



## NO BODY SHAMING

Actor Aishwarya Rai criticises size zero culture and defends her body changes

LEISURE P2



## ISRAELI OFFENSIVE

Israeli warplanes strike targets across Gaza as well as two airports in Syria and a mosque in the occupied West Bank

INTERNATIONAL P10



## ARSENAL'S WIN RUN

Arsenal remain unbeaten in Premier League after a 2-2 draw with Chelsea

SPORTS P12

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Are you giving me ticket from the same seat again? Then please upgrade my security so that I can campaign safely

### DUSSEHRA GREETINGS

To all our readers, advertisers and well-wishers. HOLIDAY NOTICE The offices and press of Orissa POST will remain closed October 23 and 24 on account of Dussehra. Hence, there will be no edition of the paper October 24 and 25. However, OP web will be available to readers on both the days. -EDITOR

## Agniveer dies in Siachen: Army

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: An Agniveer died in the line of duty in Siachen, the Army's Leh-headquartered Fire and Fury Corps said Sunday.

Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande and all ranks of the force condoled the death of Agniveer, Gawate Akshay Laxman, who hailed from Maharashtra.



Siachen glacier at the height of around 20,000 feet in the Karakoram range is known as the highest militarised zone in the world where soldiers have to battle frostbite and high winds. The exact details of Laxman's death were not immediately known.

"Quartered in snow silent to remain, when the bugle calls they shall rise and march again," the Fire and Fury Corps said on 'X'.

| WEATHER  |  | BHUB                       | CTK    |
|----------|--|----------------------------|--------|
| MAX      |  | 31.0°C                     | 30.0°C |
| MIN      |  | 22.8°C                     | 22.4°C |
| Humidity |  | 79%                        | 70%    |
| Rainfall |  | Nil                        | Nil    |
| Forecast |  | Light rainfall very likely |        |

## GAGANYAAN MISSION ISRO prefers women fighter test pilots

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 22: ISRO prefers women fighter test pilots or female scientists for its much-awaited human space flight programme Gaganyaan mission and it is possible to send them in the future, the space agency chief S Somanath said Sunday.

He also said ISRO would send a female humanoid - a robot that resembles a human - in its unmanned Gaganyaan spacecraft next year. The ambitious mission aims to send humans into space on a Low Earth Orbit of 400 km for three days and bring them safely back to the Earth.

"No doubt about it... But we have to find out such possible (women) candidates in the future," Somanath told PTI over phone in response to a query. His statement came a day after the ISRO successfully launched its TV-D1 test vehicle ahead of the human

## Airport, helipads among China's infra along LAC

In 2022, China continued to develop military infrastructure along the LAC, according to a Pentagon report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Oct 22: China increased the deployment of forces and continued infrastructure build-up, including underground storage facilities near Doklam, a second bridge over Pangong Lake and a dual-purpose airport and multiple helipads, along the LAC in 2022 amid border tensions with India, a Pentagon report has said.

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

According to the 'Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China' report 2023: "Since early May 2020, sustained tensions along the India-China border have dominated

the Western Theater Command's attention."

"Differing perceptions between India and the People's Republic of China (PRC) regarding border demarcations along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) combined with recent infrastructure construction on both sides, led to multiple clashes, an ongoing standoff, and military buildups along the shared border," the report released by the US Department of Defence this month said.

In 2022, China continued to develop military infrastructure along the LAC, the report said.

"These improvements include underground storage facilities near Doklam, new roads in all three sectors of the LAC, new villages in disputed areas in neighbouring Bhutan, a second bridge over Pangong Lake, a dual-purpose airport near the centre sector, and multiple helipads," it said.

China also deployed one border regiment, supported by two divisions of Xinjiang and Tibet Military Districts with four combined arms brigades (CAB) in reserve in the western sector of the LAC in 2022. In response to a skirmish in June 2020 between PRC and Indian patrols in Galwan Valley, the most violent clash between the two countries in 45 years, the Western Theater Command implemented a large-scale mobilisation and deployment of People's Liberation Army (PLA) forces along the LAC, the report said.



space flight mission Gaganyaan. REPRESENTATIVE PIC

He said the manned mission is expected by 2025 and that it will be a short duration mission.

"Right now, the initial candidates are to be from Air Force fighter test pilots... They are a bit different category. Right now, we are not having women fighter test pilots. So, once they come, that is one route," the Chairman said. The second option was when there

would be more scientific activity, he said. "Then, scientists will come as astronauts. So, at that time, I believe that more possibilities for women are there. Currently, possibilities are lesser because there are no women fighter test pilots," Somanath explained.

To a question, he said the ISRO's target is to put a fully operational space station by 2035.

ISRO had successfully launched TV-D1 test vehicle ahead of the human space flight mission Gaganyaan Saturday.

After overcoming initial hiccups including delays, the space agency successfully launched the test vehicle with payloads related to the country's ambitious Gaganyaan programme.

Scientists simulated an abort situation for the Crew Escape System to carry the Crew Module of the test vehicle out as they made a splash into the Bay of Bengal with planned precision.

## Kohli, Shami sink NZ

AGENCIES

Dharamsala, Oct 22: Virat Kohli anchored another tricky chase with perfection after Mohammad Shami's sizzling five-wicket haul as India defeated New Zealand by four wickets in the World Cup here Sunday, their first win over Black Caps in an ICC event after 20 years.

Shami (5/54) started with the ball to restrict New Zealand to 273 all out despite Daryl Mitchell's gutsy 130 off 127 balls. Kohli (95 off 104) later anchored India's chase with a near blemish-free knock and shared three crucial 50-run stands with Shreyas Iyer (33), KL Rahul (27) and Ravindra Jadeja (39 not out) to guide his side home in 48 overs.

With India on the cusp of victory, Kohli went for the record equalling 49th ODI hundred but much to the disappointment of a packed crowd at the HPCA stadium, he was caught in the deep. Captain Rohit Sharma contributed 46 off 40 balls at the top of batting order.

Lockie Ferguson was the most successful New Zealand bowler with figures of 2 for 63.

Daryl Mitchell top-scored for New Zealand with a career-best 130. P12



CLINICAL KOHLI: India's Virat Kohli hits a six during the ICC Men's World Cup ODI cricket match between India and New Zealand at HPCA Stadium, Dharamsala, Sunday. PTI PHOTO

## Cyclone likely Tuesday

COLLECTORS ASKED TO REMAIN PREPARED

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: The depression over the Bay of Bengal may become a low-intensity cyclonic storm by October 24, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Sunday.

The depression lies centred around 610 km south of Paradip, the IMD said in a bulletin.

"The system is likely to further intensify into a deep depression over the next 24 hours. It will move northwards in the subsequent 12 hours and then move towards the Bangladesh-West Bengal coasts in the following three days," it added.

"Though there is a possibility of the formation of a cyclonic storm, it is likely to be a very weak system. It will have a marginal impact on Odisha, bringing in light to moderate rain. The system at the sea will be around 200 km from the state's coast," weather scientist Umashankar Dash of the Regional Meteorological Centre told PTI.

If this system intensifies into a cyclone, it will be called Hamoon, a name given by Iran. Dash said fishermen were warned not to venture into the sea till October 25 as the conditions will remain rough. He said the IMD has cautioned farmers



to harvest matured paddy crops by October 23 as some parts of coastal Odisha may experience light to moderate rainfall. Fishermen who were in the deep sea were advised to return to the coast.

Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu has asked the collectors to remain prepared to face any eventuality, and directed them to ensure the evacuation of people from low-lying areas in case of heavy rain.

Under the system's influence, light to moderate rainfall is likely at a few places in coastal Odisha October 23 and at many places October 24-25.

According to the evening bulletin of IMD's Bhubaneswar centre, light to moderate rainfall would occur at a few places over the coastal districts, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Angul, Dhenkanal, Boudh, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Koraput and Malkangiri for 24 hours from 8.30 am Monday.

## 2 cops injured in attack by retired army personnel

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: A retired army personnel allegedly attacked and injured a sub-inspector (SI) and a constable when they had come to arrest him in Banki area of Cuttack district Sunday.

Banki police were on the lookout for the retired army personnel, Saroj Das, against whom three cases were registered in the police station, officials said.

Upon learning that Saroj was roaming in Banki market, police reached the spot and tried to arrest him. On seeing them, Saroj attacked sub-inspector Sambit Kumar Swain and constable Uttam Kumar Kar with a sword and fled. Both suffered injuries in the attack, said Banki SI Budhanath Behera.

After primary treatment in a local hospital, both the cops were shifted to a hospital in Cuttack, he said. "Swain is seriously injured and has cut marks in his hand and body. A major vein of his hand was cut leading to severe bleeding and dip in blood pressure," said a treating doctor.

The other cop is now stable now as he did not suffer serious injuries, he said.

Last month, Saroj had attacked a woman police sub-inspector in a similar incident.

### ଦୁର୍ଗାପୂଜାର ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ ଶୁଭକାମନା

**BHARAT MASALA**

The Taste of New India

ଭାରତର ସବୁଠୁ ବଡ଼ କ୍ରାୟୋଜେନିକ ପ୍ଲାଣ୍ଟ

**JAY BHARAT SPICES PRIVATE LIMITED**

E-mail : jbspl@bharatmasala.in | Toll Free : 1800 345 1138 | www.bharatmasala.in

ଭାରତ ମସଲା ପାଇଁ ସୁପରଷ୍ଟକ୍ସ ଓ ଡିଷ୍ଟ୍ରିବ୍ୟୁଟର ଆବଶ୍ୟକ

ଭାରତ ମସଲା ବ୍ୟାପାର ବିକ୍ରୟ ମସଲା ଓ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ଉତ୍ପାଦନ କରୁଥିବା ସବୁଠୁ ବଡ଼ ଓ ଗଞ୍ଜାମ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ମୁଖ୍ୟ ବ୍ୟବସାୟିକ ପେଶସ୍ତରୀରେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସମୟରେ ବିକ୍ରୟ ପାଇଁ ଆସିବ ସହଜ, ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବିବେଚନା ସୁପରଷ୍ଟକ୍ସ ଏବଂ ଡିଷ୍ଟ୍ରିବ୍ୟୁଟର ଆବଶ୍ୟକ

ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ: ୭୮୯୪୪୨୩୩୫୪ / ୯୯୩୭୧୫୭୧୫ / ୭୮୯୪୪୫୩୩୫୪

Email id: susanta@bharatmasala.in



# leisure



## ARIANA CELEBRATES 'BLONDIEVERSAARY'

Singer-songwriter Ariana Grande is celebrating one year of being blonde. The singer, 30, marked the anniversary with a post on her Instagram Story, reports *People magazine*.

## HELEN FLANAGAN APOLOGISES TO HER KIDS

Actress Helen Flanagan said that she had to apologise to her kids as she confessed she is not being the mother she wants to be. The actress shared the struggles she faces as a single mum, admitting that she would often feel touched out and stressed, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

**GaneshSpeaks.com**  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
Logic and reasoning will hold court, while creativity takes a backseat today.

**TAURUS**  
Today, you will strike a great balance between your professional and personal life, predicts Ganesh. You will save your money from being swindled by others.

**GEMINI**  
Today, you will have a tendency to remain possessive about your personal belongings, says Ganesh. You are likely to join personality development courses to achieve your ultimate goals.

**CANCER**  
You may have a way with words, but women somehow always have their way with you. Your problem is that while you may use your words to pull some strings, the master puppeteer, in most cases, will be a woman.

**LEO**  
You may not have a halo around your head, but that most certainly does not deter you from playing the spiritual card today, says Ganesh. On this auspicious day, it is through religious scriptures that you satiate your desire to attain the intangible.

**VIRGO**  
Today, your ingenuity will breed ideas like rabbits. You have the healer's hands, and so shall you make right many a wrong, predicts Ganesh. You shall be most understanding, and reading people's mind will do wonders for you and your beloved.

**LIBRA**  
A wistful day lies ahead of you, says Ganesh. This day, just like 'on the summer day that we flew kites', may be the standard when it comes to wanting to have a better future. Ganesh expects a sea of change in your outlook, thanks to your sweetheart's noble gesture today.

**SCORPIO**  
Dear friends and soul mates will bring you much relief and calm today, says Ganesh. Spend as much time as possible with them. Romantic escapades with your beloved will be heaven in itself. Blood relations will stand true and strong in matters of importance, says Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Tempers will fly today, warns Ganesh. Rein in your anger by the leash of control and restraint. But the buck will stop somewhere! When it does, dig your feet in and battle the crunch situation, advises Ganesh.

**CAPRICORN**  
Your outstanding intellectual ability will not only yield exciting results for you, but will also help your close associates who will have progressed a great deal in their career because of your valuable advice, says Ganesh. Scores of problems may come your way, but you will have nothing to worry about. You will deal with each one of them with ease. A project approved for implementation will be successful, and will earn you the reputation of being a perfectionist.

**AQUARIUS**  
Your communication skills will work wonders today. Your eloquence will win you precious brownie points, and may prove highly beneficial in meetings. In fact, all your arguments will sound very persuasive. The trick is not to get ruffled, says Ganesh, when people don't agree with you.

**PISCES**  
An auspicious time for starting new projects, today will see you make substantial investments in your future. Your family is the foundation of your success, and keeping that in mind will provide you with some vital insights. Your smile wins many a heart today, says Ganesh.

## Kangana to perform Ravan Dahan at Ramlila

**Mumbai:** Actress Kangana Ranaut, who is awaiting the release of her aerial combat film *Tejas*, is all set to grace the iconic Lav Kush Ramlila at Red Fort ground, in Delhi.



attend the Dussehra celebration in the national capital on October 24 and will participate in the Ravan Dahan, a tradition in which an effigy of Ravan is set ablaze by shooting an arrow.

Usually the Prime Minister of the country does the Ravan Dahan but since this year PM Modi is busy with elections, the Lav Kush Ramlila committee has decided to invite women from all walks of life for the Ramlila, this is also to mark the recently passed Women's Reservation Bill by both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

This year's Ramlila sees the infusion of cutting-edge technology. A three-story stage adorned with special 3D and LED lights has been installed at the venue to create a visually stunning experience.

IANS

**Mumbai:** Actress Gauahar Khan, in a recent interview, opened up about how a 'diggaj personality' once made her uncomfortable during an interview, when she was just 18 years old.

In an interview, Gauahar Khan was asked if she ever faced a moment where a star threw tantrums during her VJing days. She said, "He wouldn't let go of my hand. I was like, 'This is awkward. How do I pull my hand out?'" adding that she sat through the whole interview like this, and revealing that the person in question has since passed.

"I didn't know why he said that, but I followed his instruction. Later, I came to know that this star was asking for my number, where I was and why didn't I meet him before leaving," Gauahar recalled, sharing how she wondered why it was happening to her.

On the work front, Gauahar is set to host *Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 11* with Rithvik Dhanjani.

AGENCIES

## Have never endorsed size zero: Aishwarya

**Mumbai:** Actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan who never shies away from expressing her opinions on things she's asked in interviews, in a throwback video was seen slamming the 'size zero' culture while talking about her changed physical appearance.

