

ACTRESS IN DISTRESS

Urvashi Rautela seeks help from netizens to get back her gold mobile phone which she lost during Indo-Pak match

LEISURE P2

INDIA TO SKIP SUMMIT

For the third consecutive time, India will boycott a summit of China's Belt and Road Initiative in Beijing

INTERNATIONAL P10

SUBHRANSHU LIFTS ODISHA

Subhanshu Senapati's unbeaten century helps Odisha beat Assam in a match of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy

SPORTS P12

Daringbadi feels season's 1st chill

POST NEWS NETWORK

Daringbadi, Oct 16: Daringbadi in Kandhamal district, the Kashmir of Odisha, experienced this season's first cold wave Monday as mercury slipped to 15 degrees Celsius in the major tourist town.

Block officials said that the area recorded 15 degrees Celsius, Monday while weather in the area remained complete dry. Dense fog covering the atmosphere was witnessed during the wee hours leading to disruption in traffic movement at some places.

People were seen putting on their winter clothes as they shivered in the cold wave till 8am in the morning.

Water here was biting cold with tourists thronging the area to enjoy the first onset of winter. All the lodges, hotels and resorts were found booked by tourists in advance ahead of the Durga puja celebrations. It is apprehended that Daringbadi is likely to experience intense cold wave conditions in the coming days due to earlier-than-usual onset of winter in the area.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The govt should add more proteins to our free ration so that 80 crore Indians will be ready for 2036 Olympics



PRESSING DEMAND: Congress workers take out a protest rally from Saradha Bali to SJTA office on Grand Road in Puri, Monday, demanding immediate reopening of all the four gates of Srimandir for devotees (REPORT P3)

Miscreants kill sleeping man on verandah

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baisinga, Oct 16: Miscreants killed a vegetable vendor by slitting his throat while he was sleeping on the verandah of his house at Madhunanda village under this police limits in Mayurbhanj district, late Sunday night.

The victim was identified as Debendra Sasmal, 61, a native of the village under Patalipura panchayat. He was sleeping on the verandah of his house after dinner when miscreants slit his throat with a sharp-edged weapon leaving him dead at the spot. The incident has sparked shockwaves in the area.

The deceased's wife and two sons were sleeping inside the house. His son Ratnakar heard some suspicious sound in the middle of the night and woke up from sleep. He opened the door and went to the verandah only to find his father lying dead in a pool of blood.

He alerted the family members and villagers. Informed, Baisinga police reached the spot with a forensic team and launched an investigation. Police registered a case and are trying to ascertain the reason behind the murder from various angles, police SDPO Sudarshan Dash said.

NITHARI SERIAL KILLINGS Koli, Pandher acquitted

'BOTCHED-UP' PROBE NOTHING SHORT OF A 'BETRAYAL OF PUBLIC TRUST' BY AGENCIES: ALLAHABAD HC

AGENCIES

Prayagraj, Oct 16: The Allahabad High Court Monday acquitted domestic help Surinder Koli and his employer Moninder Singh Pandher in the sensational 2006 Nithari serial killings in which they were facing death sentence, holding that the prosecution failed to prove the guilt "beyond reasonable doubt" and that the investigation was "botched up".

However, the judgment in the case bringing back memories of the chilling crime targeting young girls that came to light with skeletal remains being found behind a Noida bungalow in NCR may only see Pandher walking out of the jail. Koli, the key accused, will continue to serve the life imprisonment awarded to him in the killing of a 14-year-old girl.

Reversing the death sentence given to Koli in 12 cases and Pandher in two cases, the high

court noted that the prosecution has failed to prove the guilt of both the accused "beyond reasonable doubt, on the settled parameters of a case based on circumstantial evidence" and the probe was "nothing short of a betrayal of public trust by responsible agencies".

The two were charged with rape and murder and sentenced to death in the killings that horrified the nation with the details on sexual assault, brutal murder and hints of possible cannibalism. While Koli is in a Ghaziabad prison, Pandher is lodged in a Noida jail.

"We are not satisfied with the judgment. This is not right. When someone killing several children gets acquitted, imagine what punishment will those get who kill just one or two people," said Jhabbu Lal (63) and Sunita Devi (60), who lost their daughter.

Devi, busy ironing clothes but intermittently speaking to re-



- Nithari murder case, one of the most intricate criminal investigations in recent times began following the discovery of multiple human remains in and around Pandher's residence at Noida's Nithari in 2006
- His domestic help Koli allegedly lured the children with sweets and chocolates, murder them, and had sex with the corpses. He was also accused of cannibalism. The gruesome details of the case sent shockwaves across the country

porters, said, "We appeal to PM (Narendra) Modi and CM Yogi Adityanath that those who killed our children should be hanged." A CBI official in New Delhi

said the agency's team was waiting for the judgment copy and would take a call on next steps after studying it.

The high court observed that prosecution was based on the confessional statement given by Koli to the UP Police December 29, 2006 but the procedure required to be followed for recording his disclosure leading to recovery of biological remains has been given a "complete go by".

It noted that the prosecution stand kept changing from time to time as it initially attributed recoveries jointly on Pandher and Koli but with passage of time the "guilt was fastened exclusively" upon Koli.

The high court said that "failure" of investigation agencies to probe the angle of organ trade even after recommendations from the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development was "nothing short of a betrayal of public trust by responsible agencies".

'Can't stop heartbeat'

TOP COURT REJECTS PLEA OF MOTHER OF TWO TO TERMINATE OVER 26-WEEK PREGNANCY

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 16: The Supreme Court Monday declined to permit a married woman, a mother of two, to terminate her over 26-week pregnancy as the foetus was healthy and the AIIMS medical board found no abnormality with it.

A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said the length of pregnancy has crossed 24 weeks, the upper limit for allowing Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP), and therefore it cannot be permitted.

The top court said the foetus is 26 weeks and five days old and there is no immediate threat to the mother. There was also no foetal abnormality, it said.

The length of the pregnancy has crossed 24 weeks and it is approximately 26 weeks and five days old. The medical termination of the pregnancy cannot be permitted, the bench, also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said.

The top court had said earlier in the day that the challenge to

pregnancy termination law will be dealt with in separate proceedings, and the present case would be limited to the issue between the petitioner and the State.

The SC had earlier sought a report from the AIIMS medical board on whether the foetus was suffering from any abnormality.

The bench was hearing arguments on the Centre's application seeking recall of the apex court's October 9 order permitting the 27-year-old woman, a mother of two, to undergo termination of pregnancy at AIIMS as she was suffering from post-partum psychosis after the birth of her second child.

Under the MTP Act, the upper limit for the termination of pregnancy is 24 weeks for married women, special categories including survivors of rape, and other vulnerable women such as the differently-abled and minors.

The court was faced with a conundrum over whether to allow the woman to terminate her 26-week pregnancy. The moral dilemma stemmed from what the court said the rights of the unborn child and the woman's right to her bodily autonomy

CBI files charge sheet in Manipur parading case

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 16: The CBI Monday filed a charge sheet against six people and a juvenile in connection with two tribal women being paraded naked in Manipur's Kangpokpi district in May this year.

A video of the incident, which surfaced in July this year, led to widespread condemnation across the country and globally, prompting the Supreme Court to step in and hand over the case to the CBI.

The agency filed the charge sheet against six people and a report against a child in conflict with the law before a special CBI court in Guwahati.

It was alleged that, May 4, a mob of approximately 900-1000 individuals, armed with sophisticated weapons, entered B Phainom village in Kangpokpi

District of Manipur, vandalised and set houses ablaze, looted properties, assaulted villagers, committed murders, and sexually assaulted women.

It was further alleged that two family members of one of the women paraded naked were also killed in the incident. The CBI investigation indicated that the accused arrested by Manipur Police were involved in the incident, following which the charge sheet was filed Monday.

Further investigation is continuing including the identification of other accused involved in the offences besides other aspects of the case. The accused have been charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, including those pertaining to gangrape, murder, outraging the modesty of a woman and criminal conspiracy, the CBI said.

Cricket to make a comeback in LA Olympics

141st session of IOC in Mumbai okays inclusion of 5 more sports -- Cricket, Squash, Baseball and Softball, Flag Football and Lacrosse -- in the 2028 Olympic Games

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 16: With the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Monday giving its final nod, Cricket in the Twenty20 format will return to the Olympic Games for the first time since 1900 when Los Angeles hosts the mega event in 2028.

Los Angeles will host cricket as a six-team competition for each gender with the host nation confirmed as one of the

teams. As of now, the other five teams will be picked based on the ICC T20I Rankings at a pre-decided cut-off date.

As Cricket makes a comeback amid much fanfare, it is only fair to take a deep-dive into the game's history in Olympics.

Cricket and the Olympics made for strange bedfellows when the sport featured in its roster for the first and only time in the 1900 edition of the games in Paris. The French team that played the gold medal match against Great Britain comprised players working as manual labour in construction of the magnificent Eiffel Tower.

In the games that spanned six months, the Olympic cricket programme was a one-match, two-day affair, with a cumulative score of 366 runs across four innings. The post-script was funny and scary in equal measure. The Brits from Devon



Wanderers, after playing the 'Olympics final' were off to their next destination on a motor-coach that had two drivers.

The first driver was punch drunk and had to be pulled out of his seat, and the second one was no good either. In an unbraked state, he rammed the vehicle causing minor injuries.

What was the standard of the match? An article written by Daniel Schofield in 'Daily Telegraph' a few years ago observed that renowned Olympics



chronicler the late Ian Buchanan, who had founded the International Society of Olympic Historians (ISOH), had termed the cricket event of that games as shambolic. It was held inside the Velodrome de Vincennes, a cycling track with ridiculously short square boundaries, less than 30 metres from the centre of the pitch.

If there were 24 people in the field of play, documents of that time suggests that not even 20 had watched that match over two days. R Horne, H Terry, W Anderson, D

Robinson, W Browning were week-end cricketers, who formed the French Athletic Club Union, primarily for the British expats living in France. And what did they do for a living? Well, they were building the Eiffel Tower. No wonder that the French team was all out for 26 in pursuit of 184 with no one reaching double figures.

While the Great Britain won the gold medal and a miniature of the Eiffel Tower, the French team was given the silver. Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the father of Modern Olympics, wanted cricket as a part of 1896 Games but there weren't any entry.

