

Sharvari Wagh bags IMDb 'Breakout Star Award' for holding the top position on 'Popular Indian Celebrities' list for four straight weeks

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LEISURE | P2



government, Nobel laureate Prof Mohammad Yunus fervently appeals for peace and calm

INTERNATIONAL | P9

Lifestyle hub

India emerges as a hub for global lining up for launch



Embarrassing defeat

India suffer their first ODI series loss against Sri Lanka in 27 years going down by 110 runs in the third and final ODI

SHORT TAKES

Odia IPS officer Swain is new J&K DGP

Bhubaneswar: Odia IPS officer Rashmi Ranjan Swain has been appointed as the Director General of police in Jammu & Kashmir, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said in a notification issued Wednesday, Swain incidentally hails from Rourkela. He had been holding the additional charge as DGP, J&K. Now he has been confirmed for the post in the Union Territory. After assuming charge Swain will continue in the position till September 30, 2024 or until further orders whichever is earlier. the notification stated. Swain has always been at the forefront in the fight against terrorism in J&K.

400 Indians brought back from Dhaka

New Delhi: Air India and IndiGo operated Wednesday special flights to Dhaka, bringing more than 400 people amid a volatile situation in the Bangladesh capital. A special Air India flight brought 205 people, including six infants and some staff from the Indian High Commission, from Dhaka to here Wednesday morning, an official said. IndiGo's special flight flew Tuesday from Dhaka to Kolkata to bring back more than 200 Indian nationals.

RREGULAR by MANJUL



What do you mean it's only 100 grams? 100 grams can cost as much as gold these days!

MARKET WATCH INDEX VARIATION SENSEX **79468.01** 🎓 874.94 **24297.50 1** 304.95 ₹0.02 GOLD ₹69,030 **1** ₹65

WEATHER

SILVER

30.0°€ **Max Temp** Min Temp 98% Humidity

₹79,215

Rainfall **FORECAST**

Partly cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain

pital in Paralakhemundi.

Malla informed

police said.

Appeal for peace

Head of Bangladesh's interim



lifestyle brands, with 90 per cent of the top 50 active and many others

BUSINESS | P10



SPORTS | P12

12 PAGES | ₹5.00

BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY AUGUST 8, 2024

SWEET HOMECOMING: Shooter Manu Bhaker, who won two bronze medals at the ongoing Paris Olympics, was accorded a rousing welcome on her arrival in Delhi, Wednesday

Byelection for vacant Odisha RS seat Sept 3

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 7: The Rajya Sabha (RS) by election for the vacant seat from Odisha will be held September 3, the Election Commission of India (ECI) said in a notification issued Wednesday. A single Rajya Sabha seat from the state fell vacant following the resignation of Mamata Mohanta, July 31, 2024. Mohanta was a BJD MP and her term was scheduled to expire in April 2026. After her resignation, Mohanta quit the primary membership of the BJD and joined the BJP a day later.

The notification for the RS byelection will be issued August 14, 2024, and scrutiny of nominations will be held August 22. Polling will be conducted from 9.00am to 4.00pm and the counting of votes will be held on the same day 5.00 pm onwards.

Along with the byelection in Odisha, the ECI has also announced that 11 RS seats from eight other states will also be filled up the same day. The other states where bypolls to RS seats will be held are Maharashtra, Assam and Bihar (two each) and Madhya Pradesh, Tripura, Haryana, Rajasthan and Telangana.

A total of 12 vacancies came up in the House of Elders after the sitting MPs were elected to the Lower House. Among them were Union Ministers Piyush Goyal, Jyotiraditya Scindia and

5T charter, Mo Sarkar appraisals scrapped

1.4bn dreams 'disqualified'

Failure to gauge the extent of solid and liquid intakes to maintain body weight leads to Vinesh's disqualification in her gold medal match, a bout she was considered favourite

AGENCIES

Paris, August 7: Even Tuesday, there were many in India who did not know her name. However, they did so by night when Vinesh Phogat won three successive bouts in the 50kg category of women's wrestling at the Paris Olympics, including one against an undefeated World and Olympic champion.

The nation went to sleep dreaming about a gold medal from Vinesh as she had already displayed exemplary grit and determination. Their hopes and dreams of a wrestling gold were shattered when the news about Vinesh's disqualification for overweight surfaced Wednesday. The nation was shocked beyond disbelief.

An entire nation's hopes were crushed for just 100 grams. She stood on the scales Wednesday, hours before her bout. The figures on the display board were horrifving. For her 50kg category bout, she was 100gm overweight,



IOA president PT Usha meets Vinesh Phogat at the Games village, Wednesday

leading to an automatic disqualification on perhaps the biggest day of her sporting career.

The shattered 29-year-old had to be taken to the polyclinic inside the Games village due to severe dehydration later in the day.

"I met Vinesh at the Olympic Village polyclinic a short while ago and assured her of complete support of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), Government of India and the whole country. We are providing Vinesh all medical and emotional support," association president PT Usha said.

The contingent's chief medical officer Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala explained the process of weight cut and said that every possible trick was used to ensure that Vinesh could be within the prescribed limit. Pardiwala revealed that Vinesh had been merely given small amounts of water to prevent dehydration after three draining bouts Tuesday.

"Her post participation weight

Weigh-in is done 12 hours prior to a wrestler's bout

- Vinesh had been informed that her weigh-in would be conducted at 8.30am Wednesday (Paris time)
- **During bouts through the day** weight increase is not considered
- No relaxations allowed at the **Olympics over weight**
- Vinesh took sauna bath, cycled, sprinted Tuesday night to lose weight, but that didn't help

had increased. All possible drastic measures, including cutting off her hair, were used. However, she was not below her allowed weight of 50kg," Pardiwala said.

'Everyone here is feeling that someone in the family has died. We all are shocked beyond belief.

said chief coach Vijender Dahiya. In a late development, Vinesh filed an appeal in the Court of Arbitration against the decision to disqualify her. She has asked the Olympics silver be given to her.

Musk's 'Civil War' comment irks UK govt

MORE P2 & P12

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 7: The Odisha government has excluded the '5T charter' and 'Mo Sarkar' components from the annual Performance Appraisal Reports (PAR) and Confidence Character Rolls (CCR) of its employees.

The General Administration and Public Grievance (GA&PG) department Wednesday issued an official communiqué in this regard to the Additional Chief Secretaries/Principal

Secretaries/Commissioner-cum-Secretaries of all departments, departmental chiefs, revenue divisional commissioners (RDCs) and district collectors of the state.

"The state government felt that there is no need of the '5T charter' and 'Mo Sarkar' components in the annual PAR/CCR of Group A, B and C employees of Odisha. It has decided to drop the '5T charter' and 'Mo Sarkar components from the PAR/CCR of government employees from 2024-25 fiscal," read the GA&PG department's communiqué.

Sources said that the Mohan Charan Majhi-led BJP government feels that proper appraisal



of the employees can also be done without both the '5T Charter' and 'Mo Sarkar' clauses. That is the reason it has decided to do away with both the clauses.

Notably, the previous BJD government in Odisha, under the leadership of party supremo Naveen Patnaik, had introduced the '5T charter' and 'Mo Sarkar' components in the PAR/CCR of Group A, B and C employees of the state.

The BJD government had then asked all departments to accord 20 per cent weightage to an employee's performance in implementing the '5T charter' in his PAR/CCR.

The BJD lost power in Odisha to the BJP in the 2024 Assembly polls in the state. This is the first time that the BJP has managed to dethrone the BJD after

Couple murdered over witchcraft in Gajapati

11mm

POST NEWS NETWORK

R Udayagiri, August 7: Miscreants brutally killed a couple late Tuesday night by slitting their throats over suspected witchcraft and sorcery practice. The gruesome murders took place at the house of both the deceased on top of a hill near Tunguru village under R Udayagiri police limits in Gaiapati district. The victims were identified as Chaitanya Mandal, 60, an herbal healer and his wife Irjani Mandal, 50.

On being informed Wednesday, police along with a scientific team reached the spot and sent the bodies for post-mortem to the district headquarters hos-

Preliminary inquiry suggested that miscreants might have murdered the couple over suspected witchcraft practice and sorcery. A case was registered in this connection and further investigations are on, R Udayagiri police IIC Sabyasachi

Police said that Chaitanya, a healer used to prescribe herbs to people when they came to him for treatment. He had built a hut on the hilltop and had been staying there with his wife for more than five years. However, later on people suspected that the two were involved in witchcraft which led to their murder,

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, August 7: The British government has asked Elon Musk to act responsibly and warned him of strict measures after the tech billionaire used his social media platform 'X' to unleash a barrage of posts that officials say risk inflaming the violent unrest gripping the

Justice Minister Heidi Alexander made the comments Wednesday morning after Musk posted a comment. It said that 'Civil war is inevitable' in the UK. Musk later doubled down, highlighting complaints that the British criminal justice system treats Muslims more leniently than far-right activists and comparing Britain's crackdown on social media users to the Soviet Union.

"Use of language such as a civil war 'is in no way acceptable', Alexander told Times Radio. "We are seeing police officers being seriously injured, buildings set alight, and so I really do think that everyone who has a platform should be exercising their power responsibly," Alexander added.

Britain has been shaken by violence for more than a week, as police clashed with crowds spouting anti-immigrant and Islamophobic slogans in cities and towns from Northern Ireland to the south coast of England. The unrest began after rightwing activists used social media



to spread misinformation about a knife attack that killed three girls during a Taylor Swiftthemed dance event July 29.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who has described the riots as 'far-right thuggery', said after an emergency meeting with law

enforcement officials and government ministers Tuesday that perpetrators will swiftly be punished. So far 400 persons have been arrested, he added.

The prime minister however, deflected direct questions from reporters about Musk. He said his focus was on keeping communities safe.

Alexander meanwhile said that the government would look at strengthening the existing 'Online Safety Act', which was approved last year and won't be fully implemented until 2025.

That type of rhetoric may be part of what sparked Musk's attack on the government. Musk has taken a more combative approach to his critics than was the norm in Silicon Valley technol-

firms, said ogv Krasodomski, who studies the intersection between technology and politics at 'Chatham House', a London-based think tank.

Musk just kept wading into the debate about the violence in Britain. After Starmer posted a comment on 'X' saying that the government 'will not tolerate attacks on mosques or on Muslim communities', Musk responded with the question, "Shouldn't you be concerned about attacks on (asterisk) all(asterisk) communities?'

Musk attached a similar comment to a video that said it showed a 'Muslim patrol' attacking a pub in Birmingham, highlighting the original post for his 193 million followers.



eisure



POST-DIVORCE

Kusha on dealing

with societal

pressures

Mumbai: Kusha Kapila is prepar-

ing for the release of her up-

coming web series Life Hill Gayi.

During the promotions of the

same, the actor and social media

personality discussed her di-

vorce from Zorawar Singh

Ahluwalia as well as receiving

comments about her appear-

ance. In an interview with an

entertainment portal, Kusha dis-

cussed how society treats women

unfairly and how she used to iso-

late herself to deal with it. Kusha

lives a normal life.

revealed that her mother had to deal

with far more than she did because she

During the interview, Kusha stated,

"Unkinder to women, that society is anyway

so I think that is something my mother had

to go through. I completely shut myself to opin-

ions or anything. I didn't have the band-

width for it. So I am sure my mother can speak very clearly about it.'

She went on to add, "She

had to speak to relatives

and speak to society. She

has her own life... she

goes to the temple or to

the park, she has her own social communities where she had to

face opinions and

that is how the

world works. This

is the reality, this

is the truth of

where we live

in and the

times

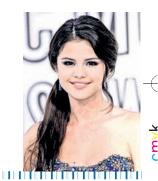
live

MARIAH CAREY: I'M ETERNALLY 12

Singer Mariah Carey finds it unbelievable that she is a mother of teenagers and calls herself 'eternally 12. "I know, normally I'd say 'Well here's the thing, I'm eternally 12, so I don't even know how that's possible!""

GOMEZ: HAVE LEARNED SO MUCH FROM MERYL STREEP

Singer-actress Selena Gomez has spoken about being in awe of her co-actress and Hollywood star Meryl Streep. Gomez shared: "She's an inspiration, and she's someone who is incredibly talented while being very humble, professional, and kind. I've learned so much from her just by her being Meryl,'



FORTUNE **FORECAST**

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You feel lost and thoroughly depressed today. This will make you turn towards spir ituality, says Ganesha. You will devote more time to meditation and will pray a lot. Despite the adverse circumstances, Ganesha says you will make a good deal of material headway.

TAURUS

Feel your imagination run wild as you star-gaze throughout the day wonder ing about the existence of the extra terrestrial. You will paint the workplace in your flavour of innovation, combined vith a drive to work equally hard.

GEMINI

A long and hectic day awaits you. You will be in the mood to finish off long-pending projects at work or at home. There is a chance that your personal life may get affected due to the extra attention you pay towards work. You need to guard against hurting the feelings of your family members, says Ganesha.

CANCER

Ganesha advises you to be careful before signing any document. A hard time for share brokers and traders. So be on the guard during deals and transactions. Average time for business. Ganesha tells

LEO

You will pay serious attention to your work. You will feel that you have no option but to work hard. You will not be in the mood for socialising. This is only a tempo rary phase, hence there is no need to worry. You will be back to your usual gregarious self in no time at all, says Ganesha

Matters of religion and spirituality rise to the fore today. Throw yourself into a singleminded pursuit to be successful in your chosen field, and make the most of your skills and natural talent, says Ganesha. Matters of relationships will see you more critical and analytical than emotional.

Ganesha says that today you shall be very careful in money matters. It is nothing to do with miserliness at all. When buying things you will be careful while spending money and will stick to your budget. On the other hand when you are out with our loved ones you will not think about holding back and will spend lavishly.

SCORPIO It is likely that you shall

learn an important lesson in life today. Remember that spite and envy beget enemies. Ganesha advises you to display some errors so as to make you seem more human and approachable.

SAGITTARIUS

You wake up with a smile today. According to Ganesha, you have a knack of solving problems, which you may use it to the optimum. Be cautious of people around you, as their envious nature may affect your work. Ignore them and keep the optimism alive.

CAPRICORN

Whether you're an artist performer, professional or an entrepreneur, career issues will take the foreground today, while personal matters will wait in queue for your attention, says Ganesha. Your performance will be at its all-time high and your efforts will be duly rewarded, but credit for this must go to your loved ones who will lend their unceasing support for all your endeavours.

AQUARIUS

Listen to your inner voice, follow what your heart says and you will not need any one else guiding you on your path. At work, you will have a smooth sailing today, as superiors will be supportive of your actions and decisions. Go on a romantic date in the evening, and mark a perfect ending to the day, feels Ganesha.

PISCES

petition, says Ganesha.

While you will need loads of moral support to keep your spirits up, you are also likely to be blessed with the company of a person who is equipped to provide just that. Positive results will come your way as long as you do not give up. Use your imagination and creativity to surge ahead of the com-

the 55-year-old told *E! News.* she told *The Hollywood Reporter.* **Sharvari** becomes **IMDb Breakout Star**

who is fresh off the success of the horror-comedy Munjya, has received the IMDb Breakout Star STARmeter Award.

The actress, who has earlier

worked as an assistant director, made her debut in 2021 with Bunty Aur Babli 2 in which she was paired opposite Siddhant Chaturvedi. While Bunty Aur Babli 2 didn't receive much positive response coupled by Covid-19, the actress registered a landslide success with her second Munjya, film which released almost three years

after her film

Muniva, which belongs to the Maddock Films' supernatural universe, became a surprise hit of 2024, and continues to play in the-

Talking about receiving the honour, Sharvari said: "Thank you so much, IMDb. I am so overwhelmed to receive the IMDb Breakout Star STARmeter Award. It's incredible. I'm so grateful to all the fans and audiences who've loved everything I've done this past month and for all the love that they've showered upon me. I'm just very, very grateful.

The award recognises stars who are strong performers on the Popular Indian Celebrities list on the IMDb app. The list charts the page views of the more than 250 million monthly visitors to IMDb worldwide.

Ricky Kej recreates National Anthem with 14K tribal kids

Bhubaneswar: Three-time Grammy award-winning musician and environmentalist Ricky Kej has created another version of the national anthem, this time collaborating with legendary instrumentalists and 14,000 tribal kids. Ricky says this project aims to create an ecosystem of music appreciators, adding, "Legendary musicians performed the melody for this project. This is something I wanted to do after last year's orchestra version."

This is the fourth version of the National Anthem that Ricky has created.

'Last year, I created an anthem with the British symphony. This year, I decided to build on that by recording an anthem with legendary instrumentalists and a choir of 14,000 children from tribal communities in Bhubaneswar.

using the orchestra as the base," he says. The choir was what I hope recorded by Ricky in collaboration with edu-

cationist Achyuta Samanta, founder of Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Ricky conducted a brief music lesson with all the children, teaching them Sa Re Ga Ma, rhythm, and scale and set a new Guinness World Record

for the 'Largest Singing Lesson'. Ricky says that when the tribal students sang along with him, it was a powerful moment. He explains, "What's more important is that they become better music appreciators. If we have an entire ecosystem of music appreciators who know a bit about music and are interested in it, musicians won't feel the need to constantly dumb down their work, thinking no one will understand it. When you have in formed music appreciators, the artform is elevated. That's

'Keep your chin up, Vinesh'

Mumbai: Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat's disqualification from the Paris Olympics in the 50 kg category has left the country shell-shocked and the Hindi film industry is not an exception.

Several members of the film fraternity are expressing their displeasure against the decision and are also supporting the Indian wrestler with words of praise.

Actress Taapsee Pannu took to the Stories section of her Instagram on Wednesday, and wrote: "This is heartbreaking but honestly, this woman has made her mark beyond gold by

Sonakshi Sinha, who tied the nuptial knot in June this year, expressed her shock as she wrote in her Instagram Story: "Unbelievable!! I can't imagine how you're feeling right now, and don't know what to say except (that) you were, are and always will be a champion.

Actress Swara Bhasker took to her X and wrote: "Who believes this 100 grams over-



weight story??? (Heartbreak emoji)." Huma Qureshi wrote on X: "Please tell me

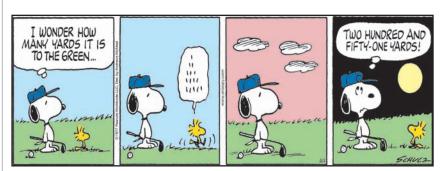
> key emoji). They have to let her fight @Phogat_Vinesh @Olympics @OGQ_India @IndianOlympians." Actor-director Farhan Akhtar wrote: "Dear @vineshphogat .. One can only try and imagine how devastated you must be but still not fully understand. Heartbroken for you that the quest ended like this. But

> something can be done (see-no-evil mon-

you will always be a champion and an inspiration to millions. Keep your chin

Vinesh, who earlier defeated Japanese wrestler Yui Susaki, has been disqualified from further competition after she was found to be 100 grams over 50 kg category. IANS

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



FUN POST

happens with

these 14,000

AGENCIES

kids."

