



PROFESSIONAL APPROACH

Actor Janhvi Kapoor says she may not be the most talented actress around, but she's the hardest working person on set

LEISURE P2



NEW COVID SCARE IN CHINA

China imposes fresh lockdowns and travel restrictions amid a Covid-19 surge with detection of two new Omicron sub-variants

INTERNATIONAL P10



MBAPPE GRABS HEADLINES

Kylian Mbappe scores in PSG's 1-1 draw with Benfica in CL amid rumours that he is quitting the club

SPORTS P12

RETAIL INFLATION REMAINS ABOVE 7%

New Delhi: Retail inflation spiked to 7.41 per cent in September, mainly due to costlier food items. For the ninth month in a row, retail inflation has remained above the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) tolerance level of six per cent. This information was released by the RBI in a release Wednesday. Retail inflation was at seven per cent in August and 4.35 per cent in September 2021. With inflation remaining above the six per cent level, RBI, now, will have to give a report to the government giving reasons for failure to contain inflation at four per cent with a bias of two per cent on either side.

CM LAUNCHES SAACAR FOR SC/ST COMMUNITY

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched Wednesday a portal which will help carry out investigations faster and payment of compensation to the victims of SC-ST atrocities within a period of 21 days. Patnaik said the 'Single Window Application Atrocity Compensation Assistance and Relief' or SAACAR portal will help the authorities avoid the delay caused by the existing manual system of enquiry and payment of compensation to the victims. "We are committed to the welfare of the SC/ST community and this new portal will bring a huge solace to the victims of atrocity belonging to the SC/ST community," he said. Official sources said that Odisha recorded 2,828 cases of crime against people belonging to SC and ST in 2020-21.



MONUMENTAL MOMENT: Participants of the 'Miss Supermodel Worldwide 2022' contest pose for a picture during their visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra, Wednesday

IMD quashes cyclone rumours

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The Regional Meteorological Centre, here said Wednesday that the IMD has not issued any kind of forecast for cyclone in the state so far. It advised people of Odisha to stay away from rumours regarding a possible cyclonic storm in the coastal state and not panic. "The India Meteorological Department has not made any forecast on the cyclone or even given any indication in this regard. Please keep away from rumours," the IMD's regional centre here tweeted. "It is not scientific to make a forecast on any weather condition seven days before its occurrence. We are working 24 hours a day to provide accurate weather-related information. So please stay away from rumours," it said. IMD director general Dr Mrutunjay Mohapatra said that there is no forecast for a cyclone in the next seven days and especially no threat for Odisha. "A cyclonic circulation has formed Tuesday over the north Andaman Sea, which is gradually weakening. There is a likelihood of the formation of another similar system around October 17-18. Today's forecast indicates a concentration of the system into low pressure. According to our analysis, there are no chances of intensification of the system into a cyclone," Mohapatra said in New Delhi. There is no possible threat to Odisha at present, Dr Mohapatra said and added that the IMD is known for its 'pinpoint' accuracy in cyclone prediction. The IMD's advisory came after social media was agog with the buzz about the formation of a cyclone over the Bay of Bengal. The director of Regional Meteorological Centre here, Dr HR Biswas at a meeting with state government officials October 10 had ruled the possibility of any cyclone in Odisha in the next 15 days. Meanwhile, an official at the SRC's office appealed to the media not to report any such news that will create panic among people.

Demonetisation will be examined, says SC

The Apex Court will look into whether the demonetisation notification contravened Article 300 (A) of the Constitution

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Supreme Court said Wednesday it is aware of the 'Lakshman Rekha' on judicial review of the government's policy decisions but it will have to examine the 2016 demonetisation decision to come to a conclusion whether the issue has become a mere 'academic' exercise. Observing that when an issue arises before a Constitution Bench, it is its duty to answer, a five-judge bench headed by Justice SA Nazeer directed the Centre and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to file a comprehensive affidavit on the petitions challenging demonetisation of ₹500 and ₹1,000 currency notes.

The bench - also comprising Justices BR Gavai, AS Bopanna, V Ramasubramanian and BV Nagarathna said the petitioners' main argument is Section 26 of the RBI Act does not authorise the Centre to completely cancel the currency notes of particular denomination. Therefore, the main question is whether the government had powers under Section 26 to demonetise all notes of ₹500 and ₹1000 denominations, noted the bench. Attorney General R Venkataramani submitted that unless the Act on demonetisation is challenged in a proper perspective, the issue will essentially remain 'academic'.

The High Denomination Bank



Demonetisation of all ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes of the Mahatma Gandhi series was announced Nov 8, 2016

According to a 2018 report, more than 1.5 million jobs were lost due to demonetisation

we will have to hear and give an answer whether it's academic, not academic or beyond the scope of judicial review. The point in the case is the government policy and its wisdom which is one aspect of the matter," the bench said. "We always know where the Lakshman Rekha is, but the manner in which it was done has to be examined. We have to hear the counsel to decide that," it added.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said the court's time should not be 'wasted' on academic issues. Objecting to Mehta's submission, senior lawyer Shyam Divan, representing petitioner Vivek Narayan Sharma, said he was surprised at the words 'waste of Constitutional Bench's time' as the earlier bench had said these cases must be placed before a Constitution Bench.

Continued on P4

Dhamnagar bypoll: BJD, Congress name candidates

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Playing the woman card, the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) announced Wednesday the name of Abanti Das as its candidate for the Dhamnagar bypoll scheduled for November 3. Abanti is the chairperson of Tihidi block. She has contributed much to the self help group (SHG) activities, party sources said here.

With both the BJP and the Congress filing male candidates for the bypoll, the BJD has chosen a different path with an aim to grab the lion's share of the women votes. The Dhamnagar Assembly constituency has 2,38,360 voters in-

cluding 1,23,013 males 1,15,314 females and 33 of other category.

BJD organisational secretary Pranab Prakash Das said after the name of Abanti was announced that collective decision-making has always been the strength of the party. He also thanked CM Naveen Patnaik for further accelerating the women empowerment movement by giving opportunity to a lady for the Dhamnagar bypoll.

Cong chooses Harekrushna

Earlier in the day, Congress had nominated Baba Harekrushna Sethi as its candidate for the bypoll. The BJP on the other hand has nominated Suraj Suryabanshi, the son of deceased BJP MLA Bishnu Sethi.

State youths seeking jobs elsewhere

Employment exchanges in Jajpur, Angul, Rayagada districts register sharp decrease in renewals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Although the districts of Jajpur, Angul and Rayagada have been witnessing an increase in the number of industries, the employment exchanges there have been observing a sharp fall in renewal of registrations. It is probably an indication of job aspirants seeking their future outside the state.

According to sources, a total of 40,272 youths had renewed their employment cards with the district employment exchange of Jajpur in 2014. However, the number decreased sharply to 20,441 in 2021. The district, which had 12 steel



and chrome factories in 2014, has now added six more cement and a tube manufacturing plants. The Kalinganagar and Jaraka industrial areas have at least 10 iron ore purification plants. However, not a single registered job seeker in the district employment exchange has been appointed by any of these factories, sources said.

Jajpur District Collector Chakravarti Singh Rathore declined to comment on the declining renewal of registrations at the district employment exchange. "When it comes to job opportunities at

Kalinganagar industrial area, we have been giving priority to Odia youths. However, I'll check the ground reality before commenting on the reported decrease in renewal of registrations," said Rathore.

According to sources, Angul had 422 industries in 2014 and now the number of establishments has grown to 556. In 2014, approximately 919 youths were registered with the district employment exchange. Now the number of renewals have come down to 315 in 2022.

Angul employment officer Manas Ranjan Mohanty said that employment exchanges are no more the lone source of finding jobs for youths. Rayagada district had 1,509 industries in 2014 and now has 3,592 in 2022. In 2016, 555 youths had renewed their registrations with the employment exchange. However, only 138 job seekers have got their registrations renewed this year.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Can't say if our doctor has done his MBBS in English or Hindi. His prescription is as illegible as any other doctor

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	57625.91	↑ 478.59
NIFTY	17123.60	↑ 140.05
DOLLAR	82.45	↓ ₹0.21
EURO	79.87	↑ ₹0.05
GOLD	₹50,960	↓ ₹136
SILVER	₹57,624	↓ ₹911

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	34.0°C	34.8°C
MIN	24.4°C	24.5°C
Humidity	81%	85%
Rainfall	18.4mm	Nil
Forecast	Light rain likely	

Miscreants decamp with ₹11L in broad daylight

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Oct 12: Miscreants have snatched cash of ₹11 lakh from the owner of an AC repairing shop here. The incident took place Tuesday, but came to light Wednesday after an FIR was lodged at Town police station here.

As per the FIR, owner Mohammed Jisam along with an employee reached the shop at around 11.00am carrying a bag. He placed the bag in front of the shop while opening the shutter. However, two youths appeared out of nowhere in a bike and the pillion rider picked up the bag which had ₹11

lakh and then they sped away according to the FIR. Jisam caught hold of the handle of the bag and tried to wrest it back. However, the two miscreants managed to evade his grasp and fled.

Following the complaint filed by Jisam, police have started an investigation into the matter. They have detained one suspect and are interrogating him. Police are also examining the CCTV footage in the locality. Police have also said that the miscreants were well aware of Jisam's movements and that helped them to escape after committing the crime.

Bug effect: Celebrities lose crores of followers

The huge decrease in numbers took many stars by surprise while critics said it was a gimmick by Meta

AGENCIES

San Francisco, Oct 12: Users of Facebook, including many celebrities were in for a rude shock Wednesday when they woke up to find the number of followers drastically reduced. Among those were Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg's followers whose numbers decreased from over 11.9 crore to just 9,995. As per reports, on Facebook's mobile application, Zuckerberg's profile page was not available due to some technical error. On the webpage, however, the highly diminished number of followers is visible. According to some media re-

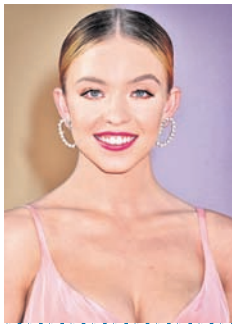


ports, a software bug triggered the sudden drop in followers. However, others claimed it to be a technical glitch while others said that this decrease in numbers could be due to a cyber attack. Reports also said several American news outlets also saw a massive dip in their numbers of followers, including 'NYT', 'Washington Post', 'The Hill', 'USA Today', 'New York Post' and 'Newsweek'. 'USA Today' saw a dip of 13,723 and 11,392 followers Monday and Tuesday. Bangla writer Taslima Nasreen also said that she lost a substantial chunk of followers. "Facebook created a tsunami that wiped away

my almost 9,00,000 followers and left only 9,000 something on the shore. Is this some kind of Facebook comedy?" the exiled Bangladeshi writer said on Twitter. There was no official statement available from Facebook on this development. However, a Meta spokesperson said, "We're aware that some people are seeing inconsistent follower count on their Facebook profiles. We're working to get things back to normal as quickly as possible and we apologise for any inconvenience. Our technical people are working round the clock to rectify this deficiency."

Continued on P4

leisure



SYDNEY SWEENEY ROPED IN FOR NEW BARBARELLA MOVIE

Under the Silver Lake star Sydney Sweeney has been signed for a new *Barbarella* movie for Sony Pictures. The film is currently in the early phase of development, with no director, producer or writer currently attached, reports *Variety*.

MELLENCAMP DIAGNOSED WITH STAGE 2 MELANOMA

Real Housewives of Beverly Hills star Teddi Mellencamp has been diagnosed with stage 2 melanoma. The 41-year-old reality star took to Instagram to reveal she had been diagnosed after her doctor spotted an 'abnormal spot' on her back, which she will have cut out next week.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You are uptight about what is yours and today, you are even less keen on sharing. This possessiveness may have to do with a certain 'someone'. Ganesh says matters regarding love are going forward intensely and your marital life will blossom.

TAURUS

Almost as if crafted by Cervantes himself, you might wake up today feeling passionate and quixotic. Make up and make overs may be on the cards as you will have the urge to be groomed. Once you are done without yourself, you will shower others with attention, says Ganesh.

GEMINI

You will spend the day safeguarding sentiments of others and it is in your own interest. For most part of the day, probably the entire day, you will be away from your family, mostly on a trip for business or leisure purposes.

CANCER

You are a master of deception, and your sugar-coated comments play a pivotal role in your methods. Today, you will be able to smell trouble from a distance, and will know when to take a U-turn. Your methods may not make you very popular with the so-called moral brigade working with you.

LEO

Ever been surprised at your own abilities? Today you shall be, says Ganesh. With the perfect blend of amicable gestures and lack of inimical actions, you are poised to become the cynosure of all occasions. The day will bring to the fore your flexible nature, moderate views, and your mature mannerisms in a cocktail that is as heady as the best blend.

VIRGO

Children will ring in applause and praises – in the classroom and off it too! Processing logic and reasoning will improve too. Ganesh asks you to keep calm and enjoy the joy ride, irrespective of anything that happens during the day.

LIBRA

Some days are full of new ideas. Today is one such day as you radiate diligence and intelligence. Consider it an auspicious moment to begin new business schemes, especially if you happen to be self-employed. Today, you will be able to think at a level higher and clearer than the rest. But, as happens when you focus more on work, it comes at the cost of family time.

SCORPIO

Dig in deep and keep yourself in the hunt, says Ganesh. Karma matters, but don't give much thought to the outcome. In matters of joint ventures, adopt a wait-and-watch approach today.

SAGITTARIUS

Be ready to receive advice – unasked and unwarranted. Don't overlook it either, as these suggestions can be worthy of consideration. But let the last word rest in your hands and look deep inside for the right verdict.

CAPRICORN

You may have sweated your guts out for an opportunity to pursue higher studies abroad, and met with disappointment. Try again today, advises Ganesh. For those of you engaged in speculation, transaction in stock and shares is likely and may fetch substantial gains.

AQUARIUS

Work, work, work! That is what will pay rich dividends. Of course, a pat on the back does matter, and with your commitment record, you may be getting a lot of it! You may back off from taking risks, and yet want change. Ganesh wonders how you will fulfill your wish.

PISCES

Arguments lead nowhere, and why argue when, at the end of the day, you can step back and watch them end up with egg on their faces, break a leg, get crushed under a falling safe, or otherwise suffer the numerous disasters you wish them to, for disagreeing with you.

Janhvi dispels myths about her work ethic

Mumbai: Actress Janhvi Kapoor has won hearts with her last release *Good Luck Jerry* which had an OTT release. Apart from her on-screen portrayals, Janhvi also leaves netizens gushing with her dreamy pictures on the gram. But on the other side, she continues to be trolled for being 'privileged' from a certain section.

In a recent interview, the *Gunjan Saxena* actress said that people think that because she's privileged, she takes her position for granted. But that's the biggest misconception about her. She confessed that she may not be the most talented or beautiful or have many skills to offer but she assures that she's the hardest

working person on set. Janhvi said that she can write it in blood so that people don't question her work ethic again.

Janhvi who started her career in 2018 with *Dhadak* says she loves to experiment because she gets bored easily. She has to set up challenges for herself to make sure she's growing otherwise it's just a waste of time.

Janhvi will be seen next in *Mr and Mrs Mahi* alongside Rajkumar Rao. She plays a cricketer in the film. The actress also has Nitesh Tiwari's *Bawaal* with Varun

Dhawan and a thriller titled *Mili*.
AGENCIES



IDFFB making comeback after pandemic-induced break

The event will open with *Lipika Darai's 'Backstage'* that gives rich insights into puppeteering, a slowly decaying art form of Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: After a long pandemic-induced hiatus, the Film Society of Bhubaneswar (FSB) is back with the annual documentary film festival to be held here at Odissi Research Centre from October 14.

One of the oldest registered film societies in the State, FSB has been functional for the last 18 years. It works towards building cinema literacy for the folks in and around the city, by organizing regular screenings, workshops, and festivals.

For its comeback, the third edition of Indian Documentary Film Festival Bhubaneswar, (IDFFB)-2022 has a stellar lineup of documentaries, whose critical acclaim



can be traced to Cannes 2021, Cannes 2022, film festivals at Sundance, Rotterdam, Locarno, IDSF, Busan, and New York among others. The festival will conclude October 16.

Backstage by Odisha's Lipika Darai that gives rich insights into a slowly decaying art form will be the opening film of the festival. The film portrays the lives and times of the puppeteers of Odisha.

Movies like *All That Breathes* by Shaunak Sen and *A Night of Knowing Nothing* by Payal Kapadia are expected to strike a chord with

the viewers. The former follows the story of two Indian brothers, who have dedicated themselves to rescuing birds that are being poisoned by pollution while the other explores the relationship of a university student who writes letters to her estranged lover. L. The letters show a glimpse of the world around her, while also giving us a faithful reflection of contemporary India. Similarly, *Hriday Bosot* by Sankhajt Biswas addresses the deep rooted anxiety and turmoil of the LGBT+ community in India.

The three day festival will also see interactions and conversations with ace filmmakers including Lipika Singh Darai, Praveen Mochhale, Kasturi Basu, Surbhi Dewan, Sapna Bhavnani and Debalina Majumdar among others. The complete schedule of screening can be found on FSB's social media handles.

FSB president Subrat Beura said 34 films in different languages like Bengali, Hazari, Manipuri, Monpa, Odia, Kashmiri, Urdu, Kachari, Assamese and Dangi will be screened at the festival.

"Unlike the other major cities of India, Bhubaneswar does not have a proper film festival in the cultural calendar. Despite all obstacles, FSB has managed to organize 12 film festivals and 10 major retrospectives, masterclasses, talks with visual artists and filmmakers, with the continuing effort to take Cinema to newer audiences, cineastes and students," said FSB executive committee member Sanchita Dwivedi.

Orissa Post and Dharitri are the media partners for the event.

Sherlyn asks Salman to become 'bhaijaan' of wronged women

Mumbai: Sajid Khan's entry into controversial *Bigg Boss 16* has caused a stir and now Sherlyn Chopra, who accused the filmmaker over sexual misconduct, has questioned superstar Salman Khan for having the #MeToo accused on the show.