That's why, saying cricket and the Olympics in the same breath would mostly sound a bit more than odd until the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the other concerned stakeholders decided to re-introduce the sport at the world's biggest sporting spectacle.

leisure



SMITH RESPONDS TO WIFE'S SEPARATION CONFESSION

Hollywood actor Will Smith says that his wife Jada Pinkett Smith's revelations about the couple's separate lives 'kind of woke him up' to the fact that she is more 'resilient' and 'clever' than he had previously thought.

GIGI, BRADLEY USE SWIFT'S HOME FOR SECRET DATE

Supermodel Gigi Hadid and Hollywood star Bradley Cooper reportedly have been using singer Taylor Swift's home for their secret rendezvous. Speaking to *The Mirror UK*, a source said that the 28-year-old blonde beauty and the 48-year-old actor chose not to meet at their respective homes.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today, you may simply take a day off to be with your spouse or kids. You may even want to catch up with relatives living in your vicinity. Your loved ones will be mighty happy and pleasantly surprised, and Ganesh approves.

TAURUS
You will not just run the race but will reach the finish line with ease today, predicts Ganesh. Neither pressure nor overload will prevent you from accomplishing your targets this afternoon. However, Ganesh advises that you must learn to be patient to make the most of your success.

GEMINI
You have a knack of giving a creative and artistic twist to all your work. As an entrepreneur, you will be no different. You attach great importance to innovation, and all your projects today validate this gift. Your time with your sweetheart will give you immense pleasure. Later in the day, you will have a gala time with your friends.

CANCER
Your partner will be willing to do anything for you today. You ask for the moon, or anything under the Sun, and they will oblige. Even though they won't be able to pluck the moon and stars from the sky, a special gesture from your partner is bound to send you to cloud nine.

LEO
You may meet people whom you haven't met in a long time, or will attempt to. New relations and acquaintances may also be formed. You will try to keep yourself busy in one task after the other. You will be able to finish all your work as per deadline, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Ganesh predicts that you will achieve the targets that you set out to achieve today. The heavy pressure of work will not affect you in any way. Ganesh says the secret of your success is being patient. You are bang on target.

LIBRA
Remember back when you were a kid? Maybe you don't, not everything at least. But don't worry, today, in all probability, you shall have a new revelation about your childhood. At work, you will demonstrate exactly who you are through your intelligence. In this same honest vein, you will express your sincerest feelings and emotions to your loved ones, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO
Keep as much distance as possible from partnerships and JVs, advises Ganesh. At work, your experience will be enough to manage huge projects. Today you are set to emerge as a better manager of large pools of people, and guide them on the lines of your imagination and decisiveness.

SAGITTARIUS
Your role in bringing crucial and influential deals will be pivotal, says Ganesh. However, the end results may not turn up as per your expectations. But a pleasant evening with your beloved is likely to cheer you up and lighten your mood.

CAPRICORN
The pace and meticulousness with which you deal with work will leave your colleagues and subordinates in awe, says Ganesh. People will look up to you and respect you for your ability to handle efficiently the cumbersome work that seems deadening to most other people. Your boss will be just as impressed and may reward you for your efforts.

AQUARIUS
Today may give you an all-time high! The day will prove important with regard to your future. Sudden and unexpected profits are on the cards, and recognition and rewards at your workplace will make you happy. Ganesh says that you should enjoy it while it lasts.

PISCES
Everyone knows your nature, but today you will feel uncomfortable by someone's progress. Ganesh knows this is unusual but you need to think about this. Anger never gives results so it is better to focus on your good qualities and hard work to achieve your goals.

Urvashi loses her gold phone, seeks help from netizens

Mumbai: Actress Urvashi Rautela has lost her mobile phone during the high-voltage India-Pakistan match which was held in Ahmedabad as a part of the ongoing ICC World Cup.

The actress took to her official X account, and shared that she lost her '24 carat real gold iPhone' at the stadium. The match concluded on Saturday with Team India comfortably beating its neighbours, but the actress spent after hours of the match in distress and registered an official complaint with the police at 1 am Sunday.

In the afternoon, she finally took to her X and put up a tweet asking for help from the netizens. She also attached a picture of the official document about the complaint of her lost phone.

Explaining the unfortunate event, she wrote on X, "Lost my 24 carat real gold iPhone at Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad! If anyone comes across it, please help."

A lot of netizens swarmed to the comments and put up a myriad of responses under the tweet. While some poked fun at the actress, others mainly were supportive of the actress in her loss of the asset.



Fatima on playing Indira

Mumbai: Fatima Sana Shaikh, who will be playing the role of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the film *Sam Bahadur*, has opened up about playing the former PM and being compared with Kangana Ranaut. The latter is also playing the same role in her film *Emergency*.

Talking about the same, Fatima said that while she is doing her role according to her script, Kangana is performing hers differently. She also added that if two actors are playing the same role, comparisons are bound to happen and there is nothing wrong with it. According to her, both approaches can be right. It's all about the spirit of the character.

Spilling some beans about how she prepped up for the character in *Sam Bahadur*, Fatima shared that she read a lot about her. She added that while Kangana is playing Indira from the time when she was much older, she is playing her from the time before. According to her, Indira Gandhi's journey is very interesting. She also added that people should talk more about freedom fighters, rulers and emperors as everyone should know what has happened in the country.

Sam Bahadur, to hit the theatres December 1, also stars Vicky Kaushal and Sanya Malhotra in lead roles.



KANYA SUNA DEPICTS REALITY OF THE COLONIAL MIDDLE CLASS

Bhubaneswar: A 56-day production-oriented theatre workshop co-hosted by Sangeet Natak Akademi and city-based troupe Panchadhvani Natya Parisad closed Monday with the enactment of Odia drama *Kanya Suna* here at Bhanjakala Mandap.

Adapted from Byasakabi Fakir Mohan Senapati's *Birei Bisal*, the play showcased the reality of the middle class against the backdrop of feudal social order in British India. It speaks about a time when daughters were sold to old-

aged men and how a young man sold his properties to get a girl of his choice. The play climaxes with a girl discarding the age-old practice with support from her villagers. Written by Panchanan Dash, the play was designed and directed by NSDian Dolgovid Rath. Dramatists Anant Mahapatra, Ramesh Panigrahi, author and publisher Banoj Tripathy and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi secretary Prabodh Rath were among the luminaries who were present at the event.



Rani: No one can romance like SRK

Mumbai: Actress Rani Mukerji, who celebrated 25 years of her cult movie *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*, shared that her co-star Shah Rukh Khan has taught her to romance.

Rani attended the special screening of the movie, along with director Karan Johar and SRK. Talking about SRK, the *Chalte Chalte* fame actress said: "SRK taught me how to romance. So when SRK says let the young people do the romance, I don't think anyone can do the romance like him."

She further said: "I started doing the films when I was 17 years old, and it just feels amazing that I have a daughter who is going to turn eight in December. So it's exactly like how my daughter was in this film."

The actress thanked fans for showering love on her character. She said: "Thank you so much for loving Tina. I was a newcomer, SRK and Kajol had already done *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge (DDLJ)*, they were the iconic pair." "I was very nervous that the audience would not accept Rahul falling in love with Tina, when Anjali was around. But that was all Karan's writing, what he wrote, and made it happen." Rani concluded.



Basanta Muduli awards announced for two years

Before his demise in a car mishap in 1986, revolutionary poet Muduli had approximately 500 poems in different languages, as well as several critical essays and short stories to his credit



Bhubaneswar: Though he died at the age of 31 in 1986, acclaimed poet Basanta Muduli's body of work, which largely addresses serious societal themes, continues to resonate in the state's literary sphere. To celebrate his poems, Basanta Muduli Smriti Sansad, a committee formed in the memory of the bard, has been honouring a poet below the age of 50 for the last 30 years.

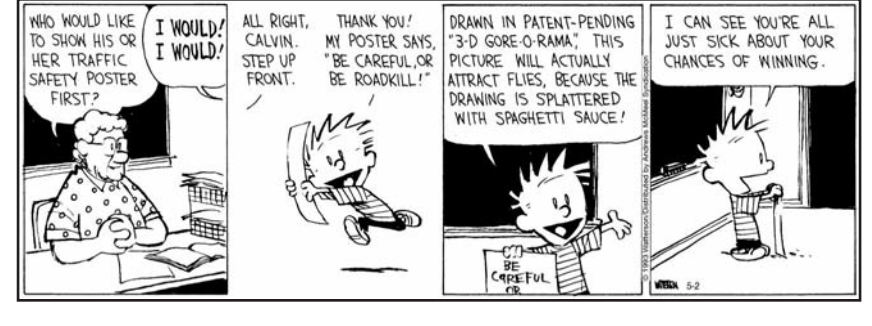
Young poets Narendra Bhoi (born 1979) from Boudh and Chittaranjan Nayak (born 1978) from Keonjhar have respectively been selected by a jury comprising eminent writers to get the prestigious Basanta Muduli Kabita

Puraskar for the years 2022 and 2023, informed Sansad's secretary, Krushna Kumar Mohanty. Narendra has written three poetry anthologies, while Chittaranjan has four to his credit. Both the winners will be given away cash awards and citations at Sanskruti Bhawan, Bhadrak, November 5, he added. State's several eminent poets, including Amaresh Pattnaik, Ashutosh Parida, Basudev Sunani, and lecturer Dattatreya Dash are scheduled to attend the event. For the unversed, before his death in a road mishap, Muduli had written 437 poems (in Odia, Hindi and English), several critical essays, and short stories.

