

OPINION 8
THE BANGLADESH
CAULDRON IS BOILING

ANALYSIS 9
WATER CRISIS AND THE
BATTLE FOR RESOURCES

WORLD 10
JUDGE REJECTS TRUMP'S LATEST
DEMAND IN HUSH MONEY CASE

BHUBANESWAR, THURSDAY AUGUST 15, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹4

Established 1864



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

78th CELEBRATION OF
INDIA
INDEPENDENCE

DADLS-25



VIKSIT ODISHA: DEVELOPMENT REDEFINED

- Honouring the religious sentiment of Odia people, four gates of the SriMandir, Puri opened for pilgrims and devotees.
- 500 Crore Corpus fund earmarked for maintenance & safety of Sri Jagannath Temple.
- Provision of ₹ 200 Crore to espouse the cause of 'Odia Asmita'.
- People's Budget, 2024-25 makes a perceptible provision of ₹10 thousand Crore for improvement in women's living standard.
- The Budget 2024-25 allocates ₹17,942 Crore for women, a rise of 188 percent compared to the previous one.
- Chapter heralded for creation of avenues in next five years for massive employment of the youth of the State.
- Upto 10% reservation for employment of Agniveer in all Uniformed Services of the State.
- Allocation of ₹5 thousand Crore in 'Samrudh Krushak Yojana' and purchase of paddy from farmers at ₹ 3100 per quintal.
- The State turning out to be a Hub in the production of Millet.
- 'One Nation-One Ration' Card for the non-resident workers.
- Commitment for multi-pronged welfare of labourers.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission** ensures availability of pure drinking water at households and public places.
- Improvement of Hats in tribal dominated Gram Panchayats and collection & sale of forest & horticultural produce.
- Holistic development of Scheduled Tribe through implementation of PESA.
- Qualitative & extensive health coverage under **Pradhan Mantree Ayushman-Bharat Jana Arogya Yojana** and **Gopabandhu Jana Arogya Yojana** and free of cost access to diagnostics & treatment.
- Establishment of **Handicraft Design Bank** to skill the traditional artisans.
- Odisha's sponsorship of Indian Hockey Team continues until 2036.
- 'PM-Shree' and 'Godabarish Model Primary School' Schemes introduced to attain excellence in school infrastructure and academics.
- 'Madho Singh Hata Kharcca Yojana' brought into operation to reduce drop-out rate among the Scheduled Tribe students.

Information & Public Relations Department
Government of Odisha

iprodisha IPR_Odisha iprodisha



SC ruling on retrospective tax on mining Odisha to be benefited by Rs 60K cr

BIJAY MISHRA
■ BHUBANESWAR
Odisha will be benefited at least by around Rs 60,000 crore due to the historical judgement on Aug 14 by the Supreme Court, which ruled that States can tax mineral rights and mineral-bearing land retrospectively, dismissing the Union's plea for prospective application to avoid burdening mining firms.
The Supreme Court rejected

the argument that its July 25 judgment upholding the powers of the States to tax mineral rights should be given prospective effect only. However, the court clarified that the levy of tax by the States, based on the judgment, should not operate for a period before April 1, 2005. The CJI said, "While the States may levy tax or revenue for the period pertaining to Entries 49 and 50 of List 2 in terms of the law laid down in MADA, the demand of tax

shall not operate on transactions made prior to 1 April, 2005."
The court also said there should be no levy of interest or penalty for the demand made for the period before July 25, 2024.
The Union Government earlier argued that the SC's July 25 ruling could impose a financial burden of Rs 70,000 to Rs 80,000 crore on public sector units (PSUs) if applied retrospectively.

Shares of metal companies are under pressure with the Nifty Metal Index down nearly 3 per cent on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) in Wednesday's intra-day trade after the Supreme Court permitted the State Governments to impose taxes on mining and related activities retrospectively. President, Jana Adhikar Parishada Bijay Parida while welcoming the SC verdict, said that Odisha will be benefited by it.

Har Ghar Tiranga CM participates in padyatra in city

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Wednesday participated in the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign padyatra held from the Lingaraj Temple to the Mukteswar Temple in the city on the eve of the Independence Day.
Majhi said the National Flag is a matter of honour and pride for every citizen. The Tricolour was a mute witness to the sacrifice, dedication and struggle of freedom fighters.
The CM said that in 2022,

on occasion of the celebration of the 76th Independence Day, the Central Government had started the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign to invoke nationalism among the people of the country. On the appeal of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the people participated in the campaign and unfurled the National Flag in their houses. If all unite and work together, success can be achieved in life and everybody can contribute to the success of the community and the country, said Majhi.

In city Man caught with 2 girls in hotel room by wife

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
High drama prevailed at a hotel in the Patia area here after a woman caught her husband red-handed with two girls in a room on Wednesday.
Sources said the woman, who had suspicion over her husband's activities, took the help of the Infocity police after getting information about the man's immoral act.
The woman along with a police team reached the hotel in the wee hours. And the hotel room's door was opened. Some objectionable items and liquor bottles were found during the raid by police.
The woman in a complaint stated that her husband was caught with two girls from a

hotel room. She further claimed that her husband had earlier identified himself as an engineer. Now, he was saying that he had changed his job.
Following the incident, police have started an investigation to ascertain whether a sex racket was operating from the hotel as the two girls from West Bengal have been rescued from the room.
The woman's husband and the two girls have been detained by the police and further investigation was on.
As per sources, the husband of the woman is a rapper and some cases are registered against him at the Nandankanan and Chandrasekharpur police stations in the city.

Kolkata doctor rape, murder AIIMS docs demand death penalty for accused



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
In a display of solidarity, hundreds of doctors of the AIIMS Bhubaneswar suspended all non-emergency services and staged protest against the rape and murder of a 31-year-old junior doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College Hospital.
Slogans of 'save doctors', 'girls are not objects', 'stop rape terrorism', 'Nyay Do Insaaf Do' echoed in the premises of the institute.
However, the doctors made sure that the emergency, OPD and IPD services were not af-

ected due to the strike, informed Dr Prabhakar Tripathy, Additional Superintendent, AIIMS Bhubaneswar.
"Our demand is that doctors or any other medical staffs should be protected at the workplace. Luckily, security arrangement in our hospital is very tight," he added.
The protesting doctors demanded that the accused be hanged to death.
"We have to work for 36 hours, but we do not have separate rooms even for changing. So, we demand the security arrangements to be further tightened," said a woman doctor.

'Food tourism can boost State's economy'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
Caterer Association of Odisha (CAO) leaders highlighted the importance of ethnic food during a three-day 5th Federation of All India Caterers (FAIC) Conference held at Hyderabad from August 9 to 11.
"Food tourism, also known as culinary tourism or gastronomy tourism, offers a multitude of benefits for travellers including opportunities to try unique and authentic dishes of a region. Also, it provides them an opportunity to immerse themselves in local or street food culture," said CAO president Binaya Bhusan Patnaik.
Food is considered a vital component of the tourism experience. Dining out is common among tourists and



"food is believed to rank alongside climate, accommodation and scenery" in importance to tourists.
According to the World Food Travel Association (WFTA), 80% of travellers research food and drink options while travelling to a new destination. Moreover, the organisation states that 53% of these travellers consider themselves 'culinary travellers', added Patnaik.
However tourism is booming in Odisha and has a diversified range of delicacies from the sweets like the 'Chhena Poda' to the Salepur Rasgolla to the Dahi

ences that expose them to new tastes, textures and traditions."
FAIC president Narendra Bhai Somani said, "According to the WFTA, food tourists spend about 25% of their travel budget on food and beverages. This can mean an increase in profits for a local community as well as the local government's budget due to the taxes imposed on the goods purchased by tourists. This rise in revenue can afford local governments the ability to invest in marketing to tourists, which in turn can boost profits for local shops, restaurants, hotels and transportation services."
An increase in culinary tourism can also instill in locals cultural pride and help ensure unemployment rates remain low, especially in rural areas with low economic activity.

Group loan menace Woman throws son into river before taking plunge

PNS ■ CUTTACK
After throwing her 10-year-old son, a woman jumped into the Chitrotpala river in the Nemala area of Cuttack district on Wednesday. While the body of the minor was later recovered from the river, his mother was still missing.
The deceased was identified as Sk Tairuddin.
As per reports, the woman identified as Suhana Parwin first threw Tairuddin into the

river and later jumped as well in a bid to end her life. "My mother had brought us for blood test of my younger brother. First, she threw my brother into the river and jumped after him," said deceased Tairuddin's sister.
SK Abbas Uddin, brother of the missing woman, said, "Suhana was worried as she had taken some group loans along with another sister of mine. She had taken seven to eight loans and did not listen to me. The group members were demanding money."
Efforts were on by Fire Service personnel to trace the missing woman till filing of the report.

DADLS-22

୭୮ ତମ

ରାଜ୍ୟସ୍ତରୀୟ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ଦିବସ

ସ୍ଥାନ : ମହାତ୍ମା ଗାନ୍ଧୀ ମାର୍ଗ, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର
୧୫ ଅଗଷ୍ଟ, ୨୦୨୪ ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନ ୯ ଘଟିକା

ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ମାନ୍ୟବର ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ
ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ

ଏହି ଉତ୍ସବରେ ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଅତିଥି ଭାବେ
ଜାତୀୟ ପତାକା ଉତ୍ତୋଳନ କରି ଅଭିବାଦନ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରିବେ ।

ଜନସାଧାରଣ ରାଜ୍ୟସ୍ତରୀୟ ସ୍ୱାଧୀନତା ଦିବସ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ଯୋଗ ଦେବାକୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ ।

ନିର୍ଦ୍ଦେଶକ
ସୂଚନା ଓ ଲୋକସମ୍ପର୍କ ବିଭାଗ

ସମସ୍ତ ବୈଦ୍ୟୁତିକ ଏବଂ ସୂଚନା ଓ ଲୋକସମ୍ପର୍କ ବିଭାଗର ସାମାଜିକ ଗଣମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ସିଧା ପ୍ରସାରଣ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ ହେବ ।

IPR_odisha IPRodisha IPRodisha

OIPR-15001/13/0063/2425

HITTING THE BULL'S EYE CM must pick honest bureaucrats to ensure good governance

The Mohan Majhi administration has to outshine the Naveen government for respectable survival. The BJD regime biggies had gone berserk in the last stint only because they had imagined that the BJD was forever. Smartest poll forecasters too had predicted the same thing. Poll survey masters employed by the BJD bosses as well as the in-house analysts turned out to be soothsayers who never warned the party guys about any doom looming large only with a view to looting money. Consequently, the BJD lost shamefully. The social media was adequately tipped by the rebels in the fold that the party was heading for a massive defeat. The social media got busy roasting the so-called front-liners mercilessly. Viral videos to that effect turned the people against the BJD and eventually the party had to bite dust. The once-invincible, demigod Naveen too lost to an ordinary opponent miserably. Once portrayed as a matchless leader, he failed to make history by breaking the record set by former Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling.
In a surprise move, as always, the BJP high command installed Mohan Majhi as Chief Minister. Majhi, a former schoolteacher, is a perfect gentleman but a known political greenhorn. He is still groping in the dark as 'statecraft' is a completely strange subject for him. No wonder, he began his innings on a populist mode. He set up public hearing 'durbars', opened the four doors of the Jagannath Temple, sent a team to probe the treasure trove of this shrine and gave away 500 crore rupees from public coffers to the wealthy temple, all of which have not gone well with the masses at all. The wisest thing he did was to put the highly-experienced Arabinda Padhee as the Chief Adminis-



BISWARAJ PATNAIK

trator of the great temple. But strangely again, the BJP government has dumped Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja on the temple administration in the capacity of a working chairman of the temple as if the Gajapati king with Arabinda as principal aide is useless. The Chief Secretary of a State is an extremely busy person managing and monitoring general administration of the whole State by keeping his bureaucratic colleagues happily on toes so as to have schemes and projects implemented well on time and public delivery made adeptly. Most conscious people do not appreciate the idea of having the chief bureaucrat wasting time to streamline the relatively lesser temple administration.
On the other side, the soft-hearted Chief Minister Majhi has thus far not spoken a word against Governor Raghubar Das' errant son, nor has he ordered a probe against him. The head of State administration has to ensure the rule of law first, and ruthlessly so. The JB Patnaik government had crumbled because of this critical issue; the popular Naveen administration fell from grace months ago only because the social media awakened the masses about a very few wrongful acts and the crooks behind them.
The Majhi administration has great tasks ahead. Poverty has to slide further down. Employment opportunities for the

youths have to improve a great deal by attracting serious corporate investors to set up shops in an environment of 'ease of doing business'. The Naveen administration had done quite much by way of putting in efforts. But as the people get to realise today, not much had ever materialised. Officials made more merry by travelling abroad as tourists than bringing in business to improve quality of life of the distressed.
The Odisha boss has to have colleagues talking sanely rather than irritating the masses with harangues. Deputy Chief Parida must undergo intensive training to talk like a learned minister. She is new and not to be blamed so early for little mistakes in her public communication, but she has to be alerted on the matter sooner than usual. The other deputy chief KanakVardhan does not seem to be so enthusiastic as he was during the coalition terms.
What has impressed the masses most about Majhi is his corruption-busting moves. After a long time, real 'big fish' have been netted by the State Vigilance in rare massive raids. The BJD leaders had invariably made huge noise about 'zero tolerance' to corruption, but in the last term when most of the party biggies had turned arrogant, the corruption level had reached an all-time peak across all departments, particularly revenue, police, excise, municipal and statutory authorities domains.
All the same, that the Mohan Majhi team members are all saintly and above board cannot be said at the moment as the administration has not settled down yet to make moves comfortably to be evaluated flawlessly. Suresh Pujari, the revenue boss, is roaring 'action' against encroachers, irrespective of the offenders' status. He is a serious guy who seems to know the crook-fixing tricks. Majhi must

extend maximum support to such ministers.
Incidentally, in many towns, there are liquor shops on drains and encroached slum dwellings which have no 'record of right' nor urban holding testimonials. In Puri, across the rail station, there is a liquor shop running from a slum dwelling on the drain. How the Excise Department officials granted permission is big mystery. Such shops are aplenty, all running on the strength of bribe money. 'Food inspection', 'weights and measures', 'drug inspection', 'civil supplies', 'commercial tax' and 'forest department' field officials have a rollicking time. The BDOs are ninety-five per cent corrupt as they have robust bribe-moving chain systems in place. The tehsildars as land record generators and managers too make money on an automated bribe-moving machinery. They don't have to ask for the dirty 'dough' as that reaches them routinely. Majhi has to pick a few stinking big fish from these communities for relocating them in prison cells.
Lastly, the Majhi administration has declared proudly that no more liquor shop will be seen in Odisha. That is vague talk. Majhi should better promise clearly to bring down the number of shops particularly in the rural and suburban areas where there are more liquor outlets than medicine stores. That is the big disturbing reason why even school-going teenagers have begun consuming alcohol. The devilish, unemployed youths working for rogue political creatures around their places initiate these impressionistic minds into alcohol consumption especially during election times.
Mohan Majhi, doubtlessly an uncomplicated simple soul, has to pick trustworthy, honest and skilled bureaucrats to guide him. Then only can good governance happen.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

OPINION 6

THE BANGLADESH CAULDRON IS BOILING

WORLD 8

THAI PM DISMISSED FOR BREACH OF ETHICS

MONEY 10

SENSEX SNAPS 2-DAY LOSING STREAK

BHUBANESWAR, THURSDAY AUGUST 15, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹4

Established 1864



8 CELEBRATION OF INDIA INDEPENDENCE

'Take proper action in Black Rose episode'

Home Dept writes to DG of Police

PNS BHUBANESWAR

Following demand for a CBI investigation into the mysterious sinking of the Mongolian vessel MV Black Rose, the Home Department of Odisha has written a letter to the DG of Police to take proper action as per the provision in law. The development came after RTI activist Pradeep Pradhan appealed for a CBI probe into the sinking of the ship off the Paradip Port.