The *Dhoom 2* actress had said, "It doesn't matter."

This is reality. This is who I am. I am a mother, and this can happen, and it happened with me, and its fine. That's life. I have never been the one who endorses size zero anyway. You guys speculated I was pregnant way before I was so many times. So this goes to show that I have lived the real life in the public eye."

Reacting to the same, a Reddit user wrote, "But size zero is unhealthy anyway. Kudos to Aishwarya. It was started by Kareena as far as I remember." While another user added, "that too for a yrf film that bombed, kya hold the industry mein aditya bhai ka pure decade mein." A third one wrote, "actors were so petty in 2000s."

On the work front, Aishwarya was last seen in *Ponniyin Selvan: I* and *Ponniyin Selvan: II*.

AGENCIES

### Gauahar shares her uncomfortable encounter



## KRITI HEAPS PRAISES ON SISTER NUPUR



**Mumbai:** Actress Kriti Sanon ditched engineering and multiple high-paying jobs to become an actress in the Indian film industry. Following her footsteps, her younger sister Nupur Sanon has also stepped into the industry with a Telugu-language film, *Tiger Nageswara Rao*. Like a proud elder sister, the *Dilwale* ac-

trix heaped praises on Nupur for making a commendable acting debut.

Taking to Instagram stories, the *Heropanti* actress shared a screengrab of one of the scenes from the movie that showed Nupur in action.

Captioning the picture, the *Luka Chuppi* actress penned, "When the eyes say it all. So proud Nups! What a super confident debut. #TIGER NAGESWARA RAO."

The South Indian movie is directed by Vamsee and produced

by Abhishek Agarwal. The film stars Ravi Teja alongside Anupam Kher, Nupur Sanon, Renu Desai, Jisshu Sengupta, Gayatri Bhardwaj, and Murali Sharma.

On the work front, Kriti Sanon is seen recently in *Ganpath* and has *The Crew* and *Do Patti* in pipeline.

AGENCIES

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

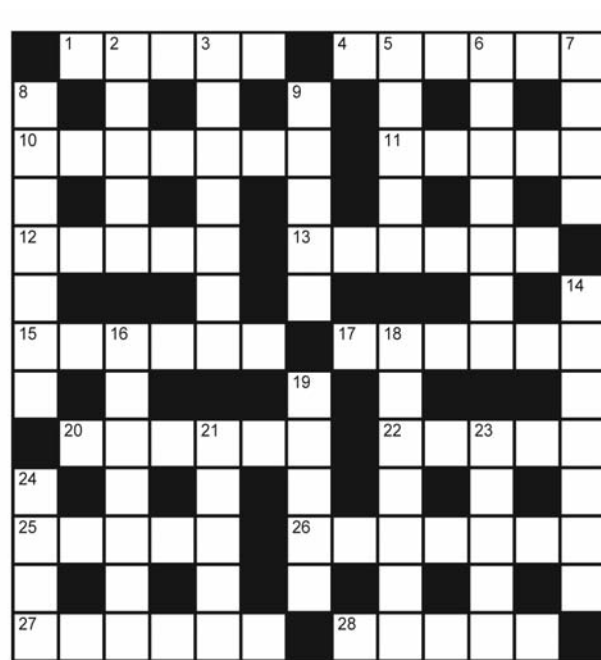


### BREVITY



### FUN post

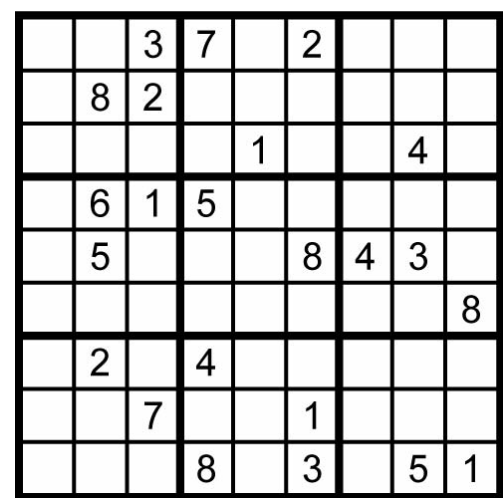
### CROSSWORD



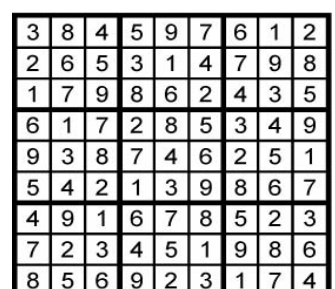
- Across**
- 1 Blatant
  - 4 Rural
  - 10 Stimulated
  - 11 Bargain-basement
  - 12 Pulitzer Prize category
  - 13 Chèvre, e.g.
  - 15 Naval unit
  - 17 Olympic medal type
  - 20 Garden decorations
  - 22 Long suit
  - 25 Corolla part
  - 26 Salad starter
  - 27 Lake Vanern location
  - 28 Salad oil holder
  - 7 Backup
  - 8 Lynx, e.g.
  - 9 Proclamation
  - 14 Tar's partner
  - 16 Sea cow
  - 18 Nuclear device
  - 19 Sacred hymn
  - 21 Free-for-all
  - 23 Marchand de vin, for one
  - 24 Numbered musical composition
- Down**
- 2 Bloody Mary ingredient
  - 3 The Lionhearted
  - 5 Family member
  - 6 Betrayal

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW





# DURGA PUJA LITS UP TWIN CITIES

On the occasion of Maha Ashtami, Sunday, **Orissa POST** takes a tour of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, capturing picturesque pandals and mesmerising idols of deities.



Saheed Nagar



Rasulgarh



Old Station Bazar



Jharpada



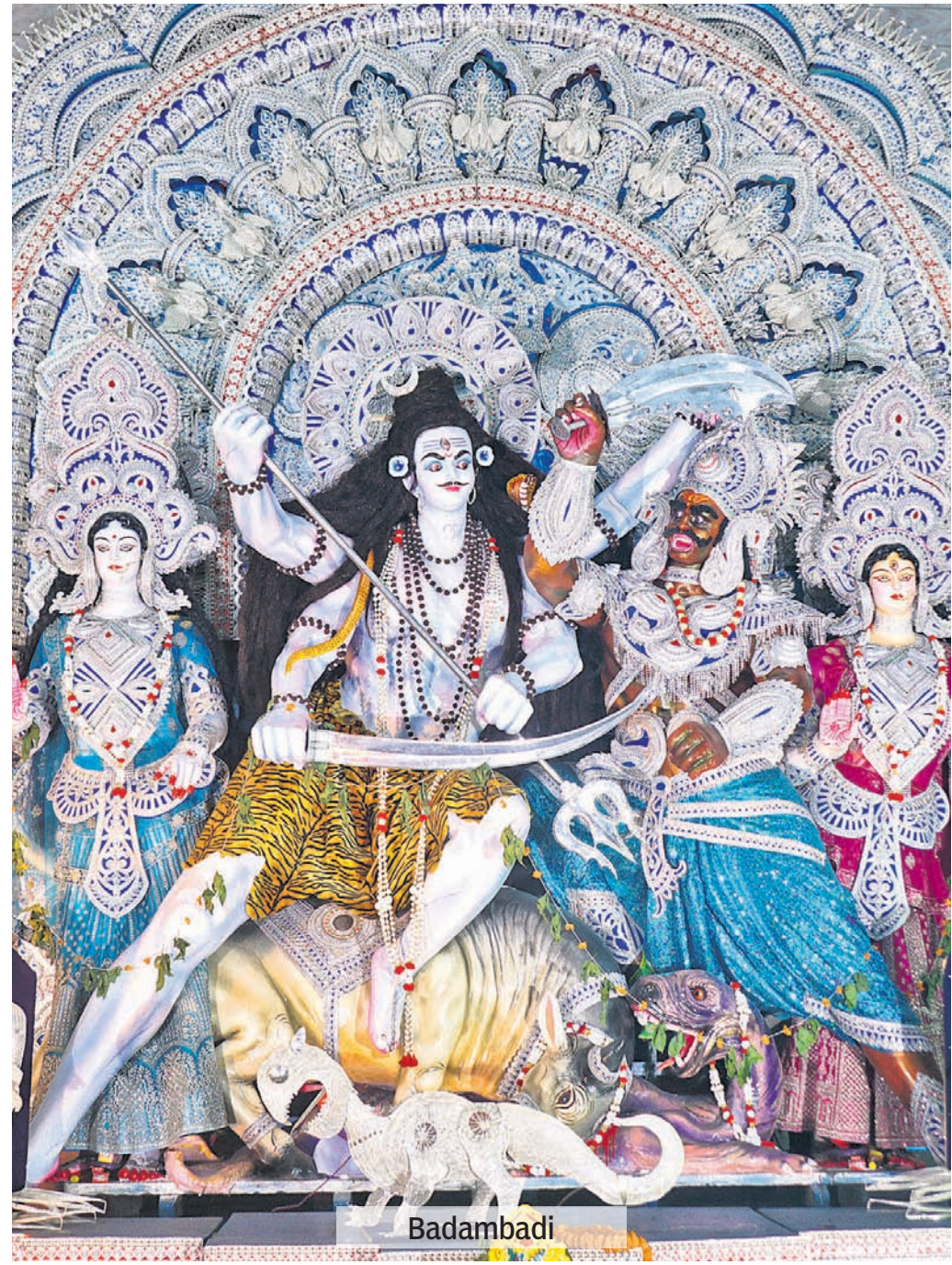
Damana



Chandini Chowk

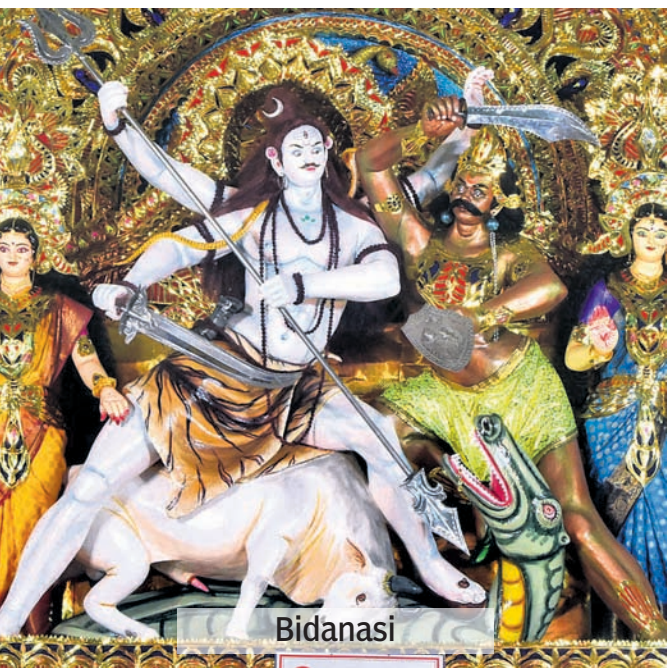


Tulasipur

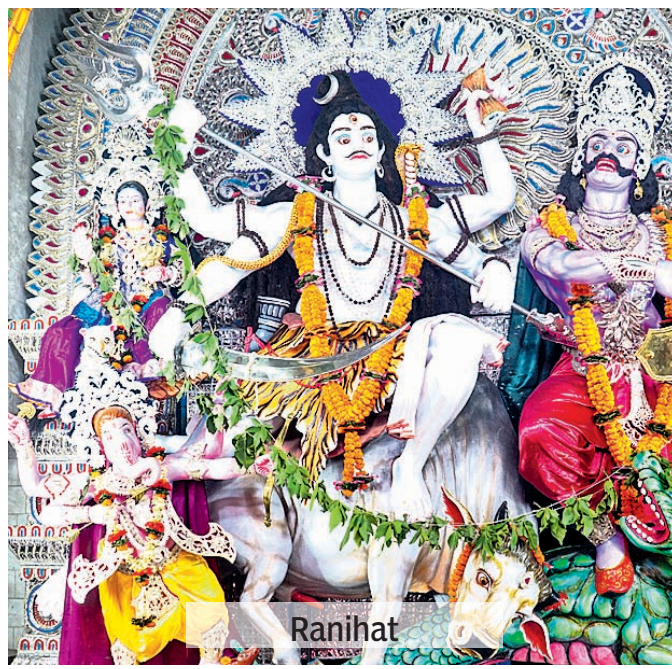


Badambadi

PHOTOS: BIKASH NAYAK, MANORANJAN MISHRA AND RAJKISHORE MOHANTY



Bidanasi



Ranihat



Ranihat Square, Cuttack

## 400-yr-old Durga Puja at Singmapore

DEBADURLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

**Cuttack, Oct 22:** Away from the opulence of Puja Pandals of the twin cities, Singmapore, a small village around 40 kilometres away from the Capital city, has been celebrating Durga Puja for the last 400 years.

The tradition started when Kashinath Mishra's family relocated from Burdwan to Odisha. Since then, the family has fostered the ritual every year.

Kashinath Mishra (70), a software developer settled in California, visits Odisha every year around September to organise Durga Puja. Reminiscing his childhood



days, Kashinath says his father used to organise Puja with limited resources. However, the practice of adhering to the core principles has not changed much, he adds.

Except for calamitous events such as floods and cyclones, the Puja has been going unhindered for the past four centuries.

During the Puja, around 10,000 villagers congregate with offerings from Saptami to Dashami every year. In adherence to rituals of vedic chants and mantras, varieties of prasads is offered to Goddess Durga.

In the recent years, the budget for the festival has gone up to around Rs 8-12 lakh.



# Taking extreme step 'no answer': Experts

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 22:** To address the critical issue of suicide among adolescents, Society for Nature, Education, and Health (SNEH) recently organised a community awareness programme called 'Suicide is Not the Answer' in the Salia Sahislum of the City bringing together experts from various fields.

The event, aimed to create awareness among parents, presented them some possible techniques to deal with the problem. The programme was held at SNEH's Conflict Resolution Counseling and Training Centre in Mayfair Nagar, with participation of some 130 attendees, including parents from nine habitations, peace committee leaders, Youth Cell Volunteers, and members of the media.

Sudarshan Chhotray, journalist and social activist, Jharana Swain, principal coun-



selor of Bhubaneswar Family Court and Jayajyoti Panda, psychologist and state educational consultant at UNICEF served as guest speakers, sensitizing the participants on this sensitive issue.

The event commenced with a condolence prayer for Anasuya, a 13-year-old girl from Mangla Nagar in Salia Sahi, who tragically took her own life, an incident that had deeply affected the community, prompting SNEH to initiate sensitization programmes aimed to prevent such unfortunate events.

Chhotray, in his address, highlighted the prevalence of suicides in underdeveloped na-

tions. He emphasised that the age group between 15 to 21 witnesses a higher incidence of suicide, citing factors like excessive expectations, consumerism, mobile addiction, lack of parental attention, the nuclear family system, feelings of isolation, and societal prejudices as major contributors to this issue.