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Across 1 Perfect

- 5 Hooded snake 8 Debauched
- 9 River valleys
- 10 Possibly 11 Put down by force
- 12 Contusion
- 14 Moses'
- successor
- 17 Wash 19 Katmandu's

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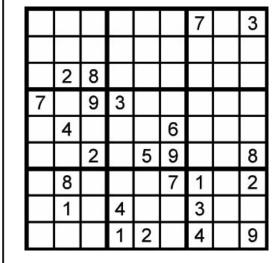
Flintstones

- 1 Dialect 2 Delicious!
- 3 Pantries
- 4 Spotted cat
- 5 Witches'
- 6 Tall marsh plant
- 7 Graz location
- 12 Like some birthday
- wishes
- 13 More often than not
- 15 Double-decker
- 16 Brunch fare
- 18 Fashion plate 20 Sign of life
- 21 19th century piano virtuoso

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

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

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

AIRING GRIEVANCES

AICCTU members stage a demonstration near ECoR headquarters in Chandrasekharpur area of Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, to press for fulfilment of their demands



Majhi seeks US support for semiconductor unit



Bhubaneswar, August 7: The state government Wednesday sought US investment for setting up a semiconductor plant in the state, an official statement said. Chief Minister Mohan Charan

Majhi, during his meeting with US Consul General in Hyderabad, Jennifer Larson, who visited the state, called for American support to the state's industrial, educational, renewable energy, tourism and culture sectors.

Citing Odisha's advantages of trained manpower, the availability of land, water and energy, Majhi sought Larson's cooperation in facilitating larger participation of American industries in the upcoming 'Utkarsh Utkal Conclave' (formerly Make in Odisha), which is likely to be held within the next

The Chief Minister also expressed his keenness on collaboration with American universities in areas such as Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning. He also sought cooperation in higher education with partnership between universities in the US and those in Odisha.

Majhi invited American companies to explore the vast potential of Odisha, its vibrant culture, rich heritage and natural beauty. He expressed the desire to promote cultural exchanges, educational collaboration and people-to-people connections.

Participating in the discussion, Larson congratulated Majhi for assuming office of the CM and said that the industrial climate in Odisha is very encouraging and the US is keen on partnering with the state for commercial

The US Consul General at Hyderabad also appreciated the vibrant culture of Odisha and said that the US is interested in supporting Odisha in all possible sectors as per the priorities of the state, the statement added.



RISKY RIDE: Motorists negotiate a service road filled with cesspools in Sikharpur area of Cuttack, Wednesday

BIHAR AND ODISHA HAVE NOTABLY HIGH REJECTION RATES

4,264 PM CARES PLEAS REJECTED

New Delhi, August 7: About 4,264 applications received on the PM Cares for Children portal have been rejected, the government said Wednesday, listing non-eligibility as the reason for rejection under the scheme for children orphaned during Covid-19 pandemic.

The scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to support children who have lost both parents or legal guardian or adoptive parents or surviving parent after March 11, 2020

Child Development (WCD) Minister Annapurna Devi told the Rajya Sabha that 9,331 applications have been registered on the PM Cares for Children portal from 613 districts in 33 states/UTs. Out of these, 524 applications were duplicate, she said in a written response.

Thus, 8,807 applications were reviewed by district-level child welfare committees and District Collectors or District Magistrates (DMs), the minister said.

Based on the final approval of DMs, 4,532 beneficiaries are receiving benefits under the scheme and 11 other applications are in the pipeline for release of benefits, Devi said.

The remaining 4,264 applications were not found eligible by PM CARES Fund

DMs. However, registration under the scheme is still open so that no eligible applicant is left behind, she said.

This WCD ministry acts upon cases approved or finalised by DMs for transfer of benefits under the scheme. No application is being processed for eligibility at the Central government level, Devi added.

The PM Cares programme saw a significant number of applications across various states and Union Territories (UTs) in 2021 with a total of 6,360 beneficiaries. Out of these, 3,953 were approved by DMs, 1,985 rejected and 422 declared duplicates, according to data shared by Devi.

Maharashtra had the highest number of registrations at 1,107, with 713 approvals. Andhra Pradesh had 473 registered ben-

adoptive parents or surviving parent after March 11, 2020 eficiaries, with 338 approvals, while Delhi reported 266 registrations with only 124 approvals,

PM Cares for Children

was launched by

Prime Minister

Narendra Modi to

support children who

have lost both parents

or legal guardian or

the data showed. Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh were among the states and UTs that showed high approval rates, whereas Bihar and Odisha had notably high rejection rates.

There was a decline in the number of registrations in 2022 as compared to the previous

The total for 2022 was 2,754 registered beneficiaries, with 454 approvals, 2,205 rejections and 95 duplicates.

In 2022, Rajasthan saw 1,253 registrations but only 13 were approved. Maharashtra had 388 registrations, with 128 approvals and Andhra Pradesh registered 38 beneficiaries, with

The overall trend in 2022 reflected a higher rejection rate across many states, the data showed.

In 2023, the registrations significantly dropped, with Bihar reporting 12 registrations and nine approvals. Delhi registered eight children, all of whom were approved as beneficiaries under the scheme.

Madhya Pradesh registered 69 beneficiaries, with only four approvals and a high rejection rate of 65. Maharashtra had 16 registrations with 14 approvals, the data showed

The overall numbers for 2023 were much lower, with a total of 211 registered beneficiaries, 125 approvals, 74 rejections and five duplicates, and seven applications still under process.

For 2024 till now, the numbers further decreased, showing a continuing trend of lower registrations.

Only a handful of registrations were reported: Karnataka had one, Madhya Pradesh two, Meghalaya two and Uttar Pradesh one, with no approvals or rejections recorded yet, the data showed.

The total registered beneficiaries for 2024 were six, with no approvals or rejections, and two were found to be duplicates, while four applications were still under process.

1 dead as heavy rain lashes state

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 7: The body of an 18-year-old girl, who was swept away while crossing a bridge over a canal in Angul district, was fished out while a man was swept away by a river in Jagatsinghpur district as heavy rain lashed the state Wednesday.

The college-going girl, identified as Preeti Behera, was crossing a bridge over a canal with her bicycle when she was swept away. Her body was fished out Wednesday.

Similarly, another youngster went missing after being swept away by Debi River near Machhagaon in Jagatsinghpur district, a police officer said, adding a search operation has been launched for him.

Heavy rain lashed several areas of the state since Tuesday, with over 100 mm of rainfall recorded in at least 25 places, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

According to the regional centre of the IMD here, Banki in Cuttack district and Bhapur in Nayagarh district witnessed heavy rainfall of 317 mm and 210 mm, respectively, during the last 24 hours till 8.30 am Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the IMD has forecast the formation of another low pressure area in the next 24 hours. It would be the sixth low pressure area since June 28 this year.

Impersonator held for duping job aspirants

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 7: Lingaraj police Wednesday arrested a man on charges of duping several job aspirants of $\ref{40}$ lakh by impersonating a Railway

The police also seized several fake documents and incriminating materials from the accused.

According to inspector incharge (IIC) of Lingaraj police station Purna Chandra Nayak, "The accused, identified as Rohit Kumar Mahanta, 31, of Balasore district, had left for Kolkata in search of jobs in 2014. There he did several odd-jobs to make both ends meet. Meanwhile, he came across Suraj and Deen Dayal Singh who later became his associates." Suraj and Singh are now at large, he added.

The IIC said a complaint lodged by Sripriya Mishra, who runs a consultancy firm in Samantarapur here in 2020, alleging that she received a phone call from Rohit, who introduced himself as an official in West Bengal's Railway department. During the call. Rohit said he knows the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) here, and if needed, he could guarantee recruitments in Group C and D posts of Railways. For the recruitments, he, however, demanded ₹8 lakh for 'C' category



and ₹6 lakh for 'D' category posts. the complainant said.

Later, Sripriya intimated the aspirants and paid ₹40 lakh to Rohit after collecting the amount from them. As per the deal, the aspirants went to Dhanbad to complete their training and accept the job offer. During the training period, they were paid a monthly stipend of ₹10,000 and a job letter by the trio.

Later, to their shock, they realised that they had been duped by the scammers as there were no genuine job letters from the Indian Railways.

Lingaraj police has booked the trio under relevant Sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and produced Rohit before a local court Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the consulting agencies acting as the conduits of the job fraud has come to

Deputy CM's thrust on climate resilient farming

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 7: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo Wednesday said that since Odisha is a disaster-prone state, climate resilient agriculture can help benefit small and marginal farmers. He said this while attending a two-day International Conference on 'Hunger Free World' organised by MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) that began in Chennai Wednesday.

Singh Deo attended the conference titled 'MS Swaminathan's Vision for Evergreen Revolution as the chief guest.

On the occasion, the Deputy Chief Minister said Odisha is a natural disaster-prone state. Small and marginal farmers can benefit by prioritising climate resilient agriculture. By diversifying agriculture or growing more than one crop at a time, the world can be made hungerfree. By increasing consumption of traditional foods, smallholder farmers, especially farmers in tribal areas, can benefit and become financially independent. Similarly, by reducing food waste, the world can quickly become hunger-free.



TAKING STOCK: CMC Mayor Subhash Chandra Singh, Commissioner Bijay Kumar Dash and other officials of the civic body take stock of the ongoing work for Netaji Memorial Park at Old Jail Ground in Dargha Bazar area of Cuttack, Wednesday

MAJOR BUREAUCRATIC RESHUFFLE IN STATE POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 7: In a major reshuffle among senior bureaucrats, the state government Wednesday appointed Board of Revenue Secretary Bijay Ketan Upadhyaya as the Director of Odia Language, Literature and

Culture (OLL&C) department. "The post of OLL&C department Director is declared equivalent in status and responsibility to the post of Additional Secretary provided in the IAS Cadre of the State. Upadhyaya is allowed to remain in additional charge of

Odisha Paribar Director," read a notification issued by the GA&PG department. While Balasore Collector Ashish Thakare was appointed as Board of Revenue Secretary, OLL&C department Director Dilip Routrai was ap-

pointed as Bhadrak Collector. Nabarangpur Collector Kamal Lochan Mishra was appointed as Odisha State Disaster Management Authority Executive Director, while Jajpur Collector Nikhil Pavan Kalyan was transferred and posted as Soil Conservation and Watershed Development Director.

CMC Commissioner Bijay Kumar Dash with additional charge of CDA Vice Chairman was appointed as Gajapati Collector, while Gajapati Collector Smruti Ranjan Pradhan was transferred and posted as Kendrapara Collector.

Nayagarh Collector Swadha Dev Singh was appointed as PR and DW department Additional Secretary, while OSEPA State Project Director Parul Patawari was appointed as Rayagada Collector. Dhenkanal Collector Amrit Ruturaj was appointed as Kandhamal Collector and Bhadrak Collector Siddeshwar Baliram Bondar was transferred and posted as Sambalpur Collector. Mayurbhanj Collector Dattatraya Bhausaheb Shinde was appointed as Cuttack Collector and Nuapada Collector Hema Kanta Say was appointed as Mayurbhanj Collector.

Kalahandi Collector P Anvesha Reddy was appointed as Jajpur Collector, while Kandhamal Collector Ashish Ishwar Patil was transferred and posted as Malkangiri Collector. Among others, Deogarh Collector Somesh Kumar Upadhyay was appointed as Dhenkanal Collector.

Solar power plants to help ECoR save ₹14 crore annually

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 7: In what would reduce dependency on conventional energy and help save around ₹14 crore annually by way of energy bill, the East Coast Railway (ECoR) is set to install 21,826 KWp solar power plants at stations, service buildings and level crossing gates under its jurisdiction, official sources said, Wednesday.

Under the initiative, solar power plants will be installed at 149 station buildings, 248 service buildings, 6.924 residential buildings and 366 level crossing gates, ECoR sources said.

"The 21,826 KWp solar power plants will help ECoR save around ₹14 crore annually by way of energy bill and ₹91.41 lakh per year from carbon credit," they said.

They said tenders have already been floated for ₹83.79 crore worth solar power plants.

"₹9.13 crore worth tender has been floated for Brahmapur-



Palasa Railway section, ₹8.86 crore for Bhubaneswar-Cuttack-Paradeep-Bhadrak section, ₹9.48 crore for Angul section, ₹9.10 crore for headquarters area in Bhubaneswar and ₹8.74 crore for Khurda Road-Puri section," they said.

The sources added that ₹8.10 crore tender has been floated for Paradeep-Kendujhargarh section, ₹7.25 crore for Visakhapatnam area, ₹7.10 crore for Visakhapatnam Electric Loco Shed area, ₹8.78 crore for DuvvadaPalasa Main Line/Naupada-Gunupur/Vizianagaram-Rayagada area and ₹7.53 crore for Kottavalasa-Kirandul Rail Line section.

Major station buildings and service buildings like ECoR headquarters building have already been provided with rooftop solar power plants, they said, adding that solar or renewable energy systems have also been installed at most of the level crossing gates under ECoR jurisdiction.

ICMR funds to develop emergency care in Puri



City AIIMS to provide technical support to the National Health Research Priority Project and state government to take care of logistics and manpower

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 7: The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) will fund the National Health Research Priority Project, aiming to develop advanced emergency care systems, including immediate treatment of heart attack or brain stroke patients in five places of the country including Puri, officials said Wednesday.

Besides Puri, the project will be taken up in four places --Ludhiana (Punjab), Vidisha (Madhya Pradesh), Vadodara (Gujarat), and Pondicherry, they said.

A three-day national consultation conference, involving the stakeholders, was held at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar to fix the modalities of the project, officials said. The project work was formally launched in Puri from the con-

While ICMR will fund the project, AIIMS-Bhubaneswar will provide technical support and the state government will take care of the logistics and manpower. The project is aimed at en-

hancing emergency care by improving logistics, boosting healthcare provider competencies integrating IT and AI tools, and mapping facilities, AIIMS-Bhubaneswar executive director Ashutosh

The key components of the project include improving ambulance services, increasing community demand, and training first-level re-

Biswas said.

sponders, he said. 'The project will address seven critical emergencies -- heart attack, brain stroke, trauma, snake bite, poisoning, respiratory emergencies, and neonatal and maternal emergencies," he added.

A research team, led by AIIMS-Bhubaneswar additional professor doctor Arvind Kumar Singh, has been formed to develop and implement this model in collaboration with the state government, officials said.

Notably, AIIMS Bhubaneswar, in collaboration with ICMR and the state government, is spearheading the project in the state.

The meeting, themed Collaborative Action: Strategies to Strengthen Emergency Care in India," saw participation of key stakeholders to discuss strategies for enhancing emergency care.

Speaking on this occasion, Director of Health Services Bijay Kumar Mohapatra, stressed the importance of enhancing the emergency healthcare system in the state while Nilakantha Mishra highlighted the need to integrate the INDIA-EMS

of Medical

Education and

Training

with national programmes and scale project will it across all disaddress seven critical tricts. Directorate

emergencies -- heart attack, brain stroke, trauma, snake bite, poisoning, respiratory emergencies, and

(DMET) Professor neonatal and Santosh Kumar maternal Mishra dressed the gaps in emergencies ambulance care, calling for better paramedic

> In the meeting, Biswas unveiled the Vision Document of INDIA EMS and Training Manuals, advocating for the integration of geo-tagging systems, IT, HR and HMIS. He stressed on improvement in transport, ALS facility ambulances, immediate response and community education on basic

engagement and training.



SENSITISATION PROGRAMME: Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) conducts dengue awareness campaign at Ward-24 near Dolamundai in Cuttack Wednesday

H&UD Min reviews WATCO activities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 7: A review meeting to evaluate the activities of Water Corporation of Odisha (WATCO) was held under the chairmanship of Housing and Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra at Kharavela Bhawan here, Wednesday.

On the occasion, Mahapatra reviewed the corporation's commitment in providing safe and hygienic drinking water to the public, a fundamental necessity for the health and well-being. He also directed WATCO officials to expedite the completion of all ongoing projects and adhere to the deadlines.

Mahapatra directed the offi-

cials concerned to approach public grievances with empathy and responsiveness and ensure that citizen concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.

During the review, WATCO CEO Pradipta Kumar Swain presented an overview of the corporation's journey, its achievements, and current objectives of the corporation. Swain shared status of various ongoing projects, outlined the action plan for the fiscal year 2024-25, and shared details on future projects which are aimed at strate**Development Minister** Krushna Chandra Mahapatra emphasised on providing safe and hygienic drinking water throughout the state

At the review meet,

Housing and Urban

gic initiatives for enhancing water supply infrastructure across the state.

Public Enterprises Commissioner-cum-Secretary T Ao and Special Secretary Nihar Ranjan Dash, H&UD department Special Secretary Sagarika Pattanaik, including other officials joined the meeting.

73 WSC students get employment

ference that concluded Tuesday.

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 7: As many as 73 students from World Skill Center (WSC) bagged jobs with Tata Steel Technical Services Limited during a recently held campus recruitment drive.

The selected students comprised 27 from Mechatronics stream, nine from Air Conditioning and Refrigeration and 37 from Mechanical and Electrical Services

They are 2023-24 b dents from School of Engineering and they will be employed by the company at its various locations across the country.

Odisha Skill Development Authority CEO Rashmita Panda congratulated the students on their recruitment. The elated students expressed their gratitude to the state government and WSC for giving them this op-

National Handloom Day celebrated in Capital city

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 7: The Handloom, Textiles and Handicrafts (HT&H) department celebrated the National Handloom Day (NHD) at Soochana Bhawan here, Wednesday.

Principal Secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee inaugurated an event organised by the department. Addressing the gathering, he underlined the significance of handloom weaving in state's cultural heritage and economy while recognising the weavers' contributions towards the growth of textile industry.

Padhee reiterated the state government's commitment to support and promote the handloom sector through various initiatives, including financial aid, skill development programmes and marketing support.



Four weavers were felicitated on this occasion for their successful engagement in weaving

Suresh Kumar Rout from Khurda district was awarded for his work with Dhalapathar Parda and Fabrics While Sambhunatha Senapati from Mayurbhanj district honoured for his expertise in Phuta sa-

Bhagabati Sisa from Koraput district was acknowledged for her craft in Kerang fabric, and Jalandhar Meher from Kalahandi district was felicitate for his creation of Habaspuri

sarees "Odisha, a state rich in cultural heritage, is renowned for its exquisite handloom traditions. The state's handloom industry is a testament to the skill and creativity of its weavers who have preserved and passed down their craft through generations, Padhee said.

National Handloom Day was first celebrated in 2015 to mark the anniversary of the 1905 Swadeshi Movement

"Handloom products such as Sambalpuri, Ikat, Bomkai, Maniabandha and Berhampuri sarees are celebrated for their unique designs and vibrant colours worldwide. These textiles are not just pieces of fabric but are woven stories of the region's history, culture and traditions," he further stated.

Notably, National Handloom Day was first celebrated in 2015 to mark the anniversary of the 1905 Swadeshi Movement. It supported homegrown businesses and discouraged the purchase of foreign goods, during India's fight for independence.

CSIR-IMMT hosts one-month training for Hindalco GETs



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 7: Fifty **Graduate Engineer Trainees** (GETs) from Hindalco Industries Limited participated in a one-month professional training programme on 'Recent Mineral Trends in Characterisation, Beneficiation, Metallurgy, and Materials Development', organised by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Institute of Minerals and Materials

Technology (CSIR-IMMT), which concluded here recently.

The programme featured a series of theory as well as practical knowledge sharing, and hands-on training sessions.