Pradhan made the appeal during the grievance hearing of Chief Minister Mohan Majhi. Pradhan had sought urgent intervention of the Odisha Government to resolve the issue in the greater interest of the State. As per reports, the ship had sunk near the Paradip Port on

September 9, 2009. The vessel was allegedly carrying 23,847 tonnes of iron ore and 920 tonnes of furnace oil to China. With no one claiming the cargo on the ship, it led to speculations that the iron ore worth crores of rupees was being smuggled abroad. While 26 among the 27 core mem-

bers were rescued, the chief engineer of the ship died. It was alleged by the Opposition that some powerful BJD leaders are involved in the case. Though CBI inquiry into the incident was demanded many times and intervention of the Orissa High Court was sought over the matter, the previous government had allegedly suppressed the issue. However, after the seriousness shown by the Mohan Majhi government over the matter, the next course of action by the Police DG remains to be watched.

Nilagiri Deputy Collector in Vigilance net

For 'embezzling' govt funds worth Rs 1 cr

PNS BHUBANESWAR

Vigilance officials on Wednesday conducted simultaneous raids at several places linked to Nilagiri Deputy Collector Parikhit Jena on the charge of amassing movable and immovable properties disproportionate to his known sources of income. A 30-member team of Vigilance conducted the raids at



his residence, office and a rented house in Nilagiri. As per initial reports, the raids were being conducted at six places linked to Jena including two places in Kaptipada, two places

in Udala and two places in Nilagiri. Apart from his disproportionate assets, Jena has been accused of bungling government funds worth more than Rs 1 crore. Originally, hailing from Bhadrak, Jena was the BDO of Mayurbhanj before being posted as the Deputy Collector of Nilagiri, Baleswar district. During his stint at Nilagiri, he allegedly embezzled government money worth over Rs 1 crore. Important documents,

bank statements and other papers were seized during the raids. Till the last report came in, the raids were underway and efforts were on to trace the involvement of other officials in the bungling of the money along with Jena.

Holiday Notice
August 15, Independence Day, being a holiday in the offices of The Pioneer, Bhubaneswar the next edition of the paper will appear on August 17, 2024.

WITH THE RAYS OF THE SUN, LET'S LIGHT UP ODISHA'S PATH TO A SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW.

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!

EMBRACE THE BENEFITS OF SOLAR POWER:

- Lower electricity bills
- Lesser carbon emissions
- Sustainable and greener tomorrow

Register for PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in 3 simple steps:

- Register online at pmsuryaghar.gov.in
- Apply for rooftop solar after approval.
- Get subsidy money through your bank account within 30 days of installation.

Scan the QR code to register for Solar Rooftop or visit pmsuryaghar.gov.in

For You, With You, Always

TPC@DL | TPN@DL | TPS@DL | TPW@DL
(Joint Venture of Tata Power and Government of Odisha)

PATANJALI®

Our aim on the 78th anniversary of Independence

Let us pledge to make the country completely healthy, cultured and extremely prosperous by giving it economic freedom, educational freedom, medical freedom, cultural and ideological freedom and freedom from diseases and addictions.

Economic freedom- Every year, foreign companies loot thousands of millions of rupees from the country and remit it abroad. On the other hand, all the profits generated by Patanjali are meant for the service of the country.

Freedom of education is being ensured by imparting modern education along with education of Sanatan Dharma under the aegis of Bharatiya Shiksha Board. Also we are running the world's best Patanjali Acharyakulam and Gurukulam to free the country from the education system introduced by Macaulay.

To make the society free from Diseases, Addictions and all kinds of Evils and Illnesses, lakhs of Patanjali activists are selflessly serving humanity by giving free yoga training.

To bring about Medical Freedom, we are conducting scientific research on the knowledge obtained from great sages like Charak, Sushrut, Dhanvantari and Patanjali. Also, we have established the world's best-integrated treatment centers Patanjali Wellness, Yoggram, and Niramayam which are helping crores of people become disease-free and healthy.

Ideological and cultural freedom is being brought about by introducing eternal values, ideals and principles of Sanatan Dharma as everyone's lifestyle in the course of propagating Sanatan Dharma as the Dharma of the epoch.

Boycott foreign products, adopt Swadeshi

Dental Care Country's No. 1 Truthpaste and Dant Kanti Fresh, the new avatar of freshness.

Hair Care Products provide natural nutrition with the power of herbs to stop hair fall and occurrence of dandruff etc.

Personal Care Have naturally glowing skin with products having properties of aloe vera, turmeric, rose etc.

Food Products Range comprises country's No. 1 Cow milk biscuits, healthy cookies and noodles without trans fats and refined flour, country's No. 1 cow ghee, mustard oil, Rice Bran oil and other healthy products.

Health Care There is no ban on any Patanjali medicines. All our medicines are available at Patanjali centers and major stores.

Home Care Boycott phenyl etc., and adopt Patanjali's indigenous and satvik products to contribute to the service of the country.

Rangellunda Airport Locked gate, cattle grazing around stun Min

As he came for review of expansion work
RAJEEV RATHAN
BRAHMAMPUR



entrance secured with a lock and cattle freely roaming around the area.

Minister Jena waited for about 30 minutes, expecting officials from the Roads and Buildings Department or the police to arrive, but no one turned up. Frustrated by the lack of presence from concerned officials, the Minister began interacting with local

residents who had gathered at the site. He reassured them that the airport expansion work would be completed within the stipulated timeline and that the department would ensure the operation of flights with increased seating capacity from the airport.

Notably, Rangellunda Airport, originally built as Bhanjabihar Airfield during

World War II, was transferred to the State Government in 2018. Earlier this year, on March 5, a 9-seater flight service between Bhubaneswar and Brahmampur was launched, with non-scheduled flights operating twice a week.

Despite the initial enthusiasm, the flights often carried only one passenger. The State Government has allocated Rs

31.57 crore for the airport's expansion, with the construction work beginning on December 27. The project is expected to be completed by December 26 this year.

However, the Minister expressed concerns over the absence of departmental officials at the site, which he feared could lead to delays and financial mismanagement. He emphasized the importance of completing the project on time to prevent any wastage of public funds.

Flight operations have been suspended since July, with the next six months expected to be crucial as the airport is poised for a relaunch after the expansion is completed.

QR code for payments in S'pur Rly Dvn

To make transactions smoother for passengers
PNS ■ SAMBALPUR



Passengers in the Sambalpur Railway Division could have the convenience of scanning QR codes for payments while purchasing tickets at various stations. The new initiative, introduced by the Sambalpur Division of East Coast Railway, aims to promote digital payments and make transactions smoother for passengers.

The QR code display services have been installed at ticket booking counters across all stations in the division. The facility of UPI payment through QR codes is being

enabled for all Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) counters, providing a fast and cashless payment option. The installation of specially procured QR code display devices is currently underway and is expected to be completed by August 15.

As per a Press release issued by Sambalpur Division, by the end of August, all Passenger Reservation System (PRS) counters will also be equipped with QR code-based UPI payment options. The initiative is expected to enhance the efficiency of the ticketing process, offering passengers a quick and convenient payment method while reducing reliance on cash.

It further stated that the refund process will also be streamlined, ensuring that it is both cashless and swift. The move aligns with the vision of Digital India, making railway ticketing in the Sambalpur Division truly cashless.

The Division requested passengers to utilise the new facility for a smoother and more efficient ticketing experience.

B'deshi infiltrators suspicion Bengali labourers attacked in Jagatsinghpur



2 arrested
KAHNU NANDA
JAGATSINGHPUR

A few Hindu right-wing activists assaulted a group of Bengali-speaking daily labourers claiming that they were Bangladeshi infiltrators, at Khaerabasti village under Naugaon block, 15km away from here.

Police sources said that an FIR has been lodged against the leader of the group in connection with the incident which occurred two days ago. Meanwhile, two of the attackers have been arrested and forwarded to court, and a SUV has been seized from their possession allegedly used for the crime. The victims are not Bangladeshi, informed Naugaon police station IIC Sanghamitra Nayak.

The arrested miscreants were identified as Papu Das, a

resident of Alanahat village and Devi Prashad Mishra, hailing from Kansa village under Naugaon block.

Reports said that these Bengali-speaking people had been working in a rice mill near a Naugaon village for the last six months. On Sunday evening, a few of them including women and children were returning to West Bengal in a Kolkata-bound bus, when all of a sudden, a group of right-wing activists intercepted the bus at Khaerabasti village on Naugaon - Jagatsinghpur road and attacked them. Later, they fled the spot. Locals shifted the injured to the Naugaon Hospital for treatment.

According to police, the rice mill where the victims had been working had hired them. They were returning to their native home in West Bengal and had no connection with the on-going political turmoil in Bangladesh.

Auto driver held for raping minor girl

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

The Pattamundai Rural police on Tuesday arrested an auto-rickshaw driver on the charge of raping a Class-II girl of a private school, said Pattamundai SDPO Khyamasagar Panda on Wednesday.

The arrested was identified as Pratap Malik (48) alias Bodhia, a resident of the Kathiapada area in the district.

According to police sources, the eight-year-old victim, who

hails from Aul block, was staying at her uncle's house in Badapada. On Sunday evening, Bodhia asked the girl to drop her at her uncle's house in her auto-rickshaw. When she refused, he lured the victim with chocolates and took her to his house and raped her.

After returning home, the girl narrated her ordeal to her grandmother.

Later, her mother lodged an FIR with police, following which a probe was conducted and the accused was arrested.

In Ramguda Sanctuary village Awareness drive held to highlight jumbos' safety

By Sabuj Bahini
RAJEEV RATHAN
BRAHMAMPUR

While observing the "World Elephant Day" on Monday, Brahmampur's Sabuj Bahini organised an awareness programme in Langaladei village, near the Ramguda Elephant Sanctuary in Kukudakhandi Block under Brahmampur Forest Range.

The event aimed to educate young children about the importance of elephants in maintaining biodiversity and the critical need for their protection. The programme featured

various activities, including drawing competitions, poetry recitals and quizzes, all designed to instill an early understanding of the crucial role elephants play in the ecosystem. The children learned about the challenges elephants face in the wild and the dire consequences of their decline on natural balance.

While the natural death rate of elephants remains consistent, the number of fatalities due to human activities such as train accidents, electrocution, and illegal poaching for ivory continues to rise. The trend poses a severe threat to

the species, whose presence in nature is vital to maintaining ecological harmony.

A poignant example highlighted during the event was the tragic case in Kerala, where a pregnant elephant was killed after consuming food laced with explosives. The heinous act underscores the urgent need for greater awareness and stronger protective measures for wildlife. The speakers at the event stressed that such acts against nature have far-reaching consequences, including natural disasters like landslides, which have caused significant loss of life in the same area.

Coordinated by Sabuj Bahini secretary Sagar Prasad Patra, the drive gave a call to protect wildlife and preserve nature. Prakriti Bandhu awardee Banumali Pradhan, along with Rabintra Sahana and Anganwadi teacher Rita Sahu, emphasized the importance of instilling these values in the next generation. They urged the community to join the cause and work towards safeguarding the natural habitat of elephants, particularly in areas like the Ramguda Elephant Sanctuary, where these majestic creatures are increasingly threatened.

INTUC State meet 'Include all workers in ECIC, EPF purview'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The INTUC State Working Committee meeting was held on August 9 here where many important resolutions were taken.

The committee demanded to enroll all workers in ESIC and EPF schemes and continue them till the workers' retirement.

The minimum pension of the EPF linked person be enhanced to Rs 9,000 with DA, it demanded, adding that the Central Government should immediately take a decision to restore the old pension scheme.

In Odisha many contract, casual, NMR and security personnel are working in NTPC, Coal India, Nalco and many private organizations. But they are not included in social security schemes like ESIC and



EPF. The committee demanded that all workers be covered under the schemes. The committee also demanded that the Odisha Government as the principal employer should immediately deposit Rs 1,900 crore EPF contribution in respect of the Cesco workers.

INTUC national vice president Dr Rama Chandra Khuntia

presided over the meeting.

The committee welcomed the appointment of MP Rahul Gandhi as the Leader of Opposition of the Lok Sabha. The committee also demanded for early long term settlement for SAIL workers and General Insurance Corporation employees.

These apart, the committee demanded to reopen all cooperative spinning mills, sugar

mills and withdrawal of the four Labour codes. Among others, the meeting was attended by INTUC State general secretary Kishore Jena, Prasant Behera, Soubhagya Pradhan, vice president Madan Mohan Dhal, Prasanta Mohapatra, Shyam Sunder Mohapatra, Debasis Ghosh, joint general secretary Satyabrata Nayak, Nirmal Samal and Pranati Mishra.

200-foot National Flag in Brahmampur



PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR

About 350 children, instructors and over 200 members of the Rotary Club paraded here with a 200-foot-long by 4-foot-wide National Flag.

The organisers described it as a modest start towards promoting patriotism and raising public knowledge of the significance of Independence Day.

Rotary Club of Berhampur president RL Tarun and zonal chair Mihir Ranjan Panigrahi said, "We also aim at educating people about the sacrifices of our heroes for independence."

Holding the Tricolour above their heads, students and

Rotarians shouted slogans "Bharat Mata ki Jai," "Vande Mataram," and "Jai Hind".

A musical band playing patriotic songs led the march, which started from the Khallikote University main gate and crossed Old Bus Stand before its return. It took 10 joints in every 20 feet to stitch the flag which was arranged by Rotary Club's District Governor Yagnasis Mohapatra.

The procession was organised by Rotary Clubs of Berhampur, Rotary Club of Berhampur East, Rotary Club Central and Rotary Club of Berhampur Innovative in association with Interact Club of DAV, Sankalp, Inner Wheel Club Berhampur, Rotaract Club of Veddyash and SIMS.

In Kandhamal Maoist camp busted after encounter

PNS ■ PHULBANI

A Maoist camp was unearthed and several explosive devices were recovered by police after an exchange of fire with the ultras at a forest in Kandhamal district on Wednesday.

Acting on inputs about the rebels' presence, a police team launched an operation in the Kandhamal-Kalahandi border areas in the afternoon, sources said.

During the operation, the police team spotted some armed ultras in tents, surrounded by trees and dense bushes, in the forest under the Baliguda police station. A gun battle ensued after the ultras opened fire on spotting the



security personnel.

However, the Red rebels managed to escape taking advantage of thick vegetation and reduced visibility due to rain.

During search in the camp, a detonator and other articles to assemble IEDs were found in one bag while the rest four bags would be opened following the safety protocols. Search operations have been intensified in the area following the encounter.

Hasina's imperial fall thanks to high degree of authoritarianism

India shares its largest border (4,096 km) with Bangladesh across five States, such as WB, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram. Beginning with its liberation in 1971, in which former PM Indira Gandhi had the biggest hand, Mujib and Indira had signed a Land Border Agreement in 1974. While it was ratified by Bangladesh immediately, the Indian Parliament approved the agreement as a constitutional amendment as late as 2015. An exchange of 162 enclaves, adverse possessions, and a 6.5 km border demarcation followed. Water sharing has been a contentious issue, with 56 rivers straddling the two countries. Despite putting in place a Joint River Committee (JRC) in 1976, the Ganga Water Agreement (1996), and Fani Water Agreement (2019) have come through after stiff opposition from West Bengal and Mamata Banerjee. 21 million Bangladeshis people depend on the Teesta river. This is unlike our relationship with Pakistan with whom we have not yet settled the border



SATYA NARAYAN MISHRA

and have a tumultuous relationship.

There are interesting contours to our economic relationship with Bangladesh. We have a huge balance of trade surplus with Bangladesh of around \$8 billion. India exports raw cotton, non-retail cotton yarn, and electricity and Bangladesh is the beehive of ready-made garments, which constitutes 81% of their exports, of which 80% goes to the USA and Europe. 20 million people work in the textile sector, of which 66% are women,

33% are illiterate. The wages are ridiculously low. The public policy on textiles has undergone major transformation from the policy of nationalisation which was introduced by Mujibur. Ershad unshackled the textile industry by bringing in a New Industrial Policy in 1983 which denationalised the sector, created Export Processing Zones and encouraged FDI into the sector. The policy was subsequently followed by subsequent Governments, transcending political divides. A cocktail of raw cotton from India, cheap women labour, and liberal imports of high-end fabrics generate \$ 41 billion out of the textile sector. Another shining example of an underdeveloped country becoming a cynosure of ready-made garments is Ethiopia, which keeps a keen eye on the success story of Bangladesh.

