



TOUGH CALL

Kangana Ranaut says military training should be made compulsory for all in India after graduation

LEISURE P2



STRICT ACTION

Manipur government says it will file cases against those circulating images and videos of violence in the conflict-hit state

NATIONAL P9



PROTEAS BEAT AUSSIES

Quinton de Kock's second successive century in the ongoing ICC World Cup helps South Africa beat Australia

SPORTS P12

Boost to mobility as CM launches LAccMI

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Oct 12: Reaffirming his government's commitment for development of the state's remote areas, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday launched the affordable bus service under the Location Accessible Multimodal Initiative (LAccMI) here besides initiating development projects worth ₹793 crore in the tribal-dominated district.

Patnaik, who undertook a one-day visit to Malkangiri, flagged off 36 buses under the scheme in the district which aims to connect all the 111 gram panchayats with the district headquarters and the state capital.

The state government will operate at least 1,000 buses in the rural areas with a budgetary allocation of ₹3,178 crore under the scheme.

In the first phase, LAccMI bus services will be introduced in rural areas of six tribal-dominated and 'inaccessible' districts of Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Kalahandi, and Gajapati. The buses will ply from panchayats to block headquarters and from block headquarters to district headquarters.

MORE P3



WHEELS OF PROGRESS: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik flags off buses under Location Accessible Multimodal Initiative (LAccMI) in Malkangiri, Thursday

Schoolgirl beaten to death over theft

POST NEWS NETWORK

Udala, Oct 12: An 11-year-old girl was allegedly beaten to death by her aunt over theft of a marigold sapling at Bhaluhuruda village under Udala police limits in Mayurbhanj, police said Thursday.

Lakshmi Murmu later tried to cover up the child's death as suicide by hanging the body, police added. Lakshmi has been taken into custody on charges of killing Saraswati Hansda, daughter of Sita and Gunti Hansda of the village, an official of Udala police said, adding that the arrest was made on the basis of an FIR lodged by the girl's parents.

According to police sources, Saraswati was studying in Class VI at Laxmisagar High School in Bhubaneswar. Recently she had visited home when her parents decided to enrol her at a school in Udala. Accordingly, Saraswati's parents left for Bhubaneswar to bring her transfer and other certificates from the school, leaving the girl at home, the official added.

"They left Saraswati under Lakshmi's care," said the official.

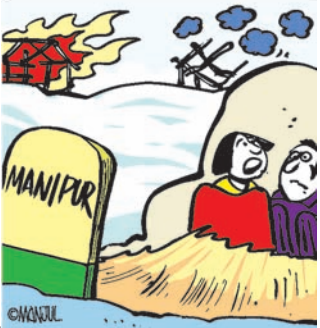
Wednesday afternoon, Lakshmi called Saraswati's mother Sita over phone informing that the girl had stolen a marigold sapling from their place. Sita, in return, told Lakshmi that she will talk to her daughter only after she comes back from Bhubaneswar, the official added.

Lakshmi again called Sita over phone in the night (Wednesday night) and informed her that Saraswati had died by hanging herself with her scarf, said the official, quoting the FIR.

Hearing this, the worried parents rushed back to the village only to find the lifeless body of their daughter hanging by a scarf. They found Saraswati's legs touching the ground with injury marks all over her body.

Preliminary inquiries indicated that Saraswati was beaten up with a stick, leading to her death. The body was hanged to pass it off as suicide, said the official.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Our govt is busy saving its countrymen...in Israel

We can't kill a child: Top court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: "We cannot kill a child," the Supreme Court observed Thursday while hearing the Centre's plea seeking recall of its order allowing a married woman—a mother of two—to terminate her 26-week pregnancy.

While making it clear that the top court has to balance the rights of the unborn child, a 'living and viable foetus', with its mother's right of decisional autonomy, a Bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud asked the Centre and her lawyer to talk to the woman about the possibility of retaining the pregnancy for a few weeks more.

"Do you want us to tell the doctors at AIIMS to stop the fetal heart?" the bench, also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, asked the counsel appearing for the 27-year-old woman. When the counsel responded with a 'no', the Bench said when the woman has waited for over 24 weeks, can't she retain the foetus for some more weeks so there is the possibility of a healthy child being born.

The Bench has posted the matter for resumed hearing at 10.30am Friday. The matter came up before the CJI-led Bench after a two-judge Bench Wednesday gave a split verdict on the Centre's plea for recall of its October 9 order granting permission to the woman to terminate her 26-week pregnancy.

WAR ESCALATES

Syria says Israeli missiles hit Damascus, Aleppo airports

REUTERS

Damascus (Syria), Oct 12: In what could signal the proliferation of the ongoing war between Israel and militant Palestinian group Hamas in Gaza, Syria Thursday claimed that Israeli airstrikes hit the international airports of Damascus and the northern city of Aleppo, damaging their runways and putting them out of service.

A Syrian military source cited by state news agency SANA said 'bursts of missiles' hit the two airports at the same time, in what he said, was a bid to distract the world's attention from Israel's war with Hamas militants in Gaza.

The Israeli military said it does not comment on such reports.

If reports are to be believed, they would be the first Israeli strikes on Syria since Hamas carried out its deadly attacks in southern Israel Saturday. Israel has for years carried out strikes against what it has described as Iran-linked targets in Syria, including against the Aleppo and Damascus airports.

Sources have said strikes on the airports are intended to disrupt Iranian supply lines to Syria, where Tehran's influence has grown since it began supporting President Bashar al-



Assad in the civil war that started in 2011.

The airstrikes came a day before Iran's foreign minister Hossein Amirabdollahian was scheduled to visit Syria to meet officials over the volatile situation in the region.

Israel has vowed to annihilate the Hamas movement that rules the Gaza Strip, in retribution for the deadliest attack on civilians in its history when hundreds of gunmen crossed the barrier and rampaged through Israeli towns Saturday. Tehran has celebrated the Hamas attacks but denied being behind them.

On Tuesday, Israeli troops

fired artillery and mortar shells towards Syria after rockets from southern Syria hit Israeli positions across the border. P10

First batch of Indians to return home today

NEW DELHI: The first batch of around 230 Indians are expected to return to India from Israel on a flight under Operation Ajay Friday morning, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Thursday. India launched Operation Ajay to facilitate the return of those Indians who wish to come back home as a series of brazen attacks on Israeli towns by Hamas militants over the weekend triggered fresh tensions in the region. "The first flight will reach Tel Aviv later tonight to pick up Indian citizens and is likely to return to India tomorrow (Friday) morning," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said. He said around 18,000 Indians are currently residing in Israel.

'NO RELIEF UNLESS HOSTAGES FREED'

ASHKELON: Israel said Thursday there would be no humanitarian exceptions to its siege of the Gaza Strip until all its hostages were freed, after the Red Cross pleaded for fuel to be allowed in to prevent overwhelmed hospitals from 'turning into morgues'. Public broadcaster Kan said the Israeli death toll had risen to more than 1,300 since Saturday. Most were civilians gunned down in their homes, on the streets or at a dance party. Scores of Israeli and foreign hostages were taken back to Gaza; Israel says it has identified 97 of them. The full scale of the killings has emerged in recent days after Israeli forces reclaimed control of towns, finding homes strewn with bodies. They say they found women who had been raped and killed, and children who were shot and burned. Israel has responded so far by putting Gaza, home to 2.3 million people, under total siege and launching by far the most powerful bombing campaign in the 75-year history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, destroying whole neighbourhoods.

SHORT TAKES

Child welfare body member murdered

Berhampur: A district Child Welfare Committee (CWC) member of Ganjam was hacked to death by her driver here, police said Thursday. The incident took place at Nilakantha Nagar here Wednesday night, police said. The deceased was identified as Soudamani Rath, 52. Getting information about the incident, police rushed to the spot and recovered Rath's body from a pool of blood Thursday morning and sent it for autopsy at MKCG Medical College and Hospital here. Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M said Rath's driver Seemanchal Sahu, 25, has been arrested in connection with the murder. P5

Bilkis case: SC for original records

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Thursday directed the Centre and the Gujarat government to submit by October 16 the original records related to the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano gangrape case and murder of seven of her family members during the 2002 Gujarat riots. After an 11-day hearing that began in August, a Bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan reserved its order on the pleas challenging the remission granted to the convicts. The Bench heard submissions by Bilkis Bano's counsel advocate Shobha Gupta, Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, senior advocate Indira Jaising and advocates Vrinda Grover for PIL petitioners, and senior advocate Sidhartha Luthra and Rishi Malhotra for convicts. P9

67 NEW OFFICER POSTS FOR ULBs

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The Odisha government has created 67 additional officer posts to strengthen the public service delivery system in urban local bodies (ULBs) of the state.

The government has created 35 Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) and 32 Odisha Revenue Service (ORS) posts.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has approved a proposal in this regard, the CMO said in a post on X, formerly Twitter. In the post, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said, "To further bolster service delivery to people in Urban Local Bodies, CM @Naveen_Odisha has approved 35 additional posts in #Odisha Administrative Service and 32 ad-

ditional posts in Odisha Revenue Service."

The postings will be made in different municipal corporations, municipalities and notified area councils (NACs), it added.

Earlier in August, the CM had approved 416 additional posts to strengthen Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) in view of the ever-increasing population in Odisha capital.

With that, the total number of sanctioned posts in BMC went up to 626.

The government had created three more Additional Commissioner (Administration) posts, six new Zonal Commissioner posts, 13 new Deputy Commissioner posts and nine new Assistant Commissioner (sanitation) posts for BMC.

India slips to 111th in Global Hunger Index 2023

GOVERNMENT CALLS IT 'FLAWED MEASURE' THAT DOESN'T REFLECT TRUE POSITION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: With the highest child wasting rate of 18.7 per cent, India ranked 111th out of 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2023 that was released Thursday even as the government rejected the report calling it a flawed measure of 'hunger' that does not reflect the country's true position.

With this, India slipped four places as it had ranked 107th out of 121 countries in 2022. The GHI is a tool for comprehensively measuring and tracking hunger at global, regional, and national levels. With a score of 28.7 in the GHI-2023, India has a level of hunger that is serious, according to a report based on the index.

India's neighbouring countries Pakistan (102th), Bangladesh (81st), Nepal (69th) and Sri Lanka (60th) have fared better than it in the index.

South Asia and Africa South of the Sahara are the world regions with the highest hunger levels, with a GHI score of 27 each, indicating serious hunger.

"India has the highest child wasting rate in the world, at 18.7 per cent, reflecting acute undernutrition," the report based on the index stated. Wasting is measured based on children's weight relative to their height.

According to the index, the rate of undernourishment in India stood at 16.6 per cent and under-five mortality at 3.1 per cent. The report also said that the prevalence of anaemia in women



aged between 15 and 24 years stood at 58.1 per cent.

The GHI 2023 shows that, after many years of advancement up to 2015, progress against hunger worldwide remains largely at a standstill. The GHI 2023 score for the world is 18.3, considered moderate and less than one point below the world's 2015 GHI score of 19.1.

PAKISTAN (102TH), BANGLADESH (81ST), NEPAL (69TH) AND SRI LANKA (60TH) HAVE FARED BETTER THAN INDIA IN THE INDEX, AS PER THE REPORT

Furthermore, since 2017 the prevalence of undernourishment, one of the indicators used in the calculation of GHI scores, has been on the rise, and the number of undernourished people has climbed from 572 million to about 735 million, the index said. The Women and Child Development Ministry said the index suffers from 'serious

methodological issues and shows a malafide intent'.

Rejecting India's ranking at the index, the Women and Child Development Ministry said the Global Hunger Index continues to be a flawed measure of 'hunger' and does not reflect India's true position.

"The index is an erroneous measure of hunger and suffers from serious methodological issues. Three out of the four indicators used for calculation of the index are related to the health of children and cannot be representative of the entire population. The fourth and most important indicator 'Proportion of Undernourished (PoU) population' is based on an opinion poll conducted on a very small sample size of 3,000," it said.

leisure



BRADLEY COOPER EAGER TO BE IN A RELATIONSHIP

Hollywood actor Bradley Cooper, 48, and Gigi, 28, were recently spotted together in New York City, and an insider has claimed that the model is 'exactly his type'. It revealed: "Bradley is excited about getting to know Gigi. He hasn't felt this excitement about a woman in a very long time."

KIM ISSUES STATEMENT ON ISRAEL ATTACKS

Reality star Kim Kardashian has spoken out on Hamas' attack on Israel. In a statement posted on Instagram, she said: "A message to my Jewish friends and family. I love you. I support you. I want you to know you are not alone in this."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today is an ordinary day, it is business as usual, but there will be some progress. You can while away your time doing petty chores. And, Ganesh says, while day-dreaming think about that coveted home, as that's how the first plans materialise.

TAURUS

The stars are very auspiciously disposed towards you, announces Ganesh. You have an exceptionally bright and enjoyable day ahead of you. All events and situations will work in your favour, if you are pursuing higher studies you will perform brilliantly. Those appearing for competitive examinations are likely to score very high.

GEMINI

It is a day filled with joy and happiness on the home front. You will spend a lot of time with children. You will complete long pending household projects as well as take an interest in ironing out differences between family members, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Your speech will today explode your thoughts. You will ponder over new deals and decide to act only after much thought. Ganesh feels that you met with success in your ambition to achieve a breakthrough.

LEO

You will feel a little uneasy today. You will feel that nothing is going right. You will try to organise yourself and concentrate your scattered energies today. This phase of uncertainty will be gone in a few days, assures Ganesh.

VIRGO

Today is a day for introspection and you will find yourself in a pensive mood. Ganesh advises you to search for the inner peace that you want. Stay calm to discover the hidden treasures within you. In the evening you will be glad to help someone who is in need of it.

LIBRA

Ganesh says you will be able to spend ample time with your loved ones and may even taken them out for lunch or dinner which will bring you more closer to them. You will even try to please them by showering them with gifts and presents today.

SCORPIO

There's always a first time, and today is the day when you would seal a profitable deal for your new business venture. However, close the deal only if it is beneficial for a long term. Be cautious and watch your steps carefully to avoid any unfortunate situation.

SAGITTARIUS

You may have to make important decisions of life today, says Ganesh. Remember, haste makes waste, so take every decision only after thinking about its long-term consequences or end results. Be patient.

CAPRICORN

Print and electronic media will attract your attention, if you're just planning to begin your career. Your spiritual and philosophical approach give you inner peace, and also inspire you to visit a holy place. Overall, you will have a balanced day, today, says Ganesh.

AQUARIUS

You will feel deeply inclined towards development and research, today. Actions speak louder than words, and your efforts and overall growth will speak plenty about your character. Your romantic side will come to the fore today. You will be willing to do anything and everything to bring a bright smile on the face of sweetheart, feels Ganesh, all of it will get noticed. Enjoy the good times!

PISCES

It is difficult for you to be part of one team and to work as a member on two teams, but today you can do anything you want. You will be able to show your expertise to your team today and will be praised by all. Women will make a profit today and will feel encouraged.

Make military training mandatory: Kangana

Mumbai: Kangana Ranaut has voiced her strong belief that compulsory military training should be introduced in the country following graduation. According to her, this initiative would effectively eliminate, what she describes as, 'lazy' and 'irresponsible' individuals from society.

Addressing the audience at the News18 Amrit Ratna event in 2023, Kangana presented her case for making military training a mandatory component of every graduate's education. In her view, this move would instill discipline and eradicate the traits of laziness and irresponsibility prevalent in today's youth. "We will get rid of these lazy and irresponsible people if military training is made compulsory in the country for every child after graduation. It will inculcate discipline in them," the actress emphasised during her address.

The *Manikarnika* actress also took the opportunity to criticize celebrities who maintain relationships with individuals from countries considered adversaries by India. She said, "Our soldiers ask when Bollywood is showcasing its love for the artistes of China and Pakistan, cricketers are hugging them, then am I the only one who thinks of them as enemies? Is the animosity between the two countries only for me? This is why we have made Tejas. It showcases how a soldier feels when people of the country talk behind his back while he is fighting at the border."

