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# leisure



## RIHANNA LOVED CINEMATOGRAPHY OF 'EMANCIPATION': WILL SMITH

Will Smith has got a rave review for his latest film 'Emancipation' from none other than Rihanna. "She loved the cinematography and could not get over the look of the film and how it felt", Smith said. "The thing that's great with Black people is they talk to the screen the whole time, so you don't have to ask people's opinion, he added.

## KEKE ANNOUNCES HER PREGNANCY DURING SNL HOSTING DEBUT

Nope star Keke Palmer announced her pregnancy during her opening monologue on Saturday Night Live as she made her hosting debut. The actress flaunted her baby bump on stage for the first time. Keke Palmer is expecting first child with boyfriend Darius Jackson.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You will find some decisions difficult to make, but be intent and resolute. Emotions may put you off rail, but once you have resolved, don't stray from it. Besides, Ganesh advises you to learn to endure setbacks in a mature manner.

**TAURUS**  
Today Ganesh sees you overdoing your aggression, domination bit and urges you to keep your assertiveness in check. This day is not a favourable one for new ventures and undertakings. Don't therefore attempt anything new. Talk pleasantly. Harshness, roughness in your tone is only going to antagonize and alienate valuable friends.

**GEMINI**  
Ganesh advises that while today will be a day filled with a lot of festivity, you still need to guard against getting carried away. You will spend the day socialising with friends and family. You might end up neglecting your household duties in organizing some function or picnic, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
You will make new friends. You will have a jolly time with them, but some worry or tension will nag you. But Ganesh says that all worries will go away by evening, when you relax with friends.

**LEO**  
You will be seized by a desire to do something new for a change today. Your mood will be bright throughout the day. You will be able to achieve success owing to your energy and enthusiasm. The planets are in your favour, hence you can accept the challenges coming your way and prevail over them, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesh predicts that you will be rewarded today for all the good work done earlier. You will prefer to manage things in your own way, rather than taking orders from others. However, Ganesh advises you not to throw your weight around, but to stay calm and composed.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says today is the right day to get closer to your loved one. You will spend the evening with your beloved. Today you will be mentally very energetic too. Make the most of the day.

**SCORPIO**  
Yet another mundane day in your life, as nothing exciting is on the cards. However, be cheerful and keep trying hard to bring in some spice in life. You never know when the planets change their mood and make an exciting future. Keep the hope alive, says Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Your leadership qualities are likely to bag compliments today. As you follow law and order and also make others follow it. You leave no stone unturned to get the work done, and that too systematically. However, make sure you also give them space and freedom to express themselves. It would earn you brownie points, says Ganesh.

**CAPRICORN**  
If at first you don't succeed, try again. Many people underestimate the power of perseverance and patience. But, these qualities will lead you success. Rather than exploding with anger and anxiety, keep your faith in your plans intact, especially when the results are not as per your plans, advises Ganesh. If you fail to do as per the advice, you may spoil your image in the society.

**AQUARIUS**  
You are in for a challenging day today. But, luck is by your side and you will be able to come out of the storm hale and hearty, assures Ganesh. If you are a businessman, you may enter into some major business venture, sign important contracts and take up new projects. It will be an exhausting day, but it will keep you charged up.

**PISCES**  
Your patience and capabilities will be on trial today and will be put to test with every work you undertake. Even simple tasks and common goals will seem hard to achieve and will require a considerable amount of effort to complete.



## Anushka goes all praise for Qala

Mumbai: Actor Anushka Sharma, who is currently working on *Chakda Xpress*, and will soon be releasing the sports biopic on OTT goes all praise about the actress Triptii Dimri. As she is busy juggling between work and personal commitments, the actress caught up with a recent release on Netflix – *Qala*. The film in question features Triptii Dimri in the titular character and it also marks the acting debut of Babil Khan, son of Irrfan Khan.

Anushka Sharma took to Instagram to share her review and opinion about *Qala* and defined it as a true work of art. She posted in her story saying, "A daughters heart-breaking yearning for her

mother's love. *Qala* is a work of art. It's heartbreaking and exhilarating equally. Exhilarating because of the genius of each department that comes through in telling this detailed story and heartbreaking for portraying emotional abuse by an emotionally unstable parent in a way that's never been done before by a film."

*Qala* is a period drama set against the backdrop of 1930s Kolkata and is revolves around the life of a singer and the music industry. The film features Babil Khan and Triptii Dimri as singers.

AGENCIES

## Malaika's way into chhaiyya chhaiyya

Mumbai: Over the years, *Chhaiyya Chhaiyya* has become an iconic song given the heavyweights involved in it - the three aces Mani Ratnam, Gulzar and cinematographer Santosh Sivan, besides Shah Rukh Khan, Farah Khan and of course Malaika Arora.

The opening episode of the show, *Moving In With Malaika* which is the OTT debut of Malaika, will see producer-director-choreographer; Farah Khan, coming over to Malaika's place. During the conversation, talking about the song, Farah says, "You're the 'Chaiyya Chaiyya' girl. But luckily for you some five heroines had refused to climb on the train."

*Chhaiyya Chhaiyya* was shot on top of a moving train. All the actresses had their own reason for not giving their nods to the song.

Farah adds, "Malaika was nowhere on the radar. We had approached Shilpa Shetty Kundra, Shilpa Shirodkar and two or three other people. One feared the prospect of climbing on top of the train, one was not available. Then the makeup person said, 'Malaika is a very good dancer'. When she climbed on top of the train, we were completely curious whether she would pull it off or not. The rest as we know is history." IANS

## Vicky gives verbal nod for high-end warrior film

Mumbai: Actor Vicky Kaushal is the first pick for this biopic which will be a larger-than-life historical character. A source confirmed the developments to Peeping Moon adding, "Laxman Utekar is next making a big-scale warrior film. Having discussed the project with Vicky, talks have been positive so far. Vicky has liked the material and has given the verbal nod, but he will sign the film only after the full narration.

The film is still in the writing process, so it may take a few more months for that to happen. However, based on the preliminary discussions, Vicky is more or less aboard this exciting period drama."

The source continued, "Laxman is bored with doing small-town stories like *Luka Chuppi* and *Mimi*. He wants to make mainstream commercial films now, and this warrior film with Vicky Kaushal is his first attempt towards that. It's kind of a passion project for him, and he wants to mount it on a much bigger scale than any Maddock Films project till date. Laxman and Vicky had a great bond while shooting their first film and are excited to collaborate again on a story they are both equally passionate about."

AGENCIES



## Fatima named PETA's Most Beautiful Vegetarian

MUMBAI: PETA has named Fatima Sana Shaikh its Most Beautiful Vegetarian celebrity. The actress who has won our hearts in movies and series like *Dangal*, *Ludo*, and *Modern Love* among many have won the coveted title along with John Abraham. Time and again, Shaikh has been vocal about several social issues, one of them being helping animals. The star had recently shared pictures of her fostered cats with her 3 million Instagram followers and spoken up for improving animal-care facilities in Mumbai.

Apart from that, the actress recently celebrated National Epilepsy Awareness Month and taught people about epilepsy's causes and symptoms on social media. The actress was highly appreciated for her role in *Modern Love*.

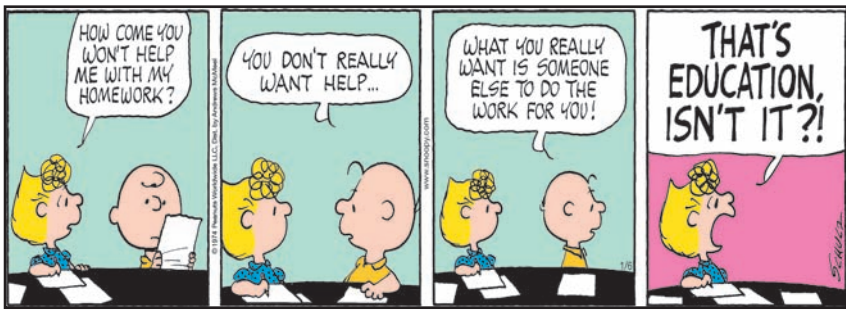
Her story of *Raat Rani* was well received across audience, and got rave reviews. Along with *Sam*

*Bahadur* Fatima Sana Shaikh has an interesting lineup and she will also be seen in *Dhak Dhak*.

AGENCIES



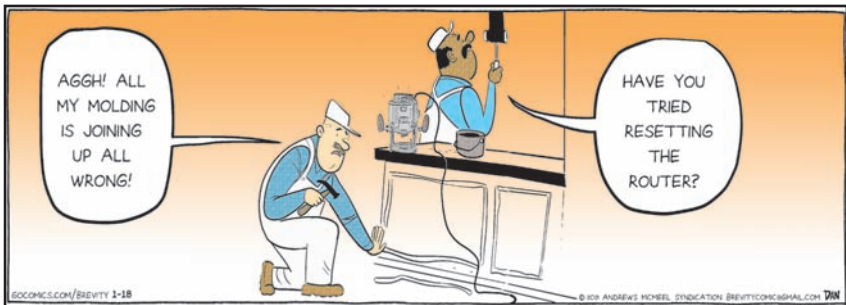
### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

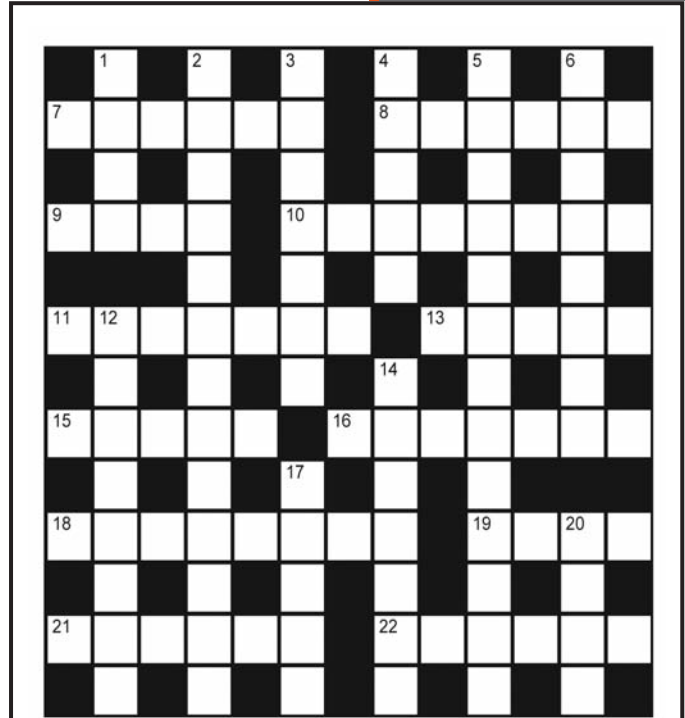


### BREVITY



### FUN post

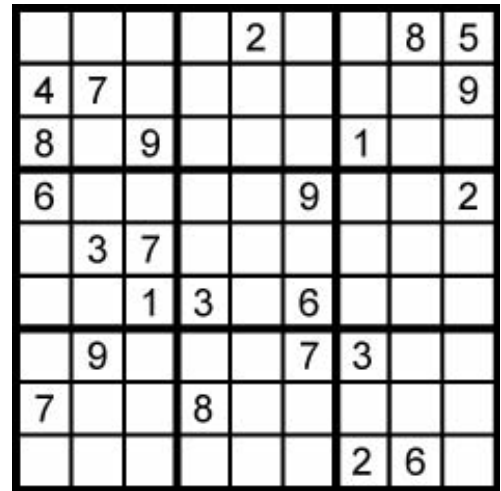
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Scarlett Johansson movie, *The Black \_\_\_*
  - 8 Mistake fixer
  - 9 Radar image
  - 10 Longshoreman
  - 11 Proceeds
  - 13 Cat-like mammal
  - 15 Vascular growth
  - 16 Heathrow, i.e.
  - 18 The one and only (4,4)
  - 19 Physical structure
  - 21 Chin feature, at times
  - 22 Furtive
  - Down**
  - 1 Stake driver
  - 2 Caught in a lie, for instance (8,5)
  - 3 Policeman's command (5,2)
  - 4 Salmon pink
  - 5 ATM (4,9)
  - 6 Greenland caribou
  - 12 Type of upturn or downturn
  - 14 Permit
  - 17 Hotel employee
  - 20 Bakery buy

### 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





## MALAIKA'S MAGIC

Model-actress Malaika Arora makes her way into the hit number 'Chhaiya Chhaiya' by making it look easier

LEISURE



## PAKISTAN SPEAKS OF WAR

Pak Army chief general Asim Munir says if his country is attacked, its armed forces will hit back

INTERNATIONAL



## BANGLA WIN THRILLER

Bangladesh defeat India by one wicket in the 1st ODI of the 3-game series at Mirpur

SPORTS

BACK PAGE

## US-made gun recovered from slain Naxalites



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Malkangiri, Dec 4:** Security forces recovered a US-made weapon following the encounter with Maoists at Perma in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district bordering Malkangiri district, police said Sunday.

Four Naxalites were gunned down by the security forces in the encounter November 26, an official said. At least four weapons were recovered in the operation, of which one was a US-made M1 carbine, he said.

The barrel of the foreign-made weapon is small compared to other assault rifles and it is convenient to handle, the official said. The rifle was used by the US soldiers during the Second World War, he said. It is said that the fire power of this rifle is of 300 yard and 15 to 20 rounds of bullets can be fired at one go.

The recovery of the sophisticated rifle has come as bad news for the jawans battling the rebels in Maoist-dominated areas.

The police have launched a probe to ascertain how and from where the Naxalites had procured such a sophisticated weapon, he said.

Earlier in December 2011 and April 2014, two 7.65 mm automatic pistols with the 'Made in USA' marks were recovered after encounters with Naxalites in Rowghat and Bhanupratappur areas of Kanker district.

In 2018, a rifle with a 'Made in Germany' mark was recovered after a gun battle with Naxalites in Sukma district and a sub-machine gun of US make was seized in Narayanpur district.



**GLITTERING NIGHT:** Fireworks during the closing ceremony of the Make in Odisha Conclave - 2022 at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday (More on Page 6)

OP PHOTO

## GAS LEAK FROM TANKER LEAVES LOCALS IN PANIC

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatna, Dec 4:** Panic gripped people after heavy gas leak was reported from a tanker that overturned on the National Highway-16 at Pashtipada on Bhawanipatna-Raipur route due to dense fog, Sunday.

As a result, traffic on the route was disrupted for over 12 hours. Commuters had to take a detour by Pashtikudi via Khariar to reach Raipur. The mishap occurred when the tanker was on its way to Raipur from Visakhapatnam.

The heavy gas leakage enveloped the whole area like a dense fog. On being informed, police, fire and administrative officials rushed to the spot and tried to bring the situation under control by closing the traffic on the Bhawanipatna-Raipur stretch of the highway.

The local authorities shifted over 70 inhabitants of Kubudi village adjoining the national highway to a safer place and provided them with free food and other relief material.

The fire personnel tried to plug the leakage, but were unsuccessful.

Later, a team from the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd reached the place and plugged the leakage by the evening.

The villagers returned to their homes in the evening and were provided with food for the night. They were asked not to ignite fire or cook food until further orders by the authorities. The leakage has left the locals in shock.

# Iran scraps morality police

# Prestige battle for Padampur today

Women-led protests have swept the Islamic republic since 22-year-old Mahsa Amini died in custody September 16 | Authorities say over 300 people were killed in the unrest, while non-official sources estimate the toll is at least 448

AGENCIES

**Tehran, Dec 4:** Iran has scrapped its morality police after more than two months of protests triggered by the arrest and subsequent death of Mahsa Amini for allegedly violating the country's strict female dress code, local media said Sunday.

Women-led protests, labelled 'riots' by the authorities, have swept Iran since the 22-year-old Iranian of Kurdish origin died in custody September 16, three days after her arrest by the morality police in Tehran.

Demonstrators have burned their mandatory hijab head coverings and shouted anti-government slogans, and since Amini's death, a growing number of women have failed to wear the hijab, particularly in parts of Tehran.

"Morality police have nothing to do with the judiciary and have been abolished," Attorney General Mohammad Jafar Montazeri was quoted as saying by the ISNA news agency. His comment came at a religious conference where he responded to a participant who asked



"why the morality police were being shut down," the report said. Since the 1979 Islamic Revolution that overthrew Iran's US-backed monarchy there has been some kind of official monitoring of the strict dress code for both men and women. But under hardline president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the morality police - known formally as the Gasht-e Ershad or 'Guidance Patrol' - was established to "spread the culture of modesty and hijab." The units were set up by Iran's

Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, which is today headed by President Ebrahim Raisi. They began their patrols in 2006 to enforce the dress code which also requires women to wear long clothes and forbids shorts, ripped jeans and other clothes deemed immodest. The announcement of the units' abolition came a day after Montazeri said "both parliament and the judiciary are working" on the issue of whether the law requiring

women to cover their heads needs to be changed.