The other fascinating area is the energy and power sector, where India has invested handsomely. In 2010, India signed the Power Transmission Agreement for supply of 1,320 Megawatt power each at Chattogram and Khulna under a

JV between the Power Grid Corporation of India and Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB). The character of power transmission arrangement under the aegis of a PSU has changed to a private sector, with Adani Power signing a long-term pact with BPDB for supplying 1,496 MW of electricity from its coal-based power plant at Godda in Jharkhand. Both Reliance Power and Adani Power have invested \$5 billion in Bangladesh. China has become a major competitor with India in Bangladesh, with an annual trade volume of \$ 28 billion as against \$10 billion from India. India has provided a line of credit of \$8 billion in the last eight years for the development of roads, railways, shipping, and ports. India has been unable to match China's big-ticket infrastructure spending, particularly in developing deep sea ports, investing in Bangladesh with soft long-term loans for infrastructure development.

Bangladesh has outstripped India in several human development

indicators lately. As per the HDR (2024), life expectancy stands at 73.7 as against India's 67.7. In the area of education, while the Mean Years of Schooling is 7.4, it's 6.6 in case of India. The HDI score of India has improved by 13% in 12 years (2010-2022) with a score of .644. The improvement is 20% for the comparable period, with a score of .67. Prof Amartya Sen had also observed in his book 'Uncertain Glory' that Bangladesh's record in improving education, health, and gender sensitivity is far more credible than that of India. However, post the pandemic, the economy of Bangladesh is in dire straits, with 30 M in a country of 130 million jobsless, FE reserves dipping by 44% and Taka depreciating by 22%. The situation has been further roiled with Hasina reserving 30% of Government jobs for families of freedom fighters, a subterfuge to give jobs to Awami League loyalists. The High Court, which upheld the Government's decision is seen to be complicit with the Government, leading to widespread agitation by

the students. The indiscriminate firing leading to the death of nearly 450 students has been like putting fire into a tinderbox, which has led to widespread arson and fleeing of Hasina to Delhi.

Hasina can be credited for a decade of exceptional economic turnaround, with a huge boost of infrastructure, FDI inflow from countries like China and India, and women's education and health, besides being the top garment exporters of the world. Its iconic 6.5 km long bridge on the Padma river will connect its 21 districts, boosting connectivity and GDP further. Despite all these development improvements, the growing democratic deficit, increasing authoritarianism, ruthless manner of suppressing peaceful protests, extra-judicial killing, and rigging of elections had all the portents for Hasina's hubris ending up with her present nemesis. She had no choice but India, where she along with her sister was given shelter by India when her father was brutally assassinated with his family in 1975

Ironically, the Interim Government is now being headed by the widely respected Nobel Laureate Mohd Yunus, against whom Hasina ran a tirade to defame and detain under many trumped-up charges. Yunus is the father of the microfinance experiment, who set up the Grameen Bank. The experiment has salvaged the lives of 7.4 million borrowers, of whom 94% are women, who have now become entrepreneurs.

It is often said that democracy is antithetical to development. It is also said without a high degree of authoritarianism, it's impossible for a developing economy to achieve high growth in quick time. However, Hasina's fall from grace should be a timely warning to the Government of India that high growth cannot be a bulwark against serious democratic deficits like authoritarianism, intolerance to criticism, denigration of minorities, and crony capitalism.

(Dr Misra is a Professor Emeritus)

OPINION 8 THE BANGLADESH CAULDRON IS BOILING

ANALYSIS 9 WATER CRISIS AND THE BATTLE FOR RESOURCES

WORLD 10 JUDGE REJECTS TRUMP'S LATEST DEMAND IN HUSH MONEY CASE

BHUBANESWAR, THURSDAY AUGUST 15, 2024; PAGES 12 ` 4

Established 1864



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

78th CELEBRATION OF INDIA INDEPENDENCE

PATIENTS SUFFER AS DOCS CONTINUE STRIKE



Doctors stage a protest over rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor in Kolkata, at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, in New Delhi on Wednesday

STAFF REPORTER n NEW DELHI

Several hospitals, including the All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) and Safdarjung, continued their strike on Wednesday in protest against the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata. The Resident Doctors' Associations of AIIMS, Vardhman Mahavir Medical College (VMMC) and Safdarjung Hospital, Ram Manohar Lohia, and Indira

Gandhi Hospital continued the strike for a third day on the trot, shutting down OPDs, OTs, and wards. Patients, who come from different corners of the country to receive medical treatment in the city, had to return home without receiving care as doctors continued their strike despite many stating that it pained them to do so but had no option left. A 34-year-old man from Sona village in Uttar Pradesh's Rampur said it is very difficult to get treatment as most of the

doctors are on strike. "I came here at 7 am and since then, I've been shuffled from one department to another. It's now 2 pm and I'm just running from one place to another. With the doctors on strike, it's becoming difficult, as there are already too many patients in the government hospitals who can't get treated even on normal days," he said. The Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA), after a meeting with Resident Doctor Associations (RDAs)

from across states and Institutes of National Importance, in a statement said it will stand with its peers nationwide in denouncing the murder and continue its strike. The Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA), however, called off its strike after a meeting with Union Health Minister J P Nadda at his residence on Tuesday night. The association said the decision to end the strike was taken in the interest of the welfare of patients. FORDA said, "A key outcome of the meeting was the health minister's agreement to form a committee with FORDA's involvement to work on the Central Protection Act. The ministry has assured that work on this will begin within the next 15 days." Doctors at Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital and associated hospitals have also called off their strike. A postgraduate trainee doctor was raped and murdered at the RG Kar Medical College while on duty last week. The semi-naked body of the 32-year-old woman was found on August 9 morning in the seminar hall of the government-run hospital in the West Bengal capital.



Traffic advisory issued ahead of I-Day

STAFF REPORTER n NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has issued a traffic advisory ahead of the Independence Day, imposing certain restrictions on movement around the Red Fort area and Chhatrasal Stadium on Thursday for the convenience of invitees and for security reasons. It also reiterated the prohibition imposed on August 1 on the flying of sub-conventional aerial platforms such as para-gliders, UAVs, hot air balloons and small size powered aircraft over the city till Thursday. Light road stretches, including Netaji Subhash Marg, Lothian

Road, SP Mukherjee Marg, Chandni Chowk Road, Nishad Raj Marg, Esplanade Road and its link road to Netaji Subhash Marg, Ring Road from Rajghat to ISBT and Outer Ring Road from ISBT to IP Flyover, will remain closed for general traffic on Thursday, the advisory said. Vehicles without parking labels for main Independence Day event may avoid C-Hexagon, India Gate, Copernicus Marg, Mandi House, Sikandra Road, W Point, A Point Tilak Marg, Mathura Road, BSZ Marg, Netaji Subhash Marg, JL Nehru Marg, Ring Road between Nizamuddin Khatta and ISBT

Kashmere Gate, and Outer Ring Road from Nizamuddin Khatta to ISBT Kashmere Gate via Salimgarh bypass, it said. In connection with the state level celebration of the occasion, the advisory added that no vehicle will be allowed to halt or park anywhere on Inner Ring Road from Azadpur Chowk to Hakikat Nagar T-Point and Stadium Road (in front of Gate No.2 Chhatrasal Stadium). "Vehicles found parked on the above roads shall be towed away and prosecuted as per law. The vehicles towed away from Azadpur Chowk to Hakikat Nagar T-Point and Stadium Road in front of Gate No. 2 Chhatrasal Stadium would be

parked in Traffic Pit located at Model Town Traffic Circle," it added. The general public is advised not to bring cameras, binoculars, remote control car keys, umbrella, handbags, briefcases, transistors, cigarette lighters, tiffin boxes, water bottles, lunch boxes etc, it stated. Flying of sub-conventional aerial platforms like para-gliders, para-motors, hang gliders, UAVs, micro light aircraft, remotely piloted aircraft, hot air balloons, small size powered aircraft, quadcopters or para jumping from aircraft etc. are prohibited over the jurisdiction of Delhi up to Thursday, it said.

DADLS-21

ପବିତ୍ର ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ଦିବସ-୨୦୨୪ ଅବସରରେ ମାନ୍ୟବର ରାଜ୍ୟପାଳଙ୍କ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ପବିତ୍ର ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ଦିବସ ଅବସରରେ ମୁଁ ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଓ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଜଣାଉଛି । ଓଡ଼ିଶାକୁ ଦେଶର ଅନ୍ୟତମ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ପରିଣତ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ସମସ୍ତେ ମିଳିମିଶି ନିଷ୍ଠାପର ଭାବେ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ କରିବାକୁ ମୁଁ ଆହ୍ଵାନ ଜଣାଉଛି ।

(ରଘୁବର ଦାସ)

ପବିତ୍ର ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ଦିବସ-୨୦୨୪ ଅବସରରେ ମାନ୍ୟବର ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା

ପବିତ୍ର ସ୍ଵାଧୀନତା ଦିବସ ଅବସରରେ ରାଜ୍ୟବାସୀ ଭାଇଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଆନ୍ତରିକ ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଓ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଜଣାଉଛି । ଆସନ୍ତୁ ଏକ ନୂଆ ଓଡ଼ିଶା, ବିକଶିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଗଠନ ଦିଗରେ ସମସ୍ତେ ସଂକଳ୍ପବଦ୍ଧ ହୋଇ କାମ କରିବା ।

(ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା)



www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

Happy Independence Day

As the proud nation celebrates the 78th Independence day it is time to ponder over the journey so far

As we celebrate 78th Independence Day, the air is filled with pride, nostalgia, and hope. This day is not just a commemoration of freedom from colonial rule but a reflection on the journey that has shaped the country. The path to where we stand today, has been nothing short of a roller coaster-marked by triumphs and challenges. As the nation looks back on its accomplishments, it must also cast its eyes forward, contemplating the road that lies ahead. India's post-independence journey has been a remarkable tale of resilience and growth. From the ashes of partition and the burden of colonial exploitation, the nation emerged with a spirit of unity and determination. The early years were fraught with challenges – economic instability, social unrest, and the monumental task of nation-building. Yet, India persisted. The Green Revolution transformed India from a food-deficient country to a self-sufficient one, while the White Revolution made the country the largest producer of milk. It made great strides in space exploration and reached the moon. The nation also saw the rise of a strong industrial base. However, the road was never smooth. India saw wars, political turmoil, and economic crises. The Emergency period in the mid-1970s was a dark chapter, testing the resilience of its democracy. The 1991 economic liberalisation marked a turning point, propelling India onto the global stage, but it also brought new challenges in the form of inequality and social disparities.



The turn of the millennium saw India making strides in various fields. The IT revolution positioned the country as a global technology hub, while advancements in space exploration and nuclear technology showcased

India's scientific prowess. Social progress was evident in the growing emphasis on education, healthcare, and women's empowerment. Landmark legislation such as the Right to Education Act and the decriminalisation of Section 377 reflected the country's commitment to social justice. Yet, there was no dearth of challenges. The rise of communal tensions, growing environmental concerns, and the struggle for inclusivity have reminded the nation that the journey is far from over. The COVID-19 pandemic, the most recent challenge, exposed vulnerabilities but also highlighted India's resilience, as the country emerged as a global leader in vaccine production and distribution. The nation today stands at a crossroads. The country must tackle environmental degradation, and ensure that economic growth is inclusive and sustainable. India's youth, now the largest demographic group, will play a crucial role. We must continue to uphold the democratic values and secular fabric. As the tricolor flutters in the wind this Independence Day, it is a reminder that this was achieved with many sacrifices and efforts on the part of millions of people who make it what it is. The road ahead may be challenging, but it is also filled with possibilities. No country is perfect; it's always a work in progress. But if the people of India commit to making it a shining example for the world, it will become one. Jai Hind!

PICTALK



Young students participate in a programme on the eve of Independence Day at a school, in Moradabad, PI

Nano technology revolutionises car care

This cutting-edge technology is changing the car detailing process by enhancing protection, durability, and aesthetic appeal of cars

The automotive industry is progressing rapidly, with nanotechnology emerging as a transformative force in redefining car care. This cutting-edge technology is revolutionising the car detailing process and offering unmatched protection, durability, and aesthetic appeal, ushering in an exciting new era for car owners and enthusiasts.



and chemical protection. Nanotechnology offers a revolutionary approach to car detailing, providing superior protection and easier maintenance than traditional methods. There are several benefits of nanotechnology in car detailing, such as:

Enhanced protection: Nanoparticles form a microscopic barrier that shields the car's paint and glass and protects it from UV rays and environmental problems, such as bird droppings, during weather conditions. This results in a long-lasting shine and reduced risk of fading or wear and tear.

Deeper cleaning and glossier finishing: Nano-formulated polishes and cleaners can penetrate deeper into the car's surface due to the particles' tiny size. It removes dirt and grime more effectively,

revealing a glossier finish to the car after detailing. **Durability & longevity:** Nanotechnology car care products typically offer extended protection compared to traditional waxes and sealants. It translates to fewer detailing sessions and keeps the car looking its best for longer.

Easier maintenance: The hydrophobic coatings created by nanoparticles make future washes a breeze. Dirt and grime slide off, requiring less scrubbing and reducing the risk of introducing swirl marks.

While the benefits of nanotechnology in car care are undeniable, it is important to approach its implementation with a clear eye. Not all nano-coated products are created equal, and selecting reputable brands that adhere to stringent quality standards is crucial. Moreover, proper application and maintenance are always vital to maximising the performance and longevity of these treatments.

As nanotechnology evolves in the rapidly increasing technology world, there are expected to be even more groundbreaking advances

ments in the car care industry. The future holds immense potential, from self-healing paintwork to intelligent coatings that adapt to environmental conditions. By embracing this technology, the automotive industry can be poised to deliver cars that look stunning and offer unparalleled protection and convenience. From the car owner's perspective, there will be several benefits, such as enhanced car ownership experiences characterised by less time spent on maintenance and greater pride in the cars' appearance, instilling a sense of hope for the future of car care. In conclusion, nanotechnology is ushering in a new era in the car maintenance industry by improving aesthetics, protection, and durability & longevity. By understanding the principles and applications of this technology, car owners can make informed decisions to optimise the care of their cars and enjoy the full benefits of this exciting development, empowering them as informed consumers in the automotive industry.

(The writer is an expert on car care; views are personal)



KUNAL SETHI

The former Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, abruptly left her country a week ago, causing immediate concern in her country and the region. According to the BBC, Hasina's family, not security officials, convinced her to leave due to safety concerns. Her son stated, "We begged her to leave as soon as the violent mob arrived." Crowds entered her residence shortly after her escape. Political, social, and economic issues, external involvement, and unhappy political opposition caused the downfall.

India's Foreign Minister, S. Jaishankar, has informed Parliament about her visit to India and the potential impact on India's relationship with Bangladesh. The unrest that led to her departure resulted in around 560 deaths and could strain the relationship between the two countries, potentially impacting regional security and foreign relations. Initially, in her long reign of 15 years, Hasina was perceived as a democratic and secular leader of Bangladesh, overseeing an economic turnaround. However, she later became intolerant and authoritarian, cracking down on media critics and imprisoning opponents. She maintained cordial relationships with Indian leaders, which sparked anti-India protests.