AGENCIES



Yami thrilled to escape busy city life



Mumbai: Actress Yami Gautam, who has been receiving a lot of positive response for her work in *OMG 2*, is stationed in a north Indian town for 50 days for the shoot of her upcoming film.

The actress is thrilled to be shooting in north India, as it's a place she has a deep fondness for due to its natural beauty and tranquility, providing her with an escape from the bustling city life in Mumbai.

A source revealed, "Yami is shooting for her upcoming film in north India and will be filming there for the next 50 days. The project promises to be one that continues to showcase Yami's prowess as a performer and a formal an-

ouncement will be made soon." Yami has been having a terrific run as her projects including *Lost, Chor Nikal Ke Bhaga*, and most notably, her theatrical release, *OMG 2*, have received good response and the audience has appreciated her work in these projects.

On the work front, Yami has *Dhoom Dham* in pipeline.

IANS



Tamannaah's strategy to beat internet trolls

Mumbai: Actress Tamannaah Bhatia who has made her mark in both South film industries as well as Hindi film industry, recently opened up about negativity on social media and how she learned to deal with it.

The *Baahubali* actress was asked about how she deals with hate and negativity on social media. She said, "...when that has happened to me, for the first moment it took me by a storm and I was very uncomfortable with it because it really made me feel like what's going on? is something that I have done gone wrong?"

The *Lust Stories 2* actress added, "So now, I have an option of either believing that that is me or I

have an option of believing what I think is true about me. I think that's the moment I felt that I have to just focus on becoming who I want to become and not be worried about what so many people think about me because A- they have never been on that journey, they have not lived my life, they have no idea about who I am. They are only talking from their level of understanding."

On the work front, Tamannaah was last seen in *Jailer* and web series *Aakhri Sach*.

AGENCIES

Movies on big screen still first choice for most Indians

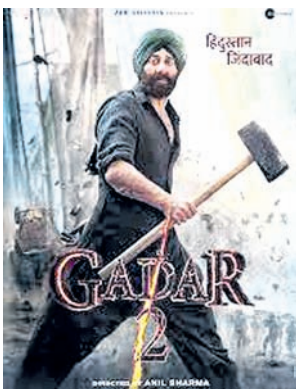
The report was launched by BookMyShow, and the survey was rolled out to the ticket platform's transacting consumer base across 650 cities and towns in India

Mumbai: A new survey, The CineFiles, has revealed that the Indian audience enjoys watching the movies on big screen, and that the audience is also highly skilled at planning for their cinematic outings in theatres as 74 per cent of the audience keep a close watch on the new releases on the horizon at least three days in advance.

Ahead of this National Cinema Day, the report revealed that 98 per cent of Indians believe cinematic magic can only be brought alive on the big

screen. In fact, 90 per cent of respondents' most likeable option for out-of-home experiences is catching the latest movie release in the theatre amongst other leisure activities such as shopping, live gigs, and adventure outings. The report was launched by the ticketing platform BookMyShow, and the survey was rolled out to the ticket platform's transacting consumer base across 650 cities and towns in India. The survey respon-

dents comprised a mix of 41 per cent GenZ along with 59 per cent Millennial and GenX audiences going gaga about movies and their magic in this survey. 74 per cent of the respon-



dents opted to watch a movie in the theatre for the immersive larger screen and high audio quality experience. 40 per cent of respondents almost always opt for premium screens like IMAX, 4DX, Director's Cut,

Insignia and so on. Commenting on the launch of BookMyShow's report The CineFiles, Ashish Saksena, COO - Cinemas, BookMyShow, said: "The enduring love for movies over the years remains

unshaken. The first day, first shows continue as a sacred tradition for many fans, inspiring cheers, whistles and endless applause at the sight of beloved stars on the big screen." Forty three per cent from India's entertainment capital - Mumbai, choose Storyline as the most critical trigger for them to catch a movie in a theatre. The figure is significantly higher than other cities. 38 per cent people from Delhi rank reviews and ratings highest to determine and decide the film to watch on the big screen. For 32 per cent Bangaloreans, the director helming the movie is the most important factor in their decision to watch a movie on the silver screen.

IANS

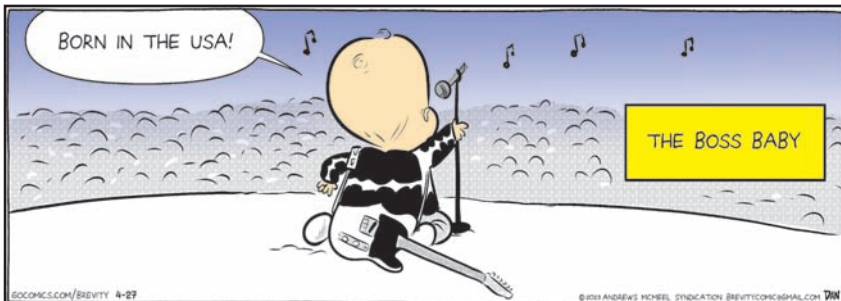
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

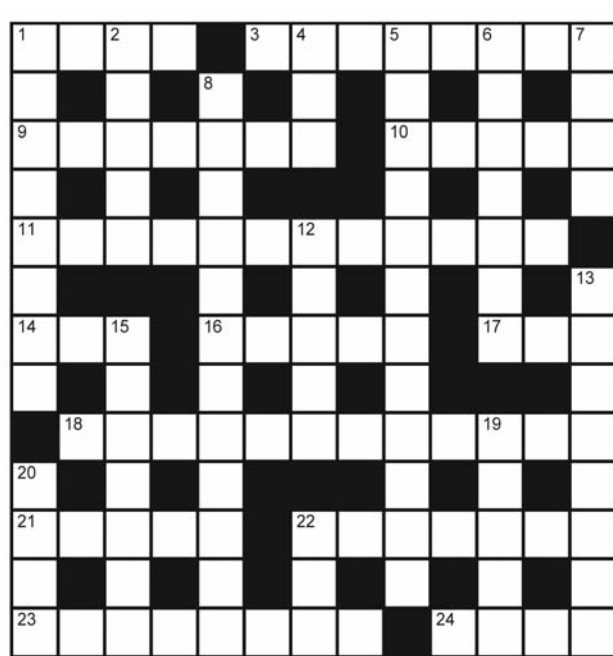


BREVITY



FUN post

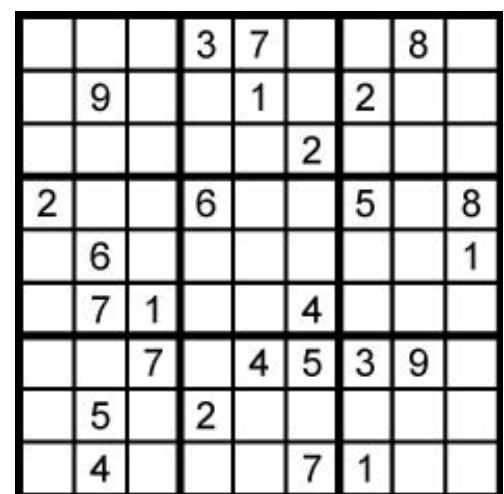
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 After-dinner drink
 - 3 Fair-skinned feature, at times
 - 9 Sinus problem
 - 10 Slice
 - 11 Pugilist's wear (6,6)
 - 14 Fellow
 - 16 Pick-me-up
 - 17 Formal vote
 - 18 Gustave Flaubert novel (6,6)
 - 21 Scent
 - 22 Middle Eastern pastry
 - 23 Tweak (4-4)
 - 24 Lab item
 - Down**
 - 1 Theatre handout
 - 2 Kick back and take it easy
 - 4 Bit of sunshine
 - 5 Swiss exports (6,6)
 - 6 It's a crime
 - 7 Lawn starter (5,2,1,4)
 - 8 Get stuck
 - 12 Writing style
 - 13 South American rodent
 - 15 Former European cavalryman
 - 19 At a distance from one another
 - 20 Young seal
 - 22 Embargo

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

downtown

FOR A SPLENDID LOOK

Artisans busy preparing decorative items for the upcoming Durga Puja at Bimanabadu Sahi in Puri, Thursday



GROOMING TALENTS: Editor of Orissa POST and Dharitri Tathagata Satpathy addressing students at an elocution competition on 'Media, Democracy, Youth' organised by Dharitri ahead of the leading Odia daily's 50th year celebrations, at Choudwar College in Cuttack, Thursday

36 LAccMI buses hit Malkangiri roads

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik flags off LAccMI scheme under which the govt is planning to roll out more than 1,000 buses in the villages across the state

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday flagged off 36 buses in 111 panchayats of Malkangiri district as he launched the much-hyped 'Location Accessible Multimodal Initiative' (LAccMI) scheme which aims at establishing seamless public transport network from gram panchayat (GP) level to the state capital.

The state govt has allocated ₹3,178 crore for running buses across the state to strengthen the public transport system under LAccMI

and bring prosperity to every village of the state. Under this scheme, more than 1,000 buses will be rolled out in the villages across the state. 36 buses have been rolled out today that will provide bus services in 111 panchayats of the Malkangiri district," said Patnaik.

A new trend for development has commenced in these panchayats with the implementation of the scheme, the Chief Minister said.

In the first phase, bus services will be provided in rural areas of six districts - Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Kalahandi and Gajapati under LAccMI scheme. The bus services will connect the GPs with the block and district headquarters. It will also join the district headquarters to the state capital.

"Communication is the cornerstone for development. LAccMI will connect everyone

with development. Buses will come to the doorstep of every villager. The bus service under the scheme will connect the students with schools and colleges, farmers with the market, the patient will easily reach hospitals and mothers can go to the market and office easily. LAccMI will bring happiness to every family of the state," the Chief Minister said.

"I recently launched 'Ama Odisha and Nabin Odisha' programme and Malkangiri will be included in the scheme soon. Under this scheme, the villages will get all the facilities available in urban areas only," he said.

He said banking, internet services and digital infrastructure will be developed in rural areas through 'Ama Odisha and Nabin Odisha' programme. The culture of the state will also be promoted under the scheme.

"Gurupriya Setu is a big milestone towards the development of Malkangiri. This bridge has brought a new light of development in the 'Swabhiman Anchal'. Today, projects worth ₹200 crore have been inaugurated in Malkangiri while foundation stone has been laid for various other projects worth ₹600 crore. I hope the projects will be completed in time with everyone's co-operation, Patnaik said.

Notably, the state government has allocated ₹3,178 crore for running buses across the state to strengthen the public transport system under LAccMI.

WORLD CALAMITY CONTROL DAY TODAY

Govt directs massive palm tree, mangrove plantation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The state government has asked its Agriculture and Forest departments to go for a massive mangrove and palm tree plantation drive in areas, which are vulnerable to natural calamities like cyclones, officials said Thursday.

Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena issued a direction to officials of the Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment (A&F) and the Forest, Environment & Climate Change (FE&CC) departments to take such an initiative, they said.

During a meeting of the state executive committee on disaster management recently, he advised the two departments to take up more and more palm tree and mangrove plantations in all areas prone to cyclones and lightning.

At least 2,058 people were killed due to lightning in Odisha in the last five years from 2018-19, the officials said.

The Chief Secretary has advised the officials to plant mangroves to protect the coastline from cyclones.

Mangrove trees help build coastal resilience as it is an effective natural safeguard against

An amount of ₹159.02 crore has been released for procurement of search & rescue equipment, accessories and vehicles for Odisha fire & emergency services as against a proposal of ₹240.33 crore. The balance amount would be released as required

OSDMA has placed a non-structural lightning mitigation proposal for implementation of a lightning forecast system in collaboration with Earth Network and Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune through 'Satark' app for three years starting from 2023-24

OSDMA has submitted another proposal to the government seeking ₹13.21 lakh for the implementation of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Ready programme in 24 identified tsunami-prone villages of six coastal districts of Odisha

cyclones, he said.

Jena also emphasised on the procurement of search & rescue equipment, accessories and vehicles for Odisha fire & emergency services. An amount of ₹159.02 crore has already been released as against the proposal of ₹240.33 crore for the purpose, the officials said, adding that the Home department has been requested to go ahead with the procurement process as the balance amount to be released as required.

Under the capacity building measures, ₹813.65 crore has been released to the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and departments of Forest, Housing & Urban Development, Home and Panchayati Raj.

The Works department has submitted a proposal, seeking funds to the tune of ₹81.28 crore

for construction of eight flood-resilient roads in Kendrapara, Bhadrak, Sambalpur and Kalahandi districts.

OSDMA has placed a non-structural lightning mitigation proposal for implementation of a lightning forecast system in collaboration with Earth Network and Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune through 'Satark' app for three years starting from 2023-24, the officials said.

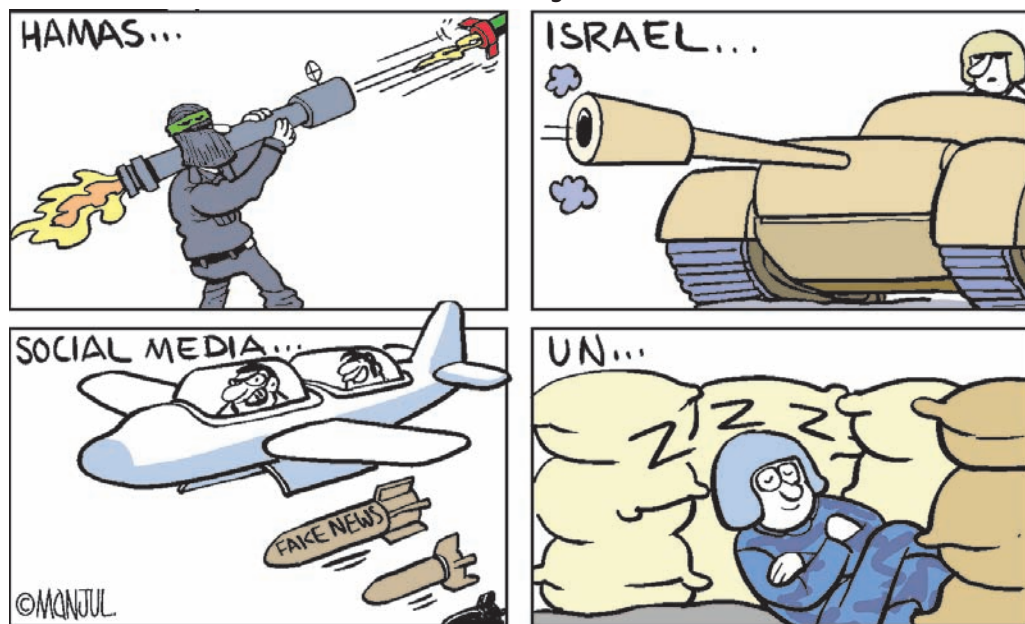
OSDMA has submitted another proposal to the government seeking ₹13.21 lakh for the implementation of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Ready programme in 24 identified tsunami-prone villages of six coastal districts of Odisha for obtaining certification from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO.

Bihar-cadre IAS officers visit Jena

Bhubaneswar: Ten Bihar-cadre trainee IAS officers of 2022 batch paid a courtesy visit to Chief Secretary of Odisha Pradeep Kumar Jena, Thursday.

The Chief Secretary shared his long administrative experience with the trainees who had come to learn about the district linked work management at Gopabandhu Administrative Academy. Jena had a long deliberation on the subject with the IAS probationers. He explained how challenging it was to manage various disasters in Odisha starting from 1999 Super Cyclone to the cyclones that had occurred in the last few years including 'Fani' in 2019 and the Bahanga train accident happened in Balasore district this year.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



STF nets notorious ganja smuggler Kalia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police has arrested an inter-state ganja smuggler from here, police said Thursday.