"Numerous factors such as exam pressure and mobile game addiction can contribute to suicidal tendencies among adolescents. To address these challenges, preventive measures should be taken like practicing meditation, spending time in nature, gardening, watching comedy or motivational films, and sharing problems with friends, family, and experts," said Jayajyoti Panda, a psychologist from UNICEF, who also delved into the various stressors in adolescents' lives, including family, educational, and societal pressures.



**CHARMING AUDIENCE:** Artistes perform during Sikander Alam Jayanti celebrations at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

OP PHOTO

## BPUT holds 2-day symposium on NIRF

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 22:** Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT), Rourkela organized a two-day symposium on step-in to national institutional ranking framework (NIRF) October 20 and 21, here at the Tennis Center Auditorium in Kalinga Stadium to facilitate deliberation among experts an educationists on how the state universities can improve their NERF ranking.



BPUT vice chancellor Amiya Kumar Rath, SK Nayak, Vice Chancellor of Ravenshaw University, Ramanuj Narayan, director of CSIR-IMMT, Bhubaneswar joined the symposium which saw participation of more than 100 representatives from colleges under BPUT and other state universities.

Sessions on the first day were conducted by the experts - Suresh Kumar from Bengaluru, Rajsekhar Bellamkonda from Hyderabad, and A Abudhari from Chennai on different parameters and metrics of NIRF.

Sessions on the second day were designed to cover an analysis of the success stories of different institutions who have secured good rankings. Experts M Murugan of Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, Chandrasekhar Bhatt of Manipal Institute of Technology, Manipal, PK Nanda, vice chancellor of SOA University and Siddhartha Swarup Rautray of KIIT University.

## KIIT-KISS honours medal winners

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 22:** A felicitation programme was organised Sunday by the educational institutions KIIT and KISS to honour the sports persons who won medals in the recently concluded Asian Games and World University Games held in China.

Odisha's first Olympian Anuradha Biswal, veteran footballer and coach of Odisha Women Football Team Shradhanjali Samantray, Olympian Dutee Chand, and fastest man of India Amiya Mallick, Secretary Odisha Rugby Association Upendra Mohanty, KIIT-KISS founder Achyuta Samanta, Vice-Chancellor KIIT-DU Saranjit Singh and Director General Sports KIIT-KISS Gaganendu Dash felicitated the sportspersons.

Speaking on the occasion, Samanta said, "The sports scenario in Odisha has completely changed under the leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Following in the footsteps of Odisha government, KIIT and



KISS always reach out in case of any issues with the sportspersons and help them."

KIIT & KISS have produced 15 Olympians and more than 5 thousand sports persons from state level to international level, he added.

During the felicitation, ₹5 lakh each was given to Tajinderpal Singh Toor, Asian Games - Gold Medalist (Shot Put), and Amit Rohidas, Asian Games - Gold

Medalist (Hockey) while ₹3 lakh each was given to Kishore Kumar Jena, Asian Games - Silver Medalist (Javelin Throw), and Tejaswin Shankar, Asian Games - Silver Medalist (Decathlon); and ₹2 lakh each to Amlan Borgohain, World University Games - Bronze Medalist (200M) and Priyanka, World University Games - Bronze Medalist (20KM Race Walk Team) respectively.

As many as 14 students of KIIT Deemed-to-be-University represented India in the recently concluded Asian Games, 2023 at Hangzhou, China, and four of them won medals.

Similarly, 18 students from three universities of Odisha, including 14 students from KIIT, participated in the World University Games, 2023 in Chengdu, China, and two KIIT students won bronze medals, informed Dash.

## NIST holds Science Talent Search 2023

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar/Berhampur, Oct 22:** The National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) in Berhampur concluded the NIST Science Talent Search 2023 (NSTS-2023).

This national competition unfolded from May to October 2023, attracting the enthusiastic participation of school and higher secondary students from all corners of the country. This year's theme, "Sustainable Innovation," was thoughtfully chosen to reflect the global demand for eco-friendly solutions in an increasingly complex world.

The call for participation was initiated in May 2023, with submissions being accepted until September 11, 2023. A total of 550 teams registered for the event through the online portal at [www.nist.edu/talesearch](http://www.nist.edu/talesearch).

A total of 18 teams from various states across India were selected to participate in the grand finale.



In the Senior category, the first place was secured by Averron Maverick from Vidya Vihar Educational Academy in Bihar, who earned a cash prize of ₹1,00,000. The runner-up position was claimed by VIDHA Aziz Public School in Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh, with a cash award of ₹50,000. Notably, the third place was clinched by SOS Senior from SOS Village in Guwahati, Assam, earning a cash prize of ₹25,000.

In the junior category, the top honours went to ObestressAlerter from DAV Kalinga Nagar in BBSR, Odisha, securing the first place and an enticing cash prize of ₹30,000.

## Multiple whammy to fuel more Sikkim-like disasters

Rising temperatures, glacial melt, heavy rainfall... The multiplier effect of climate change combined with untrammelled construction and pollution to wreak havoc in Sikkim, say scientists, warning that more such disasters in the Himalayas could be in the offing with the rise in the number of glacial lakes.

As Sikkim picks up the pieces following flash floods that saw many thousands being displaced, major infrastructure projects destroyed and scores of people killed earlier this month, experts said other Himalayan states, including Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, are susceptible to similar glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF).

A GLOF is a catastrophic deluge triggered by the failure of a moraine dam containing a glacial lake.

"Vulnerable areas include Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, and Arunachal Pradesh, where numerous glacial lakes are rapidly expanding due to climate change," environmental expert Anjal Prakash told PTI.

Experts attribute GLOFs to melting glaciers, a consequence of escalating temperatures driven by human-induced pollution and unchecked construction in the region. Factors such as earthquakes and black carbon emissions also play a role.

According to environmental

engineer Mohammed Farooq Azam, climate change is working in two ways.

"First, global warming is resulting in glacier wastage that is more pronounced post-2000 in the Himalayan region. The receding glaciers are leaving depressions where they terminate. These depressions are filled with meltwater and produce pro-glacial lakes, which are often held by the fragile natural dams. These lakes in turn enhance glacier wastage and are growing in size as well as numbers with ongoing global warming," he explained.

"Further, climate change is also resulting in extreme weather conditions," Azam, associate professor at the Indian Institute of Technology-Indore, added.

The frequency of extreme precipitation and heat waves is increasing, making pro-glacial lakes more vulnerable to breaches. This was the case in the 2013 Kedarnath disaster where the Chorabari pro-glacial lake was completely breached and that is probably what happened in Sikkim too, Azam said.

More than 5,000 people were "presumed dead" when disaster struck in Kedarnath in Uttarakhand in 2013.

Prakash agreed with Azam.

Emphasising that climate change plays a pivotal role in driving GLOFs, the research director and adjunct associate professor at the Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, said



the detrimental influence of infrastructure, deforestation, and human settlements in these vulnerable Himalayan regions are exacerbating the threat.

"Earthquakes, a common occurrence in tectonically active regions like the Himalayas, can also trigger GLOFs by destabilising the glacier or the dam. Landslides, often caused by a mix of thawing permafrost and increased water pressure, can also rupture glacial lakes. Human activities like road construction and deforestation in fragile mountain ecosystems further contribute to GLOF risks," Prakash said.

Though studies have suggested rainfall and earthquakes as potential drivers of GLOFs, it remains a challenge to determine

definitively which factor has a more significant impact, according to researcher Rina Shah.

"Climate change is a risk multiplier in this case where the mountains are already at ecological and environmental risk because of biophysical and topographic characteristics," Shah, co-founder at Reading Himalaya, a research and policy consultancy, told PTI.

Half the Earth's 215,000 glaciers are expected to melt by the end of the century, even if global warming is limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius, revealed a study published in the journal Nature, underscoring the criticality of the situation.

This alarming revelation comes alongside another concerning statistic: the volume of

glacial lakes has surged by 50 per cent in just 30 years, according to a 2020 study based on satellite data.

While glacier lakes can emerge in any area left behind after a glacier retreats, the experts said GLOF hotspots are primarily concentrated in the eastern and central Himalayan regions.

"All the Himalayan countries are prone to have GLOF events in the future due to enhanced glacier wastage, increase in number and size of pro-glacier lakes, increase in erratic precipitations and heatwaves," Azam explained.

Climate scientist Roxy Mathew Koll warned that the likelihood of cloudbursts, heavy rainfall, landslides, and glacial outbursts has markedly increased, especially over mountainous regions, in a swiftly warming world.

"If we have data over these regions, we can identify the hotspots and also improve our weather forecasts," Koll, from Pune's Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) told PTI.

The tragedies, whether in the sinking town of Joshimath or in Sikkim, were forefod decades ago, said Manshi Asher from the Environment Research and Action Collective, Himdhara.

"Himalayas are known as multi-hazard zones and are interlinked hazards - floods, landslides, seismic activity, etc. There will be triggers and cycles of disasters exacerbated because

of climatic and biophysical factors. Evidence regarding the damage that can be caused by these projects has been presented and sidelined over and over again," Asher said.

"A question does arise then - why was such heavy investment allowed in fragile landscapes jeopardising ecology and people?"

An estimated three million Indians currently live in areas where the threat of a GLOF is ever present.

Exacerbating the situation further, climate change continues to intensify due to the escalating emissions of black carbon resulting from fossil fuel combustion. The experts emphasised that when desert dust and black carbon settle on glaciers, they expedite the melting process by diminishing their albedo, or reflectivity, causing the glaciers to absorb more sunlight.

"Increasing tourism in the mountains is also affecting the local climate and glacier wastage. For instance, glaciers close to roads often have more black carbon and dust on their surfaces due to their close vicinity," Azam said.

Prakash added that construction activities around mountains disrupt ecosystems, increasing the risk of landslides and lake destabilisation which intensify the impact of climate change, making GLOFs more frequent and severe.

**FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS**

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemana-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



# Sacrifices mark annual Chhatar Jatra

Every Mahashtami, the 8th day of the annual Durga Puja, the streets of Bhawanipatna turn bloodstained as Goddess Manikeswari is taken out in a procession

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatna, Oct 22:** Lakhs of devotees thronged Bhawanipatna, the district headquarters town of Kalahandi, Sunday to witness the famous Chhatar Jatra of Goddess Manikeswari, the presiding deity of the district.

Despite repeated appeals by the administration to desist from animal sacrifice, hundreds of goats and hens were slaughtered to "appease" Maa Manikeswari during the annual 'Chhatar Jatra'. The three-km long road stretching from Jenakhal to the shrine turned scarlet with the blood of thousands of animals and birds which were sacrificed in full public view during the festival in the presence of district administration and police officials. Although animal sacrifice has been stopped in various shrines across the state, the tradition still continues during the Chhatar Jatra.

Chhatar Jatra is the annual journey symbolising the return of the Goddess Maa Manikeswari from Jenakhal to the main temple. It is observed at the exact time when 'Asthami' concludes and 'Navami' begins during the Durga Puja festival.

This festival, unique to the Konda tribe-dominated Kalahandi district, is considered to be a blend of the tribal and Aryan cultures of the state which is amply reflected in the celebration of Chhatar Jatra.

In the past, both the royal family and the tribals in Kalahandi district participated in the rituals and made offerings to the deity. However, with passage of time, now local residents and government bodies host the festival together.



An interesting aspect of this festival is that a few pigeons will be invariably sitting on top of the 'Chhatar', unfazed by the loud noise and massive crowd during the Chhatar Jatra, a devotee said.

During the festival thousands of animals and birds were sacrificed by the devotees after fulfillment of their wishes. While goats and hens were sacrificed, people also released hundreds of doves to mark the occasion, eye-witnesses said.

"People's religious sentiment is centuries old and the administration has been trying to sensitise them. Though there has been a decline in the number of animals being sacrificed, people still believe in the tradition. It will go away gradually," Tanmaya Kumar Darwan, additional district magistrate of Kalahandi, said over phone.

Kalahandi Collector P Anvesha Reddy held a series of meetings

with senior officials, police and public representatives and announcements were also made in the public address system and social media to desist people from animal sacrifice. However, due to age-old belief and tradition, it had no impact on devotees, the ADM said.

The main road in the town wore a reddish look after the sacrifices of animals and birds. Some other devotees broke coconuts and offered lamps to the deity.

A secret ritual known as 'Munda Basa' of the Goddess was held according to tradition in the wee hours of Sunday. Two buffaloes were sacrificed secretly before beginning of the Jatra to the temple.

The priests and the bearers carried the 'Bije Pratima', a representative idol of the deity towards the temple amid beating

of gongs, dholaks and drums amid performances of various traditional cultural troupes and ululations of devotees.

Over 30 cultural troupes participated in the Chhatar Jatra and presented scintillating performances during the festival. During this period lakhs of devotees remained present on both sides of the road for a three-km stretch and paid their obeisance to the deity. The Chhatar finally reached the temple at 12.10am making its way through the crowded road.

Kalahandi royal Ananta Pratap Deo who was present during the festival paid obeisance to the deity and welcomed the Chhatar inside the temple. The district police had deployed 12-platoons of police force including two additional SPs, nine DSPs, 19 inspectors, 31 SIs, and 54 ASIs under the supervision of senior police officials to maintain law and order during the festival, SP Abhilash G said.

ADM Tanmaya Kumar Darwan, Bhawanipatna Sub-Collector Biswajit Das, tehsildar Upendra Luha, district information and public relation officer Manoj Kumar Behera and executive officer Chinmaya Kumar Nayak were present during to supervise and ensure smooth functioning of the festival. CCTVs were installed for surveillance and to track any untoward incident during the festival.

The 3km journey of Chhatar took about 7 hours as more than 4 lakh people had congregated at Bhawanipatna town for the occasion, police said, adding that devotees from neighbouring states like Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh also took part in the festival.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## Funeral cannibalism: NHRC closes case

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, Oct 22:** National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has closed a case relating to cannibalism by two men during a funeral ritual as the case is being dealt by a court of law.

NHRC closed the case October 19 after human rights lawyer and the petitioner Radhakanta Tripathy apprised the rights body about it.

Tripathy in a petition in July alleged that two persons reportedly ate the flesh of Madhusmita Singh, a 25-year-old dead woman of Bandhasahi village at the village crematorium in Mayurbhanj district July 12 during cremation and sought stern action against the accused.

As per the allegation the accused identified as Sundar



Mohan Singh (58) and Narendra Singh (25) of Dantuni village took away a portion of the body from the funeral pyre and ate it as a practice of witch craft and sorcery.

Pursuant to the direction of the commission, an inquiry was conducted into the incident. The inquiry revealed that Madhusmita Singh died July 11 this year.

The family members of the deceased performed the cremation at the village burial ground. When cremation was going on,

the villagers and family members of the deceased left the place.

After kin of the deceased left, Sundar and Narendra took a part of the body from the pyre and ate it.

Police registered a case on the basis of a written complaint by the mother of the deceased and submitted a chargesheet.

The commission October 19 closed the case saying no further intervention by the commission is required since legal action has been taken in the matter.