Sherlyn said: "The message that's going out with this move of Bigg Boss makers is that it's okay to molest a woman, to touch her inappropriately and to flash your private parts because at the end of it, you will be absolved in the eyes of public because you have big content makers and channels behind you."

She added: "I don't understand what has happened to Salman Khan. How could he as such a big star allow this to happen? You call yourself a bhaijaan, can't you become bhaijaan to us wronged women. Are you just the bhaijaan of influential people and not outsiders like us?"

Sherlyn targeted Salman, who has been hosting the show for a decade now.

"The show runs because of Salman sir, he could have registered his protest to not allow Sajid in the house," said the *Time Pass* actress.

Apart from Sherlyn, many actresses and models had come forward and raised their voice against Sajid, the younger brother of filmmaker Farah Khan, for exploiting his position of power.



Armaan Malik nominated for MTV Europe Music Awards

Mumbai: Singer-songwriter Armaan Malik, who has had a terrific year so far doing career-defining projects such as the feature on Ed Sheeran's *2Step* and *Memu Aaganu* with Allu Arjun, seems all set to close the year on a high with his latest English single *You* earning him his second MTV EMA nomination for Best India Act.

His first International single, *Control*, won him the MTV EMA in 2020 and marked a major milestone in the journey of taking his music from India to the world.

Talking about this honour, Armaan says, "I am elated to earn yet another nomi-

nation at the prestigious MTV EMAs for my English single, *You*! "Last time, I'd won the award for my debut single *Control* and it was such a massive career milestone for me! I hope to make my fans, family and the country proud once again. I wish the very best to the other talented nominees alongside me, this is a big moment for all of us."

Public voting for award categories is now live on the MTV EMAs website: <https://armaan.lnk.to/voteAMEMA>

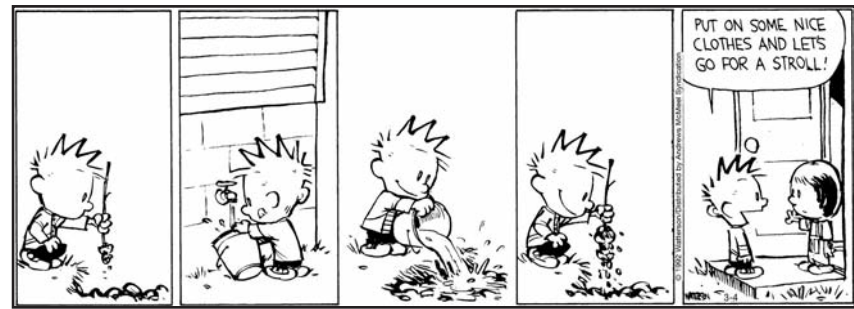
The awards ceremony celebrating global artists will be held in Dusseldorf, Germany November 13.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

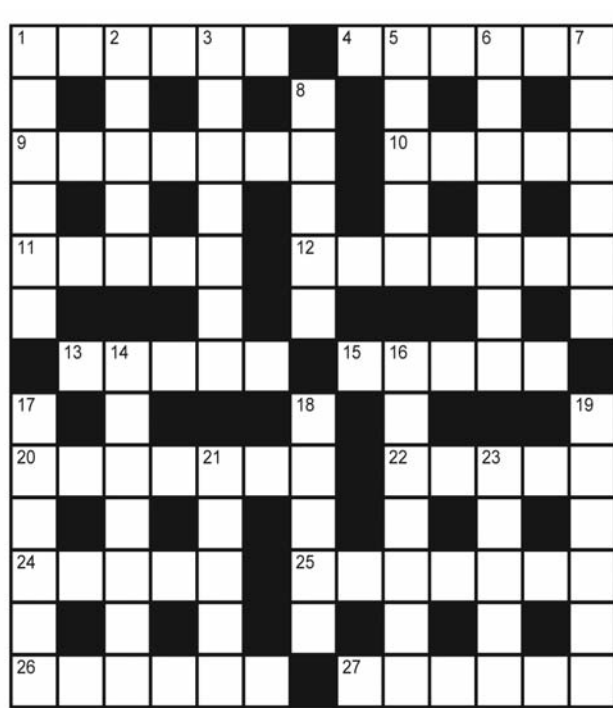


BREVITY



FUN post

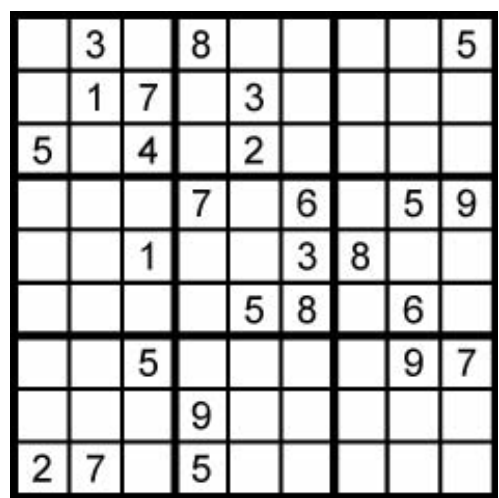
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 1 Make clean
 - 4 Clippers
 - 9 Cooking utensil
 - 10 Concur
 - 11 Restaurant patron
 - 12 Slender
 - 13 Monster
 - 15 Work, as dough
 - 20 Olympic event (3,4)
 - 22 Release
 - 24 Battery part
 - 25 Aboveboard
 - 26 Fears
 - 27 Phrase structure
 - 6 Sainly glow
 - 7 Sound system
 - 8 Water sources
 - 14 TV installment
 - 16 Risqué
 - 17 Crete, e.g.
 - 18 Ski starter
 - 19 Type of action
 - 21 Turn topsy-turvy
 - 23 Unspoken

SUDOKU

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

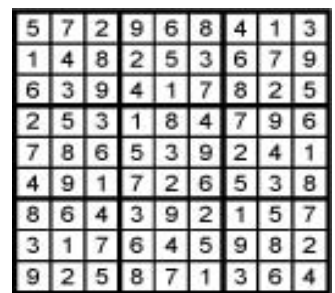


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

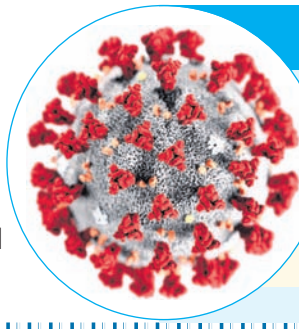


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



JUDICIAL INFRA

Chief Justice of Orissa High Court S Muralidhar inaugurated the Judicial Infrastructure Management Agency at Cantonment Road in Cuttack, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	62,78,53,147	60,73,77,296	65,64,348
India	4,46,18,533	4,40,63,406	5,28,835
Odisha	13,35,153	13,25,318	9,199

Section 66A: The scrapped law that still haunts many

SC asks DGPs and Home Secretaries of the states and officers of the UTs to instruct police not to register complaints with respect to alleged violations of Section 66A

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Supreme Court Wednesday directed that no citizen can be prosecuted under Section 66A of the Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000, which it had scrapped way back in 2015.

Under the annulled Section, a person posting offensive content could be imprisoned for up to three years and also fined.

Underlining that liberty of thought and expression is of 'cardinal' significance, the top court had March 24, 2015 done away with the provision, saying the public's right to know is directly affected by Section 66A of the IT Act.

A bench headed by Chief Justice UU Lalit said in all cases where citizens are facing prosecution for alleged violation of Section 66A of the IT Act, the reference and reliance upon the said provision shall stand deleted.

"We direct all Director Generals of Police as well as Home Secretaries of the states and competent officers in Union Territories to instruct the entire police force in their respective states/Union Territories not to register any complaint of crime with respect to alleged violation of Section 66A," said the bench, also comprising Justices Ajay Rastogi and SR Bhat.

The top court clarified that this direction shall apply only with respect to offence punishable under Section 66A and if in the crime in question other offences are also alleged then the reference and reliance upon Section 66A alone shall be deleted. The bench observed the counsel appearing for the Centre has placed on record an all-India status report with regard to pending cases under Section 66A.

It observed that the information given in a tabular form does sug-



Under Section 66A of the IT Act, which had been annulled way back in 2015, a person posting offensive content could be imprisoned for up to three years and also fined

The SC bench headed by Chief Justice UU Lalit was hearing a miscellaneous application of NGO 'People's Union for Civil Liberties' (PUCL) alleging prosecution of people under the scrapped provision

The bench observed the counsel appearing for the Centre has placed on record an all-India status report with regard to pending cases under Section 66A of the IT Act

gest that despite the issue regarding the validity of Section 66A of the Act having been decided by the apex court, a number of criminal proceedings still rely upon this provision and citizens are still facing prosecution.

"Such criminal proceedings, in our view, are directly in the teeth of the directions issued by this court in Shreya Singhal vs Union of India (March 2015 judgement) and consequently, we issue following directions...." the bench said.

"It needs no reiteration that Section 66A of the 2000 Act has been found by this court in Shreya Singhal vs Union of India to be violative of the Constitution and as such, no citizen can be prosecuted....In said section 66A," it said.

The bench also said whenever any publication, whether government, semi-government and private, about the IT Act is published and Section 66A is quoted as part of the statute book, the reader must adequately be informed that Section 66A has already been pronounced upon by the apex court to be violative of the Constitution.

Calling a 'matter of serious concern' the registration of FIRs under Section 66A of the Act which was

scrapped in 2015, the SC had last month asked the chief secretaries of the states concerned to take back the cases within three weeks.

The petitioner PUCL claimed that despite express directions of the court in 2019 that all state governments sensitize police personnel about the March 24, 2015 judgement, thousands of cases have been registered under the Section.

It sought direction to the Centre to collect data/information regarding FIRs/investigations where Section 66A has been invoked as well as pendency of cases in the courts throughout the country where proceedings under the provision are continuing in violation of the 2015 judgement.

The first PIL on the issue was filed in 2012 by law student Shreya Singhal, who sought an amendment to Section 66A after two girls - Shaheen Dhadha and Rinu Shrinivasan - were arrested in Palghar in Maharashtra's Thane district.

While one had posted a comment against the shutdown in Mumbai following Shiv Sena leader Bal Thackeray's death, the other had 'liked' it. PUCL was also one of the petitioners in the earlier case and had challenged the constitutional validity of Section 66A of the Act.



WORLD SPACE WEEK: Governor Ganeshi Lal, Satish Dhawan Space Centre chairman A Rajarajan (left) and other dignitaries during celebration of World Space Week at Ravenshaw University in Cuttack, Wednesday

20 Odisha startups participate in global event

STARTUP ODISHA IS PARTICIPATING PARTNER OF GITEX GLOBAL 2022 BEING ORGANISED IN DUBAI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: A delegation of 20 Odisha-based startups led by executive chairman of Startup Odisha Omkar Rai arrived in Dubai to participate in world's premier technology and startup event 'Gitex Global 2022' which kicked off October 10, 2022 at the Dubai World Trade Centre. Startup Odisha is a participating partner at this global event.

The startups from Odisha from sectors like Edtech, NFT, Enterprise Tech, IoT (Internet of Things), Health Tech, Ecommerce, Electric Vehicles, Fintech, Robotics, AI/ML and Consumer Tech are there to attend the focused event 'North Star 2022' which is a part



of GITEX Global 2022.

The delegation is also attending 'India Startups Confluence 2022' to be held at Opera Ball Room, Hotel Taj Dubai, Business Day UAE October 12t. The confluence gives an opportunity for startups from Odisha to connect with start-

ups from the UAE and the Middle East-based larger ecosystem stakeholders. The delegation will also visit Sharjah Research Innovation and Technology Park (SRITP).

Executive Chairman, Startup Odisha, Omkar Rai stressed that Gitex Global 2022 has emerged as the

largest technology event in the world bringing various stakeholders under one platform. The growing recognition of Odisha at such forums is a matter of pride for Odisha and a testament to the achievements of the state under the leadership of the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

Gitex Global 2022 will provide a golden opportunity for startups from Odisha to explore business and investment opportunities by showcasing innovative products, technology skills and sustainable ideas during the four-day event.

He said, "Such global events give us a platform to highlight the potential and opportunities that Odisha provide to audiences across the world."

LITTERBUGS IN CITY COUGH UP PENALTY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Notwithstanding repeated appeals and orders by the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) regarding sanitation norms, many in the city were found littering their peripheries and not keeping double dustbins of proper size for segregation of wastes.

During the last two days, the civic body has collected around Rs 65,000 from the litterbugs in three administrative zones. The violators were also issued warnings. About 100 units have been visited by the BMC staffers to ensure strict adherence of Solid Waste Management Rule, 2016.

In south-west zone, the BMC team collected Rs 21,200 whereas 18,500 and 25,000 were collected from south-east and north zone respectively.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Malkangiri, Oct 12: "Fearing an outbreak of infectious diseases, we used to sell off our desi (country) chicken before the rains. Traders made the most of it, paying less than usual. However, this year was different. Thanks to the solar-powered cold storage facility, I could vaccinate all my fowls before the monsoon. Only five or six birds in my flock of 50 died," Anil Kirsani from Pulpally Colony in Mathili block told 101Reporters.

Over the years, livestock rearing has served as a backup to meet financial emergencies in the tribal belt of Malkangiri. However, high mortality rates always posed a problem for small farmers, said Ranjita Pujari, the sarpanch of Mecca panchayat in Mathili.

Narsingh Pula of Siripeta village said his fowls started sneezing and

coughing last monsoon, besides twisting their necks. They became paralysed and died in a few days. Veterinary officials said it was a case of Ranikhet (New Castle Disease).

In fact, Ranikhet and Fowlpox wiped out the entire flock in Siripeta, Panighata and Banktiguda villages in Khairput block last year. According to Binayak Mishra, district livestock coordinator for Somks, a regional NGO that promoted better animal husbandry practices, goats and cattle succumbed to Peste des Petis, Goat Pox, Haemorrhagic Septicaemia and Black Quarter diseases.

The tribal income thus suffered a massive setback in the district, where over 58 per cent of the population struggled with poverty, according to Niti Aayog's National Multidimensional Poverty Index for 2021. Though vaccines were the only way to save their poultry,



farmers had to travel 80 km to the district headquarters to buy them from unregistered agents for Rs 50 to 60 per bird and Rs 100 to 120 per goat.

A shot in the arm
Mathili and Khairput blocks got their solar-powered vaccine coolers in January 2022 under the Odisha government's two-year pilot project to assist local farmers in tackling livestock mortality. Costing Rs 1,06,000, it comprises solar panels, a refrigerator, a small cold stor-

age box to take vaccines to the consumers, and other essential inputs supplies.

Each refrigerator can store up to 100 litres of various vaccines. In the event of a power outage, they can maintain cooling for 24 to 30 hours. These functions are of utmost importance as erratic power supply and absence of cold storage facilities impair vaccine efficiency in remote settlements, said Khairput Block Veterinary Officer Tushar Mishra. Vaccine availability and its de-

centralisation have come as a boon to farmers in the area, where income from rainfed agriculture has come down drastically due to climate change. The cold storage facility has encouraged farmers to scale up their livestock, noted Malkangiri Chief District Agriculture Officer Nandagiri Ramakrishna Hayagreva. It has also reined in distress sale of livestock.

The Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services initially trained two farmers running large-scale livestock enterprises on how to keep farm animals in good health. The solar panels and fridge were installed at their houses, from where vaccine vials were supplied to other 40 tribal youth, who were trained by the department in January. These para-veterinarians earn a living by selling vaccines, but they have to bear their travel expenses them-

selves to reach remote villages.

As per the agreement, the department purchases cold storage units and hands them over permanently to selected farmers, who have to give an undertaking that they would use it only for supply of vaccines to local farmers and para-veterinarians. A local NGO will also regularly monitor the smooth run of the system. The recipient farmer is responsible for the device's safety. The equipment comes with a one-year warranty, after which the farmers need to pay Rs 2,000 annually to get the manufacturer's services.

In Khairput block, the cold storage facility is placed at the house of Madhu Bhumia of Pushpali Colony Agriculture who is steadily becoming unprofitable. I supplement my family's income by selling vaccines that the department provides. In the last three months, I have saved around Rs 8,000, Bhumia beamed.



KUMAR UTSAV: Artists perform during the 19th Kumar Utsav celebration by UDRA at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

CS for professional mgmt of wayside amenity centres

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: In a bid to ensure feel-good factor at wayside amenity centres (WACs) and make them more homely for tourists, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra Wednesday directed the officials concerned to ensure proper upkeep of these facilities.

Mahapatra gave this direction while reviewing the functioning of WACs at a high-level meeting held here Wednesday.

Discussions in the meeting revealed about 84 WACs constructed alongside different highways and important roads connecting tourist destinations. Around 35 such facilities have been created by the Tourism department while 49 others have been constructed by the Works department.

The meeting also discussed different ways and means of professional management and upkeep

It was decided in principle that the wayside amenity centres would be operated through block and panchayat level women SHG federations

of these centres. It was decided in principle that the WACs would be operated through block and panchayat level women self-help group (WSHG) federations.

Civil maintenance, as and when necessary, would be done by the respective property owning departments.

Mahapatra directed the Mission Shakti department to train WSHG members with necessary skills through professional institutions for running these centres.

"Professional running of the WACs while providing additional earning opportunities to the local

people will also attract more tourists to these places," he said.

The Chief Secretary advised the officials to make available additional logistic facilities at WACs generally required by the travelers and tourists. The departments of Mission Shakti, Tourism and Works were asked to plan out the details for effective functioning of WACs.

Further, Mahapatra directed the departments of Rural Development and Works to locate and list out the scenic places by the side of roads leading to tourism sites and eco-tourism spots.

It was decided to develop those places with interventions like a small parking place for 10 to 15 vehicles, toilets, sitting place etc so that the tourist could stop there for a while and enjoy the scenic beauty.

"This would give a breathing break to the monotony of long travel, and make their trip more enjoyable," said Mahapatra.

