

Diwali greetings
to all our readers, advertisers and well-wishers



HOLIDAY NOTICE
The offices and press of Orissa POST will remain closed November 12 (Sunday) on the occasion of Diwali. Hence, there will be no edition of the paper November 13 (Monday). However, web edition of the paper will be available to readers on that day.

— EDITOR

Gaming proves fatal

PUBG addict +2 boy dies by suicide in Soro

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bahanaga, Nov 11: In yet another incident of youths falling prey to online game addiction, a 17-year-old college student ended his life by hanging himself after allegedly losing money to online game 'PUBG' at Arada village in Kuchiakuli panchayat under Soro police limits in Balasore district. The deceased, identified as Ashis Mallick, son of Sarat Mallick, was studying Plus II at Saraswata College in Anantapur. He had reportedly lost some money in playing 'PUBG'.

According to his family members, Ashis returned home from college Friday and went inside his room bolting the door from

THE SERIAL KILLER

JULY 27, 2023: A 19-year-old youth from Balasore's Guda village died by suicide after losing over ₹1 lakh in an online game

NOV 28, 2022: A woman labourer from Odisha died by suicide in Tamil Nadu reportedly after losing ₹70,000 in online rummy

JULY 5, 2022: Jagatsinghpur youth committed suicide after being scolded by family members for losing more than ₹2 lakh in online games

MAY 4, 2021: A Class VIII boy from Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar, died by hanging reportedly after losing money to online gaming

OCT 4, 2020: A Class VIII student from Keonjhar ended his life by hanging himself after his parents admonished him for losing ₹96,000 in online

inside. His mother knocked on the door and called him to take

food, but he did not respond. Suspecting something amiss, she screamed for help. The villagers then broke open the door and found Ashis hanging from the ceiling fan in the room. The family members rushed him to Soro community health centre where doctors pronounced him dead before arrival. On being informed, Anantapur outpost police reached the hospital and sent the body for post-mortem. Soro police registered an unnatural death case and started an investigation. Ashis' family said that an online gaming link is behind his untimely death. Jashoda Mallick, a resident of the village, said that Ashis had been playing PUBG for the last two months. He was under acute mental stress after losing some money. Since then, he had a depression-like condition.



FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS: Young women celebrate Diwali in Patna, Saturday

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

I love this govt. My wife went out for Diwali shopping but returned without buying a thing because of high prices

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	32.2°C	31.5°C
TEMP. MIN	20.2°C	20.0°C
Humidity	76%	79%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Mainly clear sky

SUSPECTED HONOUR KILLING IN KANDHAMAL

Nayagarh/Nuagaon: Police exhumed the body of a minor girl, who is suspected to be a victim of honour killing, from a place under Phiringia police limits of Kandhamal district Saturday. The deceased girl was identified as the minor daughter of Bipra Charan Nayak, a resident of Sorada village under Nuagaon police limits in Nayagarh district. Sources said the girl was in love with a married man of her village who she wanted to marry. However, the girl's family opposed her relationship with the man. A case was registered and after post-mortem, the body was handed over to the paternal uncle of the girl. Police, however, detained three persons including the father of the minor girl in this regard.

Gauhati Univ allows menstrual leaves

AGENCIES

Guwahati, Nov 11: Good news for girl students of Gauhati University as the varsity authorities have decided to allow female students to take menstrual leaves and also grant relaxation in their attendance to appear for exams, officials said Saturday. The move is expected to boost menstrual hygiene of girls and further serve as a catalyst for pursuing study in a hassle-free manner. Recognising the importance of menstrual health to women's overall health, the institution has relaxed the minimum class attendance re-

quirement for female students by 2 per cent. This decision, which comes into immediate effect, is in line with guidelines that the Union Ministries of Women & Child Development and Education released earlier this year. The new policy grants female students a menstrual leave provision, which relaxes the minimum class attendance requirement by 2 per cent so they can take exams at the conclusion of the semester. Female students must maintain a minimum of 73 per cent attendance in order to be eligible for exams, the official notification mentioned. A senior official said that the Gauhati University's move is in line with a wider view of menstrual health as a crucial component of general well-being, influencing a range of aspects of life, including mobility, employment, education access, dignity and freedom. Through this progressive policy, the university hopes to address and acknowledge the particular difficulties faced by female students throughout their period. A premier institution in north-east India, Gauhati University was founded in 1948 and is well-known for its programs and academic distinction.

DIWALI SAFEGUARDS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Dos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Purchase fireworks only from authorised manufacturers. ■ Firecrackers should be stored safely in cardboard boxes, out of reach of children and away from flammable materials. ■ Supervise children closely while they play with firecrackers. ■ Allow only one person to light a firecracker at a time. ■ Choose open areas for lighting firecrackers. ■ Utilise long candles or phuljharis to ignite firecrackers. ■ Keep two buckets of water nearby to douse any burns immediately. ■ Always wear protective shatterproof goggles while bursting firecrackers. | <p>Don'ts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoid lighting crackers while holding them in your hand. ■ Refrain from bending over firecrackers while lighting them. ■ Never light crackers inside a container. ■ Exercise patience and avoid approaching firecrackers that do not ignite immediately. ■ Do not collect leftover firecrackers to create homemade versions. ■ Keep crackers away from burning candles, diyas, or agarbattis. ■ Opt for thick cotton clothing, avoiding synthetic materials while lighting crackers. ■ Secure all clothing tightly; loose garments can be dangerous. ■ Avoid applying creams, ointments, or oils to a burnt area. |
|--|--|



50 Years

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YOUTH ICON

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COMPOSER
3X GRAMMY
AWARD
WINNER

Padmashri JADAV PAYENG
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ARUN KRISHNAMURTHY
FOUNDER, EFI

SNEHA SHAHI
ENVIRONMENTALIST

RICHARD MAHAPATRA
MANAGING EDITOR
DOWN TO EARTH
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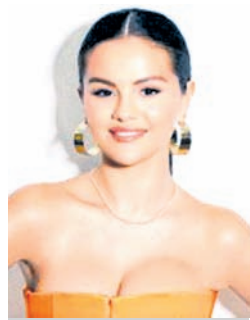
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leisure



SELENA GOMEZ DRAWS FLAK FOR 'DEMONISING' ISRAEL

Singer-actor Selena Gomez is facing more heat than ever, as a Jewish organisation has called her 'a coward', who is demonising the people of Israel by refusing to comment on atrocities committed by Hamas due to peer pressure.

'PLAYING SUPERHEROES IS WEIRDLY SPECIFIC JOB'

Actress Brie Larson recently spoke at length about her latest MCU film *The Marvels* after the end of the actor's strike. Talking about the movie, she said that playing superheroes is a weirdly specific job.



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ARIES
All eyes may be on you today – for your looks, skills, or even your funky bag! Make hay while the sun shines, and charge your batteries with all that attention. You can get some decent work done with that energy, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
You may have a tendency to feel frustrated when the results are not the way you expected, feels Ganesh. You must still work hard and finish whatever you undertake today. You will discuss some vital issues with a close friend and relive cherished secrets with your life partner.

GEMINI
Lady Luck is likely to smile on you, foresees Ganesh. You are generally shy, but today is a different day. You will remain outgoing and will be able to freely express your feelings. This temporary change will do a lot of good to your ego, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Today, you will be trying new things in your style of work. You may come across as mad, but there will be a method in your madness. Your new strategy and innovative ideas will give a new lease of life to the projects you are working on.

LEO
The oath of friendship that you once took as a bunch of raggedy misfits still holds true, and your best buddies are the ones who will stand by your side through hell or high water, Ganesh sees in you the desire to cherish such friends and prove your appreciation by treating them with graceful munificence.

VIRGO
Today, you shall balance business and entertainment equally well. The day will be like an endless party, says Ganesh. The emptying of pockets will be proportional to the amount of time you spend doing nothing. But spend prudently, advises Ganesh, and let it not worry you.

LIBRA
Connect and Express – these are the two things you must aim for at work today. You tend to do both things supremely well, be it in a business dialogue on phone, in writing, or in meetings. Getting across to people is not an issue today. But all this work aside, the lingering feeling of wanting to chill out with your sweetheart may become more substantial towards the evening. Watch a film together, suggests Ganesh.

SCORPIO
Try adding an entirely new dimension to the way you approach relationships today, advises Ganesh. Being tractable will help iron out the creases in relationships with closed ones. But be wary of complete subjugation, warns Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Confidence-building measures will need to be taken up. Be the herald, and usher in new vigour and confidence in people around you. Your business is set to skyrocket and a fair share of profits are in the offing, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
Memories of the bygone days will flash through your mind, creating a wave of nostalgia and compelling you to get in touch with old pals. On the other hand, there may be a feeling that your loved ones are demanding more than you can give, says Ganesh. But enjoying some light moments with your beloved in the evening will unburden you and charge you up for the next day.

AQUARIUS
Today will be about pleasure and pain! Plumbing, cleaning, grocery shopping, cooking... you can expect anything to weigh you down. Later, you can relax in a hot soak by candlelight, or unwind with a soothing aromatic massage.

PISCES
A day filled with socialising awaits you, says Ganesh. You will likely make contact with near and dear ones you haven't met in a while. New associations and friendships could also occur. It is a pleasant and joyous day, so make the most of it.

Nargis shares her 'timeless' journey

Mumbai: Nargis Fakhri made her Hindi film debut with Imtiaz Ali's *Rockstar*. Co-starring Ranbir Kapoor, the film gained a cult status and received critical as well as commercial appreciation. Right from the music to the performances, every aspect was lauded. Undoubtedly, Nargis made a grand debut. On the occasion of 12 years of *Rockstar*, the actress looked back at the film and shared her experience.

In a statement, Nargis said, "Reflecting on 12 years of *Rockstar*, it's incredible to see the enduring impact of this film. Despite not knowing Hindi very well at the time, the challenge became a journey of growth. Playing Heer was a profound experience, and I owe immense gratitude to Imtiaz Ali for entrusting me with such a special character. The fact that the story still connects with audiences speaks volumes, and I cherish being a part of

this timeless journey." Sharing pictures on Instagram, Nargis wrote, "12 years of *Rockstar*. Pretty crazy how time flies, but this film & everyone who worked on it will forever be in my heart. Heer will always be a part of me and so is the memories of Jordan. Once in a life Time! Thank you @imtiazialiofficial & #ranbirkapoor (sic)." AGENCIES

Here's how Sushmita came out of 'Aarya' character



Mumbai: Actress and former beauty queen Sushmita Sen has shared an interesting anecdote about how she would come out of the character of *Aarya* post the shoot. She said that she used to come back and take a shower to wash her off.

"I try very hard not to talk to people like Aarya – there is a don-giri in Aarya and if you shoot an entire season, which is 42 days, and in these many days, one's personality can easily change," Sushmita said.

She added: "One can become Aarya very easily at any given moment of time. She is such a beautiful embodiment of shakti that at times you have to remember in real life, you have to tone it down a little. After the shoot, I used to immediately come back and take a shower and wash her off and take it off. Earlier it used to be a little difficult but now it's a process of how to leave her at the set and come back."

Created and co-directed by Ram Madhvani and co-produced by Amita Madhvani, Ram Madhvani, Ram Madhvani Films and Endemol Shine India, *Aarya* Season 3 streams on Disney+ Hotstar. IANS

Tiger 3 stars urge fans to protect spoilers

Mumbai: Stars Salman Khan, Katrina Kaif and Emraan Hashmi are urging audiences to protect the countless secrets in the plot of the upcoming actioner *Tiger 3* by not disclosing any spoilers.

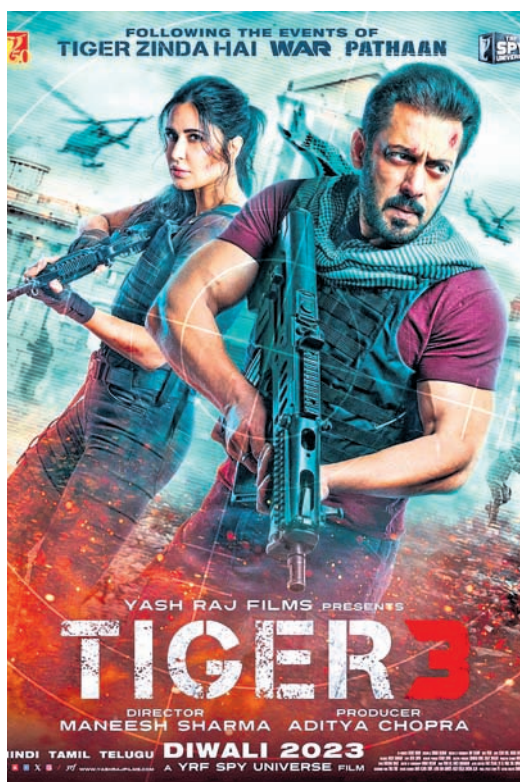
"We have made #Tiger3 with a lot of passion & we are counting on you to protect our spoilers when you see the film. Spoilers can ruin the movie-watching experience. We trust you to do what is right. We hope #Tiger3 is the perfect Diwali gift from us to you!!," Salman wrote on X.

Katrina shared that the plot twists and surprises in *Tiger 3* adds to the movie-watching experience of the film.

"Thus, we request you to not reveal any spoilers. The power is in your hands to protect our labour of love so that it can deliver the best entertainment to people. Thank you and Happy Diwali!" she added.

Emraan penned down this message. "A film like #Tiger3 has countless secrets & we are trusting you to keep them safe! Please don't reveal any spoilers as it will hamper the experience of watching the film in theatres. We have worked really hard to make #Tiger3 & we know you will support us fully! Happy Diwali!" he wrote.

Produced by Aditya Chopra, and directed by Maneesh Sharma, *Tiger 3* is set to release Sunday in Hindi, Tamil & Telugu. IANS



Family fun day at Loyola Fete



Presence of Loyola Alumni at the event reestablishes the fact that good old school days can never be erased from one's memory

As many as 18 food stalls and 41 stalls of fun games, put up by the enthusiastic teachers, took care of the participants' taste buds, intellect and physical skills. There was also a 'request corner' where the audience requested songs for the loved ones. The students grooved to the live music and the chart buster songs echoing throughout the premises of Loyola.

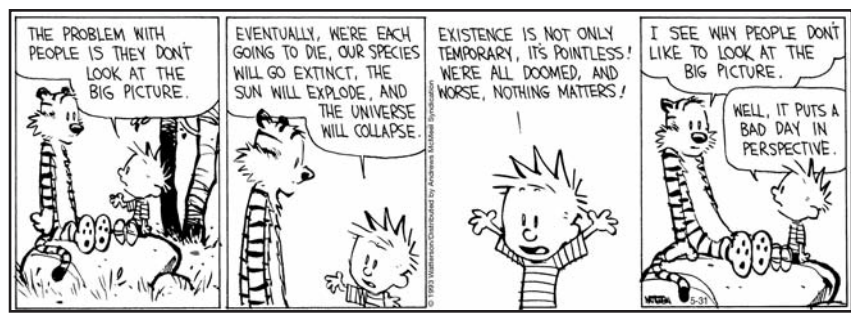
The presence of Loyola Alumni on this occasion reestablished the fact that good old school days can never be erased from one's memory.