Prime Minister Modi mentioned that he had met her ten times last year. The friendship has been mutual, as Begum Hasina also reciprocated by driving out the terrorists who targeted India and allowed concessions for transit facilities. She was the first state guest during the Modi government's third term. India has had a special relationship with Bangladesh since it was born in 1971. After her father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founder of Bangladesh, was assassinated in 1975, Hasina spent six years in India. After that, she shifted to Dhaka to lead the Awami League. The current student protests, which started on July 5 against the 30% reservation for descendants of freedom fighters



KUNAL SETHI

and the 56% quota for government positions, have impacted the political situation in Bangladesh. The Hasina government's proposal to expand this quota led to widespread protests and 200 deaths. Bangladesh opposition parties organized a 'long march' to express growing discontent with the government's policies. At the international level, tensions rose between Hasina and the U.S. when her American visa was revoked after she fled the country. The U.S. State Department emphasized the importance of the interim government in establishing long-term peace and political stability in Bangladesh. The U.K. and other countries also took the same stand. The international community is working to support the interim government led by Yunus, who is responsible for restoring normalcy. New Delhi has set up a monitoring committee and increased border control to address the situation. Madam Khaleda Zia and other opposition leaders were released after Hasina's departure. During Khaleda's two terms, Bangladesh-India relations weakened. Her visit to Delhi was also a disaster. Khalida's release may enable her to lead her party, and she stressed the

(The writer is an expert on car care; views are personal)

The Bangladesh cauldron is boiling

With New Delhi intensifying border controls, the evolving political landscape of Bangladesh is set to influence regional security and diplomacy



KALYANI SHANKAR



need for a democratic Bangladesh and emphasized peace and unity. Hasina and Khalida's sons are ready to take over their respective parties. The potential returns of these two and the other Opposition leaders could bring significant changes to the political landscape of Bangladesh. According to Hasina's son, she is ready to face any inquiry but has yet to decide on the party's leadership. Meanwhile, Hasina blames the U.S. for her ouster. Her son claims she had no time to resign and is still the Prime Minister. Bangladeshis have protested in front of the White House and the U.K. New Delhi closely monitors the situation, especially concerning border and regional security, as well as the security of Hindu minorities in Bangladesh. The Modi government is apprehensive about the safety of the Hindu minority in Bangladesh. Prime Minister Modi has called for the protection of Hindus in Bangladesh after violent incidents targeted them. The Hindu minority also protested on the streets. Bangladesh's economy, which was looking up, is declining due to Hasina's intolerance, violence, unemployment, and inflation. The country relies on India for essential commodities and



THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS WORKING TO SUPPORT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT LED BY YUNUS, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR RESTORING NORMALCY. NEW DELHI HAS SET UP A MONITORING COMMITTEE AND INCREASED BORDER CONTROL TO ADDRESS THE SITUATION

infrastructure. India needs to reconsider its Bangladesh policy after the leader's departure. The third issue concerns the porous border between India and Bangladesh, with allegations of Bangladeshi infiltrators and refugees entering India. A friendly Hasina government helped check this problem while Khalida was in denial mode. New Delhi's decision to adopt a wait-and-watch policy is a positive step. The situation depends on the elections' timing and the two Begums' potential return. If new leadership emerges, New Delhi will need to take a stand. To maintain regional peace, India's role in assisting Bangladesh in returning to normalcy is crucial and urgent. A peaceful, stable, and prosperous Bangladesh is in India's best interests. India should do everything to ensure it. The situation is still evolving, and the uncertainty of the future political landscape of Bangladesh is palpable. We will know more once the elections are announced and the plans of the two begums are revealed. The potential return of the dynastic rule adds an element of intrigue to the situation.

(The writer is a popular columnist; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LHAMO'S NEVER SAY DIE SPIRIT

Madam — Kinzang Lhamo of Bhutan may have crossed the finish line last in the women's marathon at the Paris Olympics, but she captured the admiration of many with her remarkable tenacity and unwavering determination. Despite battling adverse conditions, Lhamo completed the grueling 26.2-mile course in 3 hours, 52 minutes, and 59 seconds, choosing to persevere rather than quit. Lhamo, embodying the spirit of the "last woman running," sends a powerful message: regardless of the final outcome, we must maximize our capabilities and approach our tasks with a positive, persistent mindset. There is no shame in finishing last if the effort was sincere and wholehearted. Bhutan has already gifted the world with its unique concept of Gross National Happiness, which measures progress through health, education, and environmental parameters rather than traditional economic metrics. The country has also demonstrated the essence of democracy by having its Royals voluntarily relinquish power to allow for a citizen-led government through free and fair elections. Now, Kinzang Lhamo emerges as Bhutan's latest treasure. At just 26 years old, she has a promising future ahead. With more experience and exposure, Lhamo is poised to elevate Bhutan's presence on the international stage.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

PARIS OLYMPICS COME TO A CLOSE

Madam — The 2024 Paris Olympics have concluded, with India securing a total of six medals: five bronze and one silver. Despite its status as the world's most populous nation, with a staggering 1,450,935,791 people, India's medal haul, though commendable, highlights a larger issue. The United States led the medal tally with 126 medals, including 40 gold, while China followed with 91 medals and Japan with 45. These countries, despite their smaller populations compared to India, have achieved greater success by investing uniformly in a wide range of sports. In

Har ghar tiranga!



The 'Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative has sparked a nationwide movement, awakening the spirit of patriotism across the country. This campaign has united people from every corner of India, creating an atmosphere

of pride and respect for the national flag. It fosters a deep sense of unity and encourages active participation, bringing neighbors and fellow citizens together. By embracing this movement, people are enhancing their understanding of the significance and values embodied by the Indian flag.

India, cricket is often considered a religion, overshadowing other sports. This narrow focus, compounded by political shortsightedness, has hindered the growth and encouragement of athletic talent across other disciplines.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

WAYANAD TRAGEDY COULD BE AVERTED

Madam — The picturesque Wayanad, a hilly district located in the Western Ghats Mountain range in Kerala, is prone to landslides during heavy rains. In Kerala's history, the landslide that occurred recently there and claimed over 400 lives was the deadliest. According to the Geological Survey of India half of Kerala's land area is vulnerable to landslides. Wayanad region has had many tea and coffee plantations. The first landslide occurred in an uninhabited forest area with no access road. The torrent of water carrying mud and boulders swept away or buried the villages of Panchirimattam, Mundakkai and Chooralmala, and wreaked havoc in Meppadi, Attamala and Kunhome.

Mundakkai is a village located more than a kilometre down from the hill that slid first. Chooralmala caved in under the pressure of gushing water from the first landslide and heavy downpour. Irunjipuzha river split into two raging streams and wreaked havoc along its path. When it comes to discussing the early warning of rainfall, the less said, the better. On July 24, the Agricultural Meteorological Division of the Indian Meteorological Department issued a forecast for Wayanad that predicted only 15 mm rainfall, the day when landslides occurred. Mundakkai, where the landslide hit Wayanad first, got 572 mm of rainfall within 48 hours. However, it shouldn't be overlooked that the Hume Centre for Ecology and Wildlife Biology, an NGO specializing in weather patterns of Wayanad with a network of more than 200 weather monitoring units, had warned of possible landslides two days before the landslide happened.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode



FIRST COLUMN

THE DIVINE PARENTAL ROLE

Unlike parents, whose guidance can be flawed, God encompasses all wisdom, power and impartiality



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

The following verse will shed light on this, which is, "You alone are my mother; You alone are my father; You alone are my relative and You alone are my friend; You alone are my knowledge and You alone are my wealth; O Lord of all Lords, You alone are my everything." In verse #7.19 of the Bhagavad-Geeta, Lord Krishna states, "After efforts of many births, a yogi in the end becomes wise, and he takes My shelter. A great soul, who considers Lord Vasudeva thus as everything is very rare." The answer, therefore, is: that God is very much more than a mother or father can ever be. These entities, i.e., a mother or a father have severe limitations. Their knowledge is very limited. They don't know the Big Picture.

Far from it, they may guide their children wrongly. On the other hand, God is omniscient. He knows past, present and future also. Lord Krishna informs us what He can do. "By being specially kind, I, situated within, destroy the darkness, born of ignorance, by the shining lamp of knowledge." (10.11) Then, a parent has limited resources that he or she can give to his or her children, whereas God has all the opulence in full. Sanjaya of the Mahabharata fame informs, "Where there is yogeshwara Shri Krishna, and where there is a soul linked to Him, there will be opulences ('soubhagya'), victory (success), wealth, and morality." (18.78) A parent can help only in a limited way. Suppose his or her child is unwell. What can he or she do besides arranging medical facilities and taking care of the best way possible?



A good parent prays additionally for the rapid cure of the child. Because Only God has the power to help us get out of the trouble we get into quickly (18.53); only God has the power to forgive. Parents can be whimsical in their decision-making. They can be partial in dealing with their children: it is natural, but God is always impartial. Lord Krishna states, "I am similarly inclined towards all beings, no one is hateful for Me, and no one is dear; that is God has no preconceived and prejudiced notion towards anyone." (9.29) Many parents are poor role models. They lie but expect their children to be truthful.

What has God instructed us to do? "Whatever a superior person does, other people follow that only. Whatever standard he establishes a common man tries to emulate that." (3.21) What does God do? He always goes by dharma. God is so strict about dharma that He incarnates to reestablish it if it becomes weak. (4.7) Additionally, God is always engaged in doing duties, Lord Krishna says, "I am always carefully engaged in action, because men follow My lead in all respects." (3.34) For parents, only their children are their own, but for God, all souls are His parts. (15.7) He has to consider all of them in all His actions. God is very compassionate towards all of them. Lord Krishna confirms, "I am a well-wisher of all living entities."

Our children are forever competing against children of other parents, but for God, all children are His parts and must be dealt with fairly. That is the reason our selfish prayers are not answered. Many parents do not consult their children about their future and try to impose their desires on them. God has forbidden this, when He stated, "Svadharm (duty) of all souls are according to what their natures are." "The four divisions of the human society, based on qualities and activities, have been created by Me." (4.21)

One can excel in whatever suits one's nature because it comes naturally. What is the message? God is a parent alright but not in a conventional way. He only takes charge of those souls, who take His shelter. Parents should also try to be self-supporting to the end by taking active shelter from God; He will take care. Is God not responsible for keeping the Creation going? Is it not our responsibility as parents to do ours? I take mine towards my descendants very seriously.

(The writer is a spiritual guide; views are personal)

Water crisis and the battle for resources

As the world grapples with the escalating effects of climate change, the urgent need to rethink our approach to water management becomes ever more pressing



B K SINGH

Whenever we face drought and heat waves we are reminded to take a relook at efficiency of water management. More than one-fourth of the global population, nearly 2.2 billion people do not have proper access to clean drinking water. United Nations (UN's) goal in this regard is to provide clean drinking water and sanitation for all by 2030. UN's coordination mechanism on water and sanitation (UN-Water) sets the theme every year. This year's theme was "Leveraging Water for Peace". Air and water are important to sustain life on Earth. The conflicts between the countries, between the states and within society arise when we have to share water for crop irrigation, household purposes, industrial uses and power generation.

The conflict gets often aggravated especially when the availability of water becomes scarce during the pinch period. Treaties between the countries have resolved the disputes. Different forums are also available for the resolution of conflicts at international and national levels. India has 25 major river basins with most rivers flowing across the states. There is the Interstate Water Dispute Act, of 1956 for resolving disputes in the use, control and distribution of river and river valleys. The disputes are continuing challenges to federal water governance in the country. To resolve the disputes, there are water dispute tribunals in India namely the Ravi and Beas Water Tribunal, Vansadhara water dispute tribunal, Mahadayi Water Dispute Tribunal, Mahanadi water dispute tribunal, Krishna water dispute tribunal and Cauvery dispute tribunal etc.

The sharing of water of the Cauvery River has been the source of serious conflict between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. In 2018, the tribunal awarded Karnataka to annually release 192 tmc of water in ten equal monthly instalments to Tamil Nadu. 2023-24 was El Nino (Spanish word meaning little boy) year and there has been a deficit in rainfall in the catchment of the river from July 2023 onwards. As a result, the reservoirs were half empty and it became difficult for Karnataka to follow the orders of the tribunal.

Two states started a blame game till early July 2024 when there were good rains in the Cauvery catchment in the latter part of July. As nature was kind, the dispute was resolved and the blame game stopped. The prolonged dispute between the states for sharing water is always traced back to destruction as well as poor maintenance of the catchment of the river and unfavourable weather conditions like El Nino. World Meteorological Organization (WMO) announced that El Nino, a climate pattern associated with the warming of the ocean surface in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean has impacted the monsoon causing below-normal rainfall last year, has gradually weakened.

This has been one of the five strongest El Nino on record but remained weaker than 1997-98 and 2015-16. "El Nino typically has the greatest impact on global climate in the second year of its development - in this instance 2024," WMO said. This impact has led to above normal temperature in India till June 2024. WMO further added that there is a chance of La Nina (Spanish word meaning little girl) developing later in the year. La Nina is a climate pattern associated with periodic cooling off the ocean sur-



face temperature and brings normal rains in the region. Western World, Canada and the US are experiencing heat wave conditions even in August this year. The underground water table receded during summer. There has been a public hue and cry in many places in central and peninsular India to access potable water for household needs. The Government and Civic agencies are facing the challenge. Karnataka is one such state where there was an acute drinking water problem in the summer.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah directed the district administration to establish a helpline and control room to enable the public to register grievances and supply water in tankers to all affected areas. He also directed to tender the work of digging more bore wells to tap underground water for public emergencies. Bengaluru too faced a water shortage. Water supply to the city comes through the pipeline from the Cauvery River located 100 km away. The water has also to be pumped up at many intermediate locations to achieve an altitude of 1 km, where the city is. The arrangements have been made to supply water in tankers from adjoining towns.

Water supply to high-rise apartments was also reduced. Residents used disposable cutlery and wet wipes to ration their water consumption. It will generate more waste and agencies may have to step up the disposal. They have also banned vehicle washing and swimming pool activities. Deepening of the bore wells is another environmental challenge. Every time the groundwater level recedes, we go for the deepening. Is it environmentally sustainable? Recharging the ground through rain harvesting structures has to be adhered to by each Government continuously.

Rivers originating from the Himalayas are snow-fed and satisfy the water needs of the people, especially in the northern belt of the

country from west to east. Rivers in the central Indian landscape and peninsular India originate from forests.

Often big rivers originate from the same place and flow in different directions. Johila, Narvada and Son originate from Amarkantak and flow in different directions. Five rivers namely Koyana, Krishna, Venna, Savitri and Gayatri originate from Mahabaleshwar near Pune. Several important rivers like Tungbhadra and Cauvery also originate from the Western Ghats. Apart from providing drinking water to several villages and towns, there are numerous irrigation and power projects located on these rivers.

Life is fully dependent on these rivers and except the Himalayan Rivers all others originate from forests. Let us be clear that water is not produced by forests, yet the rivers originate there. Forests are the mothers of rivers and are systems to conserve rainwater in the subsoil and the roots of the trees.

The river source provides a small volume of water trickling from the roots of each of the millions of trees on undulating hills around. As it forms the stream and the flow of water proceeds under gravity, many more such streams join to increase the volume of water. Sometimes bigger streams or even rivers also join to increase the volume of flowing water in the river. The water in the streams is nothing but rainwater. During the monsoon substantial quantity of water is absorbed by the earth charging the underground aquifers and some portion of it is retained in the subsoil and roots of the trees.

The roots hold the water like a sponge and continuously release it during warm weather, making the streams perennial. While traversing in the forests we come across several perennial streams even in summer months when there is no rainfall. Every stream has a catchment and if it is a forested catchment, the

stream would be perennial in the non-rainy season, or else it would be a seasonal stream flowing on rainy days. Forests play a significant role in conserving water and making the streams perennial. Further, the streams flowing out of forested catchment would always carry cleaner water without even soil particles in it.

On the contrary, streams flowing through areas dominated by human activities would be muddy and mixed with chemicals and sewage. Further, the rainwater carries a lot of soil and the reservoirs get silted up losing their water holding capacity.

Reservoirs located closer to forested areas have a longer life. Maintenance engineers have a difficult time in de-silting reservoirs receiving water from human areas. The rainfall pattern and distribution not only depends upon weather conditions and the direction of wind but also depends upon the density and distribution of forests on land. The pledge we must take is to preserve and conserve natural forests. Forests also play a vital role in the maintenance of the water cycle. More than two years ago, on the sidelines of COP 26 at Glasgow, leaders holding 90% of forests on the planet had pledged to end deforestation by 2030.

Of course, India did not sign this pledge. Two more COP meetings have taken place since then, but the issue has not been reviewed by those who pledged. On the contrary, there are reports suggesting that natural forests are being lost at an alarming rate unprecedented warming has also taken its toll and forest fires have remained uncontrolled for months in the US, Canada, European countries, Russia, China, Brazil, and Australia. If we don't save our forests, the perennial water streams will become seasonal.