## Man hacked to death over past enmity in Ganjam, youth critical

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Purushottampur, Oct 22:** A man travelling in an auto-rickshaw was brutally hacked to death while his co-passenger sustained critical injuries in an organised attack by miscreants over past enmity on a forested road at Badarampalli village under Purushottampur police limits in Ganjam district, Saturday night.

The deceased was identified as K Mitu Reddy, 36, alias Padmacharan of Komand village under Rambha police limits in the district. The critically injured co-passenger was identified as Lakshman Panda, 28, of Gudijhar village.

Panda was rushed to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur first and later shifted to AIIMS in Bhubaneswar after his condition deteriorated. The incident has sent shockwaves and sparked fear in the area.

On being informed, Rambha police sent the body for post-mortem and launched an investigation. Police said Mitu had a fight with some co-villagers

over money collected for the village community hall and the deity. The opposite party nursed a grudge against him and planned to get rid of him.

The incident occurred when Mitu and Lakshman had been to Purushottampur on some work and returning home in an auto-rickshaw, Saturday night. His detractors came to know of his visit to Purushottampur and were hiding on the forested road near Badarampalli village carrying sharp-edged weapons.

They waylaid the auto-rickshaw when it arrived and abused the duo and suddenly hacked Mitu and Lakshman with the sharp-edged weapons.

Locals rescued them and rushed them to the Purushottampur CHC and later shifted them to the Berhampur-based MKCG Medical College and Hospital. During treatment Mitu narrated before his brother Bauribandhu Reddy that some villagers of Komanda and Sikula were responsible for the attack on him and Lakshman. However, Mitu succumbed to his injuries after some time during treatment.



**ROOTED IN TRADITION:** Priests carry swords to be worshipped as part of 'khandha puja' rituals at Samaleswari temple in Sambalpur on the occasion of Mahashtami, the 8th day of Durga Puja fete, Sunday

## Forest dept forms 5 teams to locate RBT in Mahendragiri

PNN & AGENCIES

**Berhampur, Oct 22:** The Odisha government has formed five teams to spot the Royal Bengal Tiger which was captured by a trap camera set up within Mahendragiri forest range in Gajapati district earlier this week, an official said.

Seven cameras have been installed in the adjoining places of Santoshpur near Gandahati waterfall, where photographs of the big cat were captured.

"The teams consist of a total of 30 department staff. They will also create awareness among the nearby residents not to let their domestic animals roam free," Paralakhemundi Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) S Anand said.

The forest officials captured images of the big cat in a trap camera in the area twice Thursday and heard the animal's roar, he said.

"The trap cameras were installed after the villagers recovered the carcass of a cow,



suspected to be the prey of a tiger Wednesday. Forest officials have also analysed the pug marks of the tiger after the incident," said Ashok Kumar Behera, Assistant Conservator of Forest (ACF), Paralakhemundi.

The tiger had not attacked any other domestic animal. "The people of the area were asked not to venture into forests after evening and to keep their livestock safe," said Behera.

The DFO said the tiger was suspected to have migrated from Bhamini mandal of Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh to explore new territory.

## Man killed in suspected jumbo attack

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 22:** The dead body of a 62-year-old person was found from Nelunga reserve forest in Keonjhar district Sunday.

Police identified the deceased as Bhagirathi Mahant, 55, a resident of Basudevur village under Keonjhar Sadar PS. "The deceased's relatives and some villagers spotted Bhagirathi lying dead in the forest Sunday morning. Police and Forest officials reached the spot and sent the body to hospital for autopsy. From the initial circumstances, Bhagirathi is suspected to have been trampled to death by a wild elephant. The villagers also informed us that a herd of 18 pachyderms were spotted in the forest area two days back," Keonjhar Sadar IIC said.

Bhagirathi, a cowherd, who had gone to the forest with the bovines October 20, did not return home till late Saturday night. The worried family members and villagers came across his body during search after two days.

## Girl held for aiding youths in rape bid on classmate

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, Oct 22:** Kudanagari police apprehended a Plus-II second year minor girl student for her involvement in providing a drug-laced cold drink to one of her classmates and helping two youths in kidnapping and attempting to rape her.

Kendrapada SDPO Debendra Mallick said the girl was produced before the CJM-cum-Principal Magistrate, Juvenile Justice Board of Kendrapada and sent to Berhampur-based reformation centre. Kudanagari IIC PC Patayat said the CCTV footage established the involvement of the minor girl in the crime.

A Plus II science girl student of a local college under Kudanagari police jurisdiction was allegedly abducted by two youths October 17 after she was given soft drink laced with drug by one of her classmates, who was aiding the youths in their rape bid. But the girl managed to escape and lodged an FIR. In her FIR filed October 18, she alleged that she fell uncon-

scious after she drank the cold drink offered by her classmate. When she regained her consciousness, she found herself in a room and her classmate along with the two youths who outraged her modesty by attempting to undress her.

When she screamed and attempted to shout for help, her classmate forcibly hold her two legs and the two youths made an attempt to sexually abuse her. When she attempted to rescue herself from their clutches, she was assaulted and later forcibly taken in a car and dropped near Narendrapur bridge on that evening at about 7pm.

She sustained injuries on her face and body and failed to walk properly. Later, her family members rescued her in critical condition and rushed her to Patkura CHC for treatment.

Acting on the FIR, Kudanagari police registered a POCSE case. The BJP activists of Patkura led by its state spokesman, Tejeswar Parida held demonstration in front of the college demanding arrest of all the accused.

scious after she drank the cold drink offered by her classmate. When she regained her consciousness, she found herself in a room and her classmate along with the two youths who outraged her modesty by attempting to undress her.

When she screamed and attempted to shout for help, her classmate forcibly hold her two legs and the two youths made an attempt to sexually abuse her. When she attempted to rescue herself from their clutches, she was assaulted and later forcibly taken in a car and dropped near Narendrapur bridge on that evening at about 7pm.

She sustained injuries on her face and body and failed to walk properly. Later, her family members rescued her in critical condition and rushed her to Patkura CHC for treatment.

Acting on the FIR, Kudanagari police registered a POCSE case. The BJP activists of Patkura led by its state spokesman, Tejeswar Parida held demonstration in front of the college demanding arrest of all the accused.

## Jumbo calf rescued after falling into pit



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, Oct 22:** An elephant calf sustained critical injuries after it fell into a pit at Bheidihi village under Bhuyan Juang Pidha forest range in Keonjhar district, forest officials said Sunday.

Reports said the calf belonging to a 25-member herd was moving in the jungle when it fell into a pit dug up for plantation and got stuck inside. The mother elephant tried to rescue its calf but failed in her bid as it had sustained critical injuries inside the pit and was unable to climb up.

Locals noticed the calf inside the pit and informed the forest department. On being informed, forest officials and a team of veterinarians reached the spot and started treatment of the injured calf. ACF Ashok Das confirmed the development stating that the injured calf is being treated by a team of veterinarians after it was rescued from the pit.

## EAST COAST RAILWAY

e-Tender Notice No. ETECONIBBS 2023047, Dated: 16.10.2023

**NAME OF WORK: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL CONSULTANT FOR DIFFERENT FIELD OFFICES AND HEAD QUARTER OFFICE AT BHUBANESWAR UNDER CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/CONSTRUCTION/BHUBANESWAR.**

Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 5431.60 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 28,65,800/-, Completion Period of the Work: 36 (Thirty six) Months.

Tender Closing Date & Time: At 1200 hrs. of 16.11.2023.

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/bidder can participate on e-tendering.

The tenderers should read all instructions to the tenderers carefully and ensure compliance of all instructions.

Chief Administrative Officer (Con)/ PR-77CG/23-24 Bhubaneswar



Turn all things to honey; this is the law of divine living.  
SRI AUROBINDO



## Stifling Voice

Literature, for centuries, has played a pivotal role in denouncing wars and promoting peace. This could be for the simple reason that poets, novelists and playwrights have a special type of human kindness in abundant measure to portray with empathy the predicament of man in all circumstances, especially when struggling against heavy odds. Also, one of the purposes of literature is to encourage understanding and dialogue between cultures. But, the biggest book fair of the world, the Frankfurt Book Fair, has let the world of liberal arts and literature down by not allowing a leading Palestinian novelist, Adania Shibli, to take part in one of its events, while it has officially announced its decision to prominently project Israel's cause and its writers at the fair this time around. It was expected that at a time of horrific massacres and violence in Israel, Gaza Strip and West Bank the world's biggest book fair would champion literary voices from both Palestine and Israel. But, it seems to have deliberately chosen to shut the voice of one side of the conflict in what may seem to some as a partisan decision.

This has resulted in triggering of condemnation by over 1300 prominent authors, including Nobel laureates, and publishers from around the world. They have accused the Frankfurt Book Fair of "shutting down" Palestinian voices, after an awards ceremony to honour a novel by Shibli was called off due to the ongoing war in Israel. This shutting down of Palestinian voices is understandable as a German response. Germany, as a nation, has the terrible history of the Holocaust of the last century to deal with. They obviously do not wish to be counted as anti Semitic at this juncture of the Israel-Palestine conflict.

The Palestine-born novelist and essayist divides her time between Berlin and Jerusalem and is well known as much in Germany as in the Arab world. She was to be awarded the 2023 LiTeraturpreis on October 20. This is an annual prize given to female writers from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Arab world. However, shortly before the programme the LitProm Association, which hands over the prize, announced it would postpone the award ceremony "due to the war started by Hamas, under which millions of people in Israel and Palestine are suffering."

In its original announcement, LitProm said it had taken the step to postpone the award as a "joint decision" with the author. But Shibli's literary agency rubbished the claim stating that the decision had not been made with the author's consent. In fact, the agency clarified had the ceremony been held, she would have taken the opportunity to reflect on the role of literature in these cruel and painful times.

The immediate reaction to the denial of opportunity to Shibli was an open letter, signed by several hundred authors, including the Irish novelist Colm Toibin, the American-Libyan Pulitzer winner Hisham Matar, the British-Pakistani novelist Kamila Shamsie and the British historian William Dalrymple. They have admonished the organisers of the book fair and said it has a responsibility for creating spaces for Palestinian writers to share their thoughts, feelings, reflections on literature through these terrible, cruel times, not shutting them down.

The sympathy of the West for Israel following the dastardly attack by Hamas is understandable, though it has always been coloured by prejudices against the Palestinians since the birth of Israel. Shibli's novel, *Minor Detail*, published in English in 2020, was hailed by LitProm as a "rigorously composed work of art that tells of the power of borders and what violent conflicts do to and with people." The novel was also nominated in the US for the National Book Awards as well as the International Book Awards. It juxtaposes the true story of the 1949 rape and murder of a Bedouin girl at the hands of an Israeli army unit with the fictional story of a female journalist investigating the crime in Ramallah decades later.

It kicked up a controversy in Germany as some critics found it too anti-Semitic. At the same time many literary critics have said the portrayal of Israeli soldiers is merely consistent with Shibli's detached literary style, which harked back to Albert Camus' *The Stranger*.

War-mongers and politicians would like to perpetuate the Israel-Palestine conflict, whereas litterateurs and other creative artists work for presenting the stark reality so as to end sufferings. Cancelling cultural events like the one at the Frankfurt Book Fair is not the way forward. This is particularly painful for the cause of Palestine since the same book fair has in the past supported Turkish publishers and gave an opportunity to Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy who spoke to the fair in a pre-recorded address last year to denounce Russia's invasion of his country. The Frankfurt Book Fair decision may have sullied its reputation as a promoter of liberal pursuits but the reasons behind the decision are not unknown.

### WISDOM CORNER

The darker the night, the nearer the dawn. Victory in life is decided by that last concentrated burst of energy filled with the resolve to win.  
DAISAKU KEDA

Stop being average. You're not even good. You were born to be great.  
ERIC THOMAS

At the end of the day, we can endure much more than we think we can.  
FRIDA KAHLO

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1956: The International Atomic Energy Agency was created with the purpose of increasing the contribution of atomic energy to world peace.

1964: The French existentialist philosopher and writer Jean-Paul Sartre published a letter in the newspaper *Le Figaro* to explain why he did not want to accept the Nobel Prize for Literature he had been awarded the day before on October 22. In his letter, he said he did not want to take sides in the East and West struggle of the Cold War, by accepting an award that was given out by Western institutions.

1983: On this day, suicide bombers drove truckloads of high explosives into the barracks of US Marines and French paratroopers in Beirut, killing 241 US servicemen and 58 French troops.

2001: Apple introduced the iPod, a portable media player that became one of the most successful and revolutionary products of the early 2000s.

### LOL

#### PASSING A PARROT

A lady was walking down the street to work and she saw a parrot on a perch in front of a pet store. The parrot said to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly." Well, the lady is furious! She stormed past the store to her work. On the way home she saw the same parrot and it said to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly." She was incredibly ticked now. The next day the same parrot again said

to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly." The lady was so ticked that she went into the store and said that she would sue the store and kill the bird. The store manager replied, "That's not good," and promised he wouldn't say it again. When the lady walked past the store that day after work the parrot called to her, "Hey lady." She paused and said, "Yes?" The bird said, "You know."



## FOCUS PRIVACY

# SURVEILLANCE STATES



Despite its immense value and global appeal, encryption is under threat worldwide. It is used by law-abiding citizens to protect themselves, but also by bad actors to hide their malicious activities



Riana Pfefferkorn & Callum Voge

**PUBLIC SCRUTINY OF GOVERNMENT POWERS KEEPS THEM IN CHECK. THAT IS HOW A DEMOCRACY IS MEANT TO WORK**

Government efforts to access private communications are nothing new. In decades past, such attempts at prying were often justified on national-security grounds. Today, however, policymakers point to child safety and disinformation as reasons to limit privacy protections. Established democracies are often leading this charge, inadvertently paving the way for the world's autocrats.

But people around the world are not taking these policies lying down. They speak out, using events like Global Encryption Day to highlight the importance of privacy and security not just for their own lives but for their communities and societies. And as vociferous opposition continues to stymie government efforts to expand surveillance powers, it has become clear that public pressure works.

Encryption, which scrambles digital data so that it can be read only by someone with the means to decode it, has become ubiquitous because it keeps information confidential and secure while authenticating the identity of the person with whom one is communicating. Today, billions of people use encryption to send digital messages and emails, transfer money, load websites, and protect their data. The gold standard in security is "end-to-end" encryption (E2EE), as only the participants have access to the data - not even the service provider can decipher it.

Despite its immense value and global appeal, encryption is under threat worldwide. It is used by law-abiding citizens to protect themselves, but also by bad actors to hide their malicious activities. For this reason, law-enforcement authorities oppose encryption designs, especially E2EE, that prevent them from accessing data.