CSIR-Human Research Development Centre at Ghaziabad head TS Rana attended as the chief guest and delivered the valedictory lecture. He also interacted with participants on various human resources development activities conducted by CSIR.

BMC's green initiative



Bhubaneswar initiative, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), in collaboration with City Forest Division Bhubaneswar started plantation drive in Miyawaki method Wednesday. Housing & Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra inaugurated the special drive by planting a 'Baula' sapling at Patrapada in the City. BMC Mayor Sulochana Das, Deputy Mayor Manjulata Kanhar, Standing Committee Chairman Biranchi Narayan Mahasupakar, Local Corporator Rashmiranjan Pattasani, BMC Commissioner Rajesh Prabhakar Patil and Divisional Forest Officer Ajit Kumar Satpathy were present on the

The latest fossil suggests Komodo dragons and giant rats that the species underwent an early and dramatic reduction in body size in response to

the unique evolutionary pressures of being marooned on an island

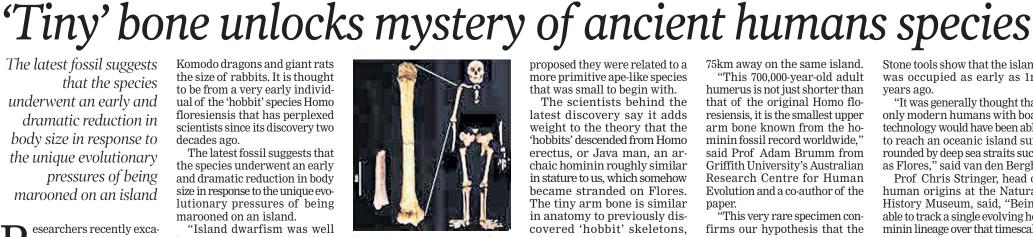
esearchers recently excavated fossilised fragments L of a rod-shaped bone 3-1/2 inches (88 mm) long at a site called Mata Menge on Indonesia's Flores Island. They discovered the remains to be a member of the smallest ancient human species measuring just 1m tall.

The fossil arm bone belonged to a tiny adult human who roamed the island 700,000 years ago alongside pygmy elephants,

the size of rabbits. It is thought to be from a very early individual of the 'hobbit' species Homo floresiensis that has perplexed scientists since its discovery two decades ago.

The latest fossil suggests that the species underwent an early and dramatic reduction in body size in response to the unique evolutionary pressures of being marooned on an island.

'Island dwarfism was well known before from fossil remains of megafauna on islands in the Mediterranean and Indonesia that were miniature versions of their mainland ancestors" said Gert van den Bergh, a palaeontologist and co-author based at the University of Wollongong, Australia. "As long as animals are concerned, no one has a problem with island dwarfism, but when it comes to



hominins it seems somehow more difficult to accept.

Since the discovery of the first 'hobbit' fossils, dating from 60,000 years ago, the miniature human's evolutionary origins have been fiercely disputed. Some experts have questioned whether floresiensis was even a unique species or simply a tribe of modern humans afflicted by a congenital stunting disease, while others

more primitive ape-like species that was small to begin with.

The scientists behind the latest discovery say it adds weight to the theory that the 'hobbits' descended from Homo erectus, or Java man, an archaic hominin roughly similar in stature to us, which somehow became stranded on Flores. The tiny arm bone is similar in anatomy to previously discovered 'hobbit' skeletons, while a newly discovered pair of teeth from the same site bear a resemblance to Homo erectus teeth - although much

Based on the estimated length of the bone, the team was able to calculate the height of the ancient human to be about 100cm. This is about 6cm shorter than the estimated height of the 60,000year-old skeleton discovered

75km away on the same island.

"This 700,000-year-old adult humerus is not just shorter than that of the original Homo floresiensis, it is the smallest upper arm bone known from the hominin fossil record worldwide," said Prof Adam Brumm from Griffith University's Australian Research Centre for Human Evolution and a co-author of the

"This very rare specimen confirms our hypothesis that the ancestors of Homo floresiensis were extremely small in body size. However, it is now apparent from the tiny proportions of this limb bone that the early progenitors of the 'hobbit' were even smaller than we had previously thought.'

Some questions remain unanswered, including how the ancestors of floresiensis washed up on the island in the first place. was occupied as early as 1m

"It was generally thought that only modern humans with boat technology would have been able to reach an oceanic island surrounded by deep sea straits such

years ago.

as Flores," said van den Bergh. Prof Chris Stringer, head of human origins at the Natural History Museum, said, "Being able to track a single evolving hominin lineage over that timescale holds great promise for future research.'

"Many researchers assume a dwarfing process occurred on Flores itself, but there is currently no way of knowing that at the moment, since the process could have already started on other islands, such as Sumbawa or Sulawesi, prior to the arrival on Flores," Stringer added.

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Bangladeshi immigrants

KENDRAPARA SP ALERTS MARINE POLICE STATIONS

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, August 7: In the backdrop of the unrest and violence in neighbouring Bangladesh, the Odisha Police is on its toes to tackle the influx of immigrants to this coastal district. Kendrapara Superintendent of Police (SP) Siddharth Kataria Wednesday alerted all the three marine police stations of the district to remain vigilant to check possible influx of Bangladeshi immigrants into Bhitarkanika National Park through sea route.

Notably, Odisha has one of the largest coastlines, stretching over 480km along the Bay of Bengal; however, it is not protected well despite the setting up of marine police stations after the 26/11 terrorist attack.

There were several instances in the past when fishing vessels from Myanmar, Thailand and most frequently from Bangladesh had been seized by the Forest authorities or by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG).

In the wake of civil unrest and political uncertainty in Bangladesh, there is a possibility of exodus from Bangladesh to India, especially on sea routes.

Keeping in mind the possible exodus of Bangladeshis via water route to take shelter at the fringes of Bhitarkanika National Park and also at their relatives' houses in coastal Kendrapara district the SP has alerted the marine police stations to keep a close watch on the situation.

The Kendrapara coast surprises many often as the illegal influx of Bangladeshis continues unabated. Consequently, the areas like Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur coast have become 'mini-Bangladesh' with the population



of the illegal immigrants keeps increasing every year.

There were several vulnerable points along the coast; but the state machineries, except for setting up marine police stations, have failed to do much in this regard as the marine police stations lack the sanctioned strength. Absence of modern sophisticated gadgets and seaworthy vessels keep the personnel of marine police stations from entering into deep sea to curb down illegal infiltration.

Bangladeshi infiltrators manage to intrude into the coastal Kendrapara district, mostly during the month of May-September to settle in dollar spinning prawn business near the coasts. Some of them also come to their relatives' houses, who have settled in the coastal districts, to help in prawn farming.

During the month of September, some of the Bangladeshi immigrants return to their country after harvesting prawns while some illegally manage to settle permanently in the coastal pockets of Rajnagar

and Mahakalapara blocks. Official sources said most of the Bangladeshi immigrants have been coming from the districts of Jashore, Khulna, Barisal

and Faridpur of Bangladesh. All the illegal immigrants conceal their nationality and pose themselves as Indians by showing their origin from Midnapore in West Bengal. It has become a difficult task to identify the Bangladeshi infiltrators as the immigrants have striking similarity in physical appearance and mother tongue with that of the locals, who have migrated from West Bengal, official sources said.

The Kendrapara SP said, "As a precautionary measure, it has been decided to keep all the three marine police stations personnel on high alert to prevent the Bangladeshi influx in the coastal pockets of Mahakalapara and Rajnagar blocks.'

The ground staff members have been asked to immediately report any suspicious activities along the coast. The fishermen. who were venturing into the sea for fishing, have also been alerted and asked to report if they notice any foreign boat in the Bay of Bengal along the coast.

The marine police in coordination with the Coast Guard personnel of Paradip have been protecting the coast, official

State braces for influx of Villagers oppose draft ESZ notification

Locals led by BJD MLAs have urged the MoEFCC to extend the last date for submission of objections regarding the draft notification of the ESZ by another 3 months beyond the current closing date of August 8

PNN & AGENCIES

Rajnagar, August 7: Hundreds of locals residing on the fringes of Bhitarkanika National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary have opposed the draft notification on the Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) radius of a Wildlife boundary Bhitarkanika Sanctuary, Bhitarkanika National Park, and Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary

Led by BJD MLA Dhruba Sahu, Pratap Keshari Deb, and former MLA Anshuman Mohanty, the villagers submitted a memorandum Tuesday to the Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) through the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Rajnagar Mangrove (Forest) and Wildlife Division.

The notification, issued by the MoEFCC, Government of India, September 6, 2023, declared a boundary of radius ranging from 100m to 8.7kms around Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary, Bhitarkanika National Park, and Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary as an ESZ.

By demarcating an ESZ encompassing an area of 497.67 sq kms, the government aims to protect critical habitats, migration routes, and nesting sites. This designation acknowledges the significance of these ecosystems not just at a regional level but as vital com-



FALLING UNDER THE SPECIFIED ESZ WILL BE AFFECTED, AS SEVERAL **ACTIVITIES WILL BE RESTRICTED** BY THE FOREST DEPARTMENT

BY DEMARCATING AN ESZ ENCOMPASSING AN AREA OF 497.67 SQ KMS, THE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO PROTECT CRITICAL HABITATS, MIGRATION ROUTES, AND NESTING SITES

ponents of global biodiversity. The BJD MLAs claimed that after the enactment of the ESZ, as many as 205 revenue villages designated in the circular would be affected in terms of availing basic civic amenities. The overall development and progress of the region are included in this critical area. They said that if this law is enacted, some human activities will be completely prohibited and some will be controlled and regulated.

BJD MLA Dhruba Sahu stated that the regulated area is primarily an agricultural zone where 90 per cent of the population depends on agriculture and allied activities such as horticulture, animal husbandry poultry, and fisheries. These activities have been included as regulated activities in the draft notification, he said.

During the 1990s, progress was hindered under the pretext of environmental safety, leading to the isolation of nine gram panchayats (GPs) adjacent to **Bhitarkanika** National Park from civil society. Even rural connectivity has not yet been developed after 77 years of Independence, the BJD leaders said.

On October 4, 1961, all the

forests of Kanika estate and adioining land were declared reserve forests: but in the draft, the entire area of Kanika Ex-Zamindari was declared a reserve forest. Bhitarkanika was declared a wildlife sanctuary April 22, 1975 by the Department

of Forest and Environment, and

the entire area declared in 1961

was included as a critical area. Similarly, in October 1998, a specific core area of the sanctuary was determined as Bhitarkanika National Park for better conservation of wildlife, alleged Pratap Deb, the BJD MLA of Aul. Deb said that without the help of the community, no ecosystem could be sustained, and the beautiful natural hotspots have developed and flourished with the cooperation of the local community.

Bhitarkanika Gahirmatha are not impediments to progress; instead, by capitalising on these two spots, livelihoods can be developed through eco-tourism, said BJD leader Anshuman Mohanty. The safety and security of these spots are absolutely essential, Sahu said, adding that it is the responsibility of the Government of India to ensure the livelihood security of the villagers residing in the area and provide all the opportunities promised by the Constitution of India.

The locals, led by the Rajnagar MLA, reiterated before the Secretary of MoEFCC that mananimal coexistence, not conflict, is the culture here, and the locals promise to maintain this harmony for a new era of hope and aspirations. However,

the boundary of Bhitarkanika

ESZ needs to be modified, they

demanded. The point zero of the ESZ (i.e., 100m to 8.7kms) should be limited to Bhitarkanika National Park, Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary, and Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary only, he said.

Before finalising the ESZ notification, the opinions of the general public living in and around Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary should be considered through the wide publication of this notification and through Gram Sabha meetings in the respective villages, as the villagers demanded.

The BJD MLAs have urged the MoEFCC to extend the last date for submission of objections regarding the draft notification of the ESZ by another three months beyond the current closing date of August 8, 2024, in the greater interest of the general public.

As many as 205 villages falling under the specified ESZ will be affected, as several activities, including noise pollution, air pollution, solid waste management, use of groundwater, vehicular traffic, and vehicular pollution, will be restricted by the Forest department. Apart from these, construction under tourism will be allowed with certain guidelines, whereas new construction will be restricted without legal permission from the competent au-

2 killed as truck hits motorcycle

Jajpur: Two persons were killed and another was seriously injured when a speeding truck hit the bike they were riding in Jajpur district, police said Wednesday. The trio was returning home on a motorcycle after purchasing medicine from Kaudikhola market Tuesday night when a speeding truck hit them from behind, they said. Subham Kumar Singh (21) and his sister Kalpana Singh (13) died on the spot and Krupasindhu Singh (50) sustained serious injuries in the accident, the police said. Local people rescued the injured and rushed him to the nearby hospital for treatment. The truck fled from the scene after the accident. The seriously injured was rushed to the local hospital and later shifted to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack after his condition deteriorated they said. When the news of the accident spread, irate residents and family members of the deceased staged a protest and blocked the NH-53 connecting Paradeep and Chandikhole by burning tyres. They demanded the arrest of the driver, seizure of the truck, regulation of traffic congestion and compensation for the family of the deceased.



MAKING HAY: People gather to catch fish from the Nagavali river, which is in spate due to torrential rainfall, in between Jemadeipentha and Kereda areas in

Woman dies in bucket attack by husband's second wife

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, August 7: In a tragic incident, a woman died after being hit with a steel bucket by the second wife of her husband at Thelapada of Jamgaon village under Boden police limits and Sinapali block of Nuapada district. The matter came to light after Boden police arrested the man along with his second wife after investigation and forwarded them to court Wednesday.

The deceased was identified as Baruni Jagat, 44, and the arrested couple was identified as Heramba Jagat and his second wife Madhuri, residents of Jamgaon village. The deceased Baruni is survived by an 11-year-old daughter identified as Ipsita Jagat.

According to reports, Heramba had tied the nuptial knot with Baruni Dei from Babebir village under Boden block in a traditional ceremony. They were living a happy life until Heramba brought home a second wife, Madhuri Dei, from Chhattisgarh.

Since the day Madhuri arrived, conflicts cropped up between the two wives. They got into a heated argument Saturday over some trivial matter. The argument escalated quickly and in a fit of rage, Madhuri struck Baruni with a steel bucket, causing a severe head injury.

Despite Baruni's head injury she was not taken to a hospital and treated with Ayurvedic medicine at home. Her condition worsened leading to her death Monday. Baruni's family was informed, and her elder brother, Bisikeshan Tandi, filed a complaint at Boden PS alleging murder.

Based on the complaint, Boden police seized Baruni's body Tuesday, conducted a postmortem, and handed over the body to the family. "A case (177/24) was registered at Boden PS in this regard and police after arresting Heramba and Madhuri, forwarded them to court Wednesday," said Khariar SDPO Arup Abhishek Behera.

Youth molests girl in moving bus; held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barbil, August 7: A youth was arrested and forwarded to court on charge of molesting a girl in a Barbil bound passenger bus from Keonjhar, Police said Wednesday.

The accused Satyabrata Nayak was arrested from Barbil bus stand following the arrival of the bus, Tuesday. Police said that the survivor boarded the Barbil bound bus identified as 'Varsha' coming from Keonjhar at 2.45pm at Rimuli, Tuesday. The girl sat next to the accused after boarding the bus. However, the accused misbehaved with the girl and started molesting her. The girl objected his advances and changed her seat after informing the conductor

of the bus. However, the accused again went near her and made obscene gestures towards her. The girl informed the conductor as well as her family members. However, when the bus reached Barbil bus stand, the kin of the girl and police, who were in hiding, overpowered the accused and arrested him.

Close shave for 12 fishermen in sea

Kendrapara: As many as 12 fishermen had a close shave from taking watery grave in the sea as other fisherfolk came to their rescue when the fibre boats they were fishing on turned turtle due to heavy rains and gusty wind, reports said Wednesday. According to



sources, 12 fishermen, including the owner of the boats, from Bobangadiha village under Suniti GP went to the sea in three fibreglass boats Tuesday to catch fish in the Bay of Bengal. While they were catching fish near Madali mouth, their boats tilted and turned turtle due to heavy rain and gusty wind in the sea. To save their lives, the fishermen in distress were took shelter on the overturned boats and alerted the other fishermen who were catching fish near the area to rescue them from drowning. The other fishermen, with their boats, rushed to the spot and rescued them from drowning. All 12 fishermen were rescued and returned to the coast with the help of local boats.

No headway in Binka double murder

Sonepur/Binka: Police seem to be clueless and are yet to ascertain the reason behind the double murder that rocked Chulimal village of Bhandar panchayat under Binka police limits in Subarnapur district even after 24hours of the incident. Sonepur MLA Niranjan Pujari's personal security officer (PSO) Manoj Jhankar, 28, and his cousin Sheshadev Jhankar, 30, were killed in the incident during a feast, Tuesday. Since then, 24 hours have passed but police are yet to unravel the reason behind the double murder. Meanwhile, police accompanied by a scientific team and sniffer dogs intensified its investigation. Two cartridges, seven empty shells, the service pistol of the PSO and a scooter were seized from the spot. IG Himnasu Lal (Northern Range) visited the spot and took stock of the murder by interacting with the villagers, Tuesday night. Meanwhile, the police team led by Subarnapur SP Yashpratap Shrimal intensified its investigation into the incident to ascertain the reason behind the double murder.

Woman, grandson critical as tusker pulls down house

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, August 7: A woman and her minor grandson sustained critical injuries after an elephant in search of food pulled down their house in Upper Kusumita village under Palasapanga forest section and Sadar forest range in Keonjhar district. late Tuesday night.

The survivors were identified Raibari Munda (55) and her eight-month old grandson Sushant Munda in Kusumita village.

On being informed, Forest officials and members of elephant squad rushed to the spot. They rescued the injured duo and rushed them to the district headquarters hospital in Keonihar for treatment. The incident sparked panic among the tribal villagers as they urged the Forest department personnel to protect them from the wrath of elephants who frequently stray into the village.

Forest officials also alerted the people and monitored the movement of the elephants. Sources said a 26-member elephant herd strayed into Kusumita village in search of food, Tuesday night. A tusker of the herd while roaming pulled down the mud wall of Mathia Munda's house. As a result, the mud wall fell on the woman and her grandson who were in their sleep. Hearing their screams and that of the villagers, the



tusker fled the place

The health condition of the woman and her grandson is stated to be stable after they were administered treatment. Sadar forest range officer, Ajit Das, said.

Sources said that the herd has migrated to the area from Raikala reserve forest in Nayagarh and has caused extensive damage in last two days to crops and properties in nearby Kusumita and adjoining villages. There is widespread dissatisfaction among the people with the Forest department's inability to protect people.

Elephants regularly stray into the villages and destroy the mud houses of the poor to eat the rice and paddy stored in their homes. People have been demanding for immediate financial assistance and rehabilitation of the affected families.

