



RAIPUR REGION
Bijapur athletes shine with gold medals Pg 06

Manu ends 5th in
10m air pistol final;
women’s team also
misses medal



72nd National
Film Awards
celebrate
India’s finest
talent



Central Chronicle

Apex Court gives split verdict on CEC selection law

Plea in SC challenging 2023 law need larger Constitution bench review.

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: In a significant development, the Supreme Court on Wednesday gave split opinions on whether a batch of pleas challenging the validity of a 2023 law that excludes the Chief Justice of India from the panel for selecting the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) should be referred to a larger Constitution bench.

A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma, which heard the pleas for five



days, said that due to a difference of opinion, the matters be placed before CJI Surya Kant on the administrative side for constitution of a bench of appropriate strength for an effective and authoritative adjudication. The bench also requested the CJI to explore the possi-

bility of setting up a permanent five-judge Constitution bench for deciding seminal issues.

The batch of pleas challenged the constitutional validity of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Ser-

Independent ECI ensures fair polls.

Justice Dipankar Datta, Supreme Court

vice and Term of Office) Act, 2023, which excludes the Chief Justice of India (CJI) from the selection panel for appointing election commissioners and Chief Election Commissioners.

On March 2, 2023, in a landmark verdict aimed at insulating the appointment of the CEC and ECs from the executive's interference, a five-judge Constitution bench ruled

that their appointments will be made by the president on the advice of a committee comprising the prime minister, the leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha and the CJI. Justice Datta, who headed the bench, refused to accept the Centre's submission that the petitions raise seminal questions of constitutional importance and should be referred to the five-judge Constitution bench. Justice Satish Chandra Sharma, another judge on the bench, disagreed with the views of Justice Datta.

‘Differing EC views reflect democracy’

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Wednesday said that reports about three election commissioners sharing differing views during official deliberations show the Election Commission (EC) is functioning in a democratic manner.

The ruling party said the report demolishes the opposition parties' allegation that the poll panel is "dictatorial".

The BJP's reaction came amid a row over a media report that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had red-flagged multiple issues, including deletion of names, in various states during the pan-India Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' list.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters here, party spokesperson Sambit Patra said, "The media reports saying that the election commissioners shared differing views in official deliberations is a reflection of pure democracy."

"If there is no communication and exchange of views among the election commissioners who conduct polls, the opposition parties would allege 'dictatorship' and call them 'yes men' of the government," he charged.

The BJP leader said that the Election Commission's statement issued on the issue shows that neither the poll panel nor any other constitutional body in India is under a "dictatorial rule".

NEWSLINE

NEW DELHI

Super El Niño

The prevailing 'super El Niño' over the equatorial Pacific might cause around 15,800 additional heat-related deaths in India over the next six months, compared to a normal year, a new study claimed on Wednesday.

The climate phenomenon could push global land temperatures 1.2 degrees Celsius above normal in the coming months, resembling the higher temperatures that climate change is projected to deliver in the next 20 years, the report by the University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute said. El Niño conditions that emerged in June are expected to intensify into "a very strong event" in the coming months and persist through February 2027, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said.

NEW DELHI

Health risks

A study by DU researchers indicates significant heavy metal contamination in agricultural soil and vegetables cultivated along a stretch of the Yamuna in the capital, raising concerns over potential health risks to consumers of crops irrigated with untreated wastewater. The study, published in the Energy Nexus journal, examined accumulation of heavy metals in commonly consumed vegetables and assessed their potential non-carcinogenic and carcinogenic risks. The research team, led by Dinabandhu Sahoo, senior professor and head of the botany department in DU, analysed the presence of molybdenum, aluminium, zinc, nickel, chromium, cadmium and lead in the agricultural soil and vegetables grown along the Yamuna.

UNITED NATIONS

‘Wartime address’

Iran's president said Wednesday that his people have been "victims of terrorism" by the United States, delivering a rare wartime speech at the UN General Assembly a day after President Donald Trump said he could "annihilate" the Islamic Republic. In a defiant speech, President Masoud Pezeshkian held up large photos of the late Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the more than 150 schoolchildren killed on the first days of the war. "We have only defended ourselves. We are not terrorists," Pezeshkian said at the General Assembly. "Our innocent people have been the targets of cowardly attacks and aggressions imposed upon our country. And we defended ourselves with utmost strength. America and Israel attacked us."

‘Rs 45 Lakh CSR payment to ex-CGPSC chief Sonwani’

Press Trust Of India

RAIPUR: The ED has claimed that arrested former Chhattisgarh Public Service Commission (CGPSC) chairman Taman Singh Sonwani received Rs 45 lakh through an institution controlled by him in return for favouring a businessman's son and daughter-in-law in the 2021 state service examination.

The money he received was shown as corporate social respon-



sibility (CSR) funding, it said, adding that the total proceeds of crime in this case is quantified so far to the tune of Rs 3.28 crore.

The federal agency on Tuesday filed its first prosecution complaint before a special court in Raipur in connection

with the alleged irregularities and corruption in the CGPSC examination scam during the previous Congress government in the state.

Seven accused - Sonwani, Director of Shri Bajrang Power and Ispat Ltd Shrawan Goyal, the then CGPSC Deputy Controller Examination) Lalit Ganvir, Utkarsh Chandrakar (nephew of K K Chandravanshi, a former personal assistant to the then CM Bhupesh Baghel) and others.

Smriti Irani is BJP in-charge for Chh'garh

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Wednesday appointed in-charges and co-in-charges for all 28 states and eight Union territories, assigning Haryana and Chhattisgarh to national general secretary Smriti Irani and Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand to party vice-president Ram Madhav, officials said.

In a reshuffle, the BJP has elevated Anil Baluni as coordinator of its communication department, which includes the party's national media cell and



social media unit. Ashish Usha Agrawal, who was recently appointed co-convenor of the BJP's national media department, has also been elevated as its convenor, a post Baluni held so far. "All these appoint-

Smriti's experience strengthens BJP: Sai

CM Vishnu Deo Sai on Wednesday said Smriti Irani's appointment as BJP in-charge for Chhattisgarh will further strengthen the organisation and the resolve for public service. "I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Smriti Irani ji on her appointment as the State In-charge for Chhattisgarh by our national president Nitin Nabin," Sai said on X. He said Irani's extensive national experience and her dedication to the organisation will be of great help. Sai also congratulated Siddharth Shambhu on being appointed as the party's co-in-charge for Chhattisgarh, saying his active participation will add momentum to organisational activities.

ments made by BJP president Nitin Nabin come into effect immediately," the party said in a notification. According to the notification, senior BJP

leader Vinay Sahasrabudhe will serve as the in-charge for Delhi, while Jamyang Tsering Namgyal and Darshana Jardosh will be the co-in-charges.

IRAN PROBLEM SOLUTION |

Trump backs India-Middle East-Europe corridor

Press Trust Of India

UNITED NATIONS: US President Donald Trump has said that his administration strongly supports the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC), saying there is a need to shift energy infrastructure away from Iranian checkpoints amid multiple strikes on



West Asian countries.

Trump made these remarks while addressing a multilateral meeting with the Gulf Cooperation Council on

Tuesday on the margins of the high-level UN General Assembly session. "Iran's terrorist attacks on commercial shipping in neighbouring countries have shown the need to shift Middle East energy infrastructure away from the Iranian checkpoints," Trump said.

"That's why my

administration strongly supports the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor and other places... the form of getting oil out, whether it's pipelines or anything else, and together we're on the verge of overcoming challenges that have plagued this region for decades," he said.

Blood Donation Mahakumbh



People attend the 'Ayurveda Seva Sammelan and Blood Donation Mahakumbh' organized as part of the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' on National Ayurveda Day, in Raipur. | Photo PTI

PROUD MOMENT |

‘Ayushman Bharat No1 in hospital admissions’

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Wednesday lauded the eight years of the Ayushman Bharat scheme, saying it has provided free treatment to over 50 crore people and facilitated over 13 crore hospital admissions.

Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) was launched on September 23, 2018, to provide cashless hospitalisation cover



of up to Rs 5 lakh per family annually for secondary and tertiary care. It is the financial protection component of the broader Ayushman Bharat programme. The programme also includes Ayushman

NUMBER

50

Free treatment reaches 50 cr, enables 13 crore admissions.

Arogya Mandirs, which seek to strengthen comprehensive primary healthcare, along with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission and the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mis-

sion. In a video post on X, BJP national spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari said beneficiaries under the scheme do not have to pay for treatment up to Rs 5 lakh and described the initiative as a major welfare measure of the Narendra Modi government.

"Eight years have been completed. Do you know that in the last eight years, over 50 crore people have been getting free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh," Bhandari said.

Modi government's 2-day Chintan Shivir gets underway

Press Trust Of India

PM Modi-led session focuses on governance priorities.

NEW DELHI: A 'Chintan Shivir' of entire council of ministers of the Modi government began on Wednesday where ongoing works across the ministries and departments, future plans and next generation reforms are being deliberated. Chaired by

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the key focus of the two-day brainstorming session is on stocktaking, improving coordination, preparing the government's future agenda, future planning, reviewing the work underway on welfare schemes, and infrastructure projects, among others, official sources said. The exercise of taking stock of different aspects of the government through such conclave

is expected to be held next week too. The 'Chintan Shivir' being held on Wednesday and Thursday will identify the next set of ideas, reforms and priorities towards a 'Viksit Bharat@2047', the sources said. The 'Viksit Bharat' exercise has been underway since 2021 and 10 sectoral groups of secretaries were constituted to prepare the 'Vision@2047' and its short-term and long-term roadmap.

Raipur



Smriti Irani faces challenge of addressing BJP factionalism.

Deepak Baij
PCC Head

Vegetable vendors protest RMC encroachment drive at Bhatagaon

Encroachment removal drive at Bhatagaon market sparked a major protest Wednesday.

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: Tension prevailed near Bhatagaon market on Wednesday morning when the Raipur Municipal Corporation carried out an encroachment removal drive against roadside vegetable vendors. The action triggered strong opposition from traders, leading to a heated confrontation between vendors and corporation officials and employees.

According to officials, the corporation team had reached the area as part of its drive to remove roadside encroachments and improve management of the unorganised market. During the action, some



vendors protested against the removal of their shops and goods. The situation reportedly escalated into pushing, abuse and physical confrontation. Corporation officials and employees were allegedly injured during the incident, while government

work was also disrupted. Following the confrontation, a revenue department official submitted a written complaint at Purani Basti police station. Police subsequently registered an FIR and deployed additional personnel in the area to prevent further

FACTFILE

• Vendors oppose corporation action, clash erupts.

escalation.

The protesting vendors, however, alleged that the corporation team manhandled and pushed them during the drive. They claimed they were removing their goods themselves and had requested officials to give them time. The vendors maintained that they did not assault any government employee. Several traders, including Gunja Sonkar, Chhavilal Sonkar and Vasu Sonkar, reportedly opposed the removal

drive.

The vendors said the Bhatagaon market is their primary source of livelihood and that many have been selling vegetables there for years. They said they arrive as early as 3 am to set up their stalls and questioned where they would go if removed from the area. The municipal administration said its drive against encroachments and unauthorised occupation of public spaces would continue as per rules. It also warned that action would be taken against anyone obstructing government work and appealed to citizens to cooperate with the campaign.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

INDUSTRIAL TRADE FAIR-2026

Industrial Trade Fair concludes with strong business participation



RAIPUR: The three-day Chhattisgarh Industrial Trade Fair-2026, organised by the Chhattisgarh chapter of Laghu Udyog Bharati at Science College Ground, concluded on September 20 with cultural programmes and strong participation from entrepreneurs and visitors. The fair, held from September 18 to 20, was inaugurated by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai. Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao, Industries Minister Lakhman Lal Dewangan, CSIDC Chairman Rajiv Agrawal and other dignitaries attended the inaugural event. Finance Minister O.P. Choudhary was the chief guest at the closing ceremony. Rajnandgaon MP Santosh Pandey, Raipur MP Brijmohan Agrawal and MLA Sunil Soni were also present. Organisers said more than 300 entrepreneurs from across the country participated in

the fair, with over 400 stalls showcasing machinery, food processing, handicrafts, startups, technology, solar energy and engineering products. According to the organisers, business opportunities worth crores of rupees were generated and several trade contracts were finalised during the event. Thousands of people, including youth, students and women, visited the fair each day. Visitors appreciated the arrangements, cleanliness and informative displays. Finance Minister Choudhary said the fair provided a platform to promote the vision of a developed Chhattisgarh and developed India by 2047. He described the MSME sector as an important pillar of self-reliance. Laghu Udyog Bharati Raipur unit president Sanjay Mishra thanked the district administration, police, media and volunteers for their support.

MP's WhatsApp hacked, contacts sent money requests

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: The WhatsApp account of Rajya Sabha MP Phulo Devi Netam has allegedly been hacked, with the hacker sending messages to several people in her contact list seeking money through UPI. Requests for amounts of Rs 56,000 and Rs 60,000 were reportedly sent from the MP's number. According to information, several acquaintances received messages



asking them to transfer money to a UPI account. In some cases, recipients were also sent fake messages related to UPI payments of Rs 56,000. The incident came to light after the MP's contacts became suspicious of the unusual requests. The hacker allegedly used the

MP's identity to attempt financial fraud among people known to her. Following the incident, people associated with Netam have been advised not to respond to any money-related message received from her number without verification.

The exact manner in which the WhatsApp account was compromised and the number of people who received the fraudulent messages are not yet clear.

180 Narcotic tablets seized, man arrested

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: Police arrested a 40-year-old man for allegedly possessing and illegally selling narcotic tablets in the Gudhiyari area and seized 180 Nitroson-10 tablets, cash and a mobile phone from his possession. According to police, information was received on September 20 that a person was selling narcotic tablets near the Hanuman Temple at CSEB Ground under Gudhiyari police station limits.



Acting on the information and under the direction of senior officers, a joint team of the Anti-Crime and Cyber Unit and Gudhiyari Police Station reached the spot and detained the suspect.

Traffic Police reunites 15-year-old boy with family

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: Showing sensitivity and a humanitarian approach, the Raipur Traffic Police Commissionerate safely reunited a 15-year-old boy with his family after he arrived in the city from Bhatapara without informing anyone at home. During a field visit in connection with Ganeshotsav, Traffic Police Station in-charge Ambrish Sharma, along with Constable No. 606 Gopal Sidar and Constable No. 03 Mohsin Khan, reached near Gate No. 1 at Station Chowk.

The police team noticed a minor boy crying alone and immediately approached him. The officers consoled the boy and spoke to him in a friendly manner. During the interaction, he identi-



fied himself as a resident of Bhatapara in Baloda Bazar district. The boy told the police that he had left home without informing his family and travelled to Raipur by train after becoming upset over his father's scolding. He said he was afraid to return home. The police team counselled the boy, gained his confidence and encouraged him to share details about his family.

Devotional music, dance mark Ganeshotsav carnival

Central Chronicle News

Ganeshotsav carnival brings music, devotion and dance together at Aishwarya Empire Society.

RAIPUR: Ganeshotsav celebrations continued with fervour across the capital, as the fourth edition of the grand Ganeshotsav Society Carnival received an enthusiastic response at Aishwarya Empire Society. Residents across age groups, including children, youth and senior citizens, participated in large numbers, creating a vibrant devotional atmosphere in the society. The highlight of the evening was a live performance by emerging musical group 'Hawayein The Band', which enthralled



the audience with a mix of devotional and Sufi music. The artistes presented devotional bhajans, Ganesh Vandana and Sufi devotional songs, drawing enthusiastic participation from residents and devotees gathered at the Ganesh pandal. The audience joined the celebrations and danced to the melodious performances, accompanied by a fusion of traditional musical instruments. The programme continued late into the night amid repeated chants of "Ganpati Bappa Morya, Mangal

Murti Morya." The Ganeshotsav Society Carnival is being organised across seven major residential societies in Raipur, bringing together cultural, musical and devotional programmes for residents. Rare Bucks Solar is the main sponsor of the carnival, while Swarnakriti Luxury Kanjeevaram Silk is associated with the event.

BMW and Grand Honda are the official automobile partners, while New Delhi Sweets is the official sweet and food partner. Navharat and Central Chronicle are the media partners.

NEXERA APP LAUNCHED

Four real estate groups join hands to bring a gift for the 'Missing Middle'



RAIPUR: Amidst rapid changes in the real estate sector, the 'NexEra' app has been launched to raise customer awareness and bring transparency to operations. Mrinal Golchha, MD of Rajat Buildtech, stated, "This is the first initiative of its kind in Chhattisgarh where an App is being used to educate and assist real estate customers. The app offers various features that help customers select suitable projects and manage budgets and loans, while also providing customer care services. The NexEra app represents our effort to serve our customers better and bring us closer to them." Prominent real estate groups from the state attended this 'Bhoomi

Pujan' (groundbreaking) ceremony. Rishabh Builders, Rajat Buildtech, Rathi Buildmart, and Capital Buildcon have joined forces to work on a new concept. Pritesh Kataria, CEO of Rishabh Builders, noted that as urbanization shifts society towards nuclear families, community living emerges as an ideal option; it allows residents to become part of a larger family where neighbors look out for one another just like family members. Ajay Rathi, Promoter of Rathi Buildmart, stated that Raipur is rapidly evolving into a major metropolis, making it essential for people to fulfill their dream of owning a home that offers a high-quality lifestyle and excellent amenities.