But even after decades of research, there is still no known way to grant law enforcement access without undermining encryption's privacy and security features. The makers of encrypted devices and services

have therefore resisted calls to build in "backdoor" government access, which would make all of their users more vulnerable. The harmful online activities that concern police do not happen only in encrypted spaces. Hate speech, disinformation, and other objectionable content remain a pernicious problem on social-media platforms and other sites, motivating a worldwide legislative push to force tech companies to improve their services. The British Parliament, for example, recently passed the Online Safety Bill (OSB) after several turbulent years during which civil-society pressure changed its scope significantly. The final version focuses mainly on the removal of illegal content and mitigating risks to children.

Yet the OSB still has serious flaws. For example, Parliament failed to include language safeguarding encryption. Moreover, the law gives Ofcom, the United Kingdom's communications regulator, the authority to compel social-media platforms and messaging services to mass scan their users' files and communications for evidence of child sexual abuse. No one contests that fighting child exploitation is immensely important. But Ofcom's power covers E2EE messaging services, which, by definition, cannot be accessed by service providers. Thus, the only way these services could

comply with an Ofcom order is by making fundamental changes to their encryption design.

In other words, the OSB gives Ofcom the power to force service providers to undermine their own encryption. Apple, Meta, and Signal have all promised to pull their E2EE apps from the UK rather than comply with any government order to diminish their users' privacy and security. In response, Ofcom has publicly vowed not to use its new authority, at least for now.

And with good reason: important bodies have concluded that scanning technologies are not sufficiently accurate, would limit fundamental rights, and would likely fail the proportionality test - the disadvantages would outweigh the advantages. Furthermore, criminals could easily circumvent these controls by encrypting content with a separate application. Ofcom would be wise to tread carefully, lest it risk the privacy and security of internet users for the sake of unproven and potentially ineffective technologies.

Ofcom's (supposed) forbearance recalls Australian authorities' conduct since the passage of a contentious 2018 law granting new governmental powers to compel communications providers to add backdoor access to their products. Civil-society and cybersecurity ex-

perts raised alarms about the law's dangers for privacy and security, and legislators themselves admitted the bill was flawed, but it passed anyway.

Five years later, not a single compulsory notice has been issued. This may reflect a deliberate choice: exercising such a power risks political blowback. Wield the sword too enthusiastically, and it might be taken away; better to keep it sheathed in favour of other, less controversial tools. Then again, government forbearance might also indicate that the controversial new power was unnecessary in the first place.

Public scrutiny of government powers keeps them in check. That is how a democracy is meant to work. In promising not to use its new tool, Ofcom appears to have grasped that the government's legitimacy is at stake. But as the UK bill inspires similar legislation in other countries, some of which are less democratic and have a track record of weaponising digital technologies against their citizens, this nuance will likely be lost.

The first test will come in the European Union, where legislators are fighting over a draft regulation to expand tech companies' child-safety obligations. Like the UK bill, the proposed Child Sex Abuse Regulation (CSAR) has already gone through numerous revisions, as member states lock horns over protecting E2EE.

By engaging with civil society, technologists, and the public, governments can design regulations that respect privacy, data security, and freedom of expression while still helping protect users from harm. Doing so is the only way to make sure that the internet works for everyone.

Riana Pfefferkorn is a research scholar at the Stanford Internet Observatory. Callum Voge is Director of Government Affairs and Advocacy at the Internet Society.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

## SPECTRUM FOOD SECURITY

# Disturbing spectre of hunger

The Sustainable Development Goal 2 seeks to create a world free of hunger by 2030. However, an alarming increase has been noticed since 2015; a trend exacerbated by a deadly cocktail of conflict, climate change, and COVID-19. By 2022 around 9.2% of world population (735 million) suffered from a state of chronic hunger, around 2.4 billion faced severe food insecurity, 148 million children were stunted and 45 million were affected by wasting. The latest GHI report released by two oversight agencies, Concern Worldwide, and Welt Hunger Life, broadly corroborates the above finding. However, what is of enormous concern to India is that it has the highest child wasting globally at 18.7%. This is the worst form of child undernutrition. In terms of childhood stunting, India is rated to be at very high risk and in terms of undernutrition it is at medium risk, with around 16.6% undernourished. However, the mortality rate of children below the age of 5 has come down to 3.5%. Ranked 111 among 125 countries, the glow of the

G20 Summit masks India's lamentable record in containing hunger.

Ironically, the pre-Modi regime has witnessed a fall in the hunger index and the Modi era is characterised by an increasing trend despite the rhetoric of Anaemia Mukh Bharat. The Poshan Programme (2018) has set a target to reduce anaemia and stunting by 3% a year as against less than 1% reduction during the Congress regime. This has remained an unrequited rhetoric.

The latest GHI report has understandably raised hackles in the government. The government's objection is predicated on its perception that the methodology is faulty. The statement of the government "There is hardly any evidence that child mortality is an outcome of hunger," defies all logic. The government believes that as per the Poshan tracker, the percentage of wasting is 7.3% as against 18.7% as per the GHI report. This is quite clearly ludicrous as the NFHS V (2019 to 2021) has put the overall figure of wasting at 19.3%.

In fact, as per the comprehensive report of IIPS Mumbai

(NFHS V) 33% of children suffer from malnutrition, and the under 5 mortality rate is 41.9%. Niti Ayog which is tracking the progress of states against various SDG targets brings out how on the all-India basis, malnutrition is about 21.2% and child mortality is 28.3%.

Danielle Resnick of the Brookings Institution in a perceptive article in GHI writes that the recent trend towards decentralising government function has given local government greater autonomy and authority. Decision-makers must put inclusive local governance, accountability, and realisation of the right to food at the centre of the food system as the food system in its current form is inadequate for the task of substantially ending poverty and hunger. He also brings out that there is a need to raise awareness of the right to food.

The heart of liberal democracy is providing socio-economic justice to all its citizens. Be it John Rawls' idea of justice or Amartya Sen's clarion call to the state to provide equal access to human capability, India's

record after economic liberalisation shows scant concern for social sector imperatives like quality school education, basic healthcare at affordable cost and minimal nutrition to all. The GHI report rightly believes that the government must respect, protect, and fulfill their right to food which should be enshrined in national law and supported by a mechanism for redressing grievance. Instead of quibbling about the methodological flaws of the GHI, the government would be well advised to take note of the well-thought-out recommendation of the GHI report. In a perceptive analysis of India's elections from 1962 to 2014, Piketty and Banerjee brought out (2019) how elections in India are fought on caste and religious divisions rather than on development issues like education, healthcare, and income distribution. The time for the right to food as a fundamental right has become overdue and it's high time the upcoming elections are fought on development rather than divisive issues.

The writer teaches Macro Economics. Views are personal.



Satya Narayan Misra

**INDIA'S RECORD AFTER ECONOMIC LIBERALISATION SHOWS SCANT CONCERN FOR SOCIAL SECTOR IMPERATIVES**

### Historic return

Sir, Cricket's return to the Olympics in 2028 is a huge deal for the sport. It has been absent from the Olympics for a long time. For places like India, where cricket is hugely popular, this is really exciting news. People are looking forward to seeing cricket in the Olympics because it means a lot more people, about three billion, can watch it on TV and online. This decision opens up new opportunities for the sport to reach a broader audience and inspire more nations to embrace cricket. With the immense viewership of the Olympic, cricket will have a chance to shine on a truly global platform. It's heartening to see the enthusiasm and support from fans, athletes, and celebrities, particularly in countries like India, where cricket holds a special place. The excitement and anticipation surrounding cricket's return to the Olympics are unmistakable, making it a significant and thrilling moment for the sport and its enthusiasts across the globe.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

### Options exhausted

Sir, this refers to "Canada withdraws 41 diplomats from India," *Orissa POST*, Oct 21. India and Canada are headed for an even frostier season in ties after the MEA's latest move to pare down the number of Canadian diplomats in India, from 62 to 21. The developments indicate that if there had been any diplomatic efforts to defuse the situation in the past, they have been fruitless. Apart from the Modi-Trudeau and National Security Adviser meetings that had discussed the Nijjar case, EAM S Jaishankar had reportedly met Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly in the US on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly. None of those appears to have turned the trajectory of events; attempts by Canada's "Five Eyes" allies to mediate have not worked either. While the allies have supported Canada's claims, they have also shored up their ties with India, with possible visits by the British, US and Australian leaders that will assure New Delhi. With diplomatic options exhausted for now, it is hoped a period of reflection will bring fresh counsel on how to break the logjam. Till then, students, tourists and businesspersons will suffer.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

**OrissaPOST**  
B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010





## Khattar advocates for modern farming

Under the Mera Pani-Meri Virasat, scheme started in Kharif-2020, the government is providing financial assistance of ₹7,000 per acre to the farmers for diversifying the paddy crop with alternative crops like maize, cotton, millet, pulses, vegetables and fruits, the statement quoted Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar as saying

AGENCIES

**Chandigarh, Oct 22:** Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Sunday said instead of cultivating traditional crops it is imperative for the farmers to do modern crops farming -- the need of the hour. "This will not only enhance their income but will also ensure protection of the environment. The farmer's future depends on crop diversification. In this direction, the state government took a new initiative by starting the Mera Pani-Meri Virasat scheme, under which the key objective is to ensure water conservation with crop diversification," he said. The scheme is proving to be effective and considering its success, a target of saving 42,480 crore litres of water has been set for 2023-24. The Chief Minister said under the Mera Pani-Meri Virasat scheme started in 2020, the government is providing a financial assistance of ₹7,000 per acre to the farmers for diversifying the paddy crop with alternative crops like maize, cotton, millet, pulses, vegetables and fruits. In Kharif year 2020, the crop diversification was adopted by 41,947 farmers on 63,743 acres and a grant of ₹45 crore was provided to them. A total of 22,565 crore litres of water was saved. Similarly, in Kharif 2023 alternative crops of



the previous year have been included in this year as well and in this scheme a target of 1.20 lakh acres has been set under crop diversification for which a grant of ₹84 crore is expected to be spent by the government. The total target of this scheme is to save approximately 42,480 crore litres of water. Till July 31, 32,150 farmers have registered their 70,170 acres of crops under this scheme. Khattar said the government has implemented the Natural Farming Scheme to protect soil health from degradation. A target of 20,000 acres, comprising 16,000 acres agriculture and 4,000 acres horticulture, has been set up to encourage natural farming in 2023-24. For this, the government has started a dedicated natural farming portal and till now 9,169 farmers have registered themselves on the portal. Under this scheme, an assistance of ₹3,000 will be provided for purchasing four drums to a farmer to prepare a natural fertiliser produced by mixing cow's dung and urine and ₹25,000 for the purchase of indigenous cows.

## Mahua cleared her stand on bribery charges: Derek

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Oct 22:** The Trinamool Congress Sunday said since its MP Mahua Moitra has already clarified her stand on allegations of bribe for questions raised, the party would now await the probe by the parliamentary ethics committee as the matter has to do with "her rights and privileges". The TMC has distanced itself from the controversy over the allegation against the Lok Sabha MP. BJP MP Nishikant Dubey and lawyer Jai Anant Dehadrai have alleged that Moitra had ac-

cepted favours from Hiranandani in exchange for raising questions in Parliament. In response, Moitra filed a defamation suit against them before the Delhi High Court. Dubey's complaint has been referred to Parliament's Ethics Committee by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. Rajya Sabha MP O'Brien told PTI Video, "The member concerned has been advised by the party leadership to clarify her position regarding the allegations levelled against her. She has already done that." "However, since the matter has to do with an elected MP,



her rights and privileges, let the matter be investigated by the right forum of Parliament, after

which the party leadership will take an appropriate decision," he added. TMC's West Bengal general secretary and spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said that the party has nothing to say on the issue and that the "person around whom this controversy is revolving is best suited to react to this". Darshan Hiranandani, the CEO of real estate-to-energy group Hiranandani, who allegedly paid Moitra to raise questions in Parliament about Adani Group, recently claimed in a signed affidavit that she targeted Gautam Adani to "malign and

embarrass Prime Minister Narendra Modi whose impeccable reputation gave opposition no opportunity to attack him". Vinod Sonkar, the chairman of the Lok Sabha Ethics Committee, had said he had received the sworn-in affidavit from Hiranandani. Moitra, however, has raised questions over the credibility of Hiranandani's affidavit, alleging that it was "drafted by the PMO" and he was forced to sign it after being "threatened" with "total shut down" of his family's businesses.



Artisans prepare effigies of demon king Ravana ahead of the Dussehra festival, in Gurugram, Haryana

## Panel to examine historical facts in Haryana

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chandigarh, Oct 22:** The Haryana government has set up a seven-member committee to examine the historical facts about Samrat Mihir Bhoj with the aim of averting the proliferation of disinformation. An order to this effect was issued by Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal here said recently in a statement. The order states that the Divisional Commissioner, Karnal, will be chairman of the committee, while Inspector General of Police, Karnal Range will be its vice chairman and the Deputy Commissioner of Kaithal will be its Member Secretary. The Superintendent of Police of Kaithal, two professors of history from Panjab University, Chandigarh namely Rajeev Lochan and Priyatosh Sharma and two advocates of both parties Gurjar and Kshatriya as representative of both communities will be its members. The committee will submit its report within a four weeks.

## Environmentalists irked over relaxation of decibel limits for firecrackers in Bengal

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, Oct 22:** Environmentalists in West Bengal are irked over the decision of the West Bengal Pollution Control Board (WBPCB) to relax the decibel limit for firecrackers from the earlier level of 90 decibels to the 125 decibels. The board said that the new decibel limit is as per the limit set by the Supreme Court nationally but has not been able to satisfy acclaimed environmentalists like Naba Dutta and SM Ghosh. As per the environmentalists, since the earlier limit of 90 decibels in 2017 was fixed following the recommendations of a committee of experts led by a leading ENT specialist, the board's logic behind the relaxation of the decibel limit is not acceptable. The environmentalists doubt the relaxation in the decibel limit and that too before the festive season was done succumbing to the pressure of the extremely powerful firecracker manufacturers lobby in the state. They said that these firecracker manufacturers tried for relaxation of the decibel limit by tapping the legal and every time their pleas were rejected by the court.