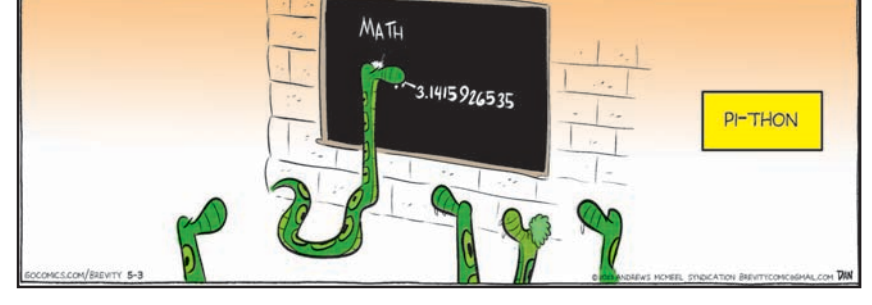
PEANUTS



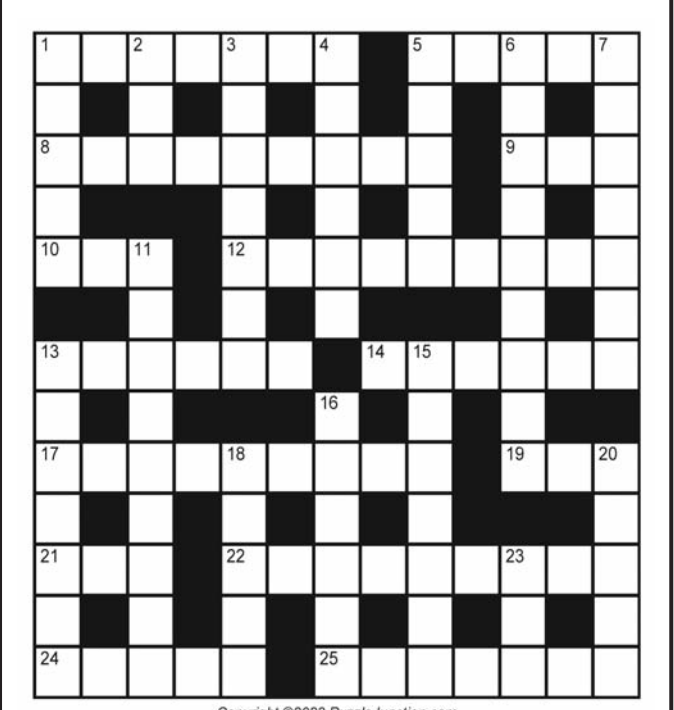
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY

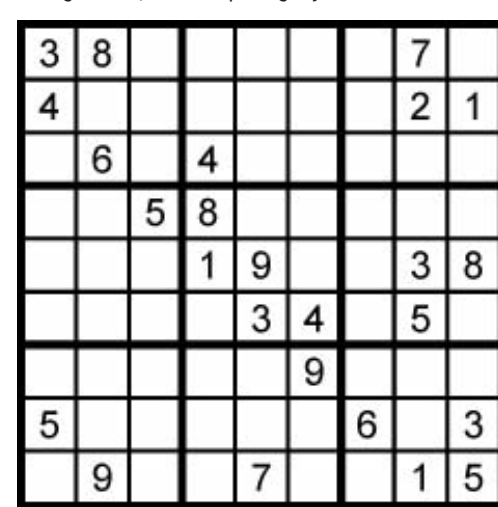


FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Greek sea nymph who detained Odysseus
 - 5 Haughty musical group
 - 9 Building wing
 - 10 Silent assent
 - 12 At once
 - 13 Milk curdler
 - 14 Saw the sights
 - 17 Rifle
 - 19 Roll of dough
 - 21 Infamous Amin
 - 22 Position on certain things
 - 24 Invalidate
 - 25 Plans of action
 - 5 Public square
 - 6 Force out, like a government
 - 7 Held up
 - 11 Type of wine
 - 13 Copy
 - 15 Cuttlefish kin
 - 16 Lover of Dido, in myth
 - 18 Blacksmith's block
 - 20 Takes out
 - 23 ___ de France
- Down**
- 1 Queen topper
 - 2 Resinous deposit
 - 3 Immature
 - 4 Dense

SUDOKU



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

MUSICAL NITE

Artistes perform at 'Suron Ki Mehfil', a live concert organised by 'Sangeet-The Sound of Music', at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Monday



Odia Emirates employee missing for over 50 days

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 16: An Emirates International Facilities Management employee, hailing from Khurda district, has mysteriously disappeared after reaching Delhi and has been missing for over 50 days, leaving his family in anguish.

Allegations of a kidnapping have surfaced as Ranjan Swain, 30, disappeared shortly after his arrival at Delhi airport from Abu Dhabi via Mumbai.

According to an FIR, Swain has been employed at Emirates International Facilities Management in Abu Dhabi for the past three years. He was scheduled to return to India August 18, which was the last time he communicated with his sister, sharing his ticket details.

However, he has since become untraceable. After waiting for 3-4 days, his family contacted the company management, who confirmed

Ranjan Swain, 30, hailing from Khurda district, vanishes after reaching New Delhi airport from Abu Dhabi in August; kidnapping suspected as family gets ransom demand

his departure for India with his friend Faheem Ahmad on Vistara Airlines," as per the FIR. Assistance from the NGO Global Odia volunteers resulted in confirmation from the UAE government that Swain had left Abu Dhabi and travelled to India August 18.

His family is facing financial hardship, as he was the sole provider for them. "It has been over 50 days since he went missing, with no sign of his whereabouts. The NGO and the family

have reached out to various individuals and learned that some people are demanding a ransom while threatening his life. This has led to suspicions of a kidnapping case in and around Delhi," the FIR stated.

The family members revealed that Swain had initially gone to Abu Dhabi through a recruitment company three years ago, financing his journey with a loan.

"After a couple of days, when we were not able to trace Ranjan, we lodged a complaint in Odisha and pushed Odisha Police to visit Delhi for the case. Odisha Police had visited and found some clues with help of IGI Airport police but couldn't do much and on advice, an FIR was lodged there October 15," said the family members.

Meanwhile, a senior Delhi Police officer said they have registered an FIR under Section 365 (kidnapping) of IPC at IGI Airport police station and probe is on.



TALENT FETED: Sports and Youth Services Minister Tusharkanti Behera felicitates Javelin star Kishore Jena for winning silver medal in the recently-concluded Hangzhou Asian Games, at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Monday

Wishes pour in as Naveen turns 78

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Ministers of various states were among those who wished Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on his 77th birthday, Monday.

"My greetings to Odisha CM Shri Naveen Patnaik Ji on his birthday. May he be blessed with a long and healthy life. @Naveen_Odisha," Modi posted on X.

Patnaik responded to Modi's message by thanking him for the birthday wishes. "Thank you Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji for your warm birthday wishes," the Odisha Chief Minister posted on X.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin took to 'X' to extend birthday wishes to his Odisha counterpart.

"Warmest birthday wishes to Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha



Thiru @Naveen_Odisha! May your life be filled with enduring joy and good health."

Taking to X, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma wrote, "Heartiest birthday wishes to Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Naveen Patnaik ji. Prayers to Maa Kamakhya for his long life and good health in the service of the nation."

Minister of Earth Sciences Kiren Rijiju wrote on X, "Sending heartfelt birthday wishes to CM

of Odisha @Naveen_Odisha! May this year brings you immense joy, good health, long life & many more accomplishments."

Extending birthday wishes to Patnaik, Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal prayed for a healthy and happy life for Naveen.

Though Patnaik did not celebrate his birthday as he is mourning his elder sister Gita Mehta's death last month, the ruling Biju Janata Dal organised several events like plantation drives and

blood donation camps in different parts of the state to mark the day.

As Patnaik had requested his well-wishers not to visit his residence 'Naveen Niwas' to greet him on the occasion, none turned up to wish the Chief Minister. Social media was flooded with good wishes for the Chief Minister on the occasion.

"Due to the demise of his elder sister Gita Mehta last month, the Chief Minister has decided not to celebrate his birthday this year," a communication from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said Sunday.

Patnaik, the five-time Chief Minister of the state, did not celebrate his birthday last year as he went to Hyderabad to attend a business meeting. He had not celebrated the day in 2020 during the first wave of the pandemic and again in 2021 with the second wave returning to haunt the state again.

Cong takes out rally, demands reopening of Srimandir gates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, Oct 16: The Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Monday took out a protest rally here for immediate reopening of all the four gates of Srimandir for devotees.

Holding banners and party flags and beating cymbals and 'mridang', Congress workers, led by OPCC president Sarat Pattanayak, took out the protest march from Saradha Bali to the office of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) on Grand Road here.

OPCC campaign committee chairman Bijay Patnaik, former OPCC presidents Jaydev Jena and Prasad Harichandan, Jeypore MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati, Mohana MLA Dasarathi Gamango and several other senior Congress leaders participated in the rally.

The party leaders submitted a memorandum to SJTA chief administrator Ranjan Das addressed to the Odisha Governor.

Pattanayak said all four gates of the Puri temple should be reopened for devotees before the beginning of the holy Odia month of Kartika (begins from October 29).

"Puri is one of the four dhams of India, and lakhs of devotees from across the globe come here for a darshan of Lord Jagannath. However, they face a lot of problems while visiting the temple. A devotee died recently while standing in a queue to visit the temple, which brought bad name to the state," he alleged.

Alleging that the state government failed to do anything for the development of the 12th century shrine, the Congress leaders said now the government has closed three out of four gates of the temple for the general public for which devotees are facing immense problems, Pattanayak said.

The party also demanded the

The three gates of Puri temple have been closed for the ongoing Srimandir Parikrama project. The state government has no intention to put devotees in trouble

AMAR SATPATHY | BJD LEADER

- Entry of devotees to Srimandir through the four gates was closed March 20, 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions
Later, when the situation improved, the Lion's Gate was reopened for devotees
In July this year, the government reopened the West Gate only for Puri residents for performing daily rituals
However, all three gates (excluding the Lion's Gate) have remained closed for the general devotees in view of the ongoing Srimandir Parikrama project around the temple

Bahinipati. The party warned to intensify stairs across the state if the government fails to address the issues before the beginning of the holy month of Kartika.

SJTA chief administrator Ranjan Kumar Das said the memorandum will be forwarded to the Governor. Das also assured to take appropriate action after going through the demands.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Samir Mohanty in Bhubaneswar criticised the state government for not forming any committee till now for the opening of Ratna Bhandar and the conduct of inventory.

The temple managing committee had submitted a resolution to the Orissa High Court as well as the state government on the issue August 4 but nothing has been done yet.

BJD leader Amar Satpathy said the three gates of Puri temple have been closed for the Srimandir Parikrama project. The government has no intention to put devotees in trouble, he added.

On the reopening of Ratna Bhandar, he said the government will follow the court directions in this regard and added that the Law department was examining the court order.

Notably, entry of devotees to the temple through the four gates was closed March 20, 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions. Later, when the Covid situation improved, the Singhadwar (Lion's Gate) was reopened for devotees.

In July this year, the government reopened the Paschim Dwar (West Gate) only for Puri residents for performing daily rituals.