SAFELY RESCUED

Kidnapped one-year-old rescued within five hours, accused held

RAIPUR: A one-year-old boy allegedly kidnapped from his home was safely rescued from Umred in Nagpur, Maharashtra, within about five hours of the incident. Gudhiyari police arrested the accused, Pawan Sahu, and handed the child over to his mother.

According to police, a woman lodged a complaint at Gudhiyari police station on September 22, alleging that Pawan Sahu entered her house, abused and threatened her, and forcibly took away her one-year-



old son. Considering the seriousness of the case, police immediately registered an FIR and launched a search for the accused and the child. Following directions from Police Commissioner Dr Sanjeev Shukla, a team from Gudhiyari police station initiated an investigation under the guidance of senior North Zone officers.

DEADLINE FOR TAX FILLING

CAIT seeks two-month extension for tax audit, ITR filing

RAIPUR: The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has urged the Union Finance Minister and the Chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) to extend the deadlines for filing tax audit reports and income tax returns for assessment year 2026-27 by two months.

CAIT National Vice Chairman and National Traders' Welfare Board member Amar Parwani, along with Chhattisgarh office-bearers, said traders, chartered accountants and tax consultants are facing difficulties due to glitches on the Income Tax portal, delayed utilities and problems in reconciling TDS/TCS data. CAIT has requested that the deadline for Tax Audit Reports



(Form 3CA/3CB-3CD) be extended from September 30 to November 30, 2026. For audit cases, the ITR filing deadline should be extended from October 31 to December 31. For transfer pricing cases, CAIT has sought extensions for Form 3CEB and related returns to December 31, 2026, and January 31, 2027, respectively. According to CAIT, audit-related utilities for ITR-3, 5 and 6 were released late in August, leaving limited time for professionals. Delays and discrepancies in Form 26AS and AIS have further complicated reconciliation.

| PARKING ARRANGEMENTS |

Raipur Railway Station parking shifted near Expressway

Central Chronicle News

Railway station parking shifts amid ongoing redevelopment work.

RAIPUR: Parking arrangements at Raipur Railway Station are being modified in view of ongoing construction work on the city side of the station. To facilitate redevelopment activities and ensure smooth passenger movement, the existing two-wheeler parking area

near the reservation centre is being vacated and shifted near the expressway. The railway administration has made parking facilities available for both two-wheelers and four-wheelers near the expressway on the city side. Passengers have been advised to use only the designated parking area after the relocation and avoid parking inside the station premises or at unauthorised locations. The Railways said the revised arrangement has been introduced to



maintain smooth traffic movement and minimise inconvenience to passengers during the construction work. Parking facilities are also available at the Gudhiyari end of the station. In addition, premium parking facility is available near Gate No. 1 on the city side.

FACTFILE

• Two-wheelers moved from reservation centre.

Prescribed parking charges will apply to two-wheelers and four-wheelers under the station's parking arrangements, with the rates inclusive of GST. Passengers have been advised to pay the prescribed fee and keep their parking receipt safely for future reference. The railway administration has urged

passengers to follow the directions and signage displayed at the station while using the designated parking facilities.

Passengers facing any difficulty can contact helpline number 139, use the Rail Madad service through the Rail One app, or approach the concerned parking or railway staff. Officials said necessary arrangements are being made to ensure passenger convenience and safe movement throughout the redevelopment work.

‘Ayurveda part of India’s ancient knowledge traditions’

Over 1,000 women set world record in blood donation

Central Chronicle News

CM Vishnu Deo Sai inaugurates mega health camp under Seva Sankalp Abhiyan.

RAIPUR: Terming blood donation one of the highest services to humanity, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai stated that a single unit of donated blood offers a new lease on life to patients and restores hope for their families. Addressing the Ayurveda Seva Sammelan, Mega Blood Donation Camp (Raktadan Mahakumbh) and Mega Health Check-up Camp held under the state’s Seva Sankalp Abhiyan at the Sardar Balbir Singh Juneja Indoor Stadium on Wednesday, the Chief Minister lauded the massive public participation, particularly by women and youth, as an inspiring example of social responsibility and empathy.

The event marked a historic milestone as more than 1,000 women donated blood in a single day, setting a new milestone entered into the Golden Book of World Records. For the camp, over 3,600 women had registered, supported by a 200-bed setup. Representatives of the Golden



FASTFACTS

● The event also witnessed significant commitments toward organ and whole-body donation.

Book of World Records presented the official certificate and medal to Chief Minister Sai.

Expressing his pride, the Chief Minister congratulated the donors, highlighting that the initiative went far beyond numbers, as every unit collected represents renewed hope for someone in critical need. The overall drive aimed to collect approximately 2,500 units of blood.

The event also witnessed significant com-

mitments toward organ and whole-body donation. Under ‘Project Dadhichi’, 31 individuals pledged their bodies for medical research and education, including Padma Shri awardee and Dharsiwa MLA Anuj Sharma. With these new pledges, the total number of body

donors under the project reached 103. The Chief Minister commended the donors, emphasizing that pledging one’s body or organs ensures that the spirit of human service continues even after life.

Extending greetings on National Ayurveda Day, Chief Minister Sai underscored that Ayurveda is an invaluable heritage of India’s ancient intellectual tradition. He noted that the principles established millennia ago by Lord Dhanvantari, Acharya Charaka, and Acharya Sushruta continue to guide holistic well-being worldwide.

He credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi with revitalizing global recognition for Indian systems of medicine through the AYUSH Ministry, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs, and wellness centers.

Healthcare infra being expanded across Ch’garh: Jaiswal

Detailing the state’s healthcare roadmap, Health Minister Shyam Bihari Jaiswal announced rapid infrastructure upgrades across the state. He highlighted the ongoing expansion of super-specialty services in Bilaspur and Jagdalpur, the establishment of new medical colleges, and the reach of Ayushman Bharat in private healthcare facilities. Minister Jaiswal also announced that four new Yoga and Naturopathy hospitals are being developed in Chhattisgarh, alongside an upcoming 100-bed Ayurvedic hospital near NIT Raipur and a modern Ayurvedic hospital complex in Bilaspur.

Retired School Principals face financial strain

RAIPUR: Retired school principals in Chhattisgarh are enduring acute financial distress as their regular monthly pensions and post-retirement dues remain stalled for over a year due to prolonged delays in issuing Pension Payment Orders (PPOs). Despite completing decades of public service in the School Education Department, several retired administrators have been left without a steady retirement income, caught in procedural red tape between district education offices, treasuries, and audit branches.

Under standard service rules, pension documentation and service verification are mandated to begin months ahead of an employee’s formal date of superannuation to ensure that the PPO is ready upon retirement. However, affected former principals report that their pension dockets have remained caught in prolonged clearance loops involving service book verifications, pay-fixation clearances, and objections raised across administrative departments. The protracted freeze on PPOs has severely affected senior citizens who rely entirely on their pension benefits to cover essential living costs, recurring medical treatments, and family obligations.

BJP appoints Gomati Sai as Gujarat Co-Incharge, Sourabh for J’khand



Central Chronicle News

CM Vishnu Deo Sai extends congratulations to both the leaders on entrusted with key responsibilities.

RAIPUR: In a major organizational development strengthening interstate leadership, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) central leadership has assigned key responsibilities to two prominent leaders from Chhattisgarh. The sitting MLA from Pathalgaoon and former Lok Sabha Member of Parliament from Raigarh Gomati Sai, has been appointed as the Co-incharge of Gujarat BJP. Concurrently, former MLA and current Chairman of the Chhattisgarh Mineral Development Corporation (CMDC), Sourabh Singh, has been named the Co-incharge of Jharkhand BJP.

Both have been among key associates of BJP President Nitin Nabin during his erstwhile tenure as Chhattisgarh BJP in-charge which eventu-

ally brought the saffron brigade to power in the last Legislative Assembly polls. Following the announcement, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai extended his warm congratulations and best wishes to both leaders on their national organizational assignments.

Congratulating Gomati Sai on her new role in Gujarat, Chief Minister Sai underscored her extensive public service track record. He noted that as an active and dedicated public representative from Chhattisgarh, she brings profound experience in public life and grassroots leadership. The Chief Minister expressed firm confidence that the party organization in Gujarat will gain substantially from her dedication, leadership, and long-standing commitment to public welfare as she steps into this new assignment.

Commending Sourabh Singh on his deployment to Jharkhand, Chief Minister Sai lauded his proven administrative and managerial acumen.

NEWSLINE

TT Tourney

R’gaon to host 2nd CG State Ranking TT Tourney

RAIPUR: The Rajnandgaon District Table Tennis Association, under the aegis of the Chhattisgarh Table Tennis Association, is set to host the “Late Shri Prakash Chitlangya Memorial 2nd Chhattisgarh State Ranking Table Tennis Tournament 2026. The three-day state-level sporting event will take place from October 2 to October 4, at the Basketball Hall of Digvijay Stadium in Rajnandgaon.

According to a press statement released by Chhattisgarh Table Tennis Association Vice President Vinay Baisware, the tournament will be contested across 12 distinct singles categories, featuring an estimated turnout of over 250 men and women paddlers representing districts across the state.

Providing details on the tournament fixture, Association Secretary Sarthak Shukla announced that the schedule has been staggered across three days to accommodate the high volume of matches.

PROMOTION

CG Postal Circle promotes 60 personnel

RAIPUR: In a major administrative development within the postal administration, the Chhattisgarh Postal Circle has promoted 60 departmental employees across cadres and issued their corresponding divisional postings.

The Department of Posts issued formal orders detailing the promotions alongside the reallocation of divisions across the state. The move is aimed at strengthening postal operations, streamlining service delivery across sub-divisions, and addressing staffing requirements in key divisional networks across Chhattisgarh.

The promoted personnel have been allotted designated postal divisions across the circle, with instructions issued to assume their responsibilities at their assigned stations within the stipulated timeframe.

Officials noted that these career progressions and postings will support efficiency in retail mail delivery, parcel services, and citizen-centric financial schemes operated under the circle.

Govt bus with 30 empl turns into a fireball, no one injured

Central Chronicle News

A government bus transporting 30 employees suddenly caught fire in front of Mahanadi Bhawan on Wednesday.



HIGHLIGHT

● More than 30 government employees were reportedly on board and they all narrowly escaped a major incident and none were injured.

Within moments, the smoke turned into flames, and the bus quickly transformed into a fireball. The smoke filling the interior caused chaos among the passengers. The driver immediately attempted to stop the bus, and realizing the situation was worsening, the employees quickly began to evacuate.

Panic gripped the employees as the flames

spread rapidly. Many jumped out of the bus in a desperate bid to save themselves. Fortunately, everyone managed to get out in time. More than 30 government employees were reportedly on board. So far, there have been no official reports of casualties or serious injuries.

Police and fire brigade arrive at the scene Upon receiving news of the incident, police and fire department teams rushed to the location. Firefighters managed to bring the blaze under control after a strenuous effort. A chaotic atmosphere prevailed at the scene for some time following the fire.

‘Complete remedial works within stipulated timeframe’

Central Chronicle News

Transport Secretary chaired meeting regarding necessary improvements at various ‘Black Spots’



RAIPUR: In compliance with the order passed by the High Court, a review meeting was held at Mantralaya Mahanadi Bhawan under the chairmanship of Transport Secretary S. Prakash.

The meeting focused on the remedial works being carried out at identified ‘black spots’ in Raipur district—specifically Tatibandh, Bhatagaon, Benta-Bhuiyan, Siltara Overbridge-Nico Gate, and Paragaon-Nisda Turn, among others—as well as tasks executed by other departments. During the meeting, Secretary S. Prakash directed

all concerned officials and construction agencies to complete the necessary remedial works within the stipulated timeframe, in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the Hon’ble High Court (Bilaspur) order.

Officials were instructed to assess the current status of the identified black spots and ensure the execution of necessary remedial measures, as well as to take action to remove unauthorized encroachments and illegal roadside eateries (‘dhabas’) from the

roads. Directives were issued to ensure smooth and safe traffic flow near liquor shops and to install adequate lighting and signage boards where required.

Similarly, instructions were given to take necessary steps to prevent unauthorized cuts in road dividers and to enforce strict measures against over-speeding and wrong-side driving. The meeting also emphasized taking action against illegal parking and implementing speed control measures as needed. A directive was

issued to conduct public awareness campaigns to sensitize the general public about road safety. Officials were also asked to complete road widening and other essential remedial works as required.

The Transport Secretary instructed all concerned departments and construction agencies to mandatorily submit compliance reports—detailing the ‘before’ and ‘current’ status of the aforementioned works, accompanied by necessary photographs—within the prescribed timeframe.

MODERN AMENITIES FOR TOURISTS |

‘Attari Botanical Garden to be re-developed’

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: The Chhattisgarh government is working on a major project to enhance the state’s natural heritage and boost tourism.

The famous Nandanvan, located at Attari in Raipur, will be redeveloped into an attractive, modern facility under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. This rejuvenation plan is estimated to cost approximately Rs 50



crore. A presentation regarding the proposed Nandanvan redevelopment project was made today during a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Vikas Sheel at Mantra-

laya Mahanadi Bhawan. The proposal received approval from the Nandanvan PPP Committee.

Discussions during the meeting focused on strengthening Nandanvan’s infrastructure

and developing it into a major hub for the environment and tourism.

Under the PPP-based plan, public-private collaboration will be leveraged to transform Nandanvan into a mod-

ern, world-class tourist destination. The botanical garden will be revamped with a focus on maintaining ecological balance and ensuring environmental conservation. World-class infrastructure, hygienic amenities, and modern facilities will be created for tourists within the complex.

New attractions and activities will be introduced for the entertainment of children and families.

CG’s Varun and Mayank named in Rest of India U-23 squad

Central Chronicle News

RAIPUR: In a major boost to Chhattisgarh cricket, Under-23 players Varun Singh Bhuie and Mayank Verma have been selected for the BCCI’s ‘Rest of India’ Under-23 squad.

The team is slated to square off against reigning Colonel C.K. Nayudu Trophy champions Tamil Nadu in a four-day red-ball encounter at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai, scheduled from Thursday, October 1, to



Sunday, October 4. The selections come on the back of prolific campaigns delivered by both players during the 2025-26 edition of the Colonel C.K. Nayudu Trophy. Both Bhuie and Verma have been key figures in Chhat-



tisgarh’s domestic setup across the Ranji Trophy and Under-23 levels. Left-arm spinner Varun Singh Bhuie emerged as one of the standout bowlers of the domestic season, bagging 41 wickets across 15 innings in eight matches.



The National Film Award for 'Ram-Nami' is a matter of immense pride and joy for Chhattisgarh
Rajesh Agrawal,
Minister for Tourism & Culture- Ch'garh

Training to youth should align with industry needs: Collector

Industry requirements for skilled manpower assessed during Skill Gap Analysis review meeting.

Central Chronicle News

SSP emphasizes linking youth to cyber-security skill training

BILASPUR: A review meeting regarding the 'Skill Gap Analysis' was held at the 'Manthan' conference hall of the District Office, with the aim of providing skill training to the youth that aligns with industry requirements and creating better employment opportunities for them. Representatives from various industries and industrialists attended the meeting, which was chaired by Collector Sanjay Agrawal and SSP Rajnesh Singh. Detailed discussions were held regarding the current and future needs of industries, essential skills, the direction of training, and available employment opportunities for the youth. CEO of Zila Panchayat Sandeep Agrawal and President of the Chhattisgarh Small-Scale Industries Association Harish Kedia also participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, Collector Sanjay Agrawal stated that to connect the youth with employ-



FASTFACTS

● Industrialists shared insights on the manpower requirements, necessary skills, and employment prospects within their respective sectors.

ment, skill training programs must be designed in accordance with the actual needs of the industries. He emphasized that training should equip youth with both technical knowledge and practical skills, ensuring that employment opportunities are available to them upon completion. He stressed the importance of establishing better coordination between

Info about technical, practical training gathered

Harish Kedia, President of the Chhattisgarh Small Scale Industries Association (CSSIA), stated that identifying skill gaps and designing training programs accordingly would help connect youth with employment that matches their qualifications and industry needs. This would provide youth with better job opportunities while ensuring industries have access to the skilled manpower they require.

industries and training institutes and continuously updating training programs to meet industry demands. He stated, "It is the need of the hour to incorporate emerging and future-ready skills into the training system in alignment with industry demands." The Collector emphasized strength-

ening industry-institute linkages and connecting training with internships and placements so that trained youth can access employment opportunities suited to their skills. SSP Rajnesh Singh stressed the importance of equipping youth with skills related to cyber-security.

Man nabbed for threatening people

BILASPUR: Ratanpur police have arrested a man for allegedly threatening people by brandishing a sharp-edged knife in Melabhata under Ratanpur police station limits. Police received information about the incident and sent a team to the spot. The team surrounded the area near Melabhata and apprehended the suspect. During questioning, the man was identified as Nilesh Kashyap (52), a resident of Gidhauri, Ratanpur. Police recovered a sharp-edged knife from his possession and registered a case against him under the Arms Act.

One nabbed for Illegal liquor storage

BILASPUR: Hirri police have seized a large quantity of country-made liquor allegedly stored illegally at a house-cum-shop in Sarseni village and arrested a 23-year-old man. Hirri TI Damodar Prasad Mishra said police received information from an informer on September 22 that Govinda Kumar Nayak, a resident of Sarseni, had allegedly stored a large quantity of illegal liquor at his house-shop. Acting on the information, a Hirri police team, accompanied by witnesses and other personnel, raided the premises.