पंजाब नैश्ननल बैंक **ि०००** punjab national bank HRD Department, Circle Office, Cuttack, Plot No.: 766, 1st Floor, Konark Centre, NH-16, Telengapentha, Cuttack, Odisha-754001 NOTICE

is informed that the administrative decision has been taken that the

This has the reference to advertisement dated 05.06.202 egarding recruitment of Peon in Cuttack Circle for FY: 2022-23

pending process of the recruitment of Subordinate staff advertised on 05.06.2022 for FY-2022-23 be scrapped **CHIEF MANAGAR-HRD**

रांजाब नैशनल बैंक 🖳 punjab national bank HRD Department, Circle Office, Balaji Midtown, Budharaja, Sambalpur,

Odisha-768004, E-mail: cosbphrd@pnb.co.in

NOTICE This has the reference to advertisement dated 27.11.2021 regarding cruitment of Part Time Sweeper (P.T.S) in Sambalpur Circle for FY

It is informed that the administrative decision has been taken that the ending process of the recruitment of Subordinate staff advertised or 27.11.2021 for FY-2021-22 is scrapped.

CHIEF MANAGAR-HRD



The practice of Yoga brings us face to face with the extraordinary complexity of our own being

SRI AUROBINDO



Peter Singer

to prevent

on affluent

countries'

governments to

invest 'significant

the best ways to

human extinction

reduce risks of

resources' in finding

The Montenegro

statement urges

governments to

work cooperatively

existential disasters

and calls especially

Existential Risk

n May, experts from many fields gathered in Montenegro to discuss "Existential Threats and Other Disasters: How Should We Address ⚠ Them." The term "existential risk" was popularised in a 2002 essay by the philosopher Nick Bostrom, who defined it as referring to risks such that "an adverse outcome would either annihilate Earth-originating intelligent life, or permanently and drastically curtail its potential.'

To appreciate the distinction between existential risks and other disasters, consider climate change. In some scenarios, runaway global warming could render most of the Earth too hot for humans to continue to live there, but Antarctica and some of the northernmost regions of Europe, Asia, and North America would become inhabitable.

That would reduce the potential of intelligent life on Earth, perhaps for millennia, but eventually the planet would cool, and the survivors' descendants would repopulate it. If these are indeed the worst-case scenarios, then climate change, disastrous as it could be, is not an exis-

To be sure, if the seriousness of a disaster is directly proportional to the number of people it kills, the difference between a disaster that kills nearly all of Earth's human population and one that brings about

its extinction would not be so great. For many philosophers concerned about existential risk, however, this view fails to consider the vast number of people who would come into existence if our species survived for a long time, but would not if Homo sapiens became extinct.

The Montenegro conference, by referring in its title to "other disasters," was not limited to existential risks, but much of the discussion was about them. As the final session of the conference was drawing to a close, some of those present felt that the issues we had been discussing were so serious, and yet so neglected, that we should seek to draw public attention, and the attention of governments, to the topic. The general tenor of such a statement was discussed, and I was a member of a small group nominated to draft it.

The statement notes that there are serious risks to the survival of humankind, most of them created by human beings, whether intentionally, like bioterrorism, or unintentionally, like climate change or the risk posed by the creation of an artificial superintelligence that is not aligned with our values. These risks, the statement goes on to say, are not being treated by governments with anything like the seriousness or urgency that they deserve.

The statement supports its view with reference to two claims made by Toby Ord in his 2020 book, The Precipice. Ord estimated the probability of our species becoming extinct in the next 100 years to 16 17 per cent, or one in six. He also estimated that the proportion of world GDP that hu-

manity spends on interventions aimed at reducing this risk is less than 0.001 per cent.

In an update that appeared in July, Ord says that because new evidence suggests that the most extreme climate-change scenarios are unlikely, the existential risk posed by climate change is less than he thought it was in 2020. On the other hand, the war in Ukraine means that the risk of nuclear war causing our extinction is higher, while the risks from superintelligent AI and pandemics are, in his view, lower in some respects and higher in others.

Ord sees the focus on chatbots as taking AI in a less dangerous direction, because chatbots are not agents. But he regards the increased competition in the race to create advanced artificial general intelligence as likely to lead to cutting corners on AI safety

Overall, Ord has not changed his estimate – which he admits is very rough - that there is a one in six chance that our species will not survive the next 100 years. He welcomes the fact that there is now increased global interest in reducing the risks of extinction, and offers as examples, the inclusion of the topic in the 2021 report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and its prominence on the agenda of the international group of former world leaders known as

The Montenegro statement urges governments to work cooperatively to prevent existential disasters and calls especially on affluent countries' governments to invest "significant resources" in finding the best ways to reduce risks of human extinction. Although the statement gives no indication of what "significant" means in this context, Ord has elsewhere suggested a commitment of 1 per cent of global GDP to reduce the risks of our species becoming extinct. That is a thousand times more than his 2020 estimate of how much governments were then spending on this task, but it would be hard to argue that it is too much.

> The writer, founder of the organisation The Life You Can Save, is Emeritus Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University. @PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER



All good things which exist are the fruits of originality. JOHN STUART MILL

Great men are like eagles, and build their nest on some lofty

THIS DAY **IN HISTORY**

- 1945: The United States, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and France signed the London Agreement, which authorized the Nürnberg trials, in which former Nazi leaders were indicted and tried as war criminals by the International Military Tribunal.
- 1963: Armed robbers stole £2.6 million from the Glasgow-London Royal Mail Train near Bridego Bridge, north of London, in the Great
- 1974: Resignation of U.S. President Nixon. Faced with the near-certain prospect of impeachment for his role in the Watergate scandal, U.S. President Richard M. Nixon announced his resignation on this day in 1974 and was succeeded by Gerald Ford the following day.



CRISES UNABATED



Malay Mishra

AS PER ASSESSMENT OF US INTELLIGENCE, A **LOW-KEY AND CALIBRATED ATTACK OF IRAN AND ITS ALLIES IS VERY LIKELY**

he targeted killings of Fuad Shukr and Ismael Haniyeh by the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), leaders of Hezbollah and Hamas in Beirut and Tehran on July 30 and 31 respectively has set the Middle East on fire again. While the Israeli govt has owned the killing of Shukr, it has neither denied nor acknowledged Haniyeh's murder, reportedly by a remote-controlled explosive detonation in his guesthouse room, as has been the practice with Israel not to admit to killings on Iranian soil. However, according to Iranian sources a short-range projectile had hit the building leading to a minor blast which killed the Hamas leader along with his guard. In either scenario, this amounts to an utter failure on the part of Iranian intelligence not to have detected the deadly plot earlier, particularly when several dignitaries were to attend the inauguration of President Pezeshkian which Haniyeh had just attended. It may be noted that the Indian government was represented at the function by senior minister Nitin Gadkari and he was even seen in a group photograph along with Haniyeh and other leaders attending the inauguration.

With the elimination of Haniyeh, the hostage-ceasefire agreement which he was negotiating along with Egyptian, Qatari and US representatives is now in tatters, and the biggest task before the US and Western powers is how to revive it while preventing an all-out war between Iran along with its proxies and Israel. It needs to be recalled that these killings happened soon after the Israeli PM's return from his US trip where he had addressed a joint session of the Congress in which he had proclaimed, "Our enemies are your enemies" to a mixed ovation with a few thousand pro-Palestinian protesters being held at bay outside Capitol Hill. Netanyahu subsequently received a cold reception in his bilateral meeting with President Biden and VP Harris who, while stating that the US govt supported Israel's right to defend itself against terrorist attacks, had shown their displeasure with continuous assaults by the IDF in Gaza leading



That Netanyahu was brazenly addressing the Congress and meeting the President, VP and Trump at his Mar-a-Lago residence was clearly indicative of his deceptive stance that he was in fact inciting Iran for a regional war behind America's back

to over 40,000 casualties, a large part being innocent civilians, women and children, including aid workers, humanitarian agencies and the media. It needs to be noted that Harris had abstained from presiding over the session though protocol warranted her presence as the presiding officer.

Ironically, the killings of both the Iran-supported leaders had been planned months in advance according to Western reports and had been kept hidden from the USG going by Secretary of State Blinken's statement in Singapore that the USG had no idea of the attack. That Netanyahu was brazenly addressing the Congress and meeting the President, VP and Trump at his Mar-a-Lago residence was clearly indicative of his deceptive stance that he was in fact inciting Iran for a regional war behind America's back. This could also mean the Israeli PM's desperate attempt to save his office in the face of heavy opposition at home from the hostages' families, judicial scrutiny in the Supreme Court of his corruption cases and above all his naming along with Defence Minister Gallant in war crimes by the ICC and ICJ in the long-drawn genocidal war in Gaza and West Bank. This could be a cynical view but knowing Netanyahu's instincts for self-survival this could have been a last-ditch effort on his

part, to reignite a regional conflict and get his Western allies involved while the hostage issue could take a temporary burial.

Predictably, the incensed Iranian leadership swore retaliation and revenge while galvanizing its "Axis of Resistance" allies, Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis of Yemen and Shias of Syria to rise up against the enemy and hit targets deeper in Israel. The consequent missile launches by Hezbollah into Israel (and Israel's retaliation thereof killing some Hezbollah commanders) and the hitting of a merchant vessel in the Red Sea by the Houthis could be construed as retaliation for Israel's audacious strike violating Iran's sovereignty.

As per assessment of US intelligence, a low-key and calibrated attack of Iran and its allies is very likely. Iran would bide for time as its nuclearisation process was nearly complete and it could not take a risk of its nuclear facilities being bombed in the eventuality of a full-fledged war. Blinken in a telephone call warned the G7 Foreign Ministers that an Iranian attack could be possible within the next 24 to 48 hours while Biden after an emergency meeting with the National Security Council decided to supply additional firepower and a squadron of fighter jets while deploying the USS Abraham Lincoln in the eastern

Mediterranean. Iran, on its part sought an urgent meeting of the OIC, ostensibly to mobilise Arab states in a joint offensive against Israel.

Burdened with a recession economy which saw global stock markets plunge to new lows, and with strong pro-Palestinian sentiments prevailing in universities and among civil society groups, the Biden administration is caught in a cleft with hardly 100 days to go for Presidential elections where Harris, the presumptive Presidential candidate, could risk alienating Arab-American and young voters who constitute a solid vote base for the Democratic Party.

India's response to the latest crisis has been muted except for the GOI issuing advisories to its nationals not to travel to Israel or Lebanon and suspending all flights by Indian carriers to Tel Aviv. However, the lives of some 5,000 Indians employed by the Israeli government to substitute for Palestinian workers in addition to some 15,000 Indian nationals residing in various parts of Israel could be in jeopardy if a war breaks out and India will be hard put to repatriate them from the war zone. Besides, sharing close ties with both Israel and Iran, India would not like to see a conflagration where it has high stakes. The recent \$100 million project to further develop Chahbahar port in Iran and plan connectivity through Iran, Central Asia and Russia, and the India-Europe-Middle East Economic Corridor and US-UAE-India-Israel projects, both which foreground Israel, could risk indefinite closure. Already there is pressure from Opposition in the Parliament calling on the government to ban Indian companies from exporting arms and munitions to Israel. On top of it, with the recent Bangladesh crisis having hit home hard. India cannot risk taking sides and would again play the card of dialogue and diplomacy while continuing to keenly watch developments with its closest neighbour in a dramatic and unexpected denouement.

> The writer is a retired diplomat. Views expressed are personal.

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Bleak status of gender equality



Sujit Kumar Mishra

DESPITE HUGE MATERIAL AND INTELLECTUAL INVESTMENTS MADE BY THE STATE, THE OUTCOME **HAS BEEN SUB-OPTIMAL**

TITI Aayog has recently released the report "Towards Viksit Bharat: Sustainable Progress, Inclusive Growth" on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) India Index 2023-24, based on 70 targets and 113 indicators. The performance in the attainment of SDGs across states has been grouped into four broad categories: (i) Aspirants (index value 0-49); (ii) Performers (50-64); (iii) Front Runners (65-99); and (iv) Achievers (100). As per this report, Odisha stands 22nd among states with a composite SDG score of 66, the national average being 71. Odisha's status has changed from being a "Performer" (score of 61 in 2020-21) to "Front Runner" (score of 66 in 2023-24). It has been classified a "Front Runner" in nine SDGs, and "Performer" in three SDGs.

The most worrisome issue is that the composite index score has fallen in the lowest cohort category ("Aspirant") in four important SDGs: (i) Zero Hunger (SDG-2) - score of 45; (ii) Quality Education (SDG-4) - score of 40: (iii) Gender Equality (SDG-5) score of 39; and (iv) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG-9) - score of 40. Gender equality emerged as the most affected SDG where the score has witnessed the maximum decline compared to 2020-21 (from 46 to 39), indicating the need for urgent attention of the government.

SDG-5 has a direct link with women's empowerment because it has a bearing on ending all forms of violence, sexual exploitation, perception about unpaid and care work.

Child sex ratio indicates the status of the girl child. In spite of a favourable sex ratio in the total population (1063 as per the National Family Health Survey, Round 5), the sex ratio at birth is unfavourable (894) in Odisha. About 30.3% of ever married women aged 18-49 in the state have experienced spousal violence (physical/ sexual), categorising Odisha among the worst performers like Karnataka. Bihar, Manipur, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Jharkhand. The ratio of female to male labour force participation rate in the age group of 15-59 is 0.58 for Odisha, compared to 0.48 for all-India. The ratio of female to male earnings (regular waged salaried employees) is 0.59, making Odisha the lowest performing state in India. Only 60% of married women in Odisha use any modern method of family planning. Only 216 women per 1000 persons in the state hold managerial positions while only 4.06% of operational landholders are women (as against the national figure of 13.96%). The status of women, as depicted by these indicators, is thus very disheartening and requires immediate government attention. Achieving gender equality in

Sir, The resignation of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina introduces sig-

Odisha by 2030 seems like a pipe dream given the present dismal status. Despite huge material and intellectual investments made by the state, the outcome has been sub-optimal. In order to achieve SDG-5, various initiatives have been implemented, such as the Biju Kanya Ratna Yojana, construction of working women's hostels, grants to the State Commission for Women, support to social welfare board for awareness campaign on declining sex ratio, among others. Odisha also adopted gender budgeting very early on. Yet we see a declining trend in the overall index score for gender equality. Hence, the challenge is not only to develop counterstrategies to achieve the goals but also to address the root cause of the issues.

The writer is a Professor, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad. Views are personal.

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

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Unplayable opponent

Sir, The hugely talented Lakshya Sen was in control of the semifinals against Axelsen for most part of the first set and the early second set till the infamous bugbear called "nerves" caught up with him. And the champion player that he is. Axelsen never allowed a player eight years younger to him, to recover. Though the loss against the great Dane was understandable, the Indian star's defeat against Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia after being one game up was extremely disappointing though it appeared that Lakshya was struggling with an injury. The 22-year-old has a great badminton career ahead of him. He is young, he has skills and he is considered to be a giant killer. Lakshya is indeed a whiff of fresh air to Indian badminton. In the coming days, world's top badminton players need to be wary of Lakshya who, at his best, can be an unplayable Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Political instability

nificant uncertainty in Bangladesh, a country already grappling with high unemployment, corruption, and climate change. This political instability could exacerbate existing issues, creating a volatile internal environment that poses challenges for governance and social stability. Given Bangladesh's strategic location in South Asia, political upheaval could affect regional stability, impacting neighbouring countries, including India. For India, this period of transition could strain bilateral relations, especially given the strong ties that have been maintained with Hasina's government. The potential rise of Opposition parties might lead to shifts in diplomatic and economic relations, creating uncertainty for India's foreign policy and regional strategy. The economic implications for India are significant, as unrest in Bangladesh disrupts trade between the two countries. This disruption could further weaken the Bangladeshi economy and negatively impact bilateral economic ties that have been beneficial to both nations. Such economic instability in Bangladesh could ripple across the region, affecting markets and investment climates. Security concerns are also heightened, as India shares a long and porous border with Bangladesh. Political instability could impact border security, migration patterns, and insurgency issues, necessitating vigilant moni-Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH toring by India to safeguard its interests.

national



We should learn a lesson that a dictatorship does not last long and the people can lose their patience when they are fed up with policies or laws that are against them

MEHROORA MIJETI I PDP CHIEF

BIOCHEMIST PADMANABHAN TO GET FIRST VIGYAN RATNA AWARD

Celebrated biochemist Govindarajan Padmanabhan has been selected for first Vigyan Ratna Puraskar, the top most science award instituted by the government this year. The government Wednesday announced 33 Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskars, which include 18 Vigyan Yuva Puraskars for young scientists and 13 Vigyan Shri Puraskars and a Vigyan Team award





Tagore is under assault in our His legacy is dishonoured daily and all that he stood for and championed is sought to be destroyed by the ruling ideology that is anchored in prejudice, bigotry, hatred, and divisiveness

The FCI is touring Jammu and Kashmir from tomorrow (Thursday) and our only request to them

is to issue the election notification as soon as possible to start the process. We are also hopeful that all parties will be treated equally so that we can fight the elections on a level playing field

OMAR ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE VICE-PRESIDENT



eclipsed. There is a need to work

together again to deal with the threat to Sanatan Dharma. There is a need to fight together for this

YOGI ADITYANATH | CM, UTTAR PRADESH

SHORT TAKES

Road crash leaves 5 of family dead Jaipur: Five members of a

family were killed and a minor girl was injured when a truck rammed into a motorcycle in Raiasthan's Chittorgarh district, police said Wednesday. The incident occurred on the Chittorgarh Nimahera highway Tuesday night. Six people were riding on the bike. Two of the deceased worked as labourers at a factory and were returning from work when the accident took place.

Ch'garh to have new tiger reserve

Raipur: The Chhattisgarh decided to declare a new tige reserve covering areas of Guru Ghasidas National Park and Tamor Pingla wildlife sanctuary in the state, a government official said. This will be the fourth tiger reserve in the state. The decision was taken in the cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai here at his official residence, he said. Creation of the tiger reserve will lead to the development of eco-tourism and also generate employment opportunities for villagers living its the core and buffer areas, a government

Teenage girl dies after fire at godown

Nagpur: A 17-year-old girl died after a fire broke out in a perfume godown located in a building in Maharashtra's Nagpur city Wednesday morning, police said. After the blaze erupted, the four family members residing in a house above the godown got trapped, officials said. Fire brigade personnel rushed to the spot and rescued the family members. The couple's daughter, Anushka Bhakde, was found unconscious in a bathroom after firefighters broke open its door, he said.

Woman killed in tiger attack

Balaghat (MP): A 56-year-old woman was killed after a tiger attacked her at a forest in the Kanha Tiger Reserve (KTR) in Madhya Pradesh's Balaghat district, police said Wednesday. The incident took place Monday evening when Kalawati Dhurve along with her daughter and a neighbour went to the forest, Baihar police station in-charge Ramkumar Raghuvanshi said.



An old bridge across Kali river in Uttara Kannada district collapsed in the small hours of Wednesday, resulting in heavy traffic along National Highway 66, connecting Goa to Karnataka. A large portion of the bridge near here caved in around 1.30 am when a truck was crossing it, leaving the driver of the vehicle injured as he fell into the river, Karwar police said

5-year extension for ban on SIMI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: A judicial tribunal has confirmed the fiveyear extension of the ban imposed on Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI), saying the outfit has not abandoned its objective of 'Jehaad' for the cause of Islam and that it continues to work for establishment of Islamic rule in India.

The tribunal, consisting of Delhi High Court judge Justice Purushaindra Kumar Kauray. was constituted under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 after the Centre January 29, 2024 decided to extend the ban on SIMI for five years.