However, all three gates (excluding the Lion's Gate) of the temple have remained closed for the general devotees in view of the Parikrama project going on around the temple.



PUJA PREP: The Durga Puja pandal in Saheed Nagar area of Bhubaneswar is nearing completion, Monday

OP PHOTO

Ex-Cong MLA Judhistir Samantaray dies at 73

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: Former Congress MLA Judhistir Samantaray passed away at a private hospital here Monday. He was 73.

Samantaray, who was elected to the Odisha Legislative Assembly as a Congress candidate from the Pipli Assembly seat in the 1995 election, was unwell for a long time.

He was recently shifted to a private hospital in Bhubaneswar after his condition deteriorated. The Congress leader breathed his last while undergoing treatment at the private health facility.

He also served as the chairman of Pipli block from 1984 to 1990.

No laser lights, flying lanterns around aerodrome

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, Oct 16: Display of laser lights, lantern lights and wish kites around an aerodrome - upto five nautical miles - that disrupt safe operation of aircraft will attract punishment under the Indian Penal Code, the ministry of Civil Aviation said.

The government has amended the Aircraft Rules, 1937 and introduced changes to the Rule 66 addressing concerns related to the display of false lights in the vicinity of an aerodrome. It clarified that the term light encompasses lantern lights, wish kites, and laser lights and the government's jurisdiction over those displaying such lights has been extended from five kilometres to five nautical miles around an aerodrome. "The government possesses the

GOVT AMENDS AIRCRAFT RULES, 1937

authority to take action against individuals displaying lights that disrupt the safe operation of aircraft or pose hazards to the operating crew. Should such lights remain unattended for 24 hours, the government is empowered to enter the location and extinguish them," the ministry of Civil Aviation said, adding that the matter shall be reported to the relevant police station for legal action under the IPC.

The government also revised the Rule 39C under which the validity

of licenses in relation to Airline Transport Pilot License (ATPL) and Commercial Pilot License (CPL) holders has been increased from five years to ten years. This change is expected to reduce administrative burden on pilots and aviation authorities like DGCA, promoting a more streamlined and efficient licensing process," the ministry said.

The Rule 118 for validation of foreign licenses has been removed as being redundant. "These amendments to the Aircraft Rules, 1937 represent a significant step towards strengthening aviation safety, security, and the ease of doing business within the aviation sector in India," the ministry said, adding that these reforms will enhance the growth and sustainability of the aviation industry, ensuring it remains at the forefront of global aviation standards.



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5T Secretary reviews EKAMRA Project work



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: 5T Secretary VK Pandian Monday reviewed progress in work at different sites under the EKAMRA Project, for which Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid the foundation June 28. After the review, the 5T directed the authorities to speed up the work asking for early start to different components under the project.

Notably, Ekamra Kshetra Amenities and Monuments Revival Action Plan (EKAMRA)

and on wards, the north parking along with the link road and duct-laying works along the outer access road. Public amenities on both sides of Purbadwar Chhaak, behind Lingaraj haat and near south west parking should also be started at the same time, he suggested. Pandian advised the people in charge to complete the project in time. Works department principal secretary VVK Yadav, police commissioner Soumendra Priyadarshi, BMC commissioner VA Kulange, Khurda Collector KS Chakraborty, OBCC MD, and other senior officials were present during the 5T Secretary's visit. The old town, also known as Ekamra Kshetra, is a living heritage site with many temples, sacred water bodies, professional routes and traditional communities of priests residing in the locality. The Chief Minister, to restore and revitalise the heritage sites of the area, had earlier initiated restoration of Bindu Sagar and setting up of Ekamra Bana project.

was launched to revive the heritage value of the inner core of the Old Town area of Bhubaneswar through urban revamp and redesign. After reviewing the work plan and work schedule prepared by the agency for redevelopment, Pandian instructed the agency to finalise all the detailed designs and mobilise materials and machineries. He asked the officials in charge to start working on the road from Taleswar to Kotitirtheswar road, the box drains from Sanatorium Chhak to Taleswar



FOR JUST DEMANDS: Members of Odisha Barisha Nagarika Mahasangh stage a demonstration at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Monday seeking fulfillment of their 5-point charter of demands

CM vows nutritious and safe food for all

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: Odisha has made transformational progress in strengthening livelihoods and food security with a focus on marginalised communities, said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on World Food Day here Monday. On the occasion, the CM pledged to reinforce sustainable and inclusive development practices, ensuring availability of nutritious and safe foods for all. Meanwhile, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Monday hosted a programme to create awareness about maintaining hygiene in food processing, safe food handling and keeping the City safe and healthy. "A total of 150 food vendors from three zones of BMC joined the programme and took an oath to



practice hygiene and serve good quality food to customers," informed a BMC official. Mayor Sulochana Das, deputy mayor Manjulata Kanhara, BMC commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange, additional commissioner Subhendu Sahu, standing committee chairperson Biranchi Narayana Mahasupakara participated in the programme along with team BMC, corporators, and representatives of food outlets. World Food Day is observed globally every year October 16 to

raise awareness about food security and sustainable food systems. Despite the vibrant culinary scene of Bhubaneswar, food hygiene remains a concern. Unsafe practices at food outlets often lead to food-borne illnesses, affecting the health of city folks. Keeping these issues in view, BMC has launched the 'city activation for Bhubaneswar first,' an awareness drive to ensure hygiene at food outlets, promoting the motto of 'eat safe, stay safe.'

"Key elements of food safety include maintaining hygiene while cooking, storing and serving food," said Mayor Sulochana Das, emphasizing the importance of cleanliness in all stages of food preparation, handling, and service. Das emphasized that as Odisha is emerging as a sports and IT hub, the government is actively courting major corporations to the region. "Therefore, there is a need to ensure that our culinary standards and overall attitude align with the expectations of these prominent entities," she said. Commissioner Kulange spoke about the behavior of food vendors when it comes to hygiene, saying, "By emphasizing key elements of food safety, our programme aims to significantly impact the lives of Bhubaneswar's citizens."

ODM Public School secures top honours



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: ODM Public School achieved stellar rankings in EducationWorld Grand Jury India School Rankings 2023-24. The school claimed the 9th position in India in the co-ed day boarding school category and secured the top spot in Odisha for career counseling category and the second spot in the overall category. Stepping into the limelight of educational distinction, ODM Public School emerged as a powerhouse in the EducationWorld Grand Jury India School Rankings 2023-24. The school

claims the 10th position on a national scale. Delving deeper into its achievements, ODM Public School shines as the paramount choice for career counseling in Odisha, symbolizing a profound commitment to guiding students towards prosperous and fulfilling futures. Additionally, the school stands strong at the 2nd position in Odisha, underscoring its comprehensive approach to nurturing not only academic brilliance but also well-rounded individuals primed for success in an evolving world. ODM Educational Group chairman Satyabrata Minaketan said, "Securing a significant position in the EducationWorld Grand Jury India School Rankings is a reaffirmation of our relentless dedication to academic excellence and comprehensive education." "It brings us immense pride to be recognised among the top schools across the nation, a validation of our unwavering commitment to shaping young minds for a brighter future," he said. Furthermore, clinching top positions in Odisha underscores our determination to provide exceptional career counselling, guiding our students towards fulfilling and prosperous paths, he added.

Narcotics worth ₹50L seized

Bhubaneswar: The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police has arrested a drug peddler and seized narcotics worth over Rs 50 lakhs during a raid in Keonjhar district. The arrested person was identified as Debananda Samal (37) from Anandapur area. Following an intelligence input, the STF sleuths with the help of local police on Sunday intercepted Samal's vehicle at the Silun Chowk. "During search, contraband brown sugar weighing 520 grams, was recovered from his possession. Police have also seized a Maruti Alto Car and other incriminating materials," an STF official said.



RAZING DOWN: An excavator engaged by BDA pulling down unauthorised constructions in Unit VIII area of Bhubaneswar, Monday

'Hand hygiene key to good health'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: A programme on hand hygiene with the theme 'clean hands are within reach' was organised for City slum dwellers in coordination with Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and civil society organizations, Sunday and Monday. The programme, held to mark the Global Handwashing Day, was facilitated by community leaders from Slum Development Association (SDAs), sanitation sub-committee of different wards with the support of CFAR and other key stakeholders. Highlighting the importance of handwashing, BMC Deputy Mayor Manjulata Kanhar said that washing hands throughout the day in key times using soap and water are the best ways to

keep sickness away and also spreading the disease to others. She also asked the parents to be alert on their children's health and adopt the practice in every household. Environmentalist Sudarshan Chhotaray urged denizens to keep the City clean, green and healthy. SDA and SHG members, ASHA workers, Anganwadi teachers, students, and BMC officials participated in the programme and learned the handwashing techniques. SDA Member Ranjulata Mohapatra said, "Today we are celebrating the Handwashing Day and our collective resolve to bring clean hands into the reach of every person in our slums." The speakers urged the participants to carry the message of handwashing to all sections of society.

Risk of fatty liver disease in low birthweight babies

BABIES WITH A LOW BIRTHWEIGHT WERE FOUND TO BE FOUR TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DEVELOP MASLD IN CHILDHOOD, ADOLESCENCE OR YOUNG ADULTHOOD, REVEALED THE STUDY, PRESENTED AT THE ONGOING UNITED EUROPEAN GASTROENTEROLOGYWEEK 2023 BEING HELD IN DENMARK

Researchers have discovered a significant connection between birthweight and the onset of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, now known as metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD), in young people. Most notably, babies with a low birthweight were found to be four times more likely to develop MASLD in childhood, adolescence or young adulthood, revealed the study, presented at the ongoing United European Gastroenterology (UEG) Week 2023 being held in Denmark. "While previous research has established the link between birthweight and major diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and metabolic syndrome, the

connection to MASLD remained unclear," said first author Dr Fahim Ebrahimi, a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Medical Epidemiology and Biostatistics at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden. "Our study now provides compelling evidence that foetal developmental factors play a significant role in the development of MASLD and progressive liver disease," he added. To investigate the link, the researchers conducted a population-based case-control study of all people aged 25 years and younger, who had been diagnosed with biopsy-proven MASLD between January 1992 and April 2017, totalling 165 cases. They found that individuals born with a low birthweight

were four times more likely to develop MASLD when compared with those born with a normal birthweight. Those born as small for gestational age (SGA), falling below the 10th percentile, were also over three times more likely to develop MASLD early in life compared with those with an



adequate (10th-90th) birthweight. In addition, the researchers found that individuals with a low birthweight, or those born as SGA, had an up to about a 6-fold higher relative risk of developing more severe stages of MASLD in the form of liver fibrosis or cirrhosis. "Further research is needed to

fully understand the underlying immunological and metabolic mechanisms. Several studies suggest that both overnutrition and undernutrition during pregnancy can lead to lasting epigenetic changes that can affect an individual's metabolism for a lifetime," Dr Ebrahimi said. Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease is a long-lasting liver condition caused by having too much fat in the liver. In recent times, MASLD was introduced to replace NAFLD. This change reflects the understanding that most conditions classified as MASLD are closely associated with the metabolic syndrome, which is characterised by obesity, insulin resistance and high levels of cholesterol or lipids.