14 nabbed for fatal clash over DJ music at Ganesh Pandal



Central Chronicle News

BILASPUR: Fourteen people, including a juvenile in conflict with the law, have been arrested in connection with the killing of a youth during a clash over music being played at a Ganesh pandal in Janakpahari, Gatora, under Masturi police station limits.

The incident occurred at around 10:30 pm on September 20. According to police, an argument broke out near the Ganesh pandal over playing music. People reached the spot after hearing the dispute, where members of the two groups were allegedly involved in an argument and exchange of abuses. Police allege that members of one group then attacked the other side with sticks, axes, a knife and other sharp weapons. Several people sustained serious injuries and were taken to CIMS for treatment. Doctors declared Shailesh Kumar Rathore alias Raj dead on arrival. The other injured persons remain under treatment.

Following the incident, Masturi police registered a

case and launched an investigation. Considering the seriousness of the matter, a joint team of Masturi police and the Anti-Crime and Cyber Unit (ACCU) arrested 13 accused and detained one juvenile. Police said the accused admitted their involvement during questioning. On the basis of information provided by them, police recovered a stick, an iron knife and an iron axe allegedly used in the attack. The accused were arrested on September 21 and produced before court on Tuesday, following which they were sent to judicial custody.

The arrested accused were identified as Bodhram Rathore (75), Santosh Rathore (47), Dilip Kumar Rathore (45), Deepak Kumar Rathore (42), Akash Rathore (19), Shankar Rathore alias Nandu (33), Akash Rathore alias Monu (19), Suraj Kumar Rathore (40), Rohit Kumar Rathore (36), Sunil alias Raja Rathore (28), Prakash alias Lalu Rathore (23), Ravi Kumar Rathore (25), and Ayush Rathore (21). A juvenile was also detained.

NEWSLINE

TCKT CHECKING

43,710 passengers penalised



BILASPUR: South East Central Railway (SECR) has taken action against 43,710 passengers during a 20-day intensive ticket-checking campaign against ticketless travel, irregular tickets and passengers carrying luggage in violation of prescribed rules. The drive generated Rs 3,13,15,499 in additional revenue through fares and penalties. The special and regular ticket-checking campaign was conducted from September 1 to 20 across the Bilaspur, Raipur and Nagpur divisions. Checks were carried out at major railway stations as well as on various trains. Passengers found travelling without tickets, with irregular tickets or without valid travel authority were dealt with under railway rules. Charges and penalties were also collected from passengers carrying luggage in violation of prescribed regulations. According to the railway administration, the objective of the campaign is to encourage passengers to travel with valid tickets and protect railway revenue.

SELECTED

Prachi selected for Kabaddi team

KARGI ROAD KOTA: Prachi Netam, an MA Political Science first-semester student of Government Niranjan Kesharwani College, Kota, has been selected for the Bilaspur sector women's kabaddi team following her performance in the divisional-level competition. The women's kabaddi competition was organised by Government Bilasa Girls Postgraduate College on September 11 and 12, with teams from 16 colleges across the Bilaspur division participating. The Government Niranjan Kesharwani College team took part under the guidance of sports officer Rajesh Singh. He said players for the Bilaspur sector team were selected based on their performance in the competition.

YCVOTERS

Scrutiny After Voting

BILASPUR: Once voting closes on September 29 at 5 pm, the digital data will undergo automated and manual scrutiny. The final list of candidates receiving the highest number of valid votes will then be prepared, followed by the declaration of the new office-bearers and executive committees. The election process is open to eligible Youth Congress members aged 18 to 35 years. Candidates have been campaigning through social media and direct outreach to members to secure votes. For online voting, members are required to use the Indian Youth Congress smartphone application and submit details including their name, mobile number, address and identity document.

Municipal Commissioner orders action against encroachments, dilapidated buildings



Central Chronicle News

Revenue collection, sanitation, public grievances and construction projects reviewed at civic body meeting.

BILASPUR: Municipal Commissioner Prakash Kumar Sarve has directed officials to remove encroachments from footpaths and take necessary action against dilapidated hostels and other unsafe buildings across the municipal corporation area.

During a comprehensive review meeting held at the Drishti conference hall, the Commissioner assessed the progress of various departmental

schemes, development projects, revenue collection, sanitation and public grievance redressal.

Reviewing the city's sanitation arrangements, he instructed officials to ensure regular monitoring and effective cleaning of public places, major roads and market areas. He also reviewed online survey entries, pending Supreme Court and High Court cases, the PM Gati Shakti scheme, Gaudham scheme and the operation of municipal cattle pounds.

The Commissioner sought case-wise updates from the departments concerned and directed officials to prioritise pending work.

Over 10.71 lakh members enrolled in YC

BILASPUR: The Chhattisgarh Youth Congress organisational election has entered its final phase, with the online membership and voting process scheduled to close at 5 pm on September 29. The election process is being conducted entirely online. According to the figures provided by the organisation, 10,71,517 members have been registered, of whom 8,53,747 have paid the prescribed membership fee, while 2,17,770 registrations have pending fee payments.

The figures are updated periodically on the digital portal. Among the Assembly constituencies in Bilaspur district, Beltara has 19,206 registered members, followed by Bilaspur with 18,586, Kota with 17,502, Masturi with 17,153, Bilha with 16,937 and Takhatpur with 12,510. The online election covers organisational posts from the state to the block level.

'Let us work together to transform the city's image'

Central Chronicle News

Public representatives, officials, and citizens take the cleanliness pledge at Chhath Ghat; a message of public participation conveyed.

BILASPUR: Various service-oriented activities are being organized under the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' (Service Pledge Campaign) to promote public service, public participation, and a spirit of service.

As part of this initiative, a cleanliness drive and tree plantation program were held today at Chhath Ghat. Public representatives and officials—including Takhatpur MLA Dharmjeet Singh, Beltara MLA Sushant Shukla, Collector Sanjay Agrawal,



Mayor Pooja Vidhani, and District Panchayat President Rajesh Suryavanshi—participated in cleaning the Chhath Ghat. During the event, the Mayor administered the cleanliness pledge to the gathered representatives, officials, and citizens. A message regarding environmental conservation alongside cleanliness was also conveyed through the planting of saplings.

MLA Dharmjeet Singh stated that people prefer visiting clean and tidy cities. Public participation is crucial to advancing Bilaspur further in

FASTFACTS

● Make cleanliness a part of life; every citizen must fulfill their responsibility: MLA Shri Sushant Shukla.

the realm of cleanliness. He urged citizens to maintain cleanliness in their surroundings and to raise awareness to stop those who litter.

He emphasized that citizens should take personal initiative to fulfill their responsibility towards cleanliness and transform it into a mass movement. MLA Sushant

Shukla remarked that cleanliness should not be limited to a mere campaign but should become a lifelong commitment. Just as we keep our homes clean, it is essential to maintain the same spirit of cleanliness in our neighbourhoods, villages, and public spaces. He noted that the objective of the 'Seva Sankalp' extends beyond administrative activities; it must be turned into a mass movement through public participation. Every citizen should pledge not to litter and to inspire others to maintain cleanliness.

One nabbed for stealing rods, cables from construction plot

Central Chronicle News

BILASPUR: Sakri police have arrested a 22-year-old man for allegedly stealing iron rods, cable wires and other construction materials from an under-construction plot in Pendari village. Sakri TI Umesh Sahu said Nehru Nagar resident Sahil Sharma had lodged a complaint stating that a plot measuring around 3,000 square feet, registered in the name of his brother Ankush Sharma, is

located near Wonder World in Pendari. Construction of the ground floor was underway, and the plot was enclosed with an iron-rod boundary. Plywood, shuttering material, boring wires and other construction supplies had also been stored at the site. According to the complaint, an unidentified person allegedly cut and removed the iron rods forming part of the boundary at around 10 am on September 22.

POWER DISRUPTION |

'Low voltage, power cuts leave consumers in trouble'

Central Chronicle News

BILASPUR: Residents of Dhuripara and Lokhandi Road in Mangla faced severe inconvenience on Tuesday due to prolonged low voltage and repeated power interruptions. The problem began around 7 am and continued until 5 pm, leaving residents without a stable power supply for nearly 10 hours.

The prolonged disruption caused problems amid the heat and led

to a water shortage, as residents were unable to operate borewell pumps. Low voltage was reportedly so severe that water pumps, fans and coolers could not function properly.

The disruption came just a day after the Lokhandi feeder had undergone around five hours of scheduled maintenance-related shutdown. Residents said they had expected the maintenance work to improve the supply, but the prob-

lems intensified the following day. Residents contacted power distribution company officials after the supply deteriorated, but alleged that they initially received only assurances. According to residents, when the problem continued for several hours and they tried to contact officials again, their calls reportedly went unanswered. The alleged lack of response has caused anger among local residents.

New fuse call centre draws complaints

A new fuse call centre was recently started in Mangla to facilitate consumer complaints. However, residents allege that the facility has failed to provide effective assistance. They claim calls to the complaint number often remain busy or stuck in the complaint process, while calls frequently go unanswered.

Residents demand attention to power supply. Residents said that

despite being within the municipal corporation limits, the power supply situation in the Lokhandi Road and Dhuripara areas has deteriorated significantly. Frequent power interruptions during the day have reportedly become routine. Residents have expressed concern that repeated complaints have not resulted in a lasting solution and have demanded that senior power department officials take corrective measures.



“There should be independent inquiries into each killing, with free and fair access to information related to all cases.”

Tasleema Akhter,
Human Rights Activist

Full legal sanction behind all decisions: Election Commission

After reports of internal rife in the EC came to the fore, the government body released a fresh statement on the issue.

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Election Commission on Wednesday asserted that all official orders, decisions and administrative directions issued by it carry full legal sanction and are taken in accordance with established statutory procedures. The clarification came after a report in *The Indian Express* said Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had raised concerns over several issues, including deletion of names, during the pan-India Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls.



In its statement, the Commission said that differences of opinion and observations are a normal part of institutional deliberations and contribute to the decision-making process before a final decision is reached. It emphasised that operational queries or suggestions raised by Commission members during the drafting stage are part of standard administrative practice, particularly to

safeguard voter rights. The Commission further stated that suggestions made by the Election Commissioners were intended to improve electoral processes. It noted that not only the three

Commissioners but also officers of the Commission are authorised to offer suggestions aimed at strengthening the electoral system.

Reaffirming its constitutional responsibilities, the Election Commission said it remains committed to carrying out its duties with complete integrity and to protecting the democratic process in India.

HIGHLIGHT

● The EC stated that it takes all its decisions based on the prescribed statutory procedures.

RJD women’s wing marches in Patna over Jamui case



Press Trust Of India

PATNA: The RJD’s women’s wing on Wednesday held a protest march in Patna over the alleged

molestation of a girl in Jamui, accusing the Bihar government of failing to curb crimes against women. The march started from the

FASTFACTS

● They demanded justice for the victim in Jamui case and demanded the resignation of CM Samrat Choudhary.

party office on Veerchand Patel Road and ended near the Income Tax crossing, where protesters raised slogans, displayed placards and burnt an effigy of Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, who also holds the Home portfolio.

Collective action needed for drought-hit farmers: Sule

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: NCP (SP) leader Supriya Sule on Wednesday urged all political parties to come together to support farmers facing a drought-like situation in Maharashtra, stressing that the issue should not be politicised. The Baramati Lok Sabha MP welcomed Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and his ministers’ decision to visit affected areas but said such visits must lead to concrete assistance for farmers.

Fadnavis on Wednesday toured villages in



Latur and Dharashiv districts affected by water shortages and crop losses. He is also scheduled to visit affected areas of Solapur district.

Smriti Irani From Television Stardom to Politics

An inspiring journey of resilience, reinvention and public service.



Central Chronicle Team
Raipur/Delhi

Former Union Minister Smriti Irani has been appointed BJP in-charge for Chhattisgarh, marking a new chapter in her political career. From becoming a household name on television to serving in the Union Cabinet and winning the Amethi parliamentary seat, Irani has held several prominent political and organisational positions over two decades.

A journey of determination, dedication and service continues.

From television’s popular Tulsirani to Union Minister, Smriti Irani built a diverse career.

Her political journey includes Rajya Sabha membership, Cabinet portfolios and historic Amethi victory.

New Responsibility

Smriti Irani succeeds Nitin Nabin as BJP in-charge for Chhattisgarh. Nitin became BJP national president on January 20, 2026. Siddharth Shambhu has been named co-in-charge.

Early Life

Born on March 23, 1976, in New Delhi, Smriti Irani began her career in modelling before entering television.

Television Fame

Her portrayal of Tulsirani in the popular serial *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* made her a household name across India.

Entry Into Politics

Irani joined the Bharatiya Janata Party in 2003. In 2004, she contested the Lok Sabha election from Chandni Chowk against Kapil Sibal but was unsuccessful.

Rise Within BJP

In 2010, she became BJP national secretary and president of the party’s Mahila Morcha. She entered Parliament in 2011 after being elected to the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat and secured another term in 2017.

First Union Cabinet Role

Irani contested against Rahul Gandhi in Amethi in 2014 but lost. She nevertheless joined Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s first Cabinet as Minister of Human Resource Development, becoming one of its youngest members.

Ministerial Responsibilities

After a reshuffle in July 2016, she took charge of the Textiles Ministry. She also served as Minister for Information and Broadcasting from July 2017 to May 2018.

Historic Amethi Victory

In the 2019 Lok Sabha election, Irani defeated Rahul Gandhi in Amethi by more than 55,000 votes, securing her first Lok Sabha seat after two unsuccessful parliamentary contests.

Women and Child Development

Following her 2019 victory, she became Union Minister for Women and Child Development. In July 2022, she also assumed responsibility for Minority Affairs, holding both portfolios until June 2024.

Electoral Setback

Irani lost the 2024 Lok Sabha election in Amethi to Congress candidate Kishori Lal Sharma by approximately 1.67 lakh votes. She was not included in the Union Cabinet formed after the election.

Back to Organisation

With her appointment as Chhattisgarh in-charge, Smriti Irani returns to a key organisational role. She will coordinate with the state leadership, drSmriti Irani: From Television Stardom to Politics

| UDP MLAS JOIN BJP |

Eight Meghalaya UDP MLAs switch loyalty to join BJP

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Wednesday received a major political boost in Meghalaya after eight MLAs of the United Democratic Party (UDP) joined the party in New Delhi in the presence of senior leaders, including Union Minister Kiren Rijiju.

The legislators who joined the BJP are Lahkmen Rymbui, Pius Marwein, Kyrmen Shylla, Mayralborn Syiem, Matthew Kurbah, Ollan Singh Suin, Balajied



Kupar Synrem and Synshar Kupar Roy. The development increases the BJP’s strength in the 60-member Meghalaya Assembly from two to 10.

The UDP has 12 MLAs, including two ministers in the Conrad K Sangma-led Meghalaya Democratic Alliance government. The BJP and UDP are currently

allies of the National People’s Party-led state government.

The switch of eight UDP legislators is expected to alter the political equations in the state ahead of the 2028 Assembly elections.

Welcoming the legislators, Rijiju described the development as significant for Meghalaya and the Northeast.

Delhi police arrest Jammu gangster

JAMMU: A Jammu-based gangster, Karanjit Singh alias “Gugga”, who allegedly escaped from an observation home in R S Pura with two Pakistani nationals in February, was arrested in Delhi after a seven-month-long search, police said on Wednesday.

Senior Superintendent of Police Jammu Joginder Singh said Singh, a resident of Dablehar, was arrested by the Special Operations Group.

He had allegedly attacked police personnel with a pistol during the February 16 escape, injuring two officers.

Gangster arrested

JAMMU: A Jammu-based gangster, Karanjit Singh alias “Gugga”, who allegedly escaped from an observation home in R S Pura with two Pakistani nationals in February, was arrested in Delhi after a seven-month-long search, police said on Wednesday. Senior SP Jammu Joginder Singh said Singh, a resident of Dablehar, was arrested by the Special Operations Group.

| BANERJEE’S APPEAL |

Abhishek seeks SC probe into EC

KOLKATA: TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee on Wednesday demanded the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and sought a court-monitored investigation into the functioning of the Election Commission, citing a media report about objections raised by two



ers over decisions linked to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. Banerjee’s demand

followed an *Indian Express* report that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had formally raised objections at least 14 times over 10 months regarding decisions and orders concerning voter registration, deletion and restoration of names, appeals and electoral-roll database management.

student, was found hanging in his hostel room on September 18, shortly after he was allegedly caught using a mobile phone to access ChatGPT during a mid-semester examination, officials said. His parents have claimed that he had told them about facing caste-based slurs.

“Caste is a favourite topic for those interested in power politics; students should not get entangled in it.”

Raj Thackeray,
MNS President



nation following the suicide of IIT Bombay student Sahil Wakode. Wakode, a 22-year-old second-year BTech

| THACKERAY’S APPEAL |

Raj Thackeray warns youth against caste politics

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: MNS president Raj Thackeray on Wednesday said caste had become a “favourite topic” for those pursuing power politics and urged students not to get drawn into caste-based divisions. His remarks came amid allegations of caste-based discrimi-

BJP workers hold symbolic Chombu demonstration, seeking CM Shivakumar’s resignation

BENGALURU: BJP leaders on Wednesday staged a protest outside Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, accusing the Congress government of pushing Karnataka into a financial crisis and neglecting development. Carrying “Chombu”, an empty water con-

tainer, BJP state president B Y Vijayendra, Assembly Leader of Opposition R Ashoka and Council Leader of Opposition Chalavadi Narayanaswamy led the demonstration.

Ashoka demanded Chief Minister D K Shivakumar’s resigna-

tion, alleging that he was unable to manage the Finance Department. Vijayendra sought a white paper on the state’s financial position and alleged that the government lacked funds for development, farmer compensation and social security pensions.

