



CAREER EVOLUTION

Katrina Kaif expresses gratitude for her journey, emphasises personal growth, and embraces authenticity

LEISURE P2

HAMAS BATTLES IDF

Hamas militants battle Israeli forces trying to push into Gaza's largest refugee camp

INTERNATIONAL P10



DJOKOVIC IN FINAL

Novak Djokovic beats Carlos Alcaraz in Turin as he seeks a seventh title in the ATP Tour Finals

SPORTS P12

Heartbreak in Ahmedabad

Australia win ODI cricket World Cup for sixth time, beating hosts India by 6 wickets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Nov 19: India's dreams of winning a third World Cup title lay in tatters after an inexplicable meltdown saw them crash to a six-wicket defeat against an indefatigable Australia here Sunday, plunging the cricket-obsessed country into deep mourning.

Australia thus won a record-extending sixth World Cup title, stretching their dominance in the tournament that started way back in 1975.

Put in to bat, India ended up with a below-par 240 despite contributions from Rohit Sharma (47 off 31 balls), Virat Kohli (54 off 63) and K L Rahul (66 off 107).

Just like his performance in the WTC final against India in June, Travis Head made a match-winning 137 off 120 balls as Australia chased down the target in 43 overs.

Indian hopes were raised when Australia lost three wickets for 47 but a 192-run partnership between Head and Marnus Labuschagne (58 not out) shut the door on the opposition.

Australia's brilliant bowling and fielding also went a long way in their emphatic win. The



Australian players celebrate with the trophy after winning the ODI cricket World Cup 2023 final against India at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, Sunday. PTI PHOTO

dew in the evening also made batting easier on a slow and dry surface. India, who were the only unbeaten side going into the final after 10 wins on the trot, fell

flat in the final hurdle. Their last world title came way back in 2011 and their last ICC trophy was the Champions Trophy triumph in 2013. India's defeats in

the ICC events over the past decade include the loss in 2014 World T20 final, 2016 World T20 semifinal, 2017 Champions Trophy final and 2019 ODI World

Cup semifinal. Head won the Player of the Match award, while Kohli was named the Player of the Series.

MORE P12

BRIEF SCORES

India: 240 all out in 50 overs (KL Rahul 66, Virat Kohli 54; Mitchell Starc 3/55).
Australia: 241/4 in 43 overs (Travis Head 137, Marnus Labuschagne 58 not out; Jasprit Bumrah 2/43).

Pro-Palestine fan breaches security to reach Kohli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Nov 19: A pro-Palestine fan breached a tight security cordon to enter the field of play in a desperate attempt to hug Virat Kohli during the World Cup final between India against Australia here Sunday.

The incident happened before the first drinks break.

The security personnel apprehended the man, who was identified as Wayne Johnson, an Australian of Chinese-Filipino origin. He was arrested and taken to Chand Kheda Police station.

Political sloganeering is an offence at cricket games but with Johnson being a foreign national, it is not yet known what kind of action will be taken against him.

Johnson wore a face mask with design of a Palestine flag and a t-shirt with slogans on both sides.

On the front of the t-shirt, 'stop bombing Palestine' was written and on the back, 'Save Palestine'. His sudden intrusion caught everyone unaware but the security was quick to apprehend him.

The ICC doesn't allow any political sloganeering during its event and any such act is also not allowed in India. Israel and Palestine militant group Hamas have been engaged in a war since October 7, when the latter attacked a music festival in Kibbutz Re'im.

PICTURE P12

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Cricket is different from politics. Here, performance matters

WEATHER	
BHUB	CTK
MAX 30.8°C	30.2°C
MIN 21.8°C	21.0°C
Humidity 81%	87%
Rainfall Nil	Nil
Forecast: Dry weather very likely	

UFO SIGHTED IN MANIPUR

AGENCIES

Imphal, Nov 19: Normal flight services at Manipur's Imphal International Airport were affected Sunday afternoon over the sighting of an unidentified flying object (UFO), officials said.

Two flights were diverted and three others delayed. Services normalised after around three hours.