Varsities, Colleges told to implement 'Mo Sarkar'

Bhubaneswar: The Higher Education department Wednesday directed the state universities and government colleges for strict implementation of 'Mo Sarkar' initiative. In a letter Dharendra Nath Kar, joint secretary of the department said, "I am directed to say that sufficient data of visitors are not being received in the Mo Sarkar portal from your end, for which feedback collection from the visitors/public by the Principal Secretary is badly affected. As you know, Mo Sarkar initiative is a flagship initiative of the government and therefore, CMO is constantly monitoring implementation of the Mo Sarkar initiative." You are requested to ensure entry of details of visitors/public in the portal.

Continued from P1

Demonetisation must be examined, says SC

Senior advocate P Chidambaram, appearing for one of the parties, said the issue has not become academic and has to be decided by the top court. He said this kind of demonetisation requires a separate act of Parliament.

The top court has now posted the matter for hearing November 9, 2022. The top court is hearing over 50 petitions challenging the Centre's 2016 demonetisation decision.

A bench headed by then Chief Justice TS Thakur had referred December 16, 2016 the question of the validity of the decision and other related matters to a larger bench of five judges for an authoritative pronouncement.

Bug effect: Celebrities lose crores of followers

It should be stated here that last week, Meta warned at least one million Facebook users about more than 400 malicious Android and iOS apps targeting them to steal their login information and compromise their accounts.

According to the company, it reported its findings to Apple and Google and is helping potentially impacted people to learn more about how to stay safe and secure their accounts.

Some critics of the social media platform however, said it was just a gimmick by Meta to attract more people to the Facebook side. They stated that the popularity of FB is on the wane and this ploy was used to attract users and non-users.

Regional as well as many actors of the Hindi film industry also reported the sudden decrease in the number of followers. They said they were perplexed at the turn of events.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Bbsr on 10.10.2022, I Dr. Sanjay Kamat on behalf of my son Anagh S. Kamat is my Natural born minor changed his name as Anagh Kamat. Henceforth he shall be known as Anagh Kamat for all purposes.

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Bbsr on 10.10.2022, I Dr. Sanjay Kamat on behalf of my daughter Anusha S. Kamat is my Natural born minor changed her name as Anusha Kamat. Henceforth he shall be known as Anusha Kamat for all purposes.

By virtue of an affidavit before Notary, Nimapara, I have changed my name from Shaik Habibula to Kafatulla Mohammad for all purpose.

Naveen unveils SAACAR portal



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday launched SAACAR the portal for 'Single Window Application Atrocity Compensation Assistance and Relief'.

Launching the portal on virtual platform, the Chief Minister said that the portal will help faster investigation and quick compensation payment. He said, "This portal will facilitate faster investigation and payment of compensation in first phase to the victims in SC-ST atrocity cases within a period of 21 days."

He said that the Online SAACAR portal will be able to avoid the delay caused by the existing manual system of enquiry and payment of compensation to the victims. My Government is committed to the welfare of the SC-ST community and this new portal will bring a huge solace to the victims of atrocity belonging to SC-ST community, he added.

He thanked the Home Department, ST & SC Development Department and Revenue & Disaster Management Department for de-

veloping this portal. This portal will increase efficiency in delivery mechanism of government of Odisha through the 5T initiative, he added.

Attending the programme Revenue & Disaster Management Minister Pramila Mallick, ST-SC Development Department Minister Jagannath Saraka and Minister of State for Home Tusharkanti Behera outlined the vision of the Chief Minister for development and welfare of ST-SC communities. This is yet one more step to provide quicker justice and relief to these communities, they added.

Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra, DGP Sunil Bnsal and other senior officers were present. Secretary to CM (GT) Shri VK Pandian moderated the programme.

Sources said that that all the procedures since the registration of FIR including medical report, caste certificate, joint investigation report submission have been digitised completely. The compensation amount will be paid directly to the account of the victims. Director State Crime Record Bureau offered the vote of thanks.

CM releases book by Amar Patnaik

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik released the book titled 'Pandemic Disruptions and Odisha's Lessons in Governance' by Amar Patnaik, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha at Naveen Niwas Wednesday.

This book is a culmination of the various essays on pertinent contemporary issues that emerged in India during the pandemic years of 2020-21 and 2021-2022. Since the pandemic struck the world, many fissures emerged which needed to be analysed to understand where India stood in the world. They pertained to healthcare, vaccines, on-line education for children and the increasing use of technology to mitigate these concerns.



With the use of technology, there was emergence of the issue of data privacy and citizen's right to privacy. Added to these was also the issue of disaster management and the state's capacity to negotiate these on a sustainable basis even as financial and budgetary resources of both the Centre and state were dwindling.

While drawing attention to the multifarious challenges in several sectors, the book highlights the achievements of states like Odisha which stood out by adopting the famed 5T framework of governance which forms the overarching policy approach in what has now gained prominence as the Odisha Model of growth and development.



OPPOSING NEP: Members of Odisha wing of All India Democratic Students' Organisation staging a protest against National Education Policy at PMG in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

'SOA pioneer in providing healthcare to masses'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) has been in the forefront in extending healthcare to the people of Odisha and had rendered yeoman service in battling the Covid-19 pandemic by joining hands with the state government, state's health and family welfare minister Naba Kishore Das said Wednesday.

"SOA has been consistently extending healthcare to the people of Odisha for many years and set up Covid Hospitals to battle the pandemic," Das said while addressing a function at the Institute of Medical Sciences and SUM Hospital here organised on the occasion of World Arthritis Day. Das specifically thanked SOA



Arthritis is treatable

Founder President Manojranjan Nayak for creating an example in ensuring healthcare for the poor in the private sector.

He said the government had handled the Covid situation well while the poor were getting the benefit of the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Ashok Kumar Mahapatra, Vice-Chancellor of SOA, who also addressed the programme, said arthritis could affect any person after the

age of 30 years. Sanghamitra Mishra, Dean of IMS and SUM Hospital and Pusparaj Samantasingh, Medical Superintendent, also spoke on the occasion explaining how the poor patients coming to the hospital were benefitting through the BSKY scheme.

A Continuing Medical Education (CME) programme on the theme for this year's World Arthritis Day - 'Arthritis is treatable, don't ignore it' - was also held to mark the occasion. Pradipta Sekhar Patro, head of the department of Clinical Immunology and Rheumatology in the hospital who put forward his view, said that arthritis could affect people of any age or class.

Rashmi Ranjan Sahu, Associate Professor in the department, proposed the vote of thanks.

RTI Day observed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Seventeen years after it came into effect, promising a new era in transparency in government functioning, India's Right to Information (RTI) Act is dying a slow but certain death, with the executive letting go of no chance to hasten the process. Between 40 and 60 lakh RTI applications are filed every year, but less than 3 per cent Indian citizens have ever filed an RTI plea, said experts.

"The anti-corruption law will become obsolete if we don't use it on a greater scale. More use of RTI by citizens will certainly reduce the attack on RTI activists who expose corruptions," said former State Information Commissioner Jagadananda here Wednesday.

Inaugurating a function to mark the RTI Day organised by RTI Clinic, a city-based social forum,

Jagadananda made a strong pitch for use of the law at the grassroots level and called for a sustained awareness campaign among the citizens including tribals in interior areas about RTI Act.

Former bureaucrat and advocate Sribhushan Sukla said the government should make the administration's work so transparent that there is minimum requirement to file RTI applications. "The system should function in a way that we don't need to file RTI applications. I should be able to access the information that I need, not just the information that the government wants to publicise," he said.

Publicly available data, including in the annual reports of the Central Information Commissions (CIC), shows that while there has been a steady increase in the number of RTI applications filed every year, the backlog, too, has been increasing, he added.



SAILING EXPEDITION: The Sailing Expedition at Chilka Lake by NCC Group Cuttack, Orissa Directorate was flagged off at INS Chilka Wednesday by Colonel Rajinish Kapoor, Group Commander, in presence of Commander Piyush Das, Camp Commandant. The sailing expedition consisting of 60 cadets will sail for 10 days, covering a distance of more than 210 kms. The cadets will also be involved in conduct of various social service activities during the expedition. The expedition is aimed at inculcating discipline, confidence and a spirit of adventure amongst the cadets.

Radical action needed to end stigma associated with mental health

Radical action is needed to end stigma and discrimination against people with mental health conditions and their families globally, according to a report published in The Lancet journal.

The Lancet Commission Report on Ending Stigma and Discrimination in Mental Health, which sets out key recommendations to achieve this goal, is a result of collaboration of more than 50 contributors worldwide.

Through this report, the commission aims to define stigma, summarise the evidence of how people with lived experience of mental health conditions worldwide currently experience stigma and assess the impact of large-scale programmes to combat stigma among others.

The report summarises the evidence received for effective interventions through an umbrella review of 216 review papers, most of which address aspects of public stigma.

The clearly emerging core finding is that forms of social contact, direct or indirect, between people who do and do not have lived experience of mental health conditions is the most effective evidence-

based way to reduce stigmatisation.

More inclusive policies, legislation and plans that were more effective in reducing stigma were generally linked with community-based treatment, programmes of public education and media activities, including participation of champions, who had lived experience of mental health conditions.

Increasing inclusivity in programmes for individuals with various learning disabilities, such as through use of hearing aids, Braille texts, and sign language, audio-visual displays and diagrams for people with poor literacy and communication problems have contributed to improved access to care.

Peer victimisation was reduced after an average of 25 weeks of involvement in a programme using social contact to bring peers with and without disabilities together for shared activities in school and community settings, the report said.

In relations to suicide, the report claims, results showed that psycho education and interpersonal contact significantly reduced stigma, which was sustained at 1-month follow-up.

Overall, the Commission lists



the components of stigma intervention as such: advocacy, collaborative community-based care, constructive discourse, gatekeeper training, protest, psycho education, social contact and social networking.

Additionally the report also explores the roles of the media, traditional and newer digital media, in promoting or reducing stigma.

The Commission has provided a four-part definition of stigma in

its report: Self-stigma, stigma by association, public stigma and structural stigma.

Self or internalised stigma occurs when people with mental health conditions are aware of and agree with the negative stereotypes with others and turn them against themselves.

Stigma by association, the report says, refers to the attribution of negative stereotypes and discrimination to family members or

STIGMA BY ASSOCIATION REFERS TO THE ATTRIBUTION OF NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES AND DISCRIMINATION TO FAMILY MEMBERS OR MENTAL HEALTH STAFF, SUCH AS BLAMING FAMILY MEMBERS FOR THE ONSET OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE CONDITIONS. MORE INCLUSIVE POLICIES, LEGISLATION AND PLANS THAT WERE MORE EFFECTIVE IN REDUCING STIGMA WERE GENERALLY LINKED WITH COMMUNITY-BASED TREATMENT, PROGRAMMES OF PUBLIC EDUCATION AND MEDIA ACTIVITIES.

Structural, systemic or institutional stigma refers to the policies and practices that work to the disadvantage of the stigmatised group, intentionally or unintentionally.

Stigma, according to the report, is often seen as a barrier to policy change, sometimes through lack of public demand for governmental action and investment, and also through misinformation, misunderstanding and lack of awareness of positive policy options among policy makers.

Globally, people with mental health conditions commonly experience restrictions in employment, voting, property ownership, marriage and divorce.

The Lancet Commission, through this report, recommends using person-first language, rather than identity-first language, that is, a person with a mental health condition or with a lived experience of a mental health condition.

Culture, the report goes on to say, also has a strong influence on stigma because of the role that it plays in deciding what is considered socially accepted behaviour and on defining the causes of mental health conditions and how they are treated.

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COASTAL EROSION

Sea gobbles up cashew forests in Kendrapara



ENVIRONMENTALISTS FEAR THAT THE REST OF THE FOREST AND THE RIVER ISLET WILL SOON LOSE THEIR EXISTENCE IF URGENT MEASURES ARE NOT TAKEN TO CHECK THE COASTAL EROSION

POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapara, Oct 12: The cashew forests on a Mahanadi islet close to Bahakud village under Ramnagar panchayat of this block in Kendrapara district are bearing the brunt of erosion by the sea with the water level rising continuously.

The cashew forest is spread over 233 acres of sand bed. Earlier there were around 5,000 cashew trees. However, hundreds of them were washed away due to the cyclonic storms that lashed the district between 1999 and 2019.



CIVIC WOES: Field staff of Public Health and Engineering department repaired an underground pipeline at Hospital Chhak in Sambalpur, Wednesday

Once a barren hill, now lush green forest

Forest dept sets example using organic fertilisers; Plans afoot to tap into tourism potential

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Oct 12: Relentless effort of the Forest department to generate greenery on a vast patch of barren land near a bald hill in Potapali gramya jungle area of Sambalpur district has yielded results.

The department is going to put in place various facilities for tourists. Reports said, as many as 72 varieties of indigenous plants have made the once bald hilly region ecologically rich.



THE DEPARTMENT TOOK THIS PROJECT ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS WHILE THIS MODEL WILL BE REPLICATED IN VARIOUS GRAMYA JUNGLES AND RESERVE FORESTS IN THE DAYS TO COME, SAID DFO BISWANATH NILANWAR

Brown sugar worth ₹80L seized; 3 held



POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Oct 12: Excise officials Wednesday seized brown sugar worth around ₹80 lakh and arrested three drug peddlers including the kingpin of a racket from Jaleswar area in Balasore district.

Acting on a tip-off, Excise sleuths of Bhograi with the help of Central Excise, Cuttack, conducted simultaneous raids at several places in the district and seized the contraband weighing nearly 1 kg.

The arrested accused have been identified as Dibakar Nayak of Baramile area under Kamarda police limits in Balasore district, Sekh Subhan Uddin of Patharpura area and Anita Barik alias Suhani Bibi. Several other materials have been seized from the three.

According to sources, the seized brown sugar was allegedly smuggled into Odisha from neighbouring West Bengal.

107 more schools to be transformed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Oct 12: As many as 107 high schools in Ganjam will be transformed under the 5T Initiative. 5T Secretary VK Pandian through video conferencing with officials Tuesday has intimated about the schools included in the high school transformation programme under 5T Initiative.

All the BDOs and officials concerned were told about maintenance and management of the transformed schools.

In the first phase, 133 schools in Ganjam have been transformed into 'smart schools' while 233 were made 'smart schools' in the second phase. It was noticed that more and more students are interested to study in these schools.



ON WARPATH: Thousands of tribals affiliated to PESA Sabha Coordination Committee staged protests, demanding separate statehood to Mayurbhanj, Wednesday

Infighting in BJD hampering development in Chhatrapur



Rift among BJD leaders dates back to the election to the block chairperson's post in April this year. The party has changed its observer to stop infighting

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Oct 12: The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) seems to be ridden with factionalism in this area of Ganjam district. Leaders like block chairperson (wife of former ZP member Munna Das) and vice-chairperson (wife of former ZP member S Kishore Reddy) are not being invited to various programmes of the party.

Sources said that the rift among the BJD leaders dates back to the election to the block chairperson's post in April this year. Despite the BJD changing its district observer to stop faction-oriented rifts, it has not worked.

It should be stated here that high drama had unfolded during the Chhatrapur block chairman election in April when two separate rival groups of BJD workers got into an ugly

fight with each other.

The supporters of Chhatrapur's sitting MLA Subas Behera and former MLA Priyanshu Pradhan were at loggerheads. Twelve samiti members were allegedly locked up by the police in a hotel at Barakul in Balugaon ahead of the election.

The internal feud within the ruling party became public after a video of the samiti members crying for help from the balcony of the hotel went viral. Eventually, they were released.

Many people alleged that due to various rival camps within the BJD, implementation of various development programmes like MGNREGS have not happened in a proper manner in Chhatrapur.

Combing stepped up in Sindhi forest

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, Oct 12: Police and security forces have not yet established the identity of a female Maoist cadre who was killed in an exchange of fire with security personnel in Sindhi forest under Baliguda police limits of Kandhamal district, Tuesday. Meanwhile, Special Operations Group (SOG) and District Voluntary Force (DVF) have intensified combing operation in the area, Wednesday.

Addressing a presser at the SP office here, IG (operation) Amitabh Thakur said the identity of the slain Maoist has not been established yet. And the slain woman Maoist could be from neighbouring Chhattisgarh. He added that the camp was organised by the CPI (Maoists) of



Kandhamal-Kalahandi-Boudh-Nayagarh (KKBN) division. It has been trying to push its cadres into Odisha, but the jawans have been scuttling their attempts every time.

Acting on the tip-off about Maoist presence in the forest, security and DV forces carried out search operations in the forest where 20 Maoists were holed up.

Conversion raises hackles in Nilagiri

Nilagiri: Tribals in Nilagiri area of Balasore are allegedly being converted into a certain religion, triggering discontent among the locals. Such conversion activities have been increasing in tribal pockets while the administration has been accused of lowering its guard.

The Balasore unit of Akhil Bharatiya Janajati Manch has strongly objected to alleged conversion activities and demanded that the families who have been lured into conversion should be excluded from the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs) in India.

Government of Odisha e-Procurement Notice. Bid Identification No. Online tender/ 11/S.E.RW BOUDH/2022-23. NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-procurement. No.O-1102: E-Mail- rw_boudh@yahoo.co.in. Name of the Work:- Road works -01 No.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN & PRINCIPAL SAHEED LAXMAN NAYAK MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL KORAPUT-764020, KORAPUT, ODISHA. Tel:06852-250101/Email:slnmchkoraput.od@gov.in. Letter No.4029 Date:12.10.2022

CORRIGENDUM. A. With reference to this office Tender Call Notice no. 3914, dt: 28/9/2022 of Office of the Dean & Principal, SLN MCH, regarding "Supply of Books(Medical)", it is notified herewith that at page no. 4, point no. 22 may please be read as "The successful bidder has to furnish the bank guarantee certificate in prescribed form. The supplier has to submit an undertaking to that effect at the time of filling tender instead of the firm should submit bank guarantee certificate."