Mayawati names nephew Ishan BSP national coordinator

LUCKNOW: The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) on Wednesday appointed Ishan Anand, younger nephew of party president Mayawati, as its new national coordinator. The decision was announced at a meeting of the party’s national executive in Lucknow, chaired by Mayawati. Ishan, who

has completed his LLM and legal studies, thanked Mayawati for entrusting him with the responsibility and pledged to work with honesty and dedication. He said he would follow the principles of B R Ambedkar, BSP founder Kanshi Ram and Mayawati. The appointment comes days after Ishan’s

elder brother Akash Anand was removed from all party responsibilities. Mayawati had earlier said Akash needed greater maturity before being given major responsibilities and alleged that he was influenced by his father-in-law, former BSP Rajya Sabha member Ashok Siddharth.

Arun Sao hails Sewa Sankalp Abhiyan initiative

Deputy CM Arun Sao hailed the Sewa Sankalp Abhiyan’s success.

Central Chronicle News

KORBA: Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Public Works, Public Health Engineering, Urban Administration & Development, and Sports & Youth Welfare, Arun Sao, chaired a high-level review meeting at the Collectorate meeting hall to finalize upcoming programs for the month-long ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’.

Emphasizing extensive public participation, he directed officials to coordinate seamlessly with administration and local representatives to transform initiatives like



riverbank cleanliness, tree plantation, blood donation, and organ donation drives into mass movements.

He praised the success of the ‘Aashirwad Ke Diya’ event, where over 5.5 lakh earthen lamps were lit across the district, and the

‘Mere Sapno Ka Bharat’ initiative, which saw over one lakh students express their vision for the nation. Sao urged departments to compile real beneficiary experiences into ‘Stories of Service’ to showcase direct scheme impacts while conducting active

public outreach through announcements, banners, and local media.

Echoing these directives, Cabinet Minister Lakhan Lal Dewangan instructed authorities to extend all scheduled events from district headquarters down to urban bodies and rural areas.

HIGHLIGHT

● He stated that the campaign is aimed to benefit the public.

He stressed mobilizing diverse groups—including social organizations, educational institutions, self-help groups, youth, and senior citizens—to ensure maximum community involvement.

Providing a comprehensive briefing, Collector Kunal Dudawat outlined the chronological action plan, departmental responsibilities, and block-level awareness campaigns driven by dedicated publicity vans.

Ayurveda Day rally promotes health awareness



Central Chronicle News

RAIGARH: To mark the ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’ and the 11th National Ayurveda Day, a joint awareness rally was organized on Tuesday by the AYUSH Department and the Medical College of Ayurveda in Raigarh district.

Commencing at 7:00 AM from the District AYUSH Office, the procession moved toward Kamala Nehru Park with an objective to promote Ayurveda, Yoga, and

FASTFACTS

● On Tuesday, a health awareness rally was taken out on the occasion of Ayurveda Day.

healthier daily lifestyles among the public.

Upon reaching the park, medical college students performed an engaging street play centered on the theme “Ayurveda for a Healthy Tomorrow,” emphasizing wellness, disease prevention, and active health consciousness.

AWARENESS

Street play promotes anti-addiction

GPM: As part of the ‘Namo Seva Gatha’ initiative under the ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’, students from Eklavya Model Residential School, Lata, staged an impactful street play in Lohra Jhorki village to combat addiction and superstition. Through dramatic performances and expressive dialogue, the students depicted how substance abuse damages personal health, drains family finances, and halts community progress. The play urged villagers to reject blind faith and embrace a rational, scientific outlook—emphasizing proper medical treatment over superstitious remedies when facing illnesses or challenges.

ILLICIT MAHUA

Nawagaon Dayali raid yields illicit liquor

MUNGELI: Following directives from Collector Amrit Vikas Topno, the Excise Department has intensified raids to crack down on the illegal production, transit, and sale of liquor across the district. During a recent operation in Village Nawagaon Dayali under the Dindori outpost, an excise team raided the premises of Phoolsingh Dhurve. Authorities seized 10 liters of illicit hand-distilled Mahua liquor along with 40 kilograms of lahan, the fermented raw material used for brewing.

Collector for time-bound grievance redressal

Central Chronicle News

GPM: The weekly public hearing has become an essential platform for citizens to present their grievances directly to the administration.

During Tuesday’s session, District Collector Vijay Dayaram K. reviewed various applications with sensitivity and seriousness, listening to complaints regarding land mutation, forest rights leases, property possession, wage settlements,



and community access pathways. Addressing the gathered officials, the Collector stressed that receiving applications alone is insufficient; departments must actively communicate updates and final actions to every

applicant. He instructed all concerned departmental officers to examine each case meticulously based on eligibility and established rules, ensuring prompt, time-bound resolutions.

By holding officials accountable for direct client follow-ups and enforcing strict compliance, the district administration aims to streamline administrative transparency and strengthen public trust through efficient grievance redressal.

National Lok Adalat set Dec 12

KORBA: Following the directives of the National Legal Services Authority and the Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority, the District Legal Services Authority, Korba, announced that the year’s fourth National Lok Adalat will take place on December 12, 2026. The Authority is encouraging citizens to utilize this opportunity for the swift, amicable resolution of both court-pending and pre-litigation disputes. By prioritizing mutual consent and compromise, the Lok Adalat offers a streamlined alternative to traditional litigation.

Ayurveda health camp held

Central Chronicle News

RAIGARH: To mark the ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’ and the 11th National Ayurveda Day, the Government Ayurveda Dispensary in Bunga, Raigarh district, organized extensive wellness drives centered on the theme ‘Ayurveda for a Healthy Tomorrow.’

The initiative featured free medical camps, herbal decoction (kadha) distribution, addiction prevention drives, hygiene awareness sessions, Mitamin training, and yoga demonstrations



across multiple local villages. A total of 458 patients received consultations and free medicines during camps held in Chhichhor Umariya, Siha, Thakurpali, Gotma, and School Para Bunga.

Informational pamphlets covering seasonal health regimens (Ritucharya), yoga, diabetes, and blood pressure were

distributed to encourage preventive care. Furthermore, 100 medicinal saplings were planted with a community pledge to ensure their long-term conservation. Active leadership from Dr. Jagriti Patel, local health workers, and village representatives ensured enthusiastic public participation across all event venues.

Collector reviews key credit schemes

Central Chronicle News

MUNGELI: At a meeting of the District-level Consultative Committee, Collector Amrit Vikas Topno reviewed the performance of banking services, credit schemes, and welfare programs across the district.

He assessed the Credit-Deposit Ratio, operation of ATMs and banking correspondents, and the progress of key initiatives including Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, NRLM, PM SVANidhi, PM Surya



Ghar, and Kisan Credit Cards for agriculture, animal husbandry, and fisheries.

Emphasizing priority credit for farmers, youth, women, and self-employed individuals, the Collector

urged bankers to clear loan applications promptly. Discussions covered PMEGP, education loans, rising NPA accounts, and financial inclusion programs like Jan-Dhan and Atal Pension Yojana.

UNIVERSITY WINS FIVE NSS AWARDS

Sant Gahira Guru University wins five NSS awards

Central Chronicle News

AMBIKAPUR: Sant Gahira Guru University, Surguja (Ambikapur), secured five state-level National Service Scheme (NSS) awards for 2025-26, as announced by the Higher Education Department of Chhattisgarh.

The university clinched the top rank in the university category, while Saraswati Mahavidyalaya,



Ambikapur, won in the institution category. Individual honors were awarded to volunteers Shivam Sharma and Neha Yadav in the college tier, alongside Meena Rajwade in the school category. Oper-

ating 158 units across six districts in the Surguja division, the university’s NSS cell actively promotes community service and social development.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Rajendra Lakpale, NSS Program Coordinator Dr. S.N. Pandey, and District Organizer Khemkaran Ahirwar congratulated the awardees for their dedication to nation-building.

AWARENESS CAMPS

Pondi-host entrepreneurship camps

KORBA: The District Trade and Industries Centre, Korba, organized one-day entrepreneurship awareness camps at the meeting halls of Janpad Panchayat Pondi-Uprora and Korba.

The camps aimed to promote self-employment schemes managed by the department, with key details presented by District Trade and Industries Centre Manager Mr. Tarun Kumar Rathia, PMFME DRP Mr. Naresh Khunte, and District Nodal Officer Mr. Ravi Jaiswal.

PADDY PROCUREMENT

Seven Bhatgaon paddy centers get upgrades

BHATGAON: Through the initiative of Bhatgaon MLA and Cabinet Minister Smt. Lakshmi Rajwade, an allocation of Rs 69.58 lakh has been sanctioned to upgrade infrastructure across seven paddy procurement centers in the Bhatgaon Assembly constituency. Located in the Surajpur development block—specifically at Tamki, Sirsi, Karoti B, Khopra, Batra, Sanvaranva, and Kurridih—each center will receive Rs 9.94 lakh for concrete platform construction and land leveling. This initiative directly resolves logistical challenges associated with grain arrival, purchasing, and outdoor storage.

Singh reviews women, schools, livelihoods

MCB: District Panchayat President Yashvanti Singh conducted a ground-level inspection in Bharatpur block following a review of the ‘Viksit Bharat - Employment and Livelihood Guarantee Mission (Rural)’ scheme.

The visit focused on inspecting women’s economic empowerment initiatives and children’s residential facilities. At the ‘Didi Milan’ program



in Gram Panchayat Madisarai, Singh interacted directly with women’s self-help groups to evaluate their operational progress, earnings, and livelihood activities. She

later visited the Badwahi Girls’ Ashram, where she sat with students to discuss their academic routines, daily schedules, and career aspirations. In addition to reviewing edu-

cational arrangements, the inspection covered the quality of meals, living conditions, and healthcare facilities to ensure a supportive environment for the resident children.

Accompanied by District Panchayat Member Anita Choudhary, the President’s tour provided firsthand insight into community progress and the real-world impact of local welfare schemes.

Dy CM Arun Sao launches blood unit

KORBA: To enhance health infrastructure and ensure safe, timely blood availability in Korba district, Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister and Minister-in-charge Arun Sao flagged off an advanced, air-conditioned mobile blood donation van at the Collectorate premises on Tuesday.

Operated by the District Red Cross Society and funded through the



District Mineral Foundation (DMF), the van is equipped with modern donor couches and vital healthcare facilities to provide a safe, comfortable environment. The launch event was

attended by Commerce and Industry Minister Lakhanlal Dewangan, Katghora MLA Premchand Patel, Collector Kunal Dudawat, Red Cross representatives, and senior health officials.

WATER CONSERVATION

Jogi Dongari reservoir hosts water conservation drive

Central Chronicle News

GPM: Under the ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’ (Service Pledge Campaign), a comprehensive cleanliness drive and water conservation awareness program was organized around the Jogi Dongari Reservoir in Gaurela-Pendra-Marwahi district, following the guidance



of District Collector Vijay Dayaram K. Officials and staff with the Water Resources Department,

Public Health Engineering Department, and Panchayat Department joined forces with a

large gathering of local villagers to execute the campaign.

Participants actively engaged in clearing scattered waste and debris from the reservoir premises and its surrounding areas, demonstrating how collective action can maintain local ecosystems. Beyond the physical cleanup, the drive

served as an educational platform to emphasize the vital importance of preserving traditional water sources. Departmental representatives sensitized attendees on preventing water wastage, using resources judiciously, and maintaining regular upkeep of village ponds, wells, and reservoirs.

Career guidance offered to students under SSA

RAIGARH: Under the ‘Seva Sankalp Abhiyan’ (Service Resolution Campaign), the District Employment and Self-Employment Guidance Centre organized a career counseling session at Government Swami Atmanand Excellence Hindi Medium Higher Secondary School in Chakradharnagar, Raigarh. Designed to



give students clear direction for their future academic and professional endeavors, the program focused on identifying career paths suited to individual interests, talents, and goals.

Fun & Focus



Daily Horoscope

ARIES

Don't get nervous and lose your confidence as you meet some high profile persons. It is as essential for good health as capital for business. Money position will improve later in the day. There will be an important development on your personal front.

Cosmic tip: Go burn the midnight oil.

Gemini

Today you feel relaxed and in the right mood to enjoy. Any issues related to money can get solved today and you can attain financial benefits. Someone you live with will be highly irritated with your recent actions today. You need to move out and rub elbows with people at high places.

Cosmic tip: Get your thinking hat.

Leo

Take special care while sitting to avoid an injury. Further good posture not only enhances one's personality but also plays an important role in improving health and confidence. Your dedication and hard work will get noticed and will bring some financial rewards for you today.

Cosmic tip: Constant sense of conflict is not good.

Libra

Think twice before speaking. Unknowingly your views could hurt someone's sentiments. Today instead of just sitting around-why not get involved in something-which will improve your earning power. People close might take undue advantage of you- if you behave extra generous.

Cosmic tip: Intuitions are true.

Sagittarius

Your generous attitude would be a blessing in disguise as you are likely to be liberated from many vices like doubt, disloyalty, depression, lack of faith, greed, attachment, egoism, and jealousy. The economic side is likely to strengthen. Good day to appear for an interview.

Cosmic tip: Go hibernate like a grizzly bear.

Aquarius

Avoid discussing about your illness. Engage yourself in some work to divert your attention from ailment because the more you talk about your ailment the worse it gets. Today, you can come across a person in a party who can give you some important advice to strengthen your economic side.

Cosmic tip: Results will be relaxing.

Taurus

Health remains perfect. You need to keep an eye on where your money is being spent, otherwise you may face problems in the coming times. Find relief- comfort and love in the company of your spouse. Your confidence is growing and advancement is apparent.

Cosmic tip: Make it work in your favour.

Cancer

A friend may test your open mindedness and tolerance power. You should be careful not to surrender your values and be rational in every decision. New moneymaking opportunities will be lucrative. Time spent with family- children and friends will be vital to regenerate your energy.

Cosmic tip: Drop your battle

Virgo

Today you are under magic spell of hope. Together with your spouse, you can discuss finances and plan your wealth for your future. Evening at the movie-theatre or dinner with your spouse seems to keep you in a relaxed and wonderful mood. Journey undertaken for better career prospects may materialise.

Cosmic tip: Stay hopeful, plan wisely, and cherish togetherness.

Scorpio

Argument with a quarrelsome person may spoil your mood. Be wise and if possible avoid it, as feuds and fuses will never help you. Today, your money can be spent on many things. Hence, you need to plan a proficient budget today so as to tackle all the challenges and money-related problems.

Cosmic tip: Hiccups are not dead ends.

Capricorn

You will remain very active and agile today. Your health will fully support you today. A neighbour of yours may come to ask you for a loan today. You are advised to check their credibility before lending money; otherwise there can be money loss. Your family members are likely to create a mountain out of a molehill.

Cosmic tip: Wake up fast and soon.

Pisces

Health remains perfect. Businessmen who are stepping out of their homes for work should store their money at a safe place today, as there are chances of theft. Spouse remains cooperative despite your erratic behaviour. Promotion or monetary benefits for deserving employees.

Cosmic tip: Do the transformation.

SCIENCE WATCH

The science of 'Ayurveda'



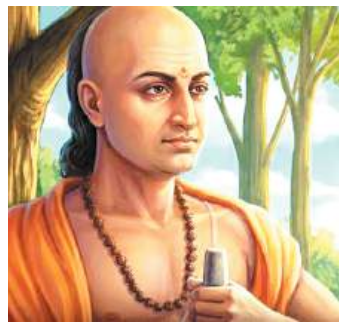
Ayurveda Day is observed annually on September 23, coinciding with the autumnal equinox. Developed over 5,000 years ago in India, its earliest conceptual foundations are rooted in the ancient Vedic texts.

Equinox & Ayurveda's philosophy



September 23 also marks the autumnal equinox when day and night are of nearly equal length, mirroring Ayurveda's core philosophical and scientific principle of balance (equilibrium) in the mind, body, and environment. Singers/artist also follow this core principle.

Father of Ayurveda



Acharya Charaka is widely regarded as the human father of Ayurveda for his foundational contributions to traditional Indian medicine. He lived around the 300-200 BCE era and served as a royal physician in the court of King Kanishka.



Who Am I?



I was a saint of the 15 century Bakti Period in India.



I lived somewhere between, 1398 - 1518 and was adopted by a poor weaver couple named Niru and Nima.



I worked as a humble weaver (julaha) throughout my life and taught that God is formless, omnipresent, and resides within every human being.



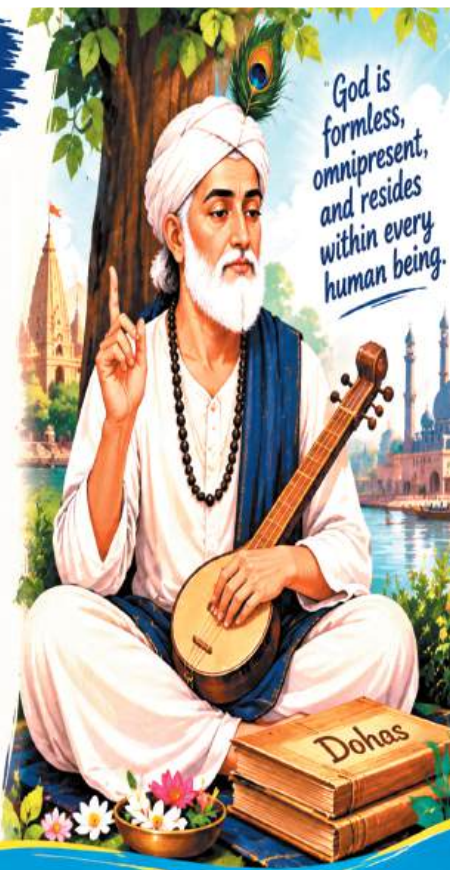
I wrote Dohas (Couplets), which were short, piercing, and memorable rhyming widely recited and sung across India today.



