

DSPL-272



Dedication of Drink from Tap Water Supply

Another 5 Cities are now fully covered with
24x7 Drink from Tap Water Supply Facility
(Rairangpur • Champua • Biramitrapur • Rajgangpur • Nimapara)
and
149 Wards in 13 more cities

by

Shri Naveen Patnaik

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

9th October 2023, 11:30 AM

Convention Centre, Lok Seva Bhawan, Bhubaneswar

City/ULB	Wards Covered Now	Population Benefitted
Rairangpur - Entire city	15	34,000
Biramitrapur - Entire city	11	39,000
Rajgangpur - Entire city	20	66,500
Champua - Entire city	13	15,500
Nimapara - Entire city	11	22,300
Bhubaneswar	27	3,82,500
Khordha	4	8,600
Jatni	3	10,800
Cuttack	21	1,80,000
Vyasanagar	6	11,000
Sundargarh	17	30,800
Rourkela	20	87,100
Keonjhar	4	10,000
Anandapur	4	9,500
Joda	1	4,000
Barbil	2	7,500
Berhampur	37	3,02,000
Hinjilicut	3	6,500

Total Population Benefitted in this phase: 12.3 Lakh



Celebrating 3 years of
Drink from Tap Journey in Odisha

ODISHA

1st Drink from Tap State in the country

Housing & Urban Development Department
Government of Odisha



DRAKE DISAPPOINTS FANS FOR SHADING RIHANNA

Rapper Drake appeared to have disappointed his fans shortly after his track 'Fear of Heights' was released, the rapper was alleged to have thrown shades at his former girlfriend and singer Rihanna, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

CAITLYN JENNER HAS NO PLANS TO SEEK OUT A PARTNER

The former *Keeping Up With the Kardashians* actor Caitlyn Jenner revealed that even though she is currently not in a relationship, she has no intentions of actively looking for a romantic partner in the immediate future.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

You may get all nostalgic and wistful today, predicts Ganesha. You will go out of your way to improve your relationships. To you, your commitment is an investment for the future. The result is loving life-long bonds.

TAURUS

Financial gains are on the cards today, predicts Ganesha. Happiness will fly in as you receive some good news from an overseas friend. If you have feelings that you haven't expressed to someone you dearly love, today is a good day to go ahead and let them know.

GEMINI

Some of your personal belongings are very dear to you. You may have to grudgingly share them with someone else. A mild pang of jealousy may kick in. But, you are merely being protective of something very personal, so there is nothing wrong with that, says Ganesha.

CANCER

You will be in high spirits today, foretells Ganesha. It is a favourable day to engage in household activities, like gardening, cooking or even washing laundry. In the evening, work will be eclipsed by the pleasures of love.

LEO

Time is one thing that you have in short change today, says Ganesha. There is every possibility that you shall remain extremely busy. The tasks may be small – like writing a letter to revive old contacts – but it is important that you do them. Chances are that you may also end up giving a few interviews over the phone. Just remember that your ability to make things work and do your best make you the prime candidate for organising and conducting urgent meetings.

VIRGO

Family matters will matter today. They hold more weight in your thoughts than everything else, says Ganesha. Business will be good today. Spend the evening relaxing and chilling out. On the cards is a visit to a place of worship.

LIBRA

Your concern for your family surmounts all else, that much Ganesha knows. Today, you will fulfil your filial duties in all that you undertake. As Ganesha rightly points out: All good things begin at home, including your fortune and good luck.

SCORPIO

A healthy and hectic day is in store for you today. You are likely to finish your pending tasks with new zeal. But the chaotic day will blossom into a fabulous evening when you hang out with your sweetheart, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Chances of you hitting a roadblock today are high. But remember the saying, 'When the going gets tough, the tough get going.' So don't succumb to pressure, advises Ganesha, but rise up to the occasion and show who's the boss.

CAPRICORN

The achievements of the day may make you feel like you were born to succeed in life. Yes, you will be successful in whatever you do today, even if you don't try too hard for it, says Ganesha. But it's important that you at least take an initiative and not expect rewards to come for no reason. Make the most of the day for fortune may not be as favourable tomorrow.

AQUARIUS

You will prove yourself today by staying ahead of your rivals in all ways. You will conquer your frustrations, and will soon be raring to go. Your pleasing demeanour endears you to others and you win admiration from all quarters, says Ganesha.

PISCES

You probably jumped out of bed this morning itching to talk to someone. And why not, since all your latent power of expression will spring out like a jack-in-the-box today. The pearls of wisdom you shower on people who are down-in-the-dumps today will make them feel good about their bluesy, taciturn selves, says Ganesha.

Scoop adjudged best series; Karishma best actress

Busan: Actress Karishma Tanna, who received a lot of positive response for her work in the streaming series *Scoop*, has bagged the coveted Best Lead Actress award for her work in *Scoop* at the prestigious Busan International Film Festival 2023.

According to its official website, Asia Contents Awards & Global OTT Awards is an annual event to celebrate the achievements of excellent content made for TV, OTT, and online across Asia. It is organised by Busan International Film Festival.



(BIFF) and Korea Radio Promotion Association. While *Scoop* won the award in the best Asian TV

series, Tanna, who attended the award ceremony – bagged the trophy for the best lead actress at the ceremony.

In response to her win, Karishma Tanna shared her gratitude and enthusiasm, stating, "I am truly humbled and elated by this recognition at the Busan Film Festival. It has been an incredible journey bringing Jagruti Pathak to life in *Scoop*. This award belongs to the entire team who worked tirelessly to make this project a reality. I am immensely grateful to my

fans for their unwavering support, and I hope to continue pushing boundaries and delivering powerful performances in the future."

Scoop, is based on Jigna Vora's biographical memoir *Behind Bars* in Byculla: My Days in Prison.



IAN S

Nushratt returns safely from Israel



Mumbai: Actress Nushratt Bharuccha, who was earlier stranded in Israel amidst the escalating tension between Israel and Gaza, has landed in Mumbai safely.

However, the actress looked distressed as she walked out of the Mumbai airport. She was seen wearing crepe coloured track pants and a sweat-shirt. As she walked from the arrivals to her car, she was surrounded by the media, the actress visibly distraught, could barely speak given the commotion.

She was almost in tears and repeatedly requested the camera persons to move behind so she could

get to her car and go home having been through a testing period of more than 24 hours.

Nushratt was in Israel to participate in Haifi Film Festival. With the help of the Indian Embassy, she was brought back home. She took a connecting flight.

The Gaza-Israel conflict has escalated after the Gaza-based terror group Hamas launched a surprise offensive against Israel.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which started in the mid-20th century is an ongoing military and political conflict in the Levant.

Despite various attempts made to resolve the conflict as part of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, alongside other efforts to resolve the broader Arab-Israeli conflict, it is one of the world's longest existing conflicts.

IAN S

Shehnaaz's quests for unique roles

Mumbai: Actress Shehnaaz Gill, who currently stars in comedy film *Thank You For Coming*, says she aspires to have a versatile filmography.

"Don't judge a book by its cover, read me carefully. They (makers) are thinking of me in a certain way. I feel they want to show my real-self on screen but I can't be doing only this kind of role. Like, recently I heard a

script, in which I'm playing a beautiful girl who is an internet sensation. This is my reality and I want to break this notion in films. I want to do something different on screen. I would like filmmakers to take risks and present me in a different way. I'm willing to do a workshop and all. I believe my talent just gives me a chance to do different things," Gill told PTI in an interview.

"I believe actors should improvise. When you have the script, you should not learn it by heart, just understand the character, do a workshop and play the part accordingly. I want to work on my craft and analyse the script. I believe in narrations. When I heard this script, I liked it and felt, 'This is something different, let's do it.' Sex education is very important," she concludes.

AGENCIES

'Men aren't called uncles even after 50'

Kochi: Actress Priyamani is still elated by the overwhelming reception of her latest film *Jawan*, faced unwarranted criticism, particularly focused on her age and appearance.

"When men get older, nobody tells them that they are 50 or 40-year-old uncles. When women hit 30 or 35, they start calling us auntsies. But that's okay because they are not realising, that tomorrow they will also cross this age," she told a media portal, adding that she has learned

not to pay attention to such trolls anymore. "I proudly say that I am a 39-year-old very good-looking girl who is very comfortable in her shoes and her body. I find myself hot. If others do or not, that's absolutely fine. No issues," she remarked.

She, however, acknowledged that such personal attacks do affect her emotionally, but added that she has made a deliberate choice not to respond to them. She said she believes that reacting to such attacks only gives those responsible a brief moment

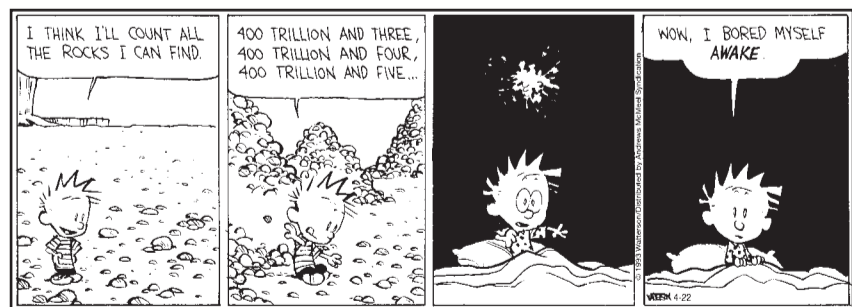
of attention and fame. On the work front, Priyamani is currently gearing up for the release of the Tamil film *Quotation Gang*.

AGENCIES

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

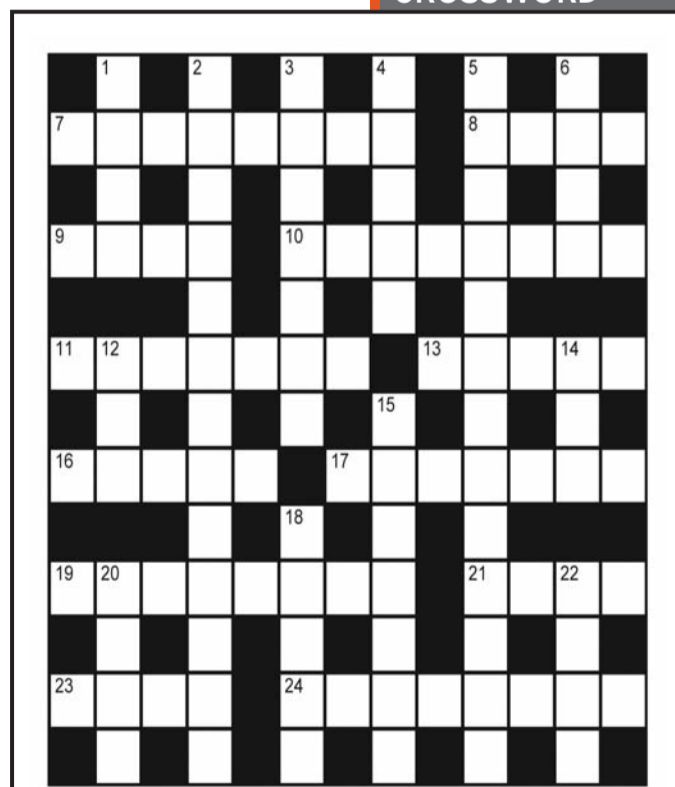


BREVITY



FUN post

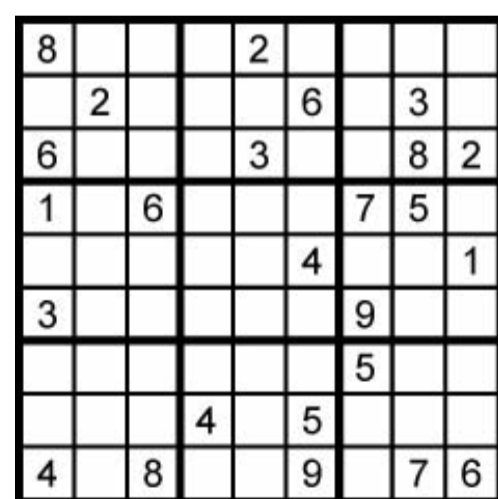
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 7 Analyses
 - 8 Figure skating jump
 - 9 Unique person
 - 10 Lazy
 - 11 Small villages
 - 13 Bathroom item
 - 16 Shorttail weasel
 - 17 Night club
 - 19 Pass judgment
 - 21 Salon request
 - 23 Farm building
 - 24 Disorders
 - 4 Actor's line member (4,9)
 - 5 Beatles
 - 6 Low-fat
 - 12 Gallery display
 - 14 Alkaline liquid
 - 15 Springbok
 - 18 Team
 - 20 Knock about
 - 22 Musical mark
- Down
- 1 Plow pullers
 - 2 Vestibule item
 - 3 Nervousness

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

RIVER OF SORROW

The Yamuna in Agra has not received the focused attention of the Yogi government in UP

TWO STATES P5

28 IPOs ON ANVIL

After a record 31 initial share sales in H1, the IPO pipeline looks strong with 28 firms eyeing to raise ₹38,000 crore in H2

BUSINESS P9

WINNING STARTS

India begin their ODI World Cup campaign on a rousing note defeating Australia by 6 wickets in Chennai

SPORTS BACK PAGE ****

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BHUBANESWAR | MONDAY OCTOBER 9 | 2023

P1

Quakes kill over 2,000 in Afghanistan

AGENCIES

Islamabad, Oct 8: Powerful earthquakes killed at least 2,000 people in western Afghanistan, a Taliban government spokesman said Sunday. It's one of the deadliest earthquakes to strike the country in two decades.

The magnitude-6.3 earthquake was followed by strong aftershocks, a spokesperson for the country's national disaster management authority said.

The United States Geological Survey said the quake's epicentre was about 40 km north-west of Herat city. It was followed by three very strong aftershocks, measuring magnitude 6.3, 5.9 and 5.5, as well as lesser shocks. Sunday, people attempted to dig out the dead and injured with their hands in Herat, clambering over rocks and debris.

Survivors and victims were trapped under buildings that had crumbled to the ground, their faces grey with dust.

Abdul Wahid Rayan, a spokesman at the Ministry of Information and Culture, said Sunday the death toll is higher than originally reported.

Villages have been destroyed, and hundreds of civilians are buried under the debris, he said while calling for urgent help.

"Besides the 2,060 dead, 1,240 people are injured and 1,320 houses are completely destroyed," said Rayan.

In June 2022, a powerful earthquake struck a rugged, mountainous region of eastern Afghanistan, killing at least 1,000 people and injuring about 1,500.