The tribunal was set up February 16 for adjudicating whether or not there was sufficient cause for declaring SIMI an outlawed organisation.

The tribunal by exercising

the powers conferred by subsection (3) of section 4 of the UAPA passed an order confirming the declaration of ban on SIMI July 24, an official notification said.

The tribunal cited a host

of reasons for the confirmation of ban on SIMI, saying the group continues to work for establishment of Islamic Rule in India, as part of furthering the objectives of the proscribed terrorist organisation ISIS/Daish.

The stated objectives of SIMI are 'Jehaad' (religious war) for the cause of Islam, destruction of nationalism and establishment of Islamic rule or Caliphate, utilise students and youth in the propagation of Islam and obtain support for 'Jehaad', the

The SIMI also emphasises on the formation of "Shariat" based Islamic rule through "Islami Ingalab" and it does not believe in the nation state, as well as in the Constitution, or the secular order and it regards idol worship as a sin and its holy

duty is to end it, it said. While extending the ban on SIMI, the government had said the group has been involved in fomenting terrorism and disturbing peace and com-

As many as 10 state governments -- Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh. Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh -- have recommended for declaration of SIMI as an "unlawful association" under the provisions

munal harmony in the country.

INDIA bloc MPs demand **justice for Vinesh Phogat**

Opposition MPs walk out of Rajya Sabha after Kharge denied permission to speak on Vinesh Phogat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: INDIA bloc MPs Wednesday held a protest on Parliament premises alleging that wrestler Vinesh Phogat's disqualification from the Olympics reeked of a "conspiracy" and demanded justice

Members of Opposition parties like the Congress, TMC, NCP(SP), JMM, RJD and SP also walked out from both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

"The entire Opposition... staged a walkout in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha demanding justice for Vinesh Phogat. Modi ji posted a consolation tweet. A consolation tweet will not work Modi ji, justice must be ensured for her," Congress general secretary Randeep Surjewala told reporters

"As part of a conspiracy, first that daughter was dragged on the streets of Delhi and now when she has been disqualified, while the government is mum. This points to a conspiracy. This is a black day in the history of sports in India. The 140 crore Indians will not forgive the government which has failed the country's sportspersons," he said.

Phogat had been at the forefront of a lengthy protest alleging government inaction against former Wrestling Federation of India head Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh who was accused of sexual harassment by women wrestlers.

The Opposition MPs protested on the steps leading up to the Makar Dwar of Parliament and raised slogans such as 'Stop conspiracy against Vinesh Phogat' and 'We want justice for her'.

Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya gave a statement on Vignesh's disqualification detailing all the assistance provided to the wrestler, but the Opposition MPs were dissatisfied and walked out.

During the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2024 in Rajya Sabha, Leader of Opposition (LoP) Mallikarjun Kharge sought to raise the issue but the Chair turned down the request, following which INDIA bloc MPs left the House.

Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankar said that the LoP wanted the chair to interrupt the debate without taking any recourse to any rule and shared his message requesting to take the floor without spelling out the

Dhankhar said he felt "deep pain" due to the act of Opposition members and said that those who walked out from this house had walked out of their constitutional duty.

JMM MP Mahua Maji slammed the government's handling of the issue.

"You saw how she (Phogat) was disqualified after being found overweight by a few grams. There is a possibility that there may have been a conspiracy against her. She should get jus-

"What is the government doing about it? It is not able to get justice for a woman and talks about women's empowerment, she said.

In a shocking reversal of fortunes, Phogat was disqualified from the Paris Olympics after being found overweight ahead of her women's 50kg final, leaving her medal-less within hours of coming close

Air India, IndiGo operate

special flights to Dhaka

EXCISE SCAM

HC questions ED on plea to cancel Kejriwal's bail

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: The Delhi High Court Wednesday questioned the ED as to what remained in its challenge seeking cancellation of bail granted to Chief Minister Arvind Keiriwal when he had already been granted interim bail by the Supreme Court in the excise policy-linked money laundering case.

The high court said it was only an academic issue now and asked if the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) petition is allowed, will the agency again arrest the chief minister?



"Answer my question. What will happen if I allow your petition? Will you arrest him again?" Justice Neena Bansal Krishna asked the ED's counsel.

To this, the counsel said there was no question of arrest and no one has declared his arrest to be illegal. The judge also said the applications filed in the case were so beautifully drafted that she got confused.

The Supreme Court granted interim bail July 12 to Kejriwal in the money laundering case and referred to a larger bench for in-depth consideration of three questions on the aspect of "need and necessity of arrest" under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

But he remains in jail as he is in judicial custody in the Central Bureau of Investigation's corruption case stemming out of

the excise scam. At the outset, ED's counsel urged the court to grant an adjournment and hear the matter Thursday as the additional solicitor general who has to argue the case was busy in another court.

'Preamble to the Constitution not removed from NCERT textbooks'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Wednesday said the Preamble to the Constitution is very well there in NCERT textbooks of Class VI as he refuted charges made in this regard by Congress president Mallikarjun

Earlier, Opposition Congress party raised in Rajya Sabha the issue of dropping Preamble from certain NCERT textbooks, saying this was an attempt to impose communal ideology on the country - a claim which Union Minister JP Nadda countered saying the government was committed to protecting constitution.

During Zero Hour, Leader of the Opposition and Congress President Kharge said Preamble, which is the soul and foundation of Indian Constitution, used to be published in NCERT textbooks. Soon after Zero Hour, Pradhan

said Kharge has made certain remarks regarding NCERT books of the Education department. The minister informed the



House that till now textbooks for classes up to 7th have been published.

"Leader of the Opposition was saying that earlier there used to be Preamble (in the textbooks). In the new textbooks of Class VI, there is Preamble. Not only Preamble, there is Fundamental Duties, Fundamental Rights, and National Anthem (in the books). These also represent core values of the Constitution and they are in the books. What he said was not a fact, Pradhan said.

In Zero Hour, Kharge said, every citizen especially the future generation needs to be educated about foundational principles and values of Indian democracy and Constitution as well as the sacrifices made by freedom fighters such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, BR Ambedkar, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

He then went on to make a statement on shifting of statues of Gandhi and Ambedkar in the Parliament complex - which was objected to from the treasury benches, and Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said Kharge was deviating from the subject.

Kharge demanded that the government give a clarification on the issue, present facts before the House and withdraw the move to drop Preamble from NCERT textbooks.

Leader of the House and BJP President JP Nadda said though he has not seen either NCERT textbook or the change but can with all authority state that there is no question of any needling of the Constitution.

"Word by word, letter by letter, this government under the dynamic leadership of (Prime Minister) Modi is committed (to the Constitution)," he said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi, August 7: Air India and IndiGo operated special

> capital. A special Air India flight brought 205 people, including 6 infants, from Dhaka to New Delhi Wednesday morning, an official said.

IndiGo's special flight flew from Dhaka to Kolkata Tuesday to bring back Indian nationals from Bangladesh, the airline said in a statement.

The Air India chartered flight, which took off for the Bangladesh capital late Tuesday was operated with an A321 neo aircraft. The flight brought back 205 people -- 199 adults and 6 infants -from Dhaka.

Air India operated the flight, which took off from the national capital without any passengers, at a very short notice despite infrastructure challenges at the airport there, said the official in the know of the developments.

"Following the temporary closure of Dhaka airport, IndiGo op-



erated a special flight 6E 8503 from Dhaka to Kolkata August 06, 2024. This flight was conducted to bring back Indian nationals from Bangladesh," the airline said in the statement. A source in the know said the

IndiGo special flight carried more than 200 passengers from Dhaka to Kolkata. The carrier also said normal flight operations between India

and Dhaka are scheduled to resume Wednesday and it has contacted all affected customers, providing updates and offering alternative travel arrangements. IndiGo operates one daily

flight from Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai to Dhaka and two daily services from Kolkata.

Air India will be commencing its scheduled operations -- two daily flights from the national capital -- to Dhaka Wednesday.

Govt appeals to four states to implement RTE

THE STATE GOVERNMENTS SUCH AS PUNJAB, KERALA, TELANGANA AND WEST BENGAL HAVE NOT IMPLEMENTED RTE PROVISIONS MANDATING THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS TO RESERVE SEATS UNDER THE RTE ACT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: The Centre Wednesday appealed to the state governments to implement the provision of the Right to Education, which mandates 25 per cent of seats for the children from economically weaker sections in private unaided schools.

The state governments such as Punjab, Kerala, Telangana and West Bengal have not implemented RTE provisions mandating the private schools to reserve seats under the RTE Act, Minister of State for Education Jayant Chaudhary informed the Rajya Sabha during the Question Hour.

Replying to a question by

Congress leader Pramod Tiwary on RTE, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said ed ucation comes under a concurrent list and it should be the endeavour of both to provide school education till class 12 for all.

"Nowadavs there is almost 100 per cent enrollment in class 1, this is due to collective efforts of all states," he said.

Pradhan, however, added the number drops as the class progresses. This decline depends on the active steps taken by the respective state governments, he said. Pradhan said though education comes under the concurrent list, school education is mainly taken care of by the state governments



"RTE and NEP both are complementary. Through both of them, it is our duty of all to ensure that all get education till class 12," he said

Pradhan further said RTE, which was framed by the previous government, has a good provision to bring 25 per cent seats for underprivileged kids.

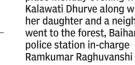
He also appealed to the state governments, which have not implemented this provision to cooperate. Earlier, Vikramjit Singh Sahney of the AAP asked the number of children covered under RTE and the steps taken by the government.

Replying to it, Chaudhary said RTE was passed in 2009 and it is an inclusive plan for the kids from poor family, which is also a priority of this government. This also has provision to bring back to those who missed the formal education system.

Referring to the Punjab government, now ruled by Sahney's AAP, has denied implementing a 25 per cent quota saying that they have a sufficient number of government schools.

"I want to appeal in the house, 🛶 no beneficiary should be deprived of his rights under this law," he added.

Sahney, an educationist and social worker, also wanted to know about the steps being taken by thegovernment to regulate fees in higher education.







national



I urge the Union government to support a comprehensive rehabilitation package for Wayanad

RAINS LASH PARTS OF DELHI

Parts of Delhi were lashed by rains Wednesday. leading to waterlogging and traffic snarls in several areas. The Mayur Vihar weather station recorded 46 mm rainfall between 2.30 pm and 5.30 pm. The three other weather stations of the city -- Najafgarh, Lodhi Road and Safdarjung, the main weather observatory -- recorded 26 mm, 20.4 mm and 12 mm rainfall respectively





My stand is clear. Adani is not my enemy, to destroy Mumbai, I will not allow it... and I don't think Pawar

will allow anyone to destroy Mumbai UDDHAV THACKERAY | SHIV SENA-UBT CHIEF

Several vouths came out voluntarily due to frustration. Central and state forces didn't properly quard

them on one or two occasions as the violence broke out suddenly

N BIREN SINGH | MANIPUR CM

There should be a thorough investigation into the technical reasons behind Vinesh Phogat not

being able to take part $\bar{\rm in}$ the final and the truth and the real reason behind it should come to

AKHILESH YADAV SP CHIEF





recommendation in asking Malavalis to be proficient in Hindi for the convenience of migrant workers in Kerala is

Migrant workers should be taught Malavalam instead of asking Malavalis living in Kerala to be proficient in Hindi #stophindiimposition

SHORT TAKES

Reply by Aug 21: SC in Bibhav's bail plea

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Wednesday directed the Delhi Police to file its response by August 21 on the plea of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar for grant of bail in the AAP Rajya Sabha member Swati Maliwal assault case. Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the Delhi Police, told a bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan that he needed three weeks' time to file a reply.

Student dies after food poisoning

Deoria (UP): A 15-year-old student, who was among the several children hospitalised here two days ago after food poisoning at a state-run school, died in eastern Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur Wednesday, officials said. Around 80 students from the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Ashram School in Mehroona village had fallen ill with symptoms of stomach pain, vomiting and diarrhoea after eating the school meal, and were hospitalised Monday. Currently, 61 students are hospitalised in Deoria Medical College, according to the officials.

6 killed in lightning strikes in Nawada

Patna: Six people were killed after being struck by lightning in Bihar's Nawada district Wednesday, according to an official statement. According to the statement issued by the Chief Minister's office (CMO), the incidents took place in Auraiya, Pakribarawa, Kadirganj and Roh police station areas. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar condoled the deaths and announced an exgratia of ₹4 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased, it said. Kumar appealed to the people to follow advisories issued by the Disaster Management Department, the

Indo-Bangla trade resumes partially

Kolkata, August 7: Trade between India and Bangladesh, which has halted since August 5, resumed partially through several land ports in West Bengal Wednesday, officials said.

Trade, mostly of perishable goods, resumed in land ports at Changrabandha, Mahadipur, Fulbari, and Gojadanga. Export from Petrapole, South Asia's largest land port in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, is expected to commence Thursday, officials said after a meeting between the land port authorities of the two

Sajedur Rahman, general secretary of the Benapole C&F Staff Association, said, "A meeting was held between two land ports and we expect that trade will

resume at 6 am tomorrow." The Director General of the Border Security Force visited Petrapole Tuesday to review the situation along the international boundary amid the crisis in Bangladesh. "Some cargo movement has started via Ghojadanga for the Bangladeshi side. This is possible as the situation in Bhomra, the neighbouring country's counterpart to Ghojadanga, remains stable," said Joydev Sarkar, an officebearer of the Carrying & Forwarding Agents Welfare

Association. Key commodities like black

India's exports to | India's main exports to

Bangladesh dipped to \$11 billion in 2023-24 from \$12.21 billion in 2022-23. Imports also declined to \$ 1.84 billion in the last fiscal

Bangladesh include vegetables, coffee. tea. spices, sugar. confectionery, refined petroleum oil. chemicals, cotton, iron

In contrast. to India are categories, with

BJP slams Khurshid

New Delhi: The BJP Wednesday slammed as "anarchist" Congress leader Salman Khurshid's remarks that a Bangladesh-like situation could happen in India as well. At a book release function Tuesday night, Khurshid said that though "everything may look normal on the surface", what is happening in Bangladesh could happen in India. Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, who was also present at the event, said Wednesday that he could not explain what Khurshid meant but the larger message that Bangladesh has given is about the importance of democracy Pratap Rudy castigated Khurshid and termed his remarks "anarchist".

Bangladesh's exports concentrated in a few

and free and fair elections, BJP MP Raiiv

stone, chillies, turmeric, and wheat bran are exported to

textiles and garments comprising 56 per cent from \$2 billion in 2022-23 and steel, and vehicles of their shipments Bangladesh from the North 24

Parganas district land port. A C&F agent association official in Bangladesh's Benapole port said trade has not yet resumed from Petrapole border. West Bengal Exporters Coordination Committee secretary Ujjal Saha said empty trucks that had gone to Bangladesh before the disturbances to unload exported goods are returning.

India remains concerned about the law and order situation in Bangladesh and reports of attacks on minorities and securitv had been beefed up in all the land borders with the neighbour. Bangladesh is India's largest trade partner in South Asia, and India is the second-largest trade partner of its neighbour in Asia.

Lok Sabha passes Finance Bill 2024

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: The Lok Sabha Wednesday passed the Finance Bill 2024 after the government relaxed the just-introduced new capital gains tax on real estate, allowing taxpayers an option to switch to a new lower tax rate or stay with the old regime that had higher rate with indexation benefit.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who in her Budget for 2024-25 proposed to lower the long-term capital gains tax on real estate to 12.5 per cent from 20 per cent but without the indexation benefit, moved an amendment to the Bill to give the option. Indexation benefit allows taxpayers to arrive at the cost price of the property after adjusting for inflation.

The amendment came after the new provision was criticised for raising tax incidence and disincentivizing investments in the real estate. The major amendment in the Bill relates to restoration of indexation benefit on sale of properties bought prior to July 23, 2024. Now, individuals or HuFs who purchased houses before July 23, 2024, can opt to pay LTCG tax under the new scheme at the rate of 12.5 per cent without indexation or claim the indexation benefit and pay 20 per cent tax.

The Lower House later approved the Bill with 45 official amendments by voice vote.



Indian Navy's frontline frigate INS Tabar during its return leg from St Petersburg, Russia conducted Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with Sea Lvnx of 3rd Squadron Naval Air Wing 5 (MFG5) of the German Navy off Kiel Canal, in the

SNIPPETS

INDIA bloc meeting scheduled for Friday called off

New Delhi: A meeting of the INDIA bloc parties scheduled to take place in the Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan Friday has been called off due to the unavailability of some leaders, a source said. The Opposition MPs are likely to stage a protest in the Parliament complex over the price rise issue Thursday. The INDIA bloc, which has 243 MPs in the Lok Sabha against the 293 of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), has been putting up a united front against the government in Parliament. INDIA bloc MPs staged a protest Tuesday at the gate of the Parliament building demanding the government to withdraw 18 per cent GST on life and health insurance premiums.

NBEMS junks claims of NEET question leak

New Delhi: The National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences Wednesday dismissed claims of some "unscrupulous agents" that they have access to the 2024 NEET-PG exam questions, and said it has filed a police complaint. In a notice, the board said the false claims have been made on a Telegram channel called "NEET-PG LEAKED MATERIAL". The guestion paper is yet to be prepared by the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS), it said. It asked NEET-PG candidates not get allured or misled by such "unscrupulous elements" who are trying to befool them by claiming to have access to questions of the upcoming 2024 National Eligibility cum Entrance Test

Ask MVA partners if I am okay as CM face: Uddhav

New Delhi: Shiv Sena-UBT supremo Uddhav Thackeray Wednesday dropped hints that he was ready to be projected as the chief ministerial face in the Maharashtra Assembly elections likely to be held in October. Thackeray's comments came on a day when he met Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, AICC general secretary K C Venugopal and other INDIA bloc representatives here. Thackeray was accompanied by his son Aditya and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut. "The farmers and youngsters of Maharashtra are fed up with the opportunistic BJP-led alliance. The 13 crore people of Maharashtra are looking towards change," Kharge said on X after the meeting.

Portfolios of four WB ministers reshuffled

of portfolios of four ministers including three of Cabinet rank following Governor CV Ananda Bose's assent to the changes, a home department notification said. The changes included entrusting some of these ministers with additional responsibilities over and above their current portfolios. Veteran Trinamool Congress leader Manas Bhuniya was given the charge of the Irrigation and Waterways department in addition to his existing Water Resources Investigation department. The Irrigation and Waterways department was earlier held by Partha Bhowmick, who was elected to the Lok Sabha from Barrackpore constituency.

PMLA JUDGEMENT REVIEW

Apex court adjourns hearing till August 28

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 7: The Supreme Court Wednesday fixed August 28 for hearing on a batch of petitions seeking review of the 2022 judgment in the Vijay Madanlal Choudhary case, which had upheld the ED's powers related to arrest, searches, seizures, and attachment of property, under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

A special bench, headed by Justice Surya Kant, agreed to adjourn the hearing on Solicitor General Tushar Mehta's request.

SG Mehta, the second highest law officer of the Centre, appearing on behalf of the Enforcement Directorate (ED). submitted that the matter was suddenly notified for hearing and he may be allowed some time to prepare and argue the The matter will now be heard

by the bench, also comprising Justices C.T. Ravikumar and Ujjal Bhuyan, August 28.