(The writer is retired principal chief conservator of forests, Karnataka; views are personal)



FORESTS PLAY A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN CONSERVING WATER AND MAKING THE STREAMS PERENNIAL. FURTHER, THE STREAMS FLOWING OUT OF FORESTED CATCHMENT WOULD ALWAYS CARRY CLEANER WATER

The perils of blind faith and the rise of India's fraudulent godmen

While India has a rich tradition of genuine spiritual leaders, the influence of these charlatans has surged, fueled by politics and societal insecurities

The Mundaka Upanishad warns of the dangers posed by those who, though ignorant, present themselves as wise. The verse (1.2.8) loosely translates to, "Living in the midst of ignorance and considering themselves wise, fools think of themselves as learned. They wander around, bewildered, like blind men led by the blind." This verse serves as a caution against self-proclaimed spiritual gurus who mislead others. India has long been a land of genuine spiritual gurus who have guided millions, providing a path for the masses to follow. However, times have changed. Today, genuine spiritual leaders are often overshadowed by flashy godmen, or "babas," who frequently



PRABHA GUPTA

deceive people for personal gain. This trend has become particularly dangerous when combined with the politics of numbers, creating a powerful politico-religious phenomenon. These so-called babas often become demigods with political leaders as their disciples, wielding immense power and wealth, even though they claim to have renounced it. A recent incident in Hathras

highlights the tragic consequences of such influence. Over 150 people, mostly women from poor Dalit families, were killed in a stampede during a satsang by Bhole Baba, also known as Narayan Sakar Hari. Baba, a former policeman who retired 28 years ago amid rape allegations, had attracted around 150,000 people to the event, despite only 80,000 being allowed. The stampede occurred when the crowd rushed to collect soil believed to have healing powers after Baba's departure. His popularity and wealth have only grown, despite such tragedies. While some of his followers were arrested, Bhole Baba himself was not named in the FIR, and his ashrams remain untouched by authorities.

And he is not alone. Many others are doing just that. A couple of years back a proclaimed baba gave unique recipe for peoples woes: keep 500 rupees in your wallet for prosperity, keep your spouse photo for better relationship and so on. Gurmeet Ram Rahim Insan ran schools for girls in which they had to eat rose petals as prasadam to which he walked. Figures like Asaram Babu and Gurmeet Ram Rahim Insan are serving prison sentences for serious crimes. The number and influence of such godmen have grown, partly due to the rise of religious politics. This trend is mirrored globally, though it is particularly pronounced in India. The following of these god-



men often stems from the insecurity and faith of their followers, who may feel abandoned by both God and the system. This combination distances them from rational thinking. In countries with less economic and social insecurity, the influence of religion tends to wane, but not entirely. In the United States, faith

healers or Televangelists wield significant influence over their followers, claiming to cure people in the name of Jesus Christ. While the number of those cured remains questionable, these healers amass enormous wealth, the owning Caribbean islands and flying in private jets. Addressing the influence of these Babas is a significant challenge. The Indian Constitution's Article 51A emphasises the duty of citizens to develop a scientific temper and humanism, which these fake godmen often ignore. While organizations like the Andhashradha Nirmulan Samiti in Maharashtra work to expose fraudulent practices, activists like Dr. Narendra Dabholkar have paid the ultimate price,

allegedly at the hands of conservative groups like Sanatan Sanstha. Similar forces were responsible for the deaths of Govind Pansare, Gauri Lankesh, and Professor Kalburgi. Following Dr Dabholkar's murder, the Maharashtra Assembly passed a law against superstition and miracle cures. To curb the influence of fake godmen, a combination of education, awareness, and strong legal frameworks is essential. Promoting critical thinking and spiritual education can empower individuals to discern genuine spiritual guidance from deception. Educational institutions, community programs, and media can play a crucial role in spreading awareness about

the characteristics of false gurus and the dangers of blind faith. Encouraging open discussions about spirituality and ethics can help people recognise the difference between authentic spiritual leaders and charlatans. Additionally, it is crucial to strengthen laws and regulations to hold fraudulent godmen accountable. Publicising such cases can also serve as a warning to potential victims. Ultimately, by encouraging critical inquiry, supporting victims, and ensuring justice, society can reduce the influence of fake godmen and safeguard the integrity of spiritual practices.

(The writer is a freelance writer, social activist and business coach; views expressed are personal)

Thai PM dismissed for breach of ethics

Another case filed against Sheikh Hasina

AP n BANGKOK
A court in Thailand on Wednesday removed Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin from office over an ethical violation, further shaking up Thai politics after the court-ordered dissolution of the main opposition party a week ago. The Constitutional Court ruled on a case involving Srettha's appointment of a Cabinet member who had been imprisoned in connection with an alleged attempt to bribe a court official. The court voted 5:4 against Srettha and the ruling removed him from office immediately. The Cabinet will remain in place on a caretaker basis until Parliament approves a new prime minister. There is no time limit for Parliament to fill the position. The caretaker Cabinet could also dissolve Parliament and call a new election. The acting PM is expected to be Phumtham Wechayachai of the Pheu Thai party.

Phumtham was first deputy prime minister and commerce minister under Srettha. If Parliament is given the task of choosing a new prime minister, it can select from a roster of candidates nominated for the post last year by the major political parties. The Pheu Thai Party, to which Srettha belongs, has two eligible candidates, including Paetongtarn Shinawatra, the daughter of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Another frontrunner would be Anutin Charnvirakul, head of the Bhumjaithai Party, which ran third in last year's election. He is currently a deputy prime minister and interior minister. Anuthin, a powerbroker in the vote-rich northeast whose family owns a major construction group, has served in both a military-backed government and the civilian one that it replaced. Also in the running would be two former senior military officers: Prayuth Chan-ocha, who served as prime minister for nine years after staging a coup in 2014, and Prawit



Wongsuwan, who was one of Srettha's deputy prime ministers. Srettha, speaking at Government House shortly after the verdict, thanked the judges for giving him the opportunity to defend himself. He said he respected the ruling and that he always sought to act ethically during his time in office. "I'm sorry that I'd be considered as a prime minister who's unethical, but that's not who I am," he said. Srettha had appointed Pichit Chuenban as a minister of the Prime Minister's Office in a Cabinet reshuffle in April. Pichit was jailed for six months in 2008 on contempt of court charges after he allegedly tried to bribe a judge with 2 million

baht (USD 55,000) in cash in a grocery bag over a case involving Thaksin, the former prime minister. Pichit resigned from the post weeks after being appointed when controversy over the incident was revived. The court said that although Pichit has already served his jail term, his behavior — as ruled by the Supreme Court — was dishonest. Srettha as prime minister has sole responsibility for vetting the qualifications of his Cabinet nominations, the court ruled. It said he knew about Pichit's past but still nominated him, and therefore it ruled that he violated the ethics codes. The petition against Srettha was initiated by former members of the military-installed Senate who had refused to approve Move Forward's prime ministerial candidate when the party was attempting to form a government after its election victory. The petition against Srettha was seen as a move favouring a pro-military political party in

his coalition government. Thailand's courts, especially the Constitutional Court, are considered a bulwark of the country's royalist establishment, which has used them and nominally independent state agencies such as the Election Commission to issue rulings to cripple or sink political opponents. Srettha became prime minister in August last year, despite his Pheu Thai party finishing second in the general election. After Move Forward was denied power by the Senate whose term ended in May, Pheu Thai — then the biggest partner of Move Forward — excluded it from the coalition and joined hands with parties affiliated with the previous military-controlled government to gather enough support from other parties and the Senate to approve a new prime minister. Srettha, 62, was a real estate executive before entering politics. He prioritized opening up Thailand after almost a decade of military-backed rule, frequently travelling abroad for trade negotiations. His party pushed a populist plan for a 10,000-baht (USD 286) hand-out policy to stimulate the economy, a key promise in its campaign last year, though it has been delayed by technicalities largely involving funding. His government also promoted Thai cultural products through a "soft power" agency and the critical tourism sector by loosening entry requirements and other measures. Srettha, who tried to project an image of a strong CEO, was seen by critics as an agent for Thaksin, who returned last August to submit to a plea deal his detractors say was essential to Srettha gaining the premiership. The Constitutional Court last week ordered the dissolution of the progressive Move Forward Party over an accusation that the party violated the constitution by proposing an amendment to a law against defaming the country's royal family. The party has already regrouped as the People's Party.

PTI n DHAKA
A case of enforced disappearance was filed on Wednesday against Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and several others, including former ministers of her cabinet, on the charge of kidnapping a lawyer in 2015. The case is the second to be filed against 76-year-old Hasina since she resigned and fled to India on August 5 following widespread protests against her Awami League-led government over a controversial job quota system. "The victim of the forced disappearance, Supreme Court lawyer Sohail Rana filed the case application, The Daily Star newspaper reported. The court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Farzana Shakila Sumu Chowdhury ordered the allegations to be accepted as a case. Other accused in the case include senior ministers of Hasina's cabinet, former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, former Law Minister Anisul Haq, former Inspector General of Police (IGP) Shahidul Haque, former Director General of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) Benazir Ahmed, and 25 unidentified members of the RAB. "On 10 February 2015, I was detained from Sector 5 in Uttara and forced into a vehicle. As soon as I was inside the car, I was nearly made unconscious by electric shocks to my ears and genitals," the report quoted Rana as saying. "After enduring various forms of brutal torture over time, I was eventually released in August in Godagari, Rajshahi," he said. On Tuesday, a murder case was lodged against Hasina and six others over the death of a grocery shop owner during last month's violent clashes that led to the fall of her government. Over 230 people were killed in Bangladesh in the incidents of violence that erupted across the country following the fall of the Hasina government on August 5, taking the death toll to 560 since the anti-quota protests first started in mid-July.

Belgorod declares emergency as Ukrainian forces press incursion

AP n KYIV
Russia's Belgorod border region declared an emergency Wednesday under heavy shelling by Ukrainian forces that are pressing a major cross-border incursion into the adjacent Kursk region for a second week. Belgorod Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov described the situation there as "extremely difficult and tense" as the attacks destroyed homes and caused civilian casualties, unnerving local people. Children in particular are being moved to safety, he said on his Telegram channel, adding that about 5,000 children are in camps in safe areas. He said the previous day that around 11,000 people had fled their homes, with about 1,000 staying in temporary accommodation

centres. The surprise Ukrainian charge onto Russian soil that began August 6 has rattled the Kremlin. The daring Kursk operation is the largest attack on Russia since World War II and could involve as many as 10,000 Ukrainian troops backed by armour and artillery, military analysts say. An emergency was declared in Kursk last Saturday. A Ukrainian Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Tuesday that Kyiv has no intention of occupying the Russian territory it says it is holding. The goal is to stop Russia from firing missiles into Ukraine from Kursk, he said. It was not clear how or when — or whether — Ukraine would attempt to extricate itself from the ground it has taken. The Ukrainian military claims it controls 74 settlements, believed

to be villages or hamlets, in the Kursk region. Russian officials say more than 100,000 people have been evacuated, mostly from Kursk. Ukraine's 1+1 TV channel published a video report Wednesday it said was from Sudzha, a Russian town about 10 kilometres from the border. The report showed burnt-out Russian military columns on roads in the area as well as Ukrainian soldiers handing humanitarian aid to local residents and taking down Russian flags from an administrative building. Russia's predicament is whether to pull troops from the front line in Ukraine's Donetsk region, where achieving a breakthrough is currently a primary war goal for the Kremlin, to defend Kursk and stop the incursion from ballooning.

Complaint filed against Hasina, others at International Tribunal

PTI n DHAKA
A complaint was filed on Wednesday with the investigation agency of Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and several others, accusing them of committing genocide and crimes against humanity during the mass movement of the students against her government. "The complaint was filed by the father of one of the students who died in police gunshots during the massive street protests," an official of the agency said. A Supreme Court lawyer filed the case on behalf of Bulbul Kabir, father of slain Arif Ahmed Siyam, a class 9 student who was shot dead by police during the protest on August 5.



Students shout slogans during a protest demanding the trial of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka on Tuesday.

"We have registered the complaint and thus the investigation of the case has started," Ataur Rahman, deputy director of the agency, was quoted as saying by The Daily Star newspaper. "Upon completion of the

probe, we will submit the report to the Chief Prosecutor's Office of the tribunal for the next procedures," he added. Hasina and several others were accused of "genocide and crimes against humanity in

the complaint," state-run BSS news agency reported. The complaint comes on a day when the interim government said that the murders conducted within the period from July 1 to August 5 will be tried by the International Crimes Tribunal. The complaint accused 76-year-old Hasina and the others of perpetrating the mass killings between July 15 and August 5, the day when Hasina resigned and fled the country, while the students and others who died during the period would come under the purview of the complaint as well, the official said. Meanwhile, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk made a phone call to Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus on Wednesday.

Kishida not to seek re-election, paves way for new Japanese PM

AP n TOKYO
Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, in a surprise move Wednesday, announced he will not run in the upcoming party leadership vote in September, paving the way for Japan to have a new prime minister. Kishida was elected president of his governing Liberal Democratic Party in 2021 and his three-year term expires in September. His drop out of the race means a new leader who wins the party vote will succeed him as prime minister because the LDP controls both houses of parliament. Kishida, stung by his party's corruption scandals, has suffered dwindling support ratings that have dipped below 20%. He announced he will not run



in the September vote, allowing for a fresh leader in an effort to show that his party is changing for the better. Kishida will support a new leader, he said. Local election losses earlier in the year eroded his clout, and LDP lawmakers have voiced the need for a fresh face

ahead of the next general election. Since the corruption scandal broke, Kishida has removed a number of Cabinet ministers and others from party executive posts, dissolved party factions that were criticized as the source of money-for-favor politics, and passed a law tightening political funds control law. But support for his government has dwindled. The scandal centers on unreported political funds raised through tickets sold for party events. It involved more than 80 LDP lawmakers, mostly belonging to a major party faction previously led by assassinated former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Ten people — lawmakers and their aides — were indicted in January.

House of Hindu family targeted in fresh arson

PTI n DHAKA
Arsonists torched a house belonging to a Hindu family with no political affiliation in northwest Bangladesh, a media report said on Wednesday, in the latest incident of targeted attacks on the minority community after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government. The incident in Farabari Mandirpara village in Akcha union under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila took place on Tuesday evening, hours after Chief Advisor to the interim government Yunus Muhammad assured the distressed minority community that his government would punish the perpetrators. The targeted arson incident also came on the same day when the Bangladesh National Hindu Grand Alliance claimed that the minority community faced attacks and threats in 278 locations across 48 districts since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government on August 5 and termed it as an "assault on

the Hindu religion." Unidentified individuals set fire to Kaleshwar Barman's house around 7:30 pm on Tuesday in Farabari Mandirpara village in Akcha union under Thakurgaon Sadar upazila, Subrata Kumar Barman, chairman of Akcha Union Parishad (UP), told newspaper The Daily Star. Local people quickly responded and managed to control the fire, and the house's occupants were able to escape unharmed, he said. The UP chairman said Kaleshwar Barman had no political affiliation. ABM Firoz Waheed, Officer-in-Charge of Thakurgaon Police Station, said: "Police visited the spot the same night, and an investigation is ongoing to identify the perpetrators." The Daily Star report said that a similar incident had happened a few days earlier in Nimbari Kamarpara village of the same Union when Ananta Barman's house was burned down, leaving all valuables destroyed.

Students still managing roads in Bangladesh

PTI n DHAKA
Several Bangladeshi students, who were behind the ouster of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, are still controlling traffic on the roads in the country despite traffic police personnel rejoining their workplaces. A wave of violence, including revenge killings and arson, persisted after Hasina fled to India on August 5. Almost all of the country's police officers went into hiding, afraid of reprisals for the force's role in the deaths of hundreds of young protesters demanding the scrapping of quotas in government service jobs. In such a situation, the students came out on the streets and tried to regulate traffic. However, traffic police personnel rejoined their workplaces on Monday. Still, the students say they do not want to leave the traffic management to the designated units of the police, The Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported.

Even on Wednesday, students were seen controlling traffic on the roads. There are also members of Ansar, Border Guard Bangladesh Red Crescent, Scouts and Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (BNCC). A limited number of traffic police were also seen on the roads. Students were managing traffic, checking licenses and reminding people to use helmets. The students say that they want to stay on the streets until full order is restored. Meanwhile, traffic police personnel say that students have played a commendable role in controlling traffic during a critical period. But now that the traffic policemen have rejoined work, the students are no longer needed there. Enayet Ullah, a student of psychology at Dhaka College and a volunteer of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society said: "We have been working on traffic control since August 7 on behalf of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society.