Lucky draws marked the culmination of the fete. The Bumper Prizes were won by Evelina Mohanty bagged the first prize while Aarna Kedia and Yash Purty won second and third prizes respectively. Many consolation prizes were also given away. PNM

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

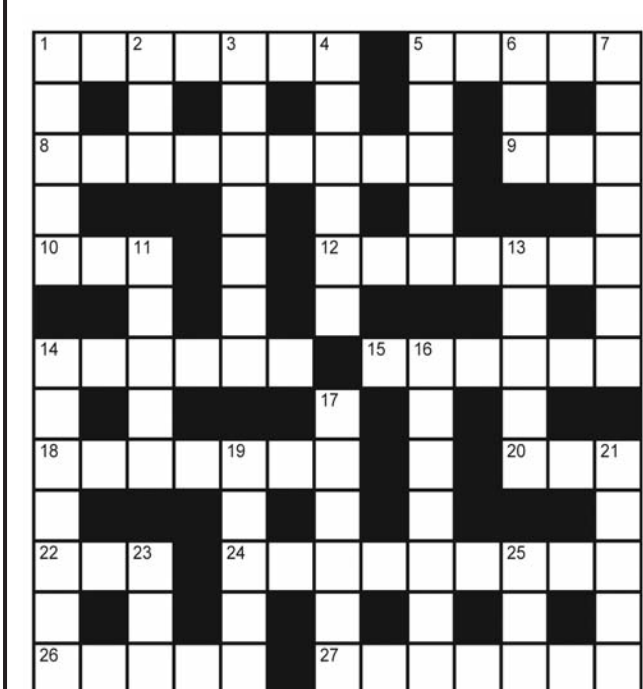


BREVITY



FUN post

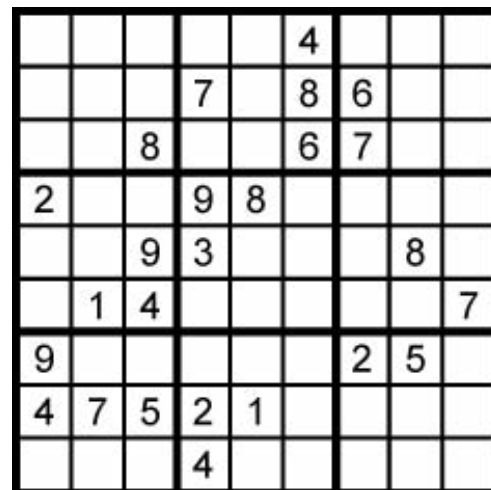
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Navigational instrument
 - 5 Spectrum maker
 - 8 Frog, for one
 - 9 Lenient
 - 10 Pelvis
 - 12 Overshadow
 - 14 Warbler
 - 15 Auto mover
 - 18 Race track workers
 - 20 Embrace
 - 22 Increases
 - 24 Tropical orange fruit
 - 26 Dapper
 - 27 Asian river
 - 6 Hurting
 - 7 Antique car
 - 11 Go to pieces
 - 13 Bony food fish
 - 14 Temporary stay
 - 16 Anger, for one
 - 17 Fish hawk
 - 19 Drain
 - 21 Magical wish granter
 - 23 Congeal
 - 25 Yoga class need
- Down**
- 1 Conflict
 - 2 World view
 - 3 Rabble-rouse
 - 4 Black eye
 - 5 Discussion group

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

MAGICAL MOVES

Artistes perform Odissi at the valedictory ceremony of Outreach Cultural Festival organised by Infosys Foundation at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Bhubaneswar, Saturday



EARTHEN LAMPS BURN BRIGHT

Despite stiff competition from electric lights and home décor items, the demand for earthen lamps is still aplenty due to their timeless charm



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: Earthen lamps are synonymous with every Hindu festival across the country, Odisha included. The lamp, commonly called diya, or dipa, has deep significance during the festival of lights, Diwali.

Traditional artisans have been making diyas since time immemorial. However they have to improvise their craft continually in order to adapt to changing times.

Despite stiff competition from electric lights and home décor items, the demand for earthen lamps is still aplenty due to their timeless charm. Like every year, this year too, the artisans have come up with designer lamps to allure buyers.

Guna Sahoo, an earthen lamp maker and seller from Keonjhar said "My family which consists of 19 members is working on diyas for several years now.

Earlier, my father and his forefathers used to make the artifacts. During Diwali, the proceeds from the sale of diyas go up to ₹20,000 daily."

A potter from Sambalpur, Biswa Rana, said "People buy a variety of diyas - from regular ones to multi layered. The price of such diyas pegged at ₹20 per dozen and the 1999 Lanos for ₹2,500 and more.

Lamps making seems quite easy to people, but it takes a lot of patience and experience to prepare a beautiful pair, Sahoo said.

"The process begins with filtering the mud which is then mixed with water and kneaded thoroughly to gain the required consistency of the clay. After preparing the dough, the required quantity of clay for making lamps

is taken out and the remaining is covered with wet jute bag to retain moisture," Sahoo said.

Later, a lump of clay dough is put on the wheel before it is turned. By applying pressure, the clay is forced to set in the centre of the wheel. The mound is then pinched on the top centre using thumb and, by taking the support of the left hand the shaping of the clay is done, he added.

"Once the required shape of diya is acquired, it is removed from the rest of the clay lump by using a needle that is attached to bamboo stick. "It is the trickiest and challenging part of separating the shaped diya from the remaining lump," Sahoo said, adding, "the soft diya is dried under direct sunlight. Once dried, it is baked at 800 degree

Celsius in the kiln. The hot diya it is allowed over night to cool down completely."

As per the demand, some diyas are coloured and some are retained plain before they are sold, he added.

Shyam Sundar of Bolangir said for many like him, making and selling diyas is the only source of earning livelihood. "The income generated through selling diyas during Diwali feeds us for a year," said Sundar whose family of seven is involved in making diyas.

Meanwhile, the annual terracotta exhibition 'Murtika-2023' at the Exhibition Ground in the Capital city to facilitate artisans/ SHGs/ Co-operative societies to display and sell their products including Diyas, concluded Friday.

Artists from several districts like Keonjhar, Jajpur, Balasore, Subarnpur, Baragarh, Rayagada, Khurda, Nayagarh, Dhenkanal, Puri, Mayurbhanj, Jagatsinghpur, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Kendrapara, Bolangir, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Gajapati, Angul, Boudh, Kalahandi, Kandhamal and Nuapada took part at the event.

SC junks plea seeking guidelines for crypto

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 11: The Supreme Court has refused to entertain a petition seeking a direction to the Centre and others to frame guidelines for regulation of trading and mining of cryptocurrencies.

Cryptocurrencies are blockchain-based digital or virtual currencies which operate independently of a central bank.

A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said the main reliefs sought in the plea were more in nature of a legislative direction.

The bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, observed that though the petition was under Article 32 of the Constitution, it was evident that the "real purpose is to seek bail in proceedings which are pending against the petitioner."

"We are unable to subscribe to this course of action. The



A SC bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said the main reliefs sought in the plea were more in nature of a legislative direction

petitioner would be at liberty to move the appropriate court for the grant of regular bail.

Insofar as the main reliefs are concerned, they are more in a nature of a legislative direction which the court cannot issue under Article 32 of the Constitution," the bench said in its order passed Friday.

Article 32 deals with right to constitutional remedies and 32 (1) grants a citizen the right

to move the apex court for enforcement of rights.

The bench noted that reliefs sought in the plea filed by the Uttar Pradesh-based man also included a direction for prosecution of cases involving digital assets/cryptocurrencies.

"We accordingly dispose of the petition granting liberty to the petitioner to pursue his remedies in accordance with law," it said.

Nat'l Education Day at RIE, Bhubaneswar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: The National Education Day was celebrated at the Regional Institute of Education (RIE), Bhubaneswar on the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India's first Education Minister and great freedom movement leader, Saturday.

The programme was inaugurated by PC Agarwal, principal of RIE in the presence of faculty members and students. In his address Agarwal highlighted the contributions of Azad in different areas like national integration, universalisation of quality school education, inclusive and equitable education, promotion of higher education and art and culture.

Cong plans 'Tulsi Yatra' for opening of Srimandir gates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: Opposition Congress announced that it will undertake a 'Tulsi Yatra', in which tulsi or basil leaves will be collected from houses across 314 blocks of the state and will be offered to Lord Jagannath in Puri, as a mark of protest over alleged mismanagement at the 12th-century shrine.

The decision was taken hours after 10 devotees fell unconscious Friday due to heavy rush at the temple, state Congress president Sarat Pattanayak said.

A huge number of people visit the temple this time of the year as it is the holy month of 'Kartik', he

said, adding that they are facing difficulties as the administration closed three of the four gates, and is allowing entry only through the 'Singha Dwar'.

"We demand the opening of all the gates in order to avoid major accidents, like a stampede, as more devotees will visit the temple during the 'Panchuka' - the last five days of Kartik," Pattanayak said.

The date of the 'Yatra' will be decided soon, he said.

Tulsi leaves will be collected from houses of all 314 blocks of the state and brought to the party's headquarters here, and from there, the holy leaves will be taken to Puri to be offered to Lord Jagannath, he said.

The Congress block presidents will lead the programme, and people from all walks of life will be brought in for it, he added.

Pattanayak said his party was worried over the safety of devotees visiting the temple, and the treasures in its 'Ratna Bhandar', which has been closed since 1978.

Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Ranjan Kumar Das said the three gates of the temple are closed because of the ongoing work for the heritage corridor project.

To this, the Congress leader said that the project work could wait, but not the holy month of Kartik.

Pandian true disciple of Naveen, says Pranab



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: Amid speculation over former bureaucrat VK Pandian joining the BJD, the ruling party in Odisha Saturday described him as a 'true disciple' of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

Addressing a function in Jajpur district, BJD organisational secretary Pranab Prakash Das, who is considered number two in the party, said "Pandian has played a key role in making Patnaik's vision and thoughts into reality".

"What a son can't do, a disciple can. Pandian... You are a true disciple of our Chief Minister. I thank you for what you have done for Odisha, Shri Jagannath Temple and Jajpur," Das, the Jajpur MLA, said.

Patnaik, a bachelor, has been at the helm of the state administration since 2000. Pandian became a part of the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) in 2011, and since then, he had been Patnaik's private secretary.

Immediately after his voluntary retirement from government service last month, Pandian, a 2000-batch IAS officer, was made the chairman of the "Nabin Odisha" (New Odisha) programme and the '5T' transformational initiatives.

"5T" refers to teamwork, technology, transparency, transformation and the time limit on which the performance of government officials and projects are judged. Pandian has also been accorded the status of a cabinet minister and will report directly to the Chief Minister.

"Das' statement indicates that the BJD has already accepted Pandian and the party just waits for Patnaik's final word to induct him. He will be given a major role to play in the next year's assembly and Lok Sabha elections," a senior party leader said.

Meanwhile, Pandian Saturday went to Puri where at least 10 devotees fainted as a heavy rush of visitors thronged inside the Shree Jagannath Temple a day before. He reviewed the situation there and asked officials to take steps for better crowd management at the shrine.

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CM inaugurates KIIT-KISS facilities



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated various facilities and centers for the employees of KIIT- KISS and the public Saturday. These include Shephalee Creche, KIIT Public School, Jayanta Mahapatra Public Library, Baba Ram Narayan Das Prasad Sevan Kendra, and KIIT Souvenir Gallery.

The inaugural function was attended by Baba Ram Narayan Das, Founder President, Unit-1 Ram Temple Saswati Bal and KIIT-KISS founder Achyuta Samanta among others. The public school will cater to KIIT-KISS employees who draw less than Rs 30,000 salary per month. They can now provide English medium education for their kids under the CBSE curriculum at KIIT Public School.

Inovaare holds global summit

Bhubaneswar: Inovaare Software Solutions Pvt Ltd, a key player in the healthcare domain within the information technology sector of the USA, celebrated its annual global summit Friday. A programme organised on this occasion was attended by industry experts, clients, partners and employees. Company CEO's Pravat Rout and CIO Mohar Mishra, while addressing the gathering, shared their vision for the company's future. They narrated Inovaare's journey from a small company to a global organisation in last 8 years. Rout informed that the company is in talks with the state government officials for setting up an Artificial Intelligence Lab. India has a large framework for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and we have decided to set up an AI center in Bhubaneswar, he added.



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP



MELODIOUS PERFORMANCE: Singers perform at the 10th annual function of Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

Pradhan urges Gadkari to upgrade Economic Corridor

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Saturday urged Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari to consider for upgrading the National Highway Economic Corridor from Ramgarhia in Chhatisgarh to Talcher in Anugul district via Jharsuguda, Deogarha and Sambalpur section into eight lanes.

Pradhan said. He further said that at present various development works are in progress to expand the NH-49 and NH-53 into four lanes. The volume of traffic freight and industrial transport through this stretch is set to grow exponentially in coming years. In view of the potential of the stretch, the Union Minister requested Gadkari to consider for upgrading this stretch to an economic corridor of eight lanes which will go a long way in ensuring improved infrastructure for the present and upcoming industrialisation in the area to boost the economy of the state and the nation as a whole.

'Ending child marriage needs community commitment'



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: A state-level roundtable on prevention of child, early and forced marriage was organised here Saturday jointly by USAID Momentum Country and Global Leadership: India-Yash, and the Centre for Catalyzing Change (C3). Experts during the discussions highlighted that ending child marriage would require a community-wide commitment. Over 70 participants from all walks of life, including government officials, volunteer organizations, corporates, and adolescent champions of the campaign against child marriage participated in the programme. "It is important to work with various stakeholders who are associated with child marriage

The roundtable provided a platform to experts for discussing strategies employed by C3 to combat forced child marriages

and also convergence of departments is important for eradicating child marriage," said chief guest Mandakinee Kar, OSCPCR chairperson. The roundtable provided a platform to the various stakeholders to highlight the achievements of these initiatives and discuss strategies employed by C3 to combat early and forced child marriages. Moreover, the discussions served as a forum to contemplate future strategies

SSEPD dept signs MoU for welfare of PwDs

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department and Sightsavers India, a national level development organisation working for the empowerment of PwDs signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Saturday for the welfare of the PwDs. Joining the MoU signing event in Loka Seva Bhawan, Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) Minister Ashok Chandra Panda said, "The state government looks forward for productive outcome through different collaborations and convergence with other Departments and Civil Service Organisations. "Within the collaborative partnership, technical support will be provided at both state and district level in the fields of preparing PwDs database, skill development programmes and strengthening PwDs livelihood

aspects," he said. The SSEPD department Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi assured government's co-operation in all activities envisaged in the MoU. He said community participation should be adhered in the welfare programmes in all convergence efforts. Sightsavers India will actively support SSEPD in sensitizing stakeholders, facilitating self-defense training, establishing computer training center and collaborating on inclusive eye health services. The partnership aligns with SDG for 2030, focusing on the inclusion of disabilities in various targets and indicators. Dillip Kumar Ray, Special Secretary and other senior officers of the department were present on the occasion while Sanyaashee Behera, Deputy Secretary, SSEPD and Prasanna Kumar, Director (Programme Operations), Sightsavers India were the signatories in the MoU.



AI can bring about massive revolution across globe

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Bhubaneswar on dated 11.11.2023, I Srimanagobinda Dasmohapatra, S/o-Late Trinath Behera, permanent resident of At/P.O.- Rasulgurh, P.S.- Mancheswar, Bhubaneswar, Dist.- Khordha, Odisha-751010 my Aadhaar No.- xxxxxxxx4121 declare that I have changed my name from Managobinda Behera to Srimanagobinda Dasmohapatra. Henceforth, I shall be known and identified as Srimanagobinda Dasmohapatra for all purposes.

The sparks of Artificial Intelligence which started at the time of World War II has recently gained the limelight. AI made by humans is a complex pattern of machine algorithms that can process and recognize data and function in a real-time environment. Various recent developments in the application of AI such as in the form of ChatGPT for educational purposes or for that matter the use of AI in surveillance or autonomous drones in the military or health sciences like for advanced melanoma screening and detection, indeed throw the light on the fact that how powerful AI can be in future. The hard power of countries such as China, the US, and Russia is strong yet they are trying to invest more in AI so that they can increase their military efficiency. Thus, Artificial Intelligence indeed has greater domination in the future which can bring about massive revolution across the globe. AI has the potential to modify and control information. This is something which can be useful for various reasons however it can have massive negative effects if misused. Defense and intelligence communities are taking initiatives to incorporate AI in data security on an international level.