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

PUBLIC NOTICE Case No.62 of 2022. Hearing of Application filed by TP Western Odisha Distribution Ltd. on behalf of all the four DISCOMs of Odisha for allowing interest on loan to be taken by the farmer for setting up Solar Capacity for Kusum C Pump level solarisation in ARR of DISCOMs under Section 62 of the Electricity Act, 2003 in conformity with the provisions of OERC (Terms and Conditions for determination of wheeling Tariff and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2014 and OERC (Conduct of Business) Regulations, 2004.

EAST COAST RAILWAY. e-Tender Notice No.ETCECONIIBBS2022106, Dated: 28.09.2022. Name of Work: EXECUTION OF PWAY LINKING BALLAST SUPPLY AND OTHER ALLIED WORKS BETWEEN BYREKAPILAS ROAD STATION INCLUDING BALANCE EARTHWORK IN FORMATION (FROM CH. 6200 TO 9500 METER) OF BHADRAK-NERGUNDI 3RD LINE OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.

FOCUS ECONOMY

RENT-SEEKING IN INDIA



Economic liberalisation was not successful in addressing the problem of rent-seeking. In fact, with higher GDP post liberalisation, rent-seeking increased too

“No force on Earth can stop an idea whose time has come” - these were the words echoed by then Finance Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, at the eve of announcing the 1991 economic reforms that would mark the dawn of a new era for Indian economic and political landscape. These reforms were meant to establish a rule-based, fair, free market capitalistic system by breaking the shackles of socialist era, license-raj and economically slow growing system in India. These reforms set in motion India's stride towards becoming a free-market economy through liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation. They intended to get India free from the major ailment of 'rent-seeking' which had crippled the economic growth. Recently, as India celebrated her 75 years of Independence, the country also overtook the United Kingdom to become the world's fifth largest economy. At this crucial juncture it is important to evaluate the impact of economic reforms on rent-seeking in India.

This stifling control provided many opportunities for collusion and rent-seeking was highly prevalent. Arvind Subramanian and Dani Rodrik have also argued that in the 1980s, India followed a pro-business approach which means favouring selected business households rather than providing a favourable condition for all businesses. The image of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi sharing the stage with industrialist Dhirubhai Ambani in a political rally was the manifestation of the economic policy being followed where instead of removing impediments to competition, the government was busy garnering political support from existing business groups.

have been found even in the recently enacted electoral bonds system. Despite liberalisation, state continues to exert its hold over other factors of production which is land, banking and finance and most importantly allocation of natural resources. In such a scenario, rent-seeking only prospered instead of ceasing to exist, with increase in productivity of the economy post liberalisation. The free-market economy fell prey to crony capitalism. Raghuram Rajan in his book 'Saving Capitalism from the Capitalists', states that the biggest threat to free market comes from capitalists themselves as they continue to depend on politicians to extract illegitimate market benefits.

One of the ways, developed by The Economist magazine, to measure prevalence of rent-seeking in any nation is by knowing how the richest people in that country make their money. If their source is where government has a strong hold like giving license, or allocation of natural resources, real estate or defence, then it is likely that rent-seeking dominates the economy. However, if their money comes from government independent domains or open sectors like IT or consumer goods, then in such cases cronyism is likely to be less powerful.

In the Medium, Small and Micro enterprises (MSME) segment, it is very interesting to note that out of 63 million enterprises in India, there are only 1 million formal employers. The archaic complex regulatory system is the reason why most of the firms intend to operate at a small scale. These complex regulatory norms are the main source

of bureaucratic rent-seeking. If these small firms decide to increase their size or become formal, they are required to comply with 1536 laws, 70,000 compliances approximately and more than 5000 filings. That is why more than 80 per cent of the firms in MSME segment are micro enterprises. This also allows big corporations to keep any competition at bay. All of this comes at a huge cost of potential growth and employment loss to the nation.

One of the recent instances is the government announcement of Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to give a boost to investment. Under this scheme, the government offers incentives (4-6% of incremental sales) to selected firms. Earlier the parameters used to select the firms were that it should be a small or medium enterprise, labour intensive and export oriented. However, later other firms were also included like the LED under the PLI scheme, despite having booming consumer demand and low technology for production. Because of this, other players too started demanding to be included in the PLI scheme, making it a typical case of rent-seeking. Experts argue such initiatives never work, and mostly drain the treasury than increasing competitiveness in the market. The special support offered to sectors by cherry-picking them only encourages rent-seeking. India already has plenty of experience with such policies being implemented in 1970s. To increase investment government must provide level-playing field to all the industries by removing the impediments in competitive free market economy.

The above evidence points out that economic liberalisation was not successful in addressing the problem of rent-seeking. In fact, with higher GDP in the economy post liberalisation, rent-seeking increased too. No wonder, India ranked ninth in the Global Crony Capitalism Index developed by 'The Economist' magazine. The reason behind this is the non-addressal of critical institutional, economic and administrative issues which continue to be breeding grounds for cronyism and corruption.

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Kartik Kishore

INDIA RANKS NINTH IN THE GLOBAL CRONY CAPITALISM INDEX DEVELOPED BY 'THE ECONOMIST' MAGAZINE

Gordon Tullock propounded the concept of rent-seeking in 1967 which was later popularised by Anne Krueger in 1974. It evolved from the studies of Adam Smith. Rent-seeking is an economic concept that occurs when an entity seeks to gain wealth without any reciprocal contribution of productivity. The term rent in rent-seeking is based on the economic definition of "rent," which is defined as economic wealth obtained through shrewd or potentially manipulative use of resources. An example of rent-seeking is when a company lobbies the government for grants, subsidies, or tariff protection. Rent-seeking comes in many forms from lobbying or donating funds.

The relationship between the government and the businesses in pre-1991 period can be defined with a focus on cronyism. Crony capitalism is a pervasive form of capitalism in which the government colludes with select business households to provide them with license for business and rig the competitive market space to favour colluding private entities in exchange for money or other such considerations. The roots of cronyism lie in this period of license, permit and quota raj as the government tightly con-

A day passed without accomplishing a good action is a day without soul.

THE MOTHER



Nationalising Energy

Although uncertainty prevails in today's global energy market, one thing has become clear: Governments are reasserting their central role. The motive is pragmatic rather than ideological, and the details vary from one country to another, but the trend is unmistakable. Governments of all political hues are taking back control of a market that had largely been left to private firms with only limited regulation. In many Western economies, this arguably represents the largest shift in the balance of public and private economic power since World War II.

The state's newfound assertiveness stems partly from huge price increases that threaten large-scale energy poverty and the collapse of some energy-intensive businesses. After years of underinvestment in the sector, the surge in energy demand in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in Asia, inevitably caused prices to jump. The cost of natural gas to consumers in the European Union rose by 12% in the second half of 2021.

But this was merely a prelude to the current price spikes resulting from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The EU's plan to cut its imports of Russian natural gas by two-thirds by 2023, together with Russia's reduction of supplies to countries including Germany and Finland, caused the European benchmark price to increase fivefold over the 12 months to June of this year. On one estimate, average consumer energy bills in Britain - which imports little Russian gas but relies on the global market for 50% of its daily needs - were predicted to be four times their 2021 level by early next year.

A second powerful factor compelling government intervention is climate change. The surge in energy demand over the past year has been led by coal, which remains the dominant source of power in Asia, causing greenhouse-gas emissions to return to their pre-pandemic level. Despite strong growth in renewables such as wind and solar, the world's continued reliance on hydrocarbons means that, absent further government intervention, emissions will continue increasing for several years to come.

None of these challenges can be addressed by market forces alone. Without a carbon price or other regulatory measures that only governments can put in place, people will continue to use gasoline-fueled cars. Market forces can do little to help families facing a sudden rise in the cost of an essential commodity. Nor can markets redistribute the windfall gains made by companies such as Saudi Aramco, which reported a record profit of \$48.4 billion in the second quarter of this year, to the many smaller businesses for which energy is a crucial input.

State intervention in the energy market is taking many and varied forms. The German government has announced plans for 2% of the country's land area to be used for the production of wind power, and is devising emergency rationing schemes to manage anticipated winter energy shortages following Russia's cutoff of gas supplies. All British households initially received a £400 (\$450) handout, to help them cope with rising energy bills, partly funded by a wind-fall tax on oil and gas producers. But that proved insufficient and, upon becoming Britain's new Prime Minister, Liz Truss capped household energy bills for two years and offered short-term support for business users. To increase domestic energy supplies, she granted new North Sea oil and gas licenses and lifted the moratorium on fracking. The United Kingdom's green agenda nominally remains in place with no new gasoline- or diesel-powered cars to be licensed from 2030, but, for the moment, government intervention is focused on price controls and increased hydrocarbon production.

Across the Atlantic, US President Joe Biden's recently enacted Inflation Reduction Act provides \$27 billion to help low- and middle-income American households convert to cleaner energy, as well as funding to maintain the country's loss-making nuclear-power sector. In France, President Emmanuel Macron is in the process of fully nationalizing the power utility EDF, a former flagship of French industrial strength that has suffered two decades of managerial and technical failure. And energy-price controls have been tightened there and across much of continental Europe.

Unfortunately, these and many other recent government initiatives are piecemeal responses to the fundamental challenges of energy insecurity and climate change. Too many measures are insufficiently thought through, provide poor value for money, and fail to address underlying obstacles to change. For example, a major shift to electric vehicles makes sense only if both charging networks and secure supplies of the advanced materials on which EVs depend are available. Small universal cash handouts are costly and do not address concentrated long-term energy poverty. Policies to increase wind-power generation are irrelevant unless the infrastructure to cope with distributed electricity supplies is in place.

Governments reach for short-term solutions that demonstrate that they are acting. But the resulting policies are not always the cheapest or the most effective, and many turn out to be no more than temporary fixes. In none of the countries mentioned above is there a settled consensus on the shape of long-term energy policy.

Nonetheless, the trend toward greater government intervention in the energy sector is well established. As the limitations of particular policies are revealed, policymakers will respond with more intervention, not less. The role of the state will have to expand further, not least to address the investment gap that has emerged. Additional funds are needed to meet future demand for all forms of energy and associated infrastructure. Financing the transition to a low-carbon economy will require vast sums.

Governments are likely to be the main source of the necessary capital, as well as supplying guarantees and subsidies to the private sector. But whether governments, many with finances already overstretched by COVID-19, will respond adequately is far from certain. In the UK, the opposition Labour Party, now well ahead in the polls, has promised to create a new publicly owned Great British Energy company to deliver a carbon-free electricity sector by 2030.

None of this is a recipe for an ideal outcome. The task of ensuring a continuous and affordable energy supply is too important to be left to the market and too complex to be taken over by ministers and bureaucrats. The involvement of both is necessary, but neither, alone, is sufficient.

Logic points to cooperative arrangements whereby governments set energy objectives and standards, and private-sector firms compete to play a part in meeting the overall goals. But achieving such collaboration and balance currently seems no more than a distant aspiration.

The writer is a visiting professor at King's College London.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

- I have never met a man so ignorant that I couldn't learn something from him. GALILEO GALILEI
- A man is never the same for long. He is continually changing. He seldom remains the same even for half an hour. GEORGE GURDIEFF
- It is important to expect nothing, to take every experience, including the negative ones, as merely steps on the path, and to proceed. RAM DASS

IN JEST THIS

Aliens keep looking down on Earth



Melvin Durai

'HUMANS ARE NO MORE CIVILISED IN THIS NEW MILLENNIUM THAN THEY WERE IN THE OLD MILLENNIUM'

A group of Ukrainian astronomers recently published a research paper titled, "Unidentified area phenomena I. Observations of events." They claimed to have spotted numerous UFOs (unidentified flying objects) from observation stations in the capital city of Kyiv and the village of Vinarivka.

"We see them everywhere," the authors write. "Flights of single, group and squadrons of the ships were detected, moving at speeds from 3 to 15 degrees per second."

Just a week or so later, on the planet of Serena, many galaxies away, the Minister of Intergalactic Affairs and other leaders gathered in the main chamber of the House of Serenity to hear a report from Ruba Pontuba, a heroic space traveller who had just returned from her third mission to Earth.

Minister: "Welcome back, most respected Ruba."

Ruba: "Thank you, most honourable minister. I am thrilled to be back. I can't tell you how much I missed being among civilised creatures."

Minister: "Is that so? It was my

hope that humans would be quite civilised by now. When you were there last, they were just entering the new millennium."

Ruba (laughs uncontrollably for five minutes): "New millennium! Ha ha ha! Humans are no more civilised in this new millennium than they were in the old millennium. They still kill each other in great numbers, then refer to lions and tigers as 'wild animals.'"

Minister: "You mean they haven't made any progress as a species?"

Ruba: "They've made a little progress in science and technology, mostly in using primitive phones that need to be recharged often. They're also learning to swipe right."

Minister: "They have a school for thieves?"

Ruba: "No, it's a way that humans hook up with each other. They look at photos of other people and decide whether to mate with them."

Minister: "Sounds very primitive. Have they made any progress in peace and love?"

Ruba: "None whatsoever. During my time on Earth, I witnessed hundreds of conflicts, such as Israelis

versus Palestinians, Russians versus Ukrainians, Will Smith versus Chris Rock."

Minister: "But don't humans want peace?"

Ruba: "Yes, most humans do want peace. They want it so much, they're willing to fight wars to achieve it."

Minister: "What about love? Don't humans love each other?"

Ruba: "Not as much as they love money. Most humans have one main goal in life: to get rich."

Minister: "But aren't they like us? Don't they want to share their fortune with the less fortunate?"

Ruba: "Well, I heard of one human who won the lottery and said, 'The first thing I'm going to do is sponsor some children in Uganda.' But it turns out that those were HIS children. He was behind on his child support. Most humans, when they get rich, buy themselves a big house, a fancy car and new teeth. Some get new spouses, too."

Minister: "So what happens to the poor?"

Ruba: "Many of them struggle to survive. In some countries, they

don't have enough food to eat."

Minister: "You mean there's a shortage of food on Earth?"

Ruba: "No, there's no shortage of food. There's just a shortage of generosity. Some humans have so much food, they don't know where to put it. They end up storing it on their hips, thighs and tummies. When I visited New York City, I saw people taking part in an eating contest. They were stuffing hotdogs down their throats, trying to win a contest."

Minister: "A food-eating contest? That sounds disgusting."

Ruba: "Yes, but other humans were clapping and cheering. This was a form of entertainment for them."

Minister: "So humans are killing each other and not sharing their food and wealth. Are they at least trying to save their planet from climate change?"

Ruba: "Yes, some of them are. But others don't believe in climate change. Just like they don't believe there's life on other planets."

Minister: "Ha ha ha! It's so easy to look down

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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Linguistic chauvinism

Sir, Every time Union Home Minister Amit Shah stirs up the controversy of Hindi as the one-language formula, the opposition from south towards it intensifies further. No surprise that Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has made a strong rebuttal to the Parliamentary Committee's recommendation to use Hindi as a medium of instruction in IITs and IIMs. Thrusting Hindi, directly or indirectly, on non-Hindi speaking southern states is always viewed as an extension of the cultural majoritarianism policy of the ruling BJP. Further, it reflects the unrequited desire of north-based political parties to make Hindi forcibly accepted by the people in the south. It would seem like the Hindi-speakers want non-Hindi speakers to learn Hindi to suit their own narratives of nationalism. People in the south should not sway to the deceptive overture of the ruling dispensation. They should rise up strongly against this most unscientific and undemocratic language policy of the saffron party to further breach the unity of the toiling masses by fomenting linguistic chauvinism. Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Inclusive education

Sir, According to a recent UN report based on census 2011, 75 per cent of children with disabilities in India do not attend any educational institute in their lifetime. Inclusive education refers to a model of learning where children with disabilities (CWD) attend the same schools with non-disabled peers. CWDs are very bright and talented kids, but they may just learn in a different manner. But in most mainstream schools, the number of students is so large that teachers can't really pay attention to the individual needs of students. India has a number of laws and policies on education but data and ground-realities show that an ecosystem of inclusion has not yet been achieved. Current laws ignore preparedness for inclusive learning. The prerequisites for a truly inclusive classroom are: preparation of the child, the parents and the receiving school. However, the existing laws on education in India have ignored to give stress on the equal preparedness of the stakeholders when it comes to inclusive and effectual learning for CWDs. Even though the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 makes inclusive education a statutory guarantee, the Rights of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 does not even define inclusive education. It is the need of the hour that an ecosystem of inclusion is created, where all stakeholders play an important role in the children's education. Bhagaban Nayak, BERTHAMPUR



We will teach our detractors a befitting lesson. Our boiling blood will ensure our detractors are taught a lesson
UDDHAV THACKERAY | FORMER MAHA CM

NEW VANDE BHARAT TRAIN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will flag off the country's fourth Vande Bharat Express train and inaugurate a slew of developmental projects in Himachal Pradesh's Una district Thursday



of the day quote

I am contesting elections after it was decided that no one from the Gandhi family is ready to run for the party president's post
MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | VETERAN CONG LEADER

The one whose name you people are taking, did he (Amit Shah) have any first-hand knowledge of what JP stood for? We had earned our spurs in the JP movement (of 1974). I do not want to attach any importance to those whose political career began just 20 years ago
NPISH KUMAR | BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

It is not the 'Gaurav Yatra' of BJP or Gujarat but the one to establish India's pride. This yatra is the story of a journey from Gujarat to India
JP NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Badal questioned by Punjab SIT

Chandigarh: A Punjab Police Special Investigation Team probing the 2015 Kotkapura police firing case Wednesday questioned former Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal for around three hours at his residence here. The SIT is led by Additional Director General of Police L K Yadav. Badal was the Chief Minister of Punjab when the police firing took place in 2015.

Flood situation grim in Assam

Guwahati: The flood situation in Assam remained serious Wednesday as incessant rains lashed several districts affecting nearly 40,000 people, officials said. Many affected people have taken shelter in relief camps and distribution centers of the affected districts, they said.

Ekalpur clashes: HC orders SIT probe

Kolkata: The Calcutta High Court Wednesday directed the West Bengal director general of police (DGP) and Kolkata police commissioner to form a special investigation team (SIT) to probe into Sunday's clashes between two groups at Ekalpur in southwestern part of the city.