Shehbaz Sharif to unveil 5-year plan for Pakistan's economic stability

PTI n ISLAMABAD
Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday announced that he would soon unveil a new five-year plan to bring cash-strapped Pakistan out of the economic crisis and asked countrymen to undertake self-inspection to correct mistakes of the past. Sharif's remarks came as the nation commemorated the 78th Independence Day of Pakistan. The Prime Minister said a "fresh journey with new zeal should be started to steer the country out of existing crises" and a five-year economic programme will soon be launched. He said that there is a need for self-introspection to correct mistakes of the past. The nation would hear good news regarding the reduction in electricity prices in the next few days, Radio Pakistan quoted him as saying at the main ceremony held in Islamabad. Turning to issues being faced by the country, Sharif pledged to work hard till the last drop of his blood to reduce inflation and electricity prices and revamp Pakistan's battered economy. He said the reduction in inflation and electricity bills is vital for the development of agriculture and industry, enhancing exports and providing solace to domestic power consumers. Sharif also urged the youth to focus on their studies, training, and skills and avoid becoming prey to the forces of chaos, anarchy and



A driver decorates his rickshaw with national flag colors to celebrate the country's 78th Independence Day from British rule in Peshawar on Wednesday.

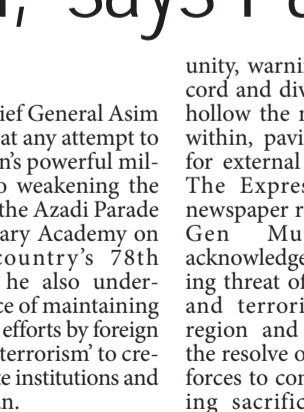
deception. He said the foes of Pakistan have continuously been targeting the minds of young people through digital terrorism to mislead them. In a separate message, Prime Minister Sharif said: "We pay homage to the immense sacrifices of our forefathers and countless unsung heroes of the Pakistan Movement, who fought tirelessly for an independent country for millions in South Asia, where they could live according to their beliefs and values. He also said Pakistan shall continue to extend moral, political and diplomatic support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir until they achieve their universal right to self-determi-

nation. President Asif Ali Zardari in his message said: "Today, we need to set aside our differences and work committedly for unity, integrity, and economic stability." He called for upholding the rule of law and strengthening democratic institutions and also reaffirmed its support to the people of Kashmir and Palestine for their legitimate rights. India has repeatedly said it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence. India has asserted that the "Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh have been, are and will always remain integral and inalienable parts of India." President Zardari on the occasion of Independence Day approved the conferment of awards upon 104 Pakistani and foreign nationals in recognition of their services to Pakistan. These awards will be given at a special ceremony on 23rd March next year. Former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the founder of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), will be conferred upon Nishan-e-Pakistan for his marvellous contribution to the field of public service. Arshad Nadeem, Pakistan's sensational javelin thrower who won the country's first individual Olympics gold in 40 years, will get Hilal-e-Imtiaz, the second-highest civilian award.

'Weakening military is weakening nation,' says Pak Army chief

PTI n ISLAMABAD
Pakistan's Army chief General Asim Munir has said that any attempt to undermine the nation's powerful military is equivalent to weakening the country. Addressing the Azadi Parade at the Pakistan Military Academy on the eve of the country's 78th Independence Day, he also underscored the importance of maintaining national unity amidst efforts by foreign powers using 'digital terrorism' to create a gulf between state institutions and the people of Pakistan. "We emerge as a strong nation after trial and tribulations. To weaken Pakistan's armed forces is tantamount to weakening the country itself," Geo News quoted him as saying. Asserting that the nation's unwavering trust in the Pakistan Army is the military's most valuable asset, he said, "Neither any negative force has ever been able to weaken this relationship of trust and love nor can it do so in future." "Historically, we as a nation have always emerged stronger after every hardship," he said, adding that mutual trust between the country and the armed forces played a key role. He also highlighted the importance of

unity, warning that discord and division could hollow the nation from within, paving the way for external aggression, The Express Tribune newspaper reported. Gen Munir also acknowledged the ongoing threat of extremism and terrorism in the region and reaffirmed the resolve of the armed forces to continue making sacrifices for the nation's security. He blamed foreign powers for a wave of 'digital terrorism,' which he said aimed to create a gulf between state institutions and the people of Pakistan, the Dawn newspaper reported. Last week, addressing a conference of Islamic clerics here, Gen Munir warned against attempts to create chaos in the cash-strapped country, saying the armed forces will foil any such move and safeguard national integrity. The powerful Pakistan Army, which has ruled coup-prone Pakistan for many years of its existence, has wielded considerable power in matters of security and foreign policy.



his appearance in a corruption case. His arrest sparked countrywide protests and riots by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters who damaged civilian as well as military installations across the country. Meanwhile, at least 70 people were injured by aerial firing in different areas of Karachi during the celebrations of Independence Day on Tuesday night, Geo News reported. Last year, two people lost their lives while more than 80 sustained injuries due to aerial firing in different areas of the city during the Independence Day celebrations.

Gen Munir's remarks came days after jailed former prime minister Imran Khan refused to apologise for the May 9 riots and said that the Army owed him an apology since he was "abducted" by the paramilitary rangers on the day of the violence. Khan, 71, was on May 9, 2023, arrested by the Pakistan Rangers from the Islamabad High Court premises during

Judge rejects Trump's latest demand in hush money case

AP n NEW YORK

Donald Trump has lost his latest bid for a new judge in his New York hush money criminal case as it heads toward a key ruling and potential sentencing next month.

In a decision posted Wednesday, Judge Juan M. Merchan declined to step aside and said Trump's demand was a rehash "rife with inaccuracies and unsubstantiated claims" about the political ties of Merchan's daughter and his ability to judge the historic case fairly and impartially.

It is the third that the judge has rejected such a request from lawyers for the former president and current Republican nominee. All three times, they argued that Merchan, a state court judge in Manhattan, has a conflict of interest because of his daughter's work as a political consultant for prominent Democrats and campaigns. Among them was Vice President Kamala Harris when she sought the 2020 nomination for president. She is now her party's 2024 White House nominee.

A state court ethics panel said

last year that Merchan could continue on the case, writing that a relative's independent political activities are not "a reasonable basis to question the judge's impartiality".

Merchan has repeatedly said he is certain he will continue to base his rulings "on the evidence and the law, without fear or favour, casting aside undue influence".

"With these fundamental principles in mind, this Court now reiterates for the third time, that which should already be clear — innuendo and mischaracterisations do not a conflict create," Merchan wrote in his three-page ruling. "Recusal is therefore not necessary, much less required."

But with Harris now Trump's Democratic opponent in this year's White House election, Trump lawyer Todd Blanche wrote in a letter to the judge last month that the defence's concerns have become "even more concrete".

Prosecutors called the claims "a vexatious and frivolous attempt to relitigate" the issue. Messages seeking comment on the ruling were left with Blanche.

The Manhattan district attorney's office, which prosecuted the case, declined to comment.

Trump was convicted in May of falsifying his business records to conceal a 2016 deal to pay off porn actor Stormy Daniels to stay quiet about her alleged 2006 sexual encounter with him. Prosecutors cast the payout as part of a Trump-driven effort to keep voters from hearing salacious stories about him during his first campaign.

Trump says all the stories were false, the business records were not and the case was a political maneuver meant to damage his current campaign. The prosecutor who brought the charges, Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, is a Democrat.

Trump has pledged to appeal. Legally, that cannot happen before a defendant is sentenced. In the meantime, his lawyers took other steps to try to derail the case. Besides the recusal request, they have asked Merchan to overturn the verdict and dismiss the case altogether because of the US Supreme Court's July ruling on presidential immunity.

That decision reins in prosecutions of ex-presidents for official acts and restricts prosecutors in pointing to official acts as evidence that a president's unofficial actions were illegal. Trump's lawyers argue that in light of the ruling, jurors in the hush money case should not have heard such evidence as former White House staffers describing how the then-president reacted to news coverage of the Daniels deal.

Earlier this month, Merchan set a Sept 16 date to rule on the immunity claim, and Sept 18 for "the imposition of sentence or other proceedings as appropriate".

The hush money case is one of four criminal prosecutions brought against Trump last year. One federal case, accusing Trump of illegally hoarding classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, was dismissed last month. The Justice Department is appealing. The others — federal and Georgia state cases concerning Trump's efforts to overturn his 2020 election loss — are not positioned to go to trial before the November election.

'Americans give Harris an advantage over Trump on honesty, discipline'

AP n WASHINGTON

Vice President Kamala Harris has a perceived advantage over former President Donald Trump on several leadership qualities such as honesty, a new poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds, although Americans are slightly more likely to trust Trump on the economy and immigration.

Nearly half of Americans say that "committed to democracy" and "disciplined" are attributes that better describe Harris. About 3 in 10 say these qualities better describe Trump.

About 4 in 10 say Harris is someone who "cares about people like you" while about 3 in 10 say that about Trump. About 4 in 10 say "honest" better describes Harris and 24% say that quality better describes Trump.

Both parties are racing to define Harris as she prepares to accept the Democratic nomination at the party's convention next week. The poll suggests she carries some of the same baggage that weighed down President Joe Biden before he ended his reelection bid but has advantages over Trump when they're compared to each other. And Democrats continue to be much happier about her candidacy than they were about Bidens.

Trump has spent the campaign championing himself as a strong leader who is capable of handling tough crises facing the country and suggesting that foreign leaders wouldn't respect Harris in the White House. But he doesn't have an advantage with Americans on that characteristic, according to the survey. Four in 10 US adults see Trump as a strong leader, and roughly the same share say that about Harris. About 4 in 10 say Trump is capable of handling a crisis, and a similar share say Harris is better positioned to do so.

Americans are about evenly divided between who they think is more capable of winning in November — Trump or Harris. In July, before Biden dropped out of the race, only about 2 in 10 Americans thought he was more capable of winning, while about twice as many thought that about Trump.

"Trump had a better chance when Joe Biden was running," said Lisa Miller, a 42-year-old student in Elko, Nevada, and a Republican. "I think a lot of people who were insecure about Joe Biden are more secure with Kamala Harris' age and cognitive abilities."

Trump has advantages on the economy and immigration:

Americans are more likely to trust Trump over Harris when it comes to handling the economy or immigration, but the difference is slight — 45% say Trump is better positioned to handle the economy, while 38% say that about Harris. The difference is similar in handling immigration. Independents are about twice as likely to trust Trump over Harris on economic issues, and they give him the advantage on immigration as well.

Howard Barnes, a 36-year-old artist in San Francisco, is a Republican who says he trusts Trump over Harris on the border.

"She doesn't really seem to be proactive about it or even interested in it," Barnes said.

Harris has more of an advantage over Trump when it comes to handling issues related to race and racial inequality, abortion policy, and health care. Roughly half of US adults say Harris would do a better job than Trump handling each of those issues, compared with about 3 in 10 for Trump. Harris is especially strong among Democrats, independents and women on the issue of abortion policy. Democrats and independents give her the edge on health care, as well as on issues of race and racial inequality. About two-thirds of Black adults say Harris is the candidate they trust more on that issue, as well as about half of Hispanic adults and white adults.

Harris' strengths also accentuate two areas where Republicans give Trump relatively low marks: abortion policy and issues related to race and racial inequality. Only about 6 in 10 Republicans trust Trump over Harris on these issues.

There are possible signs of trouble for Harris in the poll, though. Only about 6 in 10 Democrats trust her over Trump to do a better job handling the war in Gaza, her lowest rating within her party on the issues asked about. About one-quarter of Democrats say they trust neither Trump nor Harris on this topic.

NZ food bank distributes candy made from potentially lethal Methamphetamine

AP n WELLINGTON

A charity working with homeless people in Auckland, New Zealand unknowingly distributed candies filled with a potentially lethal dose of methamphetamine in its food parcels after the sweets were donated by a member of the public.

Auckland City Mission told reporters on Wednesday that staff had started to contact up to 400 people to track down parcels that could contain the sweets —

which were solid blocks of methamphetamine enclosed in candy wrappers. New Zealand's police have opened a criminal investigation.

The amount of methamphetamine in each candy was up to 300 times the level someone would usually take and could be lethal, according to the New Zealand Drug Foundation — a drug checking and policy organisation, which first tested the candies.

Ben Birks Ang, a Foundation spokesperson, said disguising

drugs as innocuous goods was a common cross-border smuggling technique and more of the candies might have been distributed throughout New Zealand.

The sweets had a high street value of NZ\$ 1,000 (\$608) per candy, which suggested the donation by an unknown member of the public was accidental rather than a deliberate attack, Birks Ang said.

The City Missioner, Helen Robinson, said eight families, including at least one child, had

reported consuming the contaminated candies since Tuesday. No one was hospitalized and Robinson said the "revolting" taste meant most had immediately spat them out.

The charity's food bank only accepts donations of commercially produced food in sealed packaging, Robinson said. The pineapple candies, stamped with the label of Malaysian brand Rinda, "appeared as such when they were donated", arriving in a retail-sized bag, she added.

Calmer winds, reinforcements help battle scattered fires in Athens suburbs

AP n ATHENS

Firefighters in Greece battled scattered fires in hopes of containing the remains of a major wildfire that burned into the northern suburbs of Athens, triggering multiple evacuations and leaving at least one person dead.

With strong winds that had fanned the flames on Sunday and Monday dying down overnight, the fire department on Tuesday said the fire no longer had any active, advancing fronts and firefighters focused on extinguishing hundreds of slow-burning areas. Reinforcements of water-dropping aircraft and firefighters were arriving from abroad after Greece requested assistance from Europe's joint disaster response mechanism. Dozens of homes and businesses were reported to have burned, although authorities did not yet have an exact number. Winds strengthened again Tuesday afternoon, but no new major flare-ups were reported. The European Union's Copernicus Emergency Management Service, which

provides mapping services for natural disasters using satellite images, said that by Monday the blaze had burned 8,500 hectares (21,000 acres, 85 square kilometres).

Helicopters, planes and hundreds of firefighters and vehicles were arriving from France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Serbia and Romania. Turkey's Agriculture and Forestry Minister Ibrahim Yumakli said two firefighting planes and one helicopter had taken off Tuesday morning headed to Greece. "I wish all the best to our colleagues who work with the motto Forests are the world's common heritage," Yumakli posted on the social media platform X.

Relations between neighbours Greece and Turkey are frequently tense over territorial disputes, but they tend to put differences aside and send each other help when faced with natural disasters such as earthquakes and forest fires. Several other Balkan countries also struggled with wildfires. Water-dropping planes and helicopters from Cyprus, Germany and Slovenia were

helping North Macedonia tackle blazes that have been burning for weeks, while Bosnian firefighters and local authorities appealed for international help to tackle fires raging in a national park in the east of the country. The Athens blaze began Sunday afternoon near Lake Marathon, about 35 kilometres (22 miles) northeast of the city, and coursed across Mount Pendeli, descending into the city's suburbs.


Firefighters found the burned body of a woman in an industrial building in the suburb of Vrilissia just after midnight. The woman, an employee of the business, was believed to have become trapped inside the building.

More than a dozen people were treated by paramedics, mostly for smoke inhalation, while five firefighters suffered light burns and breathing problems, the fire department said. Three hospitals, including a children's hospital, two monasteries and a children's home were evacuated on Monday, while about 30 push alerts were sent to cell phones warning people in several Athens

suburbs and outlying settlements to flee.

Authorities said some people who refused to leave their homes later became trapped and required rescuing, endangering the lives of firefighters. The affected areas — at the closest, some 15 kilometres (nine miles) from the heart of Athens — typically have thousands of residents. However, it was unclear how many were away on vacation at the height of the summer season, and how many had obeyed the evacuation orders or stayed to fight the blaze. Ten water-dropping planes and 10 helicopters were fighting the remaining flames Tuesday, backing up hundreds of firefighters on the ground, the fire department said.

Earlier in the week, the fire reached heights of about 25 metres (80 feet). It raced through pine forests left tinder-dry by repeated heat waves this summer. June and July were the hottest months ever recorded in Greece, which also recorded its warmest winter ever. An early start of the fire season this year has strained Greece's firefighting force.