Cybersecurity is essential in these contemporary times. For facilitating e-governance, e-commerce, and other digital resources there is a requirement of strong surveillance of the same. With the advancement of AI security various illegal activities within the cyber sphere can be tracked down. Artificial intelligence can be used to build stronger firewall protection which can prevent the hacking of sensitive information in a country. US in 2014 introduced the First Offset Strategy and later launching of CETs (Critical and Emerging Technology) during the time of Trump's presidency indeed showcases the efforts in technological advancement. These strategies focus on deep learning machine systems, developed human-machine interfaces, and robotics to protect technological advancement and promote innovation. As per NSS-22 i.e., National Security Strategy of the US, the major investment was done in the space and cyber realm specifically in increasing missile efficiency, advancement of AI and quantum systems, and involving more capabilities in the battlefield over the period. This will further be used to enhance security in terms of protecting and strengthening the



military apparatus of the nation. Similarly, China is also aiming to be the world leader in AI by the year 2030. It aims to create a huge investment in the technological domain so that the military, government, and private sector will hugely benefit from the outcomes in the future. PLA (People's Liberation Army of China) is focusing on using AI for training for war to prevent and make situational commands and help in the decision-making process. The pursuit of Intelligent and autonomous unmanned systems including the autonomous weapons system, military robotics, and cruise missiles indeed proves that China might

face tough competition in the arena of AI in the future. Russia established the Russian Foundation for Advanced Research to increase its pace in making autonomous systems and increase the involvement of robotics in military supplies by 2025. Thus, it can be safely said that future domination of the world lies in the hands of the nation having powerful AI resources. AI if used for its useful purpose can be used for various beneficial purposes and to establish strong technological security in a country; however, if it is used for harmful purposes then it can cause damages to an extent that exceeds all its positive impact. Countries having political or geographical disputes among themselves are using AI to harm the opponent nation in the form of cyberattacks and spreading misinformation and various false propaganda to create instability within that country. A few examples of the harmful effects of AI are the use of autonomous killer robots. These robots are capable of choosing and attacking their target and are usually independent of human actions. This can prove very lethal to a machine. These types of robots can be used in warfare to take

down machine-operated military equipment. AI-based weapons can be modified in various ways and some can be based on human- commands which perform through specific pre-instructed tasks whereas few can be fully autonomous and work according to specific algorithms. These technologies do possess potential threats and like these features of AI can be used to create jamming network technology which will affect the entire communication system of the masses causing chaos. Similarly, autonomous drone swarms are also very dangerous as they recognize the enemy and attack them. Disputed countries may use this to attack each other and deny responsibility which might lead to global conflict. These AI-based weapons and advanced machine learning technology are very complex and dealing with the functioning and technical aspects of its autonomous system might prove to be difficult resulting in the immoderate functioning of the same. The development of AI creates various debates as to how much advanced technology is to be used and in which fields so that nations benefit on an international level and the har-

monious diplomatic relations among the countries are not hampered. AI also raises various ethical questions and the governance and laws related to the same are indeed very difficult to make and implement. Periodic regulations and governing of AI are required otherwise there are chances of malfunctioning and data-leak risks. However, from another perspective, it is important to have AI in certain areas of defense and other fields such as health care. AI advancement does help us in various cyber security purposes and medicine can be used to diagnose certain diseases. AI-based robots can be incorporated in daily lives as well as in commercial industries to decrease the manpower for the task which seems harmful. This is indeed debatable whether AI is a boon or bane but it can be said the nature of Machine learning technology and Artificial Intelligence depends on how it is being used and not on the purpose of its creation.

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Rourkela Airport gets CTR status

A CONTROL ZONE (CTR) IS A BLOCK OF CONTROLLED AIRSPACE EXTENDING FROM THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH TO A SPECIFIED UPPER LIMIT



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Nov 11: In an important development, Rourkela Airport has been granted Control Zone (CTR) status by the Airport Authority of India (AAI).

The chairman of AAI in a letter no. 151/2023 has bestowed the CTR status to Rourkela Airport effective from November 2, 2023. The airport authorities had applied for this status September 21.

Control Zone (CTR) is an airspace designated by the authorities for the purpose of providing Air Traffic Control (ATC) service to aircraft operating within. CTRs are typically established

around airports to provide separation and orderly flow of air traffic. Within a CTR, air traffic controllers are responsible for issuing instructions and clearances to aircraft to ensure safe and efficient operation.

CTR is available during published operating hours. This airspace has been classified as 'D'. And during non-operational hours the classification is 'G'.

Alliance Air, which started providing flight connectivity to Kolkata, would start operating direct flight to the City of Joy in the next two weeks. To operate this direct flight Alliance Air has already received necessary permissions from the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Meanwhile, the aviation company is searching for more pilots and aircraft. The company may take planes on hire for connectivity. The state government will provide all necessary help for the UDAN scheme for the next six months.

Following this decision of the state government, the passengers will get the financial benefits as they are getting on the Rourkela Bhubaneswar route.

Speaking on the development, former secretary, SEFI and president of Sachetan Nagarik Manch Bimal Bisi said, "I had a direct interaction with Alliance Air CEO Vineet Sood. He is hopeful that everything will be set right on this route within the next two weeks. They may go to hire pilots and planes to tide over the problems in this route."

With the airport getting the CTR status, he also exuded hope that ILS will be installed here soon. Besides, the state government will soon initiate the process for transfer of land making it easier for the installation of ILS, he added.



AWAITING CUSTOMERS: A peddler selling plastic flowers and chandeliers at Gole Bazar Square in Sambalpur on the eve of Diwali, Saturday

OP PHOTO

In a 1st, court convicts juvenile in NDPS case

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 11: In a probable first in Odisha, the Court of Juvenile Justice Board, Khurda has convicted one juvenile in an NDPS case.

The juvenile was convicted under section 21(c) NDPS Act, 1985. He was found guilty by the Juvenile Justice Board Friday which sent him to a special home in Berhampur for three years for the offence U/s 21 (c) of the NDPS Act, 1985.

The board directed the special home to provide reformative services including education, skill development, counseling, behavior modification therapy, psychiatric support, and treatment for the period of stay of CCL in the special home.

This case relates to the seizure of 1 kg 268 gram contraband brown sugar from the exclusive and conscious possession of accused persons August 12, 2021.

This is probably the first case where a juvenile has been convicted in an NDPS case in Odisha.

The STF of Odisha Crime Branch on the night of August 12, 2021, apprehended three accused persons along with the juvenile near Khurda Bus Stand and recovered 1 kg 268 gram brown sugar and other incriminating articles from them.

They were caught while dealing with brown sugar for their pecuniary gain.

After a successful investigation, a charge-sheet was submitted against the accused persons U/s 21(c)/29 NDPS Act, 1985.

During the investigation, the seized brown sugar was also sent to SFSL, Rasulgarh for chemical examination and opinion was received affirmatively.

During the trial, prosecution had examined 11 witnesses and 44 documents.

STF is the specialised wing of Odisha Police to curb organised crime in the state. Narcotic drugs are the main focus area of STF and STF will continue its drive against such drug peddlers, an official said.

5 arrested for tusker electrocution



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Nov 11: The district forest department personnel arrested five persons on charge of poaching a tusker by spreading live wires on a farmland in Telkoi forest range area under Keonjhar forest division.

The accused poachers were identified as Chitrasena Munda, Jitu Munda, Mithu Pradhan, Putura Pradhan of Jansanpur village, and Santosh Munda of

Rugudi village under Telkoi police station limits. The development comes after arrest of two poachers, Friday.

Forest official also seized the electric wires, wood and other items used in the poaching. Assistant Conservator of Forests Ashok Das said that the poachers had laid down the live wires on the farmland to poach elephants and wild boars.

The accused have been taken for interrogation after their arrest and produced in the court, Sunday. The accused were also taken to the crime spot where they recreated the scene of laying live wires, Das added.

Reports said that the forest officials had recovered the carcass of a 40-year-old tusker from a paddy field near Saleikena village, Friday morning.

After post-mortem, forest officials concluded that it was a case of poaching by electrocution. They initially arrested two persons including the owner of the farmland where the carcass was found. On the basis of their statements, forest officials arrested five more poachers linked to the incident, sources said. However, no action has been taken against the forest officials for their negligence.

This has sparked resentment among the environmentalists and nature lovers against the forest officials. While the forest officials heap all the blame on poachers and locals in case of death of an elephant, they never look into their own wrongdoings and never try to correct themselves, they alleged.

MALKANGIRI SHOCKER

Man rapes minor daughter; arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balimela, Nov 11: In a shocking and shameful incident, a 40-year-old man was arrested for allegedly raping his 13-year-old daughter at Balimela town under Orkel police station in Malkangiri district Friday.

The accused, Nitai Sarkar, allegedly raped the girl November 5 and threatened to kill her if she revealed the matter to anyone. However, the girl narrated her plight before a neighbour. Nitai threatened his daughter again November 8. However, the girl exuded confidence and moved to the Orkel police station with the help of some neighbours.

Based on her complaint, Orkel police registered a case (395/23) and after interrogation, Sarkar was arrested and forwarded to court. A medical examination was conducted on the girl and her



statements were recorded in presence of a magistrate, IIC Dhiren Patnaik said. Notably, Sarkar's wife has been staying at her paternal house with her minor son after a family feud. While one of his daughters has got married, two others are continuing their study by residing in hostel. The heinous crime took place in the absence of his wife.

Woman trampled to death by jumbo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhawanipatna, Nov 11: A 45-year-old woman was trampled to death by an elephant in Kalahandi district, police said Saturday.

The incident happened in Surengpadar village in M Rampur block, they said.

Nilanti Majhi, a tribal, came face to face with the wild elephant when she was going to a nearby stream for washing clothes Friday evening. The elephant chased her, and trampled her to death, they added.

Forest Range Officer of M Rampur Asit Kumar Dash said her body was sent for post-mortem examination, and financial assistance will be given to her family as per the law.

Minor drowns in pond

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dabugaon, Nov 11: In a tragic incident, a minor boy drowned in a pond near Ekamba village under this police limit in Nabarangpur district Saturday.

The deceased was identified as Debendra Majhi, 9, son of Kamal Singh Majhi of the same village. As per reports, Debendra along with some of his friends went near the pond to play Saturday afternoon. Later, they all took bath in the pond. However, Debendra slipped his feet and he drowned in the deep water of the pond.

His friends returned home and informed his family members, who along with some other villagers fished out Debendra from the pond. They rushed him to Dabugaon community health centre (CHC), where the doctor pronounced him dead.



Informed, Dabugaon police reached the health centre. After investigation police registered a case (35/23) and sent the body for post-mortem. The body will be handed over to the deceased's family members after completion of autopsy, police said.

SPCB acts tough on erring industrial units

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Nov 11: The state pollution control board (SPCB) here has taken a visibly tough stand against various erring units.

While it has sealed one unit another unit has been served with an ultimatum and kept on a wait list for a week. Besides, 11 units have been issued show-cause notices and 10 others have been given directions.

Speaking on this, regional officer of SPCB Anup Mallick said, "We have sealed one tyre pyrolysis plant Attitude Exin, and kept another plant on the wait list. This means it may be sealed any moment for causing environmental problems." The tyre pyrolysis plant basically burns the used tyres to get carbon, some kinds of oils and other by-products. However, a thick black smoke emanates during the burn-



ing process which severely affects the environment.

Different kinds of units are on the radar of the SPCB. The raids were conducted November 7 and 8. Sealing and other actions were undertaken in the presence of a magistrate and officials of SPCB. The errant factories included

sponge iron units, steel plants, chemical units, rice mills and large fabrication units. During the Hockey World Cup, as many as 22 sponge iron units were ordered to stop operations for more than a month. "I was able to see the clear blue sky everywhere, but once the curb was over the

sky gradually returned to its usual smoky colour," said SK Biswal, a professor of a local management college.

Speaking further about the raids and notices the regional officer said, "11 units of different natures have been issued show-cause notices and 11 others have been given directions."

Explaining the direction part he said, "They have been visited earlier and asked to take steps. However, complaints piled up against them. For that they have been issued with directions and if they are found violating the directions, those units will also be sealed."

Here Goddess Kali is worshipped in shackles

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Nov 11: While people in a festive mood are busy in preparations for Kali Puja and Diwali, Sunday, an 800-year-old shrine, situated on the foothills of Chulia on Siddhamatha premises in the old town of Keonjhar, is leaving no stone unturned to worship the Goddess in all austerity and proper rituals.

Maa Kali here is said to be a living Goddess who answers the prayers of her devotees. What is conspicuous is that the deity here is in chains. Local residents have been worshipping the Goddess in shackles and that has been the way of the ancient shrine for eight long decades.

People throng here round



the year but Kali Puja is a special day when the temple witnesses a massive crowd of devotees. The temple is unique and distinct from all other Kali temples as the deity is worshipped here as per all kinds



of tantric rites and rituals. Siddhamatha, a sacred place situated on Chulia foothills, is an abode of nature filled with greenery. It was once a seat of tantric practice and meditation where saints used to worship

the deity with tantric rituals, priest Sanjay Tripathy said. Shiva is worshipped as Mahakal or Kaleswar in the temple, he said. Shiva is said to be 'powerless' here while Goddess Kali is believed to be all-powerful.

The lower part of the deity's stone idol is stated to be very long which is entrenched in the ground. The idol has been built in black granite stone and it resembles a skeleton, Tripathy said. The deity's idol has ten hands and each can be seen carrying a weapon such as a sword, or severed heads of demons. The Goddess can be seen biting her left finger in her mouth. The deity looks so furious that people cover at the slightest utterance of her name.

Legend has it that a saint tied the deity in chains so as to prevent her from going out of the temple and unleashing her fury as well as to protect the people from her anger. During Kali Puja, 'Yagna' and 'Chandi Patha' including all traditional rituals are conducted all through the day to propitiate the Goddess, Tripathy said.

Many devotees still fear to enter the temple to offer puja and pray to the deity through a window which is on one side of the temple and remains open all the time, Tripathy added. Similar arrangements have been made at the Dakshina Kali temple at Saras village and at Shyama Kali temple in Madhapur in the district.

WESTERN RAILWAY CORRIGENDUM
POSTPONEMENT OF DATE OF OPENING AND CLOSING OF APPLICATION MODULE
The date of opening and closing of application module for Employment Notification No. RRC/WR/02/2023 (Sports Quota) 2023-24 Dated 30-10-2023 is postponed due to technical reasons. The revised Opening Date and Time is 20-11-23 at 10.00 hrs. and Closing Date and Time is 19-12-23 at 18.00 hrs. 0835
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FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

WARS OF WORLD ORDER



The spectre of a sustained clash between the West and its rivals – especially China, Russia, and the Islamic world – looms large

tant regional shifts are possible. A protracted conflict in Gaza could set in motion a geopolitical reorganisation in the Greater Middle East, where nearly every major power – except Egypt, Iran, and Turkey – is a twentieth-century construct created by the West (especially the British and the French). Already, Israel's war is strengthening the geopolitical role of gas-rich Qatar, a regional gaffly that has become an international rogue elephant by funding violent jihadists, including Hamas.

If the conflict spreads beyond Gaza, the geopolitical implications would be even farther-reaching. Whatever comes next, Ukraine may well be among the biggest losers. As Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has acknowledged, the war in Gaza already "takes away the focus" from his country's fight against Russia at a time when Ukraine can ill afford a slowdown in Western aid.

Yet more forces and trends – including Russia's increasingly militarised economy, China's stalling growth, and the growing economic weight of the Global South – are making fundamental changes to the international order more likely. Meanwhile, the world is grappling with widening inequality, rising authoritarianism, the rapid development of transformative technologies like artificial intelligence, environmental degradation, and climate change.

Though the details are impossible to know, a fundamental global geopolitical rebalancing now appears all but inevitable. The spectre of a sustained clash between the West and its rivals – especially China, Russia, and the Islamic world – looms large.