When I died, Hindus wanted to cremate me while Muslims wanted to bury me, but my disputed body vanished and turned into flowers, which were then shared and half were cremated by Hindus in Kashi, and half were buried by Muslims in Maghar.



ANSWER - SANT KABIR



SEPTEMBER 24-THE DAY IN HISTORY

- September 24 holds immense significance in Indian history, marked by the 1932 Poona Pact, and the 2014 Mars Orbiter Mission, making India the first Asian nation to achieve this feat on its first attempt.
- Same day in 1932, freedom fighter Pritilata Waddadar martyred herself at the age of 21 during the European Club raid in Chittagong.
- On September 23, 2007, the Indian cricket team, led by MS Dhoni, won the inaugural ICC World Twenty20 by defeating Pakistan in a thrilling final.
- Same day in 1493, Christopher Columbus set sail from Cádiz, Spain, with 17 ships on his second expedition to the New World.



IT'S QUIZ TIME

Test Your Knowledge | Learn Something New | Be a Better You!

- The first Indian state to be formed on linguistic basis in 1953 was which?
- Which Indian Army regiment traces its origins to the "Skinner's Horse," raised in 1803 by James Skinner?
- The Great Stupa at Sanchi is crowned by a three-tiered stone umbrella known as the Chhatra. In Buddhist symbolism, what does this feature primarily represent?
- Which large island is believed to have derived its name from the Sanskrit word "Yavadvipa," meaning "island of barley" or "grain," and shares its name with a popular programming language?
- Plastic surgery is often viewed as a purely modern, Western medical development. However, British doctors in the late 18th century learned how to perform successful nose reconstructions (rhinoplasty) after witnessing an Indian practitioner use a flap of skin from the forehead. This technique was directly adapted from which ancient Indian medical text?
- The Satavahana dynasty, which ruled ancient central and southern India, had a unique cultural practice regarding their rulers' names that stood out from many other contemporary dynasties. What was this distinctive tradition?
- Manohar Shyam Joshi wrote a hugely popular multi-generational TV serial in 1987 for Doordarshan, directed by Ramesh Sippy. Which iconic show was it?

mother's name as a title (matronymics) (7) Bunhiyaad
(1) Andhra Pradesh (2) 1st Horse (3) The Three Jewels of Buddhism - the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha
(4) Java (5) Sushruta Samhita (6) Rulers included their rulers' names that stood out from many other contemporary dynasties. What was this distinctive tradition?
(7) Bunhiyaad

Small Questions... Big Learning! RamaQuiz Keep Quizzing... Keep Growing...

TELL ME WHY?

Why hot water freezes faster than cold water?

Hot water can sometimes freeze faster than cold water due to a phenomenon known as the Mpemba Effect. The Mpemba effect is the observation that very hot liquids or colloids (such as ice cream) can freeze more quickly than colder ones, for similar volumes and surrounding conditions. The effect is named after Erasto Mpemba, a Tanzanian teenager who studied it scientifically in the 1960s for the first time.



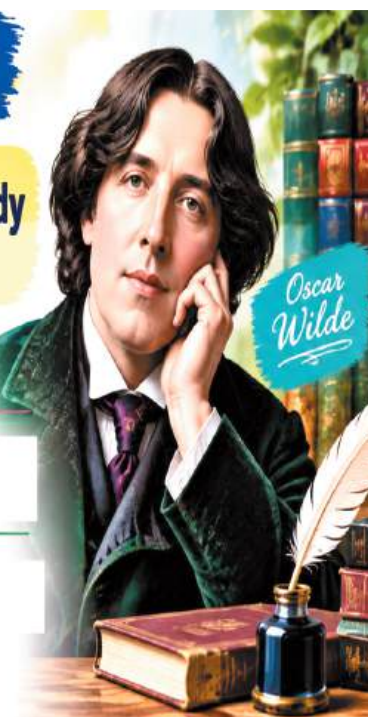
WHO SAID THIS?

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."

Who: Oscar Wilde

When: The saying surfaced in modern popular usage long after Wilde's death in 1900.

Context: It is used as a modern saying and a witty reminder of the uselessness of imitation.



WORD OF THE DAY

Ameliorate

Meaning - To make something better

Example - The new policy aims to ameliorate the living conditions of the poor.

Synonyms - Improve, Enhance

Antonyms - Worsen, Deteriorate



PHRASE FACT FINDER

"Jump on the bandwagon"

Meaning: To join an activity that has become popular.

Example: "When healthy eating became popular, many people jumped on the bandwagon."



REASONING & ASSERTION

One morning after sunrise, Nandu and Ravi were sitting in a lawn with their backs towards each other. Nandu's shadow fell exactly towards his left-hand side. Which direction was Ravi facing?

A East B West C North D South

ANSWER - D

EXPLANATION -

Since it was morning and Nandu's shadow fell exactly to his left-hand side, Nandu was facing north and hence Ravi should be facing south. Hence the answer is option D.



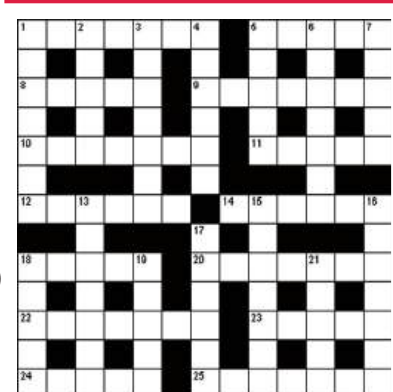
Across

- Chains, shackles (7)
- Large container for milk (5)
- Campbell, supermodel (5)
- Having more foliage (7)
- Beneficiary of a will (7)
- Historical era (5)
- Street musician (6)
- Austrian capital (6)
- Hazard (5)
- Chorus (7)
- Open grassland in the USA (7)
- Duke's domain (5)
- Endures (5)
- Watered down (7)

Down

- Organised group of devotees (3,4)
- Skimpy undergarment (5)
- Letter (7)
- Vendor (6)
- Stop (5)
- Heraldic creature (7)
- Compass point (5)
- Stories in instalments (7)
- Unbeliever (7)
- Vexed (7)
- Pal (6)
- Part of the eye (5)
- Early birds (5)
- Racecourse near Windsor (5)

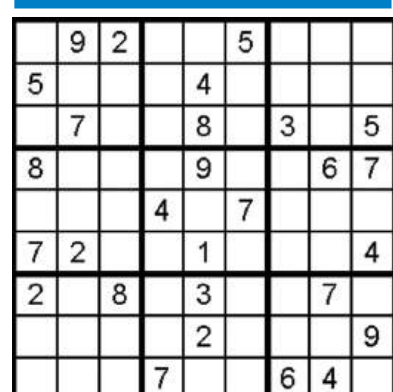
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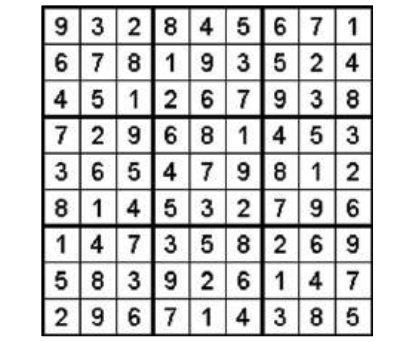
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SUDOKU- 238



SUDOKU SOLUTION - 237



DAILY WORD SEARCH

- Bach
- Dukas
- Mahler
- Barber
- Dvorak
- Mozart
- Bartok
- Elgar
- Orff
- Beethoven
- Gluck
- Ravel
- Bizet
- Grieg
- Rossini
- Brahms
- Handel
- Satie
- Chopin
- Haydn
- Verdi
- Copland
- Holst
- Wagner
- Delius
- Liszt





Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman in a group photograph at the BRICS Tax Heads Meeting under India's BRICS Presidency, at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, in New Delhi on September 23.

BRICS should cooperate on transfer pricing to ease tax disputes: FM

BRICS nations seek stronger tax cooperation as transfer pricing disputes burden developing countries and international tax rules undergo major renegotiation.

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday, September 23 urged BRICS nations to share their experiences on treaty interpretation and multilateral negotiations in international taxation, saying global transfer pricing disputes “disproportionately” burden developing countries.

India has proposed to set up two new working

groups, International Taxation and Transfer Pricing and Revenue Statistics, at a time when international tax rules are being renegotiated, Sitharaman said, addressing the BRICS heads of tax authorities meeting here. “The rules of international taxation are being renegotiated. There are several multilateral tax issues, including the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation, under

NUMBER

23

• Sitharaman seeks joint BRICS efforts to address transfer pricing disputes.

active negotiation. The decisions made in these processes over the next few years will shape cross-border taxation for a generation.

“BRICS economies, as source jurisdictions, as

large developing economies, as countries that have built significant domestic tax capacity from a low base, have a perspective on those negotiations that is essential to their fairness and their durability,” Sitharaman said. Transfer pricing refers to the pricing of goods and services that are exchanged between related companies. International transfer pricing disputes arise mainly because countries seek to ensure that

MNCs are subject to tax on an appropriate share of the profits attributable to their respective jurisdictions.

Accordingly, differences in the allocation of taxable income among countries can give rise to disputes between taxpayers and tax authorities, as well as between tax authorities in different jurisdictions. “Transfer pricing disputes cost developing-country administrations disproportionately.

BHIM introduces AI-Powered MyUPI assistant

Press Trust Of India

BHIM launches MyUPI for simpler, safer UPI assistance.

MUMBAI: NPCI BHIM Services Limited (NBSL), a wholly owned subsidiary of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), today announced the introduction of MyUPI, a conversational AI-powered assistant on the BHIM Payments App. MyUPI offers BHIM users simple, 24/7 multi-lingual support for their UPI-related needs, helping make payments safer, more convenient and easier to manage. Users can view transaction history, raise and track complaints, view and manage mandates set up through any UPI app, de-link their mobile number, and access fraud-awareness assistance in one place.

MyUPI was launched by NPCI at Global Fin-



tech Fest 2026. For users, MyUPI makes it easier to get assistance and take relevant action without having to look across multiple support channels. MyUPI enables users to converse in everyday language, making it easier to explain what they need without filling detailed forms or going through multiple back-and-forth interactions. MyUPI currently supports English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil and Bengali, with more regional languages planned over time. It is available round the clock within the BHIM Payments App, with all payment-related actions continuing to require user authentication through the UPI PIN.

Banks to remain open on Sunday ahead of proposed strike

NEW DELHI: All Public Sector Banks and Regional Rural Banks will remain open on Sunday, September 27, to ensure uninterrupted banking services ahead of a proposed three-day nationwide strike by the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) from September 28 to 30, the Finance Ministry said on Wednesday. The move comes as the strike period follows weekend holidays on September 26 and 27 and coincides with the half-yearly closing of banks on September 30. The Reserve Bank of India has approved the functioning of bank branches, offices, ATM-linked branches and currency chests on September 27.

The UFBU, which claims to represent around 90 per cent of the banking workforce, has called the strike primarily demanding a five-day banking week. Other demands



include improvements in pension, a uniform dearness allowance formula for pensioners and an option

for employees covered under the National Pension System to shift to the old pension scheme.

Bank unions to go ahead with 3-day strike

The United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) will proceed with its three-day nationwide strike from September 28 to 30 after a conciliation meeting before the Deputy Chief Labour Commissioner remained inconclusive. The unions, representing around 90 per cent of banking employees, are primarily demanding a five-day banking week, besides pension-related reforms and other issues. The Finance Ministry and Indian Banks' Association urged the unions to defer the strike, saying the five-day banking proposal is under consideration. UFBU said it would reconsider the strike if concrete progress is made. The strike coincides with the half-yearly bank closing and follows weekend holidays, potentially affecting services for five days.

Adani reclaims top spot on India's Rich List

Press Trust Of India

Adani overtakes Ambani as India's billionaire count reaches record.

NEW DELHI: Gautam Adani and family have reclaimed the top position on India's rich list, overtaking Mukesh Ambani and family, as India's billionaire population reached a record 391, according to the M3M Hurun India Rich List 2026.

Adani's wealth increased 13 per cent to Rs 9.23 lakh crore, while Ambani's wealth declined 10 per cent to Rs 8.63 lakh crore. This left Adani ahead by Rs 59,400 crore. Hurun noted that the top position has changed hands repeatedly between the two families in recent years.

Lakshmi Niwas Mittal and family made a major jump to third place, with wealth nearly



doubling by 93 per cent to Rs 3.39 lakh crore. Cyrus S Poonawalla and family remained fourth with Rs 3.03 lakh crore, up 23 per cent. Roshni Nadar Malhotra and family ranked fifth with Rs 2.79 lakh crore, making her India's wealthiest woman. Kumar Man-

FACTFILE

• India now has 391 dollar billionaires.

galam Birla and family stood sixth with Rs 2.69 lakh crore, followed by Dilip Shanghvi with Rs 2.65 lakh crore and Azim Premji and family with Rs 2.63 lakh crore. Anil Agarwal and family entered ninth place with Rs 2.08 lakh crore, while Samir Mehta and fam-

ily completed the top 10 with Rs 1.89 lakh crore. The number of individuals on the rich list with wealth of at least Rs 1,000 crore rose to 1,810, up 128 from the previous year. Their combined wealth increased 12.8 per cent to Rs 187.5 lakh crore, equivalent to about USD 1.96 trillion.

India added 27 dollar billionaires during the year, taking the total to 391, compared with 237 five years ago.

BizBriefs

BEST OF THE REST

HOW THE MARKET'S BEHAVE TODAY?

Stock markets rebound amid easing crude oil prices, strong growth forecast



MUMBAI: Benchmark stock index Sensex rebounded by nearly 300 points and the broader Nifty settled near the 24,450 level on Wednesday as below USD 100 per barrel crude oil prices and positive India growth forecast by rating agencies boosted buying in metal, financial and FMCG shares. The 30-share NSE Sensex climbed 299.17 points, or 0.40 per cent, to settle at 74,828.25. During the day, it jumped 444.66 points, or 0.59 per cent, to 74,973.74. The 50-share NSE Nifty was up 117.80 points, or 0.50 per cent, to end at 23,446.80. Among the 30 Sensex firms, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance, ITC, UltraTech Cement, Power Grid and Larsen & Toubro were the major winners. HCLTech, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, Titan and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the laggards.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, edged up 0.35 per cent to USD 99.60 per barrel. “Indian equity benchmarks closed higher on Wednesday, with broad-based buying lifting the market as investors assessed signs of a possible de-escalation in West Asia. Globally, hopes of easing tensions in West Asia and WTI crude remaining below USD 90 a barrel provided additional support to risk sentiment,” Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

Global agencies S&P, Fitch, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and OECD on Wednesday raised India's FY27 GDP growth projection to around 7 per cent, boosted by robust June quarter economic activity and resilient domestic demand despite conflict in West Asia.

SUSTAINABLE FARMING

UltraTech Cement supports farmers in sustainable agriculture

MUMBAI: UltraTech Cement Limited's Hirmi Cement Works in Chhattisgarh has supported more than 300 small-holder farmers in Balodabazar-Bhatapara district in adopting sustainable farming practices and improving agricultural productivity. Since 2023, the unit has worked with farmers in 10 nearby villages by facilitating the implementation of the Chhattisgarh Government's State Rural Livelihoods Mission, Project Bihan. In collaboration with the District Agriculture Department and Government Agriculture College, Bhatapara, the unit directly engaged 320 farmers through training, awareness programmes, exposure visits and capacity-building initiatives. The initiative included distribution of quality seeds and farming tools, promotion of crop diversification and exposure to model farms. The participating farmers subsequently shared their knowledge of improved farming practices and government schemes with another 350 farmers.

BULLION MARKET

Gold falls Rs 900 to Rs 1.54 lakh per 10 gm amid weak global cues

NEW DELHI: Gold prices fell for the third straight session, declining Rs 900 to Rs 1.54 lakh per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday as a stronger US dollar and weak global trends weighed on investor sentiment. The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,54,900 per 10 grams on Tuesday. Silver, however, remained unchanged for the second straight session at Rs 2.42 lakh per kilogram, inclusive of all taxes, according to local traders. “Gold traded weak on Wednesday as traders booked profits at higher levels,” said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities. The dollar index rose towards 100.85, adding further pressure on bullion, he added. While gold prices have weakened in recent sessions, the precious metal remains significantly more expensive than a year ago, a change that is also altering the way domestic consumers buy it.



YOUNG TALENT PUSH

Vedanta Power strengthens young talent programme to develop future power leaders

NEW DELHI: As India places its young workforce at the heart of its journey towards Viksit Bharat, Vedanta Power continues to strengthen its focus on creating opportunities for young talent to learn, lead and make an impact as the next generation of power leaders. With 56% of its workforce below the age of 35, Vedanta Power sees young professionals as a critical part of building the capabilities required for a rapidly evolving power industry. The company's approach combines campus hiring, structured learning, leadership guidance, cross-functional development and opportunities for early ownership to gain exposure to real-world operations and develop the capabilities needed to contribute meaningfully to India's growth story.