Acting on a tip-off, an STF team nabbed Sarat Kumar Dey alias Kalia, a resident of neighbouring West Bengal, from his hideout in the state Capital Wednesday and seized ₹1.25 lakh cash and other 'incriminating materials' from his possession, a police officer said.

Kalia was wanted in several cases of ganja trafficking in Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar, he said.

August 20, police intercepted a vehicle in which Dey and his associate Pramod Kumar Tandi were transporting a large quantity of ganja in Gajapati district, but both managed to give the sleuths a slip. A total of 4,335 kg of ganja worth ₹4.30 crore was seized, which was one of the largest seizures in Odisha.

The STF took over the investigation and launched a manhunt for Dey and his associate.

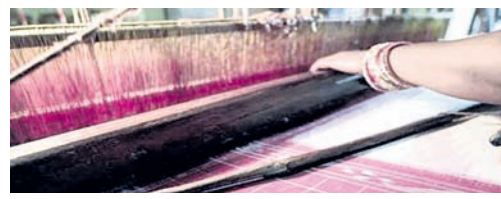
Dey was earlier involved in several cases of narcotics trafficking, robbery and rioting, and had even escaped from police custody. Interestingly, his father, Ekadashi Dey, was also a ganja peddler and is currently serving 10 years of rigorous imprisonment in Puri jail, sources said.

LOAN ASSISTANCE UNDER 'BALIA' HIKED TO ₹1 LAKH

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday approved a proposal to enhance the amount of interest-free loan given to weavers in the state from the existing ₹50,000 to ₹1 lakh to meet their working capital needs under the BALIA (Bunakar Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation) scheme.

As per the Handloom Census



2019-20, there were 66,141 weaver households in the state with 1,24,084 workforce and 56,569 looms. According to the guidelines of the scheme, weavers

According to the guidelines of the scheme, weavers can now avail working capital as per their requirements to a maximum of ₹1 lakh from banks at zero interest

can now avail the working capital as per their requirements to a maximum of ₹1 lakh from banks at zero interest. The enhanced loan scheme will come

into effect in both urban and rural areas. The scheme aims at improving the income and standard of living of the beneficiaries. Due to repeated rise

in the cost of yarn, colours and other raw materials, there was a need for increasing the working capital requirement of weavers for constant growth of business, along with enhancing production and distribution capacity. The ₹50,000 loan was felt inadequate for the purpose. Therefore, the Chief Minister gave nod to the proposal to increase the loan amount from ₹50,000 to ₹1 lakh, said a Handloom department official.

Monkey with genetically engineered pig kidney lives for 2 yrs

THE EXPERIMENT MAY ONE DAY DEVELOP TO BE A POTENTIAL SOLUTION TO THE GLOBAL SHORTAGE OF DONORS FOR PATIENTS WITH ORGAN FAILURE

In a medical breakthrough, a monkey has survived for more than two years with a kidney transplanted from a genetically engineered pig.

The experiment, carried out by researchers at the US biotech company eGenesis and Harvard Medical School, may one day develop to be a potential solution to the global shortage of donors for patients with organ failure.

"This is a major step forward for the field of transplantation," said Tatsuo Kawai, Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School.

Writing in the journal 'Nature', the scientists explained how they carried out 69 genomic edits into the pig kidneys which

enhanced compatibility and reduced rejection by the recipient's immune system.

The donor kidneys carried three types of edits: (1) knock out of three genes involved in the synthesis of glycan antigens implicated in hyperacute rejection, (2) insertion of seven human transgenes involved in the regulation of several pathways that modulate rejection: inflammation, innate immunity, coagulation, and complement, and (3) inactivation of the endogenous retroviruses in the porcine genome.

Donor kidneys carrying human transgenes resulted in longer survival time when transplanted into NHPs. Donor kid-



neys containing only knock out of the three-glycan antigens experienced poor graft survival, whereas those harbouring the knockouts and human transgenes resulted in more than seven times longer duration - a median of 24 days versus 176 days, respectively. In the case of one recipient, survival of over two years (758 days) was achieved.

The results indicate the benefit of human transgene expression in porcine kidney grafts on long-term survival.

"One of the biggest hurdles has been long-term survival of the genetically engineered organ in the NHP (non-human-primate) recipient, and this

dataset demonstrates remarkable progress in editing the porcine genome to minimise hyperacute rejection, improve recipient compatibility and address the risk of viral transmission from donor to host," Kawai said.

"We anticipate that transplant outcomes in humans will be even more favourable, as these gene edited organs are a better match for humans, as compared with NHPs," he added.

In vitro functional analysis showed that edited porcine kidney endothelial cells modulated inflammation in a manner that mirrored human endothelial cells, suggesting the edited cells acquired a high level of human

immune compatibility.

Furthermore, the evaluation of renal function biomarkers in recipients with stable grafts revealed that a single transplanted porcine kidney provided sufficient filtration of metabolites to compensate for the lack of two native kidneys.

Organ failure is a life-threatening condition for which transplantation is considered the gold standard treatment. However, the demand for organs far outstrips supply. In addition, the existing organ failure treatment paradigm is suboptimal for patients and the healthcare system due to organ incompatibility and variable donor organ quality.



ANTI-ENCROACHMENT DRIVE: An excavator deployed by BDA razing down unauthorised constructions at Brahmeswarpatna in Bhubaneswar, Thursday OPPHOTO

Cong bats for reopening of all 4 Srimandir gates

OPCC PRESIDENT SARAT PATTANAYAK ASKS GOVERNMENT TO REOPEN THE RATNA BHANDAR OF THE TEMPLE FOR REPAIRS AS WELL AS INVENTORY OF ORNAMENTS AND VALUABLES STORED IN THE SHRINE'S TREASURY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) will take out a rally in Puri October 16 to demand the reopening of all the four gates of Srimandir for devotees.

OPCC president Sarat Pattanayak said a large number of devotees from across the country and outside visit the temple each day.

"The number of devotees will increase during the holy month of Kartik, which begins from October 29. Respecting the demands of Jagannath lovers, all the four gates of the temple should be reopened for public immediately," he demanded.

The party will submit a memorandum to the chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) in this regard, he said.

He also asked the government to reopen the Ratna Bhandar of the temple for repairs as well as



Apart from the Singhadwar (Lions Gate), the government has opened the Paschim Dwar (West Gate) only for Puri residents for performing daily rituals

the inventory of ornaments and valuables stored in the shrine's treasury.

In a statement in the state Assembly during the recently

concluded monsoon session, Law Minister Jagannath Saraka had said entry of devotees to the temple through the four gates cannot be opened for devotees," he had said.

"As the Srimandir Parikrama project is still underway, three gates cannot be opened for devotees," he had said.

Apart from the Singhadwar (Lions Gate), the government has opened the Paschim Dwar (west gate) only for Puri residents for performing daily rituals.

SAI students promote eco-friendly Durga Puja

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: In a heart-warming display of environmental consciousness, students from SAI International School met Police Commissioner Soumendra Priyadarsi to present their initiative for an eco-friendly Durga Puja Thursday.

Recognizing the significance of Durga Puja as a time of unity and celebration, the SAI students connected the attributes of Goddess Durga's weapons to

modern environmental and social concerns: The Lotus, symbolizing spiritual consciousness, inspired a call for eco-friendly Visarjan practices, including water conservation, biodegradable materials, and the removal of adornments to protect aquatic life.

The Trishul and Spear, representing auspiciousness and power, prompted the promotion of traffic management, awareness, and emergency evacuation routes to reduce chaos during the celebrations.



The Sword, signifying cosmic intelligence and wisdom, encouraged the avoidance of noise pollution through eco-friendly fireworks and refraining from loudspeakers.

The Axe, symbolizing fearlessness in the face of consequences, led to an appeal for environmental care through awareness about BIO toilets, proper garbage control, and reduced carbon footprints.

The Shankh, symbolizing the inaugural sound of creation, resulted in a call for sustainable lighting, with an emphasis on energy-efficient LED bulbs, diyas, and solar power to reduce electricity consumption and carbon emissions.

CM: Millets emerging as hope for our future

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said that Odisha should lead the way in developing the roadmap for millets for next decade, both nationally and internationally.

As Odisha is gearing up for holding an international convention on millets November 10 and 11, the Chief Minister called upon all to extend their full support to make the event a grand success.



"Odisha should aim to become a Centre of Excellence for other states and countries," he said.

It may be mentioned here that Odisha is the only state to hold such an international convention on millets. The year 2023 is being celebrated as the International Year of Millets.

Chairing an Apex Committee meeting attended by Chief Secretary, Development Commissioner, 5T Secretary and other senior officers of various departments, the CM said that this Convention will highlight millet food cultures of tribal communities of Odisha and showcase the trailblazing success stories of our farmers and Mission Shakti Groups.

He further said that Millets have been a traditional crop for tribal farmers since times immemorial. They are climate resilient and powerhouse of nutrition. As climate change emerges as a prominent challenge of our times, this humble crop is emerging as a hope for our future, he added.

As per the discussion, the convention of the theme is 'Millets—Ancient Grains for Modern Challenges'. The event aims at highlighting the aspect of millets and tribal communities of Odisha. About 4,000 to 5,000 farmers, Women SHG members, Farmer-Producer organisations will attend the convention.

State BJP to raise graft issue in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Annoyed with the "silence" of central investigating agencies like the CBI and ED on alleged corruption cases in Odisha, a BJP MLAs' delegation led by the leader of the opposition, Jayanarayan Mishra, will visit New Delhi to draw Centre's attention.

While ED and CBI teams regularly visit other states, why they are not coming to Odisha to probe corruption cases, Mishra told reporters here Thursday.

Claiming rampant corruption at the government level in Odisha, Mishra alleged that the BJD government even did not spare Shree Jagannath Temple's Ratna Bhandar and is reluctant to undertake an inventory of the temple's treasury, which indicated something wrong behind it.

Mishra said all the 22 BJP MLAs will be part of the delegation, the date for which will be decided soon.

He said other than Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the delegation plans to meet the President, Election Commission of India and some Union ministers.

"We will meet the Election Commissioner and apprise him on the unconstitutional activities taking place in the state," said

Mishra, who strongly objected to the use of BJD's conch symbol in state government advertisements during the launch of 'Ama Odisha Nabin Odisha' and Location Accessible Multi-modal Initiative (LAccMI) schemes.

Meanwhile, Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Sarat Pattanayak said, "The BJP and BJD are in hand-in-glove. They (the BJP) are going to Delhi to deceive the people of Odisha. Even after their return from Delhi, neither the ED nor the CBI will visit the state. Why nothing has so far been done in the chit fund and mine scams."

Ruling BJD MLA Arabinda Dhali said, "The opposition MLAs may visit Delhi and make complaints. But, the fact remains that everything is right in Odisha and people are happy."

BJD spokesperson and MP Sasmit Patra suggested that the BJP delegation should raise people's issues during their visit to Delhi.

"The BJP MLAs should draw attention on the non-completion of Cuttack-Sambalpur National Highway, demand to waive GST on kendu leaf, low tele-density and banking facilities in southern and western regions of the state, to make paddy MSP at ₹2,930 per quintal and houses for tribals under PMAY," Patra told reporters.

High temperature in Oct

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: With temperature in Capital abnormally soaring to 36 degrees C Wednesday, which is four degrees above normal, weather watchers of the City have expressed concern over summer-like heat in October.

"The absence of dry cold wind from the north and north-east due to movement of low pressure over Odisha September 29 and 30, towards North Jharkhand, West Bengal and Bihar and the consequent cloudburst over Sikkim in the first week of October, has triggered the rise in the day temperature," said Sarat Chandra Sahu, director of SOA's Centre for Environment and Climate.

The night temperature here Wednesday was 27.4 degrees C which was 3.5 degrees C above normal, Sahu said. Between 2019 and 2023, in October, the temperature recorded at CEC and at SOA's agriculture farm at Chhatabar on City outskirts indicated sharp rise in temperature, he added.

As Chhatabar is located away from the city in a rural setting, the day and night temperature at the farm indicated a difference of 1.5 degree C against the higher temperature recorded in City.

Sahu said strong southerly wind flow from the Bay of Bengal towards North of West Bengal and Sikkim was prominent between October 1 and October 5.

Odisha experienced light to moderate rainfall due to a cy-



clonic circulation and low pressure up to October 4 but moisture with 60 to 65 per cent humidity and cloud cover caused the day temperature to hover between 30 to 33 degrees C up to October 5, he said.

As rain stopped from October 4, 60 to 65 per cent humidity in the lower atmosphere and significantly less humidity in the upper atmosphere coupled with westerly wind flow favoured the rise of day and night temperature from October 6, Sahu said.

The day temperature remained 35 degrees C (or more) and night temperature was 27 degrees C (or more) from October 6, he said, adding that this trend is expected

to continue till October 18. He explained that the high humidity in the lower atmosphere did not favour rain in the absence of any circulation to push the moisture upwards for cloud formation and subsequent rainfall.

The moisture remained in the lower atmosphere while the clear sky allowed penetration of solar radiation towards earth's surface.

Models, however, indicate that wind patterns could change from October 18 due to formation of a cyclonic circulation over the south Bay of Bengal which is expected to favour decrease in day and night temperature, Sahu said.

Startup Yatra, Xpress add 60 more ideas

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Odisha Startup Yatra and Startup Xpress completed 22 days of journey Thursday with addition of more than 60 new business ideas to an already long list, after covering 30 districts of the state and touching lives of numerous students.

The Yatra Thursday visited 7 educational institutions of two districts and collected more than 60 ideas. So far, the Yatra has been successful in collecting more than 2,300 ideas from student community.



"In the last 22 days, as many as 26,293 students participated from 185 colleges and 61 schools of 30 districts. As the initiative is in its last leg, there is high chance that the ideas generated will break all previous records and will set a new benchmark," an official said.

As the Yatra continues reaching out to more districts, huge numbers of ideas are pouring in from the student community. This astounding success in idea generation is a testament to the core idea of the Yatra that is to instil entrepreneurial spirit among young minds, he added.

Working night shifts messes up appetite

Scientists reveal how working night shifts interfere with appetite, hunger and food habits, sometimes resulting in weight gain.

The disruption in the body's biological clock, or circadian misalignment, brought about by working night shifts affects the hormones which regulating appetite, the team of scientists, led by the University of Bristol, UK, said.

Circadian misalignment is also commonly associated with the phenomenon of 'jet-lag'.

The team focused on the adrenal gland, situated near the kidney, which produces hormones that control many physiological functions including metabolism and appetite, called glucocorticoid hormones.

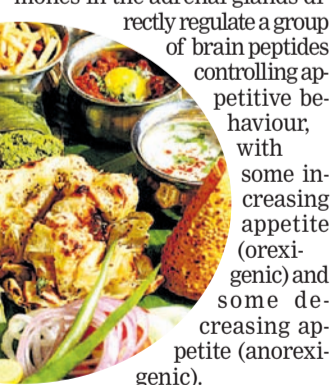
A misalignment between light

and dark cues led to a disturbance in the functioning of these hormones that then affected the appetite of the jet-lagged group of animals, driving an increased desire to eat significantly more during the inactive phase of the day the scientists said in their study published in the journal Communications Biology.

They said that their findings reveal how circadian misalignment can profoundly alter food habits much to the detriment of metabolic health and that they could help the millions of people that work through

the night and struggle with weight gain. The glucocorticoid hormones in the adrenal glands directly regulate a group of brain peptides controlling appetitive behaviour, with some increasing appetite (orexigenic) and some decreasing appetite (anorexigenic).

In this study, the jet-lagged group's orexigenic hypothalamic neuropeptides (NPY) became dysregulated, which the authors say may be promising targets for drug treatments



adapted to treat eating disorders and obesity.

Further, the team discovered that while the control rats ate about 90 per cent of their daily intake during their active phase and only 11 per cent during their inactive phase, the jet-lagged rats consumed about 54 per cent of their daily calories during their inactive phase, with no increased physical activity in this time.