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

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The crises, conflicts, and wars that are currently raging highlight just how profoundly the geopolitical landscape has changed in recent years, as great-power rivalries have again become central to international relations. With the wars in Gaza and Ukraine exacerbating global divisions, an even more profound geopolitical reconfiguration – including a shift to a new world order – may well be in the works.

These two wars heighten the risk of a third, over Taiwan. No one – least of all Chinese President Xi Jinping – can watch the United States transfer huge amounts of American artillery munitions, smart bombs, missiles, and other weaponry to Ukraine and Israel without recognising that American stockpiles are being depleted. For Xi, who has called Taiwan's incorporation into the People's Republic a "historic mission," the longer these wars continue, the better.

US President Joe Biden understands the stakes and is now seeking to defuse tensions with China. Notably, after sending a string of cabinet officials to Beijing, Biden's planned summit talks with Xi on the sidelines at the November 15-17 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum in San Francisco is set to steal the spotlight. And he and his G7 partners have stressed that they are seeking to "de-risk" their relationship with China, not "decouple" from the world's second-largest economy.

Whatever one calls it, this process is set to reshape the global financial order, as well as investment and trade patterns. Already, trade and investment flows are changing in ways that suggest that the global economy may be split into two blocs; for example, China now trades more with the Global South than with the West. Despite the high costs of economic fragmentation, China, seeking to reduce its vulnerability to future pressure, has been quietly de-

coupling large sections of its economy from the West.

In no small part, the US has itself to blame for the current situation. By actively facilitating China's economic rise for four decades, it helped to create the greatest rival it has ever faced. Today, China boasts the world's largest navy and coast guard, and is overtly challenging Western dominance over the global financial system and in international institutions. In fact, China is working hard to build an alternative world order, with itself at the center.

Though the current system is often referred to in neutral-sounding terms such as the "rules-based global order," it is undoubtedly centered on the US. Not only did the US largely make the rules on which that order is based; it also seems to believe itself exempt from key rules and norms, such as those prohibiting interference in other countries' internal affairs. International law is powerful against the powerless, but powerless against the powerful.

When it comes to creating an alternative world order, the current conflict-ridden global environment may well work in China's favour. After all, it was war that gave rise to the US-led global order, including the institutions that underpin it, such as the International Monetary

Fund, the World Bank, and the United Nations. Even reforming these institutions meaningfully has proved very difficult during peacetime.

This is certainly true for the UN, which appears to be in irreversible decline and increasingly marginalised in international affairs. The hardening gridlock at the UN Security Council has caused more responsibility to be shifted to the UN General Assembly, which was forced, notably, to adopt a resolution on the war in Gaza calling for a "humanitarian truce" and an end to Israel's siege. But the General Assembly is fundamentally weak, and, in contrast to the Security Council, its resolutions are not legally binding.

As US-led institutions deteriorate, so, too, does America's authority beyond its borders. Even Israel and Ukraine – which depend on the US as their largest military, political, and economic backer – have at times spurned US advice. Israel rebuffed America's counsel to scale back its military attacks and do more to minimise civilian casualties in an already dire humanitarian situation in Gaza. US officials have blamed Ukraine's wide dispersal of forces for its stalled counteroffensive.

Beyond the global reordering that the Sino-American rivalry appears to be causing, impor-



Brahma Chellaney

INTERNATIONAL LAW IS POWERFUL AGAINST THE POWERLESS, BUT POWERLESS AGAINST THE POWERFUL



Aakar Patel

Notebandi was the idea of a man with a diploma in mechanical engineering from Latur, a town in Maharashtra

Detachment is the beginning of mastery.

SRI AUROBINDO



Concerns Ignored

Demonetisation's anniversary came and went, without any defence of the masterstroke from the Indian government. Notebandi was the idea of a man with a diploma in mechanical engineering from Latur, a town in Maharashtra. Anil Bokil runs an institution called ArthaKranti (economic revolution), and describes himself as an economic theorist. His thinking was: in a country like India where 70% of the population survives on just ₹150 per day, why do we need currency notes of more than ₹100? He revealed in an interview days after Modi abolished 86 per cent of India's currency how the Prime Minister had got the idea. In July 2013, soon after Modi was declared the BJP's prime ministerial candidate, Bokil went to Ahmedabad with his colleagues and sought to make a presentation about an ArthaKranti proposal. Modi gave Bokil ten minutes. "By the time I was done, I realised that he had listened to me for ninety minutes. He said nothing after I had made my presentation," Bokil said. This is not surprising. The idea that a simple, magical and transformational action could be executed by him would have transfixed Modi.

On the ArthaKranti website, the benefits of demonetisation which were conveyed to Modi at that meeting are listed, including: "Terrorist and anti-national activities would be controlled," "the motive for tax avoidance would be reduced," "corruption would be minimised" and there would be a "significant growth in employment." What's not to like? But there are no details about any of this nor how demonetisation would be executed and its benefits achieved. There is no reference to or analysis of what the fallout could be. ArthaKranti also proposed withdrawing the entire taxation system in favour of a transaction tax, accompanied by a ₹2,000 limit on cash transactions. Its ideas were reductive, simplistic and, apparently, easy to implement. It was perfect for Modi, who picked out the single most dramatic element from this—demonetisation—and pushed it through.

In his speech announcing it on 8 November 2016, Modi said the problems of India were corruption, black money and terrorism. And strong steps would need to be taken against these and he would take them. Indians were honest and yet India was corrupt, and so a powerful and decisive step was needed against corruption, black money and terrorism.

Had people ever thought about where the money for terrorism came from, Modi asked. It came from Pakistan's counterfeiting operations in India, which was proved by the frequent arrests. He said the circulation of cash was linked to corruption and this was why ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes were between 80 per cent and 90 per cent of the total currency. He was cancelling them as legal tender in four hours, at midnight. That would mean that "such notes currently in the hands of antinational people would become worthless." Modi acknowledged that there would be some discomfort through this policy, but it would not be a problem. This was because, he said, ordinary citizens were enthusiastic about sacrifice and hardship for the country. No preparation had been made by various departments and we know this because the Cabinet was summoned on 8 November and ministers were told to leave their mobile phones behind so the act could remain secret till it was announced at the meeting. Since ministers didn't know, their departments didn't know and nobody prepared, just as was the case with the national lockdown of 2020.

Modi had been specifically warned by the RBI—the body that actually had to demonetise the notes of currency its governor had guaranteed with his signature and was arm-twisted into doing so—that demonetisation was a mistake. Raghuram Rajan resigned as governor after having discussed and disapproved of this move. The new governor Urjit Patel was forced to accept it by Modi within weeks of taking office. He then refused to release the minutes of the meeting the RBI urgently held on 5.30 pm on 8 November (just before Modi's speech) to approve the unhinged move, citing national security and a "threat to life." When the minutes were finally leaked to the press two years later in November 2018, Patel quit and left the following month. The RBI minutes said it had been told by the government that: i) The economy had grown 30 per cent between 2011 and 2016 but the currency notes of higher denomination had grown at a much higher rate; ii) That cash was the facilitator for black money;

iii) That counterfeit money of an estimated ₹400 crore was present in the system; iv) And, therefore, the ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes should be made invalid.

The RBI's response to the government was: i) That the economic growth referred to by the government was real while the rise in currency was nominal and not adjusted for inflation and 'hence this argument does not adequately support the recommendation' for demonetisation; ii) That most black money was held as land or gold and not cash, and abolishing currency would have no effect on curbing black money; iii) That demonetisation would have a negative impact on GDP; iv) That ₹400 crore in counterfeit currency was insignificant (only 0.02 per cent) compared to the total cash in circulation, which was ₹18 lakh crore.

Having said all this, the RBI board nonetheless put its rubber stamp on Modi's idea. The reason why it fought to keep this capitulation secret is clear. It had done its job in pushing back and pointing out the flaws; it was now protecting Modi. That is why Urjit Patel shamefully claimed there was a national security reason why he could not reveal the minutes, when RTI activists sought to access them. Of course, events proved that on every count the RBI had accurately predicted both the damage and the lack of benefit. What the RBI was hiding was the fact that Modi had ignored its concerns—all of which turned out to be true—and gone ahead anyway.

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

The dark face of dehumanisation

This war prone, unstable world unveils the dusky reality of human civilization behaving in a way which is largely non-relatable to humanity and the associated virtues. In a land where the obsession for power & supremacy intends to overpower everything that man has cultivated over generations in the process of evolution, dehumanisation seems to be the rule.

Dehumanisation literally means depriving people from basic human rights and dignity. Behaviourally, dehumanisation describes a disposition towards others that debases individuality of others by either portraying it as an individual species or by portraying it as an individual object.

The history of human civilization is full of disgraceful examples exhibiting dehumanisation. This earth had witnessed slavery to the highest degree when there was advertisement for a slave auction, in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1769. It is needless to define the plight of slaves and the shameful ways in which men & women were treated under yoke of slavery. There was instance of Ota Benga, a man, known for being featured as a human zoo exhibit in 1906 at the Bronx Zoo. Benga had

been purchased from native African slave traders by a businessman searching for African people for the exhibition, who took him to the United States. Benga was placed in a cage with an orangutan as a lampoon on Darwinism.

The tragic reality of mankind and death of humanity are clearly evident from the cited events. The society has already experienced the unpleasant outcome of dehumanisation which is spreading inside the civilisation like wildfire. No one might have ever imagined the pace at which the world is marching towards dehumanisation which is facilitated by status, power and social connection. It results in strong belief in exclusion, violence and support for violence against others.

Even today there is no dearth of instances revealing dehumanisation which everybody is witnessing in one form or other. For a moment let us forget the most terrible form of dehumanisation that society is facing at the cost of stability and harmony of human lives. Let us only concentrate on ordinary matters which are neither discussed at any level nor captured seriously by the media. While having plate full of delicious

meals in our dining rooms, we often fail to show gratitude towards the farmers' tireless effort behind that. We live peacefully at our homes because of the sacrifice made by the soldiers of our country working day and night in harsh climatic condition, but we never feel indebted for their sacrifice. We often fail to accept and recognise the daily contribution of a house help, municipality worker, auto driver, rickshaw puller, sweeper, gardener, security guard and many others for making our lives smooth and harmonious. Every day though we enjoy the free gift of nature in the form of sunlight, air, water, rain, river, forest and so on, we don't have the slightest compassion for the same and we go on exploiting nature recklessly. As a consequence of such unsympathetic attitude, we think and behave in a narrow sphere and direct our entire action for fulfilling a selfish motive devoid of any concern for the surroundings.

It is true that in the harsh process of socialisation we have lost our childlike innocence and purity. We do not have any answer to a child's innumerable questions on the existence of social discrimination, stigma, superstition, economic deprivation, violence and heartlessness of elders. The innocent kids never understand the theory that deprives a poor child of all the facilities which children of the wealthy enjoy. We often rationalise our approach in the so-called matured way and supplement the process of dehumanisation of our own children. Hence the vicious cycle continues.

We are not used to the habit of recognising the blessings the world is showering on us every day. Generally, human beings have a spontaneous inclination and acceptability to pleasure, not to pain. Therefore, our good memories are often unnoticed and sometimes are completely erased from the canvas of mind. It is time to introspect and come out of the cobweb of negativity and live with the countless blessings the mother earth is offering. A happy blending of intelligence and compassion for others has the infinite ability to break the cycle of dehumanisation. Perhaps it is the only need of this civilisation.

The writer is Joint Commissioner of Commercial Taxes & GST, Commissionerate of CT & GST, Odisha. Views are personal.

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WISDOM CORNER

- If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door. MILTON BERLE
- The best revenge is massive success. FRANK SINATRA
- Turn your wounds into wisdom. OPRAH WINFREY

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1833:** The great Leonid meteor shower, in which hundreds of thousands of meteors were observed in one night, was seen all over North America, initiating the first serious study of meteor showers.
- 1930:** The first Round Table Conference, called by the British government to consider the future constitution of India, opened in London.
- 1970:** The Bhola cyclone struck East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), killing hundreds of thousands of people in the densely populated Ganges-Brahmaputra delta; it was perhaps the deadliest tropical cyclone in recorded history and one of the greatest natural disasters.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
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Investing in education

Sir, Education is of paramount importance, and it's essential to ensure that everyone has the chance to learn and benefit from it. Education serves not only as an academic pursuit but also as a vehicle for instilling values and safeguarding cultural heritage. Learning adds purpose to our lives, fostering a sense of belonging, responsibility, and understanding of factors contributing to global peace. It goes beyond just preparing for a job, playing a crucial role in personal development, fostering clear thinking, effective decision-making, and problem-solving.

In India, National Education Day underscores the vital role of education in constructing a knowledge-based society, acknowledging knowledge and innovation as pivotal forces driving comprehensive national development. It promotes the importance of investing in education, research, and innovation as fundamental elements contributing to India's economic and social advancement. This occasion emphasises education's role in fostering a collective national identity and supporting cultural diversity.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Digital deception

Sir, Rashmika Mandanna, a prominent pan-India actress, found herself at the centre of a disturbing incident when her photograph was maliciously manipulated and merged with that of a scantily-clad woman, and the image was unleashed on social media. It's a distressing reflection of the digital age we live in. What transpired in Mandanna's case is merely the tip of the iceberg, underscoring the broader implications and the potential for technology to be misused. The ease with which Artificial Intelligence can be harnessed for such deceptive purposes raises concerns about the growing trend of digital manipulation and its consequences for individuals' reputation and overall trust in the digital realm. This disturbing incident serves as a stark reminder that no one is immune to the potential fallout of digital deception. It could happen to anyone, irrespective of their public standing or profession. Legislation, education and technological advancements should work in concert to ensure that AI is harnessed for beneficial purposes and not misused to harm individuals. Protecting privacy, digital integrity, and reputation in the age of rapid technological advancements is an ongoing challenge that demands collective efforts.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Supplementary chargesheet against four KTF members

NIA is probe into the Khalistan Tiger Force recruitment and arms smuggling case against Amritpal Singh, Amrik Singh, Jassa Singh and Gagandeep Singh



Investigations, the NIA successfully got deported Amritpal Singh aka Ammy and Amrik Singh from the Philippines," the official said.

According to the NIA officials, the charge sheeted accused persons played a pivotal role, at the behest of Arsh Dala, in a larger conspiracy, primarily focused on raising funds for the Khalistan Tiger Force, an organisation proscribed by the Indian government.

"Investigations revealed that the accused persons had entered in a criminal conspiracy to raise funds for the terrorist organisation, Khalistan Tiger Force. Canada based 'listed terrorist' Arsh Dala and arrested accomplice Manpreet Singh orchestrated the recruitment of potential cadres, forming terrorist gangs in Punjab and carried out targeted killings and firings at the residences of potential victims, coercing them into comply with their extortion demands," the official said.

The official said that NIA's probe found that "extortion funds were being systematically chan-

neled to various foreign countries through both banking and non-banking channels".

"These illicit financial transactions were aimed at fueling terrorist activities in India," the official said.

The official further said that during the probe it was also revealed that KTF operatives based abroad, were involved in regular recruitment and handling of their "terror syndicate associates from abroad".

"They are also involved in the smuggling of arms, ammunition, and explosives from across the border through drones etc. These terror hardware supplies are then used for carrying out terrorist activities on Indian soil," the official said.

Earlier, the NIA had filed charge sheet against nine accused persons in the case July 22 this year.

The official further said that 12 other members of the KTF terrorist outfit and their associates, linked with the BKI and KTF are under investigations for their role and involvement in this terror conspiracy.

Punjab records over 100 farm fires

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Nov 11: Punjab Saturday reported 104 farm fires, taking the total number of stubble-burning incidents to 23,730 while air quality indices in Haryana and the border state were in 'satisfactory' and 'moderate' categories.

The fresh figure of farm fires in Punjab was much lower than what the state was witnessing a few days ago.