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“One who loves God finds the object of his love everywhere.”
SRI AUROBINDO



Polish Poll

In a historic poll in Poland, centrist and progressive forces are poised to form government wresting power from the ruling Law and Justice nationalist party, which has ironically won the most votes for a single party. This is the overwhelming verdict of exit polls which are regarded in Poland as reliable indications of the voting pattern. If the predicted scenario turns out to be true, which is most likely, Poland is going to witness momentous electoral changes comparable to the fall of the Communists in 1989. This time it is the triumph of liberal, democratic parties over rightist, intolerant, anti-immigrant and anti-LGBTQ+ forces. Coupled with this the incumbent party PiS has incurred the wrath of the people for alleged corruption, nepotism and tampering with government institutions to perpetuate a partisan regime that cornered jobs and other privileges for party followers.

The exit polls show a strong second place finish by the main opposition group, Civic Coalition, and better than expected results for two smaller centrist and progressive parties. This means a huge setback for the governing party that was hoping for an unprecedented third consecutive term.

The exit polls in Poland have such credibility that immediately after the results were announced October 15 a jubilant Donald Tusk, Civic Coalition's leader, said the projected results mean a resounding "win for democracy" that would end the tenure of Law and Justice in power since 2015.

Tusk is a former Prime Minister who had no hesitation after the exit poll results were known to assert it clearly signals the end of "this bad time." The election for new Parliament was held after a vicious campaign in the highly polarised nation. The European Union nations, Russia and Ukraine have been keenly watching the poll outcome as their future courses of actions have got inextricably linked to it. The Poles seemed to have realised the importance of the elections this time and for this reason they turned out at the booths in record numbers. The voter turnout was nearly 73 per cent which is 10 per cent above the votes polled in 1989 that brought Communist rule to an end. Both the governing Law and Justice and the opposition Civic Coalition made the election this time into a do-or-die moment for the country to ensure Poland has a promising future as a stable democratic state.

If early forecasts turn out to be correct when final official results are announced, likely on 17 October, Civic Coalition and its potential partners have won 248 seats in the 460-member legislature, against 200 in the kitty of Law and Justice. Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the governing party's chairman and Poland's de facto leader for the last eight years, has started resigning to the defeat, though he is still clinging to the hope of managing to win. But, he has hardly any chance of retaining power as its ally - a radical right-wing grouping that shares many of the nationalist views of Law and Justice - won only 6.2 per cent of the vote, giving it 12 seats. Exit polls are generally reliable in Poland, though some experts have cautioned that the unusually high turnout could make them less accurate.

Sensing the people's anti-establishment mood the ruling party had before the poll sought to tilt the balance in its favour by holding a referendum alongside the parliamentary election. Voters were asked to answer four loaded questions about immigration and other issues clearly intended to put the European Union and the opposition known for its pro-EU stand in a bad light. The questions were nothing but the ruling party's electoral planks. For example, the voters were asked whether they support the admission of thousands of illegal immigrants from the Middle East and Africa, in accordance with the forced relocation mechanism imposed by European bureaucracy. But, many of the voters could see through the game and they stayed away from it responding to a call given by the opposition.

The results as indicated by the exit polls will bring relief to the European Union which is ready to loosen its purse strings and give Poland €30bn for its economic recovery. It has frozen these funds for the anti-EU stand of the ruling party. The EU was also alarmed by the recent posturing of the current dispensation of Poland which stopped supporting Ukraine in its war with Russia. On the other hand, the opposition has made part of its election agenda to reorient the country to the EU and support Ukraine.

But, more than the immediate concerns, the election results in Poland, bringing the liberal and Left parties back to power, are going to be a watershed moment in Europe which is dangerously tilting towards Far-right politics.

WISDOM CORNER

“This is the real secret of life - to be completely engaged with what you are doing in the here and now. And instead of calling it work, realize it is play.”
ALAN WATTS

“We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen.”
DH LAWRENCE

“Our patience will achieve more than our force.”
EDMUND BURKE

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ **1346:** At the Battle of Neville's Cross, the English defeated the Scots, who, as allies of the French, had invaded England in an attempt to distract Edward III from the siege of Calais, France.

■ **1448:** The last major effort by Crusaders to free the Balkans from Ottoman rule began with the second Battle of Kosovo in Serbia, in which a Hungarian-Walachian army suffered a crushing defeat.

■ **1973:** The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries or OPEC led by Arab countries declared an oil embargo on any country that supported Israel during the Yom Kippur War, which was fought between Israel and a coalition of Arab states. The embargo led to a massive oil shortage and had long-lasting economic effects in the United States and Europe. The embargo was lifted in March 1974.

■ **1979:** Mother Teresa, founder of a Roman Catholic order of women dedicated to the poor and particularly to the destitute of India, was named the recipient of that year's Nobel Prize for Peace.

LOL

Calming the son

In the supermarket was a man pushing a cart which contained a screaming, bellowing baby. The gentleman kept repeating softly, "Don't get excited, Albert; don't scream, Albert; don't yell, Albert; keep calm, Albert."



A woman standing next to him said, "You certainly are to be commended for trying to soothe your son, Albert." The man looked at her and said, "Lady, I'm Albert."

FOCUS LABOUR FORCE

SPOTLIGHT ON WOMEN



Ajit Ranade

GOLDIN'S MOST INTENSIVE AND DEFINITIVE STUDY IS OF WOMEN'S LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND OUTCOMES OVER 200 YEARS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

The Economics Nobel prize this year went to a single individual, Professor Claudia Goldin of Harvard University. She is the third woman in history to have won this award and the first to be honoured independently. Being the first woman to get the Economics Nobel as a single prize winner is something very special. The Nobel citation, describing her work over five decades says that the prize is "for having advanced our understanding of women's labour market outcomes." Some of her insightful and original contributions have become common knowledge now. These are worth recalling and are discussed here. Goldin's most intensive and definitive study is of women's labour force participation and outcomes over 200 years of American history. Many of her findings and conclusions, drawn from American data, are applicable to most other countries, including India, despite the cultural and geographic differences. Let us examine some of the prominent ones.

First there is the U-shape of the participation of women in the labour force as the economy develops. With economic development, the economy goes from being agrarian to industrial and finally services dominated. In the agrarian phase, women work on farms along with their men folk. With industrialisation the work is less flexible, more rigid, in the factories and on assembly lines, and hence the participation of women drops. With more economic advancement, the service sector dominates, and women are able to participate in greater numbers. This is the U-shape - high participation in the early stage, followed by low during industrial phase and high again when there is more prosperity. This has been seen over a long period of American economic history. This pattern is also observed across countries which are presently at different stages of development. Thus, this is a



There simply aren't adequate and appropriate jobs for women with high school or middle school education. So in the absence of jobs they just drop out of the labour force

pattern over time, as well as across the world. Not surprisingly most rich countries which tend to have a very large services sector, tend also to have a high female labour force participation rate (FLFPR). It can be as high as 85 or even 90% as in countries like Sweden. That means 90% of women in their working age are either employed in paid work, or are looking for a job. By contrast the FLFPR in India is low. By some accounts it is below 20% and is the lowest among all G20 countries. This has been disputed. The Economic Survey, 2023, published by the government of India puts the FLFPR at 27.7%. But more about that later below.

Another aspect of the U-shape of female participation is through the lens of the family income and social custom, and not just the economic development trajectory of the whole economy. For very poor households women cannot afford not to work. Hence the workforce participation rate is high. As family income rises, the women pull back and tend to take care of household work and child-care. For rich and very rich households the workforce participation rate goes up again. This is also U-shaped, but with respect to household income. This pattern is further muddled by social custom. If a woman is working for pay out-

side home, there is a social stigma attached. It implies that the "man" of the household is either lazy or unable to earn enough for his family. This stigma has been observed across different cultures. Thus, social stigma might also prevent women's participation especially for middle income families. Another factor which also exhibits a U-shape is women's education. For the illiterate or those with low education, women participate more. With some education (say till middle school) their participation rate drops. With much higher education their participation picks up again. This too is a U-shape. It is seen in Indian data. Here the explanation for the U-shape is not from the supply side of labour, or that middle-educated women do not want to work. It is actually from the demand side of labour. There simply aren't adequate and appropriate jobs for women with high school or middle school education. So in the absence of jobs they just drop out of the labour force.

It is quite common to hear such a comment: "my daughter is in a temporary job, but as soon as she gets married, she will quit." It is as if job is simply a temporary arrangement before marriage and motherhood. Indeed, Goldin's and other people's work has documented, how in olden times, nearly 60% of

an adult woman's prime working age was spent in either being pregnant or nursing a child. Just look at our grandparents' generation which tended to have people with a dozen siblings. Imagine the plight of their mothers. All this changed thanks to family planning, postponing marriages and spacing out pregnancies. Also, the total fertility rate, i.e. average number of children born to prime age woman dropped sharply. The special role of contraception in increasing FLFPR is also highlighted by Goldin's work. Her work also covers the struggle against discrimination at workplace that women had to fight, and also the fight for equal pay. This column cannot possibly do justice to the whole and rich body of work of the Nobel laureate.

The Nobel prize could not have been timelier and more relevant for India. The FLFPR in India has been falling steadily for over two decades, although there is some uptick recently. The Economic Survey of 2023 also documents the silent revolution of the 12 million self-help groups across the country, run almost wholly by women. The recent legislation for women's quota in Parliament and state Assemblies has come none too soon. Across most states, half of all elected persons in village, town and city councils and corporations are women, thanks to reservations in the third tier of government.