## Haryana CM visits violence-hit Nuh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Nuh (Hr), Oct 22:** Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Saturday met those affected by the July 31 communal violence here. Khattar also offered prayers at the Nalheshwar Mahadev temple in Nalhar village, where a procession led by the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) had been attacked. Six people were killed in the communal violence, most of them during the attack. A Muslim cleric was killed in adjoining Gurugram. "Every citizen condemns such incidents and these events should never have occurred," the chief minister said at Badkali Chowk where he visited an oil mill that was set afire during the riots. "Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the district administration and the government to restore law and order promptly. Thanks to the collective efforts of everyone, the situation has returned to normal," he told reporters. He met the family of Shakti Singh, 35, a resident of Bhadas village who lost his life in the Nuh violence and offered his condolences. Khattar assured Singh's family of the government's support and issued directions to the district ad-



Khattar offered prayers at the Nalheshwar Mahadev temple in Nalhar village, where a procession led by the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) had been attacked

ministration to make arrangements for the education of Singh's children. He said the government had called for applications on the 'E-kshatipoorti' portal for those who suffered losses in this violence. Khattar laid the foundation stone of the Yagyashala at the Gurukul in Bhadas village and also interacted with locals. Meanwhile, on the occasion of police commemoration day, the Haryana chief minister paid tributes to the police personnel who laid down their lives in the line of duty. Sunita Devi, the widow of constable Satyaveer who lost

## WB Guv visits Durga Puja organised by TMC leader

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Oct 22:** West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose on Sunday said his fight against corruption and violence will continue. The governor made the statement while he was speaking to reporters after visiting a community puja pandal in north Kolkata's Sukiya Street, the main organiser of which is TMC leader Kunal Ghosh. Ghosh welcomed Bose at the pandal of the Ram Mohan Mission Puja Committee. The governor oversaw some of the rituals of 'Ashtami' puja. Speaking to reporters, he said, "Our fight against corruption will continue and our struggle against violence will also continue. Corruption is a blood seed and violence is a demonic force. Just as Goddess Durga killed 'Mahishasura', and Goddess Kali killed 'Raktabej', we will also kill corruption and violence," he said. Ghosh, however, downplayed the governor's statement, maintaining that it was made in the context of the world at large. "What the governor said is in the context of the entire world, this includes the violence in Gaza. This should not be interpreted in any other way," he claimed.

## Durga Puja: Vegetable prices soar in Kolkata



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, Oct 22:** On the occasion of Durga Puja, people are grappling with soaring vegetable prices across local markets in Kolkata. The Durga Puja organisers also are facing hardships as they have to maintain the community-kitchens adjacent to their Puja pandals. As per the records of the task force of West Bengal government, meant for maintaining control over the prices of essential commodities as on Sunday, the average prices of most vegetables in the retail markets are quite high. The two popular vegetables in Bengali dishes namely bitter melon and parwal is hovering between ₹80 and ₹100 a kilogram. Even the most staple vegetable potato is also quite high priced ranging between ₹20 and ₹35 a kilogram depending on the variety available. The prices for ladies' fingers and pointed gourd are ranging between ₹70 and ₹90 a kilogram. "On an average the price for each variety of vegetable is at least ₹10 to ₹15 higher per kilogram than what it was last week. Only the price of tomato has come down, ranging between ₹40 to ₹50 a kilogram," a member of the task force said. Similarly frustrating are the exorbitant prices of cooking accessories like ginger (Rs 280 to

The Durga Puja organisers also are facing hardships as they have to maintain the community-kitchens adjacent to their Puja pandals

As per the records of the task force of West Bengal government, meant for maintaining control over the prices of essential commodities as on Sunday, the average prices of most vegetables in the retail markets are quite high

## KMC gets central funds to improve sewerage system

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, Oct 22:** At a time when Trinamool Congress-BJP tussle over non-payment of central dues to West Bengal is at its peak, Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) has received an hefty amount of ₹500 crore for improvement in the sewerage system in the state. KMC sources confirmed that the payment has been made under the provisions of 15th finance commission. A senior KMC official said the amount was sanctioned following the union government's satisfaction of the corporation's project report related to sewerage systems and other civic de-

velopment works in the case of Kolkata. "The fund will be of great help since we will be able to start these projects soon after the ongoing festival season is over. Tenders will be floated for that purpose soon after the festive season," said the KMC official. He added the primary target is to set up additional pumping stations in different pockets of



the city so that in case of heavy showers during the monsoons, the stranded water in different pockets can be quickly pumped

out giving relief to the residents of the locality. "We expect to complete and implement the project on this count in the next 30 months," he said. Besides setting up additional pumping stations, work will be undertaken for renovation of a number of canals in and around the city. Currently, there are 26 such canals in the city, out of which the renovation process is already over for 13 following an initiative by the state irrigation department on this count. "A portion of the central funds will be utilised for the renovation of the 13 other canals. There will be attempts at expansion of greenery space within the city as well," the KMC official said.





Army personnel pay tribute to Agniveer Gawate Akshay Laxman, an operator who lost his life in the line of duty amid the terrains of the Siachen glacier



A farmer carries a basket of marigold flowers ahead of 'Vijaydashami' at Chikhali village in Karad



Troops of Indian Army with BRO and assistance of civil administration during an operation to reconnect North Sikkim through the first Bailey Bridge during flood, in Mangam, Sikkim



Author Salman Rushdie receives the Peace Prize of the German book trade (Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels) during a ceremony at the Church of St. Paul in Frankfurt, Germany



Pamban bridge near Rameshwaram, Sunday. IMD has forecast rains in coastal states after formation of a low-pressure area in Bay of Bengal



Congress workers stage a protest against the distribution of ticket for Badnagar state assembly constituency ahead of the state assembly election, at the residence of party's state president Kamal Nath, in Bhopal



Security personnel near a damaged training aircraft after it crashed near Gojubavi village under Baramati taluka, in Pune district. A trainee pilot and an instructor were injured in the incident, according to police



Women drivers pose for photos after Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath flagged off new buses on the occasion of 'Maha Ashtami' during the Navratri festival, in Ayodhya



# national

## of the day quote

The government will formulate a comprehensive policy for the welfare of families of police personnel killed in the line of duty

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

While the situation in Jammu and Kashmir is normal, the continuing delay in holding assembly elections is a matter of grave concern

GHULAM NABI AZAD | FORMER J&K CM

The DMK is only against 'Aryan' hegemony and it is not against spiritualism

MK STALIN | TN CM

## SHORT TAKES

### Fake antibiotic medicines seized

**Ahmedabad:** Fake antibiotic drugs worth Rs 17.5 lakh and used to treat serious diseases have been seized in raids across various cities of Gujarat and four persons apprehended in this connection, an official said Sunday. Some of these persons worked as medical representatives of "benami" companies and used to deliver the fake medicines to doctors, the Food and Drug Control Administration (FDCA) said in a release. The FDCA officials conducted raids in various cities such as Nadiad, Surat, Ahmedabad and Rajkot and seized the fake drugs, it said.

### Man shot dead

**Dumka (Jharkhand):** A 55-year-old man was Sunday shot dead after being beaten up with lathis by his distant relatives over a land dispute in Jharkhand's Dumka district, police said. The incident took place in Lodhna village in Jama police station area. Accused neighbour Farid Sheikh and his brother-in-law Akbar Sheikh and others beat up Farooque Sheikh, before shooting him dead with three bullets, a senior police officer said. Enraged over the incident, locals set fire to Farid Sheikh's house. Farid Sheikh has been arrested and a manhunt launched to nab the other accused persons, he added.

### 3 dead, 8 injured

**Patan:** A three-year-old girl and two others were killed and eight persons were injured when a van collided with a car on a highway in Patan district of Gujarat Sunday, police said. A speeding van travelling from Radhanpur collided with a car coming from the opposite direction on the state highway near Sami town around 4 pm, an official from Sami police station said. A three-year-old girl, a 24-year-old woman and her 26-year-old fiancée were killed on the spot, while eight passengers of the van were injured, he said. The injured persons were rushed to a government hospital in Patan for treatment, the official said.

### 2 militants killed

**Srinagar:** Security forces foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control in Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir by killing two militants, a defence spokesperson said Sunday. Based on specific inputs from intelligence agencies and J-K Police of likely infiltration in the Uri sector by heavily armed terrorists from across the LoC, troops were put on a high alert, and the counter-infiltration grid was strengthened, Srinagar-based defence spokesperson. Taking advantage of bad weather marked by incessant rainfall and poor visibility, a group of armed terrorists attempted to infiltrate across the LoC, he said.

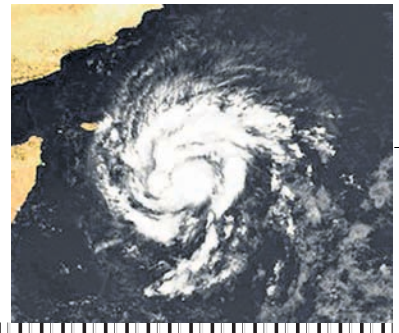


The party has fielded three candidates in the upcoming Assembly election and more names will be announced in consultation with the state leadership. The party is contesting the Rajasthan Assembly polls for the first time and we will try our best to ensure that our candidates perform well

ASADUDDIN OWAISI | AIMIM CHIEF

## 'TEJ' INTENSIFIES INTO SEVERE CYCLONIC STORM

Cyclone 'Tej', brewing in the Arabian Sea, intensified into an extremely severe cyclonic storm Sunday and is headed towards the Yemen-Oman coasts, the India Meteorological Department said



# Kharge flags 'politicisation' of bureaucracy in letter to PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge Sunday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi accusing the government of politicising bureaucracy and armed forces by asking them to showcase its achievements of the last nine years and demanded withdrawal of such orders.

In his letter, Kharge objected to the government order issued on October 18 that, he claimed, stated that senior officers of ranks as high as joint secretary, director and deputy secretary are to be deployed to all 765 districts of India as "Rath Prabharis" to "showcase achievements of the last nine years of Government of India".

He also referred to another order of the Ministry of Defence on October 9, 2023, directing soldiers on annual leave to spend time in promoting government schemes, making them "soldier-ambassadors".

"It is no coincidence that the last nine years correspond to your tenure in office. This (order) is of grave concern for multiple reasons," Kharge said, alleging that senior officers are being deputed for "marketing activity" of the incumbent government. "It is a clear violation



of the Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, which directs that no government servant shall take part in any political activity.

"While it is acceptable for government officers to disseminate information, to make them 'celebrate' and 'showcase' achievements blatantly turns them into political workers of the ruling party." The fact that only 'achievements' of the last nine years are being considered, gives away the fact that this is a transparently political order in the run-up to the five state elections and the general elections of 2024," the Congress chief alleged.

He said if senior officers of departments are being deputed for "marketing activity" of the current government, the governance of the country will grind to a halt for the next six months. "In view of protecting our democracy and our Constitution, it is

In his letter, Kharge objected to the government order issued on October 18 that, he claimed, stated that senior officers of ranks as high as joint secretary, director and deputy secretary are to be deployed to all 765 districts of India as "Rath Prabharis" to "showcase achievements of the last nine years of Government of India"

Expressing surprise at the Congress' objections, BJP chief JP Nadda hit back at the opposition party, saying public service delivery may be an "alien concept" for it as its only interest is to keep "the poor in poverty"

imperative that the above orders are withdrawn immediately," Kharge told the prime minister.

"For the Modi Government, all agencies, institutions, arms, wings, and departments of the government are now officially 'Pracharakas'," he alleged in a post on X. "In view of protecting our democracy and our Constitution, it is imperative that the orders which would lead to the politicising of Bureaucracy and our Armed Forces must be withdrawn immediately," Kharge also said in his post while sharing the letter.

## Rajender to take on KCR in Gajwel



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, Oct 22:** BJP legislator E. T. Rajender is set to take on Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababhan Naidu in Gajwel constituency in November 30 assembly polls, according to the first list of candidates released by the BJP on Sunday.

Three of the BJP's sitting Lok Sabha members - Bandi Sanjay Kumar (former Telangana BJP chief and Karimnagar MP), Dharmapuri Arvind (Nizamabad MP) and Soyam Babu Rao (Adilabad MP) will contest in the elections.

Sitting BJP legislator T. Raja Singh, whose suspension was revoked, will contest from the Goshamahal segment in the city, his present constituency. "I express my heartfelt gratitude to the BJP Leadership for nominating me as the Bharatiya Janata Party's candidate in the #Goshamahal Constituency for the upcoming 2023 legislative assembly election," Singh said in a message posted on "X".

# Eradicate manual sewer cleaning in phases: SC

The top court has asked the Centre to issue guidelines and directions that any sewer-cleaning work outsourced or required to be discharged by or through contractors or agencies do not require individuals to enter sewers for any purpose whatsoever



state governments to pay Rs 30 lakh as compensation to the next of kin of those who die while cleaning sewers.

"The court hereby directs the Union and the states to ensure that the compensation for sewer deaths is increased (given that the previous amount fixed, that is, Rs 10 lakh was made applicable in 1993). The current equivalent of that amount is Rs 30 lakh. "This shall be the amount to be paid by the concerned agency, that is, the Union, the Union Territory or the state, as the case may be. In other words, compensation for sewer deaths shall be Rs 30 lakh. In the event the dependents of any victim have not been paid such an amount, the above amount shall be payable to them. Furthermore, this shall be the amount to be hereafter paid as compensation," the bench said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** Observing that a large segment of India's population, involved in manual scavenging, has remained unheard and muted, in bondage and systematically trapped in inhumane conditions, the Supreme Court has directed the Centre and states to take appropriate measures, frame policies and issue directions to ensure that manual sewer cleaning is completely eradicated in a phased manner.

The top court has asked the Centre to issue guidelines and directions that any sewer-cleaning work outsourced or required to be discharged by or through contractors or agencies do not require individuals to enter sewers for any purpose whatsoever.

Issuing a slew of directions, a bench of Justices S Ravindra Bhat (since retired) and Aravind Kumar asked the central and

The top court directed all the states and Union territories to make sure that all departments, agencies and corporations ensure that the guidelines and directions framed by the Centre are embodied in their own guidelines and directions.

# Continuous interference in our affairs: Jaishankar

India has already rejected Canada's contention that the move for the withdrawal of the 41 Canadian diplomats amounted to a violation of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** India is looking at resuming visa services for Canadians "very soon" if it sees progress in the safety of its diplomats in Canada, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Sunday, even as he asserted that New Delhi's decision on ensuring parity in diplomatic presence with that country is in line with the Vienna Convention.

In comments that came days after Ottawa pulled out 41 of its diplomats from India, Jaishankar said New Delhi insisted on having diplomatic parity as it had concerns about the "continuous interference in our affairs by Canadian personnel". "We have not made much of that public. My sense is that over a period of time, more stuff will come out and people will understand why we had the kind of discomfort with many of them which we did," he said, replying to a question on the India-Canada ties at an interactive session.

The relationship right now is going through a difficult phase. But I do want to say that the problems we have are with a certain segment of Canadian politics and the policies which flow from that

India has already rejected Canada's contention that the move for the withdrawal of the 41 Canadian diplomats amounted to a violation of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations.

"The relationship right now is going through a difficult phase. But I do want to say that the problems we have are with a certain segment of Canadian politics and the policies which flow from that," Jaishankar said.

The ties between India and Canada nosedived after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau alleged on September 18 that there was a potential link between Indian agents and the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia in June. New Delhi strongly trashed the charges. Days later, it announced temporarily suspending issuance of visas to Canadian citizens and asked Ottawa to downsize its diplomatic presence in India.



People perform 'garba' during Navratri festival in Ahmedabad

PTI PHOTO

# DRI seizes drugs worth ₹250cr; 2 held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai/Ahmedabad:** The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized narcotics worth nearly Rs 250 crore in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and arrested two persons, the country's apex anti-smuggling agency said Sunday.

The recovery of the drugs - cocaine, mephedrone and ketamine - was made on Friday based

on inputs from DRI's Ahmedabad zonal unit and the crime branch there, said Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime), Ahmedabad, Chaitanya Mandlik.