Equinox India Developments Limited

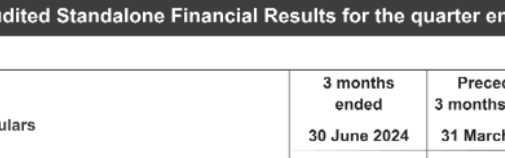
(formerly Indiabulls Real Estate Limited)

Statement of Unaudited Consolidated Financial Results for the quarter ended 30 June 2024

Sl. No.	Particulars	Rs. in million			
		3 months ended 30 June 2024 (Unaudited)	Preceding 3 months ended 31 March 2024 (Refer Note 2)	Corresponding 3 months ended 30 June 2023 (Unaudited)	Previous year ended 31 March 2024 (Audited)
1	Total income from operations	4,033.9	395.4	2,091.0	4,687.5
2	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period (before Tax, Minority Interest and Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(224.0)	(3,010.4)	(479.7)	(3,937.2)
3	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period before Tax and Minority Interest (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(224.0)	(3,010.4)	(6,770.4)	(10,227.9)
4	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period after Tax and Minority Interest (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(284.7)	(3,020.2)	(6,795.5)	(10,386.5)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the year/period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the year/period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(91.4)	(3,036.4)	(6,377.2)	(9,072.0)
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	1,268.7	1,082.2	1,082.2	1,082.2
7	Earnings per Share (of Rs. 2/- each)				
	- Basic (Amount in Rs.)	(0.49)	(5.58)	(12.55)	(19.20)
	- Diluted (Amount in Rs.)	(0.49)	(5.58)	(12.55)	(19.20)

Notes to the consolidated financial results:

- The above consolidated financial results of the Group for the quarter ended 30 June 2024 have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors ("the Board") at its meeting held on 14 August 2024. These results have been subjected to limited review by the Statutory Auditors.
- Figures for the quarter ended 31 March 2024 represent the balancing figures between the audited figures for the full financial year and published reviewed year to date figures upto third quarter of the financial year.



Equinox India Developments Limited

(formerly Indiabulls Real Estate Limited)

Statement of Unaudited Standalone Financial Results for the quarter ended 30 June 2024

Sl. No.	Particulars	Rs. in million			
		3 months ended 30 June 2024 (Unaudited)	Preceding 3 months ended 31 March 2024 (Refer Note 2)	Corresponding 3 months ended 30 June 2023 (Unaudited)	Previous year ended 31 March 2024 (Audited)
1	Total Income from Operations	86.7	523.6	98.0	802.1
2	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(120.4)	96.2	22.4	31.1
3	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(120.4)	(35,733.2)	22.4	(35,798.3)
4	Net (Loss) / Profit for the year/period after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(121.0)	(35,736.3)	22.2	(35,802.3)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the year/period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	70.0	(35,741.8)	438.4	(34,482.5)
6	Earnings per Share (of Rs. 2/- each)				
	- Basic (Amount in Rs.)	(0.21)	(66.05)	0.04	(66.17)
	- Diluted (Amount in Rs.)	(0.21)	(66.05)	0.04	(66.17)
7	Paid-up equity share capital (face value of Rs. 2 per equity share)	1,268.7	1,082.2	1,082.2	1,082.2
8	Other equity				31,839.9

Notes to the standalone financial results:


- The above standalone financial results for the quarter ended 30 June 2024 have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors ("the Board") at its meeting held on 14 August 2024. These results have been subjected to limited review by the Statutory Auditors.
- Figures for the quarter ended 31 March 2024 represent the balancing figures between the audited figures for the full financial year and published reviewed year to date figures upto third quarter of the financial year.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Annual Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosures Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Annual Financial Results are available on the Company's website (<https://equinoxindia.com>) and on the website of BSE (<https://www.bseindia.com>) and NSE (<https://www.nseindia.com>).

Registered Office: Office No 01-1001, WeWork, Blue One Square, Udyog Vihar Phase 4 Rd, Gurugram, Haryana 122016 (CIN) : L45101HR2008PLC095409

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

Place : Mumbai
Date : 14 August 2024

Sachin Shah
Executive Director



JITF INFRALOGISTICS LIMITED

CIN - L60231CT2008PLC016434

Regd. Office: A-11 (7), Udy Society, Sector-3, Tatibandh, Dharsina, Raipur- 492099, Chattisgarh
Corp. Office: Jindal ITF centre, 28, Shivaji Marg, New Delhi- 110015

EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

(₹ Lacs)

S. No.	Particulars	Standalone				Consolidated			
		Quarter Ended		Year ended		Quarter Ended		Year ended	
		30.06.2024 Unaudited	31.03.2024 Refer Note 1	30.06.2023 Unaudited	31.03.2024 Audited	30.06.2024 Unaudited	31.03.2024 Refer Note 1	30.06.2023 Unaudited	31.03.2024 Audited
1	Total Income from operations	83.77	75.63	85.73	320.81	67,000.17	90,904.54	67,437.35	333,624.71
2	Net Profit/(Loss) before tax and share of profit/(loss) of joint venture and exceptional items	6.62	3.78	10.13	22.99	4,242.30	2,809.33	785.56	13,045.51
3	Net Profit/(Loss) before tax and after share of profit/(loss) of joint venture and exceptional items	6.62	3.78	10.13	22.99	4,245.45	4,708.65	790.32	14,955.18
4	Net Profit/ (Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional items)	4.96	2.82	7.57	17.19	2,311.93	4,095.21	(574.62)	9,082.33
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period/year [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period/year (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	5.20	3.77	7.57	18.14	2,401.32	4,613.34	(575.35)	9,641.19
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	514.07	514.07	514.07	514.07	514.07	514.07	514.07	514.07
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as at Balance Sheet date				31,528.69				(56,063.28)
8	Earnings Per Share (of ₹ 2/- each)(Not annualised)								
	(1) Basic (₹)	0.02*	0.01*	0.03*	0.07	3.75*	12.67*	(5.81)*	13.78
	(2) Diluted (₹)	0.02*	0.01*	0.03*	0.07	3.75*	12.67*	(5.81)*	13.78

Note:

- The figures for the quarter ended March 31, 2024 are the balancing figures between the audited figures for the financial year ended March 31, 2024 and the published unaudited figures for the nine months ended December 31, 2023.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Standalone and Consolidated financial results for the quarter on 30th June, 2024 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Standalone and Consolidated results for the quarter ended on 30th June, 2024 are available on the websites of stock exchanges (www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com) and on the Company's website (www.jitfinfra.com).

On behalf of Board of Director of JITF Infralogistics Limited

Sd/-
Amarendra Kumar Sinha
Whole Time Director
DIN: 08190565

Place: Raipur
Date: August 14, 2024

Sensex snaps 2-day losing streak

PTI n MUMBAI

Snapping its two-day losing streak, benchmark BSE Sensex closed higher by 150 points on Wednesday following a rally in IT stocks amid a surge in the US markets on renewed hopes of a rate cut by the Fed in September.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 149.85 points or 0.19 per cent to settle at 79,105.88 with half of its constituents ending higher. During the day, it gained 272.91 points or 0.34 per cent to hit a high of 79,228.94.

The NSE Nifty closed marginally up by 4.75 points or 0.02 per cent at 24,143.75. As many 26 Nifty shares closed lower while 24 advanced.

"The domestic market traded within a narrow range; even as global markets saw a positive turnaround. The IT index edged up, reflecting optimism for improved US CPI data expected later today, which could increase the scope of a loose monetary policy from the Fed," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Among Sensex firms, Tata Consultancy Services rose the most by 2.3 per cent. HCL



Technologies, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors were the biggest gainers. On the other hand, UltraTech Cement, JSW Steel, Tata Steel, Adani Ports, Power Grid and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggards. Mining shares declined after the Supreme Court rejected the Centre's plea for prospective effect of its July 25 verdict, which upheld the power of states to levy tax on mineral rights and mineral-bearing land, and allowed them to seek a refund of royalty from April 1, 2005 onwards. NMDC tanked 6 per cent, Hind Copper by over 4 per

cent, Nalco by 2.7 per cent. "The PPI (Producer Price Inflation) numbers from the US indicate softening of inflation, and a confirmation of this declining trend is likely from the CPI numbers coming today. The US market moved up yesterday in anticipation of this and a rate cut by the Fed in September," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.57 per cent and midcap index dipped 0.41 per cent. Among the indices, IT jumped 1.41 per cent, teck surged 1.33 per cent, consumer durables went up 0.13 per cent and consumer discretionary (0.09 per cent). Commodities, energy, telecommunication, utilities, metal, power, realty and services were the laggards.

In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled higher while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower. European markets were trading in positive territory. The US markets ended significantly higher on Tuesday. Equity markets would remain closed on Thursday for Independence Day.

Wholesale inflation falls to 3-month low of 2.04 per cent in July

PTI n NEW DELHI

Wholesale inflation fell to a 3-month low of 2.04 per cent in July on decline in prices of food items especially vegetables, government data released on Wednesday showed.

The decline in wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation in July came after it rose for four months in a row till June, when it was 3.36 per cent. It was (-) 1.23 per cent in July last year. In April wholesale inflation stood at 1.19 per cent. As per the data, food inflation in July was 3.45 per cent, down from 10.87 per cent in June, mainly due to month-on-month decline in prices of vegetables, cereals, pulses and onion.

Vegetables recorded a deflation of 8.93 per cent in July, against a 38.76 per cent inflation in the previous month. "Positive rate of inflation in July, 2024 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, manufacture of food products, mineral oils, crude petroleum & natural gas, other manufacturing etc," the Commerce and Industry Ministry said in a statement. The annual rate of inflation of the manufactured Products group increased to 1.58 per



cent in July 2024, from 1.43 per cent in June 2024.

Inflation in fuel and power basket rose to 1.72 per cent in July, from 1.03 per cent in the previous month. ICRA Senior Economist Rahul Agrawal said the core (non-food manufacturing) WPI continued to inch up for the fifth consecutive month, touching a 17-month high of 1.2 per cent in July 2024, even as the index contracted on a sequential basis for the second consecutive month.

"The near-term outlook for WPI inflation remains benign. As per the data released by the Department of Consumer Affairs, the prices of a majority of food items have dipped on a sequential basis in August 2024 so far, amid a pick-up in the monsoon and a healthy

progression in kharif sowing. "This is likely to aid in containing the base effect-led uptick in the primary food articles inflation print in the ongoing month. Overall, ICRA expects the WPI inflation to remain unchanged at 2 per cent in August 2024," Agrawal said. The decline in July WPI was in line with the retail inflation data for the month. Retail inflation fell to a near 5-year low of 3.54 per cent in July, data released earlier this week showed.

Sanjeev Agrawal, President, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry said: "Going ahead, we expect the continuous softening of WPI inflation to reduce the costs of production levels and boost consumption demand in the country."

India's exports fall 1.2 per cent to USD 33.98 billion in July

PTI n NEW DELHI

India's merchandise exports in July dipped 1.2 per cent to USD 33.98 billion from USD 34.39 billion in the year-ago month, according to government data released on Wednesday.

Imports increased by about 7.45 per cent to USD 57.48 billion in July against USD 53.49 billion a year ago. "The trade deficit, or the gap between imports and exports, during the month under review stood at USD 23.5 billion. Briefing media on data, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said that going by the current trend, the country's total exports of goods and services will cross last year's figure."

India's merchandise exports rose by 2.56 per cent to USD 35.2 billion in June, even as the trade deficit widened to USD 20.98 billion. Exports during April-July this fiscal increased 4.15 per cent to USD 144.12 billion, and imports grew 7.57 per cent to USD 229.7 billion.

Rupee rises two paise to close at 83.95 against US dollar

PTI n MUMBAI

The rupee traded in a narrow range to settle 2 paise higher at 83.95 (provisional) against the American currency on Wednesday, helped by a sharp decline in the US Dollar against major currencies overseas.

Forex traders said a mixed-to-positive tone in the domestic market also supported the rupee.

However, foreign fund outflows and geopolitical tensions in the Middle East restricted the rise in the local unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.90 but soon fell into the negative zone and touched an intraday low of 83.97 against the American currency. The domestic unit finally settled at 83.95 (provisional) against the American currency, 2 paise higher from its previous close.

On Tuesday, the rupee settled for the day on a flat note at 83.97 against the US dollar. "We expect the rupee to



trade with a slight negative bias on elevated commodity prices and heightened geopolitical tension in the Middle East between Israel and Iran. "However, the weak Dollar and rising odds of a rate cut by the US Fed may support the rupee. Positive global markets may also support the rupee at lower levels," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. Choudhary further noted that traders may take cues from US CPI data today. "USD/INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.75 to Rs 84.20," it added. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies,

was trading 0.13 per cent lower at 102.42.

Forex traders said the US dollar has weakened against majors post the US Producer Price Index (PPI) print, which came in softer than anticipated, leaving the Dollar Index vulnerable to further correction. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.28 per cent to USD 80.92 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex advanced 149.85 points, or 0.19 per cent, to 79,105.88 points. The Nifty rose 4.75 points, or 0.02 per cent, to 24,143.75 points.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Tuesday, as they offloaded shares worth Rs 2,107.17 crore, according to exchange data. On the domestic macroeconomic front, wholesale inflation fell to a 3-month low of 2.04 per cent in July on the decline in prices of food items especially vegetables, government data released on Wednesday showed.

UIDAI exempted from income tax for 5 years



PTI n NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has exempted the income of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) from payment of income tax for five years till fiscal 2027-28.

Accordingly, grants/subsidies received from the central government; fees/subscriptions, including RTI fee, tender fee, sale of scrap, PVC card; authentication, enrolment and updation service charges received; term/linked deposits; and interest on bank deposits earned by UIDAI would be exempt from income tax. A notification to this effect was issued by the Central

Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) under the Ministry of Finance.

"This notification shall be applicable for assessment year 2024-2025, 2025-2026, 2026-2027, 2027-2028 and 2028-2029," it added.

UIDAI is a statutory authority established under the provisions of the Aadhaar Act, 2016, to ensure compliance with Aadhaar Act, and make regulations & rules consistent with the Act. This notification would be effective subject to the conditions that UIDAI would not engage in any commercial activity; activities and the nature of the specified income shall remain unchanged throughout financial years.

Domestic passenger vehicle wholesales dips in July: SIAM

PTI n NEW DELHI

Passenger vehicle wholesales in India declined 2.5 per cent year-on-year to 3,41,510 units in July, impacted by high base effect as well as companies reducing vehicle dispatches to dealers amid moderation in demand.

The overall passenger vehicle (PV) dispatches from companies to dealers stood at 3,50,355 units in July 2023, automobile industry body SIAM said on Wednesday.

Utility vehicles continued to drive sales of PVs, clocking 1,88,217 units last month, as against 1,80,831 units in July 2023, a growth of 4.1 per cent, as per the data issued by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM). Passenger cars, however, recorded a drop of 12 per cent at 96,652 units, as against 1,09,859 units in the same month last year.

Industry observers pointed out that after high-paced growth witnessed in the past couple of years, the industry is witnessing moderation in demand. Besides, Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) also



undertook stock corrections in July to reduce inventory in the network.

As per SIAM data, two-wheeler wholesales grew by 12.5 per cent to 14,41,694 units last month, as compared to 12,82,054 units in July 2023.

Motorcycles wholesales were up 4.1 per cent at 8,50,489 units in July 2024, as against 8,17,206 units in the year-ago month, SIAM said. Scooters sales were up 29.2 per cent at 5,53,642 units last month, as against 4,28,640 units in the year-ago period. Three-wheeler wholesales also rose 5.1 per cent to 59,073 units from 56,204 units in July last year.

"Though three-wheeler and

two-wheeler segments are performing well, there has been some de-growth of passenger vehicles and commercial vehicles in July 2024, compared to July 2023," SIAM President Vinod Aggarwal said in a statement.

He, however, said the above average rainfall coupled with upcoming festive season is likely to again propel growth in the short term.

"In addition, enabling budget announcements which emphasise on overall economic growth with fiscal support for infrastructure and rural sector should augur well for the auto sector in the medium-term," Aggarwal said.

Risk-based premium for deposit insurance merits consideration: RBI Deputy Governor

PTI n JAIPUR

Reserve Bank Deputy Governor Swaminathan J on Wednesday said implementation of risk-based premium for deposit insurance merits consideration as it will ensure that institutions with higher risk profiles contribute more to the insurance fund.