Paddy straw burning in Punjab and Haryana is considered one of the reasons behind the alarming spike in air pollution levels in Delhi in October and November.

Only six cases of stubble burning were reported in Punjab Friday as rains lashed many parts of the state.

Out of 105 stubble-burning incidents reported Saturday, crop residue burning was seen in only 10 districts in Punjab.



Sangrur district topped with 43 cases, followed by 22 in Mansa, 13 in Fazilka, eight in Fatehgarh Sahib, four each in Ludhiana and Muktsar, three each in Malerkotla, Patiala and Bathinda and one in Ferozepur, according to Ludhiana-based Punjab Remote Sensing Centre data.

On the same day in 2021 and 2022, the state had seen 4,156 and 3,916 fires respectively.

Out of a total of 23,730 farm

fires recorded from September 15 till November 11, Sangrur is leading with maximum stubble burning cases of 4,249, followed by 2,260 in Ferozepur, 1,908 in Tarn Taran, 1,837 in Mansa, 1,556 in Patiala and 1,459 in Amritsar.

The total number of 23,730 farm fires this season was 42 per cent less than the 40,677 registered in the corresponding period of last year, as per the data.

The state had reported 47,409

farm fires during the same period in 2021.

Meanwhile, there was an improvement in air quality in Haryana and Punjab as both states have been seeing AQI in 'very poor' and 'severe' categories.

Haryana's Gurugram reported an air quality index (AQI) of 198, followed by 167 in Faridabad, 124 in Panipat, 109 in Bhiwani, 88 in Sonapat, 81 in Kaithal, 73 in Rohtak, 70 each in Sirsa and Jind and 68 in Fatehabad.

In Punjab, Mandi Gobindgarh reported AQI at 147, followed by 111 in Amritsar, 60 in Bathinda, 55 in Jalandhar, 45 in Ludhiana and 49 in Khanna.

Union Territory Chandigarh, the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana, saw an AQI of 110.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

Mufti questions Centre's claim on J&K situation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Nov 11: People's Democratic Party chief Mehbooba Mufti Saturday questioned the Centre's claims about normalisation of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, pointing to the concretisation of temporary security bunkers.

"What do I say? If the situation has improved, it should reflect on the ground. Then we should not have so many new concrete structures for the security forces. Earlier, they were living in tents. Now, concrete structures are being made for them," Mehbooba told reporters in Pulwama district.

The former chief minister of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state said while the BJP-ruled Centre is making claims about normality in Kashmir, people are being 'har-



assed' using agencies such as the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

"People cannot talk, journalists are not able to work, our jails are packed. If everything is normal, why are they so scared

of Kashmiris? Why is there so much pressure? Every day, raids by the ED, NIA ... Why are people being harassed?" she said.

Asked about ED action against Lal Singh, a former minister in the erstwhile state, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) presi-

What do I say? If the situation has improved, it should reflect on the ground. Then we should not have so many new concrete structures for the security forces. Earlier, they were living in tents. Now, concrete structures are being made for them

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP CHIEF

dent said the agencies carry out raids on anyone who speaks against the BJP.

"I am not advocating for him (Singh) but the ED today has become a wing of the B.J.P. Wherever anyone raises a voice against the BJP, they (agencies) carry out raids on them. First, they call a person corrupt but when he joins the BJP, they become fine. It is their policy. What can one say about it?" she added.

80 Indian fishermen released by Pak handed over to BSF at Wagah border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amritsar, Nov 11: Eighty Indian fishermen who were recently released from a jail in Pakistan have been handed over to BSF authorities at the Attari-Wagah border here, officials said Saturday.

The Pakistan government Thursday released 80 Indian fishermen from the Malir jail in Karachi.

Punjab police protocol officer Arun Mahal said all the prisoners crossed over to India on Friday night through the land transit route of the Attari-Wagah border through the 'Emergency Travel Certificate' issued by the Indian High Commission based at Islamabad.



After their repatriation, the medical examination of the fishermen was conducted by a team of Indian doctors, said Mahal, who was posted at the Joint Check post (JCP) of the Attari-Wagah border.

The fishermen were held three years ago after their boats slipped into Pakistan through territorial waters in the Arabian Sea, Mahal said.

The moment they crossed over to India on Friday, the fishermen bowed down and touched the earth in respect, he added.

Fishermen are frequently arrested along with their boats by both India and Pakistan as the maritime border in the Arabian Sea is poorly defined. Many fishing boats lack the required technology to ascertain their precise location.

Pleasant surprise for tourists as Valley sees early snowfall

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Nov 11: Early snowfall in Gulmarg and other areas in Kashmir has boosted the tourism sector as tourists made a beeline to the valley to experience the scenic views.

Several tourists who had come to witness the magic of crimson Chinar leaves falling in Autumn here were in for a pleasant surprise as they could catch the white Gulmarg due to early snowfall Thursday and Friday.

"We were in Srinagar when we heard that the weather was taking a turn. So, we came here and saw the scenic beauty of the valley. It's not wrong to say that if you want to have a glimpse of heaven then it's in Kashmir, in Gulmarg... We are feeling great," Manzar Khan, a tourist from Delhi, told PTI.

Asim Kumar Raut from Odisha said, "We enjoyed ourselves after coming here. We were expecting snow, but not snowfall, which we saw for the first time in our lives."

The tourists who made a be-



line to Gulmarg after the snowfall could be seen making snow structures. There was fun and frolic for them as they went sliding, skating and clicked pictures of the snow-clad mountains.

"I've come to Kashmir for the

first time. It's called heaven on earth and today I have witnessed it myself. We went to Pahalgam and Sonmarg, and today we came to Gulmarg. It's a beautiful valley. I'm experiencing snowfall here for the first time,"

Suhail Ahmad from West Bengal said.

Pune resident Pravidha was all praise for the hospitality of Kashmir and urged everyone to visit the valley to experience its charm.

Seminars, sports events part of plan to fight drug abuse

Punjab police have arrested over 20,000 drug smugglers in the past 15 months during an anti-drug drive in the state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Nov 11: With seminars and sports events, the Punjab Police is spreading awareness about the perils of drug abuse among the youth, officials said Saturday.

In a first-of-its-kind initiative, police have also roped in Punjabi artistes, including singers and actors, to encourage youngsters to channel their energy in the right direction, they said.

A mega cycle rally against drug abuse will be organised in Ludhiana on the martyrdom day of Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha November 16, officials said.

Substance abuse has been a key issue in the past Assembly elections with the opposition parties always blaming the rul-

ing party for having failed in eradicating the problem. August 15, 2023, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann vowed to make Punjab a drug-free state by the next Independence Day.

Last month, Mann joined 35,000 school children in offering 'ardas' (prayer) at the Golden Temple in Amritsar to make Punjab a drug-free state and also exhorted the youth to come forward to give a final blow to the drug menace.

The students had also taken a pledge to stay away from drugs and live a healthy life. Inspector General of Police (Hq) Sukhchain Singh Gill said creating awareness among youth against drugs is part of the multi-pronged strategy of the Punjab Police to check the drug menace in the state. As part of this campaign, celebri-



ties, non-government organisations, schools and colleges, among others have been roped in to create awareness against drugs. It is for the first time that such a drive is being carried out at this scale, said Gill.

Singers Kulwinder Singh Billa, Amit Bhalla, who is popularly known as Ninja, and actors Baninder Bani and Himanshi Khurana have been roped in for the campaign. Athlete and Arjuna awardee Tajinderpal Singh Toor, who won a gold medal in shot put at the recently

held Asian Games in China will also be spreading the message against drug abuse, officials said.

While police in the Fazilka district have released a song about the detrimental effects of substance abuse and also highlights the police action against drug smugglers, their counterparts in Faridkot organised a seminar at an institute in which a film depicting the ill effects of drugs was shown to students.

A few days ago, Amritsar police organised a seminar against

drugs which saw the participation of Supreme Court Judge Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul. Amritsar Rural and Faridkot police have organised kabaddi, wrestling and basketball tournaments for the youth while the Amritsar and Barnala police organised a cricket match for women and a 10 km race, officials said.

Jalandhar police held a street play at a school to raise awareness against drugs among the youth while the Tarn Taran police organised a mini-marathon in which school students and police personnel participated.

According to Ludhiana police, the November 16 cycle rally will be the biggest in the country so far. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Rupinder Kaur Sra said they are getting overwhelming responses from people across the state and outside it who want to participate in the rally.

"It is going to be a massive event," she said.

Several celebrities, including actors and singers Guggu Gill, Karamjit Anmol, Gurnam Bhullar, and Harby Sangha, have been roped in for the event.

This cycle rally will become a catalyst in transforming the anti-drug campaign into a mass movement wherein thousands of youngsters will participate to express their solidarity against this menace, a Ludhiana police official said. Some associations of bicycle manufacturers are even offering a 10 per cent discount on new bicycles, Sra said, adding several hotels in the area under her jurisdiction are offering 15-20 per cent discount on rooms to those who have registered for the rally.

Last month, Punjab Police said it arrested over 20,000 drug smugglers in the past 15 months during an anti-drug drive in the state. More than 1,600 kg of heroin, 924.29 kg of opium and 986 kg of ganja were also recovered during the operation.



Riders perform during a freestyle motocross show at the EICMA exhibition motorcycle fair in Milan, Italy



An overcrowded train as people travel to their hometowns for Diwali in Patna



Paramilitary force personnel conduct a flag march ahead of the Assembly elections in Bhopal



A GMCH truck sprinkles water on a road to curb pollution in Guwahati



Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) activists burn an effigy during a protest against Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar over his alleged controversial remarks, in Patna



People carry goddess Kali idol towards the puja pandal on the eve of Diwali in Agartala



Protesters show placards during a pro-Palestinian protest in London



Former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia celebrates 'Choti Diwali' with his ailing wife and son at his home in New Delhi, Saturday. Sisodia, who is in jail in connection with the alleged Delhi Excise Policy scam case, was allowed to meet his wife for six hours between 10 am and 4 pm after a court order

national

of the day quote

Deepawali is a festival of joy and happiness. It is celebrated to mark the victory of light over darkness, good over evil and justice over injustice. People of different religions and faiths celebrate this festival and spread the message of love, brotherhood and harmony. This festival is a symbol of kindness, positivity and prosperity

DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

India's character has never been to attack or occupy even an inch land of another nation but it has taken a resolve to not spare anyone if it is harmed

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

Let's work together to realise the dream of a developed state in all spheres

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHARASHTRA CM

SHORT TAKES

Sanitation worker dies in Gujarat

Bhavnagar: A sanitation worker died, while another took ill while cleaning a septic tank in the campus of a government laboratory in Bhavnagar city of Gujarat, an official said Saturday. The incident occurred on the campus of the Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute on Friday when some sanitation workers of the Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation (BMC) were cleaning a septic tank using a jetting machine, municipal commissioner NV Upadhyay said. The deceased was identified as Rajesh Vegad (45), an employee of the BMC.

Senior chops off boy's finger

New Delhi: A Class 12 student was allegedly assaulted and his finger chopped off by his senior for talking to a female classmate in Delhi's Dwarka South, police said Friday. The accused had studied in the same school and already graduated. The alleged incident occurred on October 21. The victim was so scared that he did not tell his parents about the assault and had claimed that his finger was chopped off by a motorcycle chain, the police said. On Friday, he disclosed the incident to his parents, who lodged a complaint with the police. An FIR has been registered in this connection, they added.

Man dies

Surat: A 40-year-old man died, while two were hospitalised, following the chaos that occurred when passengers were boarding a Bihar-bound special train for the upcoming Chhath festival at Surat railway station in Gujarat Saturday. Passengers rushed to board the Tapti Ganga Express train from Surat railway station in the morning, causing chaos in which some people fainted, Superintendent of Police (Western Railway) Sarjo Kumari said. There was a huge rush at the railway station, because of which some passengers suffered panic attacks and dizziness, she said. One of the passengers suffered a heart complication, and a policeman present on the platform performed CPR on him before he was rushed to a hospital in an ambulance, the official said.

Quake hits Delhi

New Delhi: A 2.6-magnitude earthquake hit the national capital Saturday afternoon, according to the National Center for Seismology. It said the epicentre of the quake that struck at 3:36 pm was near Burari, 20 kilometres north of Delhi. There were no immediate reports of any damage.

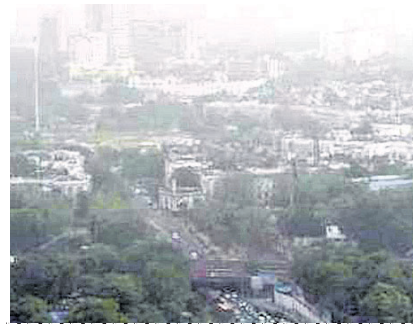


Rajasthan has become a model state in the last five years and the prime minister is afraid and troubled by it. Since the PM is not left with any other issue, ED and CBI is sent. And again and again the PM and their associates speak the language of polarization

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

HAZE OVER KOLKATA

A haze engulfed Kolkata Saturday as the air quality deteriorated with the AQI ranging from poor to very poor. Besides burning of crop residues in the neighbouring districts, celebrations with firecrackers ahead of Kali puja aggravated the situation, officials said



COP HELD FOR RAPING MINOR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Nov 11: The police sub-inspector accused of raping a minor girl in Rajasthan's Dausa district has been arrested and a case registered against him under relevant sections, including POCSO Act and the SC/ST Act, officials said Saturday.

The police officer was detained and suspended Friday. The opposition BJP attacked the Congress government in the state over law and order after the case surfaced, alleging that while the Centre believes in "beti bachao", the Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot-led dispensation in Rajasthan stands for "rapists bachao".

Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra condemned the incident, saying it brings shame to the entire society, and instructed Director General of Police Umesh Mishra to take strict action in the case.

The minor was allegedly lured into a room by Sub-Inspector Bhupendra Singh and raped Friday afternoon, police said, adding that Singh was suspended on Friday itself and a report of



The minor was allegedly lured into a room by Sub-Inspector Bhupendra Singh and raped Friday afternoon, police said

Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra condemned the incident, saying it brings shame to the entire society, and instructed Director General of Police Umesh Mishra to take strict action in the case

his misconduct was sent to the IGP of Jaipur Rural for further action. The incident which took place in the Lalsot area sparked a huge protest. Local people in large numbers gheraoed the Rahuwas police station and raised slogans against the police. A video has surfaced online purportedly showing a mob dragging the sub-inspector on the road and beating him with shoes and sticks as his clothes were torn away.

The minor underwent a medical examination and her condition is stable. The girl's exact age is yet to be determined but is estimated to be around four to five years, police said. Dausa Superintendent of Police Vandita Rana said an FIR has been registered against the accused under sections of the Indian Penal Code, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled

Three tourists killed in Dal Lake blaze



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Nov 11: Three tourists from Bangladesh were charred to death in a major blaze in a houseboat on the famous Dal Lake Saturday, officials here said.

The tourists' bodies were retrieved from the debris of the gutted houseboats near ghat nine on the lake, a popular attraction for people visiting Jammu and Kashmir's summer capital, the officials said.

A police spokesman said the three tourists who lost their lives are Anindaya Kowshal, Mohammad Moinud and a third person identified as one Das Gupta - all from Bangladesh. They were staying on the houseboat Safena, which was gutted in the blaze.

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha condoled the deaths. Eight people were rescued through collaborative efforts of the Srinagar Police, State Disaster Response Force, Tourist Police, Fire and Emergency Services, and locals, the police spokesman said.

Police said an investigation into the incident has been initiated and a report filed at RM Bagh police station. The cause of the fire, which engulfed five houseboats and as many huts attached to those, was not immediately known, the officials said. They said preliminary investigations suggested that the fire broke out in one of the houseboats in the early hours due to malfunctioning of a heating appliance.