ISRAEL POUNDS GAZA

WHO IS GENERAL NIMROD ALONI

Hours after the militants initiated an attack on Israel Saturday, reports surfaced that Hamas has captured Israel Army Commander Nimrod Aloni.

Major General Nimrod Aloni, 50, once commanded the IDF's Gaza Division, which operated precisely on the border with the Gaza Strip. He led operations against Palestinian militias. In 2017, Aloni, then a colonel, commanded an operation in the Ramallah area. He later served as Chief of Staff of the Deep Operations Command.

The Israeli authorities have not yet confirmed the capture of the general. However, Arab media outlets are already circulating a photograph of a middle-aged man in shorts and a T-shirt, who bears a striking resemblance to the renowned Israeli military leader.



People stand outside a mosque destroyed in an Israeli air strike in Khan Younis, Gaza Strip, Sunday. The Hamas militants broke out of the blockaded Gaza Strip and rampaged through nearby Israeli communities, taking captives, while Israel's retaliation strikes leveled buildings in Gaza.

REUTERS

Jerusalem/Gaza, Oct 8: Israel battered Gaza Sunday, a day after suffering its bloodiest attack in decades when Hamas fighters rampaged through Israeli towns,

killing hundreds and abducting an unknown number of others, threatening a major new war in the Middle East.

In a sign the conflict could spread beyond Gaza, Israel and Lebanon's Iran-backed

Hezbollah militia exchanged artillery and rocket fire, while in Alexandria, two Israeli tourists were shot dead along with their Egyptian guide.

Overnight, Israeli air strikes had hit housing blocks, tunnels,

a mosque and homes of Hamas officials in Gaza, killing more than 300 people, including 20 children, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed "mighty vengeance for this wicked day."

- More than 600 Israelis and 300 Palestinians killed
- Israel and Hezbollah exchange fire on Lebanon border
- Two Israeli tourists and guide shot dead in Egypt
- Hamas says it has taken many Israeli captives
- Netanyahu vows 'mighty vengeance for this wicked day'

In southern Israel, Hamas gunmen were still fighting Israeli security forces 24 hours after a surprise, multi-pronged assault during a rocket barrage smashed through security barriers and army bases to send hundreds of fighters into nearby towns.

Israel's military, which faces questions over its failure to prevent the attack, said it had regained control of most infiltration points, killed hundreds of attackers and taken dozens more prisoner but was still fighting in some places.

It said it had deployed tens of thousands of soldiers in the area surrounding Gaza, a narrow strip that is home to 2.3 million Palestinians, and planned to evacuate all Israelis living around the frontier of the territory.

"We're going to be attacking Hamas severely and this is going to be a long, long haul," a military spokesman told a briefing with reporters.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



After Russia-Ukraine, he will be more preoccupied with Israel-Palestine war. It appears that Manipur will have to wait

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
MAX	34.6°C	35.5°C
MIN	25.7°C	26.5°C
Humidity	83%	76%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	CLEAR SKY MAINLY	

3 students on morning walk run over

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: Three students, out on morning walk, Sunday died in two separate road mishaps in Angul and Bolangir districts, police said.

The deceased were identified as Rajesh Sundhi and Madhab Kumar Samad of Pallahara in Angul district and Purusottam Bhoi of Bolangir district.

"The deceased friends Rajesh and Madhab used to go for morning walks everyday on the National Highway-49. However, a speeding vehicle hit them near Muktapur village at 6 am. The vehicle escaped the spot leaving the duo in a pool of blood," said local sources.

Police rushed them to nearby hospital where doctors declared them brought dead. The Pallahara police have launched an investigation into the matter.

In the other incident, 17-year-old Purusottam, a tribal student,

20 pilgrims from Nepal hurt as bus hits truck

Bhubaneswar: At least 20 pilgrims from Nepal and a person from Uttar Pradesh were injured Sunday after their bus rammied into a truck on NH-16 in Balasore district, police said. The accident took place near Talanagar under the Soro police station limits when the bus with 61 passengers on board hit the stationary truck from the rear. The passenger vehicle was going to Puri from Kolkata when the collision occurred. Balasore Sadar SDPO Sasanka Sekhar Beura said the tourist bus hit the chrome ore-loaded truck, stationed near a dhaba, around 5 am, and 21 people, including 20 pilgrims from Nepal who were travelling in the bus, were injured. All the injured people were taken to Soro Hospital, and the Nepalese pilgrims were discharged after treatment, he said. The driver of the bus was later shifted to the district headquarters hospital, Balasore as his condition deteriorated, the SDPO said. The tourist bus is registered in Uttar Pradesh and the driver hails from that state, the officer said. The local police made arrangements for food and water for the passengers and took steps to send them to their destination, he said.

along with his four friends was strolling on the Patnagarh-Bolangir state highway when a pickup van coming from the opposite direction hit Purusottam at Gendabanji village early Sunday.

The tribal student's tragic death irked the locals who staged

a road blockade demanding the arrest of the absconding driver of the van and compensation for the deceased.

The irate villagers removed the blockade after the district administration and the local police assured them of stringent action against the erring driver.

Biannual exams for Class X, XII to be optional: Pradhan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 8: Appearing for Class X and XII board exams twice a year will not be mandatory and the concept is being introduced as an option to reduce students' stress caused by the fear of single opportunity, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has said.

In an interview to PTI, Pradhan said the issue of 'dummy schools' cannot be ignored and the time has come to have a serious discussion about it.

According to the New Curriculum Framework (NCF) announced by the Ministry of Education in August, board examinations will be held at least twice a year to ensure that students have enough time and opportunity to perform well. They will also get the option to re-

tain the best score.

Asked how the move will make board exams 'low stakes' as proposed in the new National Education Policy (NEP), Pradhan said, "The students will have an option of appearing for the exams twice a year just like engineering entrance exam JEE. They can choose the best score... But it will be completely optional, no compulsion."

"The students often get stressed thinking they lost a year, their chance is gone or that they could have performed better... The stress caused by the fear of single opportunity will be reduced."

"If any student feels that he is completely prepared and is satisfied with the score in one set of exams, he can choose not to appear for the next exams. Nothing will be mandatory," he added.

UNDERTRIAL DIES DURING TRANSIT

AGENCIES

Rourkela, Oct 8: An undertrial prisoner, who hails from West Bengal, died under mysterious conditions Sunday when he was in transit from Bargarh to Rourkela in Odisha, police said.

The deceased was among 13 people who were allegedly involved in a cheating case registered in Raghunathpalli police station in Rourkela, a senior officer said.

The deceased was identified as Anirban Karji who hailed from West Bengal and "remained a part of the gang, which was involved in large-scale cheating," he said. The gang was caught at Bargarh, the officer said, adding that all the accused are from West Bengal and have been kept in Bargarh jail since September 24.

"Karji was taken to the Veer Surendra Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR), Burla when his condition started deteriorating on the way to Rourkela. The doctors at the hospital declared him dead. Another undertrial has also been admitted as he fell sick," the senior officer said.

Rourkela SP Mitrabhanu Mahapatra said the gang committed a crime under Raghunathpalli police station, and the accused were taken from Bargarh for investigation there.

"The inquest was over and there was no injury mark or anything found on the body. But, a strip of blood pressure medicine was found in his pocket and further investigation will ascertain the cause of the death," the SP informed.

CM sanctions ₹30.58cr for Biswanath Pandit Library

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Sunday approved ₹30.58 crore for construction of a new building of Biswanath Pandit Library at Puri-Angul bus stand in Cuttack City. The stilt plus three-floor library will have a 100-capacity auditorium, cafeteria and ample parking area apart from a wide stock of books and a conducive environment for learning, the CMO said. During the visit of 5T Secretary VK Pandian to Cuttack, locals had informed him about the immediate need of the library.

India capable of winning hockey Olympic gold: Naveen

Our efforts over the last few years have made Odisha the global hub of hockey. We have the world's best hockey stadiums and coaching centres. Our endeavour is to get the best facilities and coaching for our players

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 8: "I believe India has the potential to win the Olympic gold medal in hockey. This team has the attitude and talent to make it happen," says Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, the man whose rock-solid support is behind the sport's revival.

"Hockey is in our DNA. It's time for hockey to be more appreciated. I know plenty of other sports are vying for our country's attention but hockey deserves

some shine," Patnaik, whose state is the official sponsor of both men's and women's Indian hockey teams, told PTI in an interview.

As the country celebrates the men's hockey team's Asian Games gold and Paris Olympics qualification, Patnaik, whose passion for the sport is no secret, deserves a special mention.

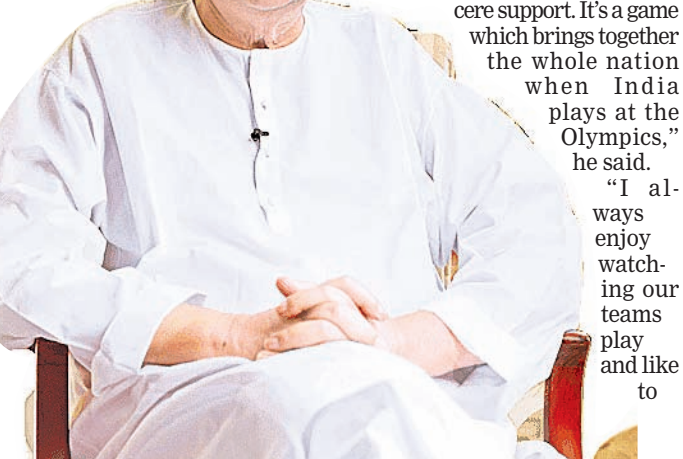
Patnaik, who played hockey while studying at the Doon School, can be seen cheering the Indian teams from the galleries whenever they play in Odisha or sitting in front of TV when they play abroad.

His government pitched in to help Indian hockey when it was in a crisis after Sahara withdrew sponsorship for all teams in 2018. No sponsor meant practically no competitive play for the teams.

Patnaik believes the Indian hockey team is capable of repeating its top-of-the-podium performance at the Paris Olympics next year. "Let's hope for the best. We will provide whatever support Hockey India requires to

make this dream a reality," he said.

"Both men's and women's Indian teams have played well in recent tournaments. To support them, we are organising the Pro League matches in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela in February. I hope this will provide them with a lot of practice matches before the



Olympics," he added.

Recalling how his love for hockey began, Patnaik said, "I learnt from my father Biju Patnaik how the role of hockey has been so deep-rooted in nation building during the freedom movement. My love for the game began then. I started playing hockey in school as a goalkeeper."

"Most Indians believe hockey is our national sport. So, we can see that there is a strong emotional connect with the game. Hockey deserves all of our sincere support. It's a game which brings together the whole nation when India plays at the Olympics," he said.

"I always enjoy watching our teams play and like to cheer for them. Whenever they play in Odisha, I make it a point to go to the stadium and encourage the players," he added.

"In Odisha, hockey matches are played in packed stadiums. In Rourkela, even local tournaments have more than 10,000 spectators coming to watch and cheer the teams. We hope that all this passion and enthusiasm will continue to create great champions from the state," Patnaik said.

"Our efforts over the last few years have made Odisha the global hub of hockey. We have the world's best hockey stadiums and coaching centres. Our endeavour is to get the best facilities and coaching for our players," Patnaik said.

"We are already committed to sponsoring the teams till 2033. And we will continue to host the major tournaments so that our teams get the home advantage and improve their rankings," he added. Patnaik said his gov-

₹50L REWARD FOR DEEP GRACE EKKA

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Sunday announced ₹50 lakh cash award for Odisha's hockey star Deep Grace Ekka for her stellar role in securing bronze medal for India at the 19th Asian Games in China's Hangzhou. In a statement, the CM said, "Deep Grace Ekka has become a symbol of hope and pride for aspiring athletes in the country. Deep has proved her tenacity with some astounding performances and I am sure that she will continue to make India proud and showcase the spirit of perseverance and excellence that she has been displaying."

ernment is "investing a lot in hockey."

"Bhubaneswar and Rourkela have become the global hockey hubs. We have a high performance centre in Bhubaneswar, providing sports science support. We will be starting our own state hockey league soon," he said.

CM approves ₹30.58cr for Biswanath Pandit Library



Biswanath Pandit Library was started in 1981 at Saheed Bhawan in Cuttack and later shifted to a new building at Khannagar in 1998. The library had recently been shifted to the Odisha Administrative Tribunal (OAT) near the Odisha Judicial Academy due to construction of the Cuttack Netaji Bus Terminal. With a collection of over 60,000 books, the library has always been a desired destination for bibliophiles and researchers alike.

THE STILT PLUS THREE-FLOOR LIBRARY WILL HAVE A 100-CAPACITY AUDITORIUM, CAFETERIA AND AMPLE PARKING AREA APART FROM A WIDE STOCK OF BOOKS AND A CONDUCIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR LEARNING

spire the public, especially the youth, to be aware of his contribution.

Biswanath Pandit Library was started in the year 1981 at Saheed Bhawan in Cuttack City and later shifted to a new building at Khannagar in the year 1998.

With a collection of over 60,000 books, the library has always been the desired destination for bibliophiles and researchers alike. People from nearby areas also visited the facility for its extensive collection of books.

The library had recently been shifted to the Odisha Administrative Tribunal (OAT) near the Odisha Judicial Academy due to the construction of the Cuttack Netaji Bus Terminal (CNBT).

Biswanath Pandit was born to Ramdas Pandit and Laxmi Devi in Dagarpada of Cuttack January 3, 1919. He was imprisoned after joining the freedom struggle. Later, he joined the socialist movement and worked to protect the interest of the oppressed and labourers for the rest of his life. He died May 18, 2002.

learning, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said.

According to sources, during the visit of Secretary (5T) VK Pandian to Cuttack, the local people had informed him about the immediate need of the library, and its proximity to the bus stand for the benefit of people coming from nearby villages and towns.

The CM has expressed hope that establishment of the library in memory of Biswanath Pandit would give due respect and in-



BLOODING TALENTS: International Master Padmini Rout interacts with kids during a seminar on chess organised by Sports and Youth Services department at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Bhubaneswar Runway Week leaves audience spellbound

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: The 9th edition of Bhubaneswar Runway Week was held in a City hotel Sunday under the guidance of Addiction Fashion Management Director John Ajay.

The main attraction of the fashion show was Miss Shinata Chouhan (2nd Runner Up Femina Miss India 2022), Sherya



Poonja (1st Runner up, Femina Miss India 2023) and Ollywood sensation Miss Shibani Sangita. As many as 10 designers dis-

played their collections in a ramp show. Among them were Tanya Ray, Devangini Behera, Manisha Rituparna, Sania, Ashfaque Ahmed, Selina Doso, Saisha Rajput, Saikat Sunny, and Arvind Ampulla. Models showcased a variety of collections including Odisha Fabrics, cocktail gowns, Dongria Shawls, Kotpad Cotton and Santali Drapes among others. Also, LCJ Jewellers show-

cased fashionable jewellery designs drawing attention of the audience.