Speaking about the programme, Mr. Rajinder Singh Ahuja, Chief Executive Officer, Vedanta Power, said, “India's power growth story is entering a new phase. We are not only going to need more power, but people who can operate complex assets, adopt new technologies, improve efficiency and respond to an increasingly dynamic energy landscape. At Vedanta, building capacity and building capability go hand in hand. Our young professionals will be an important part of that journey. We want to give them exposure



to the business, access to experienced leaders and the opportunity to take ownership early, so they can grow into the power leaders who will shape the next chapter of India's power sector.”

As part of this approach, Vedanta Power conducted AAROCHAN - The Rise of Power, its first 4 day long structured induction programme for young professionals joining the organisation. The programme brought together new employees through leadership interactions, business sessions, functional learning and operational exposure, while providing them with a broader understanding of the organisation and the power sector. As part of this strategy, the company has recently onboarded 54 campus hires, of whom 57% are women, bringing fresh talent and diverse perspectives into the power sector. The young professionals, from premier institutes across India, represent a range of domains including engineering, technical functions, human resources, communications, finance, commercial, ESG and CSR.



QUOTE FROM THE QUOTABLE

“Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.
Strength is life, weakness is death.”
[Swami Vivekananda]

| OUR VIEW |

Electoral Integrity Demands Transparency And Public Accountability

The credibility of elections rests not merely on the accuracy of electoral rolls but also on the fairness, transparency and accountability of the institutions responsible for maintaining them. The controversy surrounding West Bengal’s Special Intensive Revision has raised serious questions about administrative procedures, institutional decision-making and the protection of voting rights. The reported filing of 16.10 lakh appeals seeking the deletion of voters whose names had already been approved by judicial officers demands a clear explanation. Equally significant are questions raised within the Election Commission itself over who authorised these appeals and whether established procedures were followed. Such matters cannot remain unresolved when the democratic rights of lakhs of citizens are involved. The Election Commission is a constitutional institution whose independence must be reflected in both its decisions and its functioning. Differences among its members are natural, but important decisions require proper consultation, documented authorisation and adherence to established rules. Institutional credibility depends on the ability to demonstrate that these safeguards have been respected. Concerns regarding access to electoral software deserve equal attention. Technology should strengthen electoral administration rather than create uncertainty about who controls voter records. Electoral Registration Officers must have the authority and access necessary to perform their statutory responsibilities. Any restrictions affecting these functions require transparent justification and appropriate oversight. The controversy has inevitably become a political confrontation, with rival parties advancing conflicting interpretations of the revision exercise. Yet allegations of electoral manipulation and claims about election results must be distinguished from established facts. Political accusations cannot substitute for a thorough examination of administrative decisions. More importantly, the interests of ordinary voters must not disappear amid political exchanges. Every eligible citizen deserves a fair opportunity to establish eligibility, challenge wrongful deletion and obtain a timely decision. Electoral accuracy must never become an excuse for unnecessary exclusion. The immediate priority should be a transparent examination of the disputed appeals, clarification of administrative responsibilities and speedy disposal of pending cases. The Election Commission must address legitimate questions through verifiable records and clear explanations. Public confidence in democracy is sustained not by assurances alone but by procedures that withstand independent scrutiny.

| GUEST VIEW |

Criminal Proceedings Must Never Become Bargaining Chips

When civil disputes are converted into criminal complaints merely to intimidate the opposing party, the justice system itself becomes a weapon of harassment. The Bombay High Court has rightly warned that criminal proceedings cannot be used as bargaining chips in civil settlements. It has also indicated that complainants who misuse criminal law may face substantial costs. Such practices waste judicial time and drain police resources that should be devoted to genuine offences. For ordinary citizens, unnecessary investigations, chargesheets and repeated court appearances can bring financial pressure, reputational damage and anxiety. Many disagreements involving contracts, property or transactions could instead be addressed through civil proceedings or negotiated settlements. The Karnataka High Court has similarly cautioned that civil disputes should not be dressed up as criminal cases. Yet parties frequently label breaches of contract or property disagreements as cheating and fraud simply to gain leverage. This tendency swells crowded court dockets and weakens confidence in the administration of justice. Courts must firmly discourage such complaints and impose costs whenever deliberate misuse is established. Police should distinguish genuine criminal conduct from essentially civil disputes before proceeding. At the same time, legitimate allegations must receive investigation. Strong judicial scrutiny, policing and accessible civil remedies can prevent criminal law from becoming an instrument of coercion.



Dr Ganapathi Bhat

Comment

Pollution: The Air We Cannot Escape

Clean air is as fundamental to human life as food and water. Yet, in the pursuit of economic growth, societies are steadily contaminating the very resource that sustains life. Air pollution is no longer merely an environmental concern. It is a public health emergency with implications for urban planning, transport, energy, agriculture, industry and the economy.

The World Health Organization estimates that the combined effects of outdoor and household air pollution contribute to about seven million premature deaths every year. Nearly 99% of the world’s population breathes air that does not meet WHO air-quality guidelines. Pollution, therefore, is not a problem confined to a few congested cities; it is a global health challenge.

India’s situation is particularly worrying. The State of Global Air 2025 report, based on 2023 data, estimated that more than two million deaths in India were associated with air pollution. India and China

together accounted for more than half of the world’s air-pollution-related mortality. Population size alone cannot explain this burden. Rapid urbanisation, dependence on fossil fuels, industrial emissions, traffic congestion and weak urban infrastructure have combined to produce persistently high pollution levels.

The IQAir 2024 World Air Quality Report recorded India’s annual average PM2.5 concentration at 50.6 micrograms per cubic metre, more than ten times the WHO annual guideline of 5 micrograms. Such figures should not be treated merely as statistics. PM2.5 particles are small enough to penetrate deep into the respiratory system and enter the bloodstream, affecting organs beyond the lungs.

The health consequences extend well beyond asthma and respiratory infections. Air pollution is associated with cardiovascular disease, stroke, chronic respiratory diseases and lung cancer. Children, older people, pregnant women and those with pre-existing ill-



Dr. Kolahalam Ramkishore

nesses face greater risks. The State of Global Air 2025 report found that about 86% of the 7.9 million air-pollution-attributable deaths globally in 2023 were linked to non-communicable diseases. Pollution thus also deepens existing health inequalities.

India has set targets under the National Clean Air Programme to reduce PM10 levels by up to 40% from the 2017-18 baseline by 2025-26. Such targets are necessary, but their value ultimately depends on implementation. Effective monitoring, transparent use of funds, stronger local institutions and clear accountability are essential. Air pollution cannot be tackled through announcements alone.

Individual precautions have a role. People can reduce unnecessary exposure on heavily polluted days, use appropriate masks when necessary and limit avoidable private-vehicle use. But it would be misguided to place the burden of a systemic failure on individuals. Wearing masks cannot substitute for cleaner air policies.

The real solution lies in structural change. Public transport must become more efficient and accessible. Industrial emissions require continuous monitoring and credible enforcement. Construction sites must control dust, open waste burning must be prevented and farmers must have practical alternatives to crop-residue burning. Investments in clean energy, cleaner transport, scientific waste management and better urban design are essential.

Air pollution is ultimately not just an attack on nature; it is an attack on human life. Its costs appear not only in hospital bills but also in lost working days, reduced productivity and diminished household incomes. Pollution must therefore be treated as a national public-health priority cutting across environment, health, transport, energy, industry, agriculture and urban development. Economic growth is necessary, but development that leaves people struggling to breathe cannot be regarded as sustainable development.

Why Engineering Curriculum Needs LinkedIn and Blogs in the Current Decade

Engineering education must integrate LinkedIn and blogging to develop communication skills, professional identity, digital portfolios and ethical awareness, preparing students for competitive global careers.

P. V. Laxmiprasad

Engineering education is no longer confined to classrooms, laboratories and examinations. In the current decade, an engineer is expected not only to design, code and calculate but also to communicate, collaborate and build a credible professional identity. This is why LinkedIn and blogs deserve a meaningful place in the engineering curriculum.

Traditionally, engineering students have been trained primarily in technical subjects. While technical competence remains essential, employers increasingly look for graduates who can explain their ideas clearly, work in teams, present projects confidently and communicate with diverse audiences. A brilliant engineering project can lose its impact if its creator cannot communicate its purpose and value.

LinkedIn can become a digital professional classroom. Students can learn how to create a professional profile, present academic achievements, document projects, share internships and participate in conversations related to their discipline. Instead of waiting until graduation to create a professional identity, students can gradually develop one during their four years of engineering education.

A well-maintained LinkedIn profile can also encourage students to think



about their achievements differently. Completing a project is one thing; explaining the problem, methodology, innovation and outcome to a professional audience is another. Such activities can strengthen reflection, communication and professional awareness.

Blogs, meanwhile, can transform students from passive learners into active knowledge creators. Writing a blog on artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data science, renewable energy, electronics or sustainable engineering requires students to research, organise information and express technical ideas in understandable language. The exercise develops writing

skills while reinforcing subject knowledge. Blogs also provide an opportunity to connect engineering with society. Students can write about how technology affects education, healthcare, agriculture, climate change, transportation and everyday life. This encourages them to view engineering not merely as a technical profession but as a discipline with social consequences.

There is another important benefit: a digital portfolio can complement the traditional résumé. A student who has a LinkedIn profile containing projects, certifications, articles, presentations and achievements, together with a col-

lection of thoughtful blogs, can demonstrate skills that a marksheet cannot fully capture. However, universities should teach responsible digital communication alongside these platforms. Students need guidance on plagiarism, copyright, misinformation, artificial intelligence etiquette and ethical online behaviour. The objective should not be to turn every student into a social-media influencer, but to develop responsible professionals who can communicate their knowledge effectively.

The engineering curriculum of the current decade must therefore move beyond the narrow equation of “technical skills = employ-

ability.” The emerging equation is broader: technical competence + communication + digital presence + critical thinking + professional ethics.

LinkedIn and blogs, when integrated thoughtfully into engineering education, can provide precisely this bridge between the campus and the professional world. The engineer of tomorrow will not merely build technologies; they will also need to explain, document, share and defend them.

In the digital age, an engineer’s work should not remain invisible. The curriculum must teach students not only how to build the future, but also how to communicate it.

YOURLETTERS

IIT deaths demand urgent reforms

Official figures reporting 45 student suicides across 23 IITs from 2020-21 to 2024-25 demand urgent attention. Twenty-eight of those students belonged to SC, ST and OBC communities. These deaths raise serious questions about discrimination, academic pressure, isolation and institutional support. Authorities must examine the circumstances of every case, strengthen independent grievance systems, expand counselling and act firmly against caste-based harassment. Meaningful reform requires transparency, accountability and sustained investment in student welfare. No prestigious institution should neglect its students’ basic safety.

Dr. Vijaykumar H K, Raichur.

Japan signals growing cricket potential

Japan’s narrow two-run defeat against reigning T20 world champions India in the one-off international at Sano offered an encouraging glimpse of its cricketing potential. Even in a rain-shortened five-over contest, Japan’s disciplined bowling and determined chase kept a vastly more experienced opponent under pressure until the finish. Such performances suggest emerging teams deserve more opportunities against established nations. Regular international fixtures, better facilities and access to experienced coaches could help Japan develop talent and establish a stronger presence in Asia.

Sujit De, Kolkata

Send your articles (600-650 words) and letters (70-80 words) for this page on: editorcentralchronicle@gmail.com The letters can be edited or rewritten for clarity.

Since, I don't spend much time on social media, I don't get to read about any kind of trolling. I don't even know the trolling that is happening around me or around people. I actually don't know most of it because that's how insignificant I feel it is. It's really a waste of time."

Parineeti Chopra



&Glitters

CLOSE UP

72nd National Film Awards celebrate India's finest talent

The 72nd National Film Awards honoured India's finest cinema talents.

Central Chronicle News

Anant Nag, Yami Gautam, Mammootty and others received prestigious honours.

President Droupadi Murmu conferred the 72nd National Film Awards for 2024 on leading talents from Indian cinema, with veteran Kannada actor Anant Nag receiving the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke honour. Yami Gautam was named Best Actress in a Leading Role for her performance in "Article 370", while Mammootty and Kartik Aaryan shared the Best Actor in a Leading Role award for "Bramayugam" and "Chandu Champion", respectively. "Article 370", directed by Aditya Suhas Jambhale, also received the Best Feature Film award. The film won three National Film Awards, including Best Actress and Best Music Direction, with Shashwat Sachdev honoured for its music. Speaking at the ceremony, Yami described the National Award as the "biggest validation" for any artist and said it was the highest honour presented by the country. She added that the recognition had brought back the excitement and energy she felt as a newcomer. Aditya Dhar, who produced "Article 370", also expressed his gratitude for the film's



The 72nd National Film Awards was held in Gujarat



three awards, calling the achievement emotional and humbling. Asked about his upcoming directorial "Dhurandhar", Dhar said, "We are here for Article 370 and discuss about Dhurandhar hopefully next year." The awards ceremony was held at Ekta Nagar in Gujarat's Narmada district, with the Statue of Unity providing the backdrop. Actor-turned-director Ran-deep Hooda received the Best Debut Film of a Direc-

tor award for "Swatantrya Veer Savarkar", while Raj-kumar Periasamy won Best Direction for "Amaran".

Sanjay Mishra won Best Actor in a Supporting Role for "Bhakshak", while Sachana Namidass and Ropashree Varkady were honoured in the Best Actress in a Supporting Role category. Manoj Muntashir won Best Lyrics for "Jaane Do" from "Maidaan", while Vijay Ganguly received Best Choreography for "Aaj Ki Raat" from "Stree 2".



| HOLLYWOOD |

Tom Cruise says AI sans human creativity is debacle

Central Chronicle News

Hollywood star Tom Cruise has shared his thoughts on the growing role of artificial intelligence in filmmaking, saying technology may become an increasingly important part of the industry but human creativity will remain irreplaceable. Cruise spoke about AI during a BAFTA Life in Pictures event in London, where he reflected on his long career and the changing landscape of cinema. Asked about the impact of AI on filmmaking, the actor



Tom Cruise on the use of AI in filmmaking.

must keep creating. You know, it is coming and it's going to happen. But people want to see real things," Cruise said, according to Variety. His comments were met with applause from the audience. Cruise also spoke about his belief in the theatrical experience and the importance of bringing audiences together. While he said he has no problem with streaming platforms, the actor believes watching a film in a cinema offers a distinct experience that continues to hold value.

HIGHLIGHT

● Tom Cruise says human creativity still matters as AI transforms modern filmmaking.

acknowledged that the technology is here to stay but stressed the importance of human involvement in creating films. "Here's the thing, there is nothing like human. Creatives

CineBriefs

BEST OF THE REST

Bollywood

Vidya Balan joins Rajinikanth's Jailer 2

Actor Vidya Balan has joined Rajinikanth-starrer Jailer 2, the sequel to the 2023 Tamil blockbuster Jailer. Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar, the film will see Balan play the character Kantha. Production banner Sun Pictures announced her casting through a social media post featuring a teaser of the actor in a blue sari. Rajinikanth will return as retired jailer Muthuvel Pandian.

The film has music by Anirudh Ravichander and is scheduled for a global release on October 15. Jailer 2 continues the story from the first film, which became one of Tamil cinema's biggest hits and featured a large ensemble cast.

Web Series

New short film arrives on YouTube

Short film Bhed, Bakri, Bhoot, presented by filmmakers Abhishek Chaubey and Navdeep Singh, will release on YouTube on September 24. Directed by Shivam Shankar, the film stars Vandana Joshi, Prasanna Bisht, Apeksha Iyer, Naseem Mughal and Rishi Solanki. It will premiere on Anurag Kashyap's curated short-film channel, Oh Short Flips. The story follows a heartbroken musician who writes a message about his lover on a public bathroom wall. His personal outburst soon grows into a collection of social and political frustrations shared by strangers. The film has screened at several international festivals and won awards for editing and Best Short Film.

The bollywood hot pair

Raghav calls Parineeti a dedicated performer



Raghav Chadha has shared a heartfelt note for wife Parineeti Chopra ahead of her upcoming Netflix series Shaque: Trust No One, which premieres on September 24. Praising her dedication, Raghav wrote that he was proud of her and recalled visiting the shoot in Shimla. Parineeti responded by thanking him and calling him a

supportive and protective husband. The actor has revealed that she was pregnant with their son Neer while filming the series. Her family, including Raghav, also travelled to Shimla during the shoot. Shaque marks Parineeti's web series debut and follows a mother searching for answers after her baby goes missing.

Fashion

Mrunal Thakur's saree look is pure festive glam

Mrunal Thakur's latest mauve tissue saree look is a beautiful mix of traditional charm and modern elegance. Styled with a statement choker, sparkling earrings, embellished heels and a bun decorated with pink flowers, the actor keeps the festive look graceful without making it feel excessive. Her soft makeup and romantic colour palette add to the overall appeal. The look can easily be recreated with a rose-pink silk saree, antique-inspired jewelry, block heels and a structured handbag.



Trending on Insta

@anupamkher

Ohio honours Anupam Kher for 40 years

Anupam Kher has received a special honour from Ohio for completing 40 years in Indian cinema. He posted about the recognition on Instagram, expressing gratitude for the honour and his live stage performance.



@sakupataudi

Soha Ali Khan remembers late father

Soha Ali Khan remembered her late father Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi on his 15th death anniversary. Her daughter Inaaya also paid tribute to her grandfather with a heartfelt handwritten letter, calling him "Sarkar Abba."



Art & Culture

HERITAGE & CRAFTSMANSHIP

‘Kosagarh’, celebrating Chhattisgarh’s rich legacy of Kosa Silk

Kosa Silk brings Chhattisgarh’s forest heritage alive through timeless elegance.