This was roughly five-times more than what the control rats consumed during the inactive phase, suggesting that it was the timing of calorie consumption that was affected, the scientists said.

"For those who are working night shifts long-term, we recommend they try to maintain daylight exposure, cardiovascular exercise and mealtimes at regulated hours." PTI

SC to decide Orissa Sales Tax Act case

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Oct 12: A seven-judge Constitution bench of the Supreme Court Thursday said that it will decide appeals from Odisha challenging the validity of Section 5A of Orissa Sales Tax Act, 1947 after 29 years.

The Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said that it would keep the pleas for directions immediately to see if the matter survives. "If it doesn't then we will close it since it is now a legacy issue," the apex court said.

The bench comprising Justices SK Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai, Surya Kant, JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra also said that



it would appoint a nodal officer in the matter.

Significantly, the court was hearing a petition filed by Arjun Flour Mills in 1994 challenging the validity of Section 5A of the Orissa Sales Tax Act, 1947. The primary question to decide in the matter is whether a surcharge can be imposed on sales tax.

The SC in October 1999 had referred the case to a bench of seven judges for consideration.

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The Divine Truth is greater than any religion or creed or scripture or idea or philosophy.

SRI AUROBINDO



Spiral Of Violence

Hamas' brazen and vicious attacks within Israel have rightly drawn condemnation from around the world. If this is a war, as both sides agree it is, then Hamas' deliberate targeting of civilians counts as a major war crime.

But the brutality demonstrated by Hamas did not emerge in a vacuum. The lesson of what is currently happening in Israel and Gaza is that violence breeds more violence.

The last real chance of avoiding the tragic conflict being waged between Israel and Hamas was destroyed by a single killing: the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995. The assassin was not a Palestinian militant, but an Israeli extremist opposed to the Oslo Accords, by which Rabin sought a "land for peace" deal that was anathema to Israeli radicals, for whom Jewish sovereignty in the Holy Land is non-negotiable.

Rabin's assassination occurred at the end of a peace rally attended by more than 100,000 Israelis, hopeful of an end to hostilities between Israel and Palestinians. At the time, that hope seemed realistic.

The great beneficiaries of the assassination were Israeli nationalists, above all Binyamin Netanyahu, the leader of the right-wing Likud party. Netanyahu had rejected the Oslo Accords, because they required Israel to withdraw from the territories it had occupied after the Six-Day War in 1967. In a protest against the Accords, and against Rabin, Netanyahu led a mock funeral procession, complete with a coffin and hangman's noose.

In the years after Rabin's murder, and particularly following the failure to reach a settlement at Camp David in 2000, right-wing extremists gained power in Israel, and the prospect of achieving a viable Palestinian state in the occupied territories all but disappeared. At the same time, the failure of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's secular Fatah movement to deliver Palestinian statehood strengthened the Islamist Hamas, which, along with other Palestinian militant organisations, bases its legitimacy on killing Israelis (as well as accused collaborators with Israel).

With Hamas extending its influence (and exporting its violence) from Gaza, which it has controlled since 2007, to the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where the Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority is nominally in charge, a growing number of Israelis supported the repressive measures Netanyahu promised. And with the hapless PA unable to halt relentless expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, the cycle of extremism and violence continued.

Netanyahu now leads the most fanatically nationalist government in Israel's history, a government that includes Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, whose responsibilities include administration of a large part of the occupied West Bank. Smotrich has repeatedly incited violence against Palestinians.

In February, after a Palestinian shot dead two Israeli settlers, hundreds of Israelis rampaged through Huwara, a nearby Palestinian village, in scenes reminiscent of Cossack pogroms against Jewish settlements in Russia more than a century earlier. The Israelis set fire to Huwara, leaving one villager dead and others injured. And, like the Russian police when a pogrom was underway, Israeli forces in the area did not intervene to protect the residents or arrest the perpetrators.

None of this excuses the atrocities committed against Israeli civilians by Hamas terrorists who killed more than 1,000 Israelis, most of them defenseless civilians, including women and children. Horrifying videos show Hamas gunmen shooting, in cold blood, young people at a music festival. As a proportion of the population, this attack killed ten times as many people as al-Qaeda's attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

When Hamas attacks Israeli civilians, it knows that this will lead to Israeli counterattacks in Gaza that are bound to kill and injure many civilians. Hamas locates its military sites in residential areas, hoping that this tactic will restrain Israeli attacks, or at least lessen international support for Israel.

Hamas reportedly holds roughly 150 hostages, and has said that it will kill one every time Israel bombs a Gazan home without warning. Hamas leaders surely remember that in 2011, Netanyahu, as prime minister, was willing to free over 1,000 Palestinian prisoners, some of them terrorists, in exchange for the release of a single captive Israeli soldier, Gilad Shalit. Against that background, they may believe that Israel will not be prepared to sacrifice the lives of the hostages in order to achieve its military objectives.

If that is what the leaders of Hamas believe, they may find that they have made a mistake. Whether Israel can eliminate Hamas as a military force remains to be seen, but it is clear that in the battle to achieve that objective, Israel will have to be prepared to lose many lives, probably of both soldiers and hostages.

How far Israel will go with its declared intention to deny electricity, fuel, food, and water to the two million citizens of Gaza, many of them children, is hard to know. What is certain is that Hamas' brutal crimes do not entitle Israel to starve children.

In the eyes of many outside observers, the cause of Palestinian autonomy and statehood has long held the moral high ground. Now that cause has been stained by the gruesome murders and abductions – many of them captured on video – carried out in its name. Paradoxically, if Palestinians are ever to regain the moral high ground, they must hope for the destruction of Hamas. As long as Hamas can claim to represent them, the evil it has perpetrated will taint their cause.

The writer is Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

No amount of anxiety makes any difference to anything that is going to happen. ALAN WATTS

Thoughts come and go. Feelings come and go. Find out what it is that remains. RAMANA MAHARSHI

Kindness is the light that dissolves all walls between souls, families, and nations. PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1773: First spiral galaxy discovered. French astronomer, Charles Messier, discovered the Whirlpool Galaxy. Also known as Messier 51a, the galaxy is about 30 million light-years from Earth. A spiral galaxy is a type of galaxy where stars, gasses, and other cosmic dust particles rotate or revolve in a spiral around a central bulge. Astronomers think that the bulge consists of a black hole.

1972: A flight chartered by a Uruguayan rugby team crashed in the Andes Mountains of Argentina, and the wreckage was not located for more than two months; the incident garnered international attention, especially after it was revealed that the survivors had resorted to cannibalism.

FOCUS POLITICS

CASTE JUSTICE



The ruling party may not be able to contain the rising tide of OBC and lower caste demands through their local and regional interlocutors

The comprehensive caste survey (CCS) released by the Bihar government on Gandhi Jayanti has caused a flutter, reviving memories of the early 1990s which were characterised by the release of the Mandal Commission report and the Advani-led Rath Yatra to build the Ram Temple in Ayodhya (culminating in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in December 1992). The first got linked to the epithet Mandal Kamandal which was used to describe the VP Singh government's efforts to implement the Mandal Commission report to give caste-based reservation to OBCs as against the BJP's emerging Hindutva phalanx to capture the popular imagination and vote.



Malay Mishra

NO WONDER THE BJP LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN CONFOUNDED WITH THIS MASTERSTROKE OF BIHAR POLITICS

The CCS is a prelude to a clamour from Opposition parties and even smaller caste-based groups in the ruling NDA coalition (like the Anupriya Patel-led Apna Dal) for a nation-wide caste census. It may be noted that the last caste census was conducted in 1931 and it would be the first time since India's Independence that a caste-based census would happen, which is a promise by the Congress if it came to power as part of the INDIA alliance at the Centre. It is also noteworthy that the last decadal census was conducted in 2011 and the next census due in 2021 has been held in abeyance due to COVID-19 and subsequent apathy on part of the Modi government.

The BJP, since coming to power in 2014, has systematically increased its profile, membership and voting share by being able to consolidate the Hindu base and bring all caste groups of the Hindu hierarchy under one broad tent. A large chunk of the BJP vote share comes from projecting itself as a Hindu party, protecting the interests of Hindus. In this perspective, the party has supported a broad coalition of interests of upper castes, Brahmins, Banias, Kayasths as well as a broad chunk of OBCs and other extremely backward castes in an amorphous grouping where the lower castes have subjugated their interests to become part of

a rainbow coalition for power-sharing. This strategy has been giving the party rich dividends in successive general elections of 2014 and 2019. With the next general elections coming up a few months after elections in five states (including three in the Hindi-Hindu belt), the Bihar caste survey has shown the OBCs and EBCs occupying 63% of the state's population with the SCs accounting for 19.65%. Thus, adding the SC and ST groups, as also belonging to the broad spectrum of Hinduism, the total percentage of lower caste groups moves up to over 83% of the population while relegating the upper castes to just about 15.5%.

This has not only upset the BJP's electoral calculations but also aimed at redrawing the caste configuration for the purpose of higher reservations, proportionate to their population share, in educational institutions and employment. Thus, Rahul Gandhi's slogan, "Jitni aabadi utna haq" has found an echo among Opposition groups.

The Supreme Court has ruled against a stay on the CCS, supporting the Patna High Court's order of Aug 1, which had allowed the state government to go ahead with its caste census despite the Centre's objections that only the Centre as per the 7th Schedule of Constitution, the Census Act, 1948 and Census Rules, 1990 was empowered to conduct a census, and that privacy of respondents could be breached in such surveys. While

calling the exercise a "social survey," the Bihar government has committed to bring out the socio-economic dimensions of the survey in a month and half, in time for the next sitting of the state legislature, so that targets can be fixed for allocating governance benefits and marking reservations for the hitherto uncounted groups.

It may be noted that a day after the survey was released, the Nitish government allocated a 10% quota for economically weaker sections in state judicial services and state-run law colleges and universities, thus stealing a march over the BJP which had introduced such a category to assuage upper castes fixing an income criterion with an annual ceiling of Rs 8 lakh. States such as Karnataka, Odisha, MP, Maharashtra and Haryana have already completed their OBC surveys while Rajasthan has committed to bring it out after state elections.

Once the socio-economic status data of the state caste surveys are out, the states can identify the most vulnerable groups and plan policy measures and empowerment schemes accordingly. This will lead to greater empowerment of lowest rungs of society and the emergence of new caste leaders where new groups could vie for a greater share in the social pie. With caste configurations clearly demarcated, this will throw up a number of regional and sub-regional leaders and lead to

coalitions at the base and intermediary levels.

This is a situation ripe for a Mandal 2.0 with the demand for greater bargaining power among lower castes pre-empting the BJP's move to gain dividends from the opening of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya scheduled for early next year and cut into the ruling party's vote bank in the Hindi-Hindu belt substantially. In this sense, Nitish, along with the RJD, has played an astute move to spoil the BJP's plans to secure a march over the Opposition in 2024 general elections while aspiring for a major role within the Opposition alliance. No wonder the BJP leadership has been confounded with this masterstroke of Bihar politics.

Meanwhile PM Modi has made disjointed statements accusing the Opposition of playing the caste card while mentioning that poverty is the biggest caste, meaning that the state governments should be more mindful of addressing poverty instead of dividing society in the name of caste, this seems like a knee-jerk reaction. The ruling party may not be able to contain the rising tide of OBC and lower caste demands through their local and regional interlocutors.

Dr. Ambedkar in his iconic tract, The Annihilation of Caste, had called for a total de-identification of the Dalits with Hinduism in order to evolve a new language of protest, and a new voice and identity for real empowerment. That, alas, is not going to happen. Rather the obverse will come true, of further fragmentation of the OBC groups in a bid to regain their identity within the structure of recognised religion. However, in this quest for a new identity and aspiration to be equal stakeholders in societal development, the OBCs should be vigilant about not losing their demand for greater attention of the state for their security, prosperity and justice.

The writer is a retired diplomat and political analyst.

THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Rising inequality to exacerbate poverty



SN Tripathy

LOW HEALTH COVERAGE RESULTING IN HIGH OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENDITURE DIRECTLY IMPACTS POVERTY RATES

Poverty, the condition of lacking sufficient income or essential material possessions like food, clothing, and shelter to meet basic needs, remains a formidable social and economic challenge in India, despite the country's economic growth. India employs the Tendulkar methodology, developed by the Planning Commission, to measure poverty. This method focuses on assessing poverty based on consumption or spending over a specific period, with each Indian state establishing its own poverty threshold to determine the population living below poverty line.

The pandemic delivered India's economy a severe blow, the worst since Independence. In 2017, the World Bank estimated that over 20% of India's population lived in extreme poverty, defined as subsisting on less than \$1.90 per day. A significant portion of India's middle class has slipped below the poverty threshold. Simultaneously, those already living in poverty found themselves pushed into extreme poverty due to the economic downturn. In stark contrast, the wealthy grew wealthier, exacerbating India's existing inequality problem. There exists a correlation in India between increasing inequality, measured by the Gini coefficient, and economic development since Independence. However, this does not imply that development has not benefited the country despite growing inequality. Since 1990s, the number of people living below the poverty line has nearly halved, thanks to economic growth.

In 2021, India was projected to reach a GDP per capita of just over \$11,900, while the average national income per capita stood at approximately \$10,560. This represented a significant increase compared to 2010, with an average GDP of \$7,700 and an average national income of around \$6,600. In general, India's GDP and national income have been on a steady upward trajectory since 2010, except for 2020, which was likely impacted by COVID-19.

Extrapolating data from PLFS 2019-20 reveals that a monthly income of Rs 25,000 places an individual among the top 10% of earners, indicating some degree of income disparity. The top 1% of earners account for 6-7% of

total income, while the top 10% collectively garner a third of all income. In 2019-20, self-employed workers comprised the largest percentage of employment categories at 45.78%, followed by regular salaried workers at 33.5% and casual workers at 20.71%. Interestingly, self-employed workers dominate the lower income categories. The unemployment rate stood at 4.8% in 2019-20.

In terms of health infrastructure, significant strides have been made in expanding capacity, particularly in rural areas. From 172,608 total health centers in 2005, the count had risen to 185,505 by 2020. Data from NFHS-4 (2015-16) and NFHS-5 (2019-21) reveal promising trends. In 2015-16, 58.6% of women received antenatal check-ups during the first trimester, a figure that increased to 70% by 2019-21. Postnatal care received a boost too, with 78% of women benefiting from postnatal care within two days of delivery, and 79.1% of children receiving timely postnatal care. However, nutritional concerns, including issues of overweight, underweight, and prevalence of

anaemia (especially in children, adolescent girls, and pregnant women), remain pressing problems requiring immediate attention. Furthermore, low health coverage resulting in high out-of-pocket expenditure directly impacts poverty rates.

The report underscores significant improvements in education and household conditions in India, driven by targeted efforts through social protection schemes, especially those related to water availability and sanitation. These improvements have raised living standards and are seen as essential long-term measures for addressing inequality.