SC to deliver verdict on hijab ban today

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce its verdict Thursday on a batch of petitions challenging the Karnataka High Court judgement refusing to lift the ban on hijab in educational institutions of the state. According to the apex court's cause list, a bench of Justices Hemant Gupta and Sudhanshu Dhulia will deliver the judgement in the matter Thursday.

GAMBIA DEATHS

Haryana govt halts production at factory

Gambian police, in a preliminary probe report, said that the deaths of 69 children from acute kidney injury was linked to the cough syrups made in India and imported via a US-based company



AGENCIES

New Delhi/Chandigarh, Oct 12: The Haryana government has ordered the halting of drug manufacturing at the Sonipat unit of Maiden Pharmaceuticals, asking it to explain within a week "many contraventions" found during a recent inspection, or face suspension or cancellation of license. The order to halt production came days after the World Health Organisation (WHO) potentially linked four cough syrups manufactured at the facility to the deaths of 66 children in African nation of The Gambia.

"We have ordered that all drug production at this unit be stopped with immediate effect," Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij told PTI over phone Wednesday. After the WHO alert, samples of the four cough syrups manufactured by the firm was sent to the Central Drugs Laboratory in Kolkata October 6 for examination.

Vij said a joint team of the state and the Centre inspected the unit during which it found 12 violations or deficiencies. "Taking cog-

nisation of this, the state government has ordered to halt the drug production in this unit."

He further said the report of the cough syrup samples are yet to arrive from the Central Drugs Laboratory in Kolkata. "Depending on what it says, we will take further action," he said.

According to a notice issued by the Haryana Drugs Controller following the inspection of the firm's plant, Maiden Pharmaceuticals Limited did not perform quality testing of propylene glycol, the raw material used for making one of the formulations.

"The firm has not performed the quality testing of propylene glycol for diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol," said the notice.

The showcause notice issued October 7 stated, "The inspection of your firm was conducted by a team comprising senior officials from CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation) and Haryana Drugs Controller Authority to conduct the neces-

sary investigation for following drugs manufactured by you."

"During inspection many contraventions were detected. You are hereby served with the show cause notice rule 85(2) of drug rules, 1945 as to why your manufacturing license may not be suspended or cancelled," it said.

The state authority had asked the firm to respond within seven days, failing which it said ex-parte -- done with respect to or in the interests of one side only or of an interested outside party -- action will be taken against the company as per the drugs act.

Among the 12 "violations" highlighted by the state drugs regulator was that the batch number of propylene glycol, sorbitol solution and sodium methyl paraben used in the making of the drugs in question were not mentioned in the certificate of analysis report.

The firm has not performed process validation and analytical method validation for the drug products in question, according

Panel to study WHO report

New Delhi: The government Wednesday formed a four-member panel of experts to examine the details and adverse event reports received from the WHO on the deaths of 66 children in The Gambia being linked potentially to the four made-in-India cough syrups, official sources here said. They said after examining and analysing the adverse event reports, causal relationship and all related details shared by or to be shared by the World Health Organization, the committee will advise and recommend further course of action to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI). The development comes on a day the Haryana government ordered the halting of drug manufacturing at the Sonipat unit of Maiden Pharmaceuticals, and asked it to explain within a week "many contraventions" found during a recent inspection, or face suspension or cancellation of license. The order to halt production came days after the World Health Organisation (WHO) potentially linked four cough syrups manufactured at the facility to the deaths of 66 children in the African nation of Gambia.

to the authority.

Besides, the complete plant is found under renovation and the firm failed to produce the log books of equipment and instruments regarding manufacturing and testing for the drugs in question, the notice read.



An idol of Ganesha, allegedly belonging to Sri Venugopala Swamy temple, Alathur, Thiruvavur district, were traced to the Nelson-Atkins Museums, Kansas City, Missouri, USA by Tamil Nadu Idol Wing CID

Angry over criticism, Maha govt slaps cases against UBT leaders

Seasoned Sena (UBT) national person Dr Raghunath Kuchik said that the Shinde-Fadnavis authorities has "crossed each limits of governmental decency" by targeting governmental opponents

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Oct 12: Under siege from the continuous onslaught of the Opposition Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray), several of its leaders have been targeted with police cases by the Maharashtra government of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

Among them are a Sena (UBT) MP Vinayak Raut, a deputy leader Sushma Andhare and MLA Bhaskar Jadhav, besides other leaders, following complaints by Dattaram Gavas, an activist of Shinde's Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena.

Raut has been booked for ridiculing the Bharatiya Janata Party's Union MSME Minister Narayan Rane whom he referred to as "kombdi chor" (chicken thief) at a public rally in Thane this week, ruffling feathers.

Jadhav has been slapped with a case for aping Shinde's style of reading out a prepared speech at his October 5 Dussehra Rally in Bandra Kurla Complex.

Andhare, has also been booked -- for mimicking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's promises of giving employment to two crore youths -- at a Thane meeting.

In a statement on the October 9 meeting, the Naupada Police Station (Thane) has named other local level leaders and activists like Anita Birje, Madhukar Deshmukh, Sachin Chavan, and Dharmarajya Party's Rajan Raje.

Accordingly, the police have charged them under various sections of Indian Penal Code for inflammatory speech, using ob-

jectionable language, attempts to incite passions and sully the image of CM Shinde, etc.

Sena (UBT) leaders have cried foul over the police action, terming it as "political vendetta" intended to "silence and destroy the Opposition".

Senior farmers leader of the Sena (UBT) Kishore Tiwari said that the Shinde-Fadnavis government is "selectively targeting" party's leaders who raise their voice against the regime to demoralise the party rank-and-file.

"Does the government have the courage to throw them in jail like other Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders? How many Opposition leaders will they imprison. This is blatant misuse of power and harassment of those who oppose them," said Tiwari grimly.

Condemning the development, Nationalist Congress Party Chief Spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said that "the validity of this (Shinde-Fadnavis) government is still pending before the Supreme Court", and the Opposition leaders have a fundamental right to criticise the government's shortcomings.

"Under such circumstances, such police actions are anti-democracy and the government is trying to brow-beat the Opposition and silence them from speaking out," Tapase added sharply.

Strongly flaying the police cases, veteran Sena (UBT) national leader Dr. Raghunath Kuchik said that the Shinde-Fadnavis government has "crossed all limits of political decency" by targeting political opponents.

New war in AIADMK



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Oct 12: With the winter session of the Tamil Nadu Assembly to commence on October 17, a new war has emerged in the AIADMK over the post of Deputy leader of opposition.

The post of Deputy leader of opposition was held by former Chief Minister, O Panneerselvam (OPS) and the leader of opposition in the state Assembly is former Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami, who is also the interim general secretary of the AIADMK.

OPS and those close to him were expelled from the AIADMK July 11, during the party general council meeting held in the outskirts of Chennai and Palaniswami emerged as the interim general secretary of the party.

While the expulsion of OPS is still in the Supreme Court after the deposed leader filed a petition against the Madras High Court division bench order justifying the expulsion, the EPS faction has petitioned the Assembly Speaker M. Appavu to allow party legislator, RB Udhayakumar to take part in the Business advisory committee meet-

ings. Palaniswami sent the letter to the Speaker through the Deputy Whip of the AIADMK, SRavi Tuesday.

Former Chief Minister and deposed leader of the AIADMK, Panneerselvam has already petitioned the Speaker that he was still the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

A leader close to OPS while speaking to IANS said, "OPS was expelled by the July 11 general council meeting of the party. The Supreme Court of India is to hear a petition filed by O Panneerselvam and without a verdict from the court, you can't say that he is not with the party. Let the order come and then we can decide."

With the 2024 general elections almost around the corner, the factional feud in the AIADMK is creating major heart burns for the prospects of the NDA from Tamil heartland even though the BJP has gained some ground at the grassroots level after K Annamalai, the former IPS officer became the president of the state unit. Sources in the BJP told IANS that the party is for a grand alliance between OPS, EPS, VK Sasikala, and TTV Dhinakaran.

STADIUM MURDER CASE

Court frames charges against Sushil Kumar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: A Delhi court Wednesday framed charges against Olympic medalist wrestler Sushil Kumar and 17 others in the Chhatrasal Stadium murder case, setting the stage for their trial.

Additional Sessions Judge Shivaji Anand framed charges against



Kumar and other accused under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code, including those related to murder, rioting and criminal conspiracy.

A detailed order is awaited. Kumar along with others is accused of allegedly assaulting former junior national wrestling champion Sagar Dhankar and his friends in the parking lot of the city's Chhatrasal stadium May 4, 2021 over an alleged property dispute. Dhankar later succumbed to injuries and, according to the post-mortem report, he died due to cerebral damage resulting from blunt object impact.

The Delhi Police had arrested the wrestler May 23. The sportsman has been lodged in judicial custody since June 2, 2021.

Army to procure electric vehicles for select units

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Indian Army decided to procure electric vehicles (EV) for select units and formations in sync with the government's overall policy of reducing the carbon emissions, officials said Wednesday.

As per the plan, around 25 per cent light vehicles, 38 per cent buses and 48 per cent motorcycles in select units will be replaced with EVs in a time-bound manner.

Various factors unique to the Indian Army's employability, remote locations of employment and operational commitments were considered before finalising the roadmap for induction of EVs, the officials said. "The Indian Army has put into plan a roadmap to induct EVs wherever possible, considering the operational commitments



which will significantly reduce carbon emissions dependency on fossil fuels," said an official.

"Various factors unique to the Indian Army's employability, remote locations of employment and operational commitments were considered to arrive at a definite time-bound roadmap for the project," he added. In order to support a viable EV ecosystem in the Army

units, necessary support infrastructure, including charging points for EVs, will be put in place.

"These EV charging stations will have at least one fast charger and two to three slow chargers. Electric circuit cables, transformers with adequate load bearing capability based on anticipated number of EVs per station will be put into place," the official said.

The Army is also planning setting up of solar panel-driven charging stations, which are also planned in a phased manner.

"The Army is also procuring EVs through the capital route. As per plans, the existing shortage of buses will be fulfilled by procuring electric buses for select peace establishments for initial exploitation," said the official.

An initial tender for procurement of 60 buses along with 24 fast

chargers will soon be floated, he said. "Considering the pace of greener initiatives being adopted by the government, efforts to

reduce the dependency on fossil fuels, it is necessary to adapt to the changing environment," said another official.

In April, the Indian Army had organised a demonstration of available EVs to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh

where EV manufacturers such as Tata Motors, Perfect Metal Industries (PMI) and Revolt Motors showcased their EVs and briefed about the enhancement in technology.

As per the plan, around 25 per cent light vehicles, 38 per cent buses and 48 per cent motorcycles in select units will be replaced with EVs in a time-bound manner



Sans Mulayam, Akhilesh faces huge challenge



HIS BIGGEST TEST WILL BE THE BY-ELECTION IN MAINPURI WHICH WILL BE NECESSITATED BY THE DEMISE OF MULAYAM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Oct 12: He had taken over the reins of the party in 2017 but it is now that he will have to take on the responsibility of the family too.

The passing away of Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh has increased the burden manifold on the frail shoulders of Akhilesh Yadav.

Akhilesh Yadav now faces the challenge of keeping the party as well as the family together because the Yadav family and the Samajwadi Party have so far existed more or less as one entity. The family has been the family and family is the party.

Till Mulayam Singh was alive, his word was command and no one in the party or the family dared to disobey him - even though Akhilesh was party chief.

Mulayam maintained a balance in family relationships and ensured political importance to every family member. It was Mulayam who built up the largest political dynasty in the country - one in which even women got representation.

While Mulayam remained undisputed leader of the clan, it is unlikely that Akhilesh will be accorded the same position - especially from the elders.

His uncle Shivpal has already branched out on his own after five years of strained relationship with Akhilesh while younger sister-in-law Aparna Bisht Yadav has joined the BJP.

Akhilesh now faces the uphill task of keeping the family together and ensuring that his elders, Shivpal included, do not turn hostile.

The manner in which Akhilesh's half-brother Prateek Yadav was "alienated" during the cremation of Mulayam Singh

Yadav Tuesday, does not augur well for the future of the family.

A family member who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Wednesday, "In this hour of grief, the family has shown extreme restraint and dignity and now it is up to Akhilesh to give respect to elders and keep the flock together. Netaji (Mulayam) always wanted to keep the family together but failed to repair the relationship between Shivpal and Akhilesh and it was this that pained him the most."

He said that no one in the family was challenging Akhilesh's leadership or his claim to Mulayam's political legacy. "But everyone wants the respect and importance they deserve," he added.

His biggest test, according to family sources, will be the by-election in Mainpuri which will be necessitated by the demise of Mulayam Singh.

Akhilesh now faces the uphill task of keeping the family together and ensuring that his elders, Shivpal included, do not turn hostile

Akhilesh will need the active support of the family to retain the seat which has been considered a SP bastion.

There are already murmurings in political circles that the BJP may play a master stroke and convince Shivpal to contest and win his brother's seat. If that happens, SP will lose its third bastion in a row after it lost Rampur and Azamgarh to BJP earlier this year.

Within the Samajwadi Party too, Akhilesh will have to work overtime to keep the flock together.

Till now, the disgruntled elements used to rush to Mulayam Singh with their grievances and Mulayam would pacify them and ensure that they returned with a smile.

Akhilesh will have to make himself more accessible to workers and receptive to suggestions - more so, if they come for the veterans in the party.

"Mulayam Singh was a strong adhesive who kept the family and the party together and Akhilesh will have to make a Herculean effort to walk in his father's footsteps. The Lok Sabha elections are round the corner and his biggest test has just begun," said a party veteran.

Major J&K parties slam order on registration of new voters

Jammu administration authorised tehsildars to issue certificate of residence to those residing in the winter capital for more than a year to enable their registration as voters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar/Jammu, Oct 12: The National Conference, PDP, Congress and other prominent political parties in Jammu and Kashmir Wednesday flayed the Jammu administration's order on facilitating the registration of new voters who are from outside the union territory, while the BJP defended it saying it is in line with the laws.

They were reacting after the Jammu administration authorised tehsildars (revenue officials) to issue a certificate of residence to those residing in the winter capital for more than a year to enable their registration as voters.

While Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti alleged that the Centre's colonial settler project has been initiated in the region, the National Conference urged people of J&K to "defeat these conspiracies at the ballot box".

Former Congress leader and Democratic Azad Party chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad said the order would increase social tensions in J&K, while the Peoples Conference termed the Jammu's DC order highly suspicious.

Talking to reporters in Kulgam district, Mufti said her party has been saying that the BJP has an "illegitimate intent" behind the abrogation of Article 370.

Their aim is to change the population ratio in J&K. It will start in Jammu when a sea of people will come from outside, which will not only harm the Dogra culture there but the business, employment and resources there will be attacked. The crime rate there has



The EC's latest order for registration of new voters makes it clear that GOI's colonial settler project has been initiated in Jammu. They will bear the first blow to Dogra culture, identity, employment & business

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PRESIDENT, PDP

increased manifold since they opened the doors for the outsiders, she alleged.

The National Conference (NC) claimed the BJP is scared of the elections and knows it will lose badly.

"The government is going ahead with its plan to add 25 lakh non-local voters in J&K and we continue to oppose this move. BJP is scared of the elections & knows it will lose badly. People of J&K must defeat these conspiracies at the ballot box," the NC said in a tweet.

NC state spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar said the fresh order was an extension of what the then Chief Electoral Officer Hridesh Kumar had said at his press conference in Jammu. The party had opposed it then and continues to oppose it now, he said.

The only antidote that will defeat all these controversies is that the people of Jammu and Kashmir that includes Dogra Muslims, Kashmiris, Gujjars, Paharis and other sections, they need to register themselves as voters and when the election comes, they should come out and vote in large numbers. That is the only way we can defeat their nefarious designs, Dar told PTI.

The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), headed by National Conference president Farooq Abdullah, had Saturday

announced the formation of a 14-member committee to chalk out a strategy on the issue of any attempt of "manipulation and inclusion" of non-locals in the revised electoral rolls.

The panel has members from the five PAGD constituents and several other political parties such as the Congress, the Shiv Sena, the Dogra Swabhiman Sangathan Party (DSSP) and the Dogra Sadar Sabha (DSS).

The Peoples Conference said in a statement that the Jammu DC order reinforces the apprehensions in the minds of locals that outsiders are being enabled to register as voters to change the demographic profile of J&K. It urged the Election Commission of India as well as the J-K administration to come clean on the matter.

"We will always oppose making a non-resident a voter because Article 370 biggest benefit was that outsiders will not become voters here. This is not right, not right for the state and it will increase social tension," Azad told reporters.

The Special Summary Revision of electoral rolls was started in the Union Territory September 15 for the registration of new voters, deletion, correction, and transposition of voters who have migrated or died since the last summary revision.

UP to fine farmers for burning stubble

Anyone caught burning agriculture residue or waste in their fields will be penalised ₹2,500 if the field is less than 2 acres, ₹5,000 if the field is 2 to 5 acres and ₹15,000 if the size of the field is above 5 acres

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Oct 12: The Uttar Pradesh government has asked all District Magistrates and police chiefs to impose fines on those found burning stubble in fields.

As per the directives issued by the state's Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra, anyone caught burning agriculture residue or waste in their fields, the fine is ₹2,500 if the field is less than 2 acres, ₹5,000 if the field is 2 to 5 acres and ₹15,000 if the size of the field is above 5 acres.

Mishra has asked concerned officials to ensure that no agricultural waste is burnt in fields. He said a campaign should be organised to sensitise farmers against the ill effects of crop burning but if anyone is caught burning waste, then action should be initiated against them.

A government spokesman said, "The Chief Secretary has said that 14 instruments and machines have been identified for dealing with agricultural waste. It has been directed that farm banks, where common use instruments and machinery can be kept, should be set up and equipment given to indi-

vidual farmers as per need. Individual farmers will get 50 per cent subsidy while Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), cooperatives and panchayats will get 80 per cent subsidy for establishment of machinery banks."

The purchase of instruments and machinery should be completed by October 15.