OB & OCWW Board Chairperson Srimayee Mishra, INWEC National Chairperson Sukirti Pattnaik, Bhubaneswar Runway week Principal Advisor Naveen Khandoi, SNM Group Director Suma Mohanty and Shruti Mahapatra were present on this occasion.

IAS reshuffle

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: In a major IAS reshuffle, the state government has appointed Bishnupada Sethi as the principal secretary of the Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department, an official said, Sunday.

According to a notification, Bhaskar Jyoti Sarma has been appointed as commissioner of Land Records and Settlement, Cuttack.

The government has appointed B Parameswaran as commissioner (Consolidation), while Ramashish Hazra, director of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, has been allowed to remain in additional charge of president of Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha.

Jyoti Prakash Das has been posted the director of Special Projects under Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department, with additional charge of director of Revenue Officers' Training Institute (ROTI).

Arindam Dakua is the new director of Drinking Water and Sanitation, and Indramani Tripathy is now the director of Scheduled Tribes with additional charge of additional secretary of ST&SC Development department, and director of SC&ST Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI).

Subrata Satapathy, financial advisor of Board of Revenue, has been allowed to remain in additional charge of inspector general of Registration, Odisha, the order said.

KIIT Int'l MUN concludes

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: The 11th Edition of KIIT International Model United Nations (MUN) concluded Sunday at KIIT University with more than 1,300 delegates participating from across India and abroad.

The theme of the biggest KIIT-MUN in asia was "Engage to Empower". The chief guest of the event was Komla A Jervis Zogbema, the Director of department of Scholarships and Internships, Ministry of Higher Education and Research, Togo. The guest of honour was Yawa Edem Akpemado, Charge d' Affairs Embassy of Togo in New Delhi.

In his speech, Zogbema said, "In the post-colonial era, African nations are in a transition towards economic upliftment and education as a major sector has a lot to contribute." Commending India's role in the G20 leader-

ship, Zogbema also called for an overhaul in the UN structure as it was conceptualized during the post-World War - II era. He also wanted a close association with India to excel in the human development sector.

KIIT and KISS Founder Achyuta Samanta said that MUN is being held at a beautiful campus in Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS). In action as in Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS). He also hoped that the entire MUN assembly would deal with all the world's major issues and debate for their solution.

KIIT-DU VC Prof Saranjit Singh, Registrar Jnyana Ranjan Mohanty, Director General International Relations Debraj Pradhan, Additional Registrar Shyam Sundar Behura and Secretary General of KIIT International MUN, 2023 Kshiti Singh were present in the seminar.



OES observes wildlife week

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: Odisha Environmental Society (OES) observed wildlife week Sunday and organised a seminar on "Wildlife crimes - The way forward to combat".

In the seminar experts said that wildlife inhabiting the natural ecosystems, both terrestrial and aquatic, are under tremendous anthropogenic pressure that threaten their very survival on earth.

Joining the seminar as the chief speaker, Centurion University's Zoology professor Siba Prasad Parida vividly discussed the significance of the wildlife and the crimes committed against them. He narrated how wildlife is trafficked illegally across the globe much like the illegal trading of drugs and arms. Presenting the Odisha picture, he deliberated how tiger/leopard skins, elephant ivory, pangolin scales and live and turtle are frequently seized in the state. Presiding over the programme, OES president Sundara Narayan Patro opined that for ensuring the protection of the wildlife, drastic changes in the mindset and the actions of the people hold the key.

BALASORE TRAIN TRAGEDY

Disposal of 28 unclaimed bodies likely tomorrow

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: Four months after the triple train accident that claimed 297 lives in Balasore district, the authorities of the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Sunday initiated a process of disposing of the 28 unidentified bodies, an official said.

The civic body issued a standard operating procedure for scientifically disposing of the remains of the 28 people whose rightful claimants were not found, he said.

"We have issued an SOP for the scientific disposal of the unclaimed bodies of those who were killed in the triple train accident. The bodies will be handed over to the corporation in the presence of CBI officials and we are planning for the cremation Tuesday," BMC Mayor Sulochana Das told reporters here.

Sources said the BMC initiated the process after the Central



Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which has been probing into the train accident, wrote to the Khurda district collector, requesting him for the disposal of the bodies in a scientific manner.

The bodies were kept in the AIIMS-Bhubaneswar since the accident occurred in June.

The BMC also decided to make arrangements for smooth transportation of the bodies from AIIMS to the cremation ground at Satyanagar and Bharatpur in the city, an official said.

AIIMS-Bhubaneswar director will officially hand over the bodies to the BMC health officer following the existing rules and guidelines of the state, the Centre,

and the National Human Rights Commission for cremation of the bodies, he said.

The entire process will be video-graphed, according to the SOP issued by the BMC.

The AIIMS-Bhubaneswar had received 162 bodies and 81 of them were handed over to the family members of the deceased in the first phase.

Later, another 53 bodies were given to the family members following DNA tests but the remains of 28 others have been unclaimed, the official said.

The bodies were kept in at least five deep freezer containers procured from the Paradip Port.

India's Territorial Army inducts Mandarin language experts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 8: The Territorial Army (TA) has inducted a batch of Mandarin language experts and posted them in forward areas, a step that seeks to enhance linguistic capabilities of the Indian side during border talks with the Chinese army.

Besides, the TA is also engaged in 'advanced stages' of discussion and has 'identified criteria' for hiring some cyber security experts, sources said.

The TA, which has served the nation in times of war and peace, will mark its 75th Raising Day Monday.

The batch of five Mandarin language experts will play a role as interpreters between Indian and Chinese sides during Border Personnel Meetings (BPMs), a defence source said.

"These experts will aid the Indian Army in understanding exactly what is being told from the other (Chinese Army's) side. This will, in turn, help in understanding a scenario better

from India's perspective," the source added.

But, they can also be deployed in jobs other than aiding the Indian Army in BPMs, another source said.

The move comes nearly three years after the eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries that erupted May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong Lake areas.

The Indian and Chinese troops are locked in an over three-year confrontation in certain friction points in eastern Ladakh even as the two sides completed disengagement from several areas following extensive diplomatic and military talks.

The two sides hold BPMs at five points - Daulat Beg Oldie in northern Ladakh, Kibithu in Arunachal Pradesh, Chusul in Ladakh, Bum-La near Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh and Nathu-La in Sikkim. Usually, both sides resolve various operational issues at the BPMs.

Speaking about the formation of the TA, the defence source



said. "The TA was raised October 9, 1949, and now we have just entered into our 75th year of existence, and have served the nation in times of war, and in humanitarian and environment protection works through its eventful journey over these decades."

It was raised on the concept of being a 'citizen soldier's army'. Besides augmenting the organisational requirements, the TA also provides an opportunity to able-bodied volunteer citizens

of India, especially those who are overage for enrollment in the regular army, to serve the nation in uniform.

Keeping pace with changing times, the TA units are also evolving and undertaking various steps to transform to remain current and responsive to the emerging environment, the sources said, adding that one such step is the recruitment of five Chinese (Mandarin) language experts this year.

"The process to hire these ex-

perts in the first phase began in January and the process was completed a few months ago (around August). The process was rigorous and entailed both a written and oral examination of various candidates who have expertise in Mandarin language," the source added.

And, the best in the country in this field of language have been hired. The average age of these hired experts is 30 years.

Of the 60 current TA units, 43 are Infantry TA units and integrated with the Indian Army and have been used in war and now in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism roles in Jammu & Kashmir and the Northeast, the sources said.

In addition to security-related duties, TA units are actively involved in "perception management" towards winning the hearts and minds of the local populace, including in the Jammu and Kashmir region, they said.

TA units have also played an important role in providing essential services and establish-

ing rehabilitation camps in strife-torn Manipur this year, they said.

Certain TA units are also deployed in conjunction with Border Roads Organisation and the Ministry of Railways for the protection of under-construction road or rail alignments in remote and sensitive areas.

There were six Railway TA units, out of which five have been disbanded and one is currently existing. The decision to disband those units had come from the railways, the sources said.

Besides their operational role, the TA has also contributed to the protection and preservation of the environment.

The first Ecological Task Force (ETF) was raised in 1982, to address the severely degraded hills of Mussoorie (Uttarakhand) due to intensive and incessant limestone quarrying and deforestation. Today, the TA has ecological battalions deployed along the length and breadth of the country, they said.

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Dying Gobari stares at plastic 'burial'

Groundwater level in Kendrapara town is declining due to indiscriminate dumping of waste in the river leading to its burial



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Oct 8: Once the lifeline of Kendrapara district, Gobari river is dying a slow death with plastic and polythene waste burying the water body, a report said Sunday.

The story doesn't end here as regular and rampant dumping of the non-biodegradable waste has hindered the river's free flow obstructing drainage of water. Moreover, the plastic waste does not decompose and thereby pollutes the soil. This has also led to an acute drop in groundwater level in the area.

The results are quite alarming but the district administration is yet to take steps to clean up the river and ban the use of plastic and polythene which has proved catastrophic for the environment.

Sources said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called for a complete ban on single use plastic and polythene during Gandhi Jayanti celebrations in 2016. Meanwhile, seven years have passed but little progress has been made in this regard.

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) had directed to put stress on waste management and imposed penalty of ₹24 lakh on Kendrapara Municipality for violation of its order.

The order of the NGT has completed one and half year. However, the civic body has been lagging behind in waste management.

Several people have opened the outlets of their septic tank to Gobari river and canal as the district administration and the Kendrapara civic body are yet to implement the waste management act in the town.

The river is getting buried day by day due to unabated dumping of waste. As a result, the river is also drying up gradually with water flow declining visibly.

A resident Manoj Kumar Singh of Khadianga said waste management is in complete disarray in the areas under the 154-year-old Kendrapara Municipality.

Earlier, people used to bathe and do their daily chores in the water of Gobari river and canal. However, both have been filled with tonnes of wastes. With the water being polluted, slightest use of the river water is resulting in skin rashes and diseases among locals.

Moreover, weeds have taken over the water bodies but the Water Resources department is allegedly not keen to clean the river and canal. As a result,

stench is emanating from the river during the rainy season.

A social activist Sheikh Sabir said absence of proper waste management has posed serious problems for Kendrapara town. On an average basis, a common person is dumping around 500 gram of biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste (including plastic and polythene) while 75 MT of waste is generated from the town daily.

The civic body had called for ban and boycott of plastic and polythene materials in 2016 but its implementation has been pushed to cold storage due to negligence and apathetic attitude of officials of the district administration and civic body.

Lack of action has emboldened people and institutions to use plastic and polythene materials with impunity.

An environmentalist Sheikh Chand said large scale use of plastic and polythene materials has posed grave danger for the environment. Stray cattle and dogs are even consuming plastic and polythene waste which is endangering their lives.

Rainwater fails to seep into the ground as the plastic and polythene materials do not dissolve in soil. This has led to a decline in groundwater level in the town.

The reckless dumping of waste in the river, if left unchecked, might seriously deprive local residents of drinking water in coming days.

When contacted, executive officer Prafulla Kumar Biswal of Kendrapara Municipality said the sanitation and waste management system in the town is being streamlined and strengthened. Dust bins have been provided in every ward of the town for disposal of garbage while awareness drives are being conducted among the traders and residents to stop use of plastic and polythene materials.



CYCLATHON FOR CYBER AWARENESS: SP Mukesh Kumar Bhamoo flagging of a cyclathon organised by the district police aimed at creating awareness on cyber crimes among the residents in Sambalpur, Sunday

OP PHOTO

NHRC seeks ATR from Keonjhar Collector, SP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Oct 8: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought an action taken report (ATR) on the alleged torture of dropout children, minor girls and minor mothers from the Collector and SP of Keonjhar district.

The apex rights body has asked the District Collector and SP to file separate reports within a period of four weeks. A copy of the order has also been served before the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC).

The matter came up before the rights body after human rights activist and advocate Radhakanta Tripathy of Supreme Court filed a petition in NHRC and sought its intervention on alleged torture of poor tribal children in Keonjhar district. The NHRC hearing on



the petition issued notice to the District Collector and SP and sought their reports on the issue.

According to the petition, a 13-year-old poor dropout girl was sexually exploited by his father's

friend under Sadar police limits in Keonjhar district, September 18. The girl narrated her ordeal before her father.

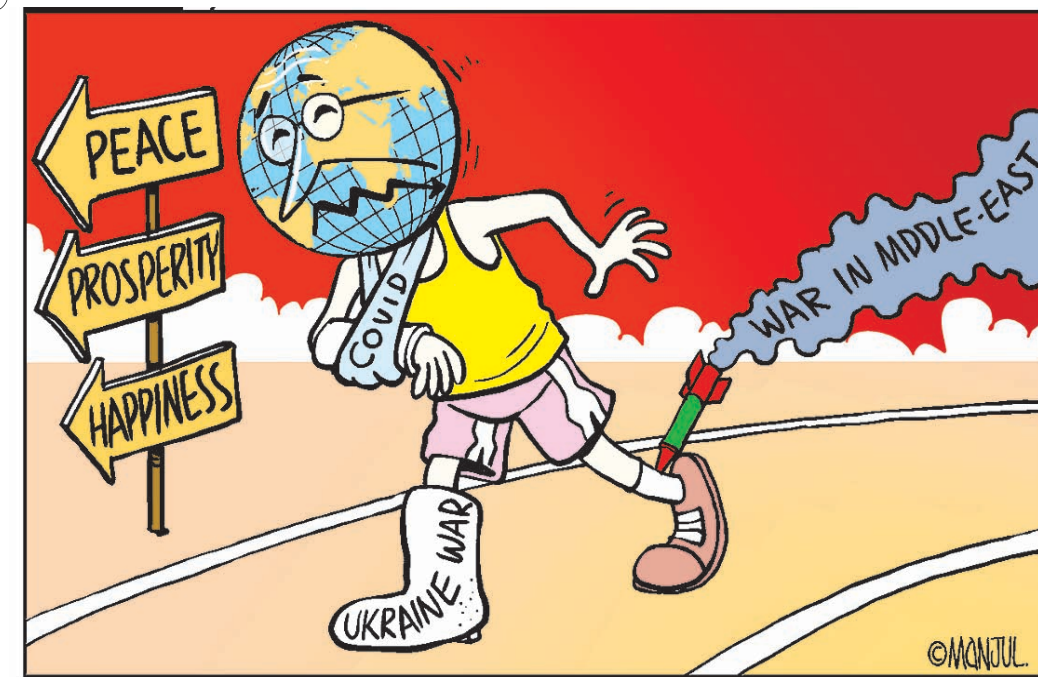
However, the father instead of filing an FIR against the friend

handed over his daughter to him. In his petition, Tripathy demanded stringent action against the accused persons. He also demanded to rehabilitate the girl with adequate compensation.