Mitigating inequality in access to education and skill development among SC/ST populations and minority communities is a critical priority. If the current trend of rising inequality is not addressed through appropriate policy measures, it could exacerbate existing poverty levels.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

Unhygienic kitchens

Sir, Unhygienic restaurant kitchens are in the news following sporadic cases of rodents and reptiles, apart from insects, detected in food served to customers. Unfortunately, it is humanly impossible to view the kitchen conditions before consuming food. Cleaning and mopping of kitchens and ensuring airtight storage and temperature control of food materials and prepared food are important. Food should be kept at a height preferably in shelves that are clean. Regular inspection of walls and crevices cannot be overstressed. Ventilation, without allowing external sources in, is a must. Sustained supply of potable water has to be ensured. Toilets have to be kept clean, and away from the kitchen. The Food and Drug Administration department of a state cannot be lax in its principal duty: inspecting restaurants, acting on erring ones, and taking follow-up actions.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Pursuit of justice

Sir, Narges Mohammadi, an Iranian activist, has been honoured with the 2023 Nobel Peace Prize, making her the second Iranian woman to achieve this distinction after Shirin Ebadi in 2003. Remarkably, she holds the distinction of being the first Nobel laureate to be incarcerated at the time of the announcement. Mohammadi, serving as the vice president of the Defenders of Human Rights Center (DHRC), has fervently advocated for women's rights, democracy, and the abolition of the death penalty in Iran. Despite facing multiple arrests and enduring severe penalties, including lashes and solitary confinement, Mohammadi has persevered in her pursuit of justice. Presently confined to Tehran's notorious Evin prison under a 12-year sentence, she has experienced deteriorating health and a lack of medical attention. Her resilience has been a source of inspiration, particularly to women in Iran, as she continues to challenge the oppressive regime. Mohammadi has also managed to clandestinely communicate with international media and human rights organisations, shedding light on the harsh conditions and torture prevalent in Iranian prisons. The Nobel Committee praised her as a "woman, a human rights advocate, and a freedom fighter," acknowledging her brave struggle and unwavering principles.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

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

Sundarbans records highest drowning mortality rate among children

THE STUDY WAS CONDUCTED IN 19 BLOCKS - 13 IN SOUTH 24 PARGANAS DISTRICT AND SIX IN NORTH 24 PARGANAS - OF THE REGION ON INCIDENTS REPORTED FROM OCTOBER 2016 TO SEPTEMBER 2019

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 12: West Bengal's Sundarbans region has recorded the world's highest drowning mortality rate of 243 per lakh population among children in the age group of one to four in three years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study. The study, which was conducted from 2016 to 2019, also found that the region has a mortality rate of 38.8 per lakh population among children aged between five and nine.

The study was conducted in 19 blocks - 13 in South 24 Parganas district and six in North 24 Parganas - of the region on incidents reported from October 2016 to September 2019. It was recently published.

"There was no difference in the mortality rates among boys and girls. Most children drowned in ponds within 50 metres of their homes when they were unaccompanied by their primary



caretakers who were engaged in household work," it said.

The survey was carried out by non-governmental organisation Child in Need Institute (CINI), in partnership with global agencies Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) and The George Institute (TGI) to gauge the enormity of the problem of drowning among children in the

coastal Sundarbans region.

Sundarbans is a mangrove region in southeastern part of West Bengal and southwestern region of Bangladesh. In the Indian part, Sundarbans is spread over 100 islands and has around 40 lakh inhabitants. Of the total population, around 15.9 per cent are children aged between one and nine.

Many settlements are remote and far away from medical establishments. Water level in the waterbodies of Sundarbans increase during monsoon, while the coastal region is also increasingly experiencing incidents of flooding over the last four to five years. West Bengal's Sundarbans Affairs Minister Bankim Chandra Hazra acknowledged the problem of drowning of children and said that the state government is trying to address the issue.

"We have no hesitation in admitting that there have been incidents of deaths of children by drowning. However, we do not have a detailed report," Hazra said. According to the minister, the call of the hour is to raise the level of awareness among the residents of Sundarbans on drowning like they were informed about dengue, malaria or child marriage.

"Every year, we are losing several young lives due to drown-

ing. People need to be informed in this regard to address this problem," Hazra added. CINI's national advocacy officer Sujoy Roy said that the survey will help not only locals but also highlight the situation before policymakers.

"Drowning deaths, particularly among children, are heartbreaking and entirely preventable. It is imperative that governments take heightened responsibility to protect our children from this silent peril. This study will help the local people as well as the government to understand how critical the situation is and realise the need to frame a policy in this regard," Roy said.

He said that the first-ever national seminar on drowning prevention was jointly organised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram in September.

No additional tax imposed: Himanta



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jorhat, Oct 12: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Thursday said that his government has not imposed any additional taxes on the people for implementing various welfare schemes.

He maintained that the state government was able to carry out the welfare activities due to the support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He was speaking at a programme where beneficiaries of the 'Orunodoi 2.0' scheme were handed their cards. Under the scheme, economically weak families receive Rs 1,250 in the bank account of the woman member every month to meet various household expenses.

Under 'Orunodoi 2.0', around 7 lakh new names will be added to the list of beneficiaries, taking the total to 26 lakh. Over 25,000 new beneficiaries of Jorhat district received their cards at the programme.

Taking on opposition parties for criticising the government for creating 'beneficiaries' through

THE CM SAID THE OPPOSITION PARTIES SHOULD QUESTION IF THE GOVERNMENT WAS LEVYING MORE TAXES TO IMPLEMENT THE SCHEMES

UNDER 'ORUNODOI 2.0', AROUND 7 LAKH NEW NAMES WILL BE ADDED TO THE LIST OF BENEFICIARIES, TAKING THE TOTAL TO 26 LAKH. OVER 25,000 NEW BENEFICIARIES OF JORHAT DISTRICT RECEIVED THEIR CARDS AT THE PROGRAMME

its various schemes, Sarma said, "As the chief minister, I will, of course, look to create 'hitad-hikaris' (beneficiaries).

"These people have the right over the benefits. If I cannot ensure these to them, I may as well go to the Himalayas," he said. He listed various other welfare and development projects, including new roads, bridges and tunnels, undertaken by his government, besides the work done in filling up vacancies in state departments, and developing education and sports infrastructure.

The CM said the opposition parties should question if the government was levying more taxes to implement the schemes. "Without any additional tax on the people, we are implementing all these schemes," he asserted.

Sarma said the state government was being able to do so "due to blessings and wishes of PM Modi". "I urge the people of Assam to continue supporting PM Modi as it is only through his help that we can take our state to new heights of development," he added.

Makeover for Kolkata trams to celebrate 150 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 12: The iconic tram service in the city has turned 150 this year and a tram car has been given a makeover to celebrate the occasion during Durga Puja this month.

The tram car, part of an effort to celebrate the festival in a unique way, has been designed to also commemorate the UNESCO heritage tag to the city's Durga Puja festival, a statement by the West Bengal Transport Corporation said.

It will ply between Ballygunge and Tollygunge areas in the southern part of the city covering some popular Puja marquees. The trial run of the specially decorated tram car was held a couple of days ago and the service will continue till New Year, it said.

The exteriors of the tram car have hand-painted artworks honouring artisans of Kumortuli, the traditional potters' quarters in North Kolkata which has evolved into a major hub for making of idols. There are also paintings of 'Sindoor khela' (smearing of vermilion by women devotees) and 'Dhununchi' dance, typically performed before the goddess. Other paintings depict a visually impaired artiste and women dhakis, heritage landmarks and cultural aspects.

Dhakis are those who play the dhak, one of the oldest instruments of Bengal made of a big wooden shell with two parchment heads. It was formerly the domain of men but women are being increasingly seen playing it. Kolkata is the only city in the country to have tram services and tram cars here typically have two bogies.

"We are ecstatic that the Durga Puja festival has provided a beautiful backdrop to this unique tram that will enthrall people," the statement quoted the WBTC managing director of Rajanvir Singh Kapur.

The makeover inside the bogies includes cane installations and 'Alpona', a highly stylised folk art form traditionally practised by women, besides mirroring the luxurious appeal of the city which is regarded as the country's cultural capital.



Women decorate a Durga Puja idol at a community pandal in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO

STARTUP PLANS TO PROMOTE TEA CULTIVATION IN MANIPUR

Tea is mostly grown in the districts of Ukhrul, Tamenglong, Senapati and Jiribam in Manipur, and small tea growers dealing in special varieties have started getting a foothold in the industry over the years



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Oct 12: Even as the Manipur government is trying hard to eradicate illegal poppy cultivation, a startup has come forward to fight the weed with another plant - tea.

The startup, Meckley Tea India Company, is looking to promote tea cultivation as an alternative to poppy farming in the picturesque state. "Illegal poppy cultivation and drug trade are two major problems of Manipur. The state government has already launched a war on drugs and has been destroying poppy cultivation.

"But unless we give an equally profitable alternative to farmers, they will tend to fall back on growing poppy. We feel that tea cultivation could be that viable alternative," Milan Kojiam, a director of Meckley Tea India Pvt Ltd, said here

Wednesday. He said the spadework for starting tea cultivation in 50 hectares currently owned by the company in Ukhrul district was done in April in consultation with the Tea Board, India, officials in Guwahati.

"But the situation took an ugly turn in May and we have not been able to make much progress. But we hope to start cultivating from the next season," Kojiam said.

He said the company is looking to procure more land and also exploring taking over tea cultivation areas of Manipur currently under the state government for turning them into profitable ventures under public-private-partnership mode.

Kojiam added they have been in talks with the local people of the area as well as the government over opening tea gardens, and the response from all sides has been positive. Anku Bora, a member of the board of directors of the company, said experts in the tea sector from Assam are helping them in the venture.

"Experts have said climate, topography and geographical location are favourable for tea cultivation in Manipur. They will soon visit our site and carry out further analysis," he said. Bora also pointed that a vibrant tea industry will provide employment opportunities, promote tea tourism and foster cultural exchanges.

Kojiam said Meckley Institute of Tea Research and Management is also being promoted by the company. Consultations with Dibrugarh University for affiliation and Toklai Tea Research Institute and Assam Agricultural University for hand-holding have already been held, with all the organisations responding favourably to the startup, he added.

Tea is mostly grown in the districts of Ukhrul, Tamenglong, Senapati and Jiribam in Manipur, and small tea growers dealing in special varieties have started getting a foothold in the industry over the years.

IIT Guwahati develops new device

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Oct 12: Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG) alumni-led startup Primary Healthtech Private Limited has developed an indigenous point-of-care-testing (POCT) device which is expected to test 25 parameters in blood to diagnose early chronic diseases related to kidney, liver, heart, and pancreas malfunctions.

Titled MobilabTM, the device is operated through an IoT-enabled Android app and can perform about 150 tests with a single charge of the battery, which enables a digitally-connected ecosystem for its

use even for the remotest locations of the nation. Primary Healthtech chief executive officer Sahil Jagnani said on Tuesday.

The device is expected to perform early screening of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which contribute to around 41 million (74%) of deaths globally, as per the recent reports of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

"The vision of MobilabTM is to make diagnosis available to fellow citizens at an affordable cost, along with generating instant results to speed up the early screening, disease management, and treatment," he said.

NOTICE INVITING TENDER No. C-1623
OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, NAYAGARH
NAYAGARH (ODISHA), PIN - 752069
e-Mail: nacnayagarh@yahoo.co.in
Tender Call Notice No. 3190 / Dt.10.10.2023
E-Procurement Notice No. MUNLNGR-09/2023-24

1	Name of the Work	Civil Works
2	No. of the Work	68 Nos.
3	Value of Work	Rs. 1,74,000/- to Rs.16,88,300/-
4	Class of Contractor	D & C
5	Period of Completion	60 Days
6	Date of Publication	Dt.10.10.2023
7	Date and time of availability of document in the portal	From Dt.16.10.2023 at 10.00 A.M. to Dt.27.10.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.
8	Last Date/Time for receipt of bids in portal	Dt.27.10.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.
9	Last date of submission of original documents in this Office	On or before Dt.31.10.2023 upto 5.00 P.M. by Registered Post/Speed Post/Drop Box available at Municipal Office
10	Date and Time of opening Technical Bid	Dt.01.11.2023 at 11.00 A.M. at Municipality Office, Nayagarh
11	Date and Time of Opening Financial Bid	Intimation will be given later through e-Mail
12	Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Executive Officer, Nayagarh Municipality

Further details can be seen from e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
Sd./- Executive Officer
Nayagarh Municipality
OIPR-13134/11/0016/2324

GOVT. OF ODISHA No. O-1271
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION-I, KEONJHAR
Tel.: 06766-258094 (O), Mail: eerw1_kjr@yahoo.com
"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works
Identification No. Online NCB - 09/2023-24

1.	Name of the work	10 Nos. Road Work
2.	Total Number of Work	10 Nos.
3.	Estimated Cost	Rs.5.08 Lakhs to Rs.16.95 Lakhs
4.	Class of Contractor	D and C Class
5.	Period of Completion	As per Annexure of e-Procurement Notice No. 09/2023-24
6.	Other Details	

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding		Last date & Time of seeking tender clarification	Date & time of opening of tender in O/o. S.E., R.W. Division-I, Keonjhar
		From	To		
1	2	3	4	5	6
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-I, Keonjhar	Road Online NCB No. 09	Dt.17.10.2023 at 11.00 A.M.	Dt.30.10.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.	Dt.27.10.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.	Dt.31.10.2023 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tenderorissa.gov.in.
OIPR-25110/11/0018/2324
Sd./- Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division-I, Keonjhar

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. B-1073
E-Procurement Notice
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, SONEPUR (R&B) DIVISION, SONEPUR
E-mail: eepwdsnpr@gmail.com, Phone: 06654-221081
CANCELLATION OF BID IDENTIFICATION
No. SE/R&B/SNPR/13/2023-24
Letter No. 5499 Dt.11.10.2023
The bid for the following work is hereby cancelled due to 1st time participate single bidder.
1. Construction of Box-cell Culvert at Ch.0/450 near M.R. High School from Nalini Chowk to Ambedkar Chowk Road of Sonepur in the District of Subarnapur for the year 2023-24 (Tender ID: 2023_EICCL_94793_4)
Sd./- Superintending Engineer
Sonepur (R&B) Division, Sonepur
OIPR-34081/11/0015/2324

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, BOUDH
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. 10/BMID/2023-24
No. A-662 E-mail ID: bmidbdh@gmail.com
Letter No. 1562 Date: 09.10.2023
01. Name of Work : Improvement to M.I.P.s in different Block of Boudh District under 'Improvement to Tanks & MIPs' Scheme & Critical Grant for the year 2023-24
02. Number of Work : 06 (Six) Nos.
03. Tender Amount : Varies from Rs.8.20 Lakhs to Rs.24.60 Lakhs
04. Class of Contractor : "D", "C" & "B"
05. Tender Paper Cost (Online) : Rs.4000/- and Rs.6000/-
06. Period of Completion : 03 (Three) Calendar Months
07. Availability of Bid Document : From 18.10.2023 at 10.00 A.M. to 03.11.2023 at 05.00 P.M. in website (www.tendersorissa.gov.in)
08. Last date & time of receipt of Bid : 03.11.2023 at 05.00 P.M. through online
09. Date of Opening of Bid Documents : 06.11.2023 at 11.00 A.M. in the Office of the S.E., M.I. Division, Boudh
10. Date of Lottery if required : 14.11.2023
11. Digital Signature Certificate of Bidder : The bidder must process compatible digital signature certificate (DSC)
12. Name and address of the OIT : Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Boudh, At/P.O.: Malisahi, District: Boudh, PIN - 762014
Further details can be seen from the Government of Odisha website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Sd./- Superintending Engineer
M.I. Division, Boudh
OIPR-32279/11/0004/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. B-1072
WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER BALLIGUDA (R&B) DIVISION, BALLIGUDA
Telephone & Fax: 06846-243242, E-mail: eepwd.balliguda@gmail.com
Bid Identification No. S.E. BLG-06/2023-24, Dated: 11.10.2023

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Road works as per DTCN available in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
1	Estimated Cost	Rs.15.55 lakh
2	No. of Works	01 (One) Only
3	Period & time of completion	21 Dyas
4	Date & time of availability of the bid document in the portal	13.10.2023 to 19.10.2023 (upto 5.00 P.M.) for Online Bidding
5	Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal	Upto 5.00 P.M. of 19.10.2023
6	Date & Time of bid opening	10.30 hours on Dated 20.10.2023
7	Name & address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Superintending Engineer, Balliguda R&B Division, Balliguda, Dist.: Kandhamala, PIN - 762103

Other details of Notice inviting Tenders can be seen in website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
Further corrigendum if any, shall only be published/uploaded in the above website.
Sd./- Superintending Engineer
Balliguda (R&B) Division
OIPR-34038/11/0008/2324



Derailed coaches of the Delhi-Kamakhya North East Express near Raghunathpur station in Buxar district, Bihar. Fault in railway tracks was the possible cause of derailment of the coaches, sources said citing a preliminary investigation report. At least four people were killed and several injured in the accident in Bihar's Buxar district Wednesday night



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Parvati Kund, in Pithoragarh. Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation of multiple development projects in Uttarakhand worth nearly ₹4,200 crore



US Nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan is escorted as it arrives in Busan, South Korea



Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, awards Kyrgyzstan's President Sadyr Japarov with the Order of Honour during their meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan



Participants at a state level bullock cart race at Hiremagalur near Chikmagalur, Karnataka



Students from different schools participate in the 74th Yuva Kreedha Pratyogita, in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh



Chinese ship Zhen Hua 15, first cargo vessel to dock at Vizhinjam Port, carries port equipment at the Vizhinjam International Sea Port, in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala



Members of Minority Youth Federation participate in a protest rally to show solidarity with Palestine, in Kolkata, West Bengal

of the day quote

Opposing the alliance (between BJP and JD-S), many leaders have shown interest in joining our party. It will be beneficial for our leadership as well as the country if these leaders are inducted

D K SHIVAKUMAR | KARNATAKA DEPUTY CM

Our government has resolved that as the number of internet users grows in the country, our priority is to keep the internet safe and trustworthy for our digital citizens

RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | UNION MINISTER

One part of the country is burning and women are being assaulted. Why is no one discussing this issue? What is happening in some other nation can be discussed afterwards

NANA PATOLE | MAHA CONGRESS CHIEF



India-France strategic partnership has deepened over years and is more relevant today than ever. We look forward to taking this partnership to newer heights

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

CPI (M)-ALLY LJD MERGES WITH RJD

The Loktantrik Janata Dal (LJD), an ally of the ruling CPI(M) in Kerala, merged with Lalu Prasad Yadav's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) Thursday. At a convention held at the M K Premnath Nagar in the evening, the LJD, led by its president M V Shreyams Kumar, adopted a resolution declaring the merger of the two socialist parties



BILKIS BANO CASE SC reserves verdict on early release of convicts

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Supreme Court Thursday reserved its verdict on a batch of petitions filed against the early release of convicts in the Bilkis Bano case by the Gujarat government.

A bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan reserved the judgment after hearing both the sides on the question of validity of the remission orders setting free convicts in the case of the gang-rape of Bano and murder of her family members committed during the 2002 post-Godhra riots.

The bench ordered the Centre and state government to file records along with translation pertaining to the convicts' remission by October 16.

Senior advocate Indira Jaising, in her rejoinder arguments, submitted that the decision of the apex court in the case will reflect the "conscience of the Constitution."

Jaising reiterated that the remission orders are 'bad in law' emphasizing that principles dwelled by the top court should



be applied in determining the application for early release.

She said that the crime committed against Bano was a "motivated" one and the nation's conscience will be reflected in the verdict of the apex court.

In an earlier hearing, she had argued that the crime committed against Bano during the 2002 post-Godhra riots was a "crime against humanity" perpetrated on the basis of religion.

In her rejoinder arguments, advocate Vrinda Grover questioned the release of convicts by the Gujarat government despite non-payment of fine - which Bombay

High Court ordered to be paid as compensation to the victim.

She contended that convicts cannot come out on remission unless fine is paid or convicts have suffered the sentence imposed in default of fine, adding that convicts had "illegal premature release".

After commencement of the final hearing, the convicts approached the trial court in Mumbai and deposited the fine imposed upon them to "reduce the controversy".

The Supreme Court had questioned the deposition of the fine without awaiting the outcome of

The Centre, Gujarat government, and convicts have opposed the PILs filed by CPI(M) leader Subhashini Ali, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, the National Federation of Indian Women, Asma Shafique Shaikh and others against the remission orders, saying that once victim herself has approached the court, others may not be allowed to intervene in a criminal matter

The 11 men convicted in the case were released August 15 last year, after the Gujarat government allowed their release under its remission policy

The convicts had completed 15 years in jail

their application filed before the top court.

"You seek permission and then you deposit without getting permission?", it had asked convicts. The petitioner had pointed out before the Supreme Court that the convicts did not pay the fines imposed on them and the non-payment of fine renders remission order illegal.

In another hearing, the apex court had also said that it will be required to examine if remission applications of convicts in the Bilkis Bano case were given any preferential treatment by the Gujarat government.

On the other hand, the convicts had contended that remission orders granting them early release have an essence of judi-

cial order and cannot be challenged by way of filing a writ petition under Article 32 of the Constitution.

The Centre, Gujarat government, and convicts have opposed the PILs filed by CPI(M) leader Subhashini Ali, Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, the National Federation of Indian Women, Asma Shafique Shaikh and others against the remission orders, saying that once victim herself has approached the court, others may not be allowed to intervene in a criminal matter.

The 11 men convicted in the case were released August 15 last year, after the Gujarat government allowed their release under its remission policy. The convicts had completed 15 years in jail.

Batla House encounter: HC reduces Ariz Khan's death sentence to life

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Delhi High Court Thursday commuted to life term the death penalty awarded to Ariz Khan following his conviction in the sensational 2008 Batla House encounter in which Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma lost his life, saying while it was conscious that the country lost a decorated police officer in the line of duty, the case did not fall in the "rarest of rare" category to merit capital punishment.

A bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Amit Sharma upheld a trial court order convicting Khan of the murder of the police official and said testimonies of the eyewitnesses and other material established his presence at the place of incident as well as his firing at the raiding party while fleeing from the spot.

Accordingly, this Court is of the considered view that the sentence of rigorous imprisonment for life would be an appropriate sentence," the court said as it refused to confirm the death penalty awarded to Khan who was a 23-year-old B.Tech student at the time of the incident.

"It is pertinent to note that there is nothing on record to attribute the fatal shot responsible for the death of late Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma to any particular accused... This court is conscious of the fact that during the incident, the country lost a decorated police officer who sacrificed his life in the line of duty. His contribution will never be forgotten by an eternally grateful nation," the court said.

Sharma, an officer of the Delhi Police's Special Cell, was killed in the encounter between police and terrorists in south Delhi's Jamia Nagar September 19, 2008. Two terrorists were also killed in the encounter that took place days after five synchronised bomb explosions rocked the national capital, killing 39 people and wounding 159.

Sharma had raided the place while looking for the terrorists responsible for the blasts.

India dubs Hamas strikes on Israel as 'terror' attacks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: India Thursday described the strikes by Hamas on Israeli cities as "terror attacks" but at the same time reaffirmed its long-standing position, advocating negotiations towards establishing a "sovereign, independent and viable" state of Palestine living side-by-side at peace with Israel.



In first detailed comments on the Israel-Hamas conflict, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said at a media briefing that there was a universal obligation to observe international humanitarian law as also a global responsibility to fight the menace of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Bagchi was responding to questions about the plight of Palestinians in Gaza in view of Israel's counter-attacks following Hamas's surprise strikes and US President Joe Biden's message to Tel Aviv to "operate by the rules of war".

The spokesperson also said India's focus has been to bring back from Israel the Indians who wish to return in view of the current situation. On India's position on Palestine, he said it has been always consistent.

"Our policy in this regard has been long-standing and consistent... India has always advocated the resumption of direct negotiations towards estab-

EAM's security cover upgraded

The security cover of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has been upgraded from the 'Y' category to 'Z', official sources said Thursday. The Union home ministry has asked the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to take the charge of his security, currently provided by the Delhi Police, they said. Jaishankar, 68, was being guarded by an armed team of the Delhi Police under the 'Y' category security cover.

lishing a sovereign, independent and viable State of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders, side by side at peace with Israel. That position remains the same," Bagchi said, reiterating New Delhi's position favouring a two-state solution to the Palestine issue.

The sudden escalation in hostilities between Israel and Palestine has triggered global concerns. Leading powers like Germany, the US, France and the UK emphasised the importance of preventing the situation from further escalation.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu that the people of India stand firmly with his country in this difficult hour, expressing strong and unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Before Thursday's comments by Bagchi on the conflict, India's response to it was limited to the MEA's readout on the phone conversation between the two prime ministers as well as Modi's tweets.

Union Civil Aviation ministry disposes of 316 public grievances

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Oct 12: The Union Civil Aviation ministry has disposed of 316 public grievances and revenue of ₹45.01 lakh was generated from scrap disposal in the first week of Special Campaign 3.0.

The ministry informed that it developed an action plan focusing on cleanliness drives through Regional/Field offices of the organisations under the ministry so as to contribute towards achieving the objectives of the campaign.

"In the first week of the Campaign (October 2 to 7) 4360 files were reviewed, 7310 Sqft. of space was freed up, 316 public grievances were disposed of and Revenue of ₹45,01,904 was generated from Scrap Disposal," the ministry said.

MANIPUR VIOLENCE

Govt bans circulation of violent visuals

The state government said that it will file cases against those sharing such images or videos

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Oct 12: The Manipur government has prohibited the circulation of videos or images depicting violence and damage to properties to restore normalcy in the ethnic strife-torn state.

Such dissemination will be dealt with severely and those responsible will be booked under the law, said the government order issued Wednesday night.

The order was given as videos and images of widespread violence went viral on social media platforms. One such video showed two youths being shot at point blank and then being buried in a pit by a group of people. The location of the incident and the place of the burial is, however, not known.



The order by the Manipur home department stated, "The state government views very seriously and with utmost sensitivity the reported spread of videos and images depicting violent activities, inflicting harm

or injury to (any)body or damage to private and public properties through various social media platforms which may aggravate the law and order situation in the state."

"The state government after thorough examination of the matter has decided to restrain the act of spreading such videos and images as a positive step towards bringing normalcy in the state," it said.

Anyone in possession of such videos or images can approach the nearest superintendent of police irrespective of jurisdiction and submit them for taking appropriate action, the order said.

Any person found violating the order will be booked and prosecuted under the law and provision of misuse of technology. They will be dealt with under the IPC and IT Act, it added.

Global water cycle 'spinning out of balance': WMO report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: More than 50 per cent of catchment areas globally witnessed deviations from normal river discharge conditions last year, posing a significant challenge in providing water to an increasingly vulnerable world grappling with climate change, according to a report by the World Meteorological Organisation.

The report titled "WMO State of Global Water Resources 2022 Report" provides an independent and consistent global-scale quantitative assessment of water resources in large river basins in comparison to the long-term average for various variables like river discharge, ground-water, evaporation, soil mois-

ture and inflow to reservoirs. It stated that the hydrological cycle was spinning out of balance as a result of climate change and human activities.

The consequences of this imbalance are devastating, with droughts and extreme rainfall events wreaking havoc on both lives and economies. The melting of snow, ice, and glaciers intensifies flood risks and jeopardises long-term water security for millions of people worldwide.

The report contends that still too little is known about the true state of the world's freshwater resources.

El Nino and La Nina are the two main phases of ENSO, or El Niño-Southern Oscillation, a climate pattern in the tropical



Pacific Ocean. El Nino, the warming of waters in the Pacific Ocean near South America. La Nina is the opposite of El Nino.

The WMO points out significant changes in the Third Pole region, which supplies water to

nearly 2 billion people, including the Tibetan Plateau, the Himalayas, and other mountain ranges.

Over the years, there has been a noticeable decrease in snow cover and a substantial increase

in glacial lakes, impacting river runoffs in critical basins like the Indus, Amu Darya, Yangtze, and the Yellow River, the report pointed out.

From 2000 to 2018, total glacier mass balance in the region

decreased by more than 4 per cent, it said, adding this has impacted river runoffs at the Indus, Amu Darya, Yangtze and Yellow River basins, indicating climate change's evolving influence on the region.

In 2022, the snow cover in the Alps, crucial for feeding major rivers of Europe like the Rhine, Danube, Rhone, and Po, remained much lower than average. The European Alps witnessed unprecedented levels of glacier mass loss.

Severe droughts impacted many parts of Europe in the summer of 2022, posing transportation challenges on rivers like the Danube and Rhine and disrupting nuclear electricity production in France due to the lack of cooling water.

IRAN PRESIDENT, SAUDI CROWN PRINCE DISCUSS CONFLICT

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman discussed the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, in the first telephone call between the two leaders since a China-brokered deal between Tehran and Riyadh to resume ties. Raisi and the Saudi crown prince discussed the "need to end war crimes against Palestine," Iranian state media said. The Saudi crown prince, for his part, "affirmed that the Kingdom is making all possible efforts in communicating with all international and regional parties to stop the ongoing escalation," Saudi state news agency SPA said



international



BLINKEN VOWS US SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

Israel captured the West Bank, along with Gaza and east Jerusalem, in a 1967 war. The Palestinians want all three territories for their future state, but there have been no peace talks in over a decade

Jerusalem, Oct 12: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken vowed American support to Israel Thursday as its military pulverised the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip with airstrikes and prepared for a possible ground invasion. As Palestinians tried to stock up on bread and groceries amid dwindling supplies, Israel said nothing would be allowed into Gaza until around 150 hostages taken captive by Hamas during a weekend attack are freed. International aid groups warned of worsening humanitarian crisis after Israel stopped all deliveries of food, water, fuel and electricity to the tiny enclave of 2.3 million people and prevented entry of supplies from Egypt. The war has already claimed at least 2,700 lives on both sides. "Not a single electricity switch will be flipped on, not a single faucet will be turned on, and not a single fuel truck will enter until the Israeli hostages are returned home," Israeli Energy Minister Israel Katz said on social media. Lt. Col. Richard Hecht, an Israeli



military spokesman, told reporters on Thursday that forces "are preparing for a ground maneuver" should political leaders order one. A ground offensive in Gaza, where the population is densely packed into a sliver of land only 40 kilometers (25 miles) long, would likely bring even higher casualties on both sides in brutal house-to-house fighting. As Israel pounds Gaza from the air, Hamas militants have fired thousands of rockets into Israel. Palestinians fleeing airstrikes in Gaza could be seen running through the streets, carrying their belongings and looking for a safe place. The number of people who fled their homes soared 30 per cent within 24 hours, reaching 340,000 people by Wednesday night. Most crowded into UN-run schools while others are staying with relatives or even strangers who let them in. Lines formed outside bakeries and

grocery stores during the few hours they dared open, as people tried to stock up before shelves emptied. On Wednesday, Gaza's only power station ran out of fuel and shut down, leaving only lights powered by scattered private generators. Hospitals, overwhelmed by a constant stream of wounded and running out of supplies, have only a few days worth of fuel before their power cuts off, aid officials say. The cut-off has also caused dire water shortage for over 650,000 people, according to the UN. "Without electricity, hospitals risk turning into morgues," warned Fabrizio Carboni, regional director of the International Committee of the Red Cross. When power runs out, it puts "newborns in incubators and elderly patients on oxygen at risk. Kidney dialysis stops, and X-rays can't be taken", he said. With Israel sealing off the territory,

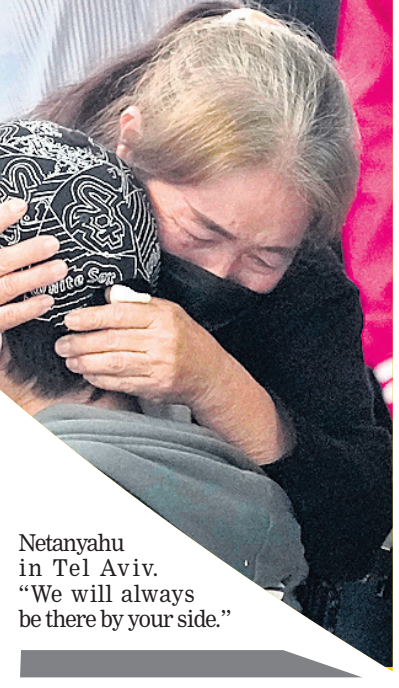
the only way in or out is through the crossing with Egypt at Rafah. Egypt's Foreign Ministry said it has not officially closed Rafah but airstrikes have prevented it from operating. Egypt has been trying to convince Israel and the United States to allow the delivery of aid and fuel through Rafah. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to "crush" Hamas after the militants stormed into the country's south on Saturday and massacred hundreds of people, including killings of children in their homes and young people at a music festival. Netanyahu alleged Hamas atrocities, including beheading soldiers and raping women. His allegations could not be independently confirmed. Amid grief and demands for vengeance among the Israeli public, the government is under intense pressure to topple Hamas rather than continuing