Many companies are actively trying to re-recruit women after their first or second pregnancy, i.e. mid-career. There are two gaps that India must urgently fill. One is the gap between the male and female labour participation rate (56 and 28% as per Economic Survey). And the second is the pay gap between male and female employees for the same work. If both these gaps are eliminated India's GDP can jump up substantially. Thanks to Goldin's prize, these issues have come into sharp focus.

The writer is a noted economist. @THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Anatomy of global inflation spike

Persistent surges in core price inflation (which excludes food and energy), and the resulting overshoot of central bank inflation targets, have been a distinctive and distressing feature of the post-pandemic global economic landscape. When confronted with such an economically significant phenomenon, those of us who pay attention to the relevant international evidence will look for common factors to account for the observed correlation between countries. I can think of at least three.

First, there is ample evidence to suggest that the initial surge of inflation across countries in 2021 and 2022 was triggered in part by an adverse shock to aggregate supply. Second, there was substantial (and, in the case of the US, unprecedented) fiscal and monetary policy support, delivered first in 2020-21, to cushion the blow to economic activity and employment, and again in 2022 (especially in Europe), to offset the higher energy and food prices caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Across the advanced economies, central banks responded to the COVID-19 shock

by deploying various combinations of interest-rate cuts, offering forward guidance, and expanding their balance sheets via large-scale quantitative-easing (QE) programmes.

A third common factor contributing to the post-pandemic inflation surge was a large and persistent change in sectoral relative prices, especially the relative prices of goods versus services. Making this argument does not require one to take a stand on how much the initial increase in the relative price of goods versus services reflected demand versus supply. If the equilibrium price of goods goes up for whatever reason, the overall price level will go up unless the central bank wants to engineer a decline in the price of services.

If there is some nominal price rigidity in the service sector, the central bank has a choice. It can allow the relative price increase to pass through and accept a one-time increase in the price level. Or, it can hike rates and throw people out of work to reduce the price of services sufficiently to keep the increase in the price index equal to the inflation target. In the event, central

banks opted, at least initially, to accommodate the price pressures by not trying to offset the increase in the relative price of goods versus services.

When considering the monetary-policy response to the 2021-22 global surge of inflation, it is noteworthy that no advanced-economy central bank began to hike rates until headline inflation had already exceeded its target rate. Equally, nearly all advanced-economy central banks (save Switzerland and Norway) delayed rate hikes until core inflation, too, had already exceeded their respective targets.

The question that many have asked is why monetary policies across most advanced economies "fell behind the curve" in this way. Critics of the US Federal Reserve suggest that a persistent inflation overshoot, and a delay in lifting rates until inflation was already above target, must stem from a failure of the underlying monetary-policy framework. According to this reasoning, the post-pandemic record indicates a breakdown of both inflation targeting and its "first cousin," flexible average inflation targeting, which the Fed adopted in August 2020.

I beg to differ. As I argue in a recent paper, the post-pandemic record is better understood as resulting from ex-post errors of tactics and execution, not from the monetary-policy frameworks. And now, underlying inflation across advanced economies appears to have peaked. With the unwinding of the adverse supply disruptions that contributed to the initial inflation surge, it seems to be on a downward trajectory - heading back toward official inflation targets.

Having hiked rates aggressively, central bankers appear to be close to the end of the global post-pandemic tightening cycle. Their judgement is that they have moved rates into sufficiently restrictive territory and that if current policies are sustained for some time, inflation will eventually return to target. I suspect that the mantra of "lower for longer," which prevailed among central banks for most of the previous decade, will soon be replaced by "higher for as long as it takes."

The writer is Professor of Economics and International Affairs at Columbia University. @PROJECT SYNDICATE



Richard Clarida

HAVING HIKED RATES AGGRESSIVELY, CENTRAL BANKERS APPEAR TO BE CLOSE TO THE END OF THE GLOBAL POST-PANDEMIC TIGHTENING CYCLE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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Dangerous escalation

Sir, This refers to the editorial "Middle East Madness," Orissa POST, October 16, which is absolutely to the point. Both the Hamas and Israel are responsible for this madness, which if not controlled would bring disquiet in the Middle East and disturb the whole world. In today's toxic and intolerant world all efforts have to be made to restore justice to people and follow the path of moderation, sensibility and sanity. Every world leader has to shed arrogance of power. Unfortunately, very few world leaders speak the language of democracy in the truest sense of the term. Israel has every right to protect its land and its people. However, had the Palestinians not being denied their legitimate rights as mandated before and Israeli leadership not made the Palestinians subservient, there would have been no upsurge. The long-standing Israel-Palestine problem has given rise to the Hamas. Gruesome pictures and stories from the war zone are too horrible, while disinformation is being spread aplenty. One can only appeal that the warring parties come to the table and good sense prevails. India must continue to be balanced, upholding justice for the disadvantaged Palestinians and simultaneously giving support to the Israeli population and their security. Nobody can predict what will happen the next moment. Any further escalation will be disastrous for India. There will be an oil crisis if the Arab countries come together on the Palestine issue.

Parthasarathy Sen, NEW DELHI

Erudite & humble

Sir, This refers to "Naveen turns 78," Orissa POST, October 16. Among all the Chief Ministers in India, I like Naveen Patnaik the most for his erudition and humble nature. Sometimes, it appears to me that politics is not his cup of tea. His attitude towards his political opponents was never found to be militant. Patnaik maintains cordial relations with the Centre no matter which party is in power, which has immensely helped him to get the state's due share of central funds. Last but not the least, Naveen unlike other Chief Ministers didn't allow politics to devour development in the state. To him the development of Odisha matters the most.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA



Devotees at Kedarnath Temple amid snowfall, in Rudraprayag district. Badrinath and Kedarnath received their first snowfall of the season Monday, bringing joy and excitement to the devotees. There was a heavy rain on the first day of Navratri Sunday followed by snowfall in Kedarnath. The entire Kedar valley was seen wrapped in white sheet of snow after snowfall that lasted nearly two hours



Effigies of the demon King Ravana being sold at a roadside stall ahead of the upcoming festival of 'Dussehra', in Jaipur, Rajasthan



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi waves at supporters during a 'Padyatra' from Chanmari to Raj Bhawan, in Aizawl, Mizoram



Labourers work at the construction site of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh



CPI (ML) workers protest in support of Palestine, at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi



Students take part in the traditional Raising Monday foam fight on St Salvator's Lower College Lawn at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, Monday, Oct. 16, 2023. The messy display is the culmination of a weekend of festivities where first years say thank you to their more senior student "parents" for mentoring them



Locals at the site after an under-construction flyover on the Mumbai-Goa highway collapsed, at Chiplun in Ratnagiri district, Maharashtra



It is written in that red diary that the Congress will form its government again in Rajasthan after the upcoming Assembly polls

FIVE COACHES OF PASSENGER TRAIN GUTTED Five coaches of a diesel-electric multiple unit (DEMU) passenger train were gutted in a fire that broke out near Narayandoh station in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district Monday afternoon...



of the day quote

The Congress will release its second list of candidates for the November 17 Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections in the next two-three days

If BJP comes to power in Chhattisgarh, we will recover every penny from the corrupt and they will be hanged upside down

The partition of this country should not have happened. That was wrong. All the leaders who were there at that time, they were all responsible (for partition). If you read a book by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's book 'India wins Freedom', Maulana Azad requested all the Congress leaders then that the country should not be divided

SHORT TAKES

Gaganyaan to launch first test flight Oct 21

Bangalore: ISRO Monday said it would commence unmanned flight tests for the Gaganyaan human spaceflight mission with the launch of a test vehicle between 7 am and 9 am October 21 from Sriharikota spaceport to demonstrate the performance of the crew escape system...

₹94 crore cash, jewellery seized

New Delhi: The Income Tax department has seized ₹94 crore in cash as well as gold and diamond jewellery worth ₹8 crore and 30 luxury watches following raids on government contractors and real estate developers in Karnataka and some other states...

Rains continue to lash Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: After a brief lull in the morning, rains continued to lash Kerala Monday, with the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) issuing an orange alert in four districts of the state...

India, UK hold '2+2' foreign dialogue

New Delhi: The inaugural India-UK '2+2' foreign and defence dialogue Monday saw the two sides focusing on ways to boost cooperation in a range of key areas such as trade and investment, defence, critical technologies, civil aviation, health and energy...

ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

Opposition leaders express solidarity with Palestinians

In a statement signed by 15 Opposition leaders, some of whom met the envoy at the Embassy, they strongly condemned the "indiscriminate bombing" of Palestinians in Gaza by Israel and said that it amounts to an attempt at "genocide"



Activists during a demonstration to show solidarity with Palestine, in Bangalore, Karnataka

New Delhi, Oct 16: A group of Opposition leaders, including Mani Shankar Aiyar, K C Tyagi, and Danish Ali, Monday expressed solidarity with Palestinians during a meeting with Palestinian envoy Adnan Abu Al-Hajja who hoped that India being a friend of Israel and Palestine would exert "pressure" on Tel Aviv to lift the "siege" and allow humanitarian aid to reach civilians in Gaza.

"We urge an immediate cessation of all hostilities to prevent further loss of innocent lives and the destruction of homes and infrastructure," the leaders said. "We urge the international community to recognise the establishment of an independent Palestinian state along the 1967 borders in accordance with the UN resolution. Such recognition is a crucial step towards ensuring a just and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, providing the Palestinian people with the opportunity to determine their own destiny and live in peace and security," the opposition leaders said.

Speaking with PTI after the meeting, the Palestinian envoy hoped that the Indian government would play a "good role" to be a mediator with both sides. "India is a friend of both sides. Hopefully, they will exert pressure on the Israeli government to stop the killing of the civilian Palestinian people, to break that siege and let humanitarian aid of water, food, fuel, medicine and electricity for 2.2 million people," Al-Hajja said.

Tyagi said it was a decision of like-minded leaders to meet the

Israel has launched a massive counter-offensive in Gaza to avenge the attacks by Hamas. More than 2,600 people have died in the conflict so far

Palestinian envoy to convey their support for the people of Palestine at a time when they are suffering a lot. By cutting off the water and power supply to the Gaza Strip, Israel is forcing them to death, he said.