In the case of Vijay Madanlal Choudhary & Dthers vs Union of India & Donners, a three-judge bench had turned down the challenge to vires of Section 50 of the PMLA giving power to the ED to summon an accused and record the statement, which is admissible evidence in the court of law.

DEATHS

CBI takes over probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: The CBI has taken over the probe into the deaths of three civil services aspirants at a coaching centre in Old Rajinder Nagar here and registered an FIR against the owner of the institute, officials said Wednesday.

Following the FIR, a team of CBI officials visited the building housing Rau's IAS Study Circle Wednesday and inspected the area where the incident had taken place July 27.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) took over the case from the Delhi Police late Tuesday evening following a Delhi High Court order. The central agency has re-registered a case against Abhishek Gupta. owner of Rau's IAS Study Circle, in accordance with the laid down procedure, the officials said.

Shreya Yadav (25) from Uttar Pradesh, Tanya Soni (25) from Telangana and Nevin Delvin (24) from Kerala drowned after water gushed into the basement of a building housing Rau's IAS Study Circle following heavy rains July 27.

The IAS aspirants were studying in the library set up in the basement when water flooded it resulting in their deaths.

The CBI has booked Gupta for culpable homicide not amounting to murder, causing death by negligence, voluntarily causing hurt, negligent conduct,



of CBI officials visited the building housing Rau's IAS **Study Circle Wednesday** and inspected the area where the incident had taken place July 27

and common intention. The agency is also likely to move special court to seek custody of Gupta and other suspects who are in judicial custody, the officials said. The high court had castigated police and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) over the students' deaths, saying it was unable to fathom how they could not come out of the basement. It also sought to know whether the doors were blocked or staircases narrow.

'What"s your line of looking? How did the children drown? You have done an investigation now. We are August 2. Why were they not able to come out of the basement? It doesn't get flooded immediately. Water takes at least two-three minutes to fill a basement, it can't happen in a minute. Why were they not able to come out," the court had asked.

The court had also asked the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) to nominate a senior officer to oversee the probe by the CBI into the criminal case.

Kolkata: The West Bengal government Wednesday effected a reshuffle

Top court expunges Punjab HC judge's remark on SC

A FIVE-JUDGE BENCH HEADED BY CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA (CJI) DY CHANDRACHUD. HOWEVER. REFUSED TO INITIATE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST PUNJAB AND HARYANA HIGH COURT JUDGE RAJBIR SEHRAWAT FOR HIS CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: The Supreme Court Wednesday expunged some "scandalous" and "unwarranted" observations made against the apex court by a single judge bench of the

Punjab and Haryana High Court in a contempt case, saying it was "pained" by these remarks.

A five-judge special bench headed by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud took suo motu note of the remarks and said these observations of Justice Rajbir Sehrawat of the high court were a "matter of grave concern"

Observing that no court including the high courts and the Supreme Court is "supreme", the bench, also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B R Gavai, Surya Kant and Hrishikesh Roy, said such observations were wholly unnecessary for the conduct of the proceedings before the high court and moreover, the Constitution is "supreme"

It, however, did not issue a notice and initiate proceedings against the high court judge for his "scandalous" observations at this stage.

"We, accordingly, expunge the observations which have been made by Justice Sehrawat in the order dated July 17, 2024 and expect a greater caution should be exercised in future while dealing with orders of the Supreme Court and for that matter, the orders passed by a division bench of the high court," the bench

The top court noted it has been apprised that a division bench presided over by the high court's Chief Justice has taken suo motu notice of his observations and stayed his order. It said every judge is bound by

the discipline which the hier-

archical nature of judicial sys-

tem proposes on judicial func-"Judicial discipline in the con-

Supreme Court," the bench said. "We are of the view that ob-



text of the hierarchial nature of the judicial system is intended to preserve the dignity of all institutions whether district courts, the high courts or the level of the

servations which were made in

the order of the single judge .. was totally unnecessary for the ultimate order which was passed," it said, adding the gratuitous observations were absolutely unwarranted.

It said parties may be aggrieved by an order but the judges can never be aggrieved by an order of a superior court. The bench said such observations bring entire judicial machinery into disrepute and affects not only the dignity of the apex court but high courts as well.

It said the principles governing the comity between the high courts and the Supreme Court as the apex judicial institutions have been held in numerous de-

It noted the adverse impact of the July 17 order got compounded further with the circulation of a video about random. gratuitous and unnecessary observations made by the single

judge during the hearing. It said observations which have reflected in the video can cause "incalculable harm to the sanctity of the judicial process". As the bench assembled, the CJI observed, "We are pained by the observations made by the single judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court while proceeding in contempt jurisdiction." Attorney General R Venkataramani, who appeared in the matter along with Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, referred to the observations and said this matter deserves the apex court's intervention.

Justice Khanna observed Indian judiciary have an appellate court system and order passed by higher courts have to

be complied with. The CJI observed though the July 17 order has been stayed, the apex court was of the view that it was not really about a particular judge but about "this tendency of gratuitous observations" on the work of the Supreme Court. He said "all high courts and district courts works in a hierarchical judicial system. We all have been judges of the high courts. That discipline has to be maintained".

Referring to the objectionable part of the order, Justice Roysaid no courts, including the Supreme Court, is supreme.

statement added.

international



No country in the world is above international law. The case at the **International Court of Justice is** extremely important in terms of ensuring that the crimes committed by Israel do not go unpunished ONCU KECELI | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, TURKEY

THE AUTHORITIES SCRAMBLE TO BRING LAW AND ORDER UNDER CONTROL

DISSOLUTION OF MFP

A court in Thailand Wednesday ordered the dissolution of the progressive Move Forward Party, which finished first in last year's general election, saying it violated the constitution by proposing an amendment of a law against defaming the country's royal family





I will put at risk more importantly, Venezuelan people expressed July 28, 2024 and the gigantic effort of the Venezuelans who have participated

EDMUNDO GONZÁLEZ OPPOSITION CANDIDATE, VENEZUELA

Pakistan has received an offer from a foreign commercial bank but we are waiting for the IMF Board approval to ask the lender to cut the offered interest rates

MINISTER, PAKISTAN We've got to throw Kamala Harris out of

office, not give her a promotion







MUHAMMAD AURANGZEB FINANCE

SHORT TAKES

Polish man jailed

Copenhagen: A Polish man was sentenced to four months in jail for assaulting Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, local media said Wednesday, adding he will be expelled from the country. The unidentified 39-year-old man has been charged with punching Frederiksen's right shoulder with a clenched fist, causing her to lose her balance but not fall. Frederiksen suffered whiplash at the time. Danish broadcasters DR and TV2 said the Copenhagen District Court issued the sentencing.

14 PIOs rescued from cyber-scam

Laos: The Indian Embassy in Laos Wednesday said that it has rescued and repatriated 14 Indian youngsters from cyber-scam centres operating in the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in the Bokeo province of the Southeast Asian country. "Our officials work tirelessly and closely with Lao authorities to ensure their safe return back to India. 548 Indian youth rescued so far," the Embassy said in a post on X while revealing yet another instance of Indian nationals being lured for employment through fake job offers.

Fire in tanker ship leaves 5 dead

Denpasar: A tanker ship caught fire Wednesday off Indonesia's Bali island. leaving five crew members died and 15 others injured. officials said. The tanker Elisabeth with 21 crew on board caught fire at Gili Tepekong in Bali's Karangasem district while travelling to West Nusa Tenggara province, police said. A crew member said that when the tanker neared Gili Tepekong, an explosion occurred near the crew's living area.

Prez Murmu arrives in New Zealand

Auckland: President Droupadi Murmu arrived in New Zealand Wednesday on the second leg of her threenation tour during which she will meet Governor-General Dame Cindy Kiro, Prime Minister Christopher Luxon and other senior ministers as India seeks to give further impetus to the bilateral ties. Murmu was accorded a warm welcome by Todd McClay, Minister of Agriculture, Trade, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing and Associate Foreign Affairs, as she arrived in New Zealand, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a post on X.

BANGLADESH Yunus appeals for calm

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, August 7: Nobel laureate Prof Mohammad Yunus, the designated head of Bangladesh's interim government, Wednesday fervently appealed everybody "to stay calm" and "refrain from all kinds of violence" as the country witnessed a major reshuffle in the security establishment following the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina government.

Army chief Gen Waker-Uz-Zaman announced that the interim government will take oath Thursday around 8 pm. He said the advisory council may have 15 members.

General Zaman added that armed forces will provide all possible support to Yunus.

Yunus, whose name was first proposed for the top job by the coordinators of the Students Against Discrimination movement, congratulated the "brave students" who took the lead in making, what he said, "our Second Victory Day possible.'

"Let us make the best use of our new victory. Let us not let this slip away because of our mistakes," said the 84-year-old economist, who will return home from Paris Thursday to take charge. "I fervently appeal to everybody to stay calm. Please refrain from all kinds of violence.3

He appealed to all students, political parties and non-political people to stay calm. "This is our beautiful country with lots of exciting possibilities.

Rajapaksas officially ditch Wickremesinghe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, August 7: Namal Rajapaksa, the 38-year-old heir to the Rajapaksa dynasty, was Wednesday named as the SLPP candidate for the presidential election, thus officially ending Rajapaksa family's backing to incumbent Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Sagara Kariyawasam, the general secretary of the Sri Lanka People's Front (SLPP, also known locally by its popular Sinhalese name, Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna), announced the younger Rajapaksa's candidacy early Wednesday morning at a ceremony at the party headquarters.

Namal's entry has made the election a four-cornered contest. Besides, President Wickremesinghe, the main Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa and the Marxist JVP leader Anura Kumara Dissanavake are already in the fray. The Rajapaksas, Mahinda, Basil and Gotabaya, were instrumental in Wickremesinghe winning the parliamentary vote in July 2022 to take over Gotabava's remaining term.

It was soon after the unprecedented development of mid-April 2022 when the island nation declared its first-ever sovereign default since gaining independence from Britain in 1948 and almost civil war-like conditions followed as unrest spread amid locals over inflation and other economic stress that had led to Gotabaya's ouster.

India evacuates Embassy officials

ndia has evacuated all non-essential staff and their families from its embassy and consulates in Bangladesh, sources have confirmed. The move comes after massive protests over job quotas forced Sheikh Hasina to quit as Bangladesh's PM and flee. The High Commission continues to operate with a skeletal staff, while those who returned to India did so on a voluntary basis, sources said. Despite the turmoil, principal officers, including the High Commissioner of India to Dhaka, remain at their posts. According to sources, the evacuation occurred via commercial flights and the High Commission remains functional, with dedicated personnel maintaining essential operations amid unrest in the region.

We must protect and make it a wonderful country for us and for our future generations," he

said in a statement. 'Let us not miss the chance by going into any senseless violence. Violence is our enemy. Please don't create more enemies. Be calm and get ready to build the country," he said. "If we take the path of violence everything will be destroyed. Please stay calm. Help those around you to stay calm."

His appeal comes as the Army chief acknowledged that there were incidents of looting and anarchy after Hasina's ouster. He said that the police forces became "totally dysfunctional" and it was not possible on the part of the military along with the navy and air force troops to "fill up the void".

"But we will do everything possible to bring the culprits to



Let us make the best use of our new victory. Let us not let this slip away because of our mistakes

MOHAMMAD YUNUS | NOBEL LAUREATE,

justice," he added.

With police absent from their duty to keep law and order or manage traffic, students carried out traffic management as volunteers for the second consecutive day Wednesday, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper

"I request our police members once again to ignore rumours and return to their duties in a phased manner, ensuring that security arrangements are properly in place,' said Additional Inspector General of Police A K M Shahidur Rahman, who was appointed as the focal person of the The interim government in Bangladesh led by **Nobel-laureate Muhammad Yunus will** take oath Thursday

Bangladesh Police Tuesday to handle the current crisis.

Rahman has now been appointed as the Director General of elite anti-crime Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) in a reshuffle Wednesday, according to home ministry which reconstituted the top positions in the security establishment.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Nationalist Party chairperson and ex-premier Khaleda Zia Wednesday addressed a massive rally of her party, her first public speech since 2018, in Nayapaltan in Central Dhaka. She thanked the people for their "struggle to make possible the impossible" and said it is not "anger" or "revenge" but "love and peace" which will rebuild the nation, a day after her release from house arrest.

Urging all to strengthen the hands of the youths, the 79year-old former premier said, 'Youths are our future. We need to build a democratic Bangladesh to fulfil their dream, and for which they shed their blood. No destruction, no anger and no revenge, we need love and peace to rebuild our country.'

Chopper crash kills 5 in Nepal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, August 7: Four Chinese tourists and a Nepali pilot were killed Wednesday when a helicopter crashed in the mountains in the northwest region of the capital, officials

A police official said all five persons, including the pilot, on board the helicopter belonging to private airline 'Air Dynasty were killed in the crash at the Shivapuri National Park area in Nuwakot district, some 30 km northwest of Kathmandu



According to the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal, the helicopter was heading towards Rasuwa's Svafrubesi area from Kathmandu with four Chinese tourists, three men and one woman. The chopper was piloted by Captain Arun Malla.

The chopper took off from the Tribhuvan International Airport at 1.54 pm and lost contact with the tower just three minutes after take off, it said in a press release. It crashed at around 2 pm local time.

The bodies were taken to Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital at Maharajgunj in Kathmandu for postmortem, the



A firefighter uses a drip torch to burn vegetation while trying to stop the Park Fire from near Mill Creek in Tehama

Khan offers conditional apology for May 9 riots

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 7: Pakistan's former premier Imran Khan Wednesday said he will apologise for last year's May 9 riots if any member of his party is found guilty of participating in the violence

Speaking to journalists in Adiala Jail, 71-year-old founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party demanded the CCTV footage of last year's May 9 riots

be made public to ascertain the

real culprits behind the riots. "If any PTI member is found guilty of participating in the events of May 9, I will apologise, expel them from the party, and ensure they face punishment", he said during an informal conversation.

Khan, however, in the same tone demanded that everyone be held accountable for violating the law.

"I was dragged by the rangers

yet there seems to be no respect for Pakistan's most popular figure, both nationally and internationally. Don't I deserve an

apology as well" he said. Khan said his party workers were subjected to injustice, with thousands of them imprisoned. Many were not allowed to contest elections and their party was banned.

"They are victims of the May 9 incident and are seeking justice," he said.

sanctions for Israeli settlers

Biden administration sued over

Washington, August 7: Pro-Israel advocacy groups and dual US-Israeli citizens have filed a lawsuit challenging President Joe Biden's order subjecting individuals involved in settler violence in the West Bank to financial and immigration sanctions.

The complaint filed in Amarillo, Texas, federal court Tuesday says the executive order that Biden, a Democrat, issued in February violates the plaintiffs' free-speech rights under the US Constitution and illegally interferes with the exercise of their religious beliefs.

The plaintiffs include Texans for Israel, a Christian nonprofit, Israeli nonprofit Regavim, the groups' leaders, and two dual US-Israeli citizens who live in the West Bank and say they oppose the "two-state solution" favored by the Biden administration.

Biden's executive order allows federal agencies to impose financial sanctions and visa restrictions against individuals who attack or intimidate Palestinians or seize their property. The White House in issuing the order said it would "promote peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

But the new lawsuit claims the order more broadly penalizes anyone who opposes the creation of an independent



sanctions regime where an Administration has deemed ordinary, peaceful activities and reasonable political positions supported by many Americans as inimical to 'peace' and therefore sanctionable." they said.

The White House and several federal agencies named as defendants in the lawsuit did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The case was assigned to US District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk, an appointee of Republican former President Donald Trump and one-time Christian legal activist whose court has become a favored destination for challenges to Biden administration policies.

In February, Kacsmaryk rejected the administration's bid to dismiss a lawsuit by a Republican congressman and three others seeking to block US aid to the West Bank and Gaza that they said was unlawfully funding the Palestinian

Nearly 40,000 and counting: The struggle to keep track of Gaza deaths

ith much of Gaza reduced to rubble by 10 months of war, counting the dead has become a challenge for the Hamas-run territory's health ministry, as the death

count nears 40,000. Israel has repeatedly questioned the credibility of the daily figures put out by the ministry and US President Joe Biden did so too in the early stages of the war.

But several United Nations agencies that operate in Gaza have said the figures are credible and they are frequently cited by international organisations. **Data collection**

Two AFP correspondents witnessed health facilities enter deaths in the ministry's database.

Gaza health officials first identify the bodies of the dead, by the visual recognition of a relative or friend, or by the recovery of personal items.

The dead person's information is then entered in the health ministry's digital database, usually including name, gender, birth date and ID number.

When bodies cannot be identified because they are unrecognisable or when no one claims them, staff record the death under a number, alongside all the information they were able to gather.

Any distinguishing marks that may help with later identification, whether personal items or a birthmark, are collected and photographed. **Central registry**

Gaza's health ministry has issued several statements setting

out its procedures for compiling the death count. In public hospitals under the direct supervision of the terri-

tory's Hamas government, the

"personal information and iden-



tity number" of every Palestinian killed during the war are entered in the hospital's database as soon

as they are pronounced dead. The data is then sent to the health ministry's central reg-

istry on a daily basis. For those who die in private hospitals and clinics, their information is taken down on a form that must be sent to the ministry within 24 hours to be added to the central registry, a ministry statement said.

The ministry's "information centre" then verifies the data entries to "ensure they do not contain any duplicates or mistakes", before saving them in the database, the statement added.

Gaza residents are also encouraged by Palestinian authorities to report any deaths in their families on a designated government website. The data is used for the ministry's verifi-

The ministry is staffed with civil servants that answer to the West Bank-based Palestinian Authority as well as to the Hamas-led government in Gaza. 'High correlation'

An investigation conducted by Airways, an NGO focused on the impact of war on civilians. analysed the data entries for 3,000 of the dead and found "a high correlation" between the ministry's data and what Palestinian civilians reported online, with 75 percent of publicly reported names also appearing on the ministry's list.

The study found that the ministry's figures had become "less accurate" as the war dragged on, a development it attributed to the heavy damage to health infra-

structure resulting from the war. For instance, at southern Gaza's Nasser Hospital, one of the few still at least partly functioning, only 50 out of 400 computers still work, its director

Atef al-Hout told AFP Israeli authorities frequently criticise the ministry's figures for failing to distinguish between combatants and civilians. But neither the army nor Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu deny the scale of the overall count.

The press office of Gaza's Hamas government estimates that nearly 70 percent of the roughly 40,000 dead are women-(about 11,000) or children (at least 16,300).













business



A serious effort is needed to remove non-tariff barriers or trade barriers, and adoption of international norms on trade facilitation, ecommerce and connectivity

PIYUSH GOYAL COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

YOUTUBE SHORTS HIT A TRILLION VIEWS

YouTube Shorts, a 60-second video format which made its global debut in India in 2020, has surpassed a trillion views, YouTube CEO Neal Mohan announced Wednesday as he highlighted the global impact of Indian content creators. Mohan, who was speaking at the YouTube Brandcast 2024 event, said YouTube has become a platform that enables people to tell their stories.