Giving details, the police spokesman said, "The conflagration quickly spread and engulfed five houseboats - Safena,

The cause of the fire, which engulfed five houseboats and as many huts attached to those, was not immediately known

This was the second major fire incident involving houseboats that are anchored on the Dal and the Nigeen lakes

Sabreena, Young Gulshan, Lala Rukh and Khar Palace. Seven residential huts and neighbouring houses in the vicinity were also gutted in the blaze.

The officials said DNA samples were taken from the victims to establish their identities, adding one of them was a woman, according to the records maintained by the houseboat operators. The bodies will be handed over to the family members only after matching the DNA, the officials said.

Properties worth crores of rupees were destroyed in the fire that broke out around 5.15 am, the officials said. This was the second major fire incident involving houseboats that are anchored on the Dal and the Nigeen lakes. In April 2022, seven houseboats were gutted in a devastating fire on Nigeen Lake, mostly popular among foreign tourists, on the outskirts of the city.

Expressing his anguish, Lt Governor Sinha said, "I am deeply pained by the loss of lives due to the unfortunate fire incident at Dal Lake, Srinagar. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. I have directed the District Administration to provide all necessary assistance to the affected persons."

ED ARRESTS 3 'ASSOCIATES' OF AAP MLA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 11: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) arrested three alleged associates of AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan Saturday in connection with a money-laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in the recruitment of staff for the Delhi Waqf Board, official sources said.

The agency had last month raided the premises of the 49-year-old Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) legislator who represents the Okhla constituency in the Delhi Assembly Zeeshan Haider, Daud Nasir and Jawed Immam Siddiqui have been taken into custody under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the sources said.

The ED claimed that the three were "associates" of Khan and had dubious cash transactions between them. The federal agency had alleged after the raids that Khan had acquired "huge proceeds of crime" in cash from illegal recruitment of staff in the Delhi Waqf Board and invested those to purchase immovable assets in the name of his associates.

"The searches were conducted in the case related to illegal recruitment of staff in Delhi Waqf Board and illegal personal gains by way of unfairly leasing out of Waqf Board properties during the chairmanship of the board by Amanatullah Khan during 2018-2022," the agency said in a statement.

It said a CBI FIR and three Delhi Police complaints formed the basis of the ED action against the AAP MLA. Khan, the ED said, "acquired huge proceeds of crime out of the said criminal activities in cash and this cash amount was invested in purchase of various immovable properties in Delhi in the name of his associates". Several "incriminating" materials in the form of physical and digital evidence, which "indicate" the role of Khan in the offence of money laundering, were seized during the raids, it said.



A trader shows Alphonso mangoes imported from African country Malawi at a fruit market in Navi Mumbai PTI PHOTO

Medical insanity no ground for acquittal: Parl panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 11: A parliamentary panel has observed that mere medical insanity cannot be a ground for the acquittal of an accused and legal insanity is required to be proved for claiming a valid defence.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, headed by BJP MP Brijlal, also recommended that the word "mental illness" in the proposed new criminal law may be changed to "unsound mind" as mental illness is too wide in its import in comparison to unsound mind and it appears to include even mood swings or voluntary intoxication within its ambit.

The observations have been made by the panel in its report prepared after examining the proposed three new criminal laws. The proposed laws are

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS-2023), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS-2023) and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA-2023).

The three bills, which were introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 11, will replace the Indian Penal Code, 1860, Criminal Procedure Act, 1898, and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.

The panel's reports were submitted to the Rajya Sabha on Friday.

The committee observed that in the Indian Penal Code, the term, a person of unsound mind, carried a restricted interpretation according to judicial precedents and was available as a defence for the accused. "The committee is of the view that mere medical insanity cannot be a ground for acquittal of the accused and legal insanity is required to be proved for claiming a valid defence," it noted.

Bihar to 'name and shame' farmers who burn stubble

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Nov 11: Amid rising air pollution caused by the burning of crop residue, the Bihar government has decided to identify farmers who are indulging in this practice and put up their names at the block offices, officials said Saturday.

Besides naming and shaming, directions have also been given to initiate action against such farmers under CrPC section 133 that deals with unlawful obstruction or nuisance, they said. "The state government has banned crop residue burning to check air pollution, and protect the fertility of the soil. It has issued a strict warning to farmers that if they indulge in stubble burning, financial assistance and subsidies under government schemes would be denied,"



Agriculture Minister Kumar Sarvjeet said.

"The state offers electricity to farmers at a cheaper rate, and diesel at subsidised prices, among others. Therefore, farmers must take the matter seriously for the benefit of the people and also the environment," he added.

It was also decided at a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Amir Subhani that the names of farmers who were earlier prosecuted for crop residue burning would be put up at the block offices, officials said. Bihar State Pollution Control Board (BSPCB)

chairman Devendra Kumar Shukla said the decisions were taken to discourage farmers from stubble burning and harming the environment.

"The state government has taken several measures to discourage farmers from burning crop residues.

The state government has undertaken awareness campaigns, and giving subsidies to farmers on various farm equipment," he said.

Poor air quality, especially during winter, in different cities of the state has always remained a matter of concern, he added. Several farmers in Rohtas, Kaimur, Buxar, Nalanda, Gaya and Patna districts were penalised by the Agriculture Department in April for violating norms related to crop residue burning.

Kuru Kolumn

No possibility of simultaneous polls

The Modi government seems to have given up its plan to fast-track the process of holding simultaneous polls for Lok Sabha and State Assemblies in May 2024. Given the time-frame chalked out

by the Ram Nath Kovind-led panel to submit its report and Election Commission of India's inability to undertake the mammoth task, the prospects look bleak. Though PM Narendra Modi had expressed his desire to implement the "One Nation One Poll" task in 2024 itself, the possibility is remote. The Kovind-led panel has started the process of sending letters to political parties seeking their suggestions and they have been given three months' time ending February first week to respond. The Parliament will hardly have any time to take up the bill as the Budget session will be shortest as general elections will be announced by mid-March. Experts

say that there is no possibility to complete the process of passing the major Constitution amendment bill before the Parliament is adjourned sine-die in early March.

BJP hijacks Rahul's OBC poll pitch

The BJP may have been countering the 'Mandal' politics by its 'Kamanda' weapon all these years. But the ongoing Assembly polls saw the BJP joining the race for the OBC votes (read Mandal). The BJP stayed away from caste politics and focused on Ram Temple and Hindu card to reap the poll harvest since 1991. But 2023 has turned out to be different when

its top leadership has joined the race for OBC votes. The PM himself promised to the voters in Telangana that if the BJP came to power, it will install an OBC as its Chief Minister. It's a different matter that the top BJP leadership is silent on bringing back its OBC leader Shivraj Singh Chouhan as Chief Minister if the party wins Madhya Pradesh. The Union Home Minister, Amit Shah has also grabbed the OBC card saying that it was the BJP that had ordered the OBC census in Bihar when it was in power along with Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. It has refrained from attacking Nitish Kumar for tabling the report of the OBC census except for alleging that the report

hides more rather than revealing true facts. Amit Shah went to the extent of saying that the BJP gave the country's first OBC Prime Minister and their welfare is fully protected under the party. It is clear that the BJP wants to hijack Rahul Gandhi's OBC census poll pitch rather than seeking votes in the name of Ram Temple in these elections.

Private play in ministries

The Modi government is heavily banking on hiring talent from outside on a contract basis rather than relying on bureaucrats who came through stiff competition in

government jobs. While some of the key positions in the financial sector had been handed over to non-Babus such as SEBI, PESB, CCI and other institutions, it transpires that private companies are hired in a big way to handle publicity and image building campaigns of many ministries of the government. The trained staff at the Press Information Bureau (PIB) looks after the ministries as per their assignment. But the social media, publicity and strategy of more than a dozen ministries is being handled by private players. They have been hired on contract to come out with out-of-the-box thinking and plan campaigns to make a big impact.

international



Today, our minds are full with the terrible images emerging from Israel and Gaza. These are just two of the more than 100 armed conflicts in the world today
BENOIT MOTTRIE | HEAD, LAST POST ASSOCIATION

B-21 RAIDER TAKES 1ST FLIGHT

The US Air Force's B-21 "Raider" bomber shaped like a flying wing took its first flight Friday, the next step in rolling out a new fleet of long-range nuclear-capable stealth bombers built by Northrop Grumman



of the day quote

Our mutual desire, both China and the United States, is to create a level playing field and ongoing, meaningful and mutually beneficial economic relations. That is our main focus
JANET YELLEN | TREASURY SECRETARY, US

I stand on the side of revolution. That's what I'm going to lead in a way that no establishment politician can
VIVEK RAMASWAMY | PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, US

Happy Diwali to all those celebrating around the world and across the UK, and a very happy Bandi Chhor Divas to our friends in the Sikh community
RISHI SUNAK | PM, UK

Greenland ice melting 5X faster than 20 years ago

Greenland's ice melt is of particular concern, as the ancient ice sheet holds enough water to raise sea levels by at least 20 feet if it were to melt away entirely



REUTERS

Copenhagen, Nov 11: Global warming has increased the speed at which glaciers in Greenland are melting by fivefold over the last 20 years, scientists from the University of Copenhagen said Friday.

A study of a thousand glaciers in the area showed the rate

of melting has entered a new phase over the last two decades, Anders Anker Bjork, assistant professor at the department of geosciences and natural resource management at the University of Copenhagen told Reuters.

The glaciers on average decrease by 25 metres annually, compared with 5-6 metres around

two decades ago, scientists concluded after studying the development of the glaciers over 130 years through satellite imagery and 200,000 old photos.

The world has already warmed by nearly 1.2C above pre-industrial temperatures, and 2023 is "virtually certain" to be the warmest in 125,000 years, sci-

There is a very clear correlation between the temperature we experience on the planet and the changes we observe in how rapidly the glaciers are melting

ANDERS ANKER BJORK | ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOSCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

entists from the European Union said earlier this month.

Lowering temperatures would require a global effort to minimise greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, said Jorgen Eivind Olesen, Institute Director of the Climate Institute at Aarhus University. "I believe we can prepare for those gla-

ciers to continue to melt at increasing speeds," Olesen said. Glaciers in Greenland are often used to anticipate the effects of climate change on Greenland's ice sheet.

"If we start to see glaciers losing mass several times faster than in the last century, it can make us expect that the ice sheet will follow the same path just on a slower and longer time scale," William Colgan, senior researcher at the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS) said.

The Greenland ice sheet contributed 17.3% of the observed rise in sea level between 2006 and 2018 and glaciers have contributed 21%. There are around 22,000 glaciers in Greenland.

RARE MOVE

Pope dismisses conservative US bishop Strickland

REUTERS

Vatican City, Nov 11: Pope Francis has dismissed Bishop Joseph E Strickland of Tyler, Texas, one of his fiercest critics among US Roman Catholic conservatives, a Vatican statement said Saturday.

It is very rare for a bishop to be relieved of his duties outright. Usually bishops in trouble with the Vatican are asked to resign before submitting a resignation, which the pope accepts.

Popes make such moves, considered drastic, when a bishop refuses a request to resign. Strickland is 65, 10 years shy of the usual retirement age for bishops. Strickland had said earlier this year that he would refuse to resign if asked.

Strickland, a prolific user of social media who was named to the diocese by the late Pope Benedict in 2012, tweeted earlier this year that he rejected Pope Francis' "program undermining the Deposit of Faith".

He has been particularly critical of the pope's attempt to make the Church more welcoming to the LGBT community and attempts by Francis to give lay people more responsibility in the Church and opposed a recent synod.

The dismissal followed a Vatican investigation earlier this year into the administration of the Tyler diocese, which Catholic media reports said included a review of his handling of financial affairs.

DESPAIR SPREADS

Gaza in tatters

With the Israel-Hamas war in its second month and more than 10,000 people killed in Gaza, trapped civilians are struggling to survive without electricity or running water



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, Nov 11: Fistfights break out in bread lines. Residents wait hours for a gallon of brackish water that makes them sick. Scabies, diarrhea and respiratory infections rip through overcrowded shelters. And some families have to choose who eats.

"My kids are crying because they are hungry and tired and can't use the bathroom," said Suzan Wahidi, an aid worker and mother of five at a UN Shelter in the central town of Deir al-Balah, where hundreds of people share a single toilet. "I have nothing for them."

Palestinians who managed to flee Israel's ground invasion in northern Gaza now encounter scarcity of food and medicine in the south, and there is no end in sight to the war sparked by Hamas' deadly October 7 attack.

Over half a million displaced people have crammed into hospitals and UN schools-turned-shelters in the south. The schools — overcrowded, strewn with trash, swarmed by flies — have become a breeding ground for infectious diseases.

Since the start of the war, several hundred trucks of aid have

There is a real threat of malnutrition and people starving. What aid workers call food insecurity is the new baseline for Gaza's 2.3 million people

ALIA ZAKI | SPOKESPERSON FOR THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, UN

entered Gaza through the southern Rafah crossing, but aid organizations say that's a drop in the ocean of need. For most people, each day has become a grueling cycle of searching for bread and water and waiting in lines.

The sense of desperation has strained Gaza's close-knit society, which has endured decades of conflict, four wars with Israel and a 16-year blockade since

Hamas seized power from rival Palestinian forces.

Some Palestinians have even vented their anger against Hamas, shouting insults at officials or beating up policemen in scenes unimaginable just a month ago, witnesses say.

"Everywhere you go, you see tension in the eyes of people," said Yousef Hammash, an aid worker with the Norwegian Refugee Council in the southern town of Khan Younis. "You can tell they are at a breaking point."

The violence has jarred the tiny territory, where family names are linked to community status and even small indiscretions can be magnified in the public eye.

Arab, Muslim nations' leaders blame Israel

Saudi Arabia and Muslim countries called Saturday for an immediate end to military operations in Gaza, declaring at a joint Islamic-Arab summit in Riyadh that Israel bears responsibility for "crimes" against Palestinians. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, gathered Arab and Muslim leaders for the summit as the kingdom has sought to exert its influence to press the United States and Israel for an end to hostilities in Gaza. Dozens of leaders including Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who was welcomed back into the Arab League earlier this year, attended the meeting. Prince Mohammed said the kingdom affirms its "condemnation and categorical rejection of this barbaric war against our brothers in Palestine".

Quake crisis shakes Iceland

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Reykjavik, Nov 11: Iceland declared a state of emergency after a series of powerful earthquakes rocked the country's southwestern Reykjanes peninsula, in what could be a precursor to a volcanic eruption.

"The National police chief ... declares a state of emergency for civil defence due to the intense earthquake (activity) at Sundhnjukagigar, north of Grindavik," the Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management said.

"Earthquakes can become larger than those that have occurred and this series of events could lead to an eruption," the administration warned.

The Icelandic Met Office (IMO) said an eruption could take place "in several days".

The village of Grindavik, home to around 4,000 people, is located some three km southwest of the area where Friday's earthquake swarm was registered.

It has evacuation plans in place in case of an eruption.

Around 1730 GMT, two strong earthquakes were felt as far away as the capital Reykjavik some 40 km away, and along much of the country's southern coast, rattling windows and household objects.

According to preliminary IMO figures, the biggest tremor had a magnitude of 5.2, north of Grindavik.

Some 24,000 tremors have been registered on the peninsula since late October, according to the IMO, with "a dense swarm" of nearly 800 quakes registered between midnight and 1400 GMT Friday.



Carnival revellers celebrate on the central Heumarkt square in the streets of Cologne, Germany

PTI PHOTO

Indian students pip Chinese in US talent pool

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 15 YEARS, CHINA NO LONGER PROVIDES LARGEST NUMBER OF FOREIGN STUDENTS TO US

AGENCIES

Washington, Nov 11: While teaching students about studying abroad, New York University professor Teboho Moja often tells her class that China, and then India, supply the highest and second highest number of international students to the US.

Data from the US Department of Homeland Security shows that, as of September this year, there are more than 320,000 active Indian student visa holders in the country — compared with about 254,000 from China. Most visa holders are college students.