“Kosagarh: Silk from Forest to Fashion” Woven from the heart of nature, Kosa Silk carries the soul of Chhattisgarh ancient tribal heritage in every thread. Every piece of Kosa Silk tells a story of patience, where human hands transform the wild treasure of forest into pure royalty. More than just a fabric, it’s a living tradition passed down through generations of master weavers. With its rich texture and natural golden luster, Kosa doesn’t just catch the light.... It commands the room. Its beauty lies in its breathing imperfections, marking each drape an exclusive piece of wearable art. Understated elegance, organic texture and a royal sheen- that is unmatched magic of a pure Kosa. From the forests to the heights of timeless fashion, rooted in tradition, shining with modern grace, Kosa Silk is one of the Indian’s most treasured fabric. That’s why, Chhattisgarh is



The golden glow of Chhattisgarh’s Kosa Silk

HIGHLIGHT

● Every golden thread reflects craftsmanship, culture, nature, and generations of tradition.

referred as Kosagarh.

Among different types of silk, Kosa Silk falls under the category of Tussar (Tasar) Silk, often consid-

ered the more organic and textured counterpart to smoother Mulberry silk. What makes Kosa exceptional is its origin-produced by silkworms that thrive in the forests of central India. This natural habitat gives Kosa its signature identity: a coarser, more textured weave, a muted yet luminous golden-beige tone, and remarkable strength.

Kosa Silk stands apart as one of India’s most premium and authentic wild silks-valued for its natural origin, handwoven character, and timeless durability. Each weave carries natural irregularities, making every piece oneof-a-kind, while its ability to age beautifully over time elevates it from just a fabric to a lifelong



By -Apoorva Neral and Apoorva Chandra Founders, Kosagarh

heirloom. Kosa does for the body what diamonds do for the hand. Rooted deeply in the cultural heritage of Chhattisgarh, Kosa Silk represents luxury that is raw, real, and enduring.

Black Robin named New Zealand’s bird of the year



Once reduced to only five known birds, New Zealand’s Chatham Island black robin, or karure, has been named Bird of the Year 2026. The tiny, shy species received more than 25,000 votes, finishing ahead of the kākāpō and New Zealand falcon. The competition attracted over 105,000 voters, marking it’s highest-ever turnout. Around 88% of the votes came from within New Zealand,

highlighting strong public interest in the country’s native wildlife. The black robin’s victory also draws attention to its remarkable conservation journey. Once critically close to extinction, the species has gradually recovered through dedicated conservation efforts on the remote Chatham Islands.

VISUAL TREATMENT AT

Ancient myths take new shape through art



Centuries-old legends are getting a contemporary visual treatment at Chennai’s DakshinaChitra Heritage Museum, where Gond and Patachitra traditions come together in a distinctive exhibition. Curated in collaboration with Loksutr, the showcase features works by 10 artists who have transformed inherited folklore, sacred narratives and traditional memories into striking artworks. Among the highlights is Amar Kanth, a large-scale Gond painting inspired by the story of the River Narmada’s origin. The exhibition also reflects the evolving journey of Gond art, whose contemporary canvas tradition gained recognition through artist Jangarh Singh Shyam. Together, these works connect ancient storytelling with present-day artistic expression.

| TRADITION |

‘Ikebana’ finding calm through ancient art of flowers

Central Chronicle News

For more than 500 years, Ikebana, the traditional Japanese art of flower arrangement, has offered a quiet way to connect with nature, creativity and oneself. While rooted in Japanese culture and Buddhist traditions, the practice continues to attract people looking for a slower, more mindful experience amid busy modern lives. Unlike conventional bouquets, Ikebana is not simply about filling a vase with flowers. Each stem, leaf and branch is carefully placed to create balance, movement and meaning. There is no single perfect arrangement, allowing the creator to respond to the natural shape and character of every flower.



The centuries-old Japanese art of Ikebana draws those seeking calm

Hiroyuki Okada, an Ikenobo teacher, describes the practice as a form of healing and self-reflection. For him, arranging flowers means observing life closely and discovering what lies within. The process encourages concentration, patience and an appreciation of beauty

in different stages, including withering and renewal. The Ikenobo school, the oldest of the major Ikebana schools, teaches traditional forms in which flowers and branches represent different aspects of life. In one arrangement, the tallest element, shin, reaches

towards the sky and represents the core. Soe expresses individuality, while tai represents the future through fresh growth. Ikebana can be practised by people of different ages, from young children to older adults. Practitioners say the focused process can bring a sense

HIGHLIGHT

● Ikebana transforms simple flowers into expressions of beauty, balance and reflection.

● More than arranging flowers, it encourages patience, presence and self-expression.

of peace, helping the mind become quieter while creating something with the hands.

Its appeal lies in simplicity. A few flowers, a small vase and a moment of attention can become an artistic ritual. More than flower arranging, Ikebana is a gentle reminder to notice nature, embrace change and find beauty in the present moment.

Cultural Hues

Lost painting resurfaces after 75 years

A Gertrude Abercrombie painting bought for just \$30 at a Michigan estate sale could now fetch \$250,000. Titled Alderman Merriam’s Shells, the 1951 artwork was authenticated after its buyer spotted Abercrombie’s signature. The Chicago Surrealist painted it using seashells owned by alderman Robert Merriam. She later gave the piece to Michigan doctor John Reynolds in exchange for medical treatment. It remained with his family for 75 years before resurfacing.



Princess Diana’s ‘Revenge Dress’ heads to auction

Revenge served stylish, indeed. Thirty years after Princess Diana stepped out in the black dress that instantly became part of fashion history; the gown is heading to auction. Sotheby’s will offer the famous ‘revenge dress’ in New York on December 9, with an estimated value of \$150,000 to \$300,000. Before the sale, the gown is making stops around the world. Designed by Greek-born designer Christina Stambolian, the gown is an off-the-shoulder black silk evening dress with a chiffon train.



Rare Aztec manuscript back in Mexico

The rare Azcatitlan Codex has returned to Mexico after nearly two centuries. Created in the late 16th or early 17th century, the illustrated manuscript documents the migration, rulers and fall of Tenochtitlan. It combines Indigenous imagery with European writing, offering a valuable glimpse into Aztec history. The codex is now displayed at Mexico City’s National Museum of Anthropology for three months. Its return has also renewed discussions about its ownership between Mexico and France.



Stolen artwork returns to France

A 300-pound sculpture stolen from a French museum in 1993 has returned home after more than three decades. Alfred Lepère’s nearly eight-foot Faune Chasseur was identified in 2025 by a US auction house during routine checks. Listed in the Art Loss Register, its sale was stopped. French authorities then worked to recover it. The unidentified owner agreed to surrender the sculpture without payment. It has returned to the Musée de Picardie in Amiens.

1,700-year-old Homer fragment found

A researcher at Utrecht University Library in the Netherlands has discovered a small parchment fragment from a 1,700-year-old copy of Homer’s The Odyssey. Written in Greek, the fragment contains lines from Book 12, where Odysseus tells how his crew killed the sacred cattle of the sun god Helios. The three-inch fragment was found among ancient Christian manuscripts from Egypt. Experts believe it once belonged to a small, complete copy of the famous epic.



Venus may have gobbled up its moon

Scientists suggest Venus may have once had a moon billions of years ago, but the planet could have eventually swallowed it. A new study used computer simulations to explore what might happen to a moon orbiting the slowly rotating planet. In most models, the moon eventually crashed into Venus. Researchers say the study does not prove Venus had a moon, but it offers a possible explanation for why the planet is moonless today and could provide clues about its ancient history.





“Virat Kohli’s batting brilliance and Rohit Sharma’s winning experience will be crucial to India’s World Cup campaign in South Africa.”

Suresh Raina
Former Indian Cricketer

Deepika’s record strikes hand India commanding 20-1 win over Thailand

Deepika Sehrawat struck a record nine goals as India crushed Thailand 20-1, registering their third consecutive victory and strengthening their lead in Asian Games Pool B.

Press Trust Of India

Deepika’s record nine goals powered India to third consecutive Pool B win.

KAKAMIGAHARA: In-form drag-flicker Deepika Sehrawat continued her impressive run, scoring a record nine goals in a single match as India thrashed Thailand 20-1 to register their third consecutive victory in Pool B of the women’s hockey competition at the Asian Games here on Wednesday.

Deepika (2nd, 8th, 9th, 24th, 33rd, 36th, 39th, 51st and 57th minutes) was unstoppable from penalty corners, converting all her nine attempts to script the record haul, while Navneet Kaur (4th, 29th, 35th and 51st) also ran riot in the one-sided contest.

Rutuja Dadaso Pisal (10th, 11th and 47th) completed a hat-trick, while Neha Goyal (19th), Lalremsiami (26th), Sakshi Rana (29th) and skipper Salima Tete (45th) joined the scoring as India piled on the goals.

Thailand’s consolation goal was scored from a penalty corner variation by Supansa Samanso (57th). India will next play hosts Japan on Friday.

India are leading Pool B standings with three wins from as many matches ahead of Japan. The top teams from each pool will



qualify for the semifinals of the 12-team competition.

India toyed with the Thai defence from the onset with Deepika at the forefront with her penalty corner conversions.

The Indians, who finished a historic fifth at the recent FIH World Cup in the Netherlands and Belgium, continued from where they left in the first two matches.

India had earlier registered convincing 19-0 and 17-1 wins over Uzbekistan and Indonesia respectively.

Deepika, who before this game scored 11 goals (eight against Uzbekistan and three against Indonesia), opened India’s tally before Navneet doubled the lead.

Deepika was immaculate with her drag-flicks, finding Thailand’s net with at ease from set pieces.

Rutuja was brilliant upfront, finding herself at the right place at the right time to deflect in passes, while Lalremsiami and Navneet struck two field goals and also converted a penalty stroke in the 29th minute as India enjoyed a commanding 11-0 at half-time.

Indians continued their complete domination after the change of ends with Sakshi and skipper Salima also registering their name in the scoresheet from field efforts.

| INDIA EYE VICTORY |

India await first real test in Asian Games men’s hockey against Korea

Press Trust Of India

Defending champions India face Korea in their first major Asian Games challenge.

KAKAMIGAHARA: Defending champions India will face their first major challenge in the Asian Games men’s hockey competition when they take on South Korea in their third Pool A encounter on Thursday.

India began their title defence with emphatic victories over Indonesia and Sri Lanka, winning 13-1 and 16-1 respectively. However, Korea, four-time Asian Games champions and bronze medallists at the previous edition, are expected to provide considerably tougher opposition.

World No. 8 India are



aiming to retain their gold medal and secure direct qualification for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. Their campaign follows a disappointing eighth-place finish at the recent FIH World Cup.

Dilpreet Singh has spearheaded India’s attack with seven field goals, while drag-flicker Jugraj Singh struck four times against Sri Lanka. Abhishek also impressed

with a hat-trick in that encounter.

Despite their attacking dominance, head coach Craig Fulton has identified areas requiring improvement, particularly penalty-corner conversion. India converted only five of their 12 opportunities against Sri Lanka, while their defence conceded one goal in each opening match.

Korea, ranked 21st

globally, possess considerable tournament experience and could test India’s defensive organisation.

Fulton has urged his players to translate lessons from their World Cup disappointment into improved performances. The encounter will provide an important assessment of India’s preparations for the knockout stage.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

INDIA DOMINATE KABADDI

Indian men and women dominate Asian Games Kabaddi opponents



NAGOYA: India’s men’s and women’s kabaddi teams continued their impressive Asian Games campaigns with convincing victories on Wednesday. The women’s team defeated 2018 champions Iran 37-23 in their second group match, overcoming a tough challenge after leading 19-15 at halftime. Coach Neeta Dadwe praised her players, particularly Pooja and Nikita, for their outstanding performances. Meanwhile, the men’s team

thrashed Bangladesh 48-25 in their third Group A encounter. India established a commanding 29-9 halftime lead, leaving Bangladesh struggling despite an improved second-half performance. Both defending champions remain unbeaten. The women will next face Japan on Thursday, while the men’s team will meet Chinese Taipei in their final group-stage fixture as both sides pursue another Asian Games gold. **PTI**

ASIAN GAMES SHOOTING

Manu ends 5th in 10m air pistol final; women’s team also misses medal



NAGOYA: Double Olympic-medallist Manu Bhaker ended fifth in the individual competition as India finished without a medal in the women’s 10m air pistol event, missing the team bronze narrowly at the Asian Games here on Wednesday. Bhaker ended fifth with a score of 181.1 after having qualified third for the final with a total of 579. The 24-year-old, who won the individual bronze in this event at the Paris Olympics in addition to her mixed team bronze, will next be seen in the 25m pistol event where she is the defending champion. Among other Indians, Esha Singh ended 15th with a score of 572 in the qualification and missed out on a place in the final. Suruchi Singh finished 26th with a score of 568. India missed out on a medal to Vietnam in the team event, finishing fourth on account of a lower inner 10s count after both teams were tied on 1719. **PTI**

HISTORIC BRONZE TRIUMPH

Jay Meena wins India’s first ever soft tennis bronze medal at Asian Games



NAGOYA: Jay Meena created history on Wednesday, securing India’s first Asian Games soft tennis medal with bronze in men’s singles. The 26-year-old from Dewas, Madhya Pradesh, lost 2-4 to Japan’s Takuya Kurosaka in a 45-minute semifinal. Appearing in his third Asian Games, Meena fell three games behind before winning the fourth and fifth to revive his hopes. However, Kurosaka claimed the sixth game to secure his place in the final. Earlier, Meena edged the Philippines’ Sherwin Nuguit 4-3 in a gripping quarterfinal after defeating Pakistan’s Arain Hussain 4-0 in the group stage. A 2022 National Games gold medallist, Meena also won mixed doubles bronze at the 2024 World Soft Tennis Championship. **PTI**

ANKUSH ADVANCES CONFIDENTLY

Ankush Panghal storms into Asian Games Boxing quarterfinals with victory

NISHIO: Indian boxer Ankush Panghal advanced to the men’s 80kg quarterfinals at the Asian Games with a commanding unanimous decision victory over Bahrain’s Hamsa Vogel on Wednesday. Making his Asian Games debut, the 21-year-old Commonwealth Games gold medallist registered an emphatic 5-0 win in the round of 16. Ankush, who secured silver at last year’s World Boxing Cup Final, is now just one victory away from assuring himself of an Asian Games medal. He will next face Tajikistan’s Nekruz Salimov in the quarterfinals. Meanwhile, India’s boxing contingent has made an impressive start to its Asian Games campaign, with all four boxers who have entered the ring so far winning their opening contests convincingly. **PTI**



| ASIAN GAMES |

Deepika’s record breaking run powered by three masters

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Nine goals in a single match and 20 across three games may have made Deepika the face of India’s record-breaking Asian Games campaign, but the star drag-flicker insists her success is down to more than just the athletic genes inherited from her wrestling family.

It is the result of years of hard work and guidance from three legends.

The 23-year-old scored a record nine goals in India’s 20-1 rout of Thailand, bettering her own mark of eight strikes against Uzbekistan in the opening match.

“I didn’t even realise I had set a record after scoring eight goals. I was just focused on converting the penalty corners. My teammates told me about it,” Deepika told PTI from Kakamigahara, Japan.

“Even in the Thailand match, I didn’t keep count.



I didn’t even realise I had set a record after scoring eight goals. I was just focused on converting the penalty corners

Deepika
Hockey Player

In the team huddle head coach Sjoerd Marijne told me I had bettered my own

Mirabai ends Asiad jinx with silver

Mirabai Chanu finally secured her maiden Asian Games medal with a historic silver, while India’s shooting campaign witnessed mixed fortunes as men’s and women’s skeet teams claimed bronze medals amid disappointments in pistol events.

Press Trust Of India

India collect three shooting medals as elusive Asian Games gold remains awaited.

NAGOYA: Gold eluded India but medals trickled in from the shooting range for the second successive day even as the country’s first ever podium finish in mixed martial arts medal became more a tale of heartbreak than history in Asian Games here on Monday.

Suchika Tariyal wept on the mat as being just 700gm more than Singaporean Hui Hoon Teo in the morning weigh-in prevented her from making the summit clash after a bitterly-contested semi-final ended drawn. She had to settle for bronze, which was India’s first ever in the combat sport but one that could have been bettered.

The Indian’s slightly higher weight proved decisive as technical rules allowed the lighter competitor to move ahead in case of a draw.

India’s overall tally



Pressure completely gone from me, I am feeling very light: Mirabai

NAGOYA: Japan had already given Mirabai Chanu an Olympic silver and on Wednesday the land of rising sun delivered another precious medal, the elusive Asian Games medal she had chased for 12 years, lifting the pressure off the star Indian weightlifter and leaving her feeling very light. Chanu totalled 198kg (87kg+110kg) in the women’s 49kg category to claim a silver, which is India’s first Asian Games weightlifting medal since Karnam Malleswari’s silver in 1998. The Manipuri had won an Olympic silver in Tokyo in 2021, bettering Malleswari’s bronze from the 2000 Sydney Games, and returned to Japan five years later to add the one major medal missing from her collection. “Finally, I have got the medal that I wanted, which I have been chasing for 12 years. I am feeling very light now because the pressure is completely gone from me. This is my dream Asian Games medal. I feel my life is complete now,” Chanu said after her event. “I won a silver medal in Tokyo (Olympics) and now I have a silver medal at the Asian Games in Japan. I’ve been dreaming of winning an Asian Games medal since I stepped into the Olympics. “I always ask myself, what is happening to me during or before every Asian Games? But this time, I tried my best. I came here with the resolve that no matter what happens, I will win the medal,” added the 32-year-old.