Similarly, a girl of a residential school in Telkoi area was found to be six months pregnant September 14 while another girl of a residential school in Bansapal block gave birth to baby girl at the district headquarters hospital, September 10.

In his petition, Tripathy has alleged marriage of minor girls is increasing among members of a particular community in Telkoi area but the district administration has failed to check child marriages. He also prayed for submission of action taken report (ATR) before the commission.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Simlipal National Park to reopen for tourists Oct 14

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Oct 8: The Simlipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district will reopen for common visitors and tourists from October 14, earlier than the usual date of November 1, a forest official said Sunday.

According to a notification issued by the Wildlife Conservator of the Simlipal Tiger Reserve Prakash Chand Gogineni, the National Park will reopen from Mahalaya, October 14 after remaining closed for around five months in view of the monsoon season.

As per the notification, tourists can enter the park between 6am and 9am. A maximum of 35 four-wheelers will be allowed entry through the Kalliani gate on the Jashipur side while 25 vehicles



will be allowed through the Pithabata gate on the Baripada side per day.

Visitors can book tickets at the counter for entry of vehicles from 6am to 9am. They can leave the premises from Barehipani and Jaranda by 3pm and Chahala by 4pm, it said.

Visitors are prohibited from take plastic bottles, intoxicants, non-vegetarian food items, and inflammatory products along with them while visiting the park.

PUBLIC NOTICE
DOCUMENT MISSING

Notice is hereby given that the property being Purchase Deed No-350/1982 and Rectified Deed No.2001/1983 of Village- Purnapada, District- Kalahandi in the name of Minakshi Patra at- Dashghara, P.O.- Khairpadar, P.S.- Dharmagarh. The said property purchase by me Name- Saroj Kumar Sharma, At/P.O.- Kalampur, P.S.- Jaipatna. All deeds register office of the Sub-Register, Bhawanipatna.

On 28.08.2023 at about 7.30 A.M. to 10.30 A.M. while come from Kalampur to Bhawanipatna on Bus, unfortunately I lost above said original documents (Sale Deed No. 350/1982 and Rectified Deed 2001/1983) have fell down from the vehicle and the same are not traceable. If anybody is in possession of the original documents relating to the said document they are requested to hand over the same to below address.

Saroj Kumar Sharma
At/P.O./P.S.- Kalampur, District- Kalahandi
Cell: 9437070324 / 7978858833

Capacity building programme on happy classroom organised



POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, Oct 8: A capacity building programme on happy classroom by the prospective resource persons (PRP) was held at the Parents' Pride Public School at Bhatsaliguda in Gandhinagar of Nabarangpur, Saturday.

This one-day capacity building programme was organised by the Centre of Excellence of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in Bhubaneswar.

Two resource persons -- Anil Kumar Patmaik, educator, Delhi Public School at Damanjodi in Koraput and G Vinod Kumar, PGT in Biology, Aditya Birla Public School at Tikri in Rayagada -- were deputed by the CBSE to hold this capacity building programme.

The day-long PRP was attended by over 40 participants from various public schools including Unique Public School, Bapuji Public School, Techno Gurukul in Nabarangpur, DIPS Kosagumuda, EMRS Hirli and the teachers of the host school.

The resource persons gave away various tips to achieve a happy classroom. The thumb rule of this programme is that a classroom is a space where happiness takes precedence, where children are always met with a smile and positivity. It is a space where their wellbeing is as important as their academic achievements.

A Aruna Prabha, principal of Parents' Pride Public School in Nabarangpur monitored and supervised this day-long PRP.

Shocker: Rescued woman, daughter survived rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Oct 8: The mother-daughter duo rescued by Sundargarh BJP MLA Kusum Tete while they were walking naked on main road near the Ib bridge in Sundargarh town have been kept under the watch of the district administration.

Doctors and psychiatrists are constantly keeping an eye on the duo in the Astha Home they have been lodged in. While condition of the mother is showing signs of improvement, the daughter is still reported to be under pain and trauma.

Notably, the duo was found crossing the Ib river bridge Friday by BJP MLA Kusum Tete. "The two women were spotted while walking along the College Road, which is one of the busiest roads in Sundargarh, with no clothes on. The road had congested traffic and there were a number of onlookers but nobody even offered them a piece of cloth to cover their bodies," the BJP leader stated. "I noticed



and later rescued them when I was crossing the bridge on Ib River, the MLA said.

On the first day, the doctors kept them sedated. Their counseling started Saturday by the psychiatrist. The daughter was completely silent out of trauma, but her mother was candid to tell everything that happened to them," said a member of the

DCW team.

The middle-aged woman was being raped by her brother in law Mithun ever since she got married. The woman has three daughters and two sons, it was learnt. Eventually, Mithun started taking interest in the daughters as they grew up, the woman said.

However, the two elder daughters managed to escape the

The middle-aged woman was being raped by her brother-in-law ever since she got married. Eventually, he started eyeing the daughters as they grew up, the woman said

clutches of their uncle. "She does not know where they are because they, like many other girls of their locality, had gone to work as house help in big cities," informed the member.

The third daughter has a little problem speaking. She also went to work somewhere outside and came back only a year back. By the time she came back, she had almost lost her ability to speak. However, when Mithun started eyeing the girl, the mother protested. Subsequently, both of them were abused by their tormentor. Finally, they could not tolerate his abuse and escaped.

The duo belongs to Jharkhand and their home is just on the other side of the border, it is learnt. They probably entered Sundargarh from Sabdega side and took the Balishankara route to reach the district headquarters.

Their counseling will continue from Monday, informed a source. The mother during her discussion with the team had reportedly informed that they were raped on the road several times while coming to Sundargarh. When contacted, Sundargarh SP Pratyush Diwakar said that efforts are on to identify the two rescued women.

All the police stations in Sundargarh and in neighbouring Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh have been alerted about the two rescued women and their photographs have been sent for identification. A special police team Monday will visit the short-stay home and question the two survivors about the heinous crime that reportedly took place with them, the SP added.

FOCUS DIPLOMACY

ROOTS OF DISCORD



Nijjar was hardly the only Sikh separatist living in Canada. In fact, the country has emerged as the global hub of the militant movement for 'Khalistan,' or an independent Sikh homeland

Rarely have two major democracies descended into as ugly a diplomatic spat as the one now unfolding between Canada and India. With the traditionally friendly relationship already at its lowest point ever, both sides are now engaging in quiet diplomacy to arrest the downward spiral, using the United States, a Canadian ally and Indian partner, as the intermediary. But even if the current diplomatic ruckus eases, Canada's tolerance of Sikh separatist activity on its territory will continue to bedevil bilateral ties.

Indira Gandhi was re-enacted, and staged attacks on Indian diplomatic missions in Canada. They have also held referenda on independence for Khalistan in Canada.

But, much to India's frustration, Canada has been reluctant to take strong action to rein in Sikh separatism. Trudeau's first official visit to India in 2018 turned into a disaster after it was revealed that a convicted Sikh terrorist who had spent years in a Canadian prison following the attempted assassination of a visiting Indian state cabinet minister had made it onto the Canadian guest list. At last month's G20 summit in New Delhi, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave Trudeau a dressing-down for being soft on violent extremists.

It was against this tense backdrop that Trudeau made his allegations about Nijjar's murder. When countries have linked foreign agents to a domestic death - for example, in 2010, when the Dubai police chief accused Mossad, Israel's intelligence service, of killing a Hamas commander in a local luxury hotel - they have typically presented video, audio, or forensic evidence. And they have mostly avoided blaming the government that the foreign agents represent.

Trudeau, by contrast, cast blame directly on the Indian government without presenting a scintilla of evidence. He says the allegations are based on credible intelligence, apparently from a "Five Eyes" partner country (Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, or the United States), but refuses to declassify the information or share it with Indian authorities.

Trudeau apparently has not provided "any facts" even to Canadian opposition leader Pierre Poilievre, a member of the Privy Council. And, according to the premier of British Columbia, the province where the killing occurred, the intelligence briefing he received on the matter included only information "available to the public doing an internet search."

Meanwhile, Canadian investigators have not made a single arrest in the case. This has left many wondering to what extent Canada's powerful but unaccountable intelligence establishment controls its foreign policy.

In any case, there is no doubt that Sikh radicals wield real political influence in Canada, including as funders. Trudeau keeps his minority government afloat with the help of Jagmeet Singh, the New Democratic Party's Sikh leader and a

Khalistan sympathiser. According to a former foreign policy adviser to Trudeau's government, action was not taken to choke off financing for the Khalistani militants because "Trudeau did not want to lose the Sikh vote" to Singh.

Canada must wake up to the threat posed by its Sikh militants. Rising drug-trade profitability and easy gun availability in British Columbia have contributed to internecine infighting among Khalistan radicals in the province. The volatile combination of Sikh militancy, the drug trade, and gangland killings has serious implications for Canadian security, but it is not only Canadians who are in danger.

Under Trudeau's father, then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, Canada's reluctance to rein in or extradite Sikh extremists wanted in India for terrorism led to the 1985 twin bombings targeting Air India flights. One attack killed all 329 passengers, most of whom were of Indian origin, on a flight from Toronto; the other misfired, killing two baggage handlers at Tokyo's Narita Airport. With Khalistani militants continuing to idolise Talwinder Singh Parmar - the terrorist that two separate Canadian inquiries identified as the mastermind behind the bombings - history is in danger of repeating itself.

By reopening old wounds, not least those created by the Air India attacks, Trudeau's accusations have created a rare national consensus in fractious and highly polarised India, with many calling for the government to put sustained pressure on Canada to start cleaning up its act. But more bitterness and recriminations will not restore the bilateral relationship. For that, both sides must use effective, cooperative diplomacy to address each other's concerns.

The writer is Professor of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin. @PROJECTSYNDICATE



Brahma Chellaney

EVEN IF THE CURRENT DIPLOMATIC RUCKUS EASES, CANADA'S TOLERANCE OF SIKH SEPARATIST ACTIVITY ON ITS TERRITORY WILL CONTINUE TO BEDEVIL BILATERAL TIES

Vain indeed is all overweening pride in the conquest even of the entire universe if one has not conquered one's own passions.

Sri Aurobindo



Pegasauce

Saturday morning's surprise and totally unprecedented attack by air, land and sea by the ruling Hamas militant group in the Gaza Strip in Israel's southern parts seems to be a colossal intelligence failure of Israel. The world over, Israel was known as the Mother of all kinds of Intelligence activities and gadgetry. Maybe the country's internal political disturbances have harmed the defence structure to such an extent that it has failed to keep a watch on its own borders. Now it has resorted to heavy bombing runs by the Israeli air force over the Gaza Strip as retaliation. Reports claim that Hamas militants fired more than 2000 rockets from the Gaza strip into Israel while its fighters entered Southern Israel by using para gliders and even captured several Israeli soldiers near the border. All the talk and bravado of 'The Iron Dome' supposedly protecting Israel from any and all rocket attacks seems to have fallen by the wayside.

Israel has always taken pride in its intelligence agencies, Shin Bet, the domestic unit, and especially in Mossad, its external spy agency. It seems all the intelligence units have failed and Israel has been caught off guard.

Globally known as a country with one of the strongest military forces, Israel has deployed security cameras at its borders, state of the art thermal imaging and motion sensors and sophisticated border fencing which are manned by personnel from both Shin Bet and Mossad. Gadgets like Pegasus are supposed to keep the user government aware of even private conversations of suspects. Everything seems to have failed and it may not be inappropriate to call it Pegasauce now.

According to international news sources, more than 600 Israelis have been killed and 100 kidnapped in these couple of days. On the other hand, retaliatory Israeli airstrikes have reportedly killed at least 370 people in the Gaza Strip, with 2200 wounded. Meanwhile in Egypt, two Israeli tourists were shot dead in Alexandria, apparently by a policeman.

Observing the situation, the US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken, predictably, said "Our first focus is to make sure Israel has what it needs."

Interestingly, Hamas has asked all factions of the Palestinian forces to unite and join this war. This call for united action could also be an indication for the future. Hezbollah, in response, has now claimed responsibility for mortar strikes from Lebanon into occupied Shebaa farms. It is accepted by all expert observers that this strike by Hamas has not only taken the Israeli security apparatus by complete surprise but it also has, probably, altered the shape of war in that region forever. Historically, since the 1973 war, it was Israel that was carrying out constant offensives against the displaced Palestinian people beyond its borders. This is the first time that war has been taken to Israeli soil. The West, especially the US and most of NATO countries, will obviously support Israel because their prime interest is to create multiple points of conflagration across the world which would, in turn, help them sell their weapons and defence equipment. There is also the underlying but unspoken and silent aspect of suppressing the ever violent and unreasonable Moslems globally.

Just before the beginning of this war, for the past few months, Israeli politicians as also its general public have been deeply divided over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's far right policies which primarily aimed at muzzling the Supreme Court and making the government all powerful. The coalition headed by Netanyahu might get a shot in the arm because of this fresh conflict with Hamas. It is possible the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) were lax because of the confusing and divisive policies of the government. Retaliations by Israel may now be extremely violent but it will only succeed in killing thousands of children and women living in Palestinian refugee camps for decades but very unlikely to cripple the determined Hamas fighters. Armed with aged Kalashnikovs and without bulletproof vests or helmets and moving around in open pickup trucks, these Palestinian fighters have finally shown that they have nerves of steel. The capture of Israeli Major General Nimrod Aloni who spearheaded operations against terrorist groups is an example of small but important victories for the Hamas.

All this obviously will help bolster Prime Minister Netanyahu and his coalition's sagging image. Whenever blood is shed of hundreds of countrymen, it is only the politicians in power of that country who benefit the most. Apart from that, this temporary success in war might help unite all the divided Palestinian fighters to come together. If that happens, the future of the region would be very unsettled.

Piate
Tathagata Satpathy

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Personal loans, defaults on rise

What would sway Indian politics - the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy or caste census? Normally it should be the RBI moves, but elections may be guided more by the caste factor as people forget that for decades castes have been denoting socio-economic status, aspirations rather than wry warnings of one who observes the economy from close quarters.