Speaking at a conference here, he also said that as the financial sector becomes more digitised, deposit insurers must work closely with regulators and supervisors to strengthen oversight mechanisms. This includes regularly updating regulatory frameworks to incorporate emerging risks associated with digital payments, cybersecurity, and fintech innovations. By adopting a proactive stance, deposit insurers can help ensure that the financial institutions under their purview are adequately prepared to manage these risks, thereby safeguarding depositor confidence.

Swaminathan was addressing the International Conference of the International Association of Deposit Insurers - Asia Pacific Regional Committee (IADI-APRC) hosted by the Deposit Insurance Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC). He further said the implementation of risk-based premium for deposit insurance merits consideration. "By tying insurance premiums to the level of risk posed by individual financial institutions, deposit insurers can incentivize banks to adopt stronger risk management practices. This approach not only enhances the overall stability of the financial system but also ensures that institutions with higher risk profiles contribute more to the insurance fund," the deputy governor said. He also emphasised that deposit insurers can further mitigate technology risks by relying on supervisory rating assessments that incorporate evaluation of a financial institution's technological and operational resilience. By using these assessments as a basis for setting insurance premiums or determining intervention strategies, deposit insurers can ensure that their actions are informed by a comprehensive understanding of each



institution's risk profile, Swaminathan added. The senior RBI official also asked deposit insurers to prioritise crisis preparedness and develop comprehensive contingency plans that account for technology-induced disruptions. This includes conducting regular stress tests and simulations to assess the potential impact of cyber incidents or fintech failures on financial institutions and the broader financial system, he said. The evolving technological landscape presents both significant challenges and opportunities for deposit insurers. By adopting a proactive, risk-based approach, including enhanced oversight, risk-based premiums, reliance on supervisory ratings, faster claim settlements, and industry collaboration, deposit insurers can effectively manage these risks, the deputy governor said.

Builders, financial institutions optimistic of growth in realty sector: Report

PTI n NEW DELHI

Real estate developers and financial institutions are cautiously optimistic about growth in the realty sector in the next six months amid geopolitical uncertainties, according to Knight Frank-NAREDCO.

Real estate consultant Knight Frank and realtors' body NAREDCO released 41st edition of the Knight Frank-NAREDCO Real Estate Sentiment Index Q2, 2024 (April-June 2024) report, showing that the current sentiment index score has moderated to 65 from its all-

time high of 72 in Q1, 2024. The future sentiment score declined to 65 from 73.

"While both current and future sentiments remain firmly in the positive zone suggesting a continued belief in the sector's long-term prospects, the scores reflect a more tempered view on recent real estate growth, influenced by election and budget speculations," Knight Frank said.

The adjustment in the future sentiment index reflects a positive yet more conservative outlook for the near term. "This recalibration may be attributed to anticipatory caution around potential



macroeconomic developments, including fiscal policies and geopolitical events, that could influence market confidence. Despite this decline, the sentiment remains in positive territory, showcasing the sector's resilience with notable activity in residential and office

markets," the consultant said. The quarterly report captures the current and future sentiments towards the real estate sector, the economic climate and funding availability as perceived by the supply-side stakeholders and financial institutions. A score of 50 represents a neutral view or status quo; a score above 50 demonstrates a positive sentiment; and a score below 50 indicates a negative sentiment.

Knight Frank India Chairman and Managing Director Shishir Bajjal said the current and future sentiment score of 65 is still in positive, however, this

recent dip shouldn't raise concerns as it simply indicates a shift toward cautious optimism in the real estate sector.

The economy remains positive with key indicators seeing stability while remaining resilient against the global geopolitical developments, he added.

"With positive sentiment driven by sustained growth in residential and office markets, this adjustment highlights the sector's careful and measured approach, ensuring continued stability amidst ongoing economic and political developments," Bajjal said.

Govt monitoring trade with Bangladesh: Commerce Secretary

PTI n NEW DELHI

India is monitoring the situation in Bangladesh and taking steps to improve the cross-border trade between the two nations, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said on Wednesday. Domestic exporters have expressed concerns over the political crisis in Bangladesh and said developments in the neighbouring country would have implications on bilateral trade.

Barthwal said that the situation in Bangladesh is improving fast and "we are monitoring the trade which is happening across the borders

and what we feel that is whatever disruptions were there, they have been largely addressed". "We also believe that between India and Bangladesh, there should be improvement in trade. So we feel that whatever best efforts, we can make for improving the trade, we should do that and we are doing that". On August 8, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus returned to Bangladesh from Paris to take oath as the head of Bangladesh's interim government, three days after Sheikh Hasina resigned as Prime Minister and fled the country following

widespread protests against her regime.

India's exports to Bangladesh in July rose by 11.13 per cent to USD 803.52 million. During April-July, exports increased by 10.76 per cent to USD 3.58 billion.

Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and India is the second biggest trade partner of the neighbouring country in Asia.

India's exports to Bangladesh dipped to USD 11 billion in 2023-24 from USD 12.21 billion in 2022-23. Imports too declined to USD 1.84 billion in the last fiscal from USD 2 billion in 2022-23.

NBCC reports growth in operational income

PNS n NEW DELHI

The Board of Directors in the meeting held on Tuesday approved the financial results of the company for the quarter ended on 30.06.2024. Company reported standalone income from operations of Rs 1627.34 crore for Q1 FY 2024-25 compared to Rs 1478.07 crore for Q1 FY 2023-24. Consolidated income from operations for Q1 FY 2024-25 stood at Rs 2144.16 crore compared to Rs 1926.09 crore for Q1 FY 2023-24.

Profit Before Tax (PBT) on standalone basis increased from Rs 84.67 crore to Rs

116.25 crore and on consolidated basis increased from Rs 103.78 crore to Rs 143.84 crore on YoY basis for quarter ended 30.06.2024.

Profit After Tax (PAT) on standalone basis has shown growth from Rs 63.13 crore to Rs 86.63 crore and on consolidated basis from Rs 77.41 crore to Rs 107.19 crore on YoY basis for the Q1 FY 2024-25.

NBCC with its robust order book and a strategic focus on redevelopment, PSU land monetisation, real estate development, overseas expansion and PMC works is well positioned to contribute towards a "Vikshit Bharat".

BIG STARS KOHLI, ROHIT EXEMPTED AS GILL, PANT, RAHUL, JADEJA SET TO PLAY DULEEP TROPHY

PTI NEW DELHI

Senior stars including skipper Rohit Sharma, premier batter Virat Kohli, pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and leading spinner R Ashwin received exemptions as the national selectors struck a fine balance between domestic performers and potential talent while picking up four squads for the Duleep Trophy starting September 5 in Bengaluru.

The tournament will feature international stars such as Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, leading all-rounders Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav and pacer Mohammed Siraj. T20 captain Suryakumar Yadav, who had played one Test against Australia in 2023 has also been picked. Apart

from Surya, the others have confirmed slot in the team. Wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant, who was part of India's T20 World Cup winning team, will also be featuring in the tournament, making it his first red-ball assignment after coming back from that horrific car accident in 2022. Also back in business will be another left-handed keeper Ishan Kishan, who was

removed from BCCI's central contracts list after he skipped the Ranji Trophy tournament last season giving priority to cash-rich IPL. Sarfaraz Khan and Dhruv Jurel, both of whom played vital role in India's home series win against England are also in the mix. Keepers Aryan Juyal and Abhishek Porel are also part of the various squads.

JSW BPSL

May the tricolors fill with peace prosperity and purity in the life of the people of our nation

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

VIII: Thekkoloi, PO: Lapanga, Tehsil: Rengali - 768 212, Odisha
Phone: +91-663-2535000, 6636000, 6634000, 2535154, 253581

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
e-Procurement Notice, ANGUL (R&B) DIVISION
Bid Identification No.04 of 2024-25
e-mail ID - angulrbddivision@yahoo.co.in

B-173

- Number of Works : 01 (One) number of building work
- Approximate estimated cost : Rs.16.60 Lakh.
- Period of completion : 03 (Three) Calendar months
- Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal : Dt. 20.08.2024 at 10.00 A.M.
- Last date / Time for receipt of bid in the portal : Dt. 29.08.2024 up to 5.00 P.M.
- Date of opening Bid : Dt. 30.08.2024 at 11.00 A.M.
- Name and address of the Office Inviting Bid : Superintending Engineer, Angul (R&B) Division, Angul
- The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only.

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>

Superintending Engineer, Angul (R&B) Division

OIPR-34074/11/0002/2426

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
P. H. DIVISION, CUTTACK
e-mail ID - sephtct521@gmail.com
sephtct521@gmail.com

e-procurement Notice for Bid Identification No. SEPH-DIVISION, CTC- 12 of 2024-25

- Name of the work : - 1 No PH Work
- Estimated cost : - Rs. 959.65 Lakh
- Period of completion : - 2 months
- Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal : - 20.08.2024 from 11.00 AM to 03.09.2024 upto 5:00 PM
- Last date & time of seeking clarification : - 27.08.2024 upto 5.00 P.M
- Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal : - 03.09.2024 upto 5.00 PM
- Date & time of opening of bids : - 04.09.2024 at 11.00 AM
- Name and address of the officer inviting bid : - The Superintending Engineer, P.H.Division, Cuttack-753004, Odisha. Ph. (0671) 2441063, email :- sephtct521@gmail.com

Further details can be seen from e-procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>

Additional Chief Engineer, Superintending Engineer P.H. Division, Cuttack

OIPR-13226/11/0012/2426

ODISHA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
PLOT NO. 4, CHUNOKOLI, SHAILASHREE VIHAR, BHUBANESWAR - 751021
Tel. No. (0674) 2721048/ 2721049 (PBX), Fax : (0674) 2721053/2721057
E-mail : orierc@gmail.com, Website: www.orierc.org

PUBLIC NOTICE
Case No. 49 of 2024

Hearing of common application under Section 86 (1) (a) of the Electricity Act, 2003 for determination of Feed-In-Tariff under PM-KUSUM-A Scheme and for approval of the Draft PPA.

M/s.TP Central Odisha Distribution Ltd.(TPCODL), M/s. TP Western Odisha Distribution Ltd. (TPWODL), M/s. TP Northern Odisha Distribution Ltd.(TPNODL) and M/s. TP Southern Odisha Ltd.(TPSODL) have filed a common application before this Commission for determination of Feed-In-Tariff under PM-KUSUM-A Scheme and for approval of the Draft PPA. The Commission has registered it as Case No. 49 of 2024 and has decided to dispose of this case through a public hearing. The common petition along with all Annexures submitted by M/s. TPCODL in this regard is available in OERC website (www.orierc.org) and also in TPCODL, TPWODL, TPNODL & TPSODL's website www.tpcentralodisha.com, www.tpwesternodisha.com, www.tpnodl.com and www.tpsouthernodisha.com. The persons/ organizations those who are interested to participate in the above proceeding may file their objections/suggestions, if any, on the common petition of M/s. TPCODL other DISCOMs of Odisha on or before 03.09.2024 through affidavits with a copy to the petitioners. M/s. TPCODL, M/s. TPWODL, M/s. TPNODL & M/s. TPSODL are directed to file their rejoinders to the objections/suggestions of the Respondents with this Commission by 03.09.2024 with a copy to the Respondents. Those persons who have filed their objection/suggestion by the due date to the above common application of M/s. TPCODL, M/s. TPWODL, M/s. TPNODL & M/s. TPSODL shall be summoned to participate in the hearing of the application by the Commission. The case shall be heard on 03.09.2024 at 11.00 AM by the Commission in Hybrid mode in its Office at Bhubaneswar.

By Order of the Commission
Sd/-
SECRETARY

Dated: 14.08.2024

ODISHA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
PLOT NO. 4, CHUNOKOLI, SHAILASHREE VIHAR, BHUBANESWAR - 751021
Tel. No. (0674) 2721048/ 2721049 (PBX), Fax : (0674) 2721053/2721057
E-mail : orierc@gmail.com, Website: www.orierc.org

PUBLIC NOTICE
Case No. 49 of 2024

Hearing of common application under Section 86 (1) (a) of the Electricity Act, 2003 for determination of Feed-In-Tariff under PM-KUSUM-A Scheme and for approval of the Draft PPA.

M/s.TP Central Odisha Distribution Ltd.(TPCODL), M/s. TP Western Odisha Distribution Ltd. (TPWODL), M/s. TP Northern Odisha Distribution Ltd.(TPNODL) and M/s. TP Southern Odisha Ltd.(TPSODL) have filed a common application before this Commission for determination of Feed-In-Tariff under PM-KUSUM-A Scheme and for approval of the Draft PPA. The Commission has registered it as Case No. 49 of 2024 and has decided to dispose of this case through a public hearing. The common petition along with all Annexures submitted by M/s. TPCODL in this regard is available in OERC website (www.orierc.org) and also in TPCODL, TPWODL, TPNODL & TPSODL's website www.tpcentralodisha.com, www.tpwesternodisha.com, www.tpnodl.com and www.tpsouthernodisha.com. The persons/ organizations those who are interested to participate in the above proceeding may file their objections/suggestions, if any, on the common petition of M/s. TPCODL other DISCOMs of Odisha on or before 03.09.2024 through affidavits with a copy to the petitioners. M/s. TPCODL, M/s. TPWODL, M/s. TPNODL & M/s. TPSODL are directed to file their rejoinders to the objections/suggestions of the Respondents with this Commission by 03.09.2024 with a copy to the Respondents. Those persons who have filed their objection/suggestion by the due date to the above common application of M/s. TPCODL, M/s. TPWODL, M/s. TPNODL & M/s. TPSODL shall be summoned to participate in the hearing of the application by the Commission. The case shall be heard on 03.09.2024 at 11.00 AM by the Commission in Hybrid mode in its Office at Bhubaneswar.

By Order of the Commission
Sd/-
SECRETARY

Dated: 14.08.2024

MCL

Saluting the Martyrs who brought us Freedom

CELEBRATING **78th** INDEPENDENCE DAY

SERVING THE NATION 24x7

MAHANADI COALFIELDS LIMITED
(A Govt. of India Undertaking & Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)
Regd. Office : Jagruti Vihar, Burla, Dist: Sambalpur-768020 (Odisha)

www.mahanadicoal.in | [@mahanadicoal](https://www.facebook.com/mahanadicoal)



INDIA CAN DO A HAT-TRICK OF TEST SERIES TRIUMPHS IN AUSTRALIA: RAVI

PTI DUBAI
 India is capable of a hat-trick of Test series triumphs in Australia given the quality of its bowlers and the strong batting lineup that has the likes of

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, feels former head coach Ravi Shastri. India have won the last two Test series in Australia and have held onto the prestigious Border-Gavaskar Trophy since

the Kangaroos claimed a 2-0 series victory on home soil at the beginning of 2015. "With (Jasprit) Bumrah fit, (Mohammed) Shami fit, you've got Mohammed Siraj there. You've got the likes of

(Ravinchandran) Ashwin and (Ravindra) Jadeja and some very good bench strength as well... One can't wait for that series to start and (I think) India can do the hat-trick (of series victories in Australia)," Shastri told ICC.

"We know what Australia will be wanting (revenge). They will be thirsty, they'd be looking to go at the throats of the Indians because they've been beaten there (in Australia) twice. "The attack is pretty much the same. One of the greatest fast bowling attacks — (one of the greatest) all-round attacks when you add Nathan Lyon there — in a long, long time. And one of the best in the history of the game. They'll be looking for those 20 wickets, game after game to help Australia win the series."

Australia legend Ricky Ponting had recently predicted a 3-1 series win for his country but Shastri said that Indian bowlers can get the job done provided their batters are up to the challenge. "It is going to be one heck of a series and India have every chance of making it a hat-trick because they've got their bowlers fit and if they can bat well, they can tickle (beat) Australia once again," said Shastri. India will play a five-match series Down Under beginning with the Test at Perth in November this year.

The Pat Cummins-led Australia are upbeat after they exacted sweet revenge over Rohit Sharma's side during the World Test Championship final at The Oval last year, and Shastri feels that a hurting home side would be more than keen to re-claim the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "The Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia over five Test matches is going to be a humdinger. Remember, India have beaten Australia twice on the last two tours and Australia have not had a hand on the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in almost a decade and that's the reason why everyone will be waiting for these two heavyweights of Test match cricket over the last five to eight years to go head-to-head," added Shastri.

With Australia too boasting a strong bowling line-up, Shastri feels that revenge will be on the home team's mind because of successive series losses they have suffered in the last two editions.