The crime branch of Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, earlier Aurangabad, also assisted in the operation that involved searches at two factories and residential premises, said the DRI. The seizure comes amid a massive spat between the ruling dispensation and opposition

in Maharashtra following the recovery of drugs worth nearly Rs 300 crore by the Mumbai police and the alleged high connections of one of the key accused, Lalit Patil.

During the searches in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, the team recovered 23 kg of cocaine, about 2.9 kg of mephedrone and Rs 30 lakh in cash from the house of one of the two accused, the DRI said in a statement.

A total of 45 kg of mephedrone, 4.3 Kg of ketamine and "another mixture of mephedrone" weighing about 9.3 kg were recovered from a factory named Mahalakshmi Industries in the Paithan MIDC area, it said. The illicit market value of the drugs is more than Rs 250 crore, said the DRI, adding two persons, including the "key conspirator", have been arrested under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.



## No mega probe agency

If reports emanating from the Prime Minister's Office are any indication, a move to create a new post of Chief Investigating officer (CIO) to head a new oversight probe body has been put on the back burner. The new oversight body was to be created to oversee

the investigation part of the Enforcement Directorate (ED), Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) and the CBI. The stated objective to create this mega probe agency was to bring better coordination among them for all kinds of economic offences. The current body - Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (CEIB) - is considered a toothless wing under the Finance Ministry. It was felt that the new oversight body will replace the CEIB and will be given statutory powers. It has been speculated that the post of the Chief Investigation Officer (CIO) in this new oversight body will go to Sanjay Mishra who was director of the ED. Mishra's work at the ED was so outstanding that the current dispensation gave him one extension after the other even after his two years fixed tenure.

## Rahul's new gamble

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has emerged a new champion of reservation for the Other Backward Castes (OBCs). Obviously, those watching the Congress for decades were surprised as the Congress had stoutly opposed reservations in jobs to the OBCs other than the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). Rahul Gandhi did not stop at providing merely reservations for the OBCs but also advocated that reservations should be at per their population. This baffled even the age-old supporters of the Congress party. But none of the senior leaders raised any voices considering the larger game plan of keeping the flocks of Mandal parties who are now part of

I.N.D.I.A. Rahul Gandhi is well aware that most of the upper castes have already moved towards the BJP while Muslims have been voting for regional parties and OBCs for the Mandal parties. The Congress's vote bank is fast dwindling and confined to a few states. Therefore, Rahul Gandhi has joined the bandwagon of propounding the cause of the OBCs.

## Congress loses its war room

Strange it may sound but true that the Congress party is all set to lose its war room after 15 years. War room, a brain child of Rahul Gandhi came into being around 15 years ago and allotted 15 Gurudwara Rakabganj Road, a

prime property in the Lutyens' Delhi. The war room was the most powerful wing under the direct control of Rahul Gandhi irrespective of who is the AICC president. It was a very popular address among Congress leaders and workers. All important meetings of the party are being held at this address. But now after 15 years, the Congress party will have to vacate its war room.

## PM harping on 'Garibi Hatao'

Strange it may sound but true that the BJP has not blasted Rahul Gandhi for advocating "Jitni Abadi Utna Haq" as vociferously as was expected. After initially criticizing Rahul Gandhi, the BJP went back into a shell. The BJP is

aware that INDIA, a group of around 28 UN-homogeneous parties may be able to dent it in some of the states including UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh. Prime Minister Modi, himself an OBC, has already hit the ground with his focus on Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs). He is strongly pitching on "Garibi Hatao" and those below the poverty line will be given the benefits. In addition, the BJP is focusing on women voters as a class with the reservation of 33% jobs. Historically, no party at the national level has won an election on the OBC plank. It transpires that the Modi government is working on the Rohini Commission report and coming out with a new policy to give benefits to the poor among all the castes and create a new class.



# international



Every single attack on Jews, on Jewish institutions is a disgrace for Germany. Every single attack fills me with shame and anger  
**FRANK-WALTER STEINMEIER** | PRESIDENT OF GERMANY

## PALESTINIAN DEATH TOLL IN WEST BANK SURGES

Deadly violence has been surging in the West Bank as the Israeli military pursues Palestinian militants in the aftermath of the Hamas attack from Gaza, with more than 90 Palestinians killed in the Israeli-occupied territory in the past two weeks, mainly in clashes with Israeli troops



A mourner carries the body of a child, during the funeral of Palestinians from al-Asthal family, who were killed in Israeli strikes, in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip



Relatives of people kidnapped by Hamas militants hold the pictures of their loved ones during a protest in Tel Aviv



An Israeli soldier secures an area, following a deadly infiltration by Hamas gunmen from the Gaza Strip, in Kibbutz Kissufim in southern Israel

# NETANYAHU WARNS HEZBOLLAH

NETANYAHU TOLD TROOPS IN NORTHERN ISRAEL THAT IF HEZBOLLAH LAUNCHES A WAR AGAINST ISRAEL, "IT WILL MAKE THE MISTAKE OF ITS LIFE. WE WILL CRIPPLE IT WITH A FORCE IT CANNOT EVEN IMAGINE AND THE CONSEQUENCES FOR IT AND THE LEBANESE STATE WILL BE DEVASTATING"

Israeli warplanes struck targets across Gaza overnight and into Sunday, as well as two airports in Syria and a mosque in the occupied West Bank allegedly used by militants, as the 2-week-old war with Hamas threatened to spiral into a broader conflict.

Israel has traded fire with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group on a near-daily basis since the war began, and tensions are soaring in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, where Israeli forces have battled militants in refugee camps and carried out two airstrikes in recent days.

Israel Sunday added 14 communities close to Lebanon and Syria to its evacuation contingency plan in the north of the country



Israel Sunday added 14 communities close to Lebanon and Syria to its evacuation contingency plan in the north of the country



for people to leave northern Gaza, including by dropping leaflets from the air.

defined next stage in operations. A convoy of 17 aid trucks was allowed to enter Gaza from Egypt Sunday, Egypt's state-run media reported, the second shipment into the territory since Israel imposed a complete siege two weeks ago.

It says an estimated 700,000 have already fled, but hundreds of thousands remain. That would raise the risk of mass civilian casualties in any ground offensive.

## India sends humanitarian aid to people of Palestine

India Sunday sent more than 38 tonnes of relief material including medicines and medical equipment for the people of Palestine amid mounting global concerns over the plight of civilians living in Gaza.



India Sunday sent more than 38 tonnes of relief material including medicines and medical equipment for the people of Palestine amid mounting global concerns over the plight of civilians living in Gaza.

# China, Philippines trade accusations

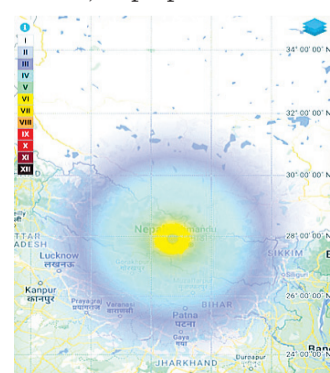
Beijing/Manila, Oct 22: China and the Philippines traded accusations over a collision in disputed waters of the South China Sea as Chinese vessels blocked Philippine boats supplying forces there Sunday in the latest of a series of maritime confrontations.



China, Philippines collision the latest maritime confrontation  
China coastguard says 'lawfully' blocked Philippine vessels  
US envoy condemns China's action, expresses support for Manila  
Manila task force says collision endangered Philippine crew

## 20 houses damaged as quake hits Nepal

Kathmandu, Oct 22: A powerful earthquake of 6.1 magnitude rocked Nepal's capital Kathmandu and damaged 20 houses Sunday, spreading panic among people and bringing back the painful memories of 2015 when a devastating quake killed about 9,000 people.



According to the National Earthquake Monitoring and Research Centre, the earthquake with its epicentre in Dhading district was recorded at 7:39 a.m. The tremor was also felt in other districts of Bagmati and Gandaki provinces.

## Argentina votes

Buenos Aires, Oct 22: Argentines began voting Sunday in a national election where a far-right libertarian leads the race, a shift in the political landscape due to fallout from the country's worst economic crisis in two decades.

trailing him by a small margin, and pollsters expect no outright winner, meaning a runoff vote will be needed. The polls close at 6 p.m. local time (2100 GMT) and first results are expected at 9 p.m. (0000 GMT).

## S Korea, US & Japan hold trilateral aerial exercise

Seoul, Oct 22: The South Korean, US and Japanese militaries conducted their first-ever trilateral aerial exercise Sunday in response to evolving North Korean nuclear threats, South Korea's air force said.





# business

## of the day quote

The two-wheeler replacement market is growing year-on-year in strong single digits, which is much much different from quarter one. However, we are yet to see a complete revival in rural demand

ARNAB BANERJEE | MD & CEO, CEAT

Our initial focus was on diesel for a simple reason that 80 per cent of the 2 lakh market for this SUV segment is basically diesel which means customers prefer diesel because of its better torque performance

SHAILESH CHANDRA | MD (PASSENGER VEHICLES), TATA MOTORS

The expansion work has already begun and we expect to produce 1 crore helmet units this fiscal year

RAJEEV KAPUR | MD, STEELBIRD

## SHORT TAKES

### Pollution board fines IOC, BPCL

**New Delhi:** Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has fined state-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) for not installing pollution control devices at their petrol pumps. IOC has been fined Rs 1 crore and BPCL Rs 2 crore, the two firms said in separate stock exchange filings. "The company has received a direction from CPCB to pay compensation of Rs 1 crore for non-installation of Vapour Recovery Systems (VRS) at retail outlets in National Capital Region (NCR)," IOC said adding the fine was for not installing VRS at petrol refuelling stations within the timeline prescribed by the Supreme Court.

### NLC's green arm starts biz ops

**New Delhi:** The coal ministry Sunday said Navratna public sector company NLC India has incorporated a wholly-owned subsidiary NLC India Green Energy Limited (NIGEL), which commenced its business operations. The first Board meeting of the company was held, and the appointment of key managerial positions was approved, along with the adoption of the company's logo. NIGEL Chairman Prasanna Kumar Motupalli said the new company, with a focus on renewable energy (RE) projects, will help to expand the RE power generation capacity faster.



**We only register those players under ALMM whose cell, wafers and polysilicon are India-made**

RK SINGH | MINISTER FOR NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

## H1 OF FY24

# US India's top trade partner

America is one of the few countries with which India has a trade surplus



**BILATERAL TRADE BETWEEN INDIA, US**  
 DIP BY 11.3% TO \$59.67BN

**TRADE BETWEEN INDIA, CHINA**  
 DOWN BY 3.56% TO \$58.11BN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** The US has emerged as India's biggest trading partner during the first half of the current financial year despite global economic uncertainties and declining exports and imports, according to government data.

According to the provisional data of the commerce ministry, the bilateral trade between India and the US has declined by 11.3 per cent to \$59.67 billion during April-September 2023 against \$67.28 billion in the same period last year.

Exports to the US have come down to \$38.28 billion during April-September 2023 from \$41.49 billion a year ago.

Imports also declined to \$21.39 billion during the first six months of the current fiscal compared to \$25.79 billion in the same period last year.

Similarly, the two-way trade between India and China also dipped by 3.56 per cent to \$58.11

**Rising above global economic uncertainties, the US surpassed China in terms of trade with India during April-Sept period**

billion.

Exports to China contracted marginally to \$7.74 billion during the first half of the current fiscal from \$7.84 billion in the year-ago period. Imports fell to \$50.47 billion from \$52.42 billion a year earlier.

Trade experts believe that though exports and imports are declining between India and the US due to global demand slowdown, the growth rate will enter a positive zone soon.

Despite this, the trend of increasing bilateral trade with the US will continue in the coming years as New Delhi and Washington are engaged in further strengthening the economic ties, they said.

Chairman of the CII national

committee on EXIM Sanjay Budhia has earlier stated that an early solution for restoration of GSP benefits by the US to Indian exporters is the need of the hour as it would help further boost the bilateral trade.

Mumbai-based exporter Khalid Khan said that going by the trend, the US will continue to be the biggest trading partner of India despite the global challenges.

Ludhiana-based exporter SC Ralhan said that the trade between New Delhi and Washington will continuously grow in the coming years.

"The US should seriously consider restoration of Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) benefits to domestic exporters as it would significantly help boost trade," Ralhan noted.

America is one of the few countries with which India has a trade surplus.

The US was India's biggest trading partner in 2022-23. The bilateral trade between India and the US rose 7.65 per cent to \$128.55 in 2022-23 against \$119.5 billion in 2021-22. It was \$80.51 billion in 2020-21.

Earlier, China was India's top trading partner from 2013-14 till 2017-18 and also in 2020-21. Before China, the UAE was the country's largest trading partner.

In 2022-23, the UAE, with \$76.16 billion bilateral trade, was the third largest trading partner of India, followed by Saudi Arabia (\$52.72 billion) and Singapore (\$35.55 billion). During April-September 2023, the bilateral trade between India and the UAE stood at \$36.16 billion.

## Mcap of top 10 valued companies dips ₹1.52L-crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** The combined market valuation of the top 10 valued companies plunged Rs 1,52,979.78 crore last week, with Reliance Industries and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) taking the biggest hit in an overall weak trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark fell 885.12 points or 1.33 per cent.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries plummeted Rs 34,876.78 crore to Rs 15,55,531.53 crore.

The valuation of TCS plunged Rs 27,827.08 crore to Rs 12,78,564.03 crore.

Hindustan Unilever's market valuation eroded by Rs 18,103.6 crore to Rs 5,86,223.02 crore and that of Bajaj Finance fell by Rs 17,171.75 crore to Rs 4,70,574.90 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of ICICI Bank dived Rs 13,518.4 crore to Rs 6,53,120.67 crore and that of ITC dropped Rs 12,533.27 crore to Rs 5,46,537.83 crore.

State Bank of India's valuation declined by Rs 11,512.75 crore to Rs 5,02,678.77 crore and that of HDFC Bank fell by Rs 10,387.09 crore to Rs 11,54,748.49 crore.

The mcap of Bharti Airtel slipped Rs 5,139.88 crore to Rs 5,30,896.08 crore and that of Infosys dipped Rs 1,909.18 crore to Rs 5,92,342.82 crore.

In the ranking of top 10 firms, Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued firm followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India and Bajaj Finance.

## FRAGILE GLOBAL CUES SCARE FPIs

FOREIGN INVESTORS PULL OUT ₹12,000CR FROM EQUITIES OCT SO FAR; INVEST ₹5,700CR IN DEBT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have withdrawn over Rs 12,000 crore from Indian equities this month so far, mainly due to a sustained rise in US bond yields and the uncertain environment resulting from the Israel-Hamas conflict.

However, the story takes an intriguing turn on observing FPI activity in Indian debt as they have infused over Rs 5,700 crore into the debt market during the period under review, data with the depositories showed.