The RBI has come out with certain facts that may not be palatable to the overall economic conditions, including a veiled subprime alert as personal loans and defaults rise. It held back repo rates at 6.5% amid continuous rises in prices. The bank indicates holding of rates till the general elections. In other words, it candidly says that there is little opportunity to cut the rates. This means the cost would continue to be more for borrowers, whether individual or corporate.

Do Bihar caste census figures matter in such a scenario? Inflation at 6.83% as per August 2023 figures less than the highest of 7.44% in July is beyond the RBI toleration limit of 6%. But hawkish RBI is targeting for 4%.

It is good news if the target is achieved but if not, post elections rates could spiral. The 112 extreme backward castes and other economically weaker classes, who are covered by the Ujjwala scheme may feel happy that the government has reduced the LPG cylinder prices by Rs 300. Correspondingly, the price of commercial cylinders has been raised by Rs 300. It is a cross subsidy.

The situation is contrary to the United States. The Federal Reserve has been firming up rates. Another rise may be in the offing as the US jobs swelled, unemployment rate comes down to 3.8% and wages rose at a modest rate. This is not a good indicator for the Indian economy. Each US rate surge sees flight of capital from the rest of the world. This means investments elsewhere would plummet. India needs to feel concerned.

On annual basis, personal loans contributed 37.7% incremental bank credit in August 2023, according to the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) report or over Rs 40 lakh crore against Rs 33 lakh crore in 2022 and Rs 29 lakh crore in 2021. Within

these loans during August, credit card loans had shown a growth of 30%, vehicle loans 21% and housing loans 14%.

Retail loans in the Indian banking sector grew at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 24.8% between March 2021 and March 2023, the RBI said in its Financial Stability Report in June. It far outstripped the 13.8% CAGR of banks' gross advances and the retail segment accounted for one-third of the gross loans in the banking system.

The share of unsecured retail loans grew to 25.2% from 22.9% in March 2021-2023, while secured loans eased from 77.1% to 74.8%, the data showed. Banks' unsecured loan portfolio amounted to close to Rs 12 lakh crore as of end July. In an August 29 report, Nomura Global Market Research's analysts say that while most lead indicators do not flag imminent risks for banks, the regulator's "repeated warnings" on unabated growth in the segment as well as concerns on rising consumer leverage have sparked investor concerns. The RBI goes by the world experience of 2007-08 sub-prime meltdown. However, the RBI Governor

has not said a word about a possibility of repeat of a meltdown.

A trend in higher default in this segment is noticed. The number of unsecured loans payment defaulters in India, on the other hand, has increased to 32.9% in the personal loans segment as of April 21, 2023, compared with 31.4% from a year ago.

Banks report 16,044 borrowers with total debt of Rs 346,479 crore. The amount stuck in the wilful default category has jumped by 41%, or over Rs 1 lakh crore in the last two years from Rs 245,767 crore in December 2020, according to data compiled by Transunion Cibil.

There is speculation that the caste census would lead to rise in demand for loan waivers. But the microfinance industry says that their borrowers know that debt waiver announcements would not add to default and escalation in credit cost. The only way to have done it is politically - by state or other governments. Rates are to remain unchanged till May 2024, but the rising personal debts and defaults are ominous signs that nudge the RBI.

WISDOM CORNER

If you want something you have never had, you must be willing to do something you have never done. THOMAS JEFFERSON

Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway. EARL NIGHTINGALE

Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1986: Phantom of Opera makes its theatrical debut. The musical written by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Richard Stilgoe opened at Her Majesty's Theatre in London's West End. The plot of the musical was inspired by French author Gaston Leroux's novel Le Fantôme de l'Opéra, which follows the life of Erik or the Phantom, a disfigured musical genius. The musical is the longest running show on Broadway.

2004: First Afghan presidential elections held. For the first time in Afghanistan's history, voters went to the polls to choose a president, selecting Hamid Karzai, who had served as the interim president after the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. As Karzai entered office, he enjoyed strong support from Western allies, but he faced enormous challenges. Continued violence and instability and an inability to effectively build up Afghan institutions and provide basic services took its toll on his popularity at home and abroad, as did allegations of government corruption.

2012: Assassination attempt made on Malala Yousafzai. The Pakistani education activist was shot at and injured while going back home from school. A Taliban gunman shot the 15-year-old activist, a vocal opponent of the ultraconservative group's prohibition on the education of girls. Despite being struck in the head, Malala survived the attack and has since gone on to become one of the leading voices for the education of girls in the world. In 2014, at the age of 17, she received the Nobel Peace Prize along with Kailash Satyarthi of India making her the youngest recipient of the prestigious award.



Shivaji Sarkar

RATES ARE TO REMAIN UNCHANGED TILL MAY 2024, BUT THE RISING PERSONAL DEBTS AND DEFAULTS ARE OMINOUS SIGNS THAT NUDGE THE RBI

Hole in ozone layer

Sir, Satellite measurements over Antarctica have detected a giant hole in the ozone layer. The hole, which scientists call an "ozone depleted area" was 26 million square kilometres large. This is roughly three times the size of Brazil. The European Space Agency's (ESA), Copernicus Sentinel-5P satellite made the recordings on September 16, 2023, as part of the EU's environmental monitoring programme. Claus Zehner, ESA's mission manager for Copernicus Sentinel-5P, told DW that this is one of the biggest ozone holes they've ever seen. Experts believe the hole in the ozone is not likely to increase warming on the surface of Antarctica. The ozone layer is a trace gas in the stratosphere, one of the four layers of the earth's atmosphere. It functions as a protective gas shield that absorbs ultraviolet (UV) radiation, protecting humans and ecosystems from dangerous amounts of UV. Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Dangerous escalation

Sir, This refers to "Israel at war," OrissaPOST, Oct 8. The fighting between Israeli forces and the Palestinian group Hamas intensified, with hundreds killed on both sides after an attack on Israel prompted Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to warn they were "embarking on long and difficult war." The conflict's bloodiest escalation in decades saw Hamas carry out a massive rocket barrage and ground, air and sea offensive, that Israel's army, said had killed more than 300 Israelis and wounded 1,000. Gaza officials said intense Israeli air strikes on the coastal enclave had brought the Palestinian death count to at least 400, with nearly 1,700 wounded. The escalation follows months of rising violence, mostly in the occupied West Bank, and tensions around Gaza's border and at contested holy sites in Jerusalem. Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to avenge what he said was a "black day" for Israel. But, the conflict could undermine the US-backed efforts to broker a normalisation of relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia - a regional security realignment that could threaten Palestinian aspirations for statehood and the ambitions of the Hamas' main backer, Iran. Also, it is a matter of concern that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict led central Asia to become one of the most unstable areas. N Sadhasiva Reddy, 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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



Has Yamuna become India's river of sorrow?

One of the holiest rivers of India, the Yamuna in Agra has not received the focused attention of the Yogi Adityanath government in UP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agra, Oct 8: Scanty rains this monsoon season in Agra region have alarmed agriculturists and river activists.

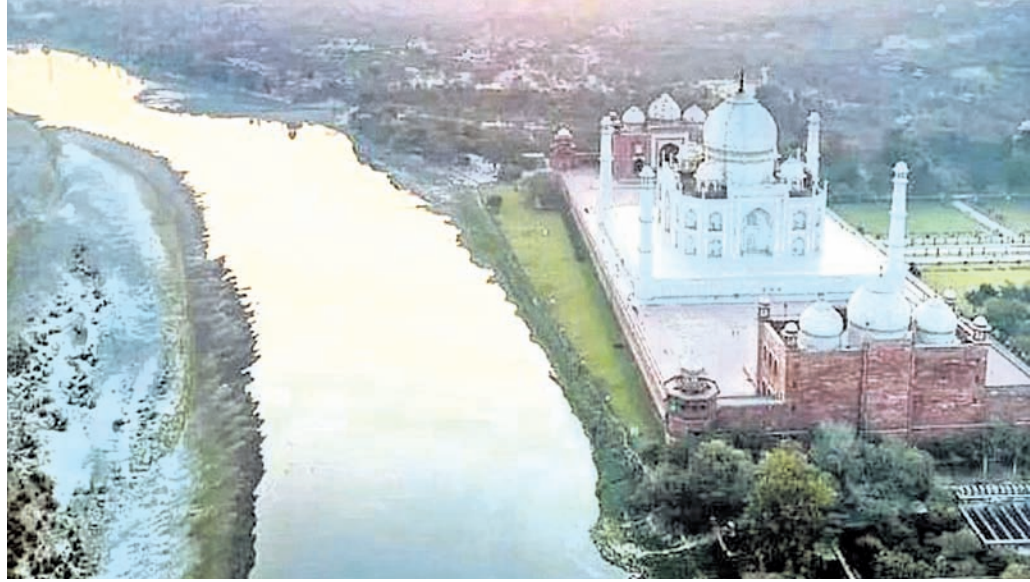
The sickly Yamuna river is already dry. "Thanks to open drains upstream, the river has been reduced to a vast sewage canal. Already you can see foaming and white layer patches on the river bed downstream of the Gokul barrage in Mathura. Yamuna is stinking with filth and toxic effluents," said environmentalist Devashish Bhattacharya.

The Agra region normally gets around 650 mm rain during the four month rainy season, but this year the total rainfall has not been able to cross 500mm.

"The rains have been erratic and poorly distributed. The whole of August went dry, when Kharif sowing normally begins," according to village level worker Ghan Shyam.

The sight of a dry and polluted river along whose banks are sited some of the best Mughal monuments including the Taj Mahal, is such a put off for the tourists. Heaps of garbage and mounds of immersed Ganesh idols are polluting the river water.

One of the holiest rivers of India, the Yamuna in Agra has not received the focused attention of the Yogi Adityanath government in UP. Demands for desilting, dredging and cleaning up the river bed plus continuous discharge of a minimum quantity of fresh water to keep the river alive have not drawn sympathetic response from the government, say the green activists



of the River Connect Campaign.

In November 2013, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had promised prompt action to rejuvenate river Yamuna. Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari also on several occasions promised to start a ferry service from Delhi to Agra to bring in tourists, but the promises have not been kept.

One of the green activists Jugal Kishor fumed furiously at the continued callous neglect of the holy Yamuna.

"Not only UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, but also Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union minister Nitin Gadkari had promised to take appropriate steps to rejuvenate and revive the ancient glory of Yamuna. Gadkari on three different occasions had assured that ferries would bring tourists from Delhi to Agra and the

Yamuna would be cleaned. But the ground reality continues to remain depressing."

Why a party committed to Hindu ideology and reviving ancient glory could be so callous and apathetic to the condition of holy rivers, is something that needs investigation, says Lok Swar president Rajiv Gupta.

"Yamuna is integral to the Sri Krishna-Radha-lore. For the Hindus it is one of the holiest rivers. The Bhakti movement poets eulogised Kalindi (Yamuna). Even the Mughal rulers were fascinated by the majestic and resplendent Yamuna river. Almost all great monuments were sited on the banks of river Yamuna from Delhi to Agra," says Goswami Nandan Shrotriya, priest of the 300-year-old Sri Mathuradheesh temple in Agra.

On a number of occasions

while intervening in the MC Mehta PIL on Taj Mahal pollution, the Supreme Court had stressed on not only cleaning pollution but also maintaining a regular flow of water in the Yamuna for the safety of the historical monuments.

The National Green Tribunal too has ordered uninterrupted minimum flow of water in Yamuna to cleanse pollutants and support aqua life, adds Padmini Iyer of the River Connect Campaign.

But successive governments have lacked the will needed to face the challenge of water pollution in the rivers. To further compound a grave situation, thousands of water bodies in the Braj Mandal have disappeared without a trace. The holy ponds or "kunds" of Braj have either vanished or grabbed by land sharks, say the locals.

Ayodhya to become UP's first 'solar city'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ayodhya (UP), Oct 8: Work is underway on a war footing to develop Ayodhya as Uttar Pradesh's first solar city ahead of the consecration ceremony of the Ram temple, likely to be in January.

The Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Department (UPNEDA) has undertaken the task to develop the temple town into the state's first solar city, officials said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and about 10,000 dignitaries from across the country are expected to attend the pran pratishtha (consecration) ceremony, likely to be held January 22, Ram Temple Construction Committee Chairperson Nripendra Mishra told PTI a fortnight ago. Officials said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is personally monitoring the ongoing work in Ayodhya.

After inspecting the work to electrify the temple town with solar power in May, the chief minister said, Ayodhya is the capital of Suryavansh. So, here, electricity will come not from other sources but from renewable solar energy.

The plan entails developing a solar park along the banks of the Saryu, providing solar-powered boats, installing solar streetlights, adoption of solar energy sources in public transport, providing solar-powered amenities such as mobile charging points at public places along with electrification of government buildings using solar energy and improving penetration of solar power for domestic use.



Senior government officials said the project is part of Uttar Pradesh's ambitious Solar Energy Policy 2022. An important aspect of the plan is to develop 16 municipal corporations and Noida as solar cities.

The plan is to develop Ayodhya as the model for the solar city project and use the learnings in the implementation of solar policies in other proposed cities, UPNEDA Director Anupam Shukla told PTI.

While the solar city project is a five-year plan (2023-28), facilities such as streetlights, installation of solar panels at government buildings, e-rickshaws with charging stations, solar trees and solar energy-powered purifiers for drinking water kiosks are to be covered in the first phase. We are confident that most of the ongoing projects in Ayodhya will be completed by January, said Shukla.

The biggest aspect of the project is the installation of a 40 MW solar plant on the banks of the Saryu, to be established by NTPC Green. The commissioning of 10 MW of the project is expected by January.

The land for the project has been finalised and work is already underway, UPNEDA officials confirmed.

No man's land on Indo-Bangla border gears up for Durga Puja

Gobindapur village located beyond the fencing of Indo-Bangla border has the history of organising Durga Puja for more than 100 years

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Karimganj (Assam), Oct 8: The everyday life of the 44 families in Gobindapur village at the India-Bangladesh border in Assam's Karimganj district is not normal as the village falls in the no man's land zone between the International Borders of the two countries, separated from the mainland by a barbed wire fence.

Work on the 124-km-long barbed wire fencing began in 1994 in the Barak Valley areas of Assam. Although the residents of Gobindapur village have voting rights, they are Indian citizens, yet the villagers have to abide by a lot of regulations. The gates of the fencing are opened in the morning and closed by the Border Security Force (BSF) before dusk. The villagers must return to their homes within this time. Moreover, outsiders cannot enter the village without the proper permission of the authorities.