Given a healthy monsoon and the ensuing festival season, we remain optimistic on market demand and robust growths. We will continue to invest in growth-facing initiatives as well as building a resilient

BHARAT PURI | PIDILITE INDUSTRIES LTD MD

We have the largest road network in the world. 90 per cent of roads are using bituminous layers.

Bitumen consumption in 2023-24 was 88 lakh tonnes. In 2024-25 it is expected to be 100 lakh tonnes. 50 per cent of the bitumen is imported. And annual import cost is ₹25,000-30,000 crore

UNION ROAD TRANSPORT MINISTER

NITIN GADKARI



customers can pay delivery partners in cash, and ask for the balance amount to be added instantly to their Zomato Money account. This balance can be used towards future delivery orders or dining out

DEEPINDER GOYAL ZOMATO CEO

SHORT TAKES

Critical Mineral Mission soon

New Delhi: The mines ministry is working on rolling out the Critical Mineral Mission this year, Mines Secretary V L Kantha Rao said Wednesday. Union Budget 2024-25 has proposed launching Critical Mineral Mission for domestic production, recycling of critical minerals, and overseas acquisition of critical mineral assets. Its mandate will include technology development, skilled workforce, extended producer responsibility framework, and a suitable financing mechanism. Critical minerals, such as cobalt, copper. lithium, nickel and rare earths, play a crucial role in th production of clean energy technologies, from wind turbines to electric cars.

Hiring activity up 11 pc in July

Bangalore: The overall job market showed a positive momentum as hiring activity in July rose by 11 per cent compared to the same month of last year, a report said Wednesday. According to the Foundit Insights Tracker (fit), hiring activity was down 1 per cent on a month-on-month (MoM) basis. Coimbatore has emerged as the leader in job growth among India's Tier-II cities, with a 24 per cent increase in hiring, followed by Jaipur with a 23 per cent rise. Other cities showing strong growth include Delhi-NCR (18 per cent), Chennai (14 per cent), and Pune (12 per cent), the report added.

Telcos disconnect 73L connections

New Delhi: Nearly 73 lakh mobile connections have been disconnected by telcos so far for failing reverification, after the telecom department flagged such mobile connections. Parliament was informed Wednesday, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has developed a system to detect fraudulent mobile connections taken on fake proof of identity or proof of address documents, and such connections are flagged to telecom service providers for reverification. "Till date. DoT has identified about 81 lakh such suspected mobile connections and out of which about 73 lakh mobile connections have been disconnected by the TSPs failing reverification," Minister Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar said in Lok Sabha.

RBI to banks: Refrain from trading bets against rupee

The rupee turned into the worst-performing Asian currency over the last month, pressured by the unwinding of trades that used the Chinese yuan to fund long bets on the local currency

Mumbai, August 7: The Reserve Bank of India has asked some large banks to not add to their existing positions against the rupee in a bid to support the currency which has fallen to all-time lows for three straight days, four bankers told Reuters.

Officials from the RBI's financial markets regulation and operations department rang big banks Tuesday, when the currency was at risk of breaching the 84/\$ level in the spot market, the bankers, who declined to be identified since they are not authorised to speak to the media, said.

The RBI did not immediately respond to a mail requesting comment. Reuters could not ascertain the full list of banks the RBI called.

The Indian rupee turned into the worst-performing Asian currency over the last month, pressured by the unwinding of trades that used the Chinese yuan to fund long bets on the local currency. To slow the depreciation, the

RBI has intervened across the spot, futures and non-deliverable forwards segments. On Tuesday, RBI officials asked

us to "consider the existing po-



sition size the risk limit," a senior treasury official at a large foreign bank said.

This meant that the RBI did not want them to add to their existing trading positions on the rupee, he said. The Indian central bank often

uses such informal calls to prod banks to manage excessive volatility. Lenders typically comply. The rupee Tuesday dropped

to a lifetime low of 83.96 to the U.S. dollar, and would have likely depreciated more if not for RBI's instructions and direct intervention.

The central bank likely sold

Indian steel prices hit more than 3-year lows

New Delhi, August 7: Steel prices in India have plunged to the lowest level in more than three years due to higher imports and subdued exports, according to data from commodities consultancy BigMint.

Local prices of hot rolled coils used in the manufacturing sector averaged 52,267 rupees (\$622.62) per tonne in July, it said. India, the world's second-biggest crude steel producer, turned a net importer in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2024. The trend continued with finished steel imports scaling a five-year high in April-May, according to provisional government data.

Increased imports from China and Vietnam into India, alongside Chinese supply in overseas markets, have made Indian exports uncompetitive in many regions, putting downward pressure on domestic prices, BigMint said.

'This combination of increased imports and reduced exports has significantly impacted the pricing dynamics in the Indian steel industry," it said in an email to Reuters. The federal steel ministry has asked the trade ministry to investigate cheaper steel imports from China and Vietnam, Reuters reported last month. Rapid economic growth and higher infrastructure spending have turned India into a lucrative market for Indian and global steel makers, particularly with steel demand slowing down in Europe and the United States.

Last week, Tata Steel's hief executive T. V. Narendran said he expected demand in India to pick up from October through March, driven by the construction sector, automobiles and railways, among others

India key market for global lifestyle brands



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: India is emerging as a hub for global lifestyle brands, with 90 per cent of the top 50 global brands active and many others lined up for launch in the country, driven by robust online sales and a burgeoning e-lifestyle market, according to a study.

 $Global\ consultancy\ firm\ Bain$ & Company and lifestyle e-commerce platform Myntra Wednesday released a study drawing insights from Bain analysis, secondary research. market participant interviews. and industry sources.

"India is also a key lifestyle destination for global brands-90 per cent of the top 50 global brands are active in India and half of them already have India revenue greater than USD 30 million. Scaled, global fashion brands in India have demonstrated robust growth, seeing a 20 per cent uptick year-on-year over 2018–23," the study showed.

About 50 per cent of global brands have greater than USD 30 million in revenue in India, the study E-Styling India: Decoding India's Online Fashion and Lifestyle Shopping Trends, said.

Over 60 varied lifestyle brands were launched or planned to be launched in India over the past

"These include scale (USD 1 billion+ global revenue) and midscale brands; these also include luxury brands, new age brands and specialised East Asian brands," it said.

The study further revealed that online channel is the top choice for global brands making foray into the Indian market, which offers multifaceted benefits like a large customer base and market trend insights.

"Online sales have become increasingly salient for top global brands operating in India. This is driven by access to a large customer base (175 million elifestyle shoppers), access to granular customer insights and 360-degree operations support (e.g., inventory integration, estore creation, etc.). These brands have also been able to grow profitably through this channel,' the study said.

Fashion brands like H&M and Mango leveraged online platforms to achieve a better reach in tier-2 cities and navigate operational challenges in a new

Reliance ready for next level of growth: Ambani



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: Reliance Industries is ready for the next level of growth as the historically fossil fuel-heavy conglomerate pivots a green path agenda while consolidating its telecom business that turned data-dark India into a data-rich nation, its chairman Mukesh Ambani said.

In the firm's latest annual report, he said in the world of volatility and uncertainty, India is shining as a beacon of stability and prosperity.

India's most valuable company, which over the past decade added telecom, retail and finance to its core business of oil and chemicals, is now pivoting a green pathway, targeting net zero carbon emissions from its operations by 2035.

Ambani said the launch of Jio 4G mobile telephony services in 2016 "turned a data-dark India into a data-rich nation, supplying every Indian home with affordable, high-speed 4G

enhanced the country's digital infrastructure by rolling out its True5G network across India in world-record time," he said, adding the launch of affordable smartphone JioBharat will go a long way in making India '2G-mukt'.

On retail, he said as India's largest retailer, Reliance Retail is perfectly positioned to serve the consumption needs of a fastgrowing economy. While its allencompassing range of products gains traction, its new commerce initiative is not just home deliveries of groceries to electronics but also supporting small indigenous merchants and kirana shop owners, he said.

The world now realising the enormous potential of India saw marquee names investing in Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd at USD 100 billion valuation, he said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 7: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty bounced back sharply Wednesday after three straight days of slump following a rally in metal, IT and oil shares at lower levels.

liverable forward market before

the spot market opened, a cur-

rency trader at a bank said. This

intervention prevented the rupee

from falling past the psycho-

The RBI has asked banks "to

not aggressively bid (on

USD/INR) for speculative posi-

tions," another senior banker

The bankers said the central

bank had not asked them to trim

their existing positions, nor they

had issued specific instructions

regarding positions in the non-

deliverable forwards market.

at a foreign bank said.

logical 84 level

The 30-share BSE Senses lied 874.94 points or 1.11 per cent to settle at 79.468.01 with 25 of its constituents ending with gains and five with losses. During the day, it jumped 1,046.13 points or

The NSE Nifty jumped 304.95 or 1.43 per cent to 24,337.70.

IndusInd Bank, Bharti Airtel, Hindustan Unilever, Tech Mahindra and Titan were the

Stock markets snap 3-day slump

SENSEX REBOUNDS 875 PTS ON VALUE BUYING IN METAL, ENERGY SHARES

in global peers and value-buying

1.33 per cent to 79,639.20.

points or 1.27 per cent to 24,297.50. Intra-day, it surged 345.15 points

Among Sensex firms, Adani Ports & SEZ rose the most by 3.42 per cent. Power Grid climbed 3.39 per cent, Tata Steel by 2.4 per cent and JSW Steel by 2.61 per cent. Infosys, HDFC Bank, ITC, Reliance Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti, and Larsen & Toubro also advanced.

Most sectors contributed to



the upward movement, with metals, energy, and pharma being the top performers.

Global markets experienced a notable rebound after the BoJ's Deputy Governor reassured that the central bank would not raise interest rates during a period of financial instability. The Indian market also witnessed broad-based buying across sectors, with the realty sector seeing a relief rally due to the reinstatement of indexation benefits," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 2.63 per cent and smallcap index climbed 2.39 per cent.

All indices ended in the positive territory. Oil & Gas jumped 3.75 per cent, metal surged 3.44 per cent, energy (3.32 per cent), capital goods (2.89 per cent), telecommunication (2.80 per

cent), services (2.53 per cent), commodities (2.49 per cent), healthcare (2.03 per cent).

Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said that markets experienced a breather after the recent decline, gaining over a percent, driven by strong global cues.

As many as 2,985 stocks adranced while 948 declined and 98 remained unchanged.

Asian markets settled in the positive territory, where Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended significantly higher.

European markets also rallied. The US markets ended higher Tuesday

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹3,531.24 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

DIIs bought equities worth ₹3,357.45 crore Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.12 per cent to USD 77.34 a barrel.

Falling for the third straight day Tuesday, the BSE benchmark settled at 78,593.07, down 166.33 points or 0.21 per cent Similarly, the Nifty declined 63.05 points or 0.26 per cent to settle below the 24,000 level at 23,992.55.

How chip giant Intel spurned OpenAI and fell behind times

This is among a series of strategic misfortunes that have seen the company, which was at the cutting edge of computer chips in the 1990s and 2000s, stumble in the era of AI

San Francisco, August 7: For US chip giant Intel, the darling of the computer age before it fell on harder times in the AI era, things might have been quite different. About seven years ago, the company had the chance to

companies discussed various options, including Intel buying a 15% stake for \$1 billion in cash, three of the people said. They also discussed Intel taking an additional 15% stake in OpenAI if it made hardware for the startup at cost price, two people said. Intel ultimately decided

and 2018, executives at the two

against a deal, partly because then-CEO Bob Swan did not think generative AI models would make it to market in the near future and thus repay the chipmaker's investment, according to three of the sources, who all requested anonymity to discuss confidential matters OpenAI was interested in an

products at cost, the people added. An Intel spokesperson did not address questions about the potential deal. Swan did not respond to a request for comment and OpenAI declined to comment. Intel's decision not to invest

in OpenAI, which went on to launch the groundbreaking ChatGPT in 2022 and is now reportedly valued at about \$80 billion, has not previously been made public.

It is among a series of strategic misfortunes that have seen the company, which was at the

cutting edge of computer chips in the 1990s and 2000s, stumble in the era of AI, according to Reuters interviews with nine people familiar with the matter including former Intel executives and industry experts.

Last week, Intel's second-quarter earnings triggered a stock price decline of more than a quarter of its value in its worst trading day since 1974. For the first time in 30 years, the tech company is worth less than \$100 billion. The erstwhile market kingpin - whose marketing slogan

"Intel Inside" long represented the gold standard of quality - is still struggling to get a blockbuster AI chip product to market.

Intel is now dwarfed by \$2.6 trillion rival Nvidia, which has pivoted from video game graphics to AI chips needed to build, train and operate large generative AI systems like OpenAI's GPT4 and Meta Platforms' Llama models. Intel has also fallen behind the \$218 billion AMD.

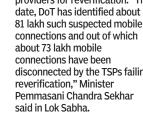
Asked about its AI progress, the Intel spokesperson referred to recent comments by CEO Pat Gelsinger, who said the company's third-generation Gaudi AI chip, which it aims to launch in the third quarter of this year, would outperform rivals.

Gelsinger said the company had "20-plus" customers for the second and third generation of Gaudi and that its next-generation Falcon Shores AI chip would

launch in late 2025. We are nearing the completion of a historic pace of design and process technology innovation, and we are encouraged by the product pipeline we're building to capture a greater share of the AI market going forward," the spokesperson told Reuters.

On the OpenAI front, Microsoft stepped in to make an investment in 2019, propelling itself to the forefront of the AI era triggered by the 2022 release of ChatGPT and a frenzy of activity among the largest companies in the world to deploy AI.

Although in hindsight the prospective deal was a missed chance for Intel, the company has been gradually losing the battle for AI supremacy for more than decade, according to the former executives and industry experts interviewed. "Intel failed in AI because they didn't present a cohesive product strategy to their customers," said Dylan— Patel, founder of semiconductor research group SemiAnalysis.







Tough fight awaits Neera Panghal surrenders

Men's javelin defending champion in bid for another piece of history today



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, August 7: His stunning monster throw of 89.34m in the qualification round made quite a statement but a tough challenge awaits defending champion Neeraj Chopra as he seeks another piece of history in the Paris Olympics men's javelin throw final round here Thursday.

Just like he did at the same stage in the Tokyo Olympics three years back, Chopra needed just a few seconds to top the qualification round with his

opening throw but the similarity ends there.

This time, the quality of the field is better than Tokyo with nine throwers crossing the automatic final round qualification mark of 84m in Paris as against six in Tokyo. Out of the nine, five made it to the final round with their first throws and thus will have a lot in their tanks for the medal round.

The 26-vear-old Chopra knows it too well, having been in the global circuit for more than

Neeraj Chopra will have a chance to become only the fifth man in Olympic javelin throw history to defend the title

"In the final, everyone has a different mindset and different situation. It will be a good competition. Whoever qualifies automatically is the best in preparation," Neeraj told journalists after his 'lightening' appearance on the field.

He was in a hurry to go back to the Games Village and take rest to prepare for his best for the final round, as a lot is at stake Thursday.

Chopra will have a chance to become only the fifth man in Olympic javelin throw history to defend the title.

Eric Lemming (Sweden; 1908 and 1912), Jonni Myyra (Finland; 1920 and 1924), Jan Zelezny (Czech Republic; 1992, 1996 and 2000) and Andreas Thorkildsen (Norway; 2004 and 2008) are the only ones to have defended the men's javelin gold medals in the

If he wins gold, and for that matter a medal, he will become the most decorated Indian in Olympics in individual sport.

Shuttler PV Sindhu (one silver one bronze), wrestler Sushil Kumar (one silver, one bronze) and shooter Manu Bhaker (two bronze) have won two Olympic medals each post Independence.

The tremendous effort, which was the second best of his career, also set aside concerns surrounding Chopra's fitness after he revealed that he had been battling an adductor niggle in the build-up to the Games. His personal best continues to be 89.94m achieved back in 2022.

His 89.34m throw may also raise hopes of millions of Indian fans to see Chopra cross the elusive 90m mark on Thursday. His effort was also the second-best qualifying throw at an Olympics after the 89.39m registered by the legendary Jan Zelezny at 2000 Sydney Games.

But there were some ominous signs coming out from the qualification round which Chopra will have to be wary of.

The peaking of two-time world champion Anderson Peters (personal best 93.07m) of Grenada as well as immediate hitting of form by Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem may indicate that the final round at Stade de France could be a classic contest.

Nadeem has not beaten Chopra in 10 meetings since 2016 but he can spring a surprise.



THE WRESTLER LOSES IN FIRST ROUND ON **OLYMPIC DEBUT**

AGENCIES

Paris: India's biggest wrestling medal hope at the Paris Games, Antim Panghal ended her Olympic campaign with a humiliating 0-10 defeat to Turkey's Yetgil Zeynep in the women's 53 kg category.

The 19-year-old debutant's hope of remaining in contention for a bronze medal via repechage were also dashed after Zeynep lost to Annika Wendle of Germany in the quarterfinals.

Earlier, World Championships bronze medallist Antim, who was one of the first to gain an Olympic quota in the category earlier owned by Vinesh Phogat, was outclassed in 101 seconds in the first round.

The Turkish wrestler emerged victorious by virtue of

"Technical Superiority" where she had a clear 10-point lead over her Indian opponent.

Zevnep was in complete control as she first pinned Antim for two points, followed by another two and then performed a double flip to get four points.

She completed the rout with another two points when the referee stopped the bout leaving Antim in tears.

Panghal becomes the third wrestler from the country who will return without any medal

While Nisha Dahiya's (68kg) campaign ended Monday, the seasoned Vinesh, who became the first Indian female wrestler to reach an Olympic final in the 50kg category on Tuesday, was disqualified hours ahead of her gold medal bout on Wednesday for being 100 grams over the weight limit.

ATHLETES FAIL TO IMPRESS

Paris: Experienced Indian javelin thrower Annu Rani once again failed to impress on the global stage as she made a qualification round exit from the Olympics with an extremely poor performance here Wednesday.

The 31-year holder opened her event with 55.81m and could not improve upon that mark in her next two attempts, which measured 53.22m and 53.55m, to finish at 15th among 16 competitors in Group A and 26th overall. Annu, who has been training

abroad in the build-up to the Olympics, has a season's best of 60.68m and her national record stands at 63.82m. In the past two years, she has

thrown over 60m only twice, with the Asian Games gold-winning effort of 62.92m being one of them.

She had qualified for the Paris Olympics through world ranking In another below-par show,

national record holder 100m hurdler Jyothi Yarraji failed to book an automatic semifinal spot after finishing seventh in her round one heat race.

Eye on consecutive bronze medals

Paris: A heart-wrenching defeat in the semifinals, notwithstanding, a demoralised Indian men's hockey team will have to regroup quickly and aim for a second consecutive podium finish at the Olympics when it takes on Spain in the bronze medal playoff here Thursday.

The Indians played against Germany, putting their defence under pressure from the start and in the process took the lead in the seventh minute through a penalty corner conversion by skipper Harmanpreet

But the Germans came back strongly in the second quarter and fourth quarters to secure the close win, courtesy some silly defensive lapses from the Indians, especially Jarmanpret Singh.

The Indians too were guilty of wasting too many scoring chances, including as many as 10 penalty corners, while converting two, one directly and another through variation.