Badminton stars humbled by China

Lakshya Sen and Ayush Shetty faltered against their higher-ranked opponents as the Indian men’s team signed off with a bronze medal after going down 1-3 to nemesis China in the semifinals. India had won the silver medal at the last edition in Hangzhou in 2023, where they had also lost to China in the final. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty were the only Indians to win a match as China once again got the better of India. World No. 14 Lakshya, who had produced a stirring performance to take India to the semifinals, could not quite bring his A game to the table, going down 16-21, 18-21 to world No. 6 Shi Yu Qi in the first singles as India fell 0-1 behind. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty produced a sensational performance to outwit Paris Olympics silver-medallists and reigning world champions Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang 21-11, 22-20 in the first doubles to bring India back into the five-match tie. But Ayush Shetty and the second doubles pair of Hariharan Amsakarunan and MR Arjun could not win their matches.



TT and squash players advance

The Indian pairings of Harmeet Desai-Yashaswini Ghorpade and Diya Chitale-Manush Shah eased into the table tennis mixed doubles quarterfinals. The world number seven duo of Chitale and Shah hardly broke a sweat in their 3-0 wins over the combination from Sri Lanka and Maldives. In the round of 16, Shah and Chitale blanked Moosa Ahmed and Aishath Nazeem 11-0, 11-7, 11-6. They play Hong Kong’s Doo Hoi Kim and Wong Chun Ting in quarterfinals on Thursday. A win would assure them of a medal in the continental event. In squash, Abhay Singh, Veer Chotrani and Tanvi Khanna entered the round of 16 with comfortable wins in their respective singles matches. Abhay, seeded second, lost just three points in his opening round men’s singles match against Thailand’s Arkaradet Arkarahirunya. He won 11-1, 11-0, 11-2. Chotrani defeated Sri Lanka’s Shamil Wakeel 11-8, 11-3, 11-3 in his round of 32 match. In women’s singles, Tanvi tamed Dami Kim of South Korea 11-5, 11-7, 11-5 in her opening round.



stood at six medals, four silver and two bronze as the wait continued for a gold. The focus of the action was, however, the shooting range where three medals -- two silver a bronze --

were added to the kitty. Youngsters Himanshu Dhillon and Rudranksh Patil held their nerve in a gripping shootout to win the individual silver and bronze medals respectively in the men’s 10m

air rifle after combining with teenager Parth Mane to fetch a team silver.

The three medals took India’s shooting tally to five -- four silver and a bronze -- but once again a gold was out of bounds as China, once again, set the benchmark with world number one Sheng Lihao’s commanding performance.

Sheng, Changhong Zhang and Sihan Ma amassed 1899.0 points to improve their own world record of 1898.4 set in Cairo last year for a gold.

The men’s team silver placed the spotlight on 18-year-old former junior world champion Parth Mane and 21-year-old Himanshu Dhillon, who is just about understanding the senior circuit in which the scores, pressure and competition demand an entirely different level of consistency.

There was plenty to celebrate for India following strong performances in badminton, hockey and table tennis. The Kabaddi teams were also off to winnings starts.

The women’s hockey team romped to a 17-1 win over Indonesia, continuing a confident onwads march which might also fetch it a ticket to the 2028 Olympic Games, provided they snare the gold.

On the badminton court, the men’s team sailed into the quarters, outplaying Bangladesh 3-0 after Lakshya Sen, K Srikanth and Ayush Shetty picked up comfortable singles wins, leading to cancellation of the doubles matches in the five-match ruber.

India aim another high in athletics

Press Trust Of India

NAGOYA: Defending champion Tajinderpal Singh Toor will chase an unprecedented third successive shot put gold as India’s 75-member athletics contingent begins its Asian Games campaign on Thursday, targeting 25 to 30 medals.

India, which secured 29 medals, including six gold, 14 silver and nine bronze, at the previous edition, will look to maintain its impressive record despite the absence of injured javelin superstar Neeraj Chopra.

Toor could become the first Indian track and field athlete to win three consecutive Asian Games gold medals in the same event. The achievement would take him past legendary shot putter Parduman Singh Brar, who won successive titles in 1954 and 1958.

Long jumper Murali Sreeshankar, silver medalist at the previous Games, will target gold after cross-



Toor guns for record golden hat-trick

ing eight metres in all seven competitions this season. His season-best effort of 8.38m places him ahead of China’s Yuan Chenlong and Uzbekistan’s Anvar Anarov.

Distance runner Gulveer Singh, the reigning 10,000m bronze medalist, will compete in three events -- 1500m, 5000m and 10,000m. He holds national records in the latter two disciplines and hopes to secure multiple medals.

Avinash Sable will attempt to defend his 3000m steeplechase crown

formidable opposition.

National record holder Tejaswin Shankar faces Japan’s Yuma Maruyama in decathlon, while high jumper Sarvesh Kushare will compete against Qatar’s multiple Olympic and world medallist Mutaz Essa Barshim.

Triple jumper Praveen Chithravel, hurdler Jyothi Yarraji, steeplechaser Parul Chaudhary and high jumper Pooja Singh are among India’s other medal contenders.

Thursday’s programme features Asha Ilango in triple jump, Seema in 10,000m and India’s mixed 4x400m relay team. Sprinters Animesh Kujur and Gurindervir Singh will contest their 100m heats.

With experienced campaigners and emerging talent across several disciplines, India’s athletics contingent will aim to improve upon its previous medal tally while converting promising seasonal performances into podium finishes.

Yastika’s ton in vain as Australia A level series

MOHALI: Yastika Bhatia’s explosive century went in vain as India Women’s A suffered a narrow two-wicket defeat against Australia A in the second unofficial ODI on Wednesday, leaving the three-match series tied 1-1. Batting first, India posted 338/6, powered by Yastika’s brilliant 112 off 84 balls, featuring 16 fours and two sixes. Tejal Hasabnis and Anushka Sharma contributed 60 runs each, while Darcie Brown claimed 3/39. Australia responded strongly, with captain Tahlia Wilson scoring 79, Anika Learoyd smashing 54 off 29 balls and Charli Knott hammering 63 off just 37 deliveries. Despite Minnu Mani’s impressive 3/48 and two wickets each from Sayali Satghare and Niki Prasad, India failed to defend their imposing total. Hayley Silver-Holmes contributed 47, while Milly Illingworth remained unbeaten on 22 as Australia reached 341/8 with three balls remaining.

New Zealand pick 7 pacers for T20I series versus India

Press Trust Of India

WELLINGTON: New Zealand picked seven front-line pace bowlers, including a fit-again Adam Milne for their upcoming five-match T20 International series against reigning World Champions India starting October 22 in Christchurch.

White-ball captain Mitchell Santner will lead an expanded 16-man T20I squad for the action-packed five-game series spread across 11 days in four cities.

According to the media release issued by the T20 World Cup have been named for the home series, including spin all-rounder Michael Bracewell and paceman Milne, who were sidelined from the tournament with respective injuries.

The 34-year-old Milne,

INDIA vs NEW ZEALAND T20I SERIES		
SCHEDULE		
1 st T20I OCT 22	Hagley Oval Christchurch	
2 nd T20I OCT 24	Hagley Oval Christchurch	
3 rd T20I OCT 27	Hnry Stadium Wellington	
4 th T20I OCT 30	Eden Park Auckland	
5 th T20I NOV 1	Seddon Park Hamilton	

who has accumulated 243 T20 caps (56 of those international), last played for the Black Caps against Zimbabwe over a year ago, and bolsters a line-up of seasoned T20I

pace bowlers, including Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, and Jacob Duffy, as well as young guns Zak Foulkes and Nathan Smith.



Cambodia had eradicated the large-scale scam compounds it became known for globally, without providing significant new evidence.

Hun Manet
Prime Minister

Jaishankar holds bilateral and multilateral meetings

Jaishankar participated in the India-UAE-France trilateral on the sidelines of the UNGA session



EAM S. Jaishankar during a meeting with his G4 counterparts from Brazil, Germany and Japan, on the sidelines of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly.

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The Foreign Ministers of the G4 nations of India, Brazil, Germany and Japan also met in New York.

NEW YORK: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has held a series of bilateral and multilateral meetings on the margins of the General Assembly, during which he discussed reformed multilateralism, the need for an effective UN Security Council and collaboration in the fields

of Artificial Intelligence and space. Jaishankar participated in the India-UAE-France trilateral on the sidelines of the UNGA session on Tuesday. "Collaboration in the fields of Artificial Intelligence, Space, health sciences, energy and culture was the main topic of discussion," the minister said in a post on X. "Our shared interests and complimentary capabilities offer immense scope for cooperation. Agreed to meet again soon to take the discussion forward," he added.

FASTFACTS

- Jaishankar said India will continue to work together with the grouping "to advance this shared objective."

- He also held discussions with Nepalese counterpart Shisir Khanal at the premises of India's Permanent Mission to the UN.

The Foreign Ministers of the G4 nations of India, Brazil, Germany and Japan also met in New York and

"discussed the imperative of reformed multilateralism and a more representative, responsive and effective UN Security Council that reflects today's global realities." Jaishankar said India will continue to work together with the grouping "to advance this shared objective." He also held discussions with Nepalese counterpart Shisir Khanal at the premises of India's Permanent Mission to the UN. "Followed up on bilateral developments since our last meeting in Delhi in June this year, including

progress in development partnership and energy cooperation," he said. Highlighting "another busy day" at UNGA, Jaishankar met with Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim ibn Hamad Al Thani, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Republic of the Philippines Ma. Theresa Lazaro, and German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul. "We exchanged assessments on the ongoing Ukraine and Gulf crises. As G4 partners, our cooperation at the @UN and other multilateral fora remains robust," he posted on X.

Russia pounds Kyiv with drones, killing 2

KYIV : Russia hammered Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, with drones in daylight attacks on Wednesday, hours before Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was due to address world leaders at the UN General Assembly. Two people were killed and 23 were wounded in Kyiv and palls of black smoke floated above the city following the latest in what have been daily Russian attacks that torment Ukrainian civilians. The drones set off fires and damaged buildings in Kyiv and elsewhere in Ukraine overnight, authorities said. Zelenskyy was in New York for the annual gathering as part of his diplomatic effort to shore up and recruit further international support for his country's grueling 4.5-year fight against Russia's invasion.

President Xi leaves for summit with Trump within six months

Press Trust Of India

Trump had invited Xi and Peng to visit the White House during his visit to China in May this year.

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday left for Washington to hold a rare second summit with his US counterpart Donald Trump in less than six months to discuss a broad range of bilateral and international issues. Xi is accompanied by his wife Peng Liyuan, Cai Qi, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and director of



the General Office of the Central Committee, and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, the foreign ministry said. The Chinese Foreign Ministry has described their second meeting within six months as a "milestone of historic significance". Trade tariffs, technology, AI, military ties, conflicts

FASTFACTS

- They are expected to arrive at Joint Base Andrews just outside Washington on Wednesday, where Trump planned to accord a rare airport reception by personally receiving them on the tarmac, according to media reports.

in the Middle East, the Russia-Ukraine war, the arms race in space and US arms sales to Taiwan were expected to figure in talks between Xi and Trump. Ahead of Xi's visit, Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and American Trade

Representative Jamieson Greer held wide-ranging talks on economic and trade issues, including on AI. In his talks with He in New York on Sunday, Bessent said the US has proposed a new notification mechanism for artificial intelligence (AI) incidents that could affect national security. Xi-Trump talks assume significance in the immediate backdrop of Trump signing the 'Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026', which authorises him to impose steep tariffs of up to 100 per cent on the top five importers of crude oil and gas from Moscow, including China and India.

FINANCIAL MISAPPROPRIATION |

Australian executive alleged misconduct is freed from jail

Press Trust Of India

YANGON: An Australian business executive who headed the American Chamber of Commerce in Myanmar has been released from jail after being detained for more than 100 days over financial misappropriation allegations, a legal official said Wednesday. Ye Khaung Kyaw, also known as Danny, was freed following a ruling by a court in Yangon, Myanmar's largest city, according to a legal official familiar with the case, who spoke on condition of anonymity because



he was not authorised to release information. Acting Police Brigadier General Soe Lin Aung, a spokesperson for Myanmar's Home Affairs Ministry, confirmed that the court concluded proceedings in Ye Khaung Kyaw's case on Tuesday but declined to provide further details. It remains unclear whether he was convicted, had the charges dismissed or withdrew, or was ordered to be deported. Ye Khaung Kyaw was detained in June around the same time as former chamber president Adam Castillo, a US business-

person who was released last week and deported without explanation. The current board of the chamber, usually known as AmCham, had accused Ye Khaung Kyaw, Castillo and former board member Munimul Islam of breach of trust and misappropriation of association assets in connection with a USD 300,000 contract with Washington-based lobbying firm Mercury Public Affairs. Islam lives outside Myanmar and has not been detained. Myanmar's military-backed government released no official statement. Officials at

the court and the police station in Yangon's Pabedan township, where Ye Khaung Kyaw faced trial, did not respond to requests for comment. Authorities in Myanmar, which is currently in the midst of a civil war, rarely speak to the international media. Supporters of the three men said the allegations were baseless and contradicted by documentary evidence. The police complaint did not specify Ye Khaung Kyaw's exact role in the alleged misconduct during his tenure as executive director.

seconds to solve it. In the past, she didn't dare compete, but she grew to like the good results and recognition, it said. "She was an introverted kid. Now, she is very confident wherever she goes," her mother Lin Yangxi was quoted as saying. CCTV said Lian has mastered more than 1,300 solving formulas and recently spent roughly two to three hours daily on training. Her parents also brought her to Shanghai to learn from top coaches, it added.

Briefs

BEST OF THE REST

UNITED NATIONS CHARTER

Turkey's Erdogan again raises Kashmir issue at UNGA



NEW YORK: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has again raised the issue of Kashmir during his address to world leaders at the high-level 81st session of the UN General Assembly. "In South Asia, it is important that all disputes, including the Kashmir issue, be addressed through dialogue within the framework of the United Nations Charter and of relevant resolutions," Erdogan said in his address. This is not the first time Erdogan has spoken about the Kashmir issue during his UNGA address. Last year

in September, he had called for a resolution on the issue of Kashmir at UNGA. In 2024, Erdogan, however, skipped mentioning Jammu and Kashmir in his speech at the UNGA. In 2020, Erdogan, in his pre-recorded video statement to the General Debate, made a reference to Jammu and Kashmir. India had at that time termed it as "completely unacceptable", saying Türkiye should learn to respect the sovereignty of other nations and reflect on its own policies more deeply.

SRI LANKA'S 2019

All 15 convicts in Easter bombings to appeal against verdict

COLOMBO: 15 people, sentenced to over 200 years each in prison by a Sri Lankan court for their involvement in the 2019 Easter Sunday suicide attacks, will appeal their record jail sentences, a defence lawyer said on Wednesday. Nine suicide bombers belonging to the local Islamist extremist group, the National Thawheed Jamaat, linked to ISIS, targeted three Catholic churches and three luxury hotels on April 21, 2019, killing nearly 270 people, including 11 Indians, and injuring over 500 others. A three-judge High Court Trial-at-Bar comprising Judges Navaratne Marasinghe, Ramanathan Kannan and Sujeewa Nissanka on Tuesday found 15 of the 24 accused guilty of involvement in the attacks and sentenced each to more than 200 years in prison. Defence counsel Kneel Maddumage, who represented seven accused, said they would appeal the convictions as well as the record terms in the Supreme Court after receiving the relevant documents. "Some of the defendants are not represented by counsel, but I requested on behalf of all the convicts that they be provided with copies of the proceedings to file their appeals," Maddumage said.

PAKISTANI OFFICIALS SAY

Afghan Taliban shelled Pak's border posts, Kabul denies attack

PESHAWAR: Afghanistan's Taliban forces shelled Pakistani border posts overnight after Pakistani troops foiled what they described as a cross-border infiltration attempt by militants, local Pakistani officials said Wednesday. The spokesman for Afghanistan's Taliban government, Zabiullah Mujahid, denied any attacks by the Afghan Taliban forces. The conflicting statements came just days after Pakistani fighter jets struck sites in eastern Afghanistan that Islamabad said were militant hideouts, an escalation between Kabul and Islamabad that threatens mediation efforts by regional powers. Separately, Pakistani security forces neutralised eight rudimentary drones, which Islamabad said were launched by the Afghan Taliban, before they could enter the northwestern city of Kohat and the border town of Torkham. All the drones were shot down and caused no damage, authorities said, adding the action underscored Pakistan's round-the-clock vigilance and readiness.

World Cube Association-certified competition 6-year-old Chinese girl sets women's Rubik's Cube speed record

BEIJING: A 6-year-old Chinese girl has set a new women's world record by solving Rubik's cubes at an average pace of just over four seconds per cube. Lian Yunzhi first broke the record earlier this month with an average time of 4.52 seconds at a World Cube Association-certified competition in the central Chinese city of Wuhan and improved to 4.27 seconds at another race in the southern city of Guangzhou, state broadcaster CCTV reported Monday. She became the only female speedcuber to achieve an average below 4.5 seconds, it said. The association listed Lian on its website as the record holder for the fastest women's average time solving the 3x3x3 cube. Wearing a red hairband with a bow, Lian looked serious as her small fingers moved quickly during the Wuhan competition. She smiled proudly and clapped after one attempt took her only about 3.54 seconds. CCTV said Lian first tried to solve a Rubik's Cube when she was 4 years old, and it used to take her 90