However, the village celebrates Durga Puja with full flavour. Gobindapur village has the his-



tory of organising Durga Puja for more than 100 years. The village has a small temple where the puja is organised every year. The preparations have been started at the village to celebrate this year's Durga Puja too.

Birendra Namasudra, one of the villagers, told IANS. "We were separated from the Indian mainland due to partition. However, we did not want to leave our ancestral home. There are several rules at the border. According to the policy given by BSF, we have to return to the village before evening. As a result, we do not have the opportunity of pandal hopping during the Durga Puja."

The worship of Goddess Durga has been going on in this village for more than 100 years, according to the villagers. They claimed that they have the blessing of Goddess Durga, and that is why they can continue the puja.

The economic situation of the villagers is not good. But the whole village is decorated during Durga Puja and Mangal Aarti is also held in the evening. On the nights of Ashtami and Navami, small competitions are held.

Prasad is distributed among the villagers for four days.

Another villager, Bipul Das, claimed that although the Border Security Forces are somewhat strict, they are the ones who extend their helping hand in organising the puja.

"The soldiers of the security forces come forward to help by providing financial donations, the provision of drinking water, the construction of pandals, lighting, and various materials," he added.

Karimganj district shares a 92-km-long border with Bangladesh, mostly with Sylhet district of that country. Apart from Gobindapur, there are eight Indian villages located beyond the fencing. The other villages are Lafashail, Jarapata, Latukandi, Kuorbag, Mahisaahan, Tesua, Barmagul, and Deo Tuli. However, no other village celebrates Durga Puja.

Gobindapur village has 44 Indian families; 42 of them are Hindu, and the rest are Muslims. The Muslims of Gobindapur village also join the festivities of the Durga Puja. The entire village spends the four days of Puja with joy.

Another villager, Titu Namasudra, said, "During the Covid-19 pandemic, we had to stop the Durga Puja temporarily due to financial distress. We don't seek support from outsiders; it's our own Durga Puja. As the situation improved, we started celebrating the previous year."

POST NEWS NETWORK

Guwahati, Oct 8: The survival of the one-horned rhinoceros is threatened by the illegal wildlife trade (IWT), even though their poaching has been drastically reduced in Assam, experts said.

In the latest incident of IWT, five persons were arrested by the Special Task Force (STF) of the Assam police after a huge number of rhino horns and other wildlife animal parts were recovered from their possession during a raid in Kaliabor town in Nagaon district August 23.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said strict action has been taken against the poaching of rhinos in the state resulting in zero cases last year and this year for the first time.

The Chief Minister taking to 'X' said that rhinos are the prized members of the state's abundant fauna.

"Rhinos, synonymous with the identity of Assam, are cherished members of the state's rich faunal biodiversity."

He also asserted that the state government has been giving utmost importance to stopping the poaching of the one-horned rhinoceros.

"The protection of this magnificent animal has been a top priority of the Govt of Assam and in the last few years, we have made consistent efforts in this regard which has resulted in zero poaching cases of rhinos in



the state for the first time," the Chief Minister stated.

Ivy Farheen Hussain, Project Officer and Wildlife Crime Analyst of conservation organisation "Aaranyak", said that the IWT, intricately linked to organised crime, transcends borders involving national and international criminal syndicates.

It encompasses arms smuggling, money laundering, cross-border trafficking, and terrorism,

all driven by the insatiable demand for rhino horns and body parts in black markets, she pointed out.

Dr Jimmy Borah, Senior Manager, Legal and Advocacy Division of Aaranyak made similar observations.

Hussain and Borah said that the demand for rhino horns, primarily from traditional medicine markets in Asia, has fuelled poaching across rhino range

areas in India.

Rhino horns are falsely believed to possess medicinal properties and are often used as status symbols. The poaching of rhinos has transformed into a highly lucrative and illicit industry, leading to the rapid decline of rhino populations.

Behind the rhino poaching, organised crime networks operate with alarming sophistication.

National and international gangs work in close coordination, leveraging their vast resources to orchestrate elaborate smuggling operations. These criminal enterprises are not limited to wildlife alone, they often branch into arms smuggling, money laundering, and even links to terrorism, further destabilizing regions, the experts said.

To effectively deal with this illegal trade and crime, the Assam government has mounted a heroic defence of its rhino population.

Over the years, their tireless efforts and innovative strategies have succeeded in minimising rhino poaching, culminating in an astounding achievement - zero poaching in 2022. This remarkable turnaround offers hope for the survival of these majestic creatures, Hussain and Borah stated.

Officials claimed the poaching has been more or less under control in Assam that saw poachers killing 190 rhinos between 2000 and 2021, the highest - 27 each - in 2013 and 2014.

Security tightened along Assam-Nagaland border

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati/Kohima, Oct 8: Security has been further tightened along the Assam-Nagaland border areas to check and curb the movement of extremists, anti-social elements, and to prevent unlawful activities, an official said.

Officials of both Assam and Nagaland governments said that militants and anti-social elements sometimes do various illegal activities including unlawful trade of forest resources and wildlife on either side of the border.

Additional District Magistrate (ADM) of Sivasagar district of Assam has enforced night cur-



few in a 5-km belt on the Assam side of Sivasagar district, which shares a border with Nagaland.

The night curfew, which is in effect from 6 pm in the evening to 6 am in the morning, will remain in place till November 6.

The decision to enforce the night curfew has been taken as a precautionary measure to deter anti-social elements, extremists, and unlawful activities from

crossing the Assam-Nagaland border within the Sivasagar district, a district official said.

He said that during the period of the night curfew, the movement of any person, group of persons, or vehicular traffic is strictly prohibited within the specified area.

Assam shares a 512-km-long border with Nagaland and several patches of the inter-state

border are disputed and the two states are now in parley to resolve the dispute.

After a series of top-level meetings, the Assam and Nagaland governments in 2021 withdrew their respective forces from the disputed sites.

Though the decades-old Nagaland and Assam border dispute cases have been pending in the Supreme Court for many years, the Chief Ministers of the two states held several meetings and are trying to settle the issues out of court.

Many people have been killed, most of them on the Assam side, in the attacks by the armed forces from Nagaland in different incidents in 1979, 1985, 2007 and 2014.

UP artisans keep date with Jammu for Dussehra effigies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Oct 8: Muslim artisans from Uttar Pradesh are back in Jammu along with their Hindu counterparts to erect effigies of demon king Ravana and his brothers for the upcoming Dussehra.

Over 50 workers, all from a village in Meerut district, reached Jammu September 23 on the invitation of Shri Sanatam Dharam Sabha Geeta Bhawan.

"We have been coming to Geeta Bhawan for the past 38 years to make the effigies for Dussehra, catering to different parts of Jammu and Kashmir besides Leh in Ladakh," head contractor Mohd Rehan told PTI.

The main Dussehra function

will be held at Parade ground in the heart of Jammu.

Effigies of Ravana, Meghnada and Kumbhakarna will also be burnt at several other places in the city including Akhnour, RS Pura and Bishna near the International Border, Gandhi Nagar, near Railway station, Channi and Sainik colony to mark the triumph of good over evil.

These craftsmen are working on dozens of massive bamboo structures having height of more than 50 feet.

Rehan said all the workers are proud of working together. Besides a dozen Muslims, there are over 40 Hindu artisans that include Harijan and Kashyap Thakur workers.

"We work together and share our meals without any discrimination. 'Mazhab nahi sikhata aapas mein bair rakhta'... We are living by the example of it," he said, lauding the temple management for their trust in them.

Rehan's son-in-law Mohd Giasuddin said artisans have been coming to Jammu for generations and his grandfather Mohd Sirajuddin was also one of them.

"We are keeping this tradition alive. The people of Jammu warmly welcome us and we also eagerly wait for this opportunity. Some of our (Hindu) co-workers also use this visit to pay obeisance at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine," he said.



Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari unveils the new IAF ensign on the sidelines of the Annual Air Force Day Parade in Prayagraj



A temporary bamboo bridge being constructed at Chungthang connecting it to Pegong days after flash floods, in Mangan district, Sikkim



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar at the site where a firecracker shop-cum-godown caught fire on Saturday, at Attibele in Bangalore



CRPF women bikers leave for the motorcycling expedition 'Yashasvini' from the Bantalab CRPF camp in Jammu



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath offers prayers at the Badrinath Temple



Students of Gurukul Art school give finishing touches to paintings on the Israel-Palestine conflict in Mumbai



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar plays a traditional musical instrument during the Haryana Krishi Vikas Mela, at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University in Hisar, Haryana



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman being presented a memento by IIT BHU Director Pramod Kumar Jain during the inauguration of the 'Readers Circle of Mental Wellness Week', in Varanasi

national

of the day quote

There has been no change in the IPC, CrPC or the Evidence Act since 1860. Any law becomes 'obsolete' after 50 years. The scale of crime has changed, and so has the method of committing them but there has been no change in the method of dealing with them

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

The Indian National Congress condemns the brutal attacks on the people of Israel

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

The Maharashtra government has allotted huge funds to strengthen health institutions in the state and there is no shortage of funds to provide medical treatment to the needy

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Two injured

Imphal: Two persons, including a CRPF personnel, were injured in a hand grenade explosion near the residence of Manipur minister Khemchand Yumnam in Imphal West district, police said Sunday. The incident happened at Yumnam Leikai around 10 pm on Saturday, they said. Two persons, who were on a motorcycle, hurled the grenade, which fell a few metres away from the main gate of the minister's residence, they added.

Three killed in MP

Barwani (MP): Three persons were killed and five injured after a tractor-trolley they were travelling on fell into a nullah in Madhya Pradesh's Barwani district Sunday, an official said, attributing the accident to sudden emergence of bovine animals on the road. Seven of the victims were going to work in a cotton field when the vehicle met with the accident on Kapadia Khedi Road, about 45 km from the district headquarters. The driver of the tractor-trolley was negotiating a turn when one or two bovine animals suddenly came onto the road. As a result, the driver lost control of the vehicle, which veered off and fell into a nullah, he said.

NEET aspirant commits suicide

Jaipur: An 18-year-old student preparing for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself from a ceiling fan at a private hostel in Rajasthan's Sikar district, police said Sunday. The incident took place Saturday. Nitin Faujdar, a resident of Nadbai town in Bharatpur district had come to Sikar in June to prepare for NEET. He was preparing at a coaching centre and skipped his class on Saturday, said Station House Officer, Udhvyog Nagar police station, Surendra Degra.

Tanzanian President arrives

New Delhi: Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan Sunday began a four-day visit to India with an aim to bolster bilateral relations. The presidential visit from Tanzania to India is taking place after a span of more than eight years. On Monday, Hassan is scheduled to hold talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Giving a fresh impetus to India-Tanzania ties. President @SuluHuSamia of Tanzania arrives on a State Visit to India. This is her first visit to India since the assumption of the office of President," Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi wrote on X after Hassan's arrival.



In my view, the data compiled as part of the survey is in order. If the BJP thinks otherwise, it should get a caste census done by its own government at the Centre

TEJASHWI YADAV | BIHAR DEPUTY CM

100 MONKEYS FOUND DEAD

Carcasses of nearly 100 monkeys were found on the outskirts of a village in Siddipet district in Telangana, officials said



Harassed as I didn't bow before BJP: Hakim

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 8: Senior West Bengal minister Firhad Hakim, who was questioned by the CBI after his residence was raided Sunday, lambasted the BJP for "employing government agencies to harass him as he didn't bow before the saffron party".

The CBI carried out searches at 12 locations, including the homes of Hakim and TMC MLA Madan Mitra, in various parts of the state as part of its investigation into alleged irregularities in recruitment processes within civic bodies.

The raid and questioning at Hakim's Chetla residence in south Kolkata began at 9 am and continued for nearly nine hours. Hakim, who serves as the minister for urban development and municipal affairs and also holds the position of Mayor of Kolkata, is a prominent figure in the TMC with significant influence within the party's structure.

A visibly frustrated Hakim, while addressing a press conference outside his residence,



Security personnel stand guard as CBI sleuths raid on the residence of Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim in connection with the alleged Municipality recruitment scam, in Kolkata

The raid and questioning at Hakim's Chetla residence in south Kolkata began at 9 am and continued for nearly nine hours

Hakim accused the BJP of resorting to the "use of central agencies to target him and other TMC leaders because they have not succumbed under the BJP's pressure"

Sikkim flood: Toll rises to 32

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gangtok, Oct 8: Thirty-two bodies, including those of nine Armymen, have been recovered so far from the slush and debris of the flash flood in the Teesta river that devastated Sikkim, while the search continued for the over 100 people who are still missing, officials said Sunday.

The flash flood, which was triggered by a cloudburst in the early hours of Wednesday, has affected 41,870 people.

So far, 2,563 people have been rescued from different areas of the state, most of which have been cut off from the rest of the country, according to the Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA).

Search was underway for 122 people who are still missing. Seventy-eight people are missing in Pakyong district, 23 in Gangtok district, 15 in Mangan and six in Namchi, it said.

Special radars, drones and Army dogs have been deployed for the search operations, officials said.

So far, 21 bodies have been recovered in Pakyong, six in Gangtok, four in Mangan and



Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra takes stock of the damages following flash floods in Rangpo, Sikkim

one in Namchi, they said. National Highway 10, the life-line of Sikkim, has been rendered unusable due to damage to the road surface and many bridges across the Teesta river. The opening and widening process of the stretch between Rangpo and Singtam is in progress, they added.

Drug menace: Mizoram intensifies crackdown

The police action has led to the recovery of drugs worth ₹60 crore and arrest of two Myanmar nationals within a week, according to officials



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, Oct 8: Amid the ongoing strife in Manipur, neighbouring Mizoram has emerged as the new route for smuggling drugs from Myanmar, prompting the state police to step up efforts to counter the menace.

The police action has led to the recovery of drugs worth ₹60 crore and arrest of two Myanmar nationals within a week, according to officials. More than 180 people have been killed and several hundreds injured since ethnic violence broke out in Manipur on May 3 when a Tribal Solidarity March was organised in the hill districts to protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status.

As efforts are on to control the ethnic unrest in Manipur, drug cartels are looking to make Mizoram the new route for smuggling drugs from Myanmar, the officials said. "Our relentless action against drug trafficking and smugglers is continuing and Mizoram Police is taking strict action against the transit of drugs in the state," Director General of Police Anil Shukla said.

He said drug smuggling continues to be a major cause of concern for Mizoram, where assembly

elections are due to be held this year. With a view to improve general policing as a whole, and to ensure smooth and peaceful conduct of assembly elections, police are making all-out efforts to counter the drug menace. As a result, significant seizures have been made, Shukla said.