Raisi said in televised comments Saturday that Iran's republican and Islamic foundations were constitutionally entrenched "but there are methods of implementing the constitution that can be flexible."

The hijab became mandatory in 1983. Morality police officers initially issued warnings before starting to crack down and arrest women 15 years ago.

Clothing norms gradually changed, especially under former moderate president Hassan Rouhani, when it became commonplace to see women in tight jeans with loose, colourful headscarves.

But in July this year his successor, the ultra-conservative Raisi, called for the mobilisation of "all state institutions to enforce the headscarf law."

Raisi at the time charged that "the enemies of Iran and Islam have targeted the cultural and religious values of society by spreading corruption."

Continued on P2

PNN/AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 4:** Elaborate security arrangements have been made for free and fair voting in the Padampur Assembly segment, where hectic bypoll campaigning was undertaken by the ruling BJD, the Opposition BJP and the Congress over the past few weeks.

Ten candidates are in the fray for the byelection that was necessitated by BJD MLA Bijay Ranjan Singh Baraha's demise in October.

The bypoll assumes significance in the wake of the BJD's loss in Dhamnagar bypoll last month, with many in political circles claiming that the result would also indicate if electoral scales were tilting against the Naveen Patnaik-led party ahead of the 2024 state elections.

The BJD has nominated from the seat the deceased MLA's daughter, Barsha, who is set to take on BJP's Pradip Purohit, a former MLA, and Congress candidate and three-time legislator Satya Bhusan

Sahu, among others.

Campaigning in Padampur turned intense as Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Bisheswar Tudu and Narendra Singh Tomar covered the length and breadth of the constituency, raising farmers' issues and the state government's alleged indifference towards them.

BJD leaders, besides going all out to counter the allegations ahead of the 'prestige battle', held the BJP-led Centre responsible for the "delay in disbursement of compensation to the farmers."

Amid all the noise, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik hit the campaign trail, the first time for a bypoll since 2019, and hit out at the BJP for "shedding crocodile tears and misleading people with lies."

Chief Electoral Officer SK Lohani said all preparations are in place for the smooth conduct of the bypoll. Voting will begin at 7 am Monday and continue till 4 pm, he stated. **More on P6**

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



You'll never find him in the office. He is busy working for you 24x7

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP: MAX	29.1°C	28.6°C	
TEMP: MIN	18.1°C	17.2°C	
Humidity	81%	82%	
Rainfall	nil	nil	
Forecast	Mainly clear sky		

## Construction work banned in Delhi-NCR as air quality worsens

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** With pollution in the national capital turning severe Sunday, the Centre's air quality panel directed authorities in the Delhi-NCR to ban non-essential construction work in the region under stage III of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).

Delhi's 24-hour average air quality index stood at 407 at 4 pm. The sub-committee for implementation of GRAP held a meeting Sunday to review the air quality scenario in the region as well as the forecasts for meteorological conditions and the air quality index of Delhi.

In an effort to prevent more deterioration, the sub-committee decided that all actions as envisaged under stage III of GRAP be implemented with immediate effect in the NCR.

# Women bring life back to their revered mountain

■ From consciously reducing dependency on firewood through community cooking to adopting sustainable, organic and eco-friendly farming, the villagers, led by the women, did it all

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Koraput, Dec 4:** Their forest is lovely, dark and green, a stream flowing through it, birdsong echoing down the hill to their homes and fields, and the wildlife back. It's taken 30 years of conservation, say the women of Anchala who didn't let their spirit flag for even

one day of those three decades. It was sometime in early 1990 that the stream flowing through the Mali 'parbat' in Anchala village in Koraput district narrowed to barely a trickle and there was not a green shoot in sight. It was time, the villagers decided, to bring back life to their revered mountain.

From consciously reducing dependency on firewood through community cooking to adopting sustainable, organic and eco-friendly farming, the villagers, led by the women, did it all. And today a lush 250-acre mountainous forest surrounds Anchala, the water nourishing their fields with vegetables and other farm produce and enough for their domestic needs.

Shuparna, who was 15 at the time and newly married, remembers how it started. "We imposed a strict fine of ₹500 on anyone cut-



Women from Anchala village who restored the Mali parbat forest over a period of three decades in Koraput district. PTI PHOTO

ting wood and created an environment where the person was reprimanded in public for cutting wood. We made them feel guilty for their actions. After a point, it

started working and more and more people started joining our movement," Shuparna said. A guard from the village was appointed to maintain vigil. To en-

sure no one illegally enters the forest area to cut wood, a family was designated to guard the forest from dusk to dawn.

"We did not have money to pay so we made a deal that whoever watched the forest would get in exchange 10 kg of finger millet or ragi. This would be collected from each household," Shuparna, one of those in-charge of guarding the forest, said. Lali, among the many women from the village who were part of the ambitious project, explained why the forest came to be overexploited. There was no LPG cylinder so the entire village was dependent on wood and coal for cooking.

"We changed our cooking habits. We made do with less wood and cooked for three families together so as to reduce the usage of wood and coal," the 65-year-old said. "Simultaneously, we started

planting tamarind, sandalwood and neem among trees in the mountain." Six months later, the first results were seen. "The first plant grew and it was celebrated like a festival in our village," said Savita. "Now even wildlife has started living in this jungle which was barren earlier. Barking deer and wild boars are now a common sight in this jungle," Lali said.

For Selwanti, the biggest moment was when the stream that had started drying began to replenish.

"I still remember it vividly. My house is close to the stream and one morning I could hear the sound of water flowing, something that had stopped long ago as the stream had reduced to a trickle. I rejoiced and called everyone to see the fruit of our effort," she said. **Continued on P2**



Women bring life...

Continued from P1  
“We grow many vegetables here like peas, cabbage and ginger among other things,” she added.

To ensure further productivity, the women have switched to sustainable farming techniques – chemical free pesticide made from cow manure, jaggery and flour and using organic compost made from chicken waste, neem and ash.

They received help from the NGO Foundation for Ecological Support for learning these techniques.

These women tribal farmers have also been brought under the Agriculture Production Cluster (APC) programme led by the Odisha government and Bharat Rural Livelihoods Foundation.

Under APC, they received support from various government departments such as Horticulture, Mission Shakti, Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water, Women and Child Development, and Odisha Livelihood Mission to help build their organisation.

Iran scraps morality...

Continued from P1  
Iran's regional rival Saudi Arabia also employed morality police to enforce female dress codes and other rules of behaviour. Since 2016 the force there has been sidelined in a push by the Sunni Muslim kingdom to shake off its austere image.

In September, the Union of Islamic Iran People Party, the country's main reformist party, called for the hijab law to be rescinded.

The party, created by relatives of former reformist president Mohammad Khatami, demands authorities “prepare the legal elements paving the way for the cancellation of the mandatory hijab law.”

As recently as Saturday it also called for the Islamic republic to “officially announce the end of the activities of the morality police” and “allow peaceful demonstrations”.

Iran accuses its enemy the United States and its allies, including Britain and Israel, and Kurdish groups based outside the country, of fomenting the street protests.

More than 300 people have been killed in the unrest, including dozens of security force members, an Iranian general said.

Oslo-based NGO Iran Human Rights Tuesday said at least 448 people had been “killed by security forces in the ongoing nationwide protests.”

Thousands of people have been arrested, including prominent Iranian actors and footballers.

Youtuber confesses to his mistake

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: A Youtuber apologised for flying a drone equipped with a high-definition camera over the Jagannath Temple in Puri.

After facing wrath from various sections on social media for allegedly demanding huge amount per drone shot on the aerial view of Puri Srimandir, the Youtuber came up with a clarification and apology. In a Youtuber post, the accused identified as Animesh Chakrabarty confessed to his mistake terming it as ‘unintentional’.

“I have a registered drone, which did not notify me that the Jagannath Temple is ‘no-fly’ zone. I did not receive any notification on my drone when I shot the video of Puri Srimandir.

PADAMPUR BYPOLL

BJD, BJP move CEO against each other

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: With barely some hours left for voting to begin in the Padampur by-election, Odisha's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) office here Sunday witnessed leaders of both ruling BJD and opposition BJP making a beeline to lodge complaint against each other.

The BJP rushed to the CEO's office in the morning and lodged a complaint against a reporter of a private regional television channel allegedly misbehaving with its candidate Pradip Purohit Saturday night.

The BJP alleged that Purohit had gone to have darshan at a Devi temple all alone after ending his campaigning when the reporter of the television channel owned by a BJD leader publicly humiliated him and accused him of undertaking canvassing during the silent period. The party demanded action against the reporter.

Purohit also staged a dharna in Padampur Saturday night demanding action against the TV reporter and ended his dharna after local police assured him to inquire into the matter.

The BJP in another petition alleged that some BJD leaders were distributing money among voters in different places of Padampur in Bargarh district after campaigning came to an end Saturday.

BJP state general secretary Lekhashree Samantsinghar claimed that villagers at several places including Paikamal block have returned money distributed by ruling party workers.

She also alleged that BJD workers were threatening the BJP workers who oppose their money distributing activities.

The ruling BJD also rushed to CEO's office at least thrice during the day alleging that the BJP candidate's wife and aunt were distributing money to the people in Padampur.

Two BJD delegations also submitted a separate petition alleging that a private TV channel owned by a BJP leader has deployed 40 to 45 teams in Padampur for transporting and distributing money to voters and asking them to vote for BJP candidate Pradip Purohit.

The regional party demanded strong action against the TV channel which has been working for a particular party. In another petition, BJD accused a BJP leader of distributing money to voters in Padampur to influence them, and demanded action against him.

Bargarh Superintendent of Police Smith Parmar said: “Our patrolling teams are keeping watch on all activities and inquiry is made to allegations of money distribution.”

Brown sugar worth over ₹1 crore seized



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: The Special Task Force (STF) of crime branch seized contraband brown sugar worth over ₹1 crore during a raid at a place near Ansupa Lake, a famous tourist spot in Athagarh area of Cuttack district. The sleuths also managed to arrest two persons for the illegal possession of the drugs.

The drug peddlers duo was identified as Jumes Kumar Sahoo of Koshala village under Chendipada police limits in Angul and Hemant Kumar Pradhan of Badabhumi area under Athagarh police limits.

Following a tip-off, a STF team with the help of Cuttack District Police intercepted one Hyundai Santro Car heading towards Cuttack on Banki-Athagarh road, Saturday evening. The driver managed to flee from the spot while the sleuths succeeded in arresting

Jumes and Hemant. The police found brown sugar weighing more than 1 Kg 335 gram and other incriminating materials from the vehicle.

“The accused persons could not produce any valid authority in support of possession of such contraband materials, for which the accused persons were arrested and will be forwarded to the court of District & Sessions cum Spl. Judge, Cuttack. In this connection STF PS Case No.29 dated 03.12.2022 U/s 21(c)/29 of NDPS Act 1985 was registered. Investigation is on,” informed STF sources.

The STF has seized more than 65 Kg of Brown Sugar/Heroin, 202 Gram Cocaine and more than 111 quintals of Ganja/Marjuana, Opium 750 gram Special drive against narcotic drugs is continuing since 2020. Around 165 drug dealers/peddlers have been arrested by the STF during the period.

Vedanta chairman interacts with eminent personalities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Industrialist Anil Agarwal, Chairman, Vedanta Group was on a visit to the state Capital to attend the Make is Odisha Conclave 2022 at the invitation of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Apart from his itinerary of attending MIO, Agarwal attended a unique interaction session with Odisha's 1st forum consisting of 19 eminent personalities representing various fields of excellence like science and technology, health, education, dance, music, literature and sports.

Agarwal, while addressing them, expressed his gratitude for their continuous support and told that he would further step up his participation in the development of the state. He also reminisced about



his association with legendary Biju Patnaik and Naveen Patnaik.

Odisha's 1st eminent personalities, including 7 Padma Bibhusan, Padma Bhusan and Padmashri recipients like Padma Bibhusan Hariprasad Chaurasia, world renowned flutist, Padma Bibhusan Sudharshan Sahoo, stone artist, Padma Bhusan Pratibha Ray, eminent Odia poet and writer, Pramod Bhagat, gold medalist of Paralympic, Padmashri Dillip Turkey celebrated hockey player and president of Indian Hockey Association, Padmashri Guru



FOR A CLEAR VISION: People getting free eye check-ups at a camp organised at Dagarpara Bania Sahi in Cuttack, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Union Minister stresses on patient service referral system

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Union Minister Bharati Pravin Pawar Sunday said there is a need for an organised patient referral service system at various levels of the healthcare system in Odisha.

The Union Minister of state for Health and Family Welfare, who visited AIIMS, Bhubaneswar here, said the daily footfall in the premier hospital is about 10,000 which puts a lot of burden on the facility.

Pawar suggested various measures to address the daily huge footfall and patient waiting time for various services.

While emphasizing on the need for an organized patient referral service system at various levels of the health care service system, she said in order to build such a type



of robust patient referral criterion, there is requirement of a collaborative approach between AIIMS and other state-run health care institutions.

She cited the example of effective Covid management during pandemic through a sound referral system across the country.

During her visit, the Union Minister inaugurated a multi-utility building in the premises of

AIIMS Bhubaneswar. She also reviewed the comprehensive functioning system of the institute in presence of AIIMS Bhubaneswar Executive Director Ashutosh Biswas, faculty members and senior officials.

In her address, Pawar highlighted the intentions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi who envisioned a healthy India with accessible and affordable healthcare for one and all. She also took a review of various academic, research, recruitment, financial and other aspects of AIIMS.

The minister asked AIIMS Bhubaneswar to provide better healthcare to the people of Odisha and neighbouring states. She applauded AIIMS Bhubaneswar for starting renal transplant services and encouraged them to start other transplant services also.

Voters' enrolment a click away

As Odisha holds a month-long special drive for enrolment of new voters and correction of entries in the electoral roll, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Sushil Kumar Lohani answers some of the questions frequently asked by voters.

Who can get enrolled as a voter?

Every Indian citizen who has attained the age of 18 on the four qualifying dates—first day of January, April, July and October of the year of revision of electoral roll unless otherwise disqualified, is eligible to be registered as a voter in the roll of the part/polling area of the constituency where he is ordinarily resident.

I'm 17 years old. Can I apply for enrolment?

Yes, if you are born before October 1, 2005, you can apply in this revision period too and your application will be considered as an advance application. It will be disposed in due course. You will get enrolled in the respective quarter of



the year and EPIC will be sent accordingly to your address.

How to get registered/enrolled in the electoral roll?

There are two modes for enrolling oneself in electoral roll—online and offline. In online mode, one can apply through www.nvsp.in portal or Voter Helpline App available in Playstore or App Store. While filing Form 6 online, the copies of necessary documents should also be uploaded. On the other hand, in offline mode, one has to file the application for the purpose in Form 6 before the Electoral Registration Officer/Assistant Electoral Registration Officer of

the constituency within which the place of ordinary residence of the applicant falls. The application accompanied by copies of the relevant documents can be filed in person before the concerned Electoral Registration Officer/Assistant Electoral Registration Officer or sent by post addressed to him or can be handed over to the Booth Level Officer of your polling area.

What are the different types of forms used for enrolment in the electoral roll?

New voters can use Form 6 for enrolment in electoral roll, while Form 7 can be used to apply for objection for proposed inclusion/deletion of name in existing electoral roll. Form 8, meanwhile, can be used for updating on shifting of residence, correction of entries in electoral roll and replacement of EPIC.

What documents are accepted with Form 6?

Apart from a recent photo, proof of age and residence are needed

with Form 6.

While birth certificate, Aadhaar card, PAN Card, Driving License and Class X certificate can be used for age proof, utility bills, Aadhaar card and bank passbook can be used as residence proof.

How to check entries in the electoral roll?

To check the entries in electoral roll, one can visit www.nvsp.in portal or open Voter Helpline App and click on 'Search in Electoral Roll'. How can I receive my EPIC after my name has been enrolled?

All the EPICs (election photo identity card) are now delivered through speed post by Postal department. For the same, you are advised to give your complete postal address along with the pin code in the application Form 6 or 8. Also you must give your mobile number. I've lost my old EPIC. How can I get a new one?

A replacement EPIC can be issued at free of cost to an elector after receipt of Form 8 from the elector.

JSW pavilion attracts youths at MIO Conclave

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: JSW pavilion at MIO Conclave was the most popular among the youth, especially children. Over the four days, students from Skilled in Odisha and various other technical institutions from various domains such as civil, mechanical, electronic and engineering visited the pavilion to appreciate JSW presence and expansion plans in Odisha.

Students and faculty members from academic institutions like College of Engineering and Technology (CET), World Skill Centre, and XIM visited the stall in large numbers.

“Sports is one of the key mandates for JSW. In Odisha, JSW is Identifying sport talents and providing them with the right platform to pursue their game of choice.



The HPC (High Performance Centre) for swimming at the premier Kalinga stadium and promotion of football in its mining DIZ among the underprivileged children are the notable steps the company has taken,” said a company official.