DAY 6 OF WAR

- At least 1,417 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip and over 6,200 have been injured since the Israel-Hamas war began, Palestinian health officials said Thursday. Of the dead, nearly 450 are children and 250 are women. The war has claimed at least 2,600 lives on both sides since Hamas launched its attack on Israel last Saturday
- Every Israeli soldier killed by Hamas militants so far in the latest Israel-Palestinian war has been identified, the Israeli military confirmed Thursday. A total of 222 Israeli soldiers have died and their families have all been notified, a spokesperson for the military said
- Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said in a statement that he has ordered the dispatch of humanitarian aid to the Gaza enclave, currently under siege by Israeli forces. He said coordination with Egyptian authorities is underway to ensure the safe and prompt delivery of the aid, including medical supplies, to Gaza
- Palestinian residents of the city of Beit Lahiya in the northern region of the Gaza Strip said Thursday that Israeli planes dropped flyers warning them to evacuate their homes and to head to "known shelters." "Anyone who is near Hamas terrorists will put their lives in danger," the flyers said
- Turkish officials have confirmed that at least one Turkish citizen has been killed in the Israel-Hamas war. The Turkish Jewish Community identified the victim on the X platform, formerly known as Twitter, as 52-year-old Avraam Avi Zakuto who emigrated to Israel in 1972. Earlier, the Israeli Embassy in Turkey said another Turkish citizen is reported missing
- The number of US citizens who have died in the Israel-Palestinian war has risen to at least 25, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Thursday during a visit Thursday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. That's an increase from 22 on Wednesday. The State Department previously said at least 17 more Americans remain unaccounted for
- Egypt's Foreign Ministry denied Thursday it had officially closed the Rafah crossing and said Israeli airstrikes have prevented it from operating. In the statement, the ministry called on all countries and international organizations wishing to provide humanitarian aid to deliver supplies to el-Arish International Airport, in Egypt's northern Sinai. Hamas' border authorities said Tuesday that an Israel airstrike hit the no-man's land between Gaza and Egypt, blocking the road with a large crater

to try to bottle it up in Gaza. Four previous conflicts ended with the group still firmly in control of the territory it has ruled since 2007. Israel has mobilised 360,000 reservists, massed additional forces near Gaza and evacuated tens of thousands of residents from nearby communities. A new war Cabinet, which includes a longtime opposition politician, is now directing the fight. Blinken's visit underscored American backing for Israel's retaliation. "You may be strong enough on your own to defend yourselves, but as long as America exists you will never have to," Blinken said after meeting with



Netanyahu in Tel Aviv. "We will always be there by your side."



University students participate in a rally called by a religious students' group 'Islami Jamiat Talaba' against Israeli airstrikes on Gaza and to show solidarity with Palestinian people, in Lahore, Pakistan

Rescuing hostages a daunting task

The Hamas-run Gaza Strip is a tiny enclave, measuring 40 kilometres long and no more than 12 kilometres wide, surveilled continually by Israel, surrounded by its guns. But rescuing — or even locating — more than 150 hostages hustled there by Palestinian militants who overran Israel's southern border on Saturday will be a daunting task. Gaza's densely populated terrain, its network of underground tunnels and the sheer numbers of men, women and children taken captive present Israel with the most complex hostage crisis that the country has ever faced. Mounting rescue operations in the midst of the massive Israeli bombardment of Gaza that followed the deadly Hamas rampage in southern Israel would only make an already difficult mission even more formidable. "The situation is unprecedented," said Gershon Baskin, who helped to negotiate the 2011 release of Staff Sgt. Gilad Schalit after more than five years of Hamas captivity. "I think Hamas was surprised at the ease it was able to take hostages. Israel was completely

bewildered by everything that's happened." Images of hostages have become seared into Israel's collective consciousness. The panicked woman being dragged off by militants on a motorcycle, her boyfriend marched across the border on foot. The terrified mother, wrapped in a blanket, clasping her two young children. Eli Elbag had tried for 12 hours to contact his soldier daughter Liri, 18, who was training to be a lookout at the Gaza border. Then a friend sent a video showing her crowded into the back seat of an Israeli military truck that militants had commandeered, sitting next to two other hostages, one with blood covering his face. As Israel pummels neighbourhood after neighbourhood in Gaza, Elbag and his wife have been glued to the television, looking for any sign of her. He said he understands the Israeli operation but remains concerned for Liri's safety. "Nobody," said Elbag, "can understand what we are feeling." **AN EXTREMELY COMPLEX SITUATION** Hamas has demanded freedom for all 5,200 prisoners the Palestinians say are held in Israeli jails in exchange for the captives. It has warned it will kill a hostage every time Israel's military bombs civilian targets in Gaza without warning. The group is also holding the bodies of two Israeli soldiers killed in the 2014 war between Israel and Hamas, as well as two Israeli civilians who entered its territory years ago. Information about the hostages seized Saturday remains sketchy days later. No complete list has been released, and it's not clear who is alive and who is not. Many are Israelis, but a long list of other countries have said their citizens have been taken hostage. Hamas has traditionally treated hostages as valuable assets, revealing little to no information about their conditions or whereabouts and refusing to grant the International Committee of the Red Cross access to check on their well-being. REUTERS/PTI PHOTOS

business

of the day quote

Cumulative household savings in India are at ₹13.75 lakh crore with immense potential for allocation to credible fixed income products

BARATH SHANKAR SUBRAMANIAN | PARTNER, ACCEL

Effective cooperation among the BRICS nations in striking the right balance between promoting sustainability and competition is pertinent to deal with complex challenges

ASHOK BHUSHAN | CHAIRPERSON, NCLAT

We now exceed 1,100 people working here in India to deliver our software strategy across the three platforms. We are going to keep investing and growing that team in order to double it basically within the next 12 to 18 months

VYVES BONNEFONT | CHIEF SOFTWARE OFFICER, STELLANTIS

Q2 RESULTS

Infosys net rises 3%

New Delhi: India's second largest IT services company Infosys Thursday reported a 3.1 per cent year-on-year rise in net profit to ₹6,215 crore for the September 2023 quarter. The earnings (before minority interest) of the Bengaluru-based company stood at ₹6,026 crore in the year-ago period. The company - which competes in the IT services market with TCS, Wipro, HCL Technologies and others - saw its revenue rising 6.7 per cent to ₹38,994 crore for the just-ended September quarter. Infosys CEO and MD Salil Parekh said, "We had our highest large deals value at \$7.7 billion in Q2 spread across all verticals and geographies". Infosys headcount fell by 7,530 to 3,28,764 as of September 30, 2023, against 3,36,294 in the June quarter.

HCL Tech net up 9%

New Delhi: IT major HCL Technologies Thursday reported a 9.9 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to ₹3,833 crore for the second quarter ended September 30. The company had posted a net profit of ₹3,487 crore a year ago. Its consolidated revenue from operations during the reported quarter increased by 8 per cent to ₹26,672 crore from ₹24,686 crore in the September 2022 quarter, according to a BSE filing.

Debt MFs continue to log outflow for second month

Cautious investors withdraw ₹11-cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: Debt-oriented mutual fund schemes witnessed a net withdrawal of ₹1.01 lakh crore in September, making it the second consecutive month of the outflow, primarily due to advance tax requirements of corporates and correction in equity markets.

The segment saw an outflow of ₹25,873 crore in August. Before this, the debt schemes attracted ₹61,440 crore in July, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed.

The huge outflow has pulled down the assets under management (AUM) of fixed income funds or debt funds to ₹13.05 lakh crore at the end of September from ₹14 lakh crore in the preceding month-end.

Investor sentiment towards debt investments was largely muted. Barring long duration

EQUITIES SNAP TWO-DAY RALLY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 12: Equity benchmark BSE Sensex declined in a volatile trade Thursday, reversing the two-session rally, mainly due to selling in IT and tech stocks.

However, heavy buying in energy, metal and auto counters capped the losses, traders said.

After swinging between gains and losses, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 64.66 points or 0.10 per cent to close at 66,408.39 points, with 14 of its constituents settling lower and 16 advancing. The index opened higher and touched a high of 66,577.60 points in early trade but later fell to a low of 66,342.53 points.

The broader Nifty of NSE also declined 17.35 points or 0.09 per cent to close below the 19,800 level at 19,794 points. It moved in a range of 19,772.65-19,843.30 points during the session.

Overall, the market breadth was positive as of the total 3,792 stocks traded, 2,168 shares advanced, 1,501 declined and 123 closed unchanged.

As many as 284 stocks hit their 52-week highs, while 20 stocks hit the year's low level.

Analysts said selling in IT shares following mixed results by IT heavyweights TCS and Infosys dragged the key indices from the day's high levels.

Infosys was the biggest loser among the Sensex stocks, falling 2.29 per cent ahead of its financial results to be announced after market hours. HCL Technologies also dropped 1.75 per cent ahead of its results. Profit taking in Bajaj Finance, Nestle, Kotak Bank, SBI, Bharti Airtel L&T and Asian Paints also weighed on the benchmark index.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) continued to be net sellers as they offloaded shares worth ₹421.77 crore Wednesday.

MONEY LAUNDERING PROBE

'Vivo siphoned off ₹1.07tn'

REUTERS

New Delhi, Oct 12: Many employees of Chinese smartphone maker Vivo and its Indian affiliates concealed their employment when seeking visas, and some breached rules by visiting the "sensitive" Himalayan region of Jammu and Kashmir, India's financial crime agency has said.

The accusations, detailed Tuesday in a court filing that is not public, follow the arrest this week of a Vivo executive, Guangwen Kuang, in a money laundering investigation launched in 2022 into India's second biggest smartphone player.

This week's court filing says ₹1.07 trillion was remitted outside India by Vivo to some trading companies controlled by its Chinese parent, in what the agency called a "masking layer" intended to escape government notice.



and gilt fund segments, all the other 14 categories witnessed net outflows. These two categories have been finding favour with investors for some time in anticipation of a change in the interest rate cycle.

In terms of categories, expectedly liquid funds saw the highest net outflows of ₹74,176 crore during the month, followed by money market funds (Rs 9,158 crore), ultra-short duration funds (Rs 5,168 crore) and floater funds (Rs 4,903 crore).

Further, corporate bond funds as a category witnessed net outflows of ₹2,459 crore after witnessing regular net inflows since January.

Amazon India has made its "best-ever start" to the peak pe-



India can emerge as a global hub for the manufacturing of small satellites and launch vehicles and carve a niche for itself in the international space economy

PAWAN KUMAR GOENKA | CHAIRMAN, IN-SPACE

JLR SEES BEST-EVER H1 SALES

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) India Thursday reported its highest-ever performance in the first half of this fiscal with sales of 2,356 units. The automaker had retailed around 1,194 units in the April-September period of the last financial year



THREE-MONTH LOW

Retail inflation eases

ON THE BACK OF EASING FOOD PRICES, INFLATION HAS COME BACK TO RBI'S COMFORT LEVEL OF BELOW 6% AFTER A GAP OF TWO MONTHS



REUTERS

New Delhi, Oct 12: India's retail inflation eased to a three-month low in September on the back of softer vegetable prices, but remained above a target of 4% that the central bank has signalled would be key before easing rates.

Annual retail inflation rose 5.02% in September, down from 6.83% the previous month.

Food inflation, which accounts for nearly half of the overall consumer price basket, rose 6.56% in September as compared with 9.94% in August.

September inflation was below the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) upper tolerance band of 2%-6%. But the RBI earlier this month kept its key lending rate steady for a fourth consecutive policy meeting, and emphatically reiterated that it was targeting inflation of 4% and a print of below 6% might not suffice as a condition for easing rates.

Vegetable prices were the key driver in keeping inflation elevated in the previous two months, forcing the government to ban some exports of rice and raise duties for onions.

Vegetable inflation sharply eased to 3.39% in September from 26.14% in the previous month. Cereal inflation in September eased to 10.95% from 11.85% in August. India has banned exports of wheat since last year.

"The central bank is unlikely to shift away from its hawkish rhetoric for as long as there remains a significant risk of a renewed pick-up in food prices," said Thamashi De Silva of Capital Economics. The government also hiked

Overall registrations in the April-September period this fiscal rose to 1.10 crore units (1,10,79,116 units) as compared with 1.01 crore units (1,01,79,072 units) in the same period of the 2022-23 fiscal.

"The narrative of H1 FY24 is one of resilience and recovery, with the total auto retail registering a 9 per cent growth year on year," the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) President Manish Raj Singhania said in a statement.

All categories reported year-on-year (YoY) growth during the

SEPTEMBER CPI AT 5.02% VS 6.83% IN AUGUST

FOOD INFLATION UP 6.56% VS 9.94% IN AUGUST

'RESERVE BANK WON'T CUT RATES UNTIL JUNE '24'

H1 OF FY24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: Automobile retail sales in India rose by 9 per cent year on year in the April-September period of this fiscal riding on the back of highest-ever registrations of passenger vehicles and three-wheelers, dealers' body FADA said Thursday.

Three-wheeler registrations rose 66 per cent to 5,33,353 units in the April-September period from 3,21,964 units in the same period last fiscal.

"This extraordinary performance in the three-wheeler category underscores the sector's vigorous recovery and adaptability in navigating through the complex market challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic," Singhania said. Two-wheeler retail sales saw a jump of 7 per cent year on year to 78,28,015 units in the first half of the current financial year. Commercial vehicle (CV) sales rose to 4,65,097 units in the first



- AUTOMOBILE SALES UP 9% YOY
- PV RETAIL SALES GREW BY 6%
- 3W REGISTRATIONS ROSE 66%
- 2W SALES SAW JUMP OF 7%
- CV SALES INCREASED 3%

The continued growth trajectory of the passenger vehicle segment for two consecutive fiscal years is a testament to the resilient demand and the market's positive response to the diverse and dynamic offerings in the segment

MANISH RAJ SINGHANIA | PRESIDENT, FADA

period under review with maximum growth witnessed in the three-wheeler registrations, he added.

Passenger vehicle (PV) retail sales grew by 6 per cent to 18,08,311 units in the first half of the current fiscal as against 17,02,905 units in the year-ago period.

"It not only grew by 6 per cent YoY but also witnessed record retails, with H1 FY'24 seeing an all-time high in PV retails at 18,08,311, surpassing the previous record set in H1 FY'23 at 17,02,905," Singhania stated. Three-wheeler registrations

rose 66 per cent to 5,33,353 units in the April-September period from 3,21,964 units in the same period last fiscal.

"This extraordinary performance in the three-wheeler category underscores the sector's vigorous recovery and adaptability in navigating through the complex market challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic," Singhania said.

Two-wheeler retail sales saw a jump of 7 per cent year on year to 78,28,015 units in the first half of the current financial year. Commercial vehicle (CV) sales rose to 4,65,097 units in the first

half, up 3 per cent from 4,50,458 units in the year-ago period. Tractor registrations on the other hand rose 14 per cent year on year to 4,44,340 units in the April-September period.

FADA said it collated vehicle registration data from 1,352 out of 1,440 RTOs.

Singhania noted that it expects demand to surge in the peak festive season. FADA anticipates a season of growth and prosperity for the auto retail sector, moving from cautious optimism to a hopeful and positive outlook for the market, he added.