Going ahead, the trajectory of FPIs' investments in India will be influenced not only by global inflation and interest rate dynamics but also by the developments and intensity of the Israel-Hamas conflict, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director-Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Adviser India, said.

Geopolitical tensions tend to elevate risk, which typically hurts foreign capital inflows into emerging markets like India, he added.

According to the data with the depositories, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) sold shares worth Rs 12,146 crore this month (till October 20).

This came after FPIs turned net sellers in September and pulled out Rs 14,767 crore.

"The primary reason for the sustained selling was the sharp spike in US bond yields, which took the 10-year yield to a 17-year high of 5 per cent on 19th October," VK Vijayakumar, Chief



Before the outflow, FPIs were incessantly buying Indian equities in the last six months -- from March to August -- and bought shares worth ₹1.74L-cr

Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

In the current scenario, experts believe that there could be an enhanced focus on safe-haven assets, such as gold and the US dollar.

Explaining reasons for the Rs 5,700 crore inflow in the debt market, Vijayakumar said this could be attributed to a host of factors such as FPIs diversifying their investment amidst global uncertainty and weakness in the global economy, Indian bonds are giving good yields and the rupee is expected to be stable given India's stable macros.

With this, the total investment by FPIs in equity has reached Rs 1.08 lakh crore and close to Rs 35,000 crore in the debt market this year so far.

In terms of sectors, FPIs have been selling across the board in sectors like financials, power, FMCG and IT, while purchasing was subdued in automobiles and capital goods. However, they were buyers in telecom.

## 86 power plants have 25 pc less coal stocks than normal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** As many as 86 thermal power plants in the country, including six imported dry fuel-based, had critical coal stock levels as of October 18, according to a Central Electricity Authority (CEA) report.

The power plants are labelled as having a critical coal stock situation, where the dry fuel is less than 25 per cent of the normative level.

According to the daily coal report of the CEA for October 18, 2023, as many as 86 thermal power plants were having critical coal stock situations out of the monitored 181 in the country. There were six imported coal-based plants out of these 86 plants.

CEA monitors 181 coal-based thermal power plants in the country with a total installed generation capacity of 206 GW.

As per the report, 148 non-pithead domestic coal-based power



plants with a total capacity of about 149 GW had 29 per cent less dry fuel stocks than the normative (or ideal) levels.

These 148 plants had about 12.77 million tonnes of coal against the normative level of 43.53 million tonnes as of October 18, 2023.

However, the situation was better at 18 domestic pithead plants where dry fuel stock was 81 per cent of the normative levels.

These 18 plants have a total power generation capacity of about 40 GW.

## 139 SMEs mobilise ₹3,540cr via IPO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** Strong participation of family offices as well as high-net-worth individuals (HNIs), adequate market liquidity, and optimistic investor sentiment have amplified interest in small and medium enterprise (SME) IPOs, with 139 such firms garnering Rs 3,540 crore through initial share sales in 2023 so far.

This was higher than 109 companies that raised Rs 1,875 crore through initial public offerings (IPOs) in the entire 2022, according to data provided by primedatabase.com.

Looking ahead, the fundraising environment for SME IPOs is anticipated to remain favourable, experts said.

Going by the industry data, a total of 139 IPOs have debuted on the SME platforms -- BSE SME and NSE Emerge -- and raised Rs 3,540 crore this year (till October 20). In addition, the maiden public issues of two more SMEs --

## LIQUIDITY PUSH



Paragon Fine and Speciality Chemical and On Door Concepts -- are scheduled to open next week.

These companies that came out with their maiden public issue belong to a wide range of sectors like IT, FMCG, automotive components, pharma, infrastructure, advertising, and hospitality.

These firms have mobilised

funds for expansion plans, support working capital requirements, and retire debt.

The remarkable surge in SME fundraising through IPOs in 2023 can be attributed to the participation of family offices and HNIs that injected substantial capital into the SME market, Jain said.

In terms of month, September saw the highest number of 37

The primary determinants include the growth potential of specific sectors, market liquidity levels, investor sentiment, and potential regulatory changes. The robust fundraising momentum is expected to persist, buoyed by the convergence of these influential factors

ABHISHEK JAIN | HEAD OF RESEARCH, ARIHANT CAPITAL MARKETS

SMEs hitting the IPO market. The largest issue this year was Spectrum Talent Management which mobilised Rs 105 crore, followed by CFF Fluid Control which mopped up Rs 86 crore.

Stock exchanges BSE and NSE launched SME platforms in 2012 becoming the only two bourses to offer such a segment in the country. These platforms provide opportunities for such firms to raise capital for growth and expansion.

## FOOD INFLATION

# Rural recovery for FMCG companies takes a pause

Persistent inflation has impacted rural demand, which contributed to over one-third of FMCG sales, as consumers are still tightening discretionary spending after uneven rains

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** The FMCG industry has witnessed a challenging September quarter amid subdued consumer demand and a decline in rural consumption due to persistent food inflation and uneven rains in some regions.

The operating environment remained tough for the FMCG (Fast Moving Consumer Goods) industry as rural demand continues to be sluggish, and some green shoots, which were visible in the preceding June quarter, seem to have paused following adverse conditions.

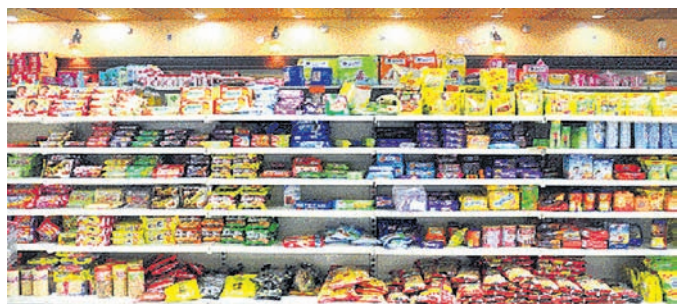
Leading FMCG makers like HUL, ITC and Nestle have expressed concerns over uneven rains, the impact of crop output and rising prices of some

commodities -- such as wheat, maida, sugar, potato, coffee, etc -- in their September quarter earnings.

"Consumption demand has been relatively subdued, especially in the value segment and rural markets on the back of sub-par monsoons and persistent Food inflation, which saw a sharp spike during the quarter," ITC said in an earnings statement.

Nestle India also hinted towards an "adverse impact on pricing" due to the rain deficit in several parts of the country.

"Uneven rain and rain deficit is expected to impact production of maize, sugar, oilseeds and spices that may have an adverse impact on pricing," Nestle India said, adding that "coffee continues to be volatile because



of the global supply deficit. The weather during the harvest of the Indian Robusta crop may impact production. Upcoming winter weather may impact wheat production".

During the quarter, the urban market continued its growth for the FMCG industry, led by modern trade channels and large packs. E-commerce continues to do well for FMCG makers.

**LOCAL PLAYERS TAKING OVER**  
 FMCG companies are also facing the heat from the resurgence of the small regional/local play-

ers, which are gaining share in the mass market products, such as tea and detergent.

Leading FMCG company HUL reported a market share loss in the mass end segments due to heightened competition from the local players and a decline in the rural market during the quarter.

Most of the small/regional players had vacated the space in the mass and small pack segments when the market was facing inflationary challenges, and the costs of raw materials were at record highs.

umes increased by 3 per cent on a two-year basis.

According to Nuvama Institutional Equities Executive Director Abneesh Roy, local players would impact the big companies in some more areas.

"Local players are back in categories, such as detergent bars and tea. We expect local players to also impact in biscuits, edible oils, hair oils," he said.

According to Roy, urban demand continues to outpace rural. "Rural demand continues to be challenging. Some green shoots, which started in Q1 FY24, seem to have taken a pause. Election-related stimulus, recovery in September rains, softer retail inflation and weaker base could help in gradual recovery," he added.

Moreover, shifting of the festive season from the September quarter to the December quarter is likely to have a positive impact on demand in Q3 FY24, Roy added.

## Govt may infuse capital in PSU general insurers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 22:** Finance Ministry would consider capital infusion in three loss-making public sector general insurance companies based on their financial performance of nine months.

The infusion if required would be made in the fourth quarter of the current financial year, sources said.

According to sources, the finance ministry last year asked three insurers -- National Insurance Company Limited, Oriental Insurance Company Limited and United India Insurance Company -- to chase bottomlines rather than topline and underwrite only good proposals.

The financial review would give some idea about the impact of restructuring initiated on the profitability numbers and the solvency margin, sources said.

The government last year provided Rs 5,000 crore capital to three insurers -- National Insurance Company Limited, Oriental Insurance Company Limited and United India Insurance Company.



# Juggernaut continues

# Arsenal unbeaten in Premier League

**KOHLI, SHAMI SHINE AS INDIA END 20-YEAR WAIT FOR WIN OVER NEW ZEALAND IN ICC EVENT**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Dharamsala, Oct 22:** Virat Kohli may have been unable to reach his 49th ODI century and equal the record of the great Sachin Tendulkar, but his 95 off 104 balls ensured India completed a fifth straight chase on the trot and now sit on top of the points table with a hard-fought four-wicket win over New Zealand at the HPCA Stadium Sunday.

Shubman Gill became the quickest player to score 2000 runs in ODIs. He reached the milestone in 38 innings, bettering the record of South African Hashim Amla who had needed 40 innings to achieve the feat



Lockie Ferguson struck with his first ball of the night by having Rohit chop onto his stumps and later on, had Gill upper-cut a bouncer to third man. Shreyas Iyer had a busy start by driving and pulling Ferguson for two boundaries, before flicking off Santner to get his third four. Though Kohli got his fifty

and stood strong from one end, he was losing partners. KL Rahul was trapped lbw while trying to defend against Santner, with New Zealand getting the wicket on review. Santner then fired in a direct throw to have Suryakumar Yadav run out in a mix-up. Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja kept the scoreboard ticking by mixing strike-rotation with hitting occasional boundaries to keep the required run-rate in check. While Jadeja attacked Ferguson and Ravindra for boundaries, Kohli was sedate and pulled off Phillips and Ferguson for his fours. Kohli pulled Boulton for six and brought out the on-drive for four, before mistiming a flick to deep mid-wicket to fall for 95. But Jadeja finished off the chase in style with a pull off Boulton for four to seal an Indian victory.

**BRIEF SCORES**  
**New Zealand:** 273 (Daryl Mitchell 130, Rachin Ravindra 75; Mohammed Shami 5/54, Kuldeep Yadav 2/73)  
**India:** 274/6 (Virat Kohli 95, Rohit Sharma 46; Lockie Ferguson 2/63, Mitchell Santner 1/37) by 4 wickets



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, Oct 22:** Arsenal rallied from two goals down to remain unbeaten in the Premier League after a 2-2 draw with Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. Chelsea had looked headed for its biggest statement win yet under Mauricio Pochettino when Cole Palmer converted a first-half penalty and Mykhailo Mudryk caught Arsenal goalkeeper David Raya out of position with a lob from a tight angle shortly after the restart. But Chelsea goalkeeper Robert Sanchez made an even bigger mistake at the other end to gift Arsenal a way back into the game. His pass into midfield in the 77th minute was intercepted by Declan Rice, who had an open net to hit from 25 yards out and didn't miss. That rejuvenated the visitors and substitute Leandro Trossard equalized in the 84th by tapping in a cross at the far post. "First half from us was the worst we've played this season in terms of sloppiness, Rice said. "But in the second half we showed what we're about — that hunger and never-say-die attitude. We showed great heart and character." Both teams entered the match in good form as Chelsea had won

## Emotional win for Man United

**London:** As red smoke spread over the away end at Bramall Lane, the chants of "There's only one Bobby Charlton" rang out from the Manchester United supporters toward the end of its game against Sheffield United. On the day when United mourned the passing of the club's greatest ever player, a thundering strike by Diogo Dalot made sure that the team and its fans could celebrate his life with a win. Dalot's long-range curler in the 77th minute secured a 2-1 win at Sheffield United in an emotionally charged evening game that was played only hours after the death of the England great was announced. It began with United captain Bruno Fernandes laying down a wreath at the center circle before the kickoff, and ended with the chorus of chants in Charlton's honor that were sparked by Dalot's late goal.

its last two league games after a shaky start under Pochettino, while Arsenal beat defending champion Manchester City at home in the previous round before the international break. The draw puts Arsenal level on points with Man City atop the standings, although Tottenham can reclaim the lead with a win over Fulham Monday. Chelsea is ninth, nine points behind.

# Ramos helps Sevilla hold Real Madrid to 1-1 draw

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Barcelona, Oct 22:** Sergio Ramos showed that he is still the boss of the box after the 37-year-old player put in a characteristically tenacious performance to help Sevilla grind out a hard-fought 1-1 draw against his former club Real Madrid. Ramos was playing his first

game against Madrid since returning to the Spanish league last month with Sevilla, his boyhood club. David Alaba scored an own-goal to put Sevilla ahead in the 74th, but Dani Carvajal equalized with a header four minutes later. Leader Madrid was left three points ahead of second-place

Girona and four points ahead of Barcelona in third before they play games on Sunday. Ramos started his career with Sevilla but soon moved to Madrid, where he won 22 trophies in 16 seasons — including four Champions League titles — before leaving in 2021. After two frustrating years with Paris Saint-Germain, the former Spain

defender returned to Sevilla. Ramos saved a goal-bound shot by former teammate Toni Kroos in the first half. The center back also had two late scoring chances to almost snatch the win for the hosts. Ramos featured in some run-ins with Antonio Rudiger, who arrived at Madrid last season in part to fill the hole left by the

aging Ramos. In one clash, Ramos grabbed the cheeks of Rudiger while the Germany defender held him as they exchanged words. Ramos also clashed with Jude Bellingham, Madrid's new star. Ramos elbowed Bellingham in the head during a corner and earned a yellow card for a foul on him in the second half.

## UNBELIEVABLE PERFORMANCE. UNBEATABLE THRILL.

**INTRODUCING THE NEW COMPASS 4X2 AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION. LAUNCHED EXCLUSIVELY FOR INDIA.**

### 9 SPEED

4X2 AUTOMATIC

NEW COMPASS

LIVE LEGENDARY

COMPASS RANGE STARTS AT ₹20.49 LAKH\*

EMI STARTING AT ₹19,999^

BEST-IN-CLASS 9 SPEED AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION

EXPANSIVE DUAL PANE SUNROOF

REDESIGNED DUAL-TONED 45.72 CM (R18) ALLOY WHEELS

ADVANCED CONNECTIVITY SUITE

Jeep

RESERVE YOUR JEEP ADVENTURE TODAY.

WWW.JEEP-INDIA.COM  
CALL 1-800-266-5337

\*Terms & conditions apply. Price shown is ex-showroom for compass sport 6MT and will differ by model, cities, and variant. Accessories shown and features mentioned may not be a part of standard equipment and are subject to change without prior notice. Actual colour and upholstery might differ.

^EMI shown is for illustrative purpose based on a specific finance amount, product & tenure. Finance is at the sole discretion of banking partner. Always drive responsibly and obey all the traffic rules. Jeep is a registered trademark of FCA US LLC.