As per the directives, agricultural waste from fields of those farmers who burnt this waste last year, should be collected and stored in cow shelters.

Of the farm residue so collected, 25 per cent should be used for mixing in the fodder for cattle. At least 20,000 tonnes of agricultural waste should be sent to cow shelters during this financial year and a scheme started by the government earlier, 'Parali do Khad lo' should be promoted extensively.

The official said that a penalty on farmers should be the last resort and an extensive sensitisation programme should be carried out first where farmers are told about the ill effects of burning agricultural waste and its impact on air, soil and water pollution. Interactive sessions should be organised between farmers and agriculture experts.



CAPTIVATING AIR SHOW: The skies over Udhampur roared Wednesday as fighter jets and combat helicopters of the IAF captivated the audience with their manoeuvres during an air show to mark the diamond jubilee celebrations at the headquarters of Air Officer Commanding (AOC) Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. As part of the event, a fly-past began with skydiving by a team of Akashganga from AN32 followed by air manoeuvres and different formations by Jaguar, MIG29, Su-30 and Rafale aircraft, officials said. Combat helicopters like Apache, Mi-17 Slithering and Chinook also exhibited adrenaline-pumping maneuvers in the first-of-its-kind air show at the Udhampur Air Force Station.

PTI PHOTOS



Wingsuit fly-by of Taj Mahal leaves visitors enthralled

In a first, Red Bull Athlete Frederic jumped out of a Cessna 172 airplane and using his wingsuit, he flew nearby the monument to achieve an individual proximity fly-by

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agra, Oct 12: Frederic Fugen, Vincent Cotte and Aurelien Chatard flew by the Taj Mahal, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, Tuesday to achieve something that had never been done before.

Titled the Taj Mahal Fly-by project, Red Bull Athlete Frederic jumped out of a Cessna 172 airplane at altitude of 5,000 feet about two kilometres away from the Taj Mahal, and using his wingsuit, he flew nearby the monument to achieve something that had never been done before - an individual proximity fly-by. Special thanks to DGCA, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Archaeological Survey of India

and District Magistrate of Agra.

The trio performed one jump early evening Tuesday, and had a few more planned Wednesday. The jump saw them light up the sky with green and orange colours to create a beautiful aerial display as tourists and visitors at the Taj Mahal were left enthralled.

Frederic Fugen is one of the most talented and innovative skydivers, wingsuit pilots and base jumpers on the planet.

As part of the Soul Flyers, a group of international athletes that perform wingsuit projects around the world, he has executed some truly incredible flights. Among his craziest projects have been Door in the Sky, when he jumped



off a mountain peak and flew into an airplane; Sky Skiing, when he performed a 45-second ski routine in the sky before landing and skiing down a mountain; Flying past the Pyramids of Giza, when he conducted a wingsuit flight super-close to the pyramids; Base jumping off Burj Khalifa, when he per-

formed the highest-ever base jump and parachute off a building; and many others.

Recently Frederic came up with the idea of a project around one of the country's most iconic monuments - the Taj Mahal, a UNESCO World Heritage site and often hailed as one of the 7 Wonders of the

World. And he achieved this feat Tuesday.

Joining Frederic on this project were frequent collaborators Vincent Cotte and Aurelien Chatard, who have been part of some of his best-known aerial projects in recent years.

The thrilling moments were captured by renowned sports videographer Dino Raffault, who has captured many of Frederic's projects and has also been part of Hollywood productions where aerial filming has been involved.

Being seasoned wingsuit pilots, Frederic, Vincent and Aurelien had all the experience and expertise needed to pull off this project. But as they say, every project and location is different from the other, and none are without their challenges. And so the wingsuit athletes made sure that their safety, the safety of their team, and that of everyone around the monument was of utmost importance.

J&K departmental stores now allowed to sell beer

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Oct 12: Beer lovers can now rock in Jammu and Kashmir as authorities have permitted departmental stores to sell the beverage under its liberalised liquor licensing and sale policy.

The Administrative Council (AC) meeting chaired by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha has approved the proposal authorising departmental stores to sell beer and other Ready to Drink (RTD) beverages in urban areas.

An official statement Tuesday said, "The Administrative Council approved incorporation of liberal provisions in Jammu and Kashmir Liquor License and Sale Rules, 1984 and Excise Policy, 2023-24 for grant of License JKEL-2A for retail sale of Beer and Ready to Drink (RTD) beverages in departmental stores in urban areas of UT."



The statement added that the departmental stores in a commercial complex, approved by the competent authority, fulfilling conditions like having total carpet area of minimum 1,200 sq feet, annual turnover of minimum ₹5 crores in Jammu and Srinagar cities and ₹2 crores for stores in other urban areas will be eligible under the scheme. Moreover, chain of departmental stores having annual turnover of more than ₹10 crores will be eligible to apply for separate licenses for each of its store.

of the day quote

Students who pursue education in regional languages are losing out on Central government job opportunities as questions in qualifying tests for the central jobs are in Hindi, and English

K T RAMA RAO |
TELANGANA'S IT, INDUSTRIES
AND COMMERCE MINISTER

This historical lie that Maharaja Hari Singh dithered on the question of accession of Kashmir with India has gone on for far too long in order to protect the dubious role of J L Nehru

KIREN RIJU | LAW MINISTER

I strongly believe that internal elections within the party will make the party strong. Whoever wins the elections, it will be victory of Congress

SHASHI THAROOR | CONG PREZ CANDIDATE

SHORT TAKES

Maliwal gets rape threats

New Delhi: Delhi Commission for Women chairperson Swati Maliwal has lodged a police complaint alleging that she has been receiving rape threats on 'Instagram' after she wrote to the Centre demanding filmmaker Sajid Khan's ouster from reality show Bigg Boss. She has submitted the complaint to the Delhi Police's Cyber Crime Unit and sought immediate registration of an FIR and arrest of the perpetrators. A senior police officer said that a case has been registered and investigation initiated.

Ch'garh: ED seizes ₹4cr cash, jewels

Raipur: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized about Rs 4 crore worth of cash and jewellery during searches at several locations linked to government officers and businessmen in Chhattisgarh in connection with a money laundering case. The seizures have been made from both the government officers and private entities raided, agency sources said. The ED action pertains to a money laundering investigation into alleged illegal levy commissions sourced by certain entities from transporters in Chhattisgarh, the sources said.

CBI questions Mootha Gautam

New Delhi: The CBI Wednesday questioned Managing Director of India Ahead News and Andhra Prabha newspaper Mootha Gautam in connection with the Delhi excise policy scam case, officials said. The executive was called to the CBI headquarters in the morning and grilled on various aspects of the case including some transactions, they said. Although he is not named as accused in the FIR, another employee of the channel, Arjun Pandey, is named in the FIR as one of the alleged "close associates" of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

Aadhaar update

New Delhi: Aadhaar holders who were issued the unique ID more than 10 years back but have not updated their details since then are being urged to update identification and residence proof documents, UIDAI said. In a statement, UIDAI - the government agency that issues Aadhaar numbers - said the updation can be done online as well as at Aadhaar centres. It said those who were issued the unique identification number more than 10 years back and have not done any updation since the issue are being "requested" to update their documents.



A language is much more than simply something you use for conversation. A language has hope, a language has imagination, a language has history in it

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

NO DISTRIBUTION OF SAREES, SHIRTS DURING RALLIES: EC

The Election Commission has said that all political parties should get equal opportunity to have access to earmarked space for election related advertisements during the poll period. The Commission also banned sarees, shirts as gifts during rallies



President Droupadi Murmu being accorded a Guard of Honour on her first visit to Tripura as the President of India in Agartala

PTI PHOTO

HUMAN SACRIFICE IN KERALA

Mastermind a pervert: Police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, Oct 12: In the human sacrifice case, a pervert is the prime accused, who exploited the fears of a man and his wife over their financial woes and two women were killed following torture, police said here Wednesday.

Strongly condemning the human sacrifice, the ruling CPI (M) stressed the need for a new legislation to curb such superstitious practices and sought strict implementation of the existing laws.

Advocate B A Aloor, known for representing the accused in sensational cases appeared for the trio.

Speaking to reporters on solving the case that became sensational, Kochi City Police Commissioner Nagaraju Chakilam said the 52-year old Mohammed Shafi, the prime accused, is a history-sheeter. He took undue advantage of the concerns of Bhagaval Singh (68) and his wife Laila (59) over their financial problems. Shafi convinced the couple that human sacrifice would solve their financial issues and brought them under his influence. Singh was a traditional massage therapist.

On news reports that the trio was engaged in 'cannibalism,' he said that this possibility was also



Laila, one of the accused in the Elanthoor 'human sacrifice' case, being produced at court, in Kochi

PTI PHOTO

being investigated, but there was no evidence to confirm it.

The Commissioner said Shafi is a pervert and a sadist, with a mindset to cause injury, harm and death. "He will make up any story, trap anyone."

He said Shafi faces many cases, including theft and rape, against him. In one of the rape cases, a 75-year-old woman was raped, and was inflicted injuries on various parts of her body. In the human sacrifice case, the two victims had injuries in their private parts, Nagaraju said.

The senior police official said

all the three accused have direct participation in both the killings, but the accused couple did not have a history of crime.

The probe to trace Padma, who went missing in September from Elamkulam near here led to the detection of killing of another victim, Roslin, a Chalakudy resident, who disappeared in June.

"All we had was a CCTV visual of a lady getting into a car with Shafi. Nothing else. Police team took the scientific route, traced them to the house at Elanthoor, questioned the couple and the whole incident unfolded,"

ALL THE THREE ACCUSED WERE PRODUCED BY POLICE BEFORE A COURT HERE AND THEY WERE REMAIND IN JUDICIAL CUSTODY

POLICE SAID THEY WOULD MOVE THE COURT SEEKING THE CUSTODY OF THE ACCUSED FOR FURTHER INTERROGATION

Nagaraju said.

According to the police remand report, the two victims underwent torture. The breasts of one of them had been chopped off. The body of the other victim was cut into 56 pieces by the accused persons.

The victims were tied to a cot before they were killed and the accused persons used a knife to inflict severe injuries on their private parts.

They were strangled by the trio before burying their chopped bodies in the pits on the premises of the couple's house in Elanthoor village of Pathanamthitta district, the report said.

The other woman was persuaded by promising a whopping Rs 10 lakh to act in a porn film and brought to the crime scene, the report added.

The chopped body parts of the killed women were exhumed on October 11.

Cabinet approves MSCS (Amendment) Bill, 2022

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved amendments to the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act to bring transparency and accountability in the sector as well as reform the electoral process.

The Union Cabinet has approved the Multi-State Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2022, which seeks to amend the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002. I&B Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters here after the Cabinet meeting. The Bill will incorporate the provisions of the 97th Constitutional Amendment. Thakur said the amendments seek to improve the ease of doing business, bring greater transparency



and enhance governance in these societies.

Explaining the reasons behind the amendment Bill, he said there have been cases of mismanagement like financial fraud, delay in holding elections and the same person continuing to occupy for a long period of time.

Multi-state co-operatives subject come in the Union list, he said, but added that the amendments are being proposed after the consultation with all states.

Govt's 'gross negligence' led economy to ruin, says Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Congress Wednesday expressed concern over international agencies slashing their GDP growth forecasts for India and alleged the government's "gross negligence" led the economy to ruin.

Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete said any reduction in GDP numbers means more joblessness, lesser income, lesser productivity and fewer avenues of investment. The government is in denial and refuses to accept that the country's growth is slowing down, she alleged.

She said the International



Monetary Fund (IMF) has for the second time in a row reduced India's GDP growth forecast to 6.8 per cent from the earlier 7.4 per cent for this year.

This is a steep cut and it is not the IMF alone which has done so, she said, adding other agencies like World Bank, ADB, Fitch, Moody's and UNCTAD are also reducing India's growth forecasts.

PLACES OF WORSHIP ACT

SC seeks Centre's response by Oct 31

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Supreme Court Wednesday asked the Centre to furnish by October 31 its affidavit in response to petitions challenging the validity of certain provisions of a 1991 law, which prohibit filing of a lawsuit to reclaim a place of worship or seek a change in its character from what prevailed August 15, 1947.

When a bench headed by Chief Justice U U Lalit was told the Centre has not yet filed its response to the petitions, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the government, said it is under consideration as to what to respond to and whether to respond.

The bench, also comprising Justices Ajay Rastogi and SR Bhat, asked Mehta how much time was required to submit the affidavit.

"Two weeks, that is what my instruction is," Mehta said, adding some time was needed considering the sensitivity of the matter.

"On the last occasion, Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General, had prayed for some time to place his submissions on record by way of an affidavit in response. Solicitor General prays for further time of two weeks to do the needful. Let the affidavit in that behalf be filed on or before October 31," the bench said.

The top court was hearing the pleas, including the one filed by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay who has said sections 2, 3, 4 of the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991 be set aside on grounds including that these provisions take away the right of judicial remedy to reclaim a place of

The 1991 provision is an Act to prohibit conversion of any place of worship and to provide for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed August 15, 1947 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto

worship of any person or a religious group.

During the hearing, senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for Upadhyay, told the bench his plea challenges the validity of certain provisions of the Act and that he has circulated a set of questions of law which requires consideration in this case.

The apex court said the counsel appearing in the matter may give questions which according to them would require consideration by the court. While hearing the matter September 9, the apex court had said the pleas challenging the validity of certain provisions of the 1991 law can be referred to a five-judge constitution bench for adjudication and asked the Centre to file a reply.

The 1991 provision is an Act to prohibit conversion of any place of worship and to provide for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.



HC quashes FIRs against Bagga, Kumar Vishwas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Oct 12: The Punjab and Haryana High Court Wednesday quashed two separate FIRs registered against BJP's Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga and former AAP leader Kumar Vishwas by the Punjab Police over their statements against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.

Giving a clean chit to the two leaders, the court observed that there cannot be any democracy without freedom of choice and free speech.



SC ASKS AWBI TO SUBMIT DATA ON DOG BITES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Supreme Court Wednesday directed the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) to submit data on dog bites in the last seven years across the country and the steps taken to check such incidents.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and J K Maheshwari directed the AWBI to file an affidavit mentioning the details and also indicate whether it would like the court to lay the guidelines.

It also clarified that its 2015 order does not prohibit the authorities or individuals including registered societies from approaching high



The top court had earlier said a balance has to be maintained between the safety of people and animal rights, and suggested those who feed stray dogs could be made responsible for vaccinating them

courts or jurisdictional courts. "We do not think it is the intent

of this court in the said order that all writ petitions or proceedings be-

fore HCs, civil courts and authorities should come to a standstill and no effective orders

can be passed by HCs in cases pertaining to stray dogs," the bench said. The top court

had earlier said a balance has to be maintained between the safety of people and animal rights, and suggested those who

feed stray dogs could be made responsible for vaccinating them and bearing the cost of treatment if somebody is attacked by the animal.

The apex court has been hearing a batch of petitions on issues relating to orders passed by various civic bodies on the culling of stray dogs which have become a menace, especially in Kerala and Mumbai.

Some NGOs and individual petitioners have moved the apex court against the decisions of some high courts, including the Bombay High Court and Kerala High Court, to allow municipal authorities to deal with the menace of stray dogs as per the rules.

Opposition parties in Punjab - Congress, SAD and the BJP - said it was a "huge embarrassment" for AAP convener Kejriwal and Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and a "serious indictment" against the way Punjab Police was functioning under AAP's rule.

Elated with the ruling, Bagga termed it as the "victory of truth" and the "defeat of Kejriwal" while Vishwas advised Punjab Chief Minister Mann to protect the self-respect of Punjab from narrow-minded people.

Justice Anoop Chitkara said that the court's non-interference in Vishwas' case would result in a miscarriage of justice, while the continuation of criminal proceedings against Bagga shall amount to an abuse of the process of law.

international

of the day quote

When it comes to technology, the politically motivated actions of the Chinese state is an increasingly urgent problem we must acknowledge and address

JEREMY FLEMING | DIRECTOR, GCHQ

I have seen again even in the last year how much progress we have made just in the last few weeks. We have had two major exercises in Australia where the Indian military has participated

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

The economies of ASEAN countries depend heavily on micro, small and medium enterprises, led by women. Within the ASEAN framework at present and in the future, women will continue to play a significant role

HUN SEN | PM, CAMBODIA

SHORT TAKES

14 nations elected into UNHRC

United Nations: The UN General Assembly has elected 14 countries into the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to succeed outgoing members. Through secret ballot Tuesday, Algeria, Morocco, South Africa, Sudan (for Africa); Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Vietnam (for the Asia-Pacific); Georgia, Romania (for Eastern Europe); Chile, Costa Rica (for Latin America and the Caribbean); Belgium, Germany (for Western Europe and other states), were elected for a three-year term beginning January 1, 2023, reports Xinhua news agency. Of the 14 states, Sudan and Germany were elected for a consecutive second term.

Russia's FSB nabs 8 for Crimea blast

Moscow: Russia's Federal Security Service said Wednesday that it had detained five Russians and three citizens of Ukraine and Armenia in connection with the bombing of a vital bridge to Crimea, an attack it said was masterminded by Ukraine. The FSB said the attack was organised by Ukrainian military intelligence and its director, Kyrlyo Budanov - echoing accusations by President Vladimir Putin over what he has called a "terrorist attack" against critical civilian infrastructure.

Suu Kyi's prison term extended

Bangkok: A court in military-ruled Myanmar convicted the country's ousted leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, on two more corruption charges Wednesday, with two three-year sentences to be served concurrently, adding to previous convictions that now leave her with a 26-year total prison term, a legal official said. Suu Kyi, 77, was detained on February 1, 2021, when the military seized power from her elected government. She has denied the allegations against her in this case, in which she was accused of receiving \$550,000 as a bribe from Maung Weik, a tycoon convicted of drug trafficking.

Nigeria floods kill 500; 1.4mn moved

Abuja: About 500 people have died in Nigeria's worst floods in a decade and 1.4 million others been displaced from their homes since the start of the rainy season, the government said. Floods caused by abundant rains and poor infrastructure have affected vast swathes of Africa's most populous country spark fears they could worsen food insecurity and inflation.