On the evening of October 4, the Special Branch team of Aizawl district intercepted a vehicle at Zembabaw East and seized 11.6 kg of crystal methamphetamine worth ₹34 crore from the illegal possession of Ropianga (37), a resident of the Khawmawi area of Myanmar, the officials said.

A case under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic (NDPS) Act read with the Foreigners Act was registered in the matter, they said. In another incident, a 38-year-old woman, Lalremthangi, was arrested from the Lengpui Airport on October 3 with 10.4 kg of crystal meth worth ₹31 crore in the international market, the officials said.

They said the contraband was being smuggled to Delhi from Myanmar in a suitcase and was seized during X-ray baggage inspection at the airport by the Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) of Mizoram Police.

NC-Cong alliance sweeps Ladakh-Kargil polls

Kargil (Ladakh): The National Conference and the Congress together won 22 seats in the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council-Kargil election, officials said Sunday. The election to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC)-Kargil was the first poll to be held after Ladakh was carved out as a Union Territory following the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution. Twenty-six seats of the council went to polls on October 4. The administration nominates four members with voting rights to the 30-member council. According to the officials, the National Conference (NC) won 12 seats, making it the single largest party, while its ally Congress registered victory in 10. The BJP won two seats, while two independent candidates also registered victory, they said. The election recorded 77.61 per cent polling with 74,026 of the 95,388 voters exercising their right.

22 DROWN IN BIHAR IN 24 HRS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Oct 8: Twenty-two people have drowned while bathing in rivers and ponds in Bihar in separate incidents, officials said Sunday.

The incidents took place in the last 24 hours when a majority of them were bathing for Jivitputrika festival, during which women fast for the well-being of their children, they said.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar consoled the deaths and announced an ex-gratia of ₹4 lakh each for the next of kin of the deceased. "Five have drowned in Bhojpur, four in Jehanabad, three each in Patna and Rohtas, two each in Darbhanga and Nawada, one each in Kaimur, Madhepura and Aurangabad in the last 24 hours," according to a statement issued by the chief minister's office.

In Bhojpur, five girls aged 15 and 20 drowned near Bahiyara Ghat of Sone River on Saturday. One of them was swept by strong currents while taking a selfie while four others tried to save her



Bitter battle for OBC votes begins

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar may have bounced back after lying low for several weeks by releasing the report of caste survey, but the Modi government has the ace in its hands too. If sources in the government are to be believed, the Modi government may table the report of the Justice Rohini Commission regarding the sub-

categorization of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) as to how the benefits reach to the most backwards amongst the OBCs. The commission was established in 2017 and headed by retired Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court, G Rohini to identify all Other Backward Castes (OBCs) and to formulate the method, basis, and criteria for a fair distribution of benefits among all the OBCs. It is interesting that neither the Modi government nor the ruling BJP has officially commented on the caste survey released by Bihar.

Modi an admirer of Indira?

The Prime Minister has spared none in blasting members of the Nehru-Gandhi family not only during election rallies but even

otherwise wherever he gets an opportunity. But he never uttered a word about late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Though there was always a mention of imposition of Emergency in 1975 but Indira's name was never invoked by him. A proof of Modi's admiration for Indira Gandhi emerged when he heaped praises on her not once but twice in the old Lok Sabha when he made his last speech on September 18 there. He made a special mention of the success of the NAM Summit held in March 1983 in New Delhi during her tenure. Modi said, "When the NAM summit was held, this House had unanimously passed the resolution and the country had appreciated this effort. Today you have also unanimously appreciated the success of the G20. I believe that you have elevated the pride of the country." As if this was not

enough, Modi went on to praise Indira Gandhi again when he said, "This very House also played a crucial role in supporting the Bangladesh Liberation War and extending its backing under the leadership of Indira Gandhi."

Trudeau, the new fall guy

After shutting the doors on Pakistan, PM Modi seems to have chosen Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as the new fall guy. When Trudeau made his allegation public saying that "Indian government agents" were involved in Hardeep Singh Nijjar's killing, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar declared in Washington that these allegations were not consistent with India's policy and termed charges as "absurd and

motivated". He went on to blast Trudeau saying he had offered no evidence to support his allegation against India. The Indian government went on to show the door to 41 Canadian diplomats in India to leave the country. India firmly conveyed to Canada and Washington that Canada has a permissive attitude towards terrorists, extremists. Now Canada is offering private talk with India. But India has not responded to this offer.

A big tactical shift

PM Narendra Modi made a major policy shift when he allowed the Indian forces to undertake surgical operations inside the PoK to destroy terror camps in Balakot in 2019. India had a declared policy that it will never cross the border to attack the enemy and would

rather defend itself. But Balakot changed it all in 2019 and Modi decided to launch a direct assault inside Pakistan. Those keeping a track of what our top intelligence agencies are doing world over say that Modi's hawkish approach is largely due to Ajit Doval, National Security Adviser (NSA) in the PMO. Doval had worked since the days of Indira Gandhi and is a Pakistan affairs expert. If more than a dozen hardened terrorists in Pakistan, Italy and elsewhere have been eliminated in the recent past, one must remember that India has changed its policy under Modi. India has conveyed to the Western world, "if we are giving our markets to you to make money, there is no free lunch. There is a cost and Canada must fall in line against terror." The last word on Canada is yet to be written.

international

18,000 INDIANS STRANDED IN ISRAEL

As gun battles are raging in towns and on highways, nearly 18,000 Indian citizens are stuck in Israel. The majority of them are caregivers, IT professionals and students. There are many agencies in Israel which hire caregivers from India for the elderly population there. There are about 85,000 Jews of Indian-origin in Israel. The Indian embassy at Jerusalem and the Representative Office of India in Palestine Saturday issued advisories asking Indian nationals in respective countries to "remain vigilant" and "directly contact the Office" in case of emergency as a full-fledged war broke out between the ruling Hamas group in the Gaza Strip and Israel



ISRAEL BATTLES HAMAS FOR A SECOND DAY AFTER MASS INCURSION AND TRADES FIRE WITH LEBANON'S HEZBOLLAH IN THE DEADLIEST DAY OF VIOLENCE IN THE COUNTRY SINCE THE YOM KIPPUR WAR 50 YEARS AGO

War on two fronts



'Colossal intelligence failure'

The surprise and unprecedented multifront attack - by air, land and sea - by the Hamas militant group in southern Israel from the Gaza Strip is a result of a "colossal failure" of the country's intelligence agencies, according to media reports and experts. Israel has always prided itself on its intelligence agencies, Shin Bet, the domestic unit, and especially on Mossad, its external spy agency. However, more than 5,000 rockets were fired as dozens of Hamas fighters infiltrated the heavily fortified border in several locations by air, land and sea, catching the country off guard on Sukkot, a major Jewish holiday. All this happened despite Israel having one of the strongest militaries in the region, security cameras at the fortified border, personnel from both Shin Bet and Mossad in the field, state-of-the-art thermal imaging/motion sensors and even sophisticated border fencing. Some experts feel that Israel got so totally engrossed in countering Iran and in efforts to foil the Islamic Republic's nuclear programme that it has neglected its own backyard.



How Hamas outfoxed Iron Dome

Israel is at war following an unprecedented attack by the Hamas group. Over 5,000 rockets were fired towards Israel from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip in just 20 minutes after it declared Operation Al-Aqsa Flood. Air raid sirens across Israel shattered the morning silence and the Iron Dome system, one of the best air defence systems in the world, was again in action. In dramatic visuals, the Iron Dome destroyed rockets mid-air and the sky was illuminated with bursts of flares. This time, however, the scale of the attack was unprecedented. The Iron Dome system is a ground-to-air short-range air defence system deployed in several parts of the country to counter rocket attacks, mortars, artillery shells, and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) at short range. When a rocket is fired toward Israel, the Detection and Tracking radar detects the incoming trajectory and relays the information to the weapons control system, which performs fast, complex calculations to detect the trajectory, speed and expected target of the rocket. The near-perfect air defence system found itself overpowered after a barrage of rockets from Hamas. For several years, the terrorist group, Hamas, has been trying to find a weakness in the Iron Dome system. They have been largely successful in doing so by overwhelming the system with a Salvo rocket attack (multiple rockets launched in a short span of time), making it difficult for the control system to intercept all targets. This time, over 5,000 rockets were launched in just 20 minutes. Hamas is continuously developing its crude rocket technology and over the years it has increased its range to cover major cities of Israel including Tel Aviv and even Jerusalem.



US to send carrier strike group for Israel

The Pentagon has ordered the Ford carrier strike group to sail to the Eastern Mediterranean to be ready to assist Israel, two US officials said Sunday. The USS Gerald R Ford and its approximately 5,000 sailors and deck of warplanes will be accompanied by cruisers and destroyers in a show of force that is meant to be ready to respond to anything, from possibly interdicting additional weapons from reaching Hamas and conducting surveillance. The Norfolk, Virginia-based carrier was already in the Mediterranean. Last week it was conducting naval exercises with Italy in the Ionian Sea. It's the United States newest and most advanced aircraft carrier and this is its first full deployment. The officials were not authorized to publicly discuss the matter before the Defense Department's announcement and spoke on condition of anonymity.



Hamas will pay unprecedented price: Israel PM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the country was at war and would exact a heavy price from its enemies. Hamas leaders said they were prepared for further escalation. A major question now was whether Israel will launch a ground assault into Gaza, a move that in the past has brought intensified casualties. Netanyahu vowed that Hamas "will pay an unprecedented price." But, he warned, "This war will take time. It will be difficult." "We will take mighty vengeance for this wicked day," he said. "Hamas launched a cruel and wicked war. We will win this war but the price is too heavy to bear," he said. "Hamas wants to murder us all. This is an enemy that murders mothers and children in their homes, in their beds. An enemy that abducts elderly, children, teenage girls."



On the verge of a great victory: Hamas chief

Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh said the Palestinian group was on the "verge of a great victory" after it launched a surprise attack on Israel from the Gaza Strip. "We are on the verge of a great victory and a clear conquest on the Gaza front," Haniyeh said in a speech broadcast on Hamas-run Al-Aqsa television. "Enough is enough, the cycle of intifadas (uprisings) and revolutions in the battle to liberate our (Palestinian) land and our prisoners languishing in occupation (Israeli) prisons must be completed." Hamas said it had planned for a long fight. "We are prepared for all options, including all-out war," the deputy head of the Hamas political bureau, Saleh al-Arouri, told Al-Jazeera TV. "We are ready to do whatever is necessary for the dignity and freedom of our people."



Tel Aviv: Israeli soldiers battled Hamas fighters in the streets of southern Israel Sunday and launched retaliatory strikes that levelled buildings in Gaza, while in northern Israel a brief exchange of strikes with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group raised fears of a broader conflict. There was still some fighting underway more than 24 hours after an unprecedented surprise attack from Gaza, in which Hamas militants, backed by a volley of thousands of rockets, broke through Israel's security barrier and rampaged through nearby communities. At least 600 people have reportedly been killed in Israel - a staggering toll on a scale the country has not experienced in decades - and more than 300 have been killed in Gaza. They took captives back into the coastal Gaza enclave, including women, children and the elderly, who they will likely try to trade for thousands of Palestinian prisoners held by Israel. Hundreds have been killed on both sides. In Gaza, residents fled homes near the border to escape Israeli strikes, fleeing deeper inside the territory after warnings in Arabic from the Israeli military. Previous conflicts between Israel and Gaza's Hamas

The Israel-Palestine conflict's bloodiest escalation in decades saw Hamas carry out a massive rocket barrage and ground, air and sea offensive, that reports said had killed 600 Israelis and wounded 1,000. Gaza officials said intense Israeli air strikes on the coastal enclave had brought the Palestinian death count to at least 400, with nearly 1,700 wounded in two days



rulers brought widespread destruction in Gaza and days

of rocket fire on Israel. The flare-up on Israel's northern border also threatened to draw into the battle Hezbollah, a fierce enemy of Israel's which is backed by Iran and estimated to have tens of thousands of rockets at its disposal. Hezbollah fired dozens of rockets and shells Sunday at three Israeli positions in a disputed area along the border and Israel's military fired back using armed drones. Two children were lightly wounded by broken glass on the Lebanese side, according to the nearby Marjayoun Hospital. Hamas said that overnight it had continued to send forces and equipment into "a number of locations inside our occupied territories," referring to Israel. The surprise attack Saturday was the deadliest on Israel in decades. In an assault of startling breadth, Hamas gunmen used explosives to break through the border fence enclosing Gaza, then crossed with motorcycles, pickup trucks, paragliders and speed boats on the coast. They rolled into as many as 22 locations outside the Gaza Strip early Saturday morning, including towns and other communities as far as 15 miles (24 kilometers) from the Gaza border, while Hamas launched thousands of rockets at Israeli cities.

ANTI-CASTE DISCRIMINATION BILL

Hindus, Dalits celebrate Calif Guv's veto decision



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Oct 8: Hindu Parents of California, eminent Indian-Americans and a Dalit advocacy group Saturday welcomed the decision of California Governor Gavin Newsom to veto the anti-caste discrimination bill observing that this bill was brought with the sole intention of stereotyping the community. Governor Newsom vetoed the bill, which was recently passed by the state assembly, saying that laws to ban caste-based discrimination already exist in the state. "As California's Governor has rightly pointed out, California's law on civil rights already covers all instances of discrimination. We believe that this bill was brought with the sole intention of stereotyping the community. Governor Newsom's decision to veto bill SB403, Hindu Parents said this significant decision stands as a beacon against prejudice, discrimination, and misinformation about Hinduism and its followers in California.

and Bahujans. Congratulating the governor for seeing through the flaws in the bill and how it would adversely impact people from South Asia, including the marginalised communities, Vaishali said the network sees the bill as anti-Dalit and a threat to their cultural existence. "While we welcome the veto, we know that nothing can bring back the life of our leader Milind Makwana who was the voice marginalised and at the forefront of the struggle against SB-403. Nothing can heal the loss and the trauma that this bill has caused to the families of the marginalised communities," Vaishali said. Expressing profound relief and gratitude following Governor Newsom's decision to veto bill SB403, Hindu Parents said this significant decision stands as a beacon against prejudice, discrimination, and misinformation about Hinduism and its followers in California.