In future, the company has plans to set-up more such sports facilities in the state. Around 20 underprivileged children from Ardor

Football Academy, Bhubaneswar visited the stall and experienced the anamorphic feature and virtual reality. They received footballs and jerseys from JSW Foundation team.

Promoting sports among young children and offering them the platform have always been a keen interest of JSW. The company took initiative to support the underprivileged kids to hone their football skills.

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**SORRY STATE OF EDUCATION**

# Many teachers play truant for years

Show-cause notice issued to 18 teachers in Keonjhar

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, Dec 4:** Teacher shortage has hit classroom studies in Keonjhar schools. Things have come to such a pass that there are many schools where the authorities have to manage the classroom teachings with very few teachers. This has happened as many teachers in remote regions of the district have neglected their duties and stopped coming to schools for years together despite taking their salaries month after month. The matter came to the fore after the district education department prepared a list of 18 absentee teachers who have not visited their schools for years and issued them show-cause notice.

The 18 showcaused teachers are from Kachhasahi Primary School, Mill Sahi Primary School under Anandapur block, Singhpur School, Talapada School, Gobindpur School under Bansapal block, Ghoshda Tangar Nodal UP School, Budhakhaman Primary School, Goliyani Sahi Primary School under Harichandanpur block, Raikala Primary School, Kolhabarapada UGUP School under Joda block, Badakumuda Primary School under Telkoi block, Keshdurapal Primary School under Ghashipura block, Sadangabahali Primary School, Deobandh Primary School, Basantpur UGUP School, Machhabhandar Project UP School and Dangardiha UGUP School under Ghatagaon block. The teachers working in these 18 schools have re-



mained absent for periods ranging from one year to seven years.

When contacted, district education officer (DEO) Purna Chandra Sethi said all the absentee teachers have been issued with show-cause notice and they will be divested of their jobs if they do not reply satisfactorily within a period of one month.

Reports said that these teachers sign an agreement every year. However, they are violating their service norms by not coming to schools for years.

"If these teachers are not coming to schools then why authorities are not dismissing them from service and recruiting others in their place, questioned Rabindra Panda, a retired headmaster.

It has been alleged that there are many teachers who have stopped visiting the schools for years together. Lack of supervision and laxity in proper monitoring of the teachers' activities has been blamed for such long absence of the teachers in their respective schools.

## Woman hacks hubby to death in Balasore

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasore, Dec 4:** A woman hacked her husband to death following a bitter fight between the couple at Charigochhia village under Chandipur police limits in Balasore district, Saturday night.

The deceased was identified as Gobind Marandi, 58, of the village. The accused wife Jaba Marandi, 45, was arrested by Chandipur police and the murder weapon seized. A case was registered in this connection and investigation kicked off.

Sources said the couple was fighting over some issues for the last couple of days and was yet to reconcile and patch up.

The issue cropped up again Saturday night and they had a bitter altercation. Enraged, Gobind thrashed his wife and ran after her to beat her again. Jaba picked up a billhook and assaulted Gobind on head and ear in a bid to save her. Profusely bleeding, Gobind collapsed on the spot writhing in pain. Villagers called the police but by the time they arrived he had already died.

## 200 Dalit families face social boycott for months

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Dec 4:** For last one and a half months, nearly 200 Dalit families have been living a difficult life after being socially boycotted by Hariadapadar co-villagers over caste-linked dispute under Aska police limits in Ganjam.

Upper caste people recently held a Kangaroo court and boycotted the Dalit families. As a result, the Dalit people were barred from communication with others, taking procession on village road for marriage and other occasions, using community ponds, tube well water, and even purchasing rations from village grocers. Moreover, over 150 children of these families refrained from attending Anganwadi centre and the primary school. Ganjam Dalit Mahasabha alleged that though the local tehsildar and the district administration were apprised of the situation of the Dalit families.

# Bankatira barrage to be completed in 3 yrs

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasore, Dec 4:** The construction of Bankatira irrigation project in Remuna Assembly constituency in this district will be completed in next three years. The irrigation project is being built at a cost of ₹505.90 crore across Budhabalanga river to ir-

**A tender of ₹187 crore for the barrage project has been floated and its work will be finished in next three years**

rigate 7,300 hectare farmland. This was stated by Water

Resources Minister Tukuni Sahoo in reply to question of Remuna MLA Sudhansu Sekhar Dhada.

It may be noted here that the state government had sanctioned ₹203 crore for the Bankatira barrage in 2013.

Later, a high level committee studied various models thoroughly and recommended shift-

ing of the project a few yards down the river. Its construction work was done at Darakholi at a revised estimate of ₹505.90 crore after administration approval June 21, 2022.

A tender of ₹187 crore for the barrage project has been floated and its work will be finished in next three years, it was stated.

OSPL-347



## Chief Electoral Officer, Odisha

### BYE ELECTION, 2022

Important information for voters of 01-Padmapur Assembly constituency

**Date of Poll : 5th December, 2022 (Monday)**  
**Time of Poll : 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM**



**Please wear mask while coming to Polling Station**

Please bring Voter Identity Card or any one of the following identification documents mentioned below to exercise your franchise.

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 MNREGA Job Card	 Indian Passport
 Passbooks with photograph issued by Bank/Post Office	 Pension document with Photograph
 Health Insurance Smart Card issued under the scheme of Ministry of Labour	 Service Identity Cards with photograph issued to employees by Central/State Govt./PSUs/Public Limited Companies
 Driving License	 Official identity cards issued to MPs/MLAs/MLCs
 PAN Card	 Unique Disability ID (UDID) Card, M/o Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India

— Please stand in the three respective queues of male, female and PwD/Senior citizen voters according to your own category

— Maintain Social Distance in Booth

— Enter the Polling Station one by one

— Don't gather in front of the polling official

Download Voter Helpline App or Log onto [www.nvsp.in](http://www.nvsp.in) to know about your details in Voter List or call Toll Free No. 1950

**Your one VOTE matters, Pl. do VOTE & Strengthen Democracy**

OIPR-12113/13/0023/2223



# Kendrapara 'Rasabali' in race for GI tag

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, Dec 4:** The famous sweetmeat 'Rasabali' of Kendrapara is among the list of five products from Odisha which will be taken up for discussion to accord GI (Geographical Indication) tag at a conference of Geographical Indication Registry to be held at Chennai in December.

The date molasses of Gajapati, silver filigree work of Cuttack, 'Kai Chatri' of Mayurbhanj, 'Magaj Ladoo' of Dhenkanal and 'Rasabali' of Kendrapara districts are the nominees in fray for the GI tag.

The 'Rasabali Nirmata Sangha' in Kendrapara was the first to demand GI tag for the delicacy in 2021. Later, a delegation from Odisha, led by Rajya Sabha MP Subhash Singh along with Munna Khan and Mamata Mohanta met Union Minister Piyush Goyal and submitted a memorandum demanding GI tag for 'Rasabali'. The memorandum had mentioned the his-



tory and present status of the dessert and claimed that according GI tag to it will boost the economic growth in Kendrapara district.

Researchers Niranjana Mekap and Anita Sabat said that 'Rasabali' as a sweetmeat was in use since medieval times during the erstwhile King Anangabhimha Deva's reign. During his rule, 32 varieties of 'Rasabali' were being used as an offering at the Sri Baladev Temple in Kendrapara and it still continues.

Various couplets, mythological scriptures like 'Dandi Ramayan' and family chronology of the Ganga dy-

nasty 'Ganga Banshanucharita' have many pages on 'Rasabali'. It has been stated that the origin of 'Rasabali' is in Kendrapara district.

Senior confectioner and 'Rasabali' maker Baishnab Panda said that earlier the sweetmeat used to be prepared only inside the temple as an offering to the deities. However, 'Rasabali' now has transcended boundaries and is easily available all over this town and other parts of Odisha.

Educationist Bhuban Mohan Jena opined that the brand value of any product increases with the GI tag. It also helps check misuse of the product and prevents imitations apart from growth of business. GI tagged products also create scope of economic growth of the area of its origin.

Saroj Kumar Mohanty, convener of 'Rasabali Nirmata Sangha' said that according GI tag to the delicacy has been a long-standing demand. If 'Rasabali' gets the GI tag, then their dreams will be fulfilled, he added.

# Police solemnise marriages of 2 former women maoists



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Phulbani, Dec 4:** Two women Maoists, who bid adieu to arms months back, got married in Kandhamal. Far away from the path of violence, the Red rebels are going to start their conjugal lives. This has brought joy to their families and local residents.

Their marriage ceremony was organised at Radha Krishna temple on the premises of the district reserve police at Phulbani in Kandhamal, Sunday.

The two women Maoists are Swapnita Patamajhi (Nandini), a resident of Gudri village under Tumudibandh block and Phulamati Usandhi (Karuna), a resident of Gumudi village of Kanker district in Chhattisgarh.

Nandini married Binod and Karuna tied the knot with Sapaneswar of G Udaygiri. As per tradition, the families of the grooms took out processions from the police reserve ground to the Radha Krishna temple. Police personnel received

the 'barat' and their marriage was organised under the direct supervision of SP Vinit Agrawal.

Both Nandini and Karuna expressed their happiness over their marriage and were hopeful of leading happy conjugal lives.

In 2018, Nandini had joined a Maoist camp and worked for over one and half years before surrendering and joining the mainstream in 2019.

Karuna had joined the ultra camp in 2008. After working as a Red comrade for 13 years, she gave up arms and surrendered before the DGP in 2021.

As per the police, both the former rebels have been provided various facilities. They were imparted training in tailoring.

"I wish them happy conjugal life. All possible help will be provided to them. I urge other Maoist sisters to eschew the path of violence and join the social mainstream to avail various government benefits," said SP Vinit Agrawal.



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FOCUS CORPORATES

# NAPOLEONS OF BIG TECH



The entire venture-capital industry rests on the idea that if you bet on enough ambitious start-ups, the gains from the rare success stories will far outweigh the losses from all the duds and rogues

ing as though all this scaffolding merely obstructed their vision.

The many years of cheap capital – a seemingly permanent high tide – obscured this tendency. The good times went on for so long that many investors forgot the basics, while politicians, happy to see job creation and growth in new industries, became far too indulgent toward tech billionaires, who often became major sources of campaign donations.

Meta is a case in point. Anyone holding the company's stock should have recognised the risks associated with the company's dual-class share structure. Although Zuckerberg holds only 13% of all shares, he owns around 55% of voting shares, and thus enjoys carte blanche in the company's decision-making.

In the good times, this structure – shared by other tech firms, such as Alphabet (Google) – may have seemed to make sense. But with Meta's share price having fallen by three-quarters over the past year, and with Zuckerberg betting the company by investing billions in creating a virtual-reality experience (the metaverse), investors are up in arms, even though they have only themselves to blame.

Will Musk – or his lenders and investors – heed this lesson? Musk's behaviour at Twitter so far suggests that everyone involved is in for a costly education. He has already sacked half the company's staff, possibly breaking employment laws in the process. He now must come up with a way to make Twitter profitable enough to justify the \$44 billion purchase price. That is a tall order. While the overall attention paid to Twitter may have increased, many top advertisers – the platform's main revenue source – have already suspended their campaigns. Napoleon fought more battles after his retreat from Moscow, some with great skill, but his reputation for invincibility never recovered. No one can unsee a naked emperor.

*The writer, a former editor-in-chief of The Economist, is Co-Director of the Global Commission for Post-Pandemic Policy.*  
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Companies have long had to manage "key person risk," even taking out insurance against the possibility of losing top executives through death, illness, or injury. But the collapse of the crypto exchange FTX, Meta's plummeting share price, and the chaos at Twitter following its takeover by Elon Musk suggest that "key people" can pose a very different kind of danger. Call it "Napoleonic founder" risk. Perhaps investors and lenders should be demanding a premium to cover the risk that a star entrepreneur will one day become an egomaniacal dictator, burning money along the way.

The risk is not new, of course. Business history is full of executives going rogue with corporate funds, and of successful entrepreneurs failing to realise that mature, publicly traded companies are not their personal playthings. But with each business cycle, it seems, old lessons must be relearned.

Following the dot-com crash at the turn of this century, the storied American investor Warren Buffett famously quipped that "you only find out who is swimming naked when the tide goes out." Such is the modern business cycle: it flows eternally from optimism to pessimism, and from boom to bust. Yet Buffett might have added that the optimistic high tides are the moments when precautions must be put in place. Once you have been confronted with the naked truth, your money may already have been lost.

This was certainly true in the case of Sam Bankman-Fried and FTX, which was valued at as much as \$32 billion earlier this year. Few will sympathise with those who have lost money from the company's collapse. Notwithstanding Bankman-Fried's pretense of offering a mature version of crypto, everyone involved should have known it was a casino. And anyone who was paying attention to Bankman-Fried's extravagant lifestyle should have seen that he was no Buffett.

To be sure, it is difficult for investors to take precautions against such buccaneers. Those who back a company like FTX are looking for high-risk bets with the potential for



Bill Emmott

**SINCE INVESTMENT IS ALL ABOUT MAKING BETS ON AN UNKNOWN FUTURE, CONFIDENCE, TRUST, AND SALESMANSHIP ARE A BIG PART OF THE GAME**

massive rewards. Still, the smart investor ought to be able to detect signs that a buccaneer is becoming something closer to a pirate. With Bankman-Fried, the clues were everywhere: he was running the company with a few close friends from a penthouse in the Bahamas.

Likewise, former British Prime Minister David Cameron should have seen that something was awry with his highly remunerated advisory role at Greensill Capital well before the firm went bust in 2021. What, after all, was the firm's Australian buccaneer-founder, Lex Greensill, doing with four private jets, all maintained on the company's tab?

Since investment is all about making bets on an unknowable future, confidence, trust, and salesmanship are a big part of the game. While investors are nominally backing business plans, their belief in that plan often depends on their belief in a person. The founder of Theranos, Elizabeth Holmes, who has just been sentenced to prison for fraud, may or may not have believed that her firm could develop a technology to revolutionise the diagnostic-testing industry. But what mattered was her ability to convince investors that, with enough money, her miraculous vision could come true.

A diversified portfolio is the main defense against losses from

fraud or delusional thinking. The entire venture-capital industry rests on the idea that if you bet on enough ambitious start-ups, the gains from the rare success stories will far outweigh the losses from all the duds and rogues. During the long era of ultra-cheap capital – combined with the potentially global markets available to technology firms – the sales pitches became more seductive, and the bets much larger. But the basic principles have always been the same.

With battle-hardened superstar entrepreneurs like Meta's Mark Zuckerberg or Twitter's Elon Musk, the issue is more complex. Having proven themselves over the past two decades, they are now more like veteran CEOs than start-up founders. Yet it is worth remembering that Napoleon Bonaparte also was a political and military veteran when he launched his disastrous invasion of Russia in 1812.

As success builds on success, and as the billions accumulate and the empires grow larger, two things happen. First, the business – or, in Musk's case, the business empire – becomes so large and complex that it needs professional managers, formal structures, and plenty of checks and balances. But, second, those who build multi-billion-dollar companies from the ground up often come to exhibit a sense of entitlement and impunity, behav-

## Zero COVID Backfires

Strange things are happening in President Xi Jinping's China. What is even more startling is the fact that the new developments are taking place only over a month after he was hailed and installed as the country's head for a record third term, a distinction enjoyed only by Mao Zedong before him. Intriguingly, a social media post forwarded countless times when protests erupted in China against Xi's "dynamic zero COVID" policy was a quotation from Xi's father, Xi Zhongxun, a former Chinese leader, saying "the people should be allowed to speak and encouraged to care about state affairs."

Days after the extraordinary street protests following the death of several people in a fire in a Xinjiang apartment padlocked for lockdown, people in several cities and universities across the country have voiced their resentment against China's longest spell of lockdown in the world to tackle COVID. The uniqueness of the protests is the symbolic use of a blank sheet of paper that, in fact, speaks far more than thousands of words. The unspoken language is intended to tell the world that the people of China not only disapprove of the zero COVID policy, but they need freedom to articulate their thoughts and feelings that are being brutally suppressed by the regime headed by Xi.

The newly anointed President for an unprecedented third term and head of the Communist Party of China (CPC) appears to have been rattled by the extent of protests and their implications. This is clear from an almost knee-jerk reaction by the authorities which abruptly lifted restrictions in major cities such as Guangzhou hours after the city saw violent protests that resulted in clashes between the police and protesters.

According to a report, a community in Beijing also allowed COVID cases with mild symptoms to isolate at home. This is a far cry from protocols earlier this year which forced entire buildings and communities to be locked down, sometimes following just one positive case. Other major cities like Shanghai and Chongqing are also reported to have relaxed some rules.