Pakistan alone cannot accomplish the task to rehabilitate the affected population, it needs huge resources and quick action. The World Bank estimated losses of \$40 billion but more may be required

JULIEN HARNIES | HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR, UN

477 WHALES DIE IN NZ STRANDINGS

Some 477 pilot whales have died after stranding themselves on two remote New Zealand beaches over recent days, officials say. None of the stranded whales could be refloated and all either died naturally or were euthanised in a "heartbreaking" loss, said Daren Grover



China reports new 'highly infectious' Covid variants

BF7 (also known as BA.2.75.2) and BA.5.1.7 is a sub-lineage of the Covid Omicron variant BA.5.2.1 and is considered to be highly infectious with greater transmissibility

which are highly infectious with greater transmissibility. According to local reports, the BF7 was detected October 4 in Yantai and Shaoguan city. The sub-variant BA.5.1.7 was detected in the Chinese mainland for the first time, as reported by Global Times. The World Health Organisation (WHO) had warned against the highly infectious BF7 subvariant. Meanwhile, holiday spending during China's Golden Week has plunged to its lowest level in seven years, as broad Covid curbs discouraged people from travelling or spending, while a darkening economic outlook continues to erode consumer confidence.



For local officials, doubling down on zero-Covid is a way to toe the Party line, demonstrate their loyalty to President Xi Jinping, and prevent any large-scale outbreak that could jeopardise their career weeks before the

New wave likely in Europe: WHO

Another wave of Covid-19 infections may have begun in Europe as cases begin to tick up across the region, the World Health Organization and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) said Wednesday. "Although we are not where we were one year ago, it is clear that the Covid-19 pandemic is still not over," WHO's Europe director, Hans Kluge, and ECDC's director, Andrea Ammon, said in a joint statement. "We are unfortunately seeing indicators rising again in Europe, suggesting that another wave of infections has begun." WHO's region-wide data showed that only Europe recorded a rise in Covid-19 cases in the week ended October 2, clocking an increase of 8% from the prior week.

Party Congress. New Covid cases are spiking across mainland China, prompting many local authorities to tighten controls on movement. Three of Shanghai's downtown districts Monday ordered entertainment venues such as internet cafes to close temporarily, according to official announcements.

AFTER RUSSIAN STRIKES

Ukraine gets new air defenses from allies



Russian air attacks killed 19 people in Ukraine, wounded more than 100 Tuesday and knocked out power supplies across the country, adding new urgency to Kyiv's long-standing calls for air defenses to protect its cities

REUTERS

Brussels, Oct 12: Ukraine's allies announced delivery of new air defenses and recommitted to providing it robust, enduring military assistance at a meeting at NATO headquarters Wednesday, saying Russian missile strikes two days ago only further united them. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, sitting next to his Ukrainian counterpart, opened the gathering of more than 50 countries by condemning Russian President Vladimir Putin's deadly missile attacks against "targets with no military purpose" across Ukraine. "The whole world has just seen yet again the malice and cruelty of Putin's war of choice, rooted in aggression and waged with deep contempt for the rules of war," Austin told the gathering, sitting next to Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov. "But Russia's latest assaults have only deepened the determination of the Ukrainian people and further united countries of goodwill from

Ukraine's N-plant loses external power

Ukraine's biggest nuclear plant, which is surrounded by Russian troops, has lost all external power needed for vital safety systems for the second time in five days, the head of the UN's nuclear watchdog said Wednesday, calling it a "deeply worrying development." The warning from International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Grossi came amid a flurry of developments in Russia's war in Ukraine. Ukraine's military command said its forces recaptured five settlements in the southern Kherson region, and Russia's main domestic security agency said eight people had been arrested in connection with the weekend Crimea bridge blast.

every region on Earth." NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg called Russia's missile attacks a sign of weakness, after weeks of Ukrainian gains that have set off rare criticism inside Russia of its war effort. "The reality is that they're not able to make progress on the battlefield. Russia is actually losing on the battlefield," Stoltenberg said. Germany announced that the first of four IRIS-T air defense systems had reached Ukraine. German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht called it a "very important support for Ukraine in the fight against missile attacks".

ENERGY CRISIS

Putin blames Europe

The impact of efforts to use less Russian energy, plus steep cuts in supplies from Russia, have been felt across the 27-nation EU, with gas prices almost 90% higher than a year ago and fears of rationing and power cuts over the coming winter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Warsaw, Oct 12: Russia's president said Europe was to blame for its energy crisis with policies that starved the oil and gas industry of investment and said price caps would make it worse, as EU states tried to forge a deal on ways to contain soaring energy costs. Worries about the security of energy supplies were heightened Wednesday when a leak in Poland on the Druzhba pipeline from Russia reduced the flow of oil to Germany. Poland said the leak was probably caused by an accident but it came as European Union nations are seeking to wean themselves off a reliance on Russian energy in response to the invasion of Ukraine in February. The Nord Stream gas link that serves Germany is currently out of action after a leak last month that both Russia and the West have blamed on sabotage, without identifying who was behind it. President Vladimir Putin said the leaks in the two Nord Stream pipelines running from Russia to Europe were an "act of international terrorism" and about depriving people of cheap energy. Putin said gas could still be supplied by one intact part of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline but it was up to the EU whether or not it wanted the gas. Germany cancelled the Nord Stream 2 project after Russia sent troops into Ukraine. Speaking at an energy forum in Russia, Putin said Russia was not



GERMANS, DUTCH TRY TO BREAK EU IMPASSE
PUTIN SAYS RUSSIA NOT TO BLAME FOR HIGH ENERGY PRICES
OIL PIPE LEAK IN POLAND SEEN AS ACCIDENT

The act of sabotage of the Nord Stream 1 and 2 is an act of international terrorism aimed at undermining energy security of the entire continent by blocking supplies of cheap energy. The US wants to force Europe to switch to importing more expensive liquefied natural gas

VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

to blame for the sky-high energy prices in Europe. PRAGUE TALKS EU energy ministers were meeting in Prague Wednesday to try to agree new measures to tackle the crisis. Most EU countries say they want a gas price cap, but disagree on its design. Some countries, including Germany, Europe's biggest gas market, remain opposed, arguing it risks choking off supplies. Germany and the Netherlands put forward their own proposals before Wednesday's meeting in the Czech capital - suggesting 10 "no-regret" EU measures, including a new benchmark price for liquefied natural gas, tougher targets to save

Kremlin scolds West for nuclear rhetoric

London: The Kremlin Wednesday scolded Western leaders for engaging in "provocative" nuclear rhetoric after a series of warnings from Russia, the United States and NATO on the dangers of escalating the Ukraine conflict into a nuclear war. President Vladimir Putin September 21 warned the West he was not bluffing when he said he would be ready to use nuclear weapons to defend Russia against what he said was "nuclear blackmail" from major Western powers. US President Joe Biden, who has cautioned that the world faced the biggest risk of nuclear Armageddon since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, said he doubted that Putin would use a tactical nuclear weapon in Ukraine. "We express our daily regret that Western heads of state, in the United States and Europe, engage in nuclear rhetoric every day," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said of Biden's interview to CNN. "We consider this a very harmful and provocative practice," Peskov said.

gas, and negotiating lower prices with other suppliers, such as Norway SUPPLY FEARS Across Europe, analysts have put the gas supply shortfall at almost 15% of average winter demand and said Germany needed to cut energy consumption by around a fifth, with worrying implications for Europe's biggest economy whose industry has relied on abundant, affordable energy supplies. The energy crisis has had knock-on effects across the whole of Europe as businesses have passed on extra costs, squeezing household budgets. Governments are also trying to figure out how to fund emergency measures taken to protect customers and smooth out the distortions caused by the surge in prices. EU member Portugal plans to inject 3 billion euros (\$2.9 billion) into its electricity and natural gas systems to curb prices paid by companies next year.

Iran anti-hijab stirs: Over 100 protestors charged

Tehran: Iran has charged more than 100 people in two provinces over the wave of protests triggered by the death in custody last month of Mahsa Amini, the judiciary said Wednesday. Protests erupted across Iran September 16, when Amini died three days after falling into a coma following her arrest in Tehran by the morality police for an alleged breach of the Islamic republic's strict dress code for women. Police have made hundreds of arrests and prosecutors vowed swift justice for "rioters". Tehran province accounted for 60 of the prosecutions while 65 people have been charged over the "recent riots" in the southern province of Hormozgan, the judiciary's Mizan Online news website reported. "Given that the rioters played a central role in the organisation of illegal gatherings, arson and attacks on public and private property, and sowed terror among the population, the prosecutor has carried out swift investigations in these cases," Hormozgan chief justice Mojtaba Ghahremani told Mizan Online.

OPEC+ oil cut

Biden vows 'consequences' for Saudis

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Oct 12: President Joe Biden said Tuesday there will be "consequences" for Saudi Arabia as the Riyadh-led OPEC+ alliance moves to cut oil production and Democratic lawmakers call for a freeze on cooperation with the Saudis. Biden suggested he would soon take action as aides announced that the administration is reeval-

uating its relationship with the kingdom in light of the oil production cut that White House officials say will help another OPEC+ member, Russia, pad its coffers as it continues its nearly eight-month war in Ukraine. Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut and Rep. Ro Khanna of California introduced legislation that would immediately pause all US arms sales to Saudi Arabia for one year.



This pause would also halt sales of spare and repair parts, support services and logistical support. But it remains to be seen how far Biden is willing to go in showing his displeasure with the Saudis, a

vital but complicated ally in the Middle East. Biden came into office vowing to recalibrate the US relationship because of Saudi Arabia's human rights record but then paid a visit to the kingdom earlier this year. Biden said in a CNN interview he would look to consult with Congress on the way forward, but stopped short of endorsing the Democratic lawmakers' call to halt weapons sales.

Xi set to rewind China's clock back to 'one leader rule' of Mao era

The outcome of the in-camera Party Congress is expected to end two very strict five-year term limits followed by Xi's predecessors to avert the danger of the one party state becoming a country with a single leader dominating the political scene

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Oct 12: China's ruling Communist Party is set to slide back to its founder Mao Zedong's era soon as President Xi Jinping is set to break the decades-old 10-year term rule to cling in power and perhaps for life, amid mounting pressure from the US-led West against Beijing's aggressive quest to become a dominant world power. On Sunday, 2,966 delegates "elected"

under the ideological parameters set by 69-year-old Xi, will attend the carefully-choreographed Communist Party's once-in-a-five-year Congress which is widely expected to endorse his continuation in power. In the century-old history of the CPC, Mao remained at the helm until his death in 1976, ruling the most populous country and subjecting it to his ideological experiments like the Cultural Revolution during which millions of intellectuals were



exterminated and wiped out much of the country's civilisational past to create a new socialist order. Mao's mercurial leadership was marked by brutal campaigns to purge the remnants of the capitalists and traditional elements from society and implement his

brand of Communism called Mao Zedong Thought. It ended up disastrously driving the communist nation to near bankruptcy. Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping, who earned the title of Paramount Leader for his sedate and pragmatic leadership putting the coun-

try on the path of economic development reversing Mao's hardline policies, introduced the collective leadership system with a ten-year term limit and 68-year age limit to avoid the ills of the one leader domination of the party. The 12th Congress of the CPC back in 1982 under the leadership of Deng set China's political and ideological direction for the next 35 years. The same Congress set a new ideological direction for the party giving high priority to economic development through market reforms and opening to the world. The 1982 Congress also resolved formally to repudiate Mao's personality cult, absolute power and leadership-for-life and restore the principles of collective party lead-

ership, including an evolving convention of term limits. Since then, all of Xi's predecessors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao followed the 10-year norm. Incidentally, China recorded extraordinary economic growth during their tenures, propelling it to become the second-largest economy after the US. Over three and half decades later, the party which controls all limbs of governance including the military, the judiciary and legislature are in the cusp of returning to the 'One Leader' rule amid its toughest period of economic slowdown exasperated by the 'Zero Covid' policy, increasing adversity with the US and the West besides uneasy relations with neighbours like India and Japan.

business

of the day quote

And my message to the funds involved and all the firms involved managing those funds. You've got three days left now. You've got to get this done. Scramble for cash

ANDREW BAILEY | GOVERNOR, BOE

I've heard this from others as well. They (startups) are moving to Singapore, they're moving to the UAE. Well, if they want to talk to the Government of India and say, look, we were moving to Singapore, but if we were to do this, we would be quite happy to be here

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

I am glad to announce today that in November ahead of the G20 meetings, I will take my first trip to India as Treasury Secretary, to attend the US-India Economic and Financial Partnership, our ninth partnership meeting

JANET YELLEN | TREASURY SECRETARY, US

SHORT TAKES

Wipro net profit drops 9.3% in Q2

New Delhi: IT services major Wipro Ltd Wednesday reported a 9.3 per cent drop in its September quarter net profit, weighed down by rising staff expenses and lower non-US earnings. Profit attributable to equity shareholders of the company was 9.3 per cent lower at ₹2,659 crore, the company said in a statement. The company had reported a consolidated net profit of ₹2,930.6 crore in the same period a year back. However, on a sequential basis, profit rose 3.72 per cent in the quarter under review, from ₹2,563.6 crore in the previous June quarter.

Adani gets licence for telecom sector

Mumbai: Adani Data Networks Limited is set to kick-start private captive network services as it is learnt to have been granted unified licence for access services. Sources said that the department of telecom has given Adani Data Networks a unified licence in six circles. Adani Group had signalled its intent of entering the telecom sector after it bought 5G spectrum during the recently held auction. After acquiring 5G spectrum, the Adani Group had said that it intends to use it for its data centres and also for the super app it is building to support its forays into various sectors like airport, power and energy sector among others.

Intel plans major layoffs in Oct

New Delhi: Chip-maker Intel is reportedly planning job cuts that can run in thousands, especially hitting its sales and marketing teams, as consumer PC sales nosedive globally. Bloomberg reported Wednesday that the layoffs will affect nearly 20 per cent of team members at its hit sales and marketing teams. The cuts will be announced "as early as this month," around the same time as Intel's third-quarter earnings report October 27.

PVR shareholders okay INOX merger

New Delhi: Multiplex operator PVR Wednesday said it has received the nod from its shareholders for the scheme of merger with rival Inox Leisure. The leading cinema exhibitor convened a meeting of its shareholders Tuesday following the directions of the Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal. The proposal was passed by over 99 per cent of the number of valid votes cast.



25% of the global energy demand growth in the next two decades is going to emanate out of India

HARDEEP PURI | PETROLEUM MINISTER

APPLE, SAMSUNG 5G UPDATE BY DEC

Apple Inc and Samsung Electronics will upgrade software for their 5G-enabled phones in India by December, the companies said Wednesday, as Indian authorities press mobile phone manufacturers to adopt the high-speed network



IMF projects India's debt ratio to be 84% of GDP by end of '22



According to official data released last month, the central government's fiscal deficit touched 32.6% of the annual target in the current financial year till August as against 31.1% recorded a year ago. In actual terms, the fiscal deficit -- the difference between expenditure and revenue -- was ₹5,41,601 crore during the April-August period of this financial year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Oct 12: India's debt ratio is projected to be 84 per cent of its GDP by the end of 2022, which is higher than many emerging economies, but its debt is a little bit easier to sustain, a senior IMF official has said.

Stressing that it is important for India to now have a very clear medium-term objective on the fiscal, Paolo Mauro, Deputy Director, Fiscal Affairs Department, International Monetary Fund, said there's still not a whole lot of clarity on the fiscal anchor.

It would be very important to give reassurance to people and to investors that things are under control, and things are going to become less vulnerable over time, Mauro, told PTI in an interview. "In terms of the debt ratio, India right now at the end of 2022, we're projecting it at about 84 per cent of GDP. That is higher than in many emerging economies," he said. "Of course, India has a lot of special features being the most populous country in the world by now and being a very large, emerging economy," he said.

"The other things that are special in a way or distinctive compared with other emerging economies are that most of India's debt is in non-indexed domestic currency and there's a large investor base from India. So those are good features to have and that's

India-UK trade deal on 'verge of collapse' over visa comments

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Oct 12: The India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) is reportedly on the "verge of collapse" after the Indian government was angered by comments made by UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman questioning action over visa overstayers from the country, a UK media report claimed Wednesday.

"The Times' newspaper quoted government sources to say that ministers in New Delhi were "shocked and disappointed" by the "disrespectful" remarks made by Braverman, who said she had concerns of an "open borders" offer to India as part of an FTA.

The likelihood of meeting the Diwali deadline for the pact, set by former Prime Minister Boris Johnson, is now believed to be diminishing.

"There's still a lot of goodwill but if certain individuals are still embedded in the [UK] government it will paralyse the talks," the newspaper quoted a source as saying. Last week, Braverman, the Indian-origin Home Secretary said in an interview that she feared a trade deal with India would increase migration to the UK when Indians already represented the largest group of visa overstayers.

"I have concerns about having an open borders migration policy with India because I don't think that's what people voted for with Brexit," she told "The Spectator" weekly news magazine.

Meanwhile Prime Minister Liz Truss's spokesman said Britain still wants to agree a free trade deal with India by Diwali later this month.

Asked if the government still wanted a trade deal by this date, the spokesman said: "Yes, we are working on this high ambition free trade deal that would put the UK at the front of the queue to supply India's growing middle class."

IMF noted that the fiscal deficit is about 10% of the GDP right now

Another good thing for India is that growth is traditionally very high

The rollover, the necessity to borrow every year is very significant. It's about 15 per cent of the GDP. So, in some ways, the debt vulnerabilities are something that one needs to keep an eye on and be mindful of the fiscal deficit

PAOLO MAURO | DEPUTY DIRECTOR (FISCAL AFFAIRS), IMF

what makes this debt a little bit easier to sustain," Mauro said.

He noted that the fiscal deficit is about 10 per cent of the GDP right now. "That is quite a bit higher than in most emerging economies. About six-and-a-half per cent of the GDP is from the central government the rest is from the states," he said.