BSP's Ali said the leaders' stand was consistent with that of the Indian government that an independent Palestinian state should be there.

"In their statement, the Opposition leaders said they strongly believe in the statement of Mahatma Gandhi that Palestine belongs to the Arabs in the same sense that England belongs to the English or France to the French."

The Opposition leaders said they believe that violence is never a solution as it leads to a cycle of destruction and suffering.

"Therefore, we emphasise the need for increased efforts by the international community in bringing about a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The international community must exert pressure on the state of Israel to abide by international laws and respect the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people," the statement said.

The sudden escalation in hostilities between Israel and Hamas has triggered global concerns. Leading powers like Germany, the United States, France and the United Kingdom have emphasised the importance of preventing the situation from further escalation

"We call for intensified diplomatic efforts and multilateral initiatives to ensure lasting peace in the region," the opposition leaders said. The leaders expressed deep concern regarding the "ongoing crisis in Gaza and the suffering of the Palestinian people".

They also called for urgent and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza.

The dire humanitarian situation demands immediate attention and action, the opposition leaders said, adding that all necessary measures must be taken to ensure that essential supplies, including food, water, and medical aid, reach the affected population without hindrance. Recognising that the Palestinian people have endured "immeasurable suffering" for over 75 years, the opposition leaders asserted that now is the time to end their plight.

Besides BSP's Ali, Congress' Aiyar and JD(U)'s Tyagi, CPI (ML) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, CPI D Raja, Samajwadi Party MP Javed Ali Khan, RLD's Shahid Siddiqui were also among those leaders who visited the embassy.

Row over Dubey's allegations against Moitra escalates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: The row over BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's allegation that TMC's Mahua Moitra took "bribes" to ask questions in the House intensified Monday with senior BJP leaders terming it as a "severe blow to the dignity of Parliament" and Moitra asserting that the charges were based on a "jilted ex's lies".

Also Monday, the embattled Adani Group latched on Dubey's complaint to attack Moitra, who has been at the forefront of criticising the conglomerate ever since Hindenburg alleged fraud, saying groups and individuals have been working overtime to harm its name and market standing.

Dubey Sunday wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla accusing the Trinamool Congress MP of taking bribes for raising questions in Parliament to "protect the interest of a business group and claimed that advocate Jai Anant Dehadrai had "shared irrefutable evidence of bribes exchanged" between Moitra and Darshan Hiranandani. Dubey also wrote to IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, urging him to investigate the IP addresses of Moitra's log-in credentials for the House.

"In her reply to Dubey's complaint to Vaishnaw, Moitra said," all parliamentary work of MPs done by PAs, assistants, interns, large teams" and urged the minister to release details of location and login details of all MPs with Call Detail Records.

Contemplating making AAP accused: CBI, ED to top court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: In more trouble for the city's ruling AAP, the CBI and the ED told the Supreme Court Monday they are contemplating making the party an accused in the corruption and money laundering cases linked to the scrapped Delhi excise policy.

Additional Solicitor General (ASG) S V Raju, representing the two probe agencies, told a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and SVN Bhatti he has instructions to state that the agencies are considering making AAP an accused, invoking legal provisions on "vicarious liability" under the anti-corruption law and section 70 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

"I want to make a statement I have received instructions to make. We are contemplating making the Aam Aadmi Party an accused and invoking offences of vicarious liability under the Prevention of Corruption Act and section 70 of the PMLA," Raju told the court.

However, the bench asked Raju to clarify his stand on Tuesday on whether there will be separate charges against the AAP in the cases being probed by the CBI and the ED. Raju said charges in corruption and



money laundering cases will be different but for the same offence.

The ASG made the statement while the bench was hearing the bail pleas of AAP leader and former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, who was arrested in the excise policy cases being probed by the CBI and ED. Senior AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh has also been arrested in connection with the excise policy cases and is currently in jail.

The bench also asked senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Sisodia, to answer legal questions Tuesday on the CBI's allegation that change in excise policy led to a loss to the state exchequer.

"We want you to answer on the allegation of the CBI that the changes in policy was done for unjust enrichment of A, B and C at state exchequer's expense and consumers were made to pay higher price," the bench told Singhvi.



Army personnel during the eleventh edition of bilateral Military Exercise SAMPRITI-XI between India and Bangladesh which commenced at the Joint Training Node, Umroi

Women's Reservation Bill: Congress leader moves SC

New Delhi: A Congress leader has filed a petition in the Supreme Court seeking directions to the Union government to implement 33 percent reservation for women's in Lok Sabha and state assemblies before 2024 general elections. Congress leader Dr Jaya Thakur has sought the immediate implementation of the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023, which was passed by the Lok Sabha and Rajya during the special session of the Parliament and notified in September after the assent of President Droupadi Murmu. The petitioner pleaded the court to declare as 'void-ab initio' a provision that states that the act to be implemented after the delimitation is undertaken for this purpose after the relevant figures for the first census.

ED raids 30 locations in fraud case against BSL

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate Monday said it has conducted fresh searches against the promoters and entities of erstwhile Bhusan Steel Limited as part of a money laundering probe against them linked to an alleged ₹56,000 crore bank fraud case. Thirty locations in the national capital region, Haryana, Kolkata, Mumbai and Bhubaneswar (Odisha) were raided and surveyed last week October 13, officials said. The money laundering case stems from a charge sheet filed by the Serious Fraud Investigation Office, an investigative agency under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. A probe found that the erstwhile Bhusan Steel Limited (BSL) and its Managing Director Neeraj Singal and his associates formed several shell companies, the agency alleged in a statement.

THE POLITICS OF SPECTACLES!

Religion is the 'opiate of the masses' -disconnecting-disadvantaged people from the here and now, and dulling their engagement in progressive politics, said Karl Marx.

But that was nearly 178 years ago. Nearer present times, in 2008, top scholar, the research and creative database of the Western Kentucky University (WKU) of the US showcased a paper on sports as the "opiate of the masses". It represented a small part of a larger project titled, Game Day and God: Football, Faith and Politics in the American South.

The India-Pakistan World Cup cricket engagement in Ahmedabad October 14, a day before Gujarat's festival of nine nights kicked-in, provided a keen insight both into the game and into the power trail surrounding it. How else would one account for the lack-lustre opening for an event billed as the

most anticipated cricket event of the year, held in the sport's biggest stadium globally named after a serving Prime Minister, in a country known to idolise the game. In fact, there was no opening ceremony at all for the first match between England and New Zealand October 5 at Ahmedabad and the saffron coloured seats remained empty by-en-large.

In sharp contrast, all stops had been pulled out for the India-Pakistan engagement October 14. There were a bevy of performers from tinsel town parading their prowess and unfolding the 'works'. Pent-up enthusiasm in an India-Pakistan sports encounter is understandable, even excitement bordering on exuberance as well, but in this particular case the nudge and push from political quarters which dominate every quarter of most sports was discernable. Speculation was rife that the stadium was 'expected' to be graced by womenkind as

a symbolic gesture marking the passing of the Women's reservation Bill 2023. It would have been a fitting thanks-giving gesture from Gujarat for the gift from its son, Narendra

Modi for women of the country, passed as the first legislation in India's new Parliament building. However and for whatever reason, this did not fructify. It is common knowledge that the ruling political establishment lays great store by symbolism in connecting the dots for perception management.

ing chants of ram-dhun while passing through a minority dominated area of Ahmedabad and following it up with a similar 'programme' at the copstation after it, for not registering their 'complaint'. Then off course an advocate has filed a complaint before the ICC chair against a Pakistani cricketer for offering prayers on the field while his team mates were waiting for drinks during the break. However no such plea was in the offing when a player of the Indian team was seen praying silently before bowling an all-important ball.

Small games and petty guiles, at times, need to be seen on a wider canvass. Allen Guttman, emeritus professor of English and American studies who has numerous sports publications to his credit is on record stating that sports is a principal spectacle that is both the product and producer of the social formation.

Thus as Navratri, the festival

of nine nights resplendent in its garbas in Gujarat gets underway, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal (BD) has once again sounded their warning against non-Muslims participating in Garba festivities.

A BJP legislator of the state has already asked Garba organisers to apply tilaks on the foreheads of the men entering garba venues as a protection against alleged "love jihad".

The spokesperson made it clear that both the saffron entities has already appealed to the government as well as the garba organisers to ensure only Hindus get to enter the garba grounds and make checking of Aadhaar cards mandatory to ensure no one from other religions get to enter the grounds. There is little new in the professed position of this code-sprinkling cow urine and applying tilak-for such demands have been voiced since 2015.



No child sexual abuse content found: YT in reply to govt notice

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: YouTube Monday said it did not detect materials related to child sexual abuse on its platform despite multiple probes and also has not received evidence of such content on the video streaming platform from regulators.

The statement from YouTube spokesperson came after the government issued notices to social media platforms, including YouTube, X (formerly Twitter) and Telegram, earlier this month asking them to takedown child sexual abuse material from their platforms in India.

In a statement, YouTube spokesperson said: "We have a long history of successfully fighting child exploitation on YouTube. Based on multiple thorough investigations, we did not detect CSAM on our platform, nor did we receive examples or evidence of CSAM on YouTube from regulators."

The video platform owned by Google further said that "no form of content that endangers minors is allowed on YouTube, and we will continue to heavily invest in the teams and technologies that detect, remove and deter the spread of this content." "We are committed to work with all collaborators in the industry-wide fight to stop the spread of child sexual abuse material (CSAM)," the YouTube spokesperson added in an e-mailed statement.