Significantly, one of China's most senior pandemic officials, Vice-Premier Sun Chunlan, said the virus' ability to cause disease was weakening. "The country is facing a new situation and new tasks in epidemic prevention and control as the pathogenicity of the Omicron virus weakens. More people are vaccinated and experience in containing the virus is accumulated," she said. This itself is in sharp contrast to an earlier message from authorities that the country needed to maintain a strict zero COVID policy.

The question is why Xi has, all along, been insisting on his zero COVID policy refusing to relax lockdown continuing in many places for months on end and other protocols. This has been baffling the world as much as many Chinese, since people across most countries seem to have come to terms with the pandemic and are moving about without masks. Work and trade are picking up in most places to pre-pandemic levels. The spectacle of spectators at the ongoing FIFA World Cup matches enjoying the games without fear of the pandemic seems to have further fuelled anger among the Chinese populace.

There could be compelling reasons for Xi's COVID policy which he would certainly be reluctant to disclose. Experts are saying that despite the propaganda, China is plagued by shortage of medical facilities for handling COVID cases. The Chinese vaccines being used are also believed to be not as efficacious as those developed outside. Xi is in no mood to buy vaccines from the West. These factors may have forced him not to risk relaxing the pandemic protocol since China's poor capacity for tackling COVID may be exposed and a catastrophe may result.

In fact, China has in recent days recorded its highest number of daily COVID cases since the pandemic began - with more than 36,000 cases recorded on a single day this week.

At the same time resentment among the people in China against prolonged lockdowns is running so high that they have started openly questioning Xi's leadership. Though the protesters are minuscule in number, the signs are ominous for Xi. Under normal circumstances he would have hit back with his characteristic ruthlessness, but now the people's lives and daily movements are dislocated by his COVID policy. Seems like Xi has limited options open for now.

### WISDOM CORNER

- No one gets away with anything, ever, so take responsibility for your own life. **JORDAN PETERSON**
- In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock. **THOMAS JEFFERSON**
- He who wishes to be obeyed must know how to command. **NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI**

### WORDSWORTH

#### Deipnosophist

It comes from two Greek words, deipnon, the chief meal or dinner, and sophistes, a master of his craft, a clever or wise man. From the latter we get our modern word sophistry, which has gone down in the world, so that it means arguments that are undoubtedly clever, but also specious, fallacious, or designed to deceive. Its origin is a 15-volume work entitled Deipnosophistai, that was written by the Greek Athenaeus sometime after AD 228, in which a group of learned men converse at a banquet. Though a principal subject is food and the preparation of food, from which we learn a great deal about classical Greek cookery, the subject matter ranges very widely. In English, the word most often refers to these learned men. Only rarely does it appear as a serious term, and even then there is more than a hint of the archly whimsical introduction of an over-erudite expression. One example will serve, from Richard Ford's A Hand-book for Travellers in Spain of 1845: "Spanish Cookery, a ... subject which is well worth the inquiry of any antiquarian deipnosophist." One curiosity is that the word appears to have shifted meaning. The Oxford English Dictionary says it refers to a master of the art of dining, which might be somebody versed in the culinary arts or appreciative of fine food, a gastronome or gourmet. Mr Ford is clearly using it in that sense. However, modern dictionaries – when they include it at all, which isn't often – prefer to apply it to sparkling and erudite dinner-table conversationalists. These days, the word seems to turn up most often either in the more arduous later stages of spelling bees, as an example of a humorously weird word, or in the vocabulary of toast masters.

#### Dekko

It is from Hindi, from dekho, "See!", which is the imperative of dekha, to look. Like the Arabic word shufti, it was borrowed by British servicemen, but it's rather older; the latter is recorded from the Second World War, whereas dekho is known in print from the latter part of the nineteenth century, having been brought into the language through the British Army in India. Many early examples are direct recordings of Hindi Speech. This one appeared in the Lima Daily Democratic Times in 1888: "Our 'gharri' (carriage) halted suddenly at the entrance of a long, straight avenue flanked by two ranges of lofty trees, and our Bengal driver, pointing to the far end of it with his lean, brown forefinger, said impressively, 'Dekho, burrah gach wahan hai' (look, there is the big tree)." By the time of the First World War, it had long been established as services slang in the way that we spell it now, as Frederic Manning makes clear in The Middle Parts of Fortune about the battles of the Somme and Ancre in 1916: "'Let's 'ave a dekho, sir,' said Sergeant Tozer, taking Mr Finch's arm. 'It's all right,' said the young man, infuriated; but the sergeant got his arm out of the sleeve, and bandaged a bullet wound near the shoulder."

### SPECTRUM ECONOMY

## Will growth go beyond numbers?



Shivaji Sarkar

**THE ONGOING MONETARY TIGHTENING AND THE GLOBAL SLOWDOWN POSE PROBLEMS**

The country is having an interesting story to tell as it goes ahead with over 6% growth, collects more GST revenue, tackles data protection, manages MUDRA scheme NPA and ushers in tighter lending system. This all, as Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has to tackle the demands of the industry, workers and the common man for preparation of her budget.

There could be ease, as the per capita income as per the IMF has jumped 57%. The 11% higher GST mop up at ₹1.46 lakh crore is a great breather. The government is trying hard to keep the fiscal deficit in check at around ₹16.6 lakh crore or 6.6% of GDP. The OECD projects growth at 6.6% for the fiscal year. The NSO found 13.5% growth in the first quarter but moderates it to between 6.1 to 6.3% in July-September. The last two quarters may be a bit less. The growth is in sync with RBI forecast. But the ongoing monetary tightening and the global slowdown pose problems. Lower manufacturing output by 4.3% at ₹5.98 lakh crore is a concern. The government capital expenditure has expanded to 49.5% to ₹13.9 lakh crore. The government claims it would sustain growth be-

tween 6 and 7%. On inflation, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran says with expected softening, its impact would be better. While Nageswaran is confident about linking Aadhaar, PAN and other instruments, there is concern as this is compromising data privacy, giving rise to cyber-attacks. It is now suggested that the digital cards should be standalone and linking these with various instruments make the job of fraudsters easier. As PAN records all financial details, cyber scammers find it a ready instrument to capture.

The NPA concern is weighing heavy despite tight fisted bank loan policy. Lending figures show rise in the personal loan sector. The most important rationale for regulation in banking is to address concerns over the safety and stability of financial institutions, the financial sector as a whole, and the payments system. The corporate wants softening of rates and easy availability despite 12.6% more lending, highest since 2014. But neither the global conditions allow this nor the health of the domestic banking sector. There are arguments for extending cuts in debt burden through write-offs for subsidising the corporate. How could

corporates remain parasites forever is the concern. They are also told that post 2008 meltdown, when Indian corporate did not need, they were given heavy incentivised loans, 50 big business houses not only pocketed the loans, they are also responsible for the highest ever NPAs and write-offs. It is another wonder why they cannot thrive when the public sector is virtually being eliminated.

The tight-fisted approach of the government in regulating further lending is being appreciated widely. It is also being stated that the government is right in encouraging business competition and it's not the government's job to subsidise forever. The government is being rational in having a tough stance and virtually giving the message that if they need funding, they could have external commercial borrowings. This government stand has a wider support. In no case, the corporate could be allowed to gobble up precious hard-earned people's savings.

The Bharatiya Kisan Sangh Secretary Mohini Mohan Mishra sought an input tax credit for farmers, removal of GST from agricultural inputs, linking of the ₹6,000 per year minimum PM Kisan Nidhi

income support with inflation. While ten trade unions boycotted the meeting the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, the labour wing of the RSS, demanded that the government bring back the old pension scheme for government employees, which was replaced by the National Pension Scheme in 2004.

Many of the demands are likely to be accepted. The higher Kisan Nidhi support may also suit the political needs as eight states go to the polls in 2023 prior to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The country's remittances that had plummeted during the pandemic, is likely to see a surge. It would increase the forex reserves. The World Bank says that the remittances would touch \$100 billion from the Gulf, the US, the UK, Singapore, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. The coming year is likely to have major changes in the economy. The growth pattern would go beyond the statistics and India could hope the dawning of a bright era with overall happiness being bestowed on the country.

*The writer is a Professor, Indian Institute of Mass Communication.*  
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#### Emotional bonding

**Sir,** The death of the 32-year-old elephant Lakshmi of the famous Manakula Vinayagar temple in the Union Territory of Puducherry a few days ago has left the localities in inconsolable tears. (Picture in Page-7, Orissa Post, December 2). No hyperbole, the pachyderm, which served in the temple for over two decades, was considered no less than a member among the families in the town, and it had created a profound impact with her imposing presence in the temple and through her courtly and friendly behaviour with the devotees over the years. Little wonder she was accorded a divine status by them. It was a rare sight that thousands gathered in Puducherry to take part in the funeral of Lakshmi and bid an emotional farewell to her. Lakshmi's death has shown that the kind of bonding that elephants have towards human beings is incredibly great and the emotional attachment they form with us may rival our own.

**Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI**

#### 'Daman' shows the way

**Sir,** The Odia film industry battered by low revenue and less footfall got a morale booster by 'Daman', an impactful presentation of healthcare needs and selfless service of healthcare professionals in remote areas of Odisha. Service to mankind is indeed service to God. It may be a low budget film, but a remarkable one. By making the movie tax-free, the government has enabled it to reach a larger audience. To make a hit film no slavish imitation from south and north film industries is required. No big budget is essential. Odia films can be made on our timeless classic literature based on real issues plaguing our society. Violence, horror, vulgarity and corruption are not suitable and fit for intellectual and moral development of the audience. If Odia films are made with integrity and commitment, then one can say the golden era has returned. 'Daman' shows the way.

**Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR**

#### Fighter Pele

**Sir,** Our prayers are with Pele as he battles colon cancer from his hospital bed in Sao Paulo. Football's most outstanding player is receiving palliative care after he stopped responding to chemotherapy treatment. He had a colon tumour removed in September 2021 and has since undergone chemotherapy. Pele thanked fans in an Instagram post late Thursday for the well-wishes he's received. Millions of football lovers worldwide will hope that the fighter in Pele will conquer adversity.

**Nj Ravi Chander, BANGALORE**

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

**Orissa POST**  
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



# national



**There is a clear anti-incumbency wave against the BJP government in Gujarat due to which Prime Minister Narendra Modi campaigned aggressively in the state**  
**ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM**

## HACKING ATTACK

After All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Delhi became the victim of hacking attack where Chinese involvement was suspected, another top hospital in the national capital, the Safdarjung Hospital has also been hit



## of the day quote

We all believe that India is a country which has always been peace loving. War and violence were never our nature. India neither attacked any other country, nor it occupied even an inch of any other country's land. This is India's character

**RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER**

There is no necessity for the differently-abled persons to go to office to work. We are going to create an ambience that would facilitate working from home

**MK STALIN | TN CM**

The Assam government has received approval from the Centre for re-construction of road network damaged in Dima Hasao district in this year's flood and landslides, and for conversion of wooden bridges to concrete ones

**HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM**

# 50% voting in MCD polls; AAP, BJP claim victory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** Around 50 per cent voting was recorded Sunday in the election to the 250 municipal wards in Delhi, with main rivals BJP and AAP claiming victory in the high-stakes contest.

No major glitches in electronic voting machines were reported and the voting passed off peacefully with high security observed at the 3,360 critical booths in 493 locations where more than 25,000 police personnel, nearly 13,000 home guards and 100 companies of paramilitary forces were deployed, officials said.

Several people in North-East Delhi and some other areas complained that their names were missing from the voters' lists. Anil Kumar, the Delhi Congress president, was among the people who could not vote. The BJP said it has filed a complaint with the state election commission over the missing names.

Election officials said that nearly 50 per cent polling was reported by



5.30 pm when the voting time ended. However, the figure is likely to rise as many people who reported before 5.30 pm and were queued up at the polling booths were casting their votes. The results will be announced on December 7.

Garbage collection and landfills emerged as one of the biggest issues in the fight between the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the BJP, which has been

controlling municipal bodies for 15 years. The polls are crucial for the AAP and its leader Arvind Kejriwal as they seek expansion of the party ahead of 2024 general elections in the country.

A victory in the MCD polls will not only cement AAP's place in Delhi but will fuel its aspiration to emerge as a serious contender to the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the national

scene. The BJP, which had deployed its top leaders, including national president JP Nadda, 19 Union ministers like Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari and Piyush Goyal and chief ministers of six states in the campaign, is also seeking redemption through a morale-boosting victory.

The party received a drubbing at the hands of AAP in the 2020 Delhi Assembly polls and won just

eight of the 70 seats. With a unified MCD led by a mayor of the party, the BJP can continue to challenge the AAP and Kejriwal in the national capital's politics.

There were 1,349 candidates in the fray and over 1.45 crore electors were eligible to exercise their franchise. Earlier in the day, Kejriwal urged people to exercise their franchise for setting up an honest establishment in the

Municipal Corporation of Delhi that delivers results.

Meanwhile, several voters were disappointed after their names were missing from the voters' list.

"I came here to cast my vote for the first time. I found that my name is not mentioned in the list. Officials don't have a clue. I am standing for the past few hours but nobody is helping me." 19-year-old Puneet Kumar said.

# Voting in bypolls to 1 LS, 6 Assembly seats today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** Voting will be held Monday in bypolls to six assembly seats in five states and the Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat in Uttar Pradesh, where the Samajwadi Party is locked in a high-voltage contest with the BJP.

Rampur Sadar and Khatauli in Uttar Pradesh, Padampur in Odisha, Sardarshahar in Rajasthan, Kurhani in Bihar and Bhanupratappur in Chhattisgarh are the assembly seats where the bypolls will be held.

Election authorities have made elaborate arrangements for the by-elections. The counting of votes for the single parliamentary and six assembly seats will be held on December 8, coinciding with the ballot count for Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh assembly elections.

In Uttar Pradesh, a direct contest between the BJP and the Samajwadi Party-Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) alliance is on the cards in bypolls to the Rampur Sadar and Khatauli assembly seats and the Mainpuri Lok Sabha constituency. The BSP and



the Congress are not contesting from the seats.

According to a statement issued by the office of Uttar Pradesh's Chief Electoral Officer, 24.43 lakh people will exercise their voting rights in the bypolls. This includes 13.14 lakh male voters, 11.29 lakh female voters and 132 third category voters, it said.

Voting will take place from 7 am to 6 pm at 3,062 polling booths located in 1,945 polling centres. While the bypoll to the Mainpuri parliamentary seat is taking place due to the death of Samajwadi Party (SP)

founder Mulayam Singh Yadav, in Rampur Sadar and Khatauli, the polls were necessitated after SP MLA Azam Khan and BJP MLA Vikram Singh Saini were disqualified following their conviction in separate cases.

While Khan was disqualified after a court awarded him three-year imprisonment in a 2019 hate speech case, Saini lost his membership of the assembly after his conviction in a 2013 Muzaffarnagar riots case. The outcomes of the bypolls will not have any impact on the central or the state governments as the BJP enjoys a

comfortable majority at both levels.

However, wins would provide a psychological advantage ahead of the 2024 general elections. Mulayam Singh Yadav's elder daughter-in-law Dimple Yadav is the SP candidate in Mainpuri while the BJP has fielded Raghuraj Singh Shukla, a former confidant of Mulayam's brother Shivpal Singh Yadav. Dimple Yadav is the wife of SP president Akhilesh Yadav.

While Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is hoping to demolish the key Samajwadi Party (SP) citadels after wresting Azamgarh and Rampur Lok Sabha seats in June bypolls, the SP is keen to turn the tide with the public show of unity by Shivpal and Akhilesh, who declared that they have bridged their differences.

The Sardarshahar seat in Rajasthan was held by Congress MLA Bhanwar Lal Sharma (77) who passed away on October 9 after a prolonged illness. The Congress has fielded the late Sharma's son Anil Kumar while former MLA Ashok Kumar is the BJP candidate. Eight other candidates are in the fray.

# 'Allotting tickets to women against Islam'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ahmedabad, Dec 4:** The Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid in Ahmedabad Sunday said allotting tickets to women in elections is a rebellion against Islam and weakens the religion.

Talking to reporters here on the eve of the second and final phase of polling for the Gujarat Assembly elections, the Shahi Imam, Shabbir Ahmed Siddiqui, said women are not allowed to offer Namaz (prayer performed by Muslims) because they have a certain position in Islam.

"If you talk about Islam...Do you see even a single woman offering Namaz? Namaz has great importance in Islam. Had it been justified in Islam for women to come before people, they (women)

would not have been stopped (from entering) the mosque. "Women are stopped from visiting mosques because they have a certain status in Islam. Whoever (whichever party) gives tickets to (Muslim) women rebels against Islam. Don't you have men (candidates) that you are bringing in women? This will weaken our religion," the Shahi Imam said.

Voting for 93 out of 182 Assembly seats will be held across 14 central and northern districts of Gujarat on Monday. The first phase of voting for 89 seats in Saurashtra, Kutch and south Gujarat regions was held on December 1, when an average voter turnout of 63.31 per cent was recorded. The counting of votes will be taken up on December 8.