AFGHANISTAN EARTHQUAKE

Over 600 houses were destroyed across 12 villages in Herat province, with some 4,200 people affected

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Kabul, Oct 8: The death count from a series of earthquakes in western Afghanistan rose sharply Sunday to more than 2,000 as rescuers scurried for survivors among the ruins of villages razed to the ground. Saturday's magnitude 6.3 quake - followed by eight strong aftershocks - jolted hard-to-reach areas 30 km (19 miles) northwest of the provincial capital of Herat, toppling rural homes and sending panicked city dwellers surging into the streets. "Unfortunately, the casualties are practically very high," deputy government spokesman Bilal Karimi said early Sunday, as the extent of the damage became clear. As night fell Saturday in Sarboland village of Zinda Jan district, an AFP reporter saw dozens of homes ruined near the epicentre of the quakes, which shook the area for more than five hours. Men shovelled through piles of crumbled masonry as women and children waited in the open, with destroyed homes displaying personal belongings flapping in the harsh wind. The World Health Organization (WHO) said more than 600 houses were destroyed or partially damaged across at least 12 villages in Herat province, with some 4,200 people affected. "In the very first shake all the houses collapsed," said 42-year-

'Everything turned to sand'



old Bashir Ahmad. "Those who were inside the houses were buried," he said. "There are families we have heard no news from." Nek Mohammad told AFP he was at work when the first quake struck at around 11:00 am. "We came home and saw that actually there was nothing left. Everything had turned to sand," said the 32-year-old, adding that some 30 bodies had been recovered. "So far, we have nothing. No blankets or anything else. We are here left out at night with our martyrs," he said as darkness began to fall.

The WHO said late Saturday "the number of casualties is expected to rise as search and rescue operations are ongoing". In Herat city, residents fled their homes and schools, hospitals and offices evacuated when the first quake was felt. There were few reports of casualties in the metropolitan area, however. Afghanistan is already suffering in the grip of a dire humanitarian crisis, with the widespread withdrawal of foreign aid following the Taliban's return to power in 2021. Herat province - home to some 1.9 million people on the border

with Iran - has also been hit by a years-long drought that has crippled many already hard-scrabble agricultural communities. Afghanistan is frequently hit by earthquakes, especially in the Hindu Kush mountain range, which lies near the junction of the Eurasian and Indian tectonic plates. More than 1,000 people were killed and tens of thousands left homeless in June last year after a 5.9-magnitude quake - the deadliest in Afghanistan in nearly a quarter of a century - struck the impoverished province of Paktika.

2 Indian trainee pilots killed in plane crash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Toronto, Oct 8: Two trainee pilots from India are among three persons killed when a small plane crashed in Canada's British Columbia province, according to media reports. Abhay Gadru and Yash Ramugade, both 25, from Mumbai, were in the small twin-engine light aircraft - a piper PA-34 Seneca - which crashed on Friday near the local airport in Chilliwack city, about 100 km east of Vancouver. The plane crashed behind a motel near the airport, killing the pilot and everyone on board, Sgt Pete Healey from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police was quoted as saying by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Gadru moved to Canada three years ago to complete pilot training and was expected to graduate in November, his cousin Sdradha Trisal was quoted as saying by the Vancouver Sun newspaper on Saturday. "He was such a pure soul. I can't believe he's gone and I'm just left with memories now," Trisal said. A total of three people were killed in the plane crash. The report said that Gadru's sibling Chirag, who also lives in the British Columbia province, is trying to send back his brother's remains to their parents in India. Meanwhile, CTV News Vancouver, a Canadian news portal, said that the second person among the three killed was Yash Ramugade, who also hailed from Mumbai.

SHORT TAKES

New Kohli record

Chennai: Virat Kohli scripted Sunday the record of taking the most number of catches in ODI World Cup history for India. Kohli achieved the feat when he caught Mitch Marsh at first slip off the bowling of Jasprit Bumrah. With this catch, Kohli went past former India captain Anil Kumble who has taken 14 catches in the ODI World Cup. Kumble needed 18 matches while Kohli required 26 games to go past the former head coach of the Indian team.

Chirag stuns Akash

Cuttack: Chirag Arora created an upset of sorts when he defeated former Odisha champion Akash Mohapatra in the 29th All Odisha Billiards and Snooker Championships being played at the Cuttack Club here. In a tense snooker match, Chirag emerged victorious 3-2. In other matches played on the day Subrat Das trounced Mohammed Raza 3-0, Sameer Ali defeated Govinda Rao 3-0 and Nishant Biswal beat Mishal Swain 3-0.

Bronze for Ayush

New Delhi: Shuttler Ayush Shetty's stellar run at the BWF World Junior Championships in Spokane, USA came to an end Sunday as he finished his campaign with a bronze medal. He is the 10th Indian to win a medal at the BWF World Junior Championships. Despite fighting hard, Ayush went down 18-21, 15-21 to fourth seed, Alwi Farhan of Indonesia.

Swiatek shines

Beijing: Iga Swiatek won the China Open tennis tournament title here Sunday with a near-perfect 6-2, 6-2 victory over Liudmila Samsonova. It was Swiatek's fifth title of the season. Swiatek's triumph, in her first visit to China, was her 16th career title. No doubt, the numbers will increase next year.

Spinners demolish Aussies

KL Rahul and Virat Kohli's rescue act helps India win game by 6 wickets

AGENCIES

Chennai, Oct 8: KL Rahul (97 n o, 115b, 8x4, 2x6) and Virat Kohli (85, 116b, 6x4) helped India overcome early jitters as the hosts began their ODI World Cup campaign here Sunday on a rousing note defeating Australia by six wickets.

Chasing a victory target of 200 on a slow pitch, India had lost three wickets with only two runs on board, before Kohli and Rahul steadied the ship with a partnership of 165 runs for the fourth wicket that took India over the line comfortably.

As is the case, the batters will definitely get more attention, but it was the Indian spinners who conjured the win by creating a web around the Australian batters. Ravindra Jadeja (3/28), Kuldeep Yadav (2/42) and local boy Ravichandran Ashwin (1/34) did the job for the hosts as they



VITAL BLOW: Ravindra Jadeja celebrates with skipper Rohit Sharma after the dismissal of Marnus Labuschagne at the ODI WC game in Chennai

ran through the Aussie batting line up. They were well supported by the Indian pacers with Jasprit Bumrah (2/35) once again standing out. Jadeja became the biggest

nemesis among Indian spinners on a tacky Chepauk track as India rolled over Australia for 199 in 49.3 overs. Jadeja, who knows the track like the back of his

hand, courtesy his decade-plus association with Chennai Super Kings, used the slowness of the surface with subtle variations and it completely flummoxed the Aussies. The delivery that got Australian top-scorer Steve Smith (46) was a beauty with the ball spinning across the face of the bat to hit the off-stump.

Except for the stand of 69 runs for the second wicket between Smith and David Warner (41), none of the other Aussie batters had any answer to the Indian spin attack. The dismissal of Smith and Marnus Labuschagne (27), both by Jadeja, triggered a middle-order collapse from which Australia could never recover.

BRIEF SCORES

Australia 199 all out in 49.3 overs (Steve Smith 46, Ravindra Jadeja 3/28) lost to **India** 201 for 4 in 41.2 overs (KL Rahul 97 n o, Virat Kohli 85) by six wickets.

Team combo may change: Rohit

AGENCIES

Hyderabad, Oct 8: Rohit Sharma admitted Sunday that the biggest challenge in front of his side would be to play in different conditions over the course of the World Cup, and the Indian captain did not rule out making changes in team combinations to suit the demands of a particular venue.

"That will be the biggest challenge moving forward because we will play in different conditions. (We) might have to change combinations too and as a team we are prepared to do that," said Rohit during the post-match presentation.

Rohit was particularly pleased with the team's fielding. "Good feeling to come out on top. Magnificent, especially the fielding. The fielding was something we really put our effort in. It



was a great show," Rohit said. "In conditions like this it can be tough sometimes. We knew there would be assistance for everyone. Seamers got reverse swing going, spinners bowled in nice areas. All in all a great effort," Rohit stated.

Rohit also was quick to point out that Virat Kohli and KL Rahul had saved the team the blushes with a match-winning partnership. "Yes I was (nervous) to be honest when we lost three early wickets. But hats off

to Virat and KL (Rahul), the way they stuck out there to create a match-winning partnership," Rohit said.

Australian captain Pat Cummins felt his team was 50 runs short of what could have been a challenging total. "We were 50 runs short. It is always tough to defend anything below 200," Cummins pointed out.

The Australian skipper added that the Indian spinners had really bowled well. "They had our number in this game," Cummins said. "This is a long tournament, so hopefully we will improve in the next game and get into the winning momentum," Cummins added.

Meanwhile Rohit said that initially when he came into bat, Kohli had asked him to play with patience. "There was something in the pitch, so I was cautious to start with," Rahul said.

Arsenal overcome Man City challenge

AGENCIES

London, Oct 8: An 86th minute goal by Gabriel Martinelli helped Arsenal defeat Manchester City 1-0 here Sunday. This was the second successive defeat for current Premier League champions. It should be stated here that Arsenal always threatened to break while City on the other hand struggled to create anything of note during the entire game. Martinelli's goal also helped Arsenal end their 12-game win-less streak against Manchester City. Last year Arsenal were in contention to win the PL title, but a 1-3 defeat to City robbed them off their chances.

In an earlier game played on the day, Liverpool were held to a 2-2 draw by Brighton. Mo Salah got both goals for Liverpool while, Simon Adingra and Lewis Dunk were the scorers for Brighton.

India eye Olympic glory

AFTER MORE THAN 100 MEDALS AT THE ASIAN GAMES, INDIAN ATHLETES SEEK SUCCESS AT PARIS



PR Sreejesh holds aloft the Indian Tricolour during the closing ceremony of the Asian Games at Hangzhou, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hangzhou, Oct 8: India, with a record haul of 107 medals at the Hangzhou Asian Games, have written a glittering chapter in the country's sporting history, while also giving a strong reason to start dreaming about a best-ever Olympic performance next year in Paris. The 660-strong Indian contingent bagged 28 gold, 38 silver and 41 bronze medals at the continental showpiece, fetching 37 more medals than they did at the 2018 Jakarta Games.

The historic success here can bolster India's ambitions of hosting the Olympics. The government is reportedly mulling presenting the road-map for the 2036 Olympics to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) when its session is held in Mumbai next month.

Olympic and World champion Neeraj Chopra's global presence seems to have rubbed off on the entire contingent, and while he led the charge in athletics there is no denying that the javelin exponent was a motivation for athletes in other disciplines as well.

Of course, there were a few

minor aberrations along the way — the biggest being 65kg wrestler Bajrang Punia being humbled and humiliated on the mat. However, the disappointments paled in comparison to the success stories.

Athletics and shooting contributed the maximum number of medals (29 and 22 respectively), making up nearly half of India's total and gold count. Shooting gave the most number of gold medals, seven, while athletics contributed six.

Archery gave nine medals, including five gold medals, in a huge improvement after just two silver medals in the 2018 edition. This was India's best show in archery in any edition of the Asian Games. Compound archers, Jyothi Surekha Vennam and Ojas Pravin Deotale won three gold medals each, the most yellow medals among the Indians in any sport.

The shooters also produced their best-ever show at the Asiad with seven gold, nine silver and six bronze medals. Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar emerged India's most successful shooter at the Asiad with four medals including two gold.

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MARUTI SUZUKI AUTHORISED DEALERS: JYOTE MOTORS: BHUBANESWAR: LEWIS ROAD: 9798190190. NAYAPALLI: 9798190190. TAMANDO: 9798190190. KEONJHAR: 9798190190. NAYAGARH: 9798190190. BALUGAON: 9798190190. ANANDPUR: 9798190190. KENDRAPARA: 9798190190. BALASORE: 9798190190. BHADRAK: 9798190190. BARPADA: 9798190190. UDALA: 7064499950. RAIRANGPUR: 9853446906. JALESWAR: 7064499950. BASUDEVPUR: 9798190190. SKY AUTOMOBILES: BHUBANESWAR: PATIA : 7381045356. CUTTACK: 9776677771, 7381873818. DHENKANAL: 7381045357. NARSHINGPUR: 7381045357. KAMAKHYANAGAR: 7381045357. JAJPUR: 9776900777, SALEPUR: 9583544555, CHANDIKHOL: 9583544555, TANGI: 7381045356. NARAYANI MOTORS: BHUBANESHWAR: RASULGARH: 9583022019, 7440019592, 9583022013. JAGATSINGHPUR: 9583022090. PURI: 9583022035. NIMAPARA: 7381094851. PARADEEP: 9583022034/ 48. PURI HIGHWAY PIPLI: 9583022013. TIRTOL: 7381000159. ODYSSEY MOTORS: ANGUL: 7752076136, 9776901481, PALLAHARA: 7873565435, 9437831123. TUSHI MOTORS: CUTTACK: 9078076450. PANIKOILI: 9078076450. ATHAGARH: 9078076450. ORBIT MOTORS: ROURKELA: 9437041155, 9040404444. SUNDARGARH: 9437049161, 9437131074. DEOGARH: 9437061223, 7064400290. SKY AUTOMOBILES: BERHAMPUR: 9778202019. BHANJANAGAR: 9778202019. PARALAKHEMUNDI: 9778202019. PHULBANI: 9778202019. ODYSSEY MOTORS: SAMBALPUR (AINTHPALI): 7381433909. BOLANGIR: 9438068327. BARGARH: 9556352943. NUAPADA: 7381017851. SONEPUR: 9438068327. JHARSUGUDA: 9439892153. BOUDH: 8594908009. PADAMPUR : 7381661837. APARNA MOTORS: SAMBALPUR (PARDHIPALI): 9237395001. LEGEND CARS: JEYPORE: 7894406481, RAYGADA: 9692883042 BHAWANIPATNA: 7894442907.

*Offer includes consumer offer, exchange bonus and institutional or rural offer, 2 ka 4 wheeler offer and Gold voucher (wherever applicable) on selected models/ variants. Above mentioned savings amount is the value of maximum savings on selected models. **Terms and conditions apply. Finance scheme details mentioned in the advertisement are at the sole discretion of the financier and terms and conditions as specified by the financier shall apply. Credit at the sole discretion of the Bank. 100% on-road funding is provided by select financiers only. For more details, please contact your nearest ARENA dealership. Features and accessories shown may not be part of standard fitment. Black Glass Shade on the vehicle is due to the lighting effect. Images used are for illustration purposes only. Car color may vary due to printing on paper. Offers vary across variants. Maruti Suzuki India Limited reserves the right to discontinue offers without notice. The price given in the ad is based on Bhubaneswar prices and are subject to vary based on the dealer city. Above offers are valid till 31st October 2023.