Enrolment of international students from India has doubled over the last decade, with about 1.8 million students from the country attending US campuses in that time. In 2022, the number of Indian students who headed Stateside jumped considerably to 64,300 while China's number fell to 24,796.

"Indian students are certainly filling the gap (left by Chinese students) and are pursuing graduate education leading to top positions in the tech industry and STEM-related jobs. This is not only happening in the US but in other countries as well," Moja wrote in her reply to the Post.

Students of Chinese origin have made significant contri-



The one key differentiator — and perhaps advantage — for Indian students is that they are likely to be more comfortable in English because of India's English-medium education and the predominance of English in India

RAJIKA BHANDARI | EXPERT, INTERNATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION

It is a similar story across the pond. In Britain also India had overtaken China as the main recipient of student visas for the first three quarters of 2022

need to rely more and more on those students from India and other countries to maintain its leadership in areas of scientific research, defence technology and hi-tech industry.

How this change in the talent pool will affect America's global competence remains unclear. While there are similarities between students from India and China, such as work ethic, there are also differences. A popular view is that people from India are well-suited to

leadership roles, while those from China are good at problem-solving. Though a few scientific studies appear to support the theory, many researchers have cautioned that the results should not be over-interpreted.

In a 2017 article published in the peer-reviewed journal Neuroscience Letters, a group of scientists, mainly from the Suzhou Institute of Biomedical Engineering and Technology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), examined ethnic differences in cerebral morphology between Chinese and Indian undergraduate student volunteers.

A total of 36 Chinese and 32 Indian students at Soochow University in Suzhou, Jiangsu province, who were all within the same age range, had MRI scans done of their brains, looking at grey matter volume, cortical thickness and cortical surface area.

The purpose of the study was not to evaluate which group was smarter, according to the researchers. The mainstream scientific community has strongly opposed using brain scan as an IQ measurement. Brain structure varies from one person to another. It does not have any implication for racial or cultural superiority.

Reds eye plan to avert govt shutdown as Moody's warns

THE US IS ONE STEP CLOSER TO LOSING ITS LAST PERFECT CREDIT RATING AFTER MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE CHANGED THE OUTLOOK OF THE NATION'S DEBT TO NEGATIVE

REUTERS

Washington, Nov 11: US House of Representatives Republicans are due to unveil a stopgap measure Saturday aimed at averting a government shutdown, the latest in a series of standoffs that contributed to Moody's lowering its outlook on the nation's credit.

The move to change its outlook to "negative" from "stable" by the last major credit ratings agency to maintain a top "AAA" rating on the US government came six months after Congress brought the nation to the brink of default on \$31.4 trillion in debt and just a week before federal agencies will run out of money without congressional action.

Newly installed House Speaker



Mike Johnson, the top Republican in Congress, has spent the past several days discussing options with his slim 221-212 House majority, including how long to extend stopgap funding while lawmakers negotiate a spending plan for the fiscal year that runs through September 30.

"Continued political polarization within US Congress raises the risk that successive governments will not be able to reach consensus on a fiscal plan to slow the decline in debt affordability," Moody's said in a statement.

The move could strengthen the hand of Republicans who want to push for sharper spending cuts, after the federal government ended the last fiscal

year with a \$1.7 trillion deficit — its largest outside the depths of the Covid pandemic. That reflects both the toll of high spending and past tax cuts.

"Moody's just downgraded our credit rating outlook to negative because of our out-of-control government spending and deficits," hardline Republican Representative Andy Harris said on social media. The White House sought to pin blame for the outlook change, which cited the high deficit and rising interest rates, on Republicans.

"Moody's decision to change the US outlook is yet another consequence of congressional Republican extremism and dysfunction," White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre said.

of the day quote

The FPI selling trend which started in September continued in October and is showing no signs of reversing in November even though the intensity of selling has come down this month

VK VIJAYAKUMAR | CHIEF INVESTMENT STRATEGIST, GEJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

We are encouraged by the continuing strong performance that exhibit consistent and remarkable growth trajectory

MURALI MALAYAPPAN | CMD, SHRIRAM PROPERTIES

Gold prices are in favour of business. We are receiving a very good response. We expect total sales to be over 30 tonnes on Dhanteras day across the country. It will be much higher than roughly 22 tonnes estimated sales in the year-ago period

DINESH JAIN | DIRECTOR, GJC

Q2 RESULTS

BSE net jumps 4X

Mumbai: BSE, the country's leading stock exchange, has posted a four-fold jump in net profit at Rs 118.4 crore for the July-September quarter of the current financial year. The exchange had made a net profit of Rs 29.4 crore in the same quarter last year. The stock exchange's revenue increased by 53 per cent to a record Rs 367 crore in the second quarter this year from Rs 240 crore in the same period of the previous financial year.

ONGC drops again

New Delhi: State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) reported a 20 per cent drop in September quarter net profit on decline in oil prices and lower output. This is the second consecutive quarter of a decline in net profit for ONGC, India's top crude oil and natural gas producer. The firm had reported a 34 per cent drop in April-June profit. The company reported a net profit of Rs 10,216 crore in July-September (second quarter of current 2023-24 fiscal year), compared to Rs 12,826 crore earning in the same period last year.

Tata Chemicals dips

New Delhi: Tata Chemicals Ltd Friday reported a 28 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 495 crore for the second quarter of this fiscal year. Its net profit stood at Rs 685 crore in the year-ago period. Income from operations fell to Rs 3,998 crore in the July-September period, as compared to Rs 4,239 crore in the corresponding quarter of last year (Q2FY23).

PTC profit surges

New Delhi: Power trading solution provider PTC India Friday posted over 46 per cent jump in its consolidated net profit to Rs 202.31 crore for the September 2023 quarter, mainly on the back of higher revenues. The company's consolidated net profit stood at Rs 138.23 crore in the year-ago period, according to a BSE filing. The total income rose to Rs 5,224.85 crore in the quarter from Rs 4,901.84 crore a year ago.

Eicher profit jumps

New Delhi: Eicher Motors Friday said its consolidated net profit increased by 55 per cent to Rs 1,016 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2023, driven by robust sales. The company had reported a net profit after tax of Rs 657 crore in the July-September quarter of last fiscal.



Indian equities can readily deliver double-digit returns in the next two-three years with the support of double-digit earnings growth

PRANAV HARIDASAN | MD AND CEO, AXIS SECURITIES

NEW FEAT FOR PAK STOCKS

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) had jumped past the 55,000 barrier, setting a new milestone. On Friday, the benchmark KSE-100 index reached an intraday high of 55,506.32 points, Geo News reported. According to Arif Habib Limited on X, formerly Twitter, the KSE-100 index crossed the 55,000 level trading to reach an all-time high



TURMOIL CONTINUES

2.5L jobs cut so far in '23

Tech firms have been sacking employees citing global macroeconomic conditions

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 11: Nearly 2.5 lakh employees have been laid off so far this year in the global technology and startup sector, as the tech layoffs continue unabated for the past two years.

Nearly 1,106 tech companies have sacked 248,974 employees (till November 11), according to data compiled by the website Layoffs.fyi.

Last year, 1,024 tech companies laid off a total of 154,336 employees.

As of September 30, 2023, Indian startups have laid off over 13,000 workers, resembling the total layoffs witnessed in 2022.

Citing the global macroeconomic conditions, Big Tech firms and startups across the spectrum have fired employees.

On average, about 555 employees lost their jobs every day in the last two years - or 23 workers every hour.

In January alone, 89,554 employees were laid off. In terms

Over-hiring, uncertain global macro-economic conditions, strong tailwinds from the Covid-19 pandemic have forced companies to cut jobs



NEARLY 1,106 TECH FIRMS HAVE SACKED 248,974 EMPLOYEES

INDIAN STARTUPS HAVE LAID OFF MORE THAN 13,000 WORKERS IN 2023

1,024 FIRMS LAID OFF A TOTAL OF 154,336 EMPLOYEES IN 2022

RETAIL TECH AND CONSUMER TECH EMPLOYEES WORST HIT

of sector, retail tech and consumer tech were the ones which laid off the most employees in this year.

As 2023 is not over yet, more layoffs are set to happen in the remaining period. Several tech and gaming companies laid off employees this month.

French video game company Ubisoft, which published popular franchises like Assassin's Creed and Far Cry, has laid off about 124 employees as part of a corporate restructuring and reor-

ganisation effort.

Game development software company Unity has announced that it will "likely" go for layoffs as part of cost-saving measures.

Snap, the parent company of Snapchat, has laid off nearly 20 employees who held product management titles as part of a restructuring aimed at streamlining the social messaging company.

US-based F5, a global leader in multi-cloud application security and delivery, reportedly

laid off 120 employees this month.

Global communications company Viasat is laying off 800 employees, about 10 per cent of its workforce, and the impact will spread across the business in terms of geographies and divisions.

US-based cybersecurity company Splunk has announced to lay off about 7 per cent of its global workforce, just months ahead of its acquisition by global networking giant Cisco.

SELF-CERTIFICATION

India proposes new law for broadcasters, streaming giants

REUTERS

New Delhi, Nov 11: India Friday introduced a new draft broadcasting law to regulate the sector that will also apply to streaming giants such as Netflix, Disney and Amazon and calls for formation of individual content evaluation committees.

Netflix and Amazon have become hugely popular in India, which is set to grow into a \$7 billion market for the sector by 2027, according to Media Partners Asia. Top Bollywood stars feature in online shows, some of which have faced criticism from lawmakers and the public for scenes deemed vulgar or offensive to religious sentiments.

The minister for information and broadcasting, Anurag Thakur, said setting up Content Evaluation Committees (CEC) by each broadcaster was among "key innovations" in the new law and will help in "robust self-regulation".

"Every broadcaster or broadcasting network operator must establish a Content Evaluation Committee (CEC) with members from various social groups," stated the draft law document, which is open for public consultation for 30 days.

The proposal however comes at a time of increasing scrutiny of streaming companies in India over content-related issues.

Though all films in Indian cinemas are reviewed and certified by a government-appointed board, streamed content is not.

Under the new proposed law, the federal government "can define the CEC's size, quorum, and operational details" and only those shows shall be broadcast that are "duly certified" by such a committee, the draft law stated.

Leadership disagreement stalls Zee-Sony merger

REUTERS

Bangalore, Nov 11: Talks of a merger between India's Zee Entertainment Enterprises and Japan's Sony's Indian arm have stalled after a clash on which company's top executive will run the merged entity, the Mint business daily reported Friday.

Sony is pushing for its Indian operations managing director NP Singh to head the merged company, as Zee's candidate, managing director Punit Goenka faces an on-going investigation, the report said, citing people aware of the matter.

Zee and Sony India did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

An Indian tribunal last month lifted a ban on Goenka holding board positions in Zee Group



A failure to reach an agreement on leadership by Dec 21 may derail the merger to make an entertainment giant in India

companies, but said that he will have to cooperate with any investigation by India's markets regulator.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) had in June alleged that Goenka and Zee Group Chairman Subhash Chandra were actively involved in diverting company funds.

Both Goenka and Chandra have denied any wrongdoing.

A failure to reach an agreement on leadership by December 21 may derail the merger, the Mint report said.

In September, Sony had announced a delay in the merger, saying it expected completion "within the next few months".

Last month, rival Disney was reported by Bloomberg to be nearing a deal to sell its India operations to Reliance Industries.

SAFE HAVEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 11: Investors flocked to Gold Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), which are considered a safe haven during uncertain times, and put in Rs 841 crore in October, way higher than Rs 175 crore in the preceding month.

Apart from the inflows, the asset base of Gold ETFs also surged in the period under review, as per data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi).

"With the ongoing geo-political tensions, fear of continued hike in interest rates in the US, inflation still higher than expectations, and growth rate slowing down, the appeal of Gold as a safe haven and hedge against inflation is expected to continue," Melvyn Santarita, analyst and



manager of research at Morningstar Investment Adviser India, said.

Moreover, Gold prices in recent times have come-off from all-time high levels, thereby providing some buying opportunity, particularly after a sharp rally it witnessed since March this year, he added.

According to the data, Gold-

linked ETFs saw an inflow of Rs 841 crore last month, as compared to Rs 175.3 crore in September. The category recorded Rs 1,028 crore in August, which was the highest monthly inflow in 16 months, and Rs 456 crore in July.

Prior to that, Gold ETFs saw an inflow to the tune of Rs 298 crore during the April-June pe-

DEBT-RIDDEN

Future's retail arm heads for liquidation



Lenders fail to get suitable buyer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 11: Future Retail, once the crown jewel of Kishore Biyani-led Future Group, is now heading for liquidation as its lenders could not get any reasonable buyer of the debt-ridden firm.

As the Committee of Creditors (CoC) rejected the sole resolution plan submitted by Space Mantra after four extensions in the deadline to complete the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP), the RP of the company has now approached NCLT to initiate liquidation of Future Retail (FRL).

"The resolution plan submitted by Space Mantra Private has not been approved by CoC of FRL, kindly note that, the Resolution Professional (RP) has filed an application, before the National Company Law Tribunal, Mumbai Bench, for initiation of liquidation of FRL," said a regulatory filing from FRL.

Last month FRL had informed that Rs 550 crore bid submitted by Space Mantra for FRL, failed to get the required number of votes in the e-voting process of the CoC.

The NCLT had granted four extensions to FRL for completion of CIRP and the last date was September 30, 2023, and after that there was no extension in the time frame.

The insolvency proceedings against FRL were started by the tribunal July 20, 2022.

The Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC) mandates the completion of CIRP within 330 days, which includes time taken during litigations.

As per Section 12 (1) of the Code, the CIRP shall be com-

pleted within a period of 180 days from the date of initiation.

However, NCLT may grant a one-time extension of 90 days. The maximum time within which CIRP must be mandatorily completed, including any extension or litigation period, is 330 days.

Earlier, FRL had said it had received six bids from prospective buyers by May 15, which was the last date for submission of resolution plans.

The deadline for submission of resolution plans was May 15, 2023, for 48 companies, which were in the final list of 'Eligible Prospective Resolution Applicants'.

This has happened despite FRL lenders coming with revised Expressions of Interest (EOIs) and inviting fresh bids after dividing its assets into clusters.

Future Retail has a debt of around Rs 30,000 crore and the company is going through CIRP.

On March 23, 2023, creditors of FRL invited new EOIs, whereby prospective buyers can bid for the debt-ridden firm "as a going concern or individual cluster or a combination of clusters of its assets", as it failed to attract a resolution plan in more than four months.

FRL operated multiple retail formats in both the hypermarket supermarket and home segments under brands such as Big Bazaar, Easyday, and Foodhall. At its peak, FRL was operating more than 1,500 outlets in nearly 430 cities.

It was part of the 19 Future group companies operating in the retail, wholesale, logistic and warehousing segments, which were supposed to be transferred to Reliance Retail as part of a Rs 24,713-crore deal announced in August 2020. However, lenders had rejected the takeover of the 19 Future group companies, including FRL, by Reliance amid a legal challenge by Amazon.

Forex reserves hit 7-week high

REUTERS

New Delhi, Nov 11: India's foreign exchange reserves rose for a second straight week and stood at a seven-week high of \$590.78 billion as of November 3, data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed Friday.

The reserves rose by \$4.7 billion, adding to the \$2.6-billion rise in the prior week ending October 27.

Changes in foreign currency assets, expressed in dollar terms, include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of other currencies held in its reserves.

The RBI has bolstered its forex reserves to deal with potential eventualities, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said Thursday, adding that India's current account deficit is "eminently manageable."

Foreign exchange reserves also include India's reserve tranche position in the International Monetary Fund.

For the week the forex reserves data pertains, the rupee had hit a record low of 83.2950 against the dollar. The unit, however, was little changed on a week-on-week basis.

The currency settled at 83.34 Friday, a record closing low, and was down 0.2 per cent for the week.