## SHORT TAKES

### 6 dead, 10 injured

**Ratlam (MP):** At least six persons were killed and 10 others injured, eight of them critically, when a speeding truck rammed into a group of people standing at a roadside bus stop in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district on Sunday evening, police said. The incident occurred at a traffic intersection near Satrudra village on Ratlam-Lebad Road, about 30 km away from the Ratlam district headquarters. District Collector Narendra Kumar Suryavanshi said six persons were killed and ten others were injured.

### Five detained

**Sikar:** A day after gangster Raju Theth and another man were shot dead in Sikar district of Rajasthan, five people including a minor were detained on Sunday for their alleged involvement in the murder, a police official said. Two of them were injured in a brief encounter with police on Sunday, the official said. Theth was killed on Saturday in a hail of bullets outside his house here. A man, Tarachand Kadwasara, who had gone to meet his daughter studying in a coaching institute there was also hit by bullets and died. The assailants fired at him and stashed the key of his car and fled in it from the spot.

### Woman killed

**New Delhi:** In a shocking incident, a 53-year-old woman was beaten to death allegedly by her neighbours in outer Delhi's Bawana area, the police said. It has been alleged that the accused poured chilli powder in the eyes and private parts of the victim before thrashing her to death, sources said. However, the police have not confirmed the chilli powder angle.



Daredevil motorcycle team of Border Security Force performs during the 58th BSF Raising Day function at Guru Nanak Dev University, in Amritsar

# Mumbai woman gangraped, tortured

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Dec 4:** A 42-year-old woman was allegedly gangraped by three persons who entered her home, attacked her with a sharp weapon and gave her burn injuries on her private parts with cigarettes, a Mumbai police official said on Sunday.

The incident took place in Kurla in the early hours of Wednesday, the official said.

"The accused raped her one by one and also performed unnatural sex. They singed her private parts with cigarettes and attacked her with a sharp weapon on the chest and both arms. One of the accused videoed the incident and threatened to circulate it if she approached police," he said. The woman narrated her ordeal to neighbours, who got in touch with an NGO and an FIR was registered, the Kurla police station official said.

The trio has been charged under Indian Penal Code sections 376 (rape), 376D (gang rape), 377 (unnatural sex), 324 (voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapon) and other offences and efforts were on to nab them, he said.

# Navy discovers vintage cannons from Hooghly river bank

Five cannons, probably of World War I vintage, were discovered by the Navy from the river bank in Kolkata, a senior official at its Bengal area headquarters said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Dec 4:** It was not a treasure hunt but Indian Navy personnel did hit upon a jackpot of a different kind while clearing a piece of land on the banks of the Hooghly river.

Five cannons, probably of World War I vintage, were discovered by the Navy from the river bank in Kolkata, a senior official at its Bengal area headquarters said. Two of these British-era cannons were refurbished and painted in black, white and red motifs, and mounted at the INS Netaji Subhas, the Indian Navy's Bengal area base headquarters here. Captain Joydeep Chakraborty said



that they came across the cannons while clearing a piece of land on the left bank of the Hooghly. The cannons are probably of World War I vintage and meant for being mounted on ships," he said.

Four of the five canons, discovered in mid-2021, were retrieved this year from the land, which earlier was part of the river bed. The last one is in the process of being lifted from the ground where it is embedded, he said.

Captain Chakraborty said that the land at Daighat near Kidderpore docks earlier belonged to the Kolkata Port, and was taken from them by the Navy for the construction of a facility there. While clearing the land of weed and rubbish, the workers came across a British-era cannon when the spade of one of them made a metallic sound on hitting the ground.

"Upon clearing the place, a cannon was discovered and further search led to the discovery of four more," he said. Four of the cannons were excavated and brought to the Navy House, with two of these having been mounted there, Commander Sudipto Moitra, the chief spokesperson of the Bengal area, said.

These did not bear any manufacturing marks, making it difficult to trace their origin. These may have been manufactured here for British warships, Captain Chakraborty said. Plans are on to refurbish and mount the other cannons at the Navy's other establishments here, Commander Moitra said.

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		From	To
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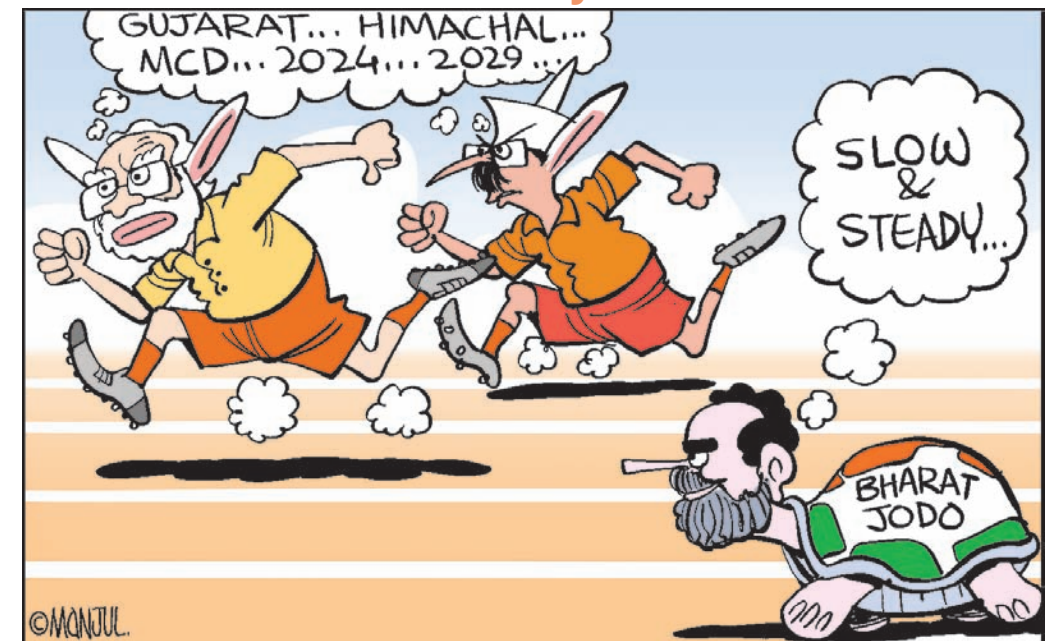
# Curtains down on MiO Conclave 3.0



Exhibition, mouth-watering delicacies at food court, cultural programme and glittering fireworks mark the concluding day of the Make in Odisha (MiO) Conclave 2022 at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

PHOTOS: BIKASH NAYAK

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## Odissi, Bharatnatyam enthral audience at Konark Festival

**Bhubaneswar:** Odissi and Bharatnatyam enthralled the audience on the fourth day of the Konark Festival, Sunday. The first set of performances saw Leela Samson and Group of Spanda Dance Company from Chennai performing three Bharatnatyam dance recitals. The rhythm and music composition for the performances were by composer Tirugokaranam Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar and choreography by Leela Samson. The second half of the show saw Odissi performances by Pitambar Biswal and Group of Suravi from Bhubaneswar. The music composition for the performance was made by Himanshu Sekhar Swain, the rhythm composition by Guru Dhaneswar Swain, the script by Guru Ramarao Patra and the choreography by Guru Pitambar Biswal.

## Odisha startups crowd-puller at flagship investors' summit

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 4:** The third edition of state's flagship investors' summit— Make in Odisha (MiO) Conclave 2022— at Janata Maidan here, wherein Odisha received an impressive ₹10.50 lakh crore investment intents, came to an end, Sunday. Stalls showcasing products of national and international companies, government agencies and startups, especially Odisha-based ones, witnessed huge footfall of visitors. Odisha-based startups on ideas like drone enterprise, apparel brand management, diesel generator monitoring system, notes sharing platform and healthcare system, which showcased their products at the conclave, were crowd puller. Orissa POST takes a look at some of the startups.

IG Drones, a drone solution enterprise from Odisha, which has been offering services to power line monitoring, road inspection, smart city, mine survey, industrial survey, pipeline survey, agricultural survey, railway survey and river mapping, showcased its new drone 'IG Drones Kisaan' at the conclave. The drone will help the farmers spray fertilizers at the farmlands without any manual labour, said IG Drones co-founder Om Prakash. Another point of attraction in the mega event was Yoobbel, a plat-



form which lets influencers, entrepreneurs or any potential individual to start their own apparel brand with nothing but just few clicks and zero investment. Vishaka Mohanta of Yoobbel said not every platform out there acknowledges its customers' needs while providing exceptional quality products, with an array of unmatched quirky designs to pick from. Yoobbel offers to handover your game in your own hand by letting you create your apparel brand all by yourself. "An amalgamation of creativity, skill and talent is what makes Yoobbel a perfect hub for your merchandise solution. We believe in standing up to our expectations while serving through the best platform of its kind," said Mohanta.

Lecture Notes, a platform for sharing undergraduate notes containing more than 80 lakh pages of student notes, faculty notes, solved previous year question papers and much more also drew crowds. Aditya Mohapatra product manager of Lecture Notes said, "Every learner should be able to access premium quality study material anytime, anywhere." "We aim at becoming the largest end-to-end platform for undergrad students, to empower them and to service all their related needs that remain unsolved till now." Founded in 2018, EzeRx is a Med-Tech and BioTech startup committed towards providing innovative solutions by manufacturing highly advanced medical devices.

## 2.57L Padampur voters to decide fate of 10 in fray

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 4:** A total of 2,57,474 voters – 1,29,497 males, 1,27,965 females and 12 transgenders – will exercise their franchise at 319 booths of Padampur Assembly constituency in Bargarh district, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) SK Lohani said Sunday. "Bargarh Superintendent of Police Smith Parmar has been tasked with the responsibility of looking into the law and order situation during the byelection. Special web casting arrangements

have been made in 120 booths, and 66 have been fitted with CCTVs. As many as 91 micro observers will be deployed at the booths, each of which will be having four polling personnel," Lohani said. Around 79 booths have been marked 'critical', and 15 have been made 'model booths' with facilities such as ramp, temporary shed, separate queues and drinking water. A ban has been

### FIGURES SAY IT ALL

91 micro observers will be deployed at the booths, each of which will be having four polling personnel. Around 79 booths have been marked 'critical', and 15 have been made 'model booths' with facilities such as ramp, temporary shed, separate queues and drinking water.

imposed on broadcasting of exit polls during voting December 5, the CEO said. Pick-up and drop arrangements have been made for voters with physical disabilities, he said, adding the entry and exit points of Padampur will remain sealed for the bypoll. Official sources said 16,424 cases of public property misuse and 8,695

cases of defacement have been recorded. One case of misuse of vehicle and one of violation of loud speaker norms have also been filed. As many as 14 FIRs have been registered against various persons for violating the model code of conduct or for other crimes, the sources said. Campaigning in Padampur ended on a bitter note Saturday with senior BJP leader and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan urging the voters not to trust the ruling BJD, a statement which was strongly objected to by the regional party.



of the day quote

A governor is the representative of the President of India and there should be some criteria on who can be appointed to such a post. I demand such rules be framed

The AAP government introduced the 'Lalu model' in a new avatar in Delhi and bungled crores of rupees by enlisting fake names as beneficiaries under the construction workers' welfare board

India's bio-economy has grown eight times in the last 8 years under the Modi government from 10 billion dollars in 2014 to over 80 billion dollars in 2022

SHORT TAKES

Bogtui massacre: Key accused held

Kolkata: After over eight months of searching, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) nabbed Lalan Sheikh, the principal accused behind the massacre at the Bogtui village in West Bengal's Birbhum district. Eight persons were killed in the carnage that happened on March 21. CBI sources informed on Sunday morning that Lalan Sheikh was nabbed following a special raid by a team of investigating sleuths late Saturday night. However, the central agency sleuths refused to disclose other details relating to the matter, including the place from where Sheikh was arrested.

Prof loses ₹23L in online scam

Chennai: A Tiruchy-based professor, who was unemployed after returning from Saudi Arabia during Covid-19, lost Rs 23.5 lakh to an online scam. Tiruchy police said that Prem Navas of Tirumurugan Nagar, Musri Taluk of Tiruchy district after losing his teaching job in Saudi Arabia was searching for new job openings abroad through online job sites.

Minor girl raped

Meerut: An 11-year-old girl was allegedly kidnapped by a driver, raped, and then dropped on a road in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut district. A case has been registered at the Ganganagar police station on the complaint filed by the girl's mother. She has alleged that her daughter, on Saturday, had gone to get milk and on the way, she was taken away by someone in a car, and then dropped on a road about an hour later, Circle Officer (Sadar Dehat) Devesh Singh said, adding that the woman has alleged that her daughter was raped.

Kuru Kolumn

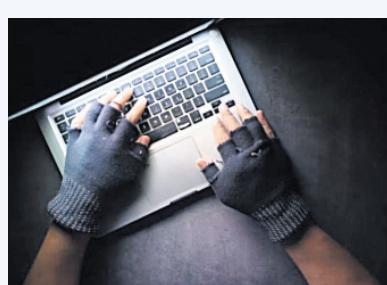
Modi-Dhankhar bonding buzz

The bonhomie between the Vice President of India, Jagdeep Dhankhar and Prime Minister Modi is keenly watched by political pundits. It is no secret that the relationship between the PM and former Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu was not cordial. Knowledgeable sources say that

Cyber attacks triple in last 3 yrs, but funds underutilised

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE  
New Delhi, Dec 4: The number of cyber attacks in the country has witnessed three-fold increase over as many years, however, the funds meant for cybersecurity have been underutilised with only Rs 98.31 crore used of the total Rs 213 crore sanctioned. According to government data, in 2019, total number of cyber security incidents tracked by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) was 3,94,499. The number spiked to 11,58,208 in the year 2020 and further increased to 14,02,809 in 2021. This year, as many as 6,74,021 cyber security incidents were reported till June.

Cyber attack which has put All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi's servers out of order on November 23 is yet to be resolved completely. Multiple agencies have been looking into the cyber attack at the crucial installation of the country. While a case has been registered, the CERT-IN, Delhi Police and other investigating agencies are probing the incident. On December 1, cyber attackers briefly hacked the Ministry of Jal Shakti's Twitter handle, the second major cyber attack on a government site. With the borderless cyberspace coupled with the anonymity,



along with rapid growth of the Internet, rise in cyber security incidents is a global phenomenon. A Parliamentary standing committee in

its report this year observed that there is a significant surge in cyber incidents and cyber security breaches and it is imperative that capabilities and resilience of the country to deal with imminent dangers on cyber space are enhanced proportionately. "Cyber security has to remain at the forefront of agenda/priority items for the Ministry and no fund crunch should come in the way of ensuring a safe ecosystem as far as the cyberworld is concerned. In fact the Committee feels that the Ministry must dovetail their efforts to achieve a more secured cyberworld especially in the wake of renewed challenges in this space.

"The Committee, therefore, recommends that funds for cyber security may be increased on a year on basis to forestall any failures in this domain for sheer lack of funds," it said. The report also cited lower fund utilisation with respect to CERT-in, National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC) and data governance. "So, far as the underutilisation of funds under the head is concerned, an amount of Rs 216 crore had been allocated in BE (Budget Estimate) stage during 2021-22, which was reduced to Rs 213 crore at RE (Revised Estimate) stage and actual utilisation till January, 2022 has been 98.31 crore only," said the report.

Learning a lot during Bharat Jodo Yatra: Rahul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jhalawar, Dec 4: Rahul Gandhi Sunday said he is learning a lot during his Bharat Jodo Yatra which entered the Congress-ruled Rajasthan to a grand welcome by party workers at Jhalawar. The yatra entered Rajasthan at the Chanwli Chauraha here Sunday evening after spending 12 days in Madhya Pradesh, during which it covered a distance of 380 kms. Rahul Gandhi said he has no hatred in his heart towards the BJP and the RSS, but he will not let them "spread hatred in the country". He said he is learning immensely from the foot march. "Things that cannot be understood while travelling in an aeroplane, a helicopter or a vehicle." "It is only after shaking hands with farmers that one understands what they are doing. This cannot

be learnt from a helicopter," he said. Targeting the central government, he said that only three-four industrialists are benefitting under this dispensation which is not in the interest of the country. The yatra entered the Congress-ruled Rajasthan Sunday evening amid excitement among party workers and a well-coordinated attempt to paper over differences between Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his former deputy Sachin Pilot. A grand welcome was given to Rahul at Chanwli chauraha in Jhalawar. Rahul Gandhi along with Ashok Gehlot, Sachin Pilot, PCC chief Govind Singh Dotasra held hands and danced in a circle together with folk artistes on the stage. The cultural artistes presented performances including the famous 'Padharo Mhare Des' on the occasion.