CLICKING TOWARDS RECORD

Festival season spurs online shopping spree

ANY LINGERING FEARS THAT INFLATION AND HIGHER INTEREST RATES WOULD DAMPEN CONSUMERS' SPIRIT IN ASIA'S THIRD LARGEST ECONOMY ARE BEING RAPIDLY DISPELLED

REUTERS

New Delhi, Oct 12: Run off their virtual feet at the start of India's festival season, e-commerce companies like Amazon and Walmart owned Flipkart are looking forward to a potentially record-breaking few weeks.

RedSeer, a Bangalore-based consultancy, which monitors over 100 platforms covering 90% of online sales, predicts virtual shoppers will spend a record \$11 billion during the month to mid-November - which would be nearly 20% more than last year.

Amazon India has made its "best-ever start" to the peak pe-

riod in the shopping calendar, according to country manager Manish Tiwary, reporting a record 95 million customer visits in the first two days of its 'Great Indian Festival 2023' campaign.

Over at Flipkart, sales of electronic products, lifestyle garments and furniture were seven to ten times higher than in the pre-festival period, said vice president Arief Mohamad. Both retailers have hired over 200,000 temporary workers to meet the rush and added over 300,000 new sellers, according to company officials.

CHANGING WAYS Citing a report by market re-



search Nielsen Media India, Amazon officials said over 80% of urban consumers were expected to shop online during this festival season, and half of buyers were willing to spend more compared to last year.

A shift in consumer behaviour and increased penetration of smartphones has fuelled the rise in online buying.

Manju Negi could be speaking for a lot of working women in India with money to spend but

2023 FESTIVAL ONLINE SALES SEEN AT RECORD \$11 BILLION

EXPANDING SMARTPHONE PENETRATION, ECONOMY DRIVING ONLINE SALES

RISE IN ONLINE SALES SEEN SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH, SAY ANALYST

DELIVERY NETWORKS

The e-commerce firms have also expanded their footprint by organising delivery solutions for more customers living outside India's major metros.

"The fast emerging online business has created opportunities for a number of logistics companies and small sellers - generating jobs for millions," said Ashwani Jakhar, CEO of Prozo, a supply-chain management company based in Gurgaon.

Commenting on the first 48 hours of the festival sales, Amazon said in a statement that more than 80% of customers came from non-metro cities, and smaller sellers saw a 35% jump in sales compared a year ago.

The e-commerce market is projected to expand to \$350 billion by 2030 from \$63 billion in 2023, according to government estimates.

DE KOCK, BOWLERS SINK OZ

I've taken a leaf out of Gayle's book: Rohit on most 6s record

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Oct 12: Quinton de Kock showed his class with a second successive hundred before the bowlers came on top of Australian batters to help South Africa script a comfortable 134-run victory in their ICC World Cup match.

After De Kock's departure, Aiden Markram cashed in on his rich vein of form with a fifty to steer South Africa to 311/7. In response, the Aussies were reduced to 70/6 before their lower order helped the side to avoid a humiliation taking their total to 177.

Marnus Labuschagne (46, 74b, 3x4) was looking at the batters falling one after the other before finding an ally in Mitchell Starc (27). The duo stitched together 69 runs for the seventh wicket. Both of them departed in successive overs, before skipper Pat Cummins (22) and Adam Zampa (11 n o) then added 32 runs helping the team past 170-run mark.

Kagiso Rabada (3/33) was the standout among the Proteas bowlers, while Keshav Maharaj (2/30), Tabraiz Shamsi (2/38) and Marco Jansen (2/54) bagged two wickets apiece. Lungi Ngidi (1/18) was excellent in his 8-over spell.

Earlier, the 30-year-old De Kock, who will retire from the format after the World Cup, oozed confidence as he fetched 109 off 106 balls (8x4, 5x6), while Markram smashed 56 off 44 (7x4, 1x6) to help South Africa post the highest ODI total in Lucknow.

De Kock paced his innings well and troubled the Australian bowling attack, which cut a sorry figure, on a difficult Ekana pitch. The rub of the green also went to the Proteas' way as the Australians were guilty of spilling numerous catches.



Quinton de Kock celebrates his century; (inset) Kagiso Rabada (C) reacts after dismissing an Australia batter, Thursday

Off-spinner Glenn Maxwell (2/34) was their most successful bowler while the others managed to get some wickets at the fag end of the innings.

After a rather sedate start, De Kock, who calls this stadium 'home' during the IPL, put a move on things. He used Starc's pace to flick one over deep backward square leg to get the first six of the match in the fifth over.

Both Temba Bavuma (35) and De Kock skillfully nullified the early threat that the Australian pacers generally pose. In fact, skipper Pat Cummins was at his wit's end and kept shuffling between all his bowlers to find a

breakthrough.

After playing the role of the sheet anchor with 35 off 55 balls, Bavuma decided to pull the trigger. He had survived twice before - a top edge which Zampa failed to judge and then when Sean Abbott caught the ball on the rope and lost balance. Abbott threw the ball towards a waiting Strac, but his throw was inaccurate. The South African skipper attempted a sweep but the ball found David Warner.

The back-to-back maximums off Josh Hazlewood over fine leg and the majestic six over midwicket for his hundred were the highlight of De Kock's in-

nings. The wicketkeeper-batter eventually fell to a freak dismissal as the ball deflected from the back of his willow into his chest and onto the stumps. Markram, who was dropped on 1 by Cummins off his own bowling, clobbered seven fours and a six.

BRIEF SCORES

South Africa 311/7 (Quinton de Kock 109, Aiden Markram 56; Glenn Maxwell 2/34, Mitchell Starc 2/53) beat Australia 177 (Marnus Labuschagne 46, Mitchell Starc 27; Kagiso Rabada 3/33, Keshav Maharaj 2/30, Tabraiz Shamsi 2/38, Marco Jansen 2/54, Lungi Ngidi 1/18) by 134 runs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: After surpassing Chris Gayle's record of most sixes in international cricket Wednesday, Indian captain Rohit Sharma said he has taken some inspiration from the 'Universe Boss' himself in his journey.

During his record-breaking 81-ball 131 against Afghanistan at the Ferozshah Kotla, Rohit hammered five sixes to reach 556 maximums across three formats, three more than the West Indian left-hander. Rohit reached the landmark in 453 matches, precisely 30 games less than Gayle.

"Universe Boss is Universe Boss. I have taken a leaf out of his book. Over the years, we have seen him, such a six-hitting machine he is wherever he plays. 'We wear the same jersey (No. 45). I am sure he is happy about it because jersey No. 45 has done it (breaking his record)," said Rohit in a video posted by the BCCI.

Rohit said a lot of work has gone into developing his six-hitting skills over the years. "When I started playing this game, I never thought I would be able to hit sixes, leave alone that many sixes. Obviously, a lot of work has been put into it over the years. So, I am quite happy with the work that I have done."

"I am the sort of person who is not satisfied (with what he has been doing), and I want to continue what I am doing. My focus is on that. Yeah, it is a small happy moment for me," said the right-handed opener.

The 36-year-old patted his bowlers for restricting Afghanistan to a below-par total on a surface which suited batsmen. "For us, the focus is on those small things which is to



look into the opposition that we play. Today was Afghanistan, and to play well here... We understood the conditions and played well.

"I thought we played a brilliant game. The bowlers did an exceptional job to restrict Afghanistan to below 280 because the wicket was really good to bat on," said Rohit.

The skipper urged the team to focus on the job at hand rather than thinking about the knock-out stages. "It is a very different format that we play now, the World Cup - 9 league games and then the semifinals and final. For us what was important was to look at every game that came our way and not to look too far ahead," he added.

Pragyan bags gold medal at women's 100m hurdles event



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Oct 12: Pragyan Prasanth Sahu of Odisha had a splendid outing at the National Open Athletics Championships here Thursday as she secured gold medal in the women's 100m hurdles event.

Pragyan clinched the yellow metal with a timing of 13.46 seconds. Sapna Kumari of Bihar claimed silver with a timing of 13.47 seconds, while C Anjali of Karnataka bagged bronze clocking 13.53s.

Services runner H Manikanta clinched the men's 100m sprint gold with a time of 10.42 seconds, a day after he set a national record of 10.23 seconds in the semifinal of the event.

Giridharani Ravi Kumar of Tamil Nadu emerged as the fastest woman of the meet after winning the 100m sprint with a time of 11.36 seconds at the Kanteerava Stadium.

It was a 1-2 finish for Services in the men's 100m dash as Nikhil Patil won silver with a time of 10.69 seconds. Railways Siva B clinched bronze with a time of 10.70 seconds.

'Defending gold in Paris will be tough'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gurugram, Oct 12: Neeraj Chopra has been in sizzling form in season 2023, winning almost everything on offer, but the star athlete has no qualms in admitting that defending his gold medal at Paris Olympics will be a huge challenge since maintaining top form on a consistent basis is not easy.

Chopra said it is not wise to write off two-time world champion (2019 and 2022) Anderson Peters of Grenada, who has endured a miserable season as he struggled to touch even 80m mark. Peters was one of the medal favourites, going into Tokyo Olympics but he could not even qualify for the finals.

"Defending my Olympic gold medal could be tough because there is pressure and expectations from the people. Maintaining top form for many years is challenging but my endeavour will be to prepare in the best possible way and give my best in Paris," Chopra told PTI in an interview.

"Peters was not in good form but we can't say anything for next year. One year is a long time and everybody will try to be in best of fitness and form. I was injured in 2019 and could not play the whole year."

"Every player faces injuries and downward turn in performance. Competition will be tough in Paris Olympics and



also in other competitions."

The 25-year-old Chopra was Thursday inducted as the new and first non-cricketer Laureus Goodwill Ambassador. He was joined by former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh who has been Laureus Goodwill Ambassador since 2017.

Chopra defended his Asian Games gold medal in Hangzhou earlier this month with a season's best throw of 88.88m, which was his fourth career-best effort. He emerged winner in an enticing battle with compatriot Kishore Jena who won the silver medal.

Asked if he can visualise two Indians standing on the podium

in Paris, he said, "It is difficult to say, it will not be easy. But if we (him and Jena) keep on doing well and give our best, if not next year, it can happen in future competitions."

Chopra said athletes looking for quick results must realise that there are no shortcuts to success and resorting to certain practices will only close the road for them. While he did not say it in as many words, Chopra's message could be for dope offenders.

"Give your 100 per cent in whatever field you are. If I speak on sports, the thing I can see currently as a little bit of a problem is lack of patience in our athletes. Some of them want quick

results and because of that they do certain training or take diets that closes their road ahead," he asserted.

On Chopra refusing to consider himself as the greatest-ever Indian track and field athlete, Yuvraj said, "For a great athlete, there is no need to say that he is great. When we play, we say let the bat talk. Neeraj's javelin talks."

"The coming generation should learn from the greatness he has achieved. He has struggled, he has worked for many years. I am hoping that he will win many more medals and India will become number one in track and field."

Gill back in nets for an hour-long session

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Oct 12: The Indian camp had reasons to smile Thursday as Shubman Gill, recovering from dengue, was back in the nets, raising hopes of a return for Saturday's World Cup game against Pakistan.

However, it can't be said with a degree of certainty whether the team would risk picking the recovering Gill for the 'Battle Royale'. The 22-year-old has already missed the first two games against Australia and Afghanistan but there is a high chance of him making it to the playing XI for the marquee clash against the arch-rivals.

In fact, to facilitate a special net session for Gill ahead of the team's arrival in Ahmedabad, the Indian team released its left-arm throwdown expert Nuwan Senewiratne on Wednesday itself.

Gill arrived at the Narendra Modi Stadium after 11 am and did some strides and sprints under the watchful eyes of team doctor Rizwan in the main arena before heading to the nets.

Keeping Shaheen Shah Afridi's left-arm indippers in mind, Gill focused on tackling the 150 clicks-plus sidearm thunderbolts from the Sri Lankan specialist. He also faced the net bowlers during an extended session. Gill looked comfortable



facing both throwdowns as well as the net bowlers.

For someone whose platelet count had dropped to 70000 only a few days ago and was in hospital on Sunday night, Gill's recovery has been exemplary.

However, it is understood that coach Rahul Dravid and the medical team will have a closer look at his Friday's session before taking a call.

The idea to train in intense heat was to check how his body responds to a game which starts at 2 pm, whether he would be able to withstand the heat and humidity immediately after a bout of dengue.

Traditional welcome for Pak in Ahmedabad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Oct 12: The famed Indian hospitality was at its best once again here Thursday as the Pakistan squad received a grand welcome at the team hotel following an in-flight celebration, ahead of their marquee World Cup game against arch rivals India.

Upon their arrival at the hotel here, Pakistan players received a warm welcome with a shower of flower petals and balloons, traditional scarves, the sound of dhols combined with a dance performance. It followed a cake cutting ceremony which was organised by the cabin crew of the carrier that flew them into Ahmedabad from Hyderabad.

Delighted at the reception its players received, the Pakistan



Cricket Board (PCB) posted a video on X, capturing the moments. "Touchdown Ahmedabad. Capturing the journey, featuring a surprise in-flight celebration," the PCB captioned the video.

Tight security has been put

in place for the high-profile match to be played Saturday. The city had been turned into a fortress and it will be secured by more than 11,000 members of the Gujarat police, National Security Guard (NSG), Rapid Action Force (RAF) and home guards.

Pakistan were based in Hyderabad since their arrival in India after a gap of seven years, playing four games including two warm-up clashes and continued to receive a lot of attention from fans and the media.

The Babar Azam-led side felt being 'at home' in Hyderabad as a large crowd in support of the neighbours turned up at the airport September 27, and particularly for their last match at the stadium in Uppal against Sri Lanka.

Pakistan are coming into the match after a comprehensive win over Sri Lanka in which they pulled off the highest run chase in the history of World Cup. The hosts India, too, will enter the contest on the back of two comfortable victories against Australia and Afghanistan.

WILLIAMSON RETURNS AS NZ FACE BANGLA

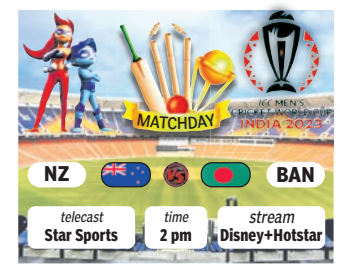
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Oct 12: Fortified by the return of inspirational captain and premier batter Kane Williamson, a high-flying New Zealand will believe that they can ward off a spin-heavy Bangladesh to consolidate their position on top of the table during their World Cup match here Friday.

The Kiwis (NRR: +1.958) have four points now, same as India (NRR: +1.5) and Pakistan (NRR: +0.92) but a better net run-rate (NRR) has kept them ahead, and a win here will free them from the chasing pack for the time being.

In that context, the arrival of Williamson, who has sufficiently recovered from a post ACL injury surgery, benefits them on two counts.

Williamson is a shrewd captain who knows the ebb and flow of ODIs, and he is an excellent bat-



ter against spin, a quality that he might have to conjure against a capable Bangladesh unit on a slow Chepauk pitch.

Williamson had missed the Kiwis' matches against England and Netherlands as Tom Latham had stood in as New Zealand captain in those games. But the Black Caps will continue to miss the services of senior pacer Tim Southee, who is still recovering from a procedure on his fractured thumb.

However, Williamson's come-

back will pose the Kiwis with a selection dilemma as well. Rachin Ravindra, who batted at No.3 in the absence of Williamson, has notched up a hundred and fifty in two World Cup outings, and the Kiwis management will have to think hard as to who to be benched to accommodate the returning 33-year-old.

The MA Chidambaram track could offer another turner like it did in the match between India and Australia the previous Sunday. Despite a walloping at the hands of England in their last match, this could be Bangladesh's secret point of joy going against the Kiwis.

Their spin trio of captain Shakib Al Hasan, Mehedi Hasan and Mehidy Hasan Miraz has taken 11 wickets among them from two matches. The Tigers will pin their hopes on those three to weave their magic on New Zealand to notch up a crucial victory.