BULLISH AFRICA

Cocoa prices at highest level since 1978

COCOA FUTURES ROSE 1% IN NEW YORK, TOPPING \$4,000 A TONNE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 45 YEARS



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, Nov 11: Cocoa prices topped \$4,000 per tonne in New York Friday, the highest since 1978, as the outlook of poor crop harvests across West Africa has been a bullish factor pushing prices higher this week.

There is also an increasing risk that El Nino-induced weather disturbances could cause the global cocoa market to sink into a deficit for the third year, Zero Hedge reported.

According to Bloomberg, harvests in Ivory Coast and Ghana - some of the world's largest

There is also an increasing risk that El Nino-induced weather disturbances could cause the global cocoa market to sink into a deficit for the third year

cocoa producers - are producing lower crop yields, which has led to tighter supplies, therefore supporting higher prices.

"The market does not seem convinced that production will

recover enough to avoid a supply deficit for 2023/24," ADM Investor Services Inc analysts said in a note, Zero Hedge reported. Cocoa futures rose 1 per cent in New York, topping \$4,000 a tonne for the first time in 45 years.

Earlier this week, Oreo-maker Mondelez International said it would have to hike prices on some of its products due to the soaring cocoa and sugar prices.

Meanwhile, sugar prices hit decade highs on global shortage fears in April. And Arabica coffee prices are set to move higher after inventories hit 24-year lows, Zero Hedge reported.

England book CT ticket

PAKISTAN GO OLD SCHOOL TO END WORLD CUP WITH EMBARRASSING DEFEAT, WHILE BUTTLER & CO HAVE SOMETHING TO CHEER FOR DESPITE POOR CAMPAIGN



IMPRESSIVE OUTINGS: Joe Root (L) and Ben Stokes run between wickets during their partnership; David Willey celebrates a wicket in his farewell game

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Nov 11: England joined the party after everything was done and dusted, finding enough reasons to smile while humiliating a demotivated Pakistan by 93 runs in their final World Cup game here Saturday.

By virtue of winning their last two games, England finished seventh in the 10-team table and qualified for the Champions Trophy (CT), scheduled in Pakistan in 2025.

Pakistan's improbable hopes of a semi-final qualification were dashed the moment England batted first and scored 337/9. Pakistan, in response, managed only 244 runs in 43.3 overs as their batters were neither able to pick Adil Rashid's (2/55) googlies nor retiring David Willey's (3/56) incisive swinging deliveries.

There was no chance in hell of Pakistan making the cut because even if their batters had hit 40 consecutive sixes in 6.4 overs, they wouldn't have surpassed

England's total and topple New Zealand on net run-rate.

The academic interest was whether Pakistan batting was able to withstand the pressure of scoreboard and once again Babar Azam's men batted in an archaic manner, as if the 50-over showpiece was being held in 1992 and not in 2023.

Once again Babar (38, 45b) and Mohammed Rizwan (36, 51b), the two pillars of Pakistani batting, struggled to get going and let the game drift during their 51-run stand in 11.2 overs.

Batting second at Eden Gardens has been tricky as the ball swung around and also with a lot of balls gripping off the surface, there was turn on offer. The two seniors didn't have the game to put the opposition under pressure and that has been Pakistan's story throughout the tournament.

In every 10-over blocks, Pakistan scored 43 (1-10), 46 (11-20) and 54 (21-30), which was never going to be okay in a chase of near 340. They have failed to show

intent save a couple of games against Bangladesh and New Zealand (DLS win), where Fakhar Zaman fired after being picked too late into the tournament.

On the day, purposeful batting by Salman Ali Agha (51, 45b, 6x4, 1x6) or tail-ender Harris Rauf's (35, 23b, 3x4, 3x6) rearguard action was a lesson for the top-order.

Earlier, England's star-studded batting line-up saved their best for the last as half centuries by Ben Stokes (84, 76b, 11x4, 2x6), Joe Root (60, 72b, 4x4) and Jonny Bairstow (59, 61b, 7x4, 1x6) powered the 2019 champions to a commendable total.

Having scored 339/9 against the Netherlands in their last match, this was England's second successive 300-plus total. England batters however failed to fire at the death as, from being 240/2 in 40 overs, they managed 97 runs in the last 10 overs, a period when they also lost seven wickets.

Rauf returned with 3/64, while Shaheen Shah Afridi bagged 2/72 and denied Stokes a well-deserved



century. Meanwhile, Rauf also became the first Asian bowler to earn the ignominy of giving away 500 runs in the tournament.

The 32-year-old Stokes, who came out of ODI retirement to take part in England's title defence, has made his impact felt since his return with three back-to-back 50-plus scores which also included a century, as he signed off the WC with 304 runs at 50.66.

Stokes and Root consolidated after a quick start in a 132-run partnership. Bairstow's brisk knock provided a perfect start for England in an 82-run opening stand with Dawid Malan (31).

BRIEF SCORES: England 337/9 (Ben Stokes 84, Joe Root 60, Jonny Bairstow 59; Harris Rauf 3/64, Shaheen Shah Afridi 2/72, Mohammad Wasim 2/74) beat Pakistan 244 (Salman Ali Agha 51, Babar Azam 38, Mohammad Rizwan 36, Harris Rauf 35; David Willey 3/56, Gus Atkinson 2/45, Adil Rashid 2/55, Moeen Ali 2/60) by 93 runs.

Don't judge our middle order by numbers, says coach Dravid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Nov 11: There was a hint of concern surrounding the Indian middle-order, particularly around KL Rahul and Shreyas Iyer ahead of the World Cup, but head coach Rahul Dravid Saturday expressed his delight over the manner in which they responded to the task at the showpiece.

Rahul returned from a tendon injury during the recent Asia Cup while Iyer had to battle against a back spasm before getting fit just in time for the marquee event. While they have not set the stage ablaze, Rahul's tally of 245 runs and Iyer's 293 runs have allowed India a good degree of batting solidity in the tournament.

"How well your middle-order performs in challenging situations under pressure, is going to probably decide how well you do. While our top order batters performed exceptionally well, our middle-order played very critical roles," Dravid said.

He was not worried about the fact that the numbers of players like Rahul and Iyer were not as glossy as some other batters in the side.

"You can't judge them by numbers. It only gives you half of the picture, but it's actually some of those 30s, 40s, critical knocks. I can look back at the contributions of our middle-order and they'll come only in sort of spurts - a Shreyas (Iyer), or a KL (Rahul), or a Surya (Suryakumar Yadav), and Jaddu's (Ravindra Jadeja) important knock in Dharamsala. These small things actually what really gives you those ticks," said Dravid.

The former Indian captain was impressed the way Iyer made his comeback into the side after his injury to make some vital contributions. "He brings temperament - one of the things Shreyas has shown us from the time I have seen him at India A - the way he handles success and failure. He's able to bring the best out of himself under those pressure situations," said Dravid.

"Guys like that who have incredible temperament and strength of mind, and I think that's what has held him in really good stead. He's terrific temperamentally. So, when some-



one like him does well, you know he's going to make big contribution," he added.

Apart from Rahul and Iyer, India also had injury worries over pacer Jasprit Bumrah and left-arm spinner Jadeja in the run-up to the World Cup. But both the players recovered well in time to play in the quadrennial big bash, and made a telling impact.

Dravid acknowledged the effort these players have put in to make a comeback and also credited the National Cricket Academy and team support staff for helping them recover efficiently.

HEPING PRAISE ON ROHIT
India's dominant eight-match winning streak in the World Cup has a lot to do with Rohit Sharma adapting brilliantly to his dual role of team captain and opener, reckoned Dravid.

"Rohit has certainly been a leader. I think he's led by example both on and off the field," said Dravid. "There have been some games where it could have been tricky for us, but the fact that he's been able to get us to those kinds of starts has literally cracked open the game. It's actually has made it look easy for us and certainly made it easier for the guys who followed in that (batting) department."

Dravid said Rohit sets the example for others by imbibing the team motto, and it has created a massive impact in the Indian dressing room. The former Indian captain, perhaps, had in his mind the aggressive

way Rohit has opened till date in this event, a stimulant for others to follow his suit.

"We've talked about playing in a particular way. You cannot do that unless your leader buys in and shows by example. It's been terrific to see the way Rohit's done that. I think his captaincy has been fantastic. He's someone who's certainly got the respect of the group and the coaching staff," said Dravid.

TAKE ON 'TIMED OUT' ROW

Angelo Mathews' first-of-its-kind timed out dismissal against Bangladesh in a World Cup match has again stirred the debate about 'Spirit of Cricket' and Dravid Saturday said a player should be allowed to follow the rules of the game to the letter, if he wishes so.

The heated deliberations started after Mathews was declared timed out following an appeal of Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan after the Sri Lankan batter could not get ready in time to face his first ball, coming in after the dismissal of Sadeera Samarawickrama.

"Everyone thinks differently. We are all unique creatures and we have our own minds and thoughts. There is no real right and wrong. It's fine to have those differences," said Dravid.

"When someone wants to take the letter of the rule to the last Nth degree, I don't think you can complain about it because, honestly, he's just following the rules as he sees it. You might not do it yourself. But you can't blame somebody for following it."

MCC BACKS UMPIRES' CALL ON 'TIME OUT' ROW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Nov 11: The umpires had correctly ruled Angelo Mathews 'timed out' but the Sri Lankan batter could have avoided getting dismissed in that fashion by consulting the officials before asking for a new helmet, Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the custodian of the rules governing the game, said Saturday.

Mathews had become the first batter to be dismissed 'timed out' in international cricket when he failed to take strike within the stipulated time of two minutes following the dismissal of Sadeera Samarawickrama in their World Cup match against Bangladesh Monday, triggering a huge controversy.

Mathews realised that the strap of his helmet was broken and asked for a new helmet. The delay prompted Bangladesh to appeal and the umpires upheld it despite Mathews' repeated pleas.

"When the helmet broke, it appears that Mathews did not consult with the umpires, which a player would be expected to do when seeking new equipment. Rather, he just signalled to the dressing room for a re-

placement," the MCC said in a statement.

"Had he explained to the umpires what had happened and asked for time to get it sorted out, they might have allowed him to change the helmet, perhaps calling Time and thus removing any possibility of being Timed out."

"Given that Time had not been called, and that at the time of the appeal more than two minutes had elapsed, the umpires correctly gave Mathews out. In fact, there was no other action for the umpires to take within the Laws of Cricket," the statement added.

South Africa's Marais Erasmus and England's Richard Illingworth were the two on-field umpires in that game. A peeved Mathews had called Bangladesh's decision to dismiss him via 'time out' "disgraceful". The two teams didn't shake hands after the match November 7.

The MCC emphasised that such a law is certainly required because in its absence, "a batter could waste time at the fall of a wicket." The ICC also maintained that the Spirit of Cricket is not owned by any one player, country or culture and that the game is played with subtle differences right across the globe.

India look to sustain momentum



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Nov 11: The marauding Indians have not put a foot wrong in their authoritative run in the World Cup and it won't be a surprise if they go about plundering Netherlands in their final league game, where Virat Kohli will have a perfect opportunity to scale 'Mount 50' at his spiritual home.

India have already qualified for the semifinals while the elimi-



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nated Netherlands are on their way home, and this situation casts a perception of insignificance on their fixture.

But in reality, there are no academic-natured matches in a World Cup, where teams constantly try to better their best in the quest for ultimate glory.

India are no different as they look to maintain the momentum while ticking off a few team goals against the Netherlands, hence a large-scale change to the hosts' playing eleven looks unlikely at this stage.

Since cricket is often a game of outcome and numbers, an approaching historic personal milestone gives this game an exciting undertone as well, which also carries importance from the team's perspective.

Kohli had equalled Sachin Tendulkar's record of 49 ODI

hundreds against South Africa at Kolkata, and the wait now is on for his 50th ton.

Kohli may like to insulate himself from the outside noise and focus on the job at his hand - continue churning out runs but expectations have only grown that he gets the milestone hundred at his IPL home.

So far, he has amassed 543 runs, leading India's batting chart and this is also the first time Kohli is going past the 500-run mark in the 50-over World Cup. He had made 282 runs in 2011, 305 in 2015 and 443 in 2019, while Tendulkar, Shikhar Dhawan and Rohit Sharma played the lead roles with the bat in those editions.

Hence, Kohli will not want any slip up in India's last league game, using it as preparation ground to return to his sharp self ahead of the semifinals after a week-long gap following the match against the Proteas.

India's bowling, on the other hand, remained largely trouble free with the three pacers and the two spinners delivering frequently. The ultra-efficient five-man unit will be looking for one final rehearsal ahead of the last four match, against New Zealand at Mumbai.

Marsh masterclass floors Bangladesh



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Smith for the second and third wickets respectively to take it away from the Asian team.

Earlier, Towhid Hridoy slammed a 79-ball 74 (5x4, 2x6) as Bangladesh produced their best batting effort of the tournament to post a competitive 306/8.

Opting to bowl, Josh Hazlewood (0/21) was on the money with the new ball, while Adam Zampa (2/32) scalped two to take the top position in the list of most wicket takers in this World Cup, and Sean Abbott (2/61), playing his first game, also took two wickets.

Litton Das (36) and Tanzid Hasan (36) gave Bangladesh a good start on a belt of a wicket as they were 76 for no loss at one stage. However, both frittered away their starts. Abbott broke the partnership dismissing Tanzid.

Najmul Hossain Shanto (45) also looked in fine fettle as Bangladesh scored 100/1 in 15.1 overs. However, Zampa had Litton's wicket. Hridoy smashed two sixes en route to a 63-run alliance with Shanto, but Labuschagne produced a terrific throw to run out the stand-in skipper.

Mahmudullah (32) clobbered three sixes and a four during his 44-run stand with Hridoy as the 200 was up for Bangladesh in the 32nd over. Mushfiqur Rahim (21) became the second victim of Zampa but Mehidy Hasan Miraz provided some impetus.

Bangladesh could add just 67 runs in the last 10 overs, but the total was enough to ensure that their net run rate wouldn't go below Sri Lanka in the race for the Championships trophy qualification.

BRIEF SCORES
Bangladesh 306/8 (Towhid Hridoy 74, Najmul Hossain Shanto 45; Adam Zampa 2/32, Sean Abbott 2/61) lost to **Australia 307/2** (Mitchell Marsh 177 n.o, Steve Smith 63 n.o, David Warner 53) by 8 wickets.



Angelo Mathews shows his helmet while arguing with the umpires during Sri Lanka's match against Bangladesh

NEWS IN BRIEF

Archer Dhiraj wins silver

BANGKOK: Dhiraj Bommadevara clinched India's first Paris Olympics quota in archery when he bagged a silver at the Asian Continental Qualification Tournament here Saturday. After his senior colleague Tarundeep Rai's last-eight exit, Bommadevara was the lone Indian in fray and the 22-year-old did not disappoint, cruising into the final with two straight-set wins. The Asian CQT offered individual quotas to the two countries who made the finals in men's and women's sections. But Dhiraj failed to win the gold, losing to his Chinese Taipei rival Zih-Siang Lin 5-6 (29-28, 27-29, 28-28, 30-28, 25-26) (9-10) in an intense shoot-off.

A World Cup milestone

AHMEDABAD: Over a million fans have attended the ongoing World Cup with the tournament on track to

become one of the most attended ICC events in history. With six games to go, the millionth fan came through the turnstiles during the match between Afghanistan and South Africa in Ahmedabad Friday, the ICC said in a media release. The tournament has already broken multiple viewership and digital records.

Kahn's academy launched

MUMBAI: German goalkeeping legend Oliver Kahn has launched his academy in India, aiming to "transform the landscape of football education" and development in the country. He has entered into a partnership with Pro 10 in Maharashtra. The Oliver Kahn Academy aims to become the hub for complete football education that would focus on grooming players along with well-rounded athletes. It has plans to establish academies across the country, in collaboration with football clubs, sports academies and educational institutions.