The opposition teams seemed to have found out a way to deny one of the world's best dragflicker Harmanpreet as he managed to be on target just once

The over-reliance on



Harmanpreet and lack of innovative penalty corner variations seemed to be hurting India badly here as they don't have much options in their hands.

But the return of Amit Rohidas, who missed Tuesday's match after being shown the red card against Great Britain in the quarterfinal, should bolster the Indian defence and also give more chances from penalty corners as he is second best option from set pieces after Harmanpreet.

The Indians were looking to

break a 44-year-old jinx to reach an Olympic final but it eluded them narrowly.

The last time India made the Olympic hockey final was way back in 1980 Moscow Games. which, in fact, was their last of the eight gold medals at the quadrennial event.

A place in final would have at least assured India a silver medal after 1960 Olympics but that also slipped out of hands. But all is not lost for the Indians as they still have a chance to claim a podium finish if they beat

Spain Thursday in the bronze medal match.

For that, the Indians will have to leave the baggage of the semifinal loss behind and come out with a fresh mind to get the better of Spain.

Veteran India goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, who is playing his last international tournament, reminded his teammates that all

"It's a heartbreaking loss for us (against Germany). We had the chance to win gold, but now, we have to forget this semifinal and focus on the bronze medal match," he had said.

"It's a medal match and it's about the country. It's about those 19 players here, all the staff. And I think we all get a last opportunity to play, to get a medal for our country rather than worrying about what happened today (Tuesday). These 19 players should play like this is our last opportunity as a player to get a medal for our country.'

Going by form and world ranking, the Indians are clear favourites to win the tie against Spain but in the end it will all boil down to the mental aspect of the

While India lost a close semifinal, Spain were thrashed 0-4 by Netherlands.

Women's TT team to return empty-handed

Paris: Archana Kamath gave a brief resistance but that was not enough as India lost 1-3 to technically superior Germany in the women's table tennis team event quarterfinals of the Paris Olympics here Wednesday. Indian table tennis campaign ended with the loss. The Indian duo of Sreeja Akula and Archana lost the opening doubles match 5-11 11-8 10-12 6-11 to the German pair of Yuan Wan and Xiona Shan. Sreeja and Archana were holding the fort till the third game but they lost it in deuce. Thereafter, they lost the match.In the first singles, star Indian Manika Batra was not at he best as she won the first game but lost the next three (11-85-117-115-11) against Annett Kaufmann as Germany took 2-0 lead in the tie. It was at this point that Archana gave India a glimmer of hope as she held off Germany charge briefly with a 19-17 1-11 11-5 11-9 win over Xiona Shan in the second singles. But in the third singles, Kaufmann blanked Sreeja 11-6 11-7 11-7 to seal the tie for Germany and book a semifinal berth. The two, however, could not progress beyond that stage, losing to higher-ranked opponents. The Paris Games marked the first time that India competed in the team event at the Olympics. The men's and women's team events in table tennis were introduced at the 2008 Beijing Games.



OLYMPICS TIDBITS

French economy given a lift by Olympics

The Paris Olympics is giving a much-needed lift to the French economy thanks to increased consumer spending, according to a report from US bank card and financial transactions firm Visa. France. the euro zone's second-biggest economy, is banking on the Games to shore up its meagre growth, with its statistics office predicting a 0.3 percentage point boost from ticket and TV rights sales and more tourism. Visa said its data showed that small businesses in Paris reported a 26% rise in sales to Visa cardholders during the first weekend of the Olympic Games compared with a year earlier. "Our latest data shows a significant increase in consumer spending among Visa cardholders during the opening ceremony weekend," said Visa Europe CEO Charlotte Hogg.

IOC vows more exposure for sponsors

rom selfies with Samsung phones on the podium to Louis Vuitton cases at the opening ceremony, the Paris Olympics have widened the scope for sponsors' product placement like never before, and this trend will continue in future Games, the International Olympic Committee said Wednesday. The IOC saw revenues of \$2.295 billion from its top sponsors for the period 2017-2021, the second biggest source of income for the Olympic movement, with broadcasters paying \$4.544 billion over the same period. No advertising is displayed in any of the competition venues where the Olympic rings are the only visible logos to audiences around the world.

TENSIONS SIMMER OVER GAZA

Israeli athletes receive threats

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, August 7: Israel's Olympic team said some athletes have received threats as they compete in Paris amid larger tensions over Palestinian deaths during the war in Gaza and the threat of a wider regional conflict in the Middle East.

Yael Arad, president of the Israeli National Olympic Committee, told The Associated Press Tuesday that team members had received "centralized" threats meant to generate "psychological terror" in athletes, without giving further details.

Last week, Paris prosecutors opened an investigation into emailed death threats to Israeli athletes, and the national cybercrime agency is looking into the leak of some Israeli athletes' personal data online, which has since been taken down.

Prosecutors also launched an



inquiry into inciting racial hatred after Israeli athletes received 'discriminatory gestures'

during an Israel-Paraguay match. Tom Reuveny, a 24-year-old Israeli athlete who won a gold in

wind-surfing over the weekend, was among those who said he's received threats.

Politics "should be put aside' during the Games, he told AP, speaking during a memorial

Tuesday of the deadly attack that targeted the Israeli delegation at the 1972 Olympics in Munich, Germany. The September 5, 1972, assault by the Palestinian group Black September killed 11 Israelis and a police officer.

"I don't think any politics should be involved in sport, especially in the Olympic Games," Reuveny said. "Unfortunately, there is a lot of politics involved

— not in the Games — of the people who don't want us to compete and don't want us to be here. I've gotten quite a few messages and threats.'

While Israel has called for the Olympics to remain a neutral space, the Palestinian delegation has used the Games as a way to generate conversation about the day-to-day struggles of those in Gaza. The Israel-Hamas war has claimed more

than 39,000 Palestinian lives.

"The thing that really hurts me is that people are looking at Palestinians as just numbers now. The number of people that died. The number of people displaced," Palestinian American Olympic swimmer Valerie Tarazi told the AP Sunday.

"As athletes, we're here just as everyone else. We want to compete. As people, we have lives, ... We want to live in our homes, just like everyone else in the world," she added.

The world is coming together in Paris at a moment of global political upheaval, multiple wars, historic migration and a deepening climate crisis, all issues that have risen to the forefront

of conversation in the Olympics. Tuesday's memorial of the 1972 attack underscored how the Olympics have frequently found (themselves caught up in international crises that aren't directly related to sport.

HEARTBREAKING DISQUALIFICATION

India in shock, hails Vinesh

sad that what happened to her. She was overweight very small one. But the rules are rules and everything there and it's impossible not make the NENAD LALOVIC UNITED WORLD

Wrestler Vinesh Phogat, a gold hopeful at the Paris Olympics, suffered a heartbreak as she was disqualified from the event hours before her final bout. Her 'confirmed' silver medal also stands cancelled after her disqualification, which happened over her weight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: India was in a state of disbelief after Vinesh Phogat's shocking disqualification ahead of her 50kg wrestling final as people from all walks of life expressed their disappointment and frustration at the huge setback, calling it "cruel" and "biggest heartbreak" of the Paris Olympics.

Phogat was disqualified Wednesday from the Olympics after being found overweight ahead of her women's 50kg final here, leaving her medal-less within hours of coming close

Vijender cries sabotage

to an unparalleled gold.

The news sparked widespread anger as fans flooded the social media with messages supporting the athlete and many also questioned the "dictatorial sys-

"This is a cruel end to Vinesh Phogat's Olympic journey. She was unstoppable..," wrote a fan, while another added: "Biggest heartbreak of 2024 Olympics for India. Vinesh Phogat was thrown out of the Olympics due to being 100 grams overweight. The Indian lioness moving towards gold will not get any medal now. Heartbreak.

Another user wrote: "This is

and you got disqualified because you were few grams more than 50 kg. This is sad beyond words." Another user noted: "The

terrible and cruel. You prepare

for this day for the whole life

whole of India is in shock. Once again Vinesh is losing to the dictatorial system."

Phogat, who had dropped down to the 50kg weight class to compete at the Olympics, was found overweight by 100gm this

According to International rules, if any grappler is found overweight at the time of weigh-in then he or she will end up at the bottom of the final standings. Celebrities also expressed their anguish at the terrible news.

The sports fraternity also expressed their support for Phogat, who was taken to the polyclinic inside the Games village due to severe dehydration.

"I think it's (the) most unfortunate. Lalso think it's most unfair. I do hope that the authorities will take notice of it, take a strong response to this because this is not just the initial round," legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar said at an event in Mumbai.

"We're talking about the

world medal round and therefore this cannot and should not be taken lying down by anybody in India — whether it's the Indian Olympic Association or the government of India. I think we actually must be protesting very very strongly about this whole thing."

Rio Olympic bronze medal-list wrestler Sakshi Malik called it "devastating".

"My heart is nervous and troubled, what Vinesh has done is beyond imagination. This is perhaps the most devastating incident to happen to an Indian athlete in this Olympics. We can't even imagine what she might be going through. If it was possible, I would have given my medal to Vinesh," Malik

The 29-year-old had taken down defending champion Yui Susaki of Japan en route the finals Tuesday in a remarkable performance and was to face American Sarah Ann Hildebrandt in the summit bout

'It's part of the game'

Paris: "It's part of the game," a brave Vinesh Phogat told the Indian coaches who met her after her shock disqualification from the Paris Olympics for weighing 100g more than the permissible limit in the women's 50kg category here Wednesday.

Women's national coach Virender Dahiya and Manjeet Rani met the feisty wrestler, who had caused a flutter at the wrestling arena by beating world number one and de-

fending champion Yui Susaki in the opening round Tuesday. As the nation prepared to celebrate Vinesh's medal-win-

ning run -- she was assured of at-least a silver - Vinesh was disqualified when she could not ace the second weigh-in.

"It sent a shockwave through the wrestling contingent. The girls were feeling pretty low after the news broke. We met Vinesh and tried to console her. She was brave. She told us, 'it's hard luck that we missed the

game'," Dahiya said, sharing the details of their meeting. "Several IOA officials were

also there to meet her."

There was more bad news for Indian wrestling during the day when Antim Panghal made a first round exit in the women's 53kg, losing her opening bout by technical su-

"She just could not play her game, did not look in her element," said the coach

disqualification and Prime Minister Modi

take "appropriate action". Leaders of several parties,

On X, Modi said, "Vinesh, you

try proud, she said on X.

Govt asks IOA to take action



New Delhi: Wrestler Vinesh Phogat will always be a champion, said politicians across party lines as they came out in support of the grappler after her disqualification from the Paris Olympics, with the government asking the Indian Olympic Association to take "appropriate action" in the matter.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President

Droupadi Murmu described the setback as painful but said Phogat is a champion among champions for the more than 1.4 billion people of India and the nation's pride.

In a statement in the Lok Sabha, Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said the Indian Olympic Association lodged a strong protest with the United World Wrestling (UWW) over Phogat's

has asked IOA chief PT Usha to

including the Congress, demanded accountability be fixed and the decision leading to her disqualification be reviewed.

are a champion among champions! You are India's pride and an inspiration for each and every Indian." President Murmu said, While we all share her disappointment at the disqualification, she remains a champion in the hearts of 1.4 billion people. Phogat's extraordinary feats at the Paris Olympics have thrilled every Indian and done the coun-

The Congress urged the government and the IOA to make all efforts to appeal against Phogat's disqualification from the Olympics, with party leader Rahul tive category," Mandaviya said.

Gandhi expressing confidence that she will come back stronger to the wrestling arena. She is India's pride, the party said.

"She went through a lot. From protesting at the footpath for justice to reaching the pinnacle podium of the Olympics," he said, referring to Phogat being at the forefront of a lengthy protest alleging government in-

action against former Wrestling Federation of India head Brij

Bhushan

despair that I am Sharan Singh, experiencing. At the who was acsame time, I know that cused of sexual you epitomise harassment by resilience. It has women always been your wrestlers. nature to take Gandhi, who is the Leader of challenges head on. Opposition in **Come back stronger!** the Lok Sabha,

We are all rooting for NARENDRA MODI I PM

I wish words could

express the sense of

will strongly challenge this decision. "Vinesh is not one to give up, we are confident that she will come back stronger to the wrestling arena. You have al-

hoped the IOA

Vinesh," he said. In a statement in the Lok Sabha, Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviva said the government had provided all possible assistance to Phogat according to her requirement

ways made the country proud

which included personal staff. "Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat has been disqualified from the Paris Olympics due to being overweight by 100 gm. Vinesh was playing in the 50 kg category and her weight had to be 50 kg for the competition. According to the rules and regulations of UWW, for all competitions, weigh-ins are organised every morning for the respec-

History-maker

breaks for her. What more could she have done? Which other test?" he wondered.

aid it is shocking that Vinesh (50kg) was 100gm over in the weigh-in before an Olympic final. "I

extreme," the middle-weight (75kg) boxer told PTI. "And when I say sabotage I mean peop



The 22-year-old shooter won a bronze each in the women's 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team event, in which she had paired with Sarabjot Singh, to script Olympic *history for the country*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 7: Lifted on shoulders, garlanded and showered with rose petals - star pistol shooter Manu Bhaker's return to the country was a memorable affair as hundreds of supporters braved a steady drizzle to welcome her Wednesday after her historic feat of winning two medals in a single edition of the Olympics.

The Air India flight (AI 142), which brought Bhaker from Paris to Delhi, landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at around 9:20am, delayed by one hour.

Hundreds of people, who waited at the airport long before her arrival despite the morning drizzle in the city, accorded her and her coach Jaspal Rana an enthusiastic reception. The 22-year-old Bhaker won a

bronze each in the women's 10m air pistol and 10m air pistol mixed team event, in which she had paired with Sarabjot Singh, to script Olympic history for the country.

Before her, only British-Indian athlete Norman Pritchard had achieved the rare landmark for the country with his two silver medals in 200m sprint and 200m hurdles at the 1900 Olympics but this happened in the pre-Independence era.

The youngster was greeted with bouquets, garlands, and celebratory dhol after emerging from the airport exit. Rose petals were also showered on her and Rana as soon as they came out amid significant police presence to manage the crowd. Bhaker and Rana were eventually lifted on the shoul-

ders by the gathering. Manu will head back to Paris Saturday to participate in the closing ceremony Sunday where she will be one of India's flag-bearers.

Punjab CM visits Vinesh's home

Chandigarh: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Wednesday asked why the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) did not raise any objection after wrestler Vinesh Phogat was disqualified from the

Paris Olympics on being found overweight ahead of her women's 50 kg final bout. Mann met the family of Vinesh in Charkhi Dadri where he had gone to address a rally. Speaking to media, Mann said he came to

Vinesh's residence here. "We are sad," he said while referring to Vinesh's disqualification from the Paris Olympics. Praising Vinesh, Mann said she won three games in a day and she defeated strong contestants, including a defending champion. "Whose fault is this?" he asked on her disqualification. Meanwhile, Vinesh's uncle and Dronacharya awardee wrestling coach Mahavir Singh Phogat said the whole country is sad after she was disqualified from the Olympics. "There is nothing left to say. The entire country was hoping for a gold medal. Now she has been disqualified," said Phogat.

Spirited SL crush shaky India

WELLALAGE CONSIGNS INDIA TO 110-RUN DEFEAT WITH FIVE-WICKET HAUL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, August 7: The shockingly clueless Indian batting unit was strangled by crafty Sri Lankan spinners, led by fivewicket man Dunith Wellalage, as Rohit Sharma's men crashed to an embarrassing 110-run defeat in the third and final ODI here Wednesday.

Chasing a competitive 249 on a sharp turner at Premadasa, India were bowled out for a woeful 138 in 26.1 overs, and the new head coach Gautam Gambhir will have a few hard points to ponder early into his stint.

The left-arm spinner Wellalage, who hurt India with the bat till now, chose to bruise the visitors by ball taking five for 27 after opener Avishka Fernando made a well-paced 96 to carry Lanka to 248 for seven.

However, India had a rather good beginning, despite the early departure of Shubman Gill, to their chase, courtesy Rohit Sharma's breakneck 35 off 20 balls that included an 18-run over off Maheesh Theekshana. The runs cascaded through a

sequence of 6, 4, 4, 4 in the fourth over of the innings. But sweep, one of the favoured

shots of Rohit, brought the downfall of the Indian skipper. His attempt to play it off Wellalage ended in the hands of Kusal Mendis behind the stumps.

Once Rohit walked back, the rest of the Indian batters submerged into a whirlpool of confusion.

Virat Kohli (20) played for turn

when there was none and was ad-



the three-match series 2-0 after the first match ended in a tie, and this is the Islanders' first bilateral ODI series win over India since 1997

judged leg before to Wellalage. Rishabh Pant, who was playing his first ODI after his comeback from that horrific car crash, trotted down the track and was beaten in the air by Theekshana to eventually get stumped by Kusal.

Riyan Parag, who made his ODI debut while coming in place of Arshdeep Singh, offered no shot to a straight one from legspinner Jeffrey Vandersay to get bowled.

In between, Shreyas Iyer also fell leg before to Wellalage, taking the total number of lbw and clean bowled dismissals in this Indian innings to seven, and no other crumb of statistics will offer a clearer picture of the muddled Indian minds than that.

'We knew they are used to small grounds and good wickets in India. So they would struggle on a big Premadasa ground. We knew we could get an advantage

with some turn on the wicket, and we have good spinners,' Theekshana's post match TV comments with reference to tracks used during ODI World Cup, was like rubbing salt to the wound.

Before their spinners pushed Indian batters deep into trouble, Lanka managed to work through the Indian bowling through opener Avishka Fernando (96, 102 balls, 9x4, 2x6) and Kusal (59, 82b, 4x4).

India fought through an excellent spell of off-spin by Parag (3/54) but apart from Kuldeep Yaday (1/36) there was no real assistance for him.

OLYMPICS: INDIA Schedule - Day 13 Golf: Women's Individual:

Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar Athletics: Women's 100m hur-

dles Repechage Round: Jyothi Yarraji -- 2:05pm Men's javelin throw final:

Neeraj Chopra-- 11:55pm **Wrestling:** Men's 57kg freestyle 1/8 Finals: Aman Sehrawat --2:30pm

Women's 57kg freestyle 1/8 Finals: Anshu Malik -- 2:30pm **Hockey:** Men's Bronze medal match: India vs Spain -- 5:30pm

Swaminathan, Bagri make main draw

Mumbai: Vinay Swaminathan and Anurag Bagri won their respective third-round matches in senior snooker to qualify for the main draw of the Western India Billiards and Snooker Championships. Swaminathan potted steadily defeated Railways' Aditya Agrawal 4-0 (67-31, 47-16, 60-53, and 45-7), while Bagri got the better of Mahabaleshwar's Pankaj Kadam 4-0 (65-15, 58-41, 53-42, and 56-44). In second round, Gujarat's Parth Shah played well to defeat Mumbai's Nikhil Bhansali 4-2 (62-52, 59-14, 72-65, 52-65, 32-53, and 62-11).

Babar, Rizwan, Shaheen retained in Test squad

Lahore: Pakistan Wednesday dropped its plans to conduct a "major surgery" on the national team as it included senior players Babar Azam, Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Shah Afridi in the Test squad for the two-match series against Bangladesh. The trio was under the scanner, failing to perform in the T20 World Cup Cup in June, where Pakistan was eliminated in the opening round.