FINNISH NOBEL PEACE LAUREATE AHTISAARI DIES

Martti Ahtisaari, the former President of Finland and global peace broker who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008 for his work to resolve international conflicts, died Monday. He was 86. The foundation he created for preventing and resolving violent conflicts said in a statement it was "deeply saddened by the loss of its founder and (former) chair of the board." In 2021, it was announced that Ahtisaari had advanced Alzheimer's disease



international

What is Hezbollah

Lebanon's Hezbollah has been exchanging fire with Israel across the border for days in the deadliest escalation since they fought a major war in 2006, threatening to expand a conflict between Israel and Palestinian group Hamas. Backed by Iran, Hezbollah has said it is ready to help when the time comes in the war between Israel and Hamas, which is also backed by Tehran. Sources said last week Hezbollah's attacks so far had been designed to be contained and so avoid another major war. Israel's defence minister said on Oct. 15 that Israel had no interest in waging war on its northern front, and that if Hezbollah restrained itself then Israel would also keep the situation along the border as it is. Iran's Revolutionary Guards founded Hezbollah in 1982, the middle of Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war. It was part of Iran's effort to exports its 1979 Islamic Revolution around the region and fight Israeli forces after their 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Sharing Tehran's Shi'ite Islamist ideology, Hezbollah recruited Lebanese Shi'ite Muslims. The



group has risen from a shadowy faction to a heavily armed force with major sway over the Lebanese state. The United States, some Western governments and others deem it a terrorist organisation. While other groups disarmed after Lebanon's civil war, Hezbollah kept its weapons to fight Israeli forces that were occupying the predominantly Shi'ite south of the country. Years of guerrilla warfare led Israel to withdraw in 2000. Hezbollah demonstrated its military advances in 2006 during a five-week war with Israel, which erupted after it crossed into Israel, kidnapping two soldiers and killing others. Hezbollah fired thousands of rockets into Israel during the conflict, in which 1,200 people were killed in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 158 Israelis were killed, most of them soldiers. Hezbollah's military power grew after it deployed into Syria, another of Iran's allies in the region, to help President Bashar al-Assad fight mostly Sunni Muslim rebels. Hezbollah boasts weapons including precision rockets and drones, and says it can hit all parts of Israel. In 2021, Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah said the group had 100,000 fighters. Iran gives Hezbollah weapons and money. The United States estimates Iran has allocated it hundreds of millions of dollars annually in recent years. Hezbollah has deep ties to Hamas, which controls Gaza, and Islamic Jihad, another Palestinian faction backed by Iran. Hezbollah has been a source of inspiration and support for other Iranian-backed groups across the Middle East. It has trained armed groups in Iraq and taken part in fighting there. Saudi Arabia says Hezbollah has also fought in support of the Iran-allied Houthis in Yemen. Hezbollah denies this. Hezbollah's influence is underpinned by its sophisticated arsenal and the support of many Lebanese Shi'ites who say the group defends Lebanon from Israel.

Who funds Hamas
Palestinian militant group Hamas uses a global financing network to funnel support from charities and friendly nations, passing cash through Gaza tunnels or using cryptocurrencies to bypass international sanctions, according to experts and officials. However, Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip, will face even more obstacles accessing funds after the rampage by the group's gunmen that killed hundreds of Israelis, mainly civilians. Israel has responded with the heaviest bombardment of Gaza in 75 years of conflict. Earlier this week, Israeli police said they froze a Barclays bank account the authorities said was linked to Hamas fundraising and blocked cryptocurrency accounts used to gather donations, without specifying how many accounts or the value of the assets. The move provided a glimpse of a complex financial web, some legitimate, much hidden, that underpins Hamas, or the Islamic Resistance Movement, and its government in the Gaza Strip, which it has run since 2007. Matthew Levitt, a former US official specialised in counterterrorism, estimated the bulk of Hamas' budget of more than \$300 million came from taxes on business, as well as from countries including Iran and Qatar or charities. Last February the State Department said that Hamas raises funds in other Gulf countries and gets donations from Palestinians, other expatriates and its own charities.



An Israeli soldier flashes a V-sign from an armoured personnel carrier (APC) convoy as they head towards the Gaza Strip border in southern Israel, Monday

GAZA AID STUCK

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rafah (Gaza Strip), Oct 16: Palestinians in besieged Gaza crowded into hospitals and schools Monday, seeking shelter and running low on food and water.

More than a million people have fled their homes ahead of an expected Israeli ground invasion aimed at destroying Hamas after its fighters rampaged through southern Israel. As the enclave's food, water and medicine supplies dwindled, all eyes were on the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, where trucks carrying badly needed aid have been waiting for days as mediators press for a cease-fire that would allow them to enter Gaza and allow foreigners to leave. Rafah, Gaza's only connection to Egypt, was shut down nearly a week ago because of Israeli airstrikes. Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Israel "has not taken a position to open the crossing from the Gaza side". The Israeli government did not respond to a request for comment. With a ground invasion of Gaza expected, Israel was preparing for the potential of a new front opening on its northern border with Lebanon, where it has exchanged fire repeatedly with the Iranian-backed Hezbollah group. The military ordered residents from 28 Israeli communities to evacuate.

Speaking to the Israeli Knesset on Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Iran and Hezbollah. "Don't test us in the north. Don't make the mistake of the past. Today, the price you will pay will be far heavier," referring to Israel's 2006 war with Hezbollah. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians sheltering in UN facilities are

on less than 1 litre (1 quart) of water per day. Hospitals warn they are on the verge of collapse, with emergency generators that power machines like ventilators and incubators down to about one day of fuel and supplies of medicine almost exhausted.

The Gaza Health Ministry said 2,750 Palestinians have been killed and 9,700 wounded since the fighting erupted, more than in the 2014 Gaza war, which lasted over six weeks. That makes this the deadliest of the five



Palestinians gather to collect water, amid shortages of drinking water, as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip

More than 1,400 Israelis have died, the vast majority civilians killed in Hamas' Oct. 7 assault. The Israeli military said Monday that at least 199 hostages were taken back in Gaza, higher than previous

estimates. The military did not specify whether that number includes foreigners.

Israeli airstrikes have pulverized entire neighbourhoods as Palestinian militants continue to fire rockets into Israel. Israel is widely expected to launch a ground offensive in order to kill Hamas leaders, recover captives and destroy the group's military infrastructure, much of which is in residential areas. Street-by-street fighting would likely cause mounting casualties on both sides.

Israel has ordered more than 1 million Palestinians — almost half the territory's population — to leave Gaza City and the surrounding area for the enclave's south.

The military says it is trying to clear away civilians ahead of a major campaign against Hamas in the north, where it says the militants have extensive networks of tunnels and rocket launchers. Hamas has urged people to stay in their homes. For a third day, Israel's military announced a safe corridor for people to move from north to south between the hours of 8 am and noon. It said more than 600,000 people have already evacuated the Gaza City area. Hospitals in Gaza are expected to run out of generator fuel in the next 24 hours, endangering the lives of thousands of patients, according to the UN.



HARD TIMES



India to skip China's Belt and Road Forum again



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, Oct 16: For the third consecutive time, India is set to boycott a summit of China's Belt and Road Initiative here on Tuesday to highlight its stand on the sovereignty issues in the controversial CPEC, which is being laid through the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and the financial viability of Beijing's projects in smaller countries, official sources here said.

The two-day Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation (BRFIC) is being held by China amid criticism that the loans amounting to billions of dollars for unsustainable projects turned out to be debt traps for smaller countries like Sri Lanka, driving them into a deep economic crisis.

Road Initiative (BRI), the pet project of President Xi Jinping. China held two international forums for its mega global infrastructure initiative in 2017 and 2019. India had stayed away from both the meetings. Official sources here said like in the previous two BRI conferences, India will not take part in this year's meeting either. India is steadfast in its criticism of the BRI, especially its flagship the USD 60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) overriding New Delhi's sovereignty concerns. India is also vocal about its criticism that the BRI projects should be based on universally recognised international norms, good governance, and the rule of law, and follow principles of openness, transparency and financial sustainability.

Man charged with hate crime after Muslim boy killed

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chicago, Oct 16: A 71-year-old Illinois man accused of fatally stabbing a 6-year-old boy and seriously wounding a 32-year-old woman was charged with a hate crime Sunday. Police allege he singled out the victims because of their Islamic faith and as a response to the war between Israel and Hamas.

In recent days, police in U.S. Cities and federal authorities have been on high alert for violence driven by antisemitic or Islamophobic sentiments. FBI officials, along with Jewish and Muslim groups, have reported an increase of hateful and threatening rhetoric.

In the Chicago-area case, officers found the woman and boy late Saturday morning at a home in an unincorporated area of Plainfield Township, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) southwest of Chicago, the Will County Sheriff's Office said in a statement on social media.

The boy was pronounced dead at a hospital. The woman had multiple stab wounds and was expected to survive, according to the statement. An autopsy on the child showed he had been stabbed dozens of times.

Jaishankar meets Vietnamese PM, pushes for closer ties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hanoi, Oct 16: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Monday met Vietnam's top leadership and discussed ways to boost cooperation in areas like trade, energy, defence and maritime security while also sharing perspectives on the Indo-Pacific, amidst China's aggressive behaviour in the strategic region.

Jaishankar, who arrived here on a four-day official visit to Vietnam Sunday, called on Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Honoured to call on PM Pham Minh Chinh of Vietnam today evening. Conveyed the greetings of PM @narendramodi. Valued his guidance for the further development of our bilateral relationship. A stronger India-Vietnam partnership contributes to a stable, secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific," he said in a post on platform X.

Earlier, Jaishankar met his Vietnamese counterpart Bui Thanh Son and discussed ways to boost cooperation in areas like trade, energy, defence and maritime security while also sharing perspectives on the Indo-Pacific. Jaishankar and Son also un-



Jaishankar, who arrived on a four-day official visit to Vietnam Sunday, called on Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh and conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi

veiled commemorative stamps celebrating 50 years of establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Vietnam. "Stamps depicting Kalaripayattu and Vovinam cap-

ture our shared affinity for sports and celebrate the strong cultural, social & people-to-people links between India and Vietnam," he posted on X. Jaishankar said he had a useful exchange of views with Le Hoai Trung, Chairman of the External Relation Commission of the Communist Party of Vietnam. "The convergent approach of India and Vietnam on key regional and global issues was manifest," he added. He also attended a meeting of the 18th India-Vietnam Joint Commission in Hanoi.

Daniel elected as Ecuador's President

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Quito (Ecuador), Oct 16: Daniel Noboa has managed to do what his father failed at five times: Getting elected as Ecuador's President.

And he did it Sunday on his first attempt, winning a runoff election against a leftist lawyer on the resume of a 35-year-old who belongs to the South American country's elite, which means some schooling in the U.S., some entrepreneurial work, some dabbling in politics.

Now, he must answer the universal demand to make Ecuador safe again, which voters urged on all the candidates who originally jumped into the race amid a surge in unprecedented violence tied to drug trafficking. Noboa's proposals to tackle the crucial issue have run the gamut. At one point in the campaign, he proposed turning ships into floating jails for the most violent criminals.