Members of the Zeliang community perform during the fourth day of Hornbill Festival, at Kisama near Kohima, Nagaland

Kharge calls for 'top to bottom' accountability

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge Sunday sent out a stern message to leaders to perform or make way for others, and strongly pitched for accountability of office-bearers "from top to bottom" as he presided over the first meeting of the party's steering committee. During the meeting at the AICC headquarters here, the Congress also decided to hold its plenary session in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, in the second half of February, where Kharge's election as president would be ratified. As the Congress plans to end the Bharat Jodo Yatra by January 26, the Committee decided to continue its mass outreach with the 'Haath Se Haath Jodo Abhiyan (Joining Hands campaign)' till March 26, during which foot marches will be taken out from village to block and district levels and will culminate as public rallies at state headquarters. The party will also hand out a letter by Rahul Gandhi talking about the core message of the yatra, along with a "charge sheet" against the Modi government. The party also plans to take out state-level marches



by women party workers across the country which will be led by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. In his introductory remarks at the meeting, Kharge batted for organisational accountability in the party and said those unable to fulfill their responsibilities will have to make way for their colleagues. He also asked whether the party in-charges have visited their respective areas for even 10 days in a month. He also asked state in-charges to submit a roadmap for holding mass movements for raising people's issues over a period of 30 to 90 days

and sought a schedule of planned programmes in states where elections are due before 2024. "I believe that the biggest part of our responsibility towards the party and the country is - organisational accountability from top to bottom. If the Congress organisation is strong, accountable and lives up to the expectations of the people, only then we will be able to win elections and serve the people of the country," the Congress chief said. During the meeting of the steering committee, which replaced the party's top decision-making body Congress Working Committee (CWC) till the plenary, the party stressed on unity and urged members to work with a sense of collective purpose to ensure the Congress' victory. The Congress is mired in factionalism in several states including in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, the two states where it is in power of its own. "The victory of the party will be the victory of every leader and karyakarta and a victory for the idea of India that guided our freedom movement and is enshrined in our Constitution," the party statement said.

Girl brutalised, left with abdomen cut open in UP



The student was found dead with her abdomen cut open and visceral organs scattered all around, police said

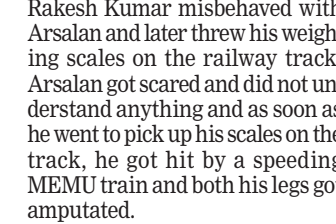
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE  
Pilibhit (Uttar Pradesh), Dec 4: In a gruesome murder, a nine-year-old girl was brutalised, mutilated and left to die in a wheat field on the outskirts of Madhopur village under the Amaria police station in Pilibhit. The Class 3 student was found dead with her abdomen cut open and visceral organs scattered all around, police said. According to the girl's father, Anis Ahmad, Anam had gone with her uncle, Shadab Ahmad, to attend a religious function in a nearby village, Sarainda Patti, on Friday night. She mysteriously went missing that night. The family kept looking for her and finally managed to find her on Saturday. "I immediately called for an ambulance as she was still breathing. On the way to the hospital, she tried to disclose the name of her at-

tacker but before she could do so, she succumbed to her injuries," Anis Ahmad said. Superintendent of Police Dinesh Kumar Prabhu rushed to the spot to take stock of the situation. Police have registered an FIR against a local villager, named Shaqil Vaistava and taken him into custody. According to police, Anis Ahmad had an old enmity with Shaqil. In fact, an FIR had been filed regarding the case and it is still pending in court. SHO Mukesh Shukla said, "A blood-stained knife was recovered from a field located at a distance of about 500 metres from the murder spot. The forensic team has collected all the necessary evidence. The accused has been booked under IPC section 302 (murder)." SP Prabhu said, "Based on the autopsy report, we have ruled out rape as of now. Further investigation in the matter is underway."

UP vendor loses legs during police raids

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kanpur, Dec 4: A 17-year-old vegetable vendor lost his legs after he was run over by a train while he was trying to pick up his weighing scales that were allegedly thrown by the police on the track in Kalyanpur area of Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur district, police said. The victim, Arsalan a.k.a. Laddu, was referred to the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS) in Lucknow, after his condition was reported to be critical. Taking serious cognisance of the incident, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) (West), Vijay Dhul, has suspended the accused Head Constable with immediate effect. An inquiry has also been set up in the matter. His family members alleged that Arsalan was selling vegetables on the GT Road side next to Kalyanpur crossing when Sub-Inspector Shadab Khan and Head Constable



Rakesh Kumar misbehaved with Arsalan and later threw his weighing scales on the railway track. Arsalan got scared and did not understand anything and as soon as he went to pick up his scales on the track, he got hit by a speeding MEMU train and both his legs got amputated. As soon as the information about the matter was received by senior police officials, DCP West reached the spot. During preliminary investigation, the allegations that the vendor was beaten up and later his scales were thrown on the railway track, were found to be true. "The role of the accompanying Sub-Inspector is also being probed," said the DCP, adding, "The investigation into the case has been given to Kalyanpur ACP Vikas Pandey." Meanwhile, doctors have said that Arsalan's condition has worsened due to excessive loss of blood along with amputation of his legs.

there was no warmth between them. But Dhankhar-Modi chemistry is being witnessed with considerable interest. Highly-placed sources say that Modi drove down to the Vice President's House at 6 Maulana Azad Marg last month and was closeted with Dhankhar for nearly two hours. No official statement or photograph was released of this meeting. What transpired between Dhankhar and Modi during the meeting is not immediately known. It seems the PM shared his thoughts with Dhankhar on domestic and international affairs.

No number 2 in Modi govt

Union Home Minister Amit Shah doesn't mince words and is known for playing with a straight bat. The other day when someone complimented him for being number two in the Modi government, he bluntly said, "There is no number two in the Modi government. No one should remain under any illusion. There is number one only and his name is PM Modi. We all

work under Modiji. We do as directed by number one." Amit Shah may have put the record straight but in the process Defence Minister Rajnath Singh also got a signal who is presumed to be number two in the hierarchy. Technically, Rajnath Singh is considered as number two as he sits next to the Prime Minister in the Lok Sabha.

Mamata-Modi bonhomie

Even as skirmishes between the BJP-TMC continue at the lower levels in West Bengal, there is a sea change between the arch rivals at the national level. The first clue had come of this emerging bonhomie last month when no senior leader other than Partha Chatterjee was named in the Rs 50 crores cash haul in the teachers' recruitment scam. There was shock and disbelief in political circles that Mamata Banerjee was not even remotely linked by the Central agencies in the massive cash haul. Within weeks, a new Governor was appointed by the Modi government in West Bengal who is playing cool and is not

aggressive at all as his predecessor was. As if this was not enough, Mamata Banerjee also invited her arch rival and BJP's Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari for a cup of tea. If Mamata is cozying up to the BJP leadership, the saffron party has also realised that prolonged bitterness will not serve any political purpose either. Perhaps, Modi wants Mamata's cooperation in passing some key legislation in Parliament as the TMC is the third largest group.

What's cooking?

Even as the Congress and AAP are blaming each other of having a 'tacit understanding' with the BJP, reports have emanated from Gujarat that individual candidates in select constituencies are trying to work out a deal. The AAP has realized that it has a support base in urban areas, parts of Saurashtra and tribal belt. The AAP doesn't have too much of a presence in rural areas where the Congress has its traditional base.

Therefore, some of the AAP's candidates are working in tandem in rural areas to help the Congress. Similarly, the Congress candidates in some urban seats are playing cool. The BJP continues to be worried about a dozen seats where its rebels have refused to bow out.

Can Kharge resurrect Congress?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a relentless campaign making "Congress Mukht Bharat" since 2014. His campaign, however, partially succeeded in 2022 as the party became "Gandhi-Mukt Congress" when Mallikarjun Kharge took over its reins. But even the "Gandhi Mukht Congress" experiment may take more time as Sonia Gandhi continues to be chairperson of the UPA and the other two Gandhis are part of the 47-member Steering Committee. Kharge has a tough task in hand to win Himachal and Gujarat Assembly polls by gearing up Congress' machinery and taking advantage of the anti-incumbency against the BJP.



# international



Putin is not sincere about peace talks with Ukraine as he is taking the war to a new level of barbarism by trying to turn off the lights of civilians

VICTORIA NULAND | UNDER SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, US

## 1,700 SEALS FOUND DEAD

About 1,700 seals have been found dead on the Caspian Sea coast in southern Russia, officials said Sunday. The authorities said that it's still unclear what caused the animals' deaths, but they likely died of natural reasons



## of the day quote

One Earth. One Family. One Future. India has taken over the presidency of #G20India! I trust my friend @NarendraModi to bring us together in order to build peace and a more sustainable world

EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

Our message to the unions is to say this is not a time to strike, this is a time to try and negotiate. We're looking at the military, we're looking at a specialist response force... a surge capacity

NADHIM ZAHAWI | CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, UK

There is bound to be more infections but it is not something we have not seen before. This year alone, we have already seen three infection waves

ONG YE KUNG | HEALTH MINISTER, SINGAPORE

## SHORT TAKES

### Iran executes four

Dubai: Iran Sunday executed four men convicted of cooperating with Israel's spy agency Mossad. Iranian state media reported that the country's Supreme Court had upheld the death sentence handed out to the four men "for the crime of cooperating with the intelligence services of the Zionist regime and for kidnapping". Three other people were handed prison sentences of between five and 10 years after being convicted of crimes that included acting against national security, aiding in kidnapping, and possessing illegal weapons.

### El Salvador sends 10,000 cops, army

San Salvador: The government of El Salvador sent 10,000 soldiers and police to seal off a town on the outskirts of the nation's capital Saturday to search for gang members. The operation was one of the largest mobilizations yet in President Nayib Bukele's nine-month-old crackdown on street gangs that long extorted money from businesses and ruled many neighborhoods of the capital, San Salvador. The troops blocked roads going in and out of the township of Soyapango, checking people's documents. Special teams went into the town looking for gang suspects

### Nepal ruling party leading parl polls

Kathmandu: Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's Nepali Congress-led ruling coalition Sunday maintained its lead in Nepal's parliamentary election after its candidate from Syangja constituency No 2 Dhanraj Gurung won the election from the seat, sources said. Gurung secured 31,466 votes against his nearest rival Padma Kumari Aryal of the CPN (UML) who bagged 25,839 votes, the Election Commission sources said. With this the Nepali Congress (NC) tally has risen to 57 in the House of Representatives (HoR) under direct election followed by CPN-UML, which has won 44 seats so far.

### Rare anti-govt protest in Syria

Beirut: Protests in Syria's Druze-majority Sweida province turned violent Sunday leading to the deaths of a protester and a police officer, and wounding seven others. Anti-government demonstrations are rare in Syria where President Bashar Assad stamped out a pro-democracy uprising over a decade ago. Assad survived the resulting civil war but the conflict has plunged Syria into poverty, coupled with a food security and energy crisis.

## DISPUTED KASHMIR

# Ready for war: Pak Army chief

THE MAIDEN VISIT CAME LESS THAN A WEEK SINCE GENERAL ASIM MUNIR TOOK CHARGE OF PAKISTAN'S POWERFUL MILITARY, AND WERE AMONG HIS STRONGEST PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON ARCH-RIVAL INDIA SINCE TAKING UP THE ROLE

AGENCIES

Islamabad, Dec 4: Pakistan's newly-appointed Army chief General Asim Munir Saturday said that if his country is attacked, the Pakistani armed forces will "not only defend every inch of our motherland, but to take the fight back to the enemy."

Munir made the remarks during his first-ever visit to troops in the frontline areas in Rakhchikri Sector of the Line of Control (LoC) that divides the disputed Kashmir region, which is claimed by both Pakistan and India, Saturday.

"We have noticed highly irresponsible statements from Indian leadership on Gilgit Baltistan and Jammu and Kashmir recently. Let me make it categorically clear, Pakistan's armed forces are ever ready, not only to defend every inch of our motherland, but to take the fight back to the enemy, if ever, war is imposed on us," he said.

General Munir November 24 replaced General Qamar Javed Bajwa, who retired after serving two consecutive three-year terms as the Army chief in the coup-prone country. Pakistan's generals retain a strong influence over security matters and foreign affairs, according to analysts, and Pakistan's army chief will play a key role in man-



Let me make it categorically clear, Pakistan's armed forces are ever ready, not only to defend every inch of our motherland, but to take the fight back to the enemy if ever war is imposed on us. Indian state will never be able to achieve her nefarious designs

ASIM MUNIR | ARMY CHIEF, PAKISTAN

aging risks of conflict with India on its eastern border, while also dealing with potential friction with Afghanistan on its western frontier.

During his visit to the frontline areas, Chief of Army Staff Gen Munir was briefed on the latest situation along LoC and operational preparedness of the formation.

General Munir interacted with officers and soldiers, appreciating their high morale, professional competence and combat readiness while performing their duties in challenging conditions.

He also talked about some recent statements by Indian officials about Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. "Any misconception resulting into a misadventure will always be met with the full might of our armed forces backed by a resilient nation," he said.

Earlier on arrival at the LoC, Lieutenant General Shahid Imtiaz, Corps Commander Rawalpindi, received the Army chief.

Relations between India and Pakistan have been strained over the Kashmir issue and cross-bor-

The two South Asian nuclear powers both claim the Kashmir region in full, but rule only parts, and have fought two of their three wars over the area

Both sides often accuse each other of breaching a 2003 ceasefire pact by shelling and firing across the LoC, a 740-km de facto border that cuts Kashmir into two

Since early 2021, the LoC has been mostly quiet, following the renewal of a ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan

der terrorism emanating from Pakistan. The ties between the two countries nosedived after India abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution, revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcating the State into two Union Territories August 5, 2019.

India's decision evoked strong reaction from Pakistan, which downgraded diplomatic ties and expelled the Indian envoy. Trade ties between Pakistan and India have largely been frozen since then.

India has told Pakistan that the entire Union Territory of Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh were and will always be an integral and inalienable part of the country.

## Chinese astronauts return safely after six-month mission

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Dec 4: China's spaceship, the Shenzhou-14, carrying three astronauts who lived in its orbiting space station for six months touched down at the Dongfeng landing site in north Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region safely Sunday, official media here reported.

Minutes after the capsule landed, grounded crews pulled out the three astronauts - Chen Dong, Liu Yang and Cai Xuzhe - one after another from the capsule in a nationally televised operation.

Earlier, the Shenzhou-14 carrying the three detached from the space station. The three astronauts have lived and worked in the space station complex for 183 days.

They were replaced by another three astronauts flown to the under-construction space station by the Shenzhou-15 spaceship November 29. The three Shenzhou-14 astronauts were sent to the space station June 5.

China plans to complete the Space station by the end of this year, amid intensifying competition with the United States.

This will be the last flight mission in the construction phase of China's Space Station, official media reported.

Once ready, China will be the only country to own a space station.

The International Space Station (ISS) of Russia is a collaborative project of several countries. China Space Station (CSS) is also expected to be a competitor to the ISS built by Russia.

Observers say the CSS may become the sole space station to remain in orbit once the ISS retires in the coming years.

## Israeli aircraft hits Gaza after rocket fire

Over 140 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli-Palestinian fighting this year

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gaza City, Dec 4: Israeli aircraft struck several military sites in the Gaza Strip early Sunday, hours after Palestinian militants fired a missile into southern Israel in a move apparently linked to rising tension in the occupied West Bank, Israel said.

The Israeli military said the airstrikes targeted a weapons manufacturing facility and an underground tunnel belonging to Hamas, the militant group that has controlled Gaza since 2007. The military said more projectiles were fired over the border while war-

planes were hitting the Gaza sites.

No Palestinian group claimed responsibility for the Saturday evening rocket, which landed in an open area near the Gaza-Israel fence. The border has been quiet since August's three-day blitz between Israel and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, a powerful Gaza group that is smaller than the dominant Hamas.

Hamas and other factions have largely honored the unofficial understandings that have kept the situation in the impoverished territory calm in exchange for thousands of Israeli work permits. Israel and Egypt maintain a blockade on Gaza to prevent Hamas from

stocking up weapons.

Critics of the blockade say it is a form of collective punishment that harms Gaza's 2.3 million people.

While Gaza remained quiet, tension has been boiling for months in the West Bank, where the Palestinian Authority exerts limited self-rule in parts of the territory.

The military says the raids are meant to dismantle militant networks and thwart future attacks, but the Palestinians say they entrench Israel's open-ended occupation, now in its 56th year. A recent wave of Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets killed an additional nine people.

SEMERU, THE TALLEST MOUNTAIN ON JAVA, ERUPTED LAST YEAR KILLING OVER 50 PEOPLE AND DISPLACING THOUSANDS

REUTERS

Jakarta, Dec 4: A volcano erupted in Indonesia Sunday spewing a cloud of ash 15 km into the sky and forcing the evacuation of nearly 2,000 people, authorities said, as they issued their highest warning for the area in the east of Java island.

There were no immediate reports of any casualties from the eruption of the Semeru volcano and Indonesia's transport ministry said that there was no impact on air travel but notices had been sent to two regional airports for vigilance.