"I think, given the global conjuncture and country-specific circumstances, inflation is a little bit on the high side... Looking at all of those things, it makes sense to reduce the deficit, and to bring down the debt gradually over time," Mauro said.

"Another good thing for India is that growth is traditionally very high. That helps maintain that ratio at a stable level, maybe even bring it down if growth continues to be very strong. But without a reduction in the fiscal deficit, it would be difficult to, on the one hand, keep inflation in check and on the other hand, also reduce the debt ratio," he said.

Mauro said that it was necessary to reduce the deficit as well.

Responding to a question, Mauro said India has a very good information system that allows better distribution of cash transfers than in many other countries, including some advanced economies.

"One area where I would recommend a reform would be for example, the fuel taxes," he said. "It would be advisable for the fuel excise tax cuts to be reversed," he added.

DOUBLE WHAMMY

INFLATION SURGES TO 7.4%, FACTORY OUTPUT SHRINKS

Inflation has been above the targeted zone for the ninth month in a row and as per statute, the RBI will now have to explain to the government in writing why it failed to keep prices below 6%. Since April 2022, the RBI has increased the interest rate by 190 bps in a bid to dampen demand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: In twin blows to Indian economic revival, higher food prices drove retail inflation to a five-month high of 7.4 per cent while factory output fell for the first time in 18 months.

The second consecutive month of rise in consumer price index (CPI)-based inflation will add to the pressure on the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to again raise interest rates to tame high prices.

Headline CPI inflation surged to 7.4 per cent in September from 7 per cent in the previous month, official data released Wednesday showed.

Higher inflation was led by food items. Food inflation surged to a 22-month high of 8.6 per cent while core inflation rose to a 4-month high of 6.3 per cent. This is the second successive quarter where the average is higher than 7 per cent.

Irregular rainfall is said to be the primary reason behind higher inflation in vegetable and fruits. While inflation in cereals has also inched up, the steps taken by the

- Retail inflation rises to a five-month high
- Food inflation surged to a 22-month high
- Core inflation rose to a 4-month high
- Factory output fell for first time in 18 months



government and a reasonably healthy Kharif output are expected to address the concerns behind the further hike in prices.

Separately, the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) declined 0.8 per cent in August with heavy rains dampening construction activity and electricity demand, and the bleak manufacturing output belying the hope generated by the robust GST e-way bill data.

Official data released by National Statistical Office (NSO) Wednesday showed that the retail inflation based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) was at 7.41 per cent in September as against 7 per cent in August. In year ago same month, it was at a comfortable level of 4.35 per cent.

IIP contracted by 0.8 per cent in August, mainly due to a decline in output of the manufacturing and mining sectors. Official data showed that the previous low in industrial output growth was a contraction of 3.2 per cent in February 2021.

Factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), had expanded by 13 per cent in August 2021. The IIP grew by 2.2 per cent in July this year.

The manufacturing sector

shrank by 0.7 per cent in August 2022 compared to the 11.1 per cent growth recorded in the year-ago period, as per the data released by the Statistics and Programme Implementation Ministry.

The power sector showed a growth of 1.4 per cent against a 16 per cent rise a year ago. The mining sector witnessed a contraction of 3.9 per cent in August 2022, whereas there was a growth of 23.3 per cent in the year-ago period.

During April-August this year, IIP rose 7.7 per cent against 29 per cent growth in the same period a year ago. Capital goods output, which is a barometer of investments, rose five per cent in August 2022 compared to 20 per cent growth in the year-ago month.

The consumer durables segment declined 2.5 per cent from 11.1 per cent growth a year ago. The primary goods segment, which accounts for nearly 34 per cent of the index, expanded 1.7 per cent in August compared to 16.9 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

The ministry said the growth rates over the corresponding period of the previous year are to be interpreted, considering the unusual circumstances on account of the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020.

LPG LOSSES

One-time grant of ₹22K-cr to oil PSUs

BETWEEN JUNE 2020 TO JUNE 2022, THE INTERNATIONAL PRICES OF LPG SOARED BY AROUND 300%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The government will extend a one-time grant of ₹22,000 crore to three state-owned fuel retailers to cover for the losses they incurred on selling domestic cooking gas LPG below cost in the last two years, I&B Minister Anurag Thakur said Wednesday.

The Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a meeting Wednesday, approved the one-time grant to three oil marketing companies - Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL), Thakur told a news briefing.

The grant will be for covering the



losses they incurred on selling LPG below cost to consumers from June 2020 to June 2022. The three firms sell domestic LPG at government-regulated prices to consumers.

However, to insulate consumers from fluctuations in international LPG prices, the cost increase was not fully passed on to consumers of domestic LPG, an official statement said. Accordingly, domestic LPG prices have risen by only 72 per cent during this period, it said adding this led to significant losses for the three firms.

"Despite these losses, the three PSU OMCs have ensured contin-

uous supplies of this essential cooking fuel in the country. The government has therefore decided to give a one-time grant to the three PSU OMCs for these losses in domestic LPG," it said.

The Union Cabinet approved a one-time grant amounting to ₹22,000 crore to the three oil marketing companies (OMCs).

"This decision will help the PSU OMCs to continue their commitment to the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan, ensuring unhindered domestic LPG supplies and also supporting the procurement of Make in India products."

Stellantis inaugurates software hub in India

REUTERS

Milan, Oct 12: Carmaker Stellantis said Wednesday it had inaugurated a new software hub in Bangalore, India, its second innovation centre in the country, focusing on cockpit and driver assistance technologies.

Software is increasingly crucial in modern vehicles and a growing source of revenue, with carmakers expanding research investments and hiring more executives with specific experience to offer clients more features driven by connectivity, data and e-commerce.

Stellantis aims to generate 20 billion euros (\$19.4 billion) in additional annual revenues by 2030 from its software-driven strategy. The new facility in India will be the main development centre for one of the three technology platforms Stellantis will start deploying in 2024, the STLA SmartCockpit, focusing on digitally integrating vehicles and drivers, the group said in a statement.

Stellantis, the world's fourth largest carmaker, is present in the Indian market with its Jeep and Citroen brands.

1ST TO BREACH ₹6 TRILLION MARK

SBI becomes largest home loan provider

TO MARK THE OCCASION, THE BANK ALSO ANNOUNCED A FESTIVE OFFER FOR HOME LOAN BUYERS, OFFERING UP TO 25 BPS DISCOUNT ON INTEREST RATE STARTING AT 8.40% AND ALSO THE WAIVER OF THE PROCESSING FEE TILL JAN 31, 2023

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 12: The nation's largest lender State Bank of India said it has surpassed the ₹6-lakh-crore mark, making it the largest in the



industry.

To mark the occasion, the bank also announced a festive offer for home loan buyers, offering up to 25 bps discount on interest rate starting at 8.40 per cent and also the waiver of the processing fee till January 31, 2023. The lower interest will also be applicable to balance transfers.

The bank had crossed the ₹5 lakh crore mark in January 2021, the bank said in a statement, adding it is the first lender to achieve the ₹6 lakh crore milestone in the residential home category.

loans begin at 8.80 per cent.

State Bank of India did not offer details such as the credit score conditions or the ticket size of the loan to avail of the lower rates. It further said the festive offer also includes waiver of the processing fees, balance transfers/takeovers and top-up loans.

Meanwhile, the largest pure-play mortgage player HDFC, which is awaiting its merger with its banking subsidiary HDFC Bank, said it's also offering discounted interest rates to new borrowers to the tune of 20 bps or at 8.40 per cent.

According to HDFC website, the festive offer is valid up to November 30, and the low rate will be applicable to those borrowers who have a minimum credit score of 750.

Leading banks and mortgage players have increased their lending rates by up to 0.50 percentage point after the Reserve Bank of India last raised its repo rate by 50 bps to tame inflation.

Chinese 'flying car' makes first public flight in Dubai

REUTERS

Dubai, Oct 12: A "flying car" built by Chinese electronic vehicle maker Xpeng Inc made its first public flight in the United Arab Emirates, as the company works towards launching the electric aircraft on international markets.

The X2 is a two-seater electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft that is lifted by eight propellers - two at each corner of the vehicle. The company says it has a top speed of 130 km (80 miles) per hour.

The unmanned, 90-minute test flight in Dubai was described by its manufacturer as an "important base for the next generation of flying cars."

"We are making step-by-step (moves) to the international market," said Minguan Qiu, general manager of Xpeng Aeroht. "First we selected Dubai city because Dubai is the most innovative city in the world."



The demonstration was held with an empty cockpit, but the company says it carried out a manned flight test in July 2021.

Unlike airplanes and helicopters, eVTOL, or "electric vertical takeoff and landing," vehicles offer quick point-to-point personal travel, at least in principle.

The pilot-less vehicles could one day ferry passengers across town high above congested roadways. But the sector still faces major challenges, including battery life, air traffic control and safety, and infrastructure issues.

Relief despite disappointment

MBAPPE SCORES IN PSG'S DRAW WITH BENFICA AS REPORTS SWIRL; MAN CITY, REAL MADRID ADVANCE IN SPITE OF STALEMATES IN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rome, Oct 12: Happy or not, Kylian Mbappe continues to score goals for Paris Saint-Germain. Manchester City, meanwhile, just isn't the same without Erling Haaland.

Still, City — despite a 0-0 draw at FC Copenhagen — joined holder Real Madrid Tuesday as the first teams to advance to the knockout phase of the Champions League.

On the same day when reports emerged that Mbappe is frustrated at PSG and wants to leave during the January transfer window, the France striker converted a penalty in a 1-1 draw with Benfica. It was Mbappe's record 31st goal for PSG in the competition, passing Edinson Cavani for the club record.

Mbappe had been close to joining Real Madrid on a free transfer this summer but finally agreed to stay at PSG for two more years with an option for an extra season. The 23-year-old Frenchman celebrated his latest goal by holding his arms out wide and rushing toward the stands at Parc de Princes — with no outward sign of discontent.

Mbappe also had an acrobatic potential late winner waved off by the VAR, leaving PSG level on points

with Benfica atop Group H.

CITY STOPPED

With Haaland rested, 10-man City was held to a 0-0 draw at FC Copenhagen, a team languishing in the bottom half of the Danish league. Copenhagen became the first team to stop City from scoring this season in a match overshadowed by early video-review decisions.

One of those VAR calls resulted in a red card for City left back Sergio Gomez in the 30th minute for pulling back Hakon Haraldsson as the last man, harming the visitors attacking ambitions at the atmospheric Parken Stadium.

Still, City lead Group G with 10 points, followed by Borussia Dortmund (7), Sevilla (2) and Copenhagen (2). City, like Madrid, has advanced with two rounds of matches still remaining in the group phase.

RUDIGER TO THE RESCUE

Antonio Rudiger had his face bloodied as he scored a stoppage-time equalizer for Madrid in a 1-1 draw with Shakhtar Donetsk. Also, Timo Werner scored his first Champions League goal since returning to Leipzig to help secure a 2-0 win at Celtic. Madrid lead Group F with 10 points, followed by Leipzig (6), Shakhtar (5) and Celtic (1).



IN LIMELIGHT AGAIN: Kylian Mbappe celebrates his goal against Benfica on a day — Tuesday — when reports came out that the France striker is unhappy at PSG

SURGING CHELSEA

Chelsea was at the bottom of Group E but two straight victories over Serie A champion AC Milan has seen it move into pole position to progress to the round of 16.

Chelsea moved to the top of the group on a 2-0 win at Milan, which played most of the match

with 10 men after former Blues defender Fikayo Tomori was sent off in the 18th minute after also giving away a penalty.

Jorginho converted the spot kick and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang doubled the visitors' advantage in the 34th. Chelsea moved a point above Salzburg, which drew 1-1 at

Dinamo Zagreb in the other Group E match. Milan and Dinamo are three points below Chelsea.

JUVENTUS CRISIS

Juventus descended further into crisis and was left on the verge of elimination from the Champions League following a 2-0 loss at Maccabi Haifa that also included an injury to key winger Angel Di Maria.

Omer Atzili scored two first-half goals as Haifa earned their first Champions League win in two decades. Juventus were left third in Group H behind PSG and Benfica with two games to play.

BELLINGHAM'S CONSISTENCY

At 19, England midfielder Jude Bellingham has scored in all four of Dortmund's Champions League games this season. Young players took center stage as Sevilla took the lead with a header from 20-year-old defender Tanguy Nianzou before Bellingham knocked in Thomas Meunier's low cross for a 1-1 draw.

Only Haaland (5 goals) and Mbappe (4) have scored more Champions League goals this season. Bellingham also became the highest-scoring English teenager in a single Champions League season, overtaking Wayne Rooney's record of three goals in 2004-05.

India not up to USA standards: Dennerby

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: India head coach Thomas Dennerby admitted that his team was no match to the USA after they suffered a 0-8 humiliation in their FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup opener but insisted that the home team is capable of playing better.

Dennerby had claimed that India can compete against any team in the age-group showpiece, his comment coming on the basis of the close game (1-3 loss) the team played against Sweden, who failed to qualify for the showpiece event, in the lead up to the tournament.

"I did not expect to let in so many goals because defending has been quite good when they played against Sweden two and half weeks ago. We defended very well, we had two shots on the bar and we were creating chances. But honestly USA were one level up even if you compare with Sweden at least," the coach said Tuesday.

Dennerby had earlier said that India had prepared well for the U-17 World Cup. However, during an interaction with media, he said that they haven't played any side of the standard of USA in the lead-up to the showpiece.

"No doubt USA are really a good

side. If you look at the USA players, the skillfulness, their speed and you cannot find any weak point in their team. So far the games we have played earlier this year, no team was up to this level," Dennerby said.

"We have not played against any team which sends in top quality corners and players like six feet tall coming in and jumping very high and heading with top class quality, the Swede added.

He said the Indian team can do better, adding that the players were nervous due to the big occasion. "It was definitely very tough for us. But of course I also know that team India can play a little bit better than this. My feeling is that the girls were a little bit too nervous, could not handle the situation as it was their first World Cup game," he said.

"In the beginning, we did not even try to pass the ball to each other. There was something in the way, not comfortable enough to start playing. I was screaming the girls to start playing.

"After 3-0, it was for USA to just play their game and have fun and it was tough for us. But the good thing is there are two more games to go and I hope we can show everyone that India is much better than this. We can have a much better game than this against Morocco."

Siraj, Shami, Thakur to join team in Australia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: Fast bowlers Mohammed Siraj, Mohammed Shami and Shardul Thakur will join the Indian contingent in Australia soon even as Deepak Chahar has been ruled out of the upcoming T20 World Cup due to a back injury.

Chahar, who was among the stand-by players, was expected to make the main squad in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah but it is understood that his back injury will take time to heal.

"Deepak will take some time to get fit. His back issue has flared up again. His ankle is fine and there wasn't any problem there. So BCCI is sending three reinforcements. Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj and Shardul Thakur," a BCCI official told this agency on conditions of anonymity.

Chahar had competed in the T20 series against South Africa but developed a back issue and was forced to skip the ODI series. He reported to National Cricket Academy

(NCA) for rehabilitation.

It is understood that since the team has time till October 15 to announce Jasprit Bumrah's replacement, the team management has time to check out form and fitness of all three pacers.

Their timely arrival in Australia will also give them time enough to acclimatise to the conditions Down Under. In case their services are required, they will ready for the contest.

Shami with his artistry and experience leads the race but Siraj was excellent in the recently-concluded ODI series against South Africa, where he emerged Player of the Series. Shardul with his all-round abilities will provide cover to Hardik Pandya but most likely he will be in stand-by list.

Ravi Bishnoi and Shreyas Iyer are unlikely to travel for the time being and will only join the team in case the team asks for a batter's reinforcement. Bishnoi will travel in case there is any injury to Yuzvendra Chahal.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Discus thrower Kaur banned

NEW DELHI: Top Indian discus thrower Kamalpreet Kaur, who achieved stardom for her exploits at the Tokyo Games, was Wednesday banned for three years for using prohibited substance stanozolol, the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) has announced. Her ban will be effective from March 29, 2022. Kamalpreet was handed a provisional suspension in May this year after testing positive for the steroid, which was found in her sample that AIU collected at Patiala March 7. Stanozolol is classified as an anabolic steroid and is in the list of banned substances as per World Athletics. Kamalpreet had refused the analysis of her B sample. Kamalpreet had finished sixth at the Tokyo Games in a splendid show with a best throw of 63.70m.

No aid for Djokovic's visa

MELBOURNE: Novak Djokovic won't get official support with lobbying from Tennis Australia should he seek to enter the country for the first major of 2023, a year after he was deported because he was not vaccinated for COVID-19. The 21-time Grand Slam champion wasn't allowed to defend his Australian Open title last January after a tumultuous 10-day legal saga that culminated with his visa being revoked on the eve of the tournament. Djokovic originally was granted an exemption to strict vaccination rules by two medical panels and Tennis Australia in order to play in the Australian Open but, after traveling to Melbourne believing he had all his paperwork in order, the exemption was rejected by the Australian Border Force. "It is not a matter we can lobby on. It is a matter that definitely stays between the two of them," Australian Open tournament director Craig Tiley said Wednesday.

Contrasting fortunes for Odisha

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha men's team suffered a five-wicket loss against Tamil Nadu in their Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 tournament in Lucknow, Wednesday. However, the state eyes registered a 13-run win via VJD method against Nagaland in their Senior Women T20 Trophy match in Bangalore. Batting first, the men's team posted 143/3 courtesy Subhanshu Senapati (65, 53b, 4x4, 3x6) and Anshuman Rath (51, 40b, 6x4, 1x6). T Natarajan (2/32) bowled well for TN. In response, TN rode on Baba Aparajith's unbeaten half century (65 n, 0, 42b, 7x4) to notch up the win with seven balls to spare. Sameer R Mohanty (2/7) bowled well for Odisha. In the women's match, Odisha restricted Nagaland to 62/8 with Rasanara Parvin (3/11) being the best bowler on the day for the state eyes. In reply, Odisha reached 29 for no loss in 7.3 overs before rain forced the umpires to apply VJD method to get the result.

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