"Most roads have been closed since this morning and now it is

## Indonesia's Semeru volcano erupts



SMOKE & ASH: Mount Semeru releases volcanic materials during an eruption Sunday in Lumajang, East Java, Indonesia

raining volcanic ash and it has covered the view of the mountain," community volunteer Bayu Denny Alfianto told Reuters by telephone from near the volcano.

Indonesia's disaster mitigation agency (BNPB) said 1,979 people

had been moved to 11 shelters and authorities had distributed masks to residents. The eruption began at 2:46 am and rescue, search and evacuation efforts were going on.

The volcano's plume of ash reached a height of 50,000 feet (15

## WAR SPILLS TO OIL

# Russia will not export oil subject to Western price cap: Deputy PM



Selling oil and gas to Europe has been one of the main sources for Russian foreign currency earnings since Soviet geologists found oil and gas in the swamps of Siberia in the decades after WW II

REUTERS

Moscow, Dec 4: Russia, the world's second largest oil exporter, will not sell oil that is subject to a Western price cap even if it has to cut production, President Vladimir Putin's point man on energy said.

The Group of Seven and Australia on Friday agreed a \$60 per barrel price cap on Russian seaborne crude oil after European Union members overcame resistance from Poland.

The move by the West to prohibit shipping, insurance and re-insurance companies from handling cargoes of Russian crude above the cap, is an attempt to punish Putin for the Ukraine conflict.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said Sunday the move by the West was a gross interference which contradicted the rules of free trade and would destabilise global energy markets by triggering a shortage of supply.

"We are working on mechanisms to prohibit the use of a price cap instrument, regardless of what level is set, because such interference could further destabilise the market," said Novak, who is the Russian government official in charge of the country's oil, gas, atomic energy and coal.

Russia working on mechanism to prohibit price cap

Russia would rather accept production cut

West imposes \$60/barrel cap on Russian seaborne crude

"We will sell oil and petroleum products only to those countries that will work with us under market conditions, even if we have to reduce production a little," he added.

Novak said the Western cap could trigger trouble in the products markets and could affect other countries beside Russia.

### 'FROZEN'

It is unclear what, if any, immediate impact the Western cap will have on Russian oil flows because the discounted price to Brent for Russian blends has widened so significantly.

A source who asked not to be identified due to the sensitivity of the situation told Reuters that a decree was being prepared to prohibit Russian companies and traders from interacting with countries and companies guided by the cap.

In essence, such a decree would ban the export of oil and petroleum products to countries and companies that apply it.

Since he ordered the February 24 military operation in Ukraine, Putin says the United States and its allies have embarked on economic war against Russia with the most severe sanctions in modern history, warning that they will face a energy crisis.

Putin in September warned the West that he could cut off energy supplies if price caps were imposed, telling them that Europe would be "frozen" like a wolf's tail in a well-known Russian fairy tale.

## Historic 17th century crown to be modified for King Charles III

Set with over 2,000 diamonds, the Imperial State Crown was created in 1937 for the coronation of King George VI, the father of Elizabeth II

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

London, Dec 4: Britain's 17th-century St Edward's Crown, the centrepiece of the Crown Jewels, has been removed from display to be altered for the coronation of King Charles III, Buckingham Palace said Saturday.

The solid gold crown, encrusted with rubies, amethysts, sapphires, garnet, topazes and tourmalines, will undergo "modification work" for Charles III's coronation at

Westminster Abbey May 6 next year, the palace said.

The crown is the centrepiece of the Crown Jewels, a large collection of royal regalia housed in the Tower of London that attracts more than a million visitors per year. It has a purple velvet cap with an ermine band, is just over 30 cm (one foot) tall and very heavy. It was last worn by Queen Elizabeth II, at her coronation in 1953.

Charles III, 74, will be crowned along with his wife, Queen Consort



Camilla. The ceremony will be followed by a national holiday May 8. The crown was made for King Charles II in 1661 to replace a mediaeval crown though to date

back to Edward the Confessor.

The original had been melted down by parliamentarians after the execution of Charles I. For hundreds of years afterwards, the

crown was only carried in coronation processions because it was too heavy to wear. It was altered to make it lighter for the coronation of King George V in 1911 but still weighs 2.23 kilograms (nearly five pounds).

Charles III will only wear it at the moment he is crowned. When he leaves Westminster Abbey, Charles will wear the more modern Imperial State Crown, also used for occasions such as the opening of parliament.

Set with over 2,000 diamonds, the Imperial State Crown was created in 1937 for the coronation of King George VI, the father of Elizabeth II.

The coronation traditionally

takes place some months after a new sovereign has ascended to the throne, following a period of national and royal mourning, and intense preparation.

Charles immediately became king when his mother died September 8. He also took over as head of state of 14 Commonwealth countries, including Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

Concerned about public perceptions, he has reportedly requested a less lavish ceremony than the festivities held for Elizabeth II in 1953. The queen, who was 96, died at her Balmoral estate in Scotland after a year of declining health. She reigned for a record 70 years.



## of the day quote

We will watch the situation and evaluate our next step. The price decline in commodities is not secular and broad-based



**SURESH NARAYANAN** | CHAIRMAN AND MD, NESTLE INDIA

We are looking at... How we can get hydrogen from places like India, Australia and Latin America, where we think the cost of hydrogen production is really interesting



**GLENN LLEWELLYN** | VP (ZERO-EMISSION AIRCRAFT), AIRBUS

Global cues continue to cause volatility, but this week the market's focus will shift to domestic cues like RBI policy and state election results. The outcome of the RBI policy is scheduled for 7 December



**SANTOSH MEENA** | HEAD OF RESEARCH, SWASTIKA INVESTMART LTD

## SHORT TAKES

### Norms for PLI on drones out

**New Delhi:** The Ministry of Civil Aviation has issued guidelines for the implementation of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to support the indigenous drone industry. These guidelines cover aspects like the definitions, qualification and eligibility application and online portal project management agency (PMA), empowered group of secretaries (EGoS) and competent authority. To make India a global hub for research and development, testing, manufacturing, and operation of drones under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, the liberalised Drone Rules, 2021 were released to create a growth-oriented regulatory framework for drones. To facilitate further growth, the government has approved Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Drones and Drone Components in India. For the implementation of this scheme during 2022-23 to 2024-25, a corpus of Rs 120 crore has also been allocated.

### MSI likely to miss production target

**New Delhi:** Maruti Suzuki India's (MSI) challenge to produce 20 lakh units this fiscal may fall slightly short, according to company Senior Executive Officer, Marketing & Sales Shashank Srivastava. He, however said, the company is still counting on an outside chance to meet the challenge through execution of its pending orders that stands at around 3.75 lakh units. Earlier in August this year, Maruti Suzuki India Chairman RC Bhargava, in his address to shareholders in the company's annual report for 2021-22 had stated that the company will increase its production and will challenge to produce 20 lakh units in the ongoing fiscal with semiconductor availability improving. He has said that the new midsize SUV, Grand Vitara, was expected to play a key role in the challenge to touch 20 lakh units.

### NDTV open offer subscribed 32%

**New Delhi:** Billionaire Gautam Adani's group has found investors willing to sell over 53 lakh shares of NDTV despite the deep discount to the stock's current trading price, giving it the rights - which it may or may not exercise - to nominate a chairman of the broadcaster. The open offer, made after Adani group acquired a little known firm that gave it an indirect holding over 29.18 per cent stake in New Delhi Television (NDTV), closes December 5.



**A robust safety oversight system certified and acknowledged by the experts is sine qua non for flight safety and very assuring for the flying public**

**ARUN KUMAR** | CHIEF, DGCA

## POWERGRID TO SEPARATE TELECOM BIZ

Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd is in the process of carving out its telecom vertical to a new fully-owned subsidiary, Powergrid Teleservices Ltd, in a bid to have a "focused approach" and to move up the value chain, senior company officials said



# Foreign investors better India's position

**A FEW MONTHS BACK, INTERNATIONAL INVESTORS FACED THE DILEMMA OF WHERE TO INVEST WHEN COMPARING INDIA WITH CHINA. NOW, INDIA HAS THE BEST EARNINGS GROWTH OUTLOOK AMONGST THE TOP FIVE ECONOMIES**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Singapore, Dec 4:** Foreign investors have upgraded India as a dedicated allocation in their investment portfolios given the strong economy, stable government and significant reforms undertaken over the last eight years, equity experts have said.

According to the experts, who participated in Futures Industry Association (FIA) Asia trade conference held in Singapore from November 29 to December 1, investment is flowing into India's growth story.

Previously, the investors had grouped India within emerging markets and comparatively only China was a "dedicated allocation" emerging market, according to Anant Jatia, Founder & CIO at Greenland Investment Management LLP in Mumbai.

"Investment is flowing into India's Growth Story. We see investments being redirected as FPIs reposition their dollars amidst uncertainties in China," Jatia told PTI on the sidelines of FIA Asia 2022.

"We are seeing the current pickup gaining momentum as FPIs have turned net buyers of India with over \$5 billion coming in over November and early December relative to the \$23 billion they pulled out over the first ten months of 2022," Jatia added.

He said that the flip is impressive considering the cost of liquidity has gone up significantly with the Fed Funds Rate, currently at 3.83 per cent, slated to rise an additional 50



**SENSEX, NIFTY IN THE 11 MONTHS OF THE CURRENT YEAR ARE UP ABOUT 8% AND ARE AT THEIR LIFETIME HIGHS**

**INDIA IS ONE OF THE BETTER PERFORMING MARKETS GLOBALLY AND HAS GIVEN -POSITIVE RETURNS WHILE MOST ARE NEGATIVE. CURRENTLY THE DOW IS NEGATIVE 5.25%**

**SO FAR THIS YEAR, THE TOTAL OUTFLOW BY FPIs IN EQUITIES STOOD AT ₹1.25 LAKH CRORE**

basis months this month.

Sunil Sachdeva, a Singapore-based stock market expert with focus on Indian equities, said that the Indian stock markets have shown good resilience in recent months, and hit a new growth trajectory though some of the leading global markets are down by 15-20 per cent due to the economic uncertainties.

"This resilience has come from good Government regulatory reforms, RBI's sharp eye on the econ-

omy with supportive policies and a good level of domestic consumption," Sachdeva, who is also the Treasury Director of Saffron Pte Ltd, a family office based in Singapore, said.

"The Indian markets have entered into a new trajectory. The Indices are at an all-time high," he said.

Sachdeva said this is just a start of a multi-year growth cycle and it is time to stay invested.

"We have seen very large in-

**We are seeing Indian equities growing 7 per cent year on year return while comparatively the US markets are down 14 per cent. I believe the Indian equity market could grow up to 5-8 per cent year on year**

**SUNIL SACHDEVA** | EXPERT, SINGAPORE-BASED STOCK MARKET

terest in India as a market at the FIA event here and everyone wants a pie of Indian stocks. International and domestic investors want to be part of the Indian Growth Story," he said.

"In China, the valuation looks very good but definitely there are Covid-related uncertainties," Sachdeva underlined.

He said in India there is a political certainty attracting the investments, stability and the Government policies look good.

"Funds through Foreign Portfolio Investors are flowing into India. Today, India has over 10 crores of dematerialized (demat) accounts. Just imagine the growth potential, if the demat accounts grow to 20-30 crore in the coming decade," said Sachdeva.

Domestic investors are moving their low-interest rate fixed deposits from banks to the higher return stock market, where major industrial sectors, such as listed companies from infrastructure, auto and banks have reported a good level of profitability in the second quarter.

## WEAKENING ECONOMY, RUSSIAN OIL CAP

# OPEC+ keeps steady policy

REUTERS

**London, Dec 4:** OPEC+ agreed to stick to its oil output targets at a meeting Sunday as the oil markets struggle to assess the impact of a slowing Chinese economy on demand and a G7 price cap on Russian oil on supply.

The decision comes two days after the Group of Seven (G7) nations agreed a price cap on Russian oil.

OPEC+, which comprises the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies including Russia, angered the United States and other Western nations in October when it agreed to cut output by 2 million barrels per day (bpd), about 2% of world demand, from November until the end of 2023.

Washington accused the group and one of its leaders, Saudi Arabia, of siding with Russia despite Moscow's war in Ukraine.

OPEC+ argued it had cut output because of a weaker economic outlook. Oil prices have declined since October due to slower Chinese and global growth and higher interest rates, prompting market speculation the group could cut output again.

But Sunday the group of oil producers decided to keep the policy unchanged. Its key ministers will next meet February 1 for a monitoring committee while a full meeting is scheduled for June 3-4.

On Friday, G7 nations and Australia agreed a \$60 per barrel



price cap on Russian seaborne crude oil in a move to deprive President Vladimir Putin of revenue while keeping Russian oil flowing to global markets.

Many analysts and OPEC ministers have said the price cap is confusing and probably inefficient as Moscow has been selling most of its oil to countries like China and India, which have refused to condemn the war in Ukraine.

Neither an OPEC meeting Saturday nor the OPEC+ meeting Sunday discussed the Russian price cap, sources said.

Sources have told Reuters several OPEC+ members have expressed frustration at the cap saying the anti-market measure could ultimately be used by the West against any producer. The United States said the measure was not aimed at OPEC.

JP Morgan said Friday that OPEC+ could review production in the new year based on fresh data on Chinese demand trends and consumer compliance with price caps on Russia crude output and tanker flow.

# States capital spends inch up just 2.2% in H1

**ODISHA IS AMONG THE 18 STATES WHOSE COMBINED REVENUE DEFICIT HAS NARROWED TO MORE THAN ONE-FOURTH FROM THE YEAR-AGO PERIOD**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Dec 4:** Capital expenditure (capex) of 18 states has risen just 2.2 per cent in the first half of the current fiscal even as their combined revenue deficit has narrowed to more than one-fourth from the year-ago period, according to a report.

This means that there has to be a massive 57 per cent increase in their capital outlays to meet their FY23 budgeted target. Ica Ratings said in an analysis on the available numbers from 18 of the largest states, which have budgeted for a combined capital outlay of Rs 6.2 lakh crore.

But these states have collectively spent only Rs 1.59 lakh crore so far this fiscal, which is just about a growth of 2.2 per cent annualised.

Revenue deficits of these 18 states have narrowed to a low Rs 30,000 crore in the first half of the current fiscal from Rs 1.3 lakh crore in the corresponding period in FY22.

This revenue tailwind comes in spite of these states budgeting for a combined revenue deficit to Rs 1.4 lakh crore in FY23 from Rs 1.1 lakh crore in FY22.

Despite this, their combined capital outlay rose by a muted 2.2 per cent in H1, sharply lower than the high 37.8 per cent growth indicated in their budgets, necessitating a sharp 57 per cent increase in H2 to achieve the target, the agency said in a weekend note.



The 18 states covered in this note are Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Bengal.

These states have budgeted a combined capital outlay of Rs 6.2 lakh crore for this fiscal. This means that to use the budgeted outlay their spending will have to jump by 57 per cent (or by 4.6 lakh crore) in the second half of the fiscal to meet the 37.8 per cent increased capex, which looks ambitious and thus the states are going to miss the capital outlay target by a sizeable extent, it said.

These states saw their combined revenue rising by 27 per cent to Rs 13.9 lakh crore in the first half of FY23 from Rs 10.9 lakh crore in H1FY22, on better tax collections.

The states' own tax revenues rose a higher 28.6 per cent in the first half year-on-year. The combined rev-

enue receipts of these states were equivalent to 43 per cent of the budget estimate and higher than the year-ago period but lower than H1 of FY20.

Among these states, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Bengal have already received 50-53 per cent of their budgeted own tax revenues. Additionally tax devolution from the Centre expanded by a sharp 44.6 per cent in H1 year-on-year.

This led to the revenue deficit coming down to Rs 30,000 crore from Rs 1.3 lakh crore for 14 of these 18 sample states and, in spite of this, the combined revenue spending of these 18 states increased by 15.3 per cent in first half, or 42 per cent of the budget estimate.

Despite this, their combined capital outlay in the first half was at Rs 1.59 lakh crore, which is a muted 2.2 per cent higher than the year-ago period. The capital outlay in first half was a modest 26 per cent of the combined budget estimate with

that of Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Uttarakhand and UP below/equal to 20 per cent of their respective budgeted targets.

Of these states, Andhra, Bengal, Haryana and UP have budgeted for a high 77-127 per cent growth in their capital outlays for the fiscal. For the combined capital outlay of these 18 states to be in line with the budget estimate of Rs 6.2 lakh crore, it would imply spending Rs 4.6 lakh crore or a sharp 57 per cent higher spending in the second half of this fiscal than the actual capital outlay of Rs 3 lakh crore in H2FY22.

However, looking at the trend of lower-than-budgeted capital outlays as well as back-ended spending in recent years, the agency says these states' capex will be lower by at least 23 per cent of the budgeted target.

However, Karnataka (52.8 per cent) and Himachal (50.4 per cent) had revenue receipt exceeding 50 per cent of their budgeted target, whereas for Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Telangana and UP it was below 40 per cent and for the remaining 12 states, it varied in the 40-49 per cent.

The states' own tax revenue, which comprised nearly half of the total revenue receipts, expanded by 28.6 per cent to Rs 7.6 lakh crore in H1 from Rs 5.9 lakh crore a year ago, which was 47 per cent of the budget estimate.

# India plans federal oversight of all real-money online games

*The drafting of the new regulations comes amid growing concerns that the proliferation of such games, particularly among young people, had led to addiction and financial losses, with some reported cases of suicide*

REUTERS

**New Delhi, Dec 4:** India's planned regulation of online gaming will apply to all real-money games after the prime minister's office overruled a proposal to only regulate games of skill and leave out games of chance, according to a government document and three sources.

The much-awaited regulations are seen shaping the future of India's gaming sector that research firm Redseer estimates will be worth \$7 billion by 2026, dominated by real-money games. Tiger Global and Sequoia Capital have in re-

cent years backed Indian startups Dream11 and Mobile Premier League, popular for fantasy cricket.

An Indian panel tasked with drafting the regulation in August proposed a new body to decide whether a game involves skill or chance, and then let skill games be governed by planned federal rules that call for registration requirements, know-your-customer norms and a grievance redress mechanism.

Chance games - considered akin to gambling, which is mostly banned across India - were set to stay under the purview of individual state governments which would



be free to regulate them, Reuters has previously reported.

But in an October 26 government meeting, an official from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office objected to such a differentiation, calling for expanded oversight

on all types of games, according to the confidential minutes of the gathering reviewed by Reuters.

Differentiating games as skill or chance wasn't easy due to lack of legal clarity and contrasting court decisions, the minutes quoted

**The much-awaited regulations are seen shaping the future of India's gaming sector that research firm Redseer estimates will be worth \$7 billion by 2026, dominated by real-money games**

the official as saying, adding "online gaming may be considered as one activity/service with no distinction."

Defining games has been contentious in India. India's Supreme Court says the card game rummy and certain fantasy games are skill-based and legal, for exam-

ple, while different state courts have held different views about games such as poker.

Three people directly involved in the rule-making process, including two government officials in New Delhi, told Reuters the rules will give the federal administration broader oversight on all types of games while state governments remain empowered to impose outright bans on gambling, or games of chance.

One of the government sources said Modi's administration continues to be concerned about potential addiction of such platforms.

The government panel's August report had recommended new rules should include so-called "de-addiction measures" such as periodic warnings and advisories and fixing deposit and withdrawal limits.



# Mbappe magic sinks Poland Soccerroos 'Messimerised'

DEFENDING CHAMPIONS SEAL LAST EIGHTH SPOT WITH CONVINCING TRIUMPH

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Doha, Dec 4: Kylian Mbappe set up a history-making goal for Olivier Giroud and then scored two himself as holders France eased into the quarter-finals of the World Cup with a 3-1 win over Poland Sunday.

Giroud's opening goal a minute before half-time was his 52nd for his country, allowing him to pass Thierry Henry and become France's all-time record marksman. Mbappe's lethal strike in the 74th minute killed off any prospect of a Poland comeback and he netted again at the death to move to nine goals in just 11 World Cup appearances, the second-most for a French player at the tournament.

At the other end the threat of Robert Lewandowski was snuffed out by the French defence although the 34-year-old Poland captain did get the consolation of scoring a stoppage-time penalty.

France, though, march on to the quarter-finals and remain on course to become the first team to successfully defend the World Cup since Brazil 60 years ago.

France were overwhelming favourites against a Poland side who had limped through the group stage, but the memory of their exit from Euro 2020 served as a warning.

France had been 3-1 up and cruising in that last-16 tie against Switzerland only to concede two late goals and end up losing on penalties, with Mbappe missing the crucial spot-kick. Mbappe returned Sunday as one of nine changes following their inconsequential defeat by Tunisia, with goalkeeper and captain Hugo Lloris also returning to win his 142nd cap.

That saw him equal the record for most France appearances held by Lilian Thuram, whose son Marcus came off the bench here.

It was a history-making occasion for France but what coach



French players celebrate after their victory over Poland in the pre-quarter final match at the Al Thumama Stadium in Doha, Sunday

Didier Deschamps wanted above all was a routine victory and progression to the quarter-finals.

The sky should be the limit for a French side led by Mbappe, but it is not just him.

Ousmane Dembele and Antoine Griezmann were lively in a strong start amid a hushed atmosphere at Al Thumama Stadium.

**Emphatic**

The fans were happy to sit back and be thrilled as the big screen at one point showed that Mbappe had reached a top speed of 35 kilometres per hour.

France's pace and pressing was too much for Poland as Przemyslaw Frankowski gave possession away, leading to Dembele crossing to the back post for Giroud to somehow put the ball wide.

Poland, who have not won a World Cup knockout match since 1982, recovered from a tentative

## Giroud France's all-time record goalscorer

Olivier Giroud became France's record scorer Sunday with 52 goals, eclipsing the mark he shared with Thierry Henry after striking against Poland at the World Cup. Giroud, 36, gave France a 1-0 lead just before half-time in their last-16 tie at Al Thumama Stadium in Doha on his 117th appearance for his country. It was the AC Milan forward's third goal of the tournament after his brace against Australia in France's opening group game.

start to almost go ahead in the 38th minute as Lloris blocked a shot by Piotr Zielinski and Jakub Kaminski's follow-up was stopped on the line by Raphael Varane. Those misses proved crucial as France seized the lead a minute before half-time.

Patient build-up play ended with Mbappe having a glance as he received the ball just outside the box before playing in Giroud who took a touch and finished into the far corner. France were left to chase the game in the second half and they sent on Juventus striker

Arkadiusz Milik to support Lewandowski for the final half hour. However, their attack was simply no match for France, who picked off Poland to make it 2-0.

A Griezmann clearance was brought down by Giroud and he released Dembele whose ball into the middle was controlled before being blasted home by Mbappe.

It was an emphatic finish and was followed by another of a similar calibre from a Thuram assist in stoppage time. Only Just Fontaine, who scored 13 in 1958, has scored more World Cup goals for France.

**LEO'S GOAL IN HIS 1,000TH MATCH HELPS ARGENTINA SET UP QUARTERFINAL DATE WITH THE NETHERLANDS**

AGENCIES

Al Rayyan (Qatar), Dec 4: Lionel Messi scored his first goal in a World Cup knockout round in his 1,000th match to beat Diego Maradona's tournament tally, as Argentina beat off a frenzied Australia fightback to win 2-1 here Saturday and reach the quarter-finals. Messi put his side ahead after 35 minutes with a coolly taken low strike for his 94th international goal, passing the great Maradona's eight World Cup goals, in a match where he was instrumental in almost every Argentine attack. Incidentally it was Messi's 789th goal in his 1,000th game.

Julian Alvarez made it 2-0 near the hour mark after pouncing on a howler by keeper Mat Ryan to set up a mouth-watering last-eight clash next Friday with the Netherlands, who beat the United States 3-1 earlier in the day.

With nothing to lose, the Soccerroos, chasing a first World Cup quarterfinal berth, pulled a goal back 13 minutes from time when Craig Goodwin's wayward shot took a huge deflection off Enzo Fernandez and flew into the net for an own goal.

Messi spurned two clear chances late on but it was Australia's teenaged substitute Garang Kulol who set hearts racing in the stadium when deep into stoppage time his close-range shot on the turn was brilliantly saved by Emi Martinez.

Man of the match Messi admitted the final moments were tense. "Things got complicated in the end with their goal but it's a World Cup



THAT MAGICAL FEELING: Lionel Messi (10) celebrates with teammates after scoring the opening goal for Argentina against Australia, Saturday

and it's never easy," Messi said. "Now we have a really tough clash with Holland, who play very well. They have great players and a great coach, it's going to be hard-fought. It's going to get tougher from this stage," the Argentina legend said.

Argentina took a while to find their stride in a physical match that started off scrappy, with Alejandro Gomez, Fernandez and Alvarez combining well but unable to break down a resolute defence as Messi struggled to make his mark.

Lifted throughout by the overwhelmingly Argentine support, which cheered, sang and bounced in unison from all sides of the stadium, Argentina finally made the breakthrough after 35 minutes with Messi the creator and finisher of a superbly worked goal delivered at breathtaking speed.

Messi took a free-kick and picked out Alexis Mac Allister,

who passed to Nicolas Otamendi to tap gently back into the path of Messi, who fired low into the corner and beyond the reach of the outstretched Ryan.

Argentina got their second close to the hour-mark after a huge back-pass blunder from Ryan, who came under pressure from Rodrigo De Paul and was robbed of the ball by Alvarez, who turned and slotted home.

Australia refused to give up and launched a succession of threatening moves that rattled an Argentine side whose attention was focused more on their own attacks. After the own Argentina goal, the Aussies nearly equalised when Aziz Behich darted dangerously into the area before a brilliant saving tackle by Lisandro Martinez.

Argentina tried for a third goal, with Lautaro Martinez firing wide and Messi coming close.

## Thrilling win for Bangladesh

**HOSTS RIDE ON 10TH WICKET STAND TO STEAL GAME FROM INDIA**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mirpur, Dec 4: Bangladesh's last wicket pair of Mehidy Hasan Miraj (38 n o, 39b, 4x4, 2x6) and Mustafizur Rahman (10 n o) pulled off an absolute heist with a thrilling unbeaten 51-run stand as India choked during final half-an-hour to lose a low-scoring opening ODI by one wicket here Sunday.

While India produced yet another poor batting show which saw them get all out for 186 in 41.2 overs, the bowlers did a splendid job to reduce Bangladesh to 136 for nine in the 40th over.

However KL Rahul, who was entrusted with keeping duties to fit him and another veteran Shikhar Dhawan in the same XI, dropped an aerial sitter when Bangladesh still needed 32 runs. It was followed by Washington Sundar not going for an easy catch at third man that earned him the wrath of skipper Rohit Sharma as Miraj along with Mustafizur got the team past the finishing line in exactly 46 overs.

The stand between Miraj and Mustafizur was Bangladesh's highest 10th wicket partnership and the fourth-highest 10th wicket partnership in a successful ODI chase.

On a track that assisted both seamers and spinners, Indian top-order barring Rahul (73, 70b, 5x4, 4x6) flopped badly to be bowled out for a score below 200. Rohit (27) and Shreyas Iyer (24) got starts but



KL Rahul acknowledges the applause after reaching his half century

failed to capitalise. But the total that looked emi-

nently gettable at the break turned into a sizeable one due to lion-hearted efforts from Mohammed Siraj (3/32), Shardul Thakur (1/21) and Washington Sundar (2/17).

Debutant Kuldeep Sen's (2/37) pace was used to hit him for

three sixes - two of them during the slog overs while Deepak Chahar (1/32) despite providing a first-ball breakthrough looked pedestrian towards the end when there was no nip in the air.

Earlier, Rahul batted well on a day when the others struggled to get going. Left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan (5/36) did most of the damage. He was well-supported by pacer Ebadot Hossain (4/47).

Bangladesh got things rolling with Miraj casting Dhawan (7) in the seventh over. Rohit looked fluent, before Shakib bowled him with one that went straight through. There was more joy in store for the hosts as, two balls later, the left-arm spinner sent back Kohli (9) after skipper Litton Das pulled off an incredible catch at cover after diving full length to his right.

**Brief scores**

India 186 in 41.2 overs (KL Rahul 73, Shakib Al Hasan 5/36, Ebadot Hossain 4/47) lost to Bangladesh 187 for 9 in 46 overs (Litton Das 41, Mehidy Hasan Miraj 38 n o, Mohammad Siraj 3/32, Washington Sundar 2/17) by one wicket.

## Foden aspiring for more playing time with England team

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Doha, Dec 4: England midfielder Phil Foden may have been one of the stars of their 3-0 win over Wales in the last Group B match, but despite his goal and fine display in that game, he admitted things could still turn better for him in Qatar.

Foden didn't appear in England's 0-0 draw with the United States and only played the closing minutes of their 6-2 win against Iran, although he set up a goal for Manchester City teammate Jack Grealish. He would be a popular choice to kick off England's last 16 tie against Senegal, but so far the youngster admitted his World Cup had been a 'mixed bag'.

Foden said the World Cup had been 'up and down' for him while speaking to the 'BBC' Saturday. "I am disappointed not to start more games but it is part of the tournament. I am a team player and when I get the opportunities, I'll take them," Foden stated.

Foden said the depth of the England squad is one of the reasons that playing time is so hard to come by. "There is a lot of competition; (Bukayo) Saka has done well and scored in the first game, (Marcus) Rashford has scored and did very well against Wales. Everyone is scoring, so it will be a headache for Gareth (Southgate) to pick the team for the next game," he admitted.

Foden also pointed out that irrespective of whether he plays or not, the main goal of the team is to win from here on. "Now we can't afford to make any more mistakes," he said.

## Brazil banking on fit-again Neymar

Star striker trains ahead of South Korea game

AGENCIES

Doha, Dec 4: Brazil head into Monday's World Cup last-16 tie against South Korea pre-occupied by the health of the great Pele. However, more importantly coach Tite is still wondering whether to include Neymar in the squad for the pre-quarterfinal game at the Stadium 974 here.

There would be no better way for Brazil to pay tribute to their greatest ever player than by going on to win a record-extending sixth World Cup December 18, and the draw appears to have opened up favourably for them. They topped their section despite scoring just three goals in three games in Qatar; their worst showing in front of goal in the group stage of a World Cup since 1978.

Brazil have a fearsome range of attacking options, even with Gabriel Jesus having gone home injured (see box), but they have scored just once since Neymar came off with a sprained ankle November 24 in

their opening 2-0 win over Serbia. He watched the Cameroon game from just behind the Brazilian bench at the Lusail Stadium and Saturday he was back training with his teammates, raising hopes he would be on the field against the Koreans. "I feel good, I knew that I would now," Neymar wrote Sunday on Instagram with a reference to James Brown.

His teammates are also hoping that Neymar returns as quickly as possible. "With his return the whole team will improve," said Richarlison, scorer of both goals against Serbia. "I hope he comes back. Everyone saw how much we missed him in the last two games. I think him coming back will make me better," the forward added.

On paper Brazil could surely not have asked for a kinder draw at this stage than South Korea, who qualified for the last 16 thanks to a last-gasp winner by Hwang Hee-chan against Portugal. If Brazil win they will advance to a quarterfinal against Japan or Croatia, with a last-four showdown against great rivals Argentina still on the cards.



Neymar

## Aussies subdue stubborn India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Adelaide, Dec 4: Skipper Harmanpreet Singh's brace went in vain as India lost 4-5 to Australia in the final game to hand the five-Test hockey series 1-4 to the World No.1 side here Sunday. India had lost 4-5 and 4-7 in the first two Tests before winning the next match 4-3. They lost the fourth game 1-5.

Tom Wickham (second, 17th) scored two goals for Australia while Aran Zalewski (30th), Jacob Anderson (40th) and Jake Whetton (54th) were the other goal getters for the home team.

Harmanpreet (24th, 60th) converted two penalty corners for India while Amit Rohidas (34th)

and Sukhjeet Singh (55th) also found the opposition net.

Australia were by far the better side on display as they controlled the proceedings in opening two quarters. They wasted no time in punishing India with Wickham scoring from top of the circle with a fierce strike.

Australia doubled their lead in the 17th minute and again it was Wickham who scored. India managed to pull one back in the 24th minute when Harmanpreet converted a well-executed penalty corner.

Australia continued to press and they restored their two-goal advantage just before half time with Zalewski hitting the target.

**OZ WIN 5-GAME HOCKEY TEST SERIES 4-1**

## Mirabai eyes Paris Games spot

INDIAN LIFTERS START THEIR QUEST FOR OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bogota, Dec 4: Indian weightlifters, led by Mirabai Chanu, will look to find their rhythm as they kick off their preparations for the 2024 Paris Olympics with the first qualifying event -- the World Championships, starting here Monday.

Olympic silver medalist Chanu, Commonwealth Games medallists S Bindiyarani Devi (59kg), Achinta Sheuli (73kg) and Gurdeep Singh (+109kg) will all be in action for the first time since the Birmingham Games in August as they aim to col-



lect the required ranking points to qualify for the Paris Games.

While Chanu, a former world champion, is not expected to test her limits in this event, head coach Vijay Sharma wants the other lifters to rise to the occasion and outdo themselves in at least one category.

"My expectation for this tournament is that apart from Mirabai, everyone should try and get a personal best in one of the three categories. That will show improvement and will help them in their qualification," Sharma said. "For Mira, we will try to get 200-plus total in every qualifying event."

## Pant rested

Mirpur: Flamboyant wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant has been released abruptly from the Indian ODI squad for the three-match series against Bangladesh, the BCCI said Sunday. Pant was released following consultation with the BCCI medical team and no replacement has been sought. "In consultation with the BCCI medical team, Rishabh Pant has been released from the ODI squad," an official said.