"Due to sighting of an unidentified flying object within Imphal controlled airspace, two flights have been diverted and three departing flights have been delayed. Flight operations commence after receipt of clearance from the competent authority," a statement issued by Airport Director Chipemmi Keishing said.

An official of the Air Traffic Control (ATC) said they received a message from the CISF at 2.30 pm, informing them that a UFO was found near the airport.

The Indian Air Force Eastern Command at Shillong was informed of the development, the official said.

Manipur is bordered by Nagaland, Mizoram and Assam, besides sharing an international border with Myanmar to its east.

Climate toll on state's coast

Coast vulnerable to cyclones as well as chronic problems associated with shore erosion, storm surge and inundation

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Nov 19: Owing to its proximity to the Bay of Bengal, Odisha has been bearing the brunt of climate change with the regular occurrence of devastating tropical cyclones, increasing volume of lightning, erratic rainfall and coastal erosion.

"With over 480 km of coastline, Odisha is in a precarious position when it comes to the impact of climate change," says the Odisha State Action Plan on Climate Change (Phase-II).

The document also mentions that Odisha's coast is vulnerable to cyclones as well as chronic problems associated with shore erosion, coastal flooding, storm surge and inundation. Studies conducted by several other re-

puted government and non-government organisations have also echoed the same warning that large parts of Ganjam, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Balasore districts are at greater risk of deluge and inundation due to coastal erosion.

"Many coastal villages in Kendrapara, Ganjam and Puri districts are experiencing increased levels of inundation and storm flooding, accelerated coastal erosion, seawater intrusion into freshwater, including groundwater and encroachment of tidal waters into river systems. All these lead to multiple displacements and the poor living on the margins of subsistence are forced into greater poverty," said renowned environmentalist and researcher Ranjan Panda.

Those living in the sea coast have been facing acute shortage of drinking water and loss of livelihoods as huge patches of arable lands were eaten away by the rising sea waves.

Bengalata Rout of Tandahar

in Astaranga block of Puri district, said, "In my younger days, the villagers had to cover a long distance to go to the sea for fishing or any other work. But, now the sea has come so close to our village that we are staring at displacement."

The situation is more precarious in Udayakani village of the same block. "We are living a miserable life after the destructive super cyclone of 1999. Since then, the sea waves continue to expand inundating our land with every passing year. We have already been displaced twice due to shore erosion. All our farmland are either submerged or filled with salt water and sand forcing us to work as daily labourers in nearby villages," said Siba Pradhan of Udayakani.

"Such situations are already forcing many people to migrate to other places. We urgently need rehabilitation policies for supporting these climate migrants and displaced people so that their right to life with dignity is protected," said Panda.

Cyber incidents in India twice the global average

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Nov 19: The Indian cyberspace has seen nearly double the number of cyber incidents as compared to the global average, National Cybersecurity Coordinator MU Nair said Sunday.

Addressing a session on 'Aligning Technologies to Future Conflicts' at the Synergia Conclave 2023, Nair said ransomware attack payments of nearly USD 1.54 billion have been made on an average over the past 10 months, which has doubled since 2022.

"These payments are just the tip of an iceberg since several of these incidents go unreported," he said. Nair said the Indian cyberspace has seen cyber incidents at an average of 2127 times during the past six months, which is much more than the global average of 1108.

Nair said it's time for countries to rally together to contain and limit disruptive practices on cyberspace. "There are a large

State-owned banks asked to strengthen cybersecurity

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry has asked state-owned banks to review systems and processes related to their digital operation in view of the UCO Bank reporting an erroneous credit of Rs 820 crore to account holders of the bank. According to sources, the banks have been advised to check their cybersecurity robustness and take measures to strengthen them.

number of initiatives in this direction under the UN and regional forums where nations are looking for solutions to cyberspace which is not confined to national boundaries," he said.

Nair said several international initiatives are addressing the evolving challenges of cybersecurity. One notable effort is the UN Group of Governmental Experts on advancing responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, appointed by the UNGA, he said.

2 sisters drown

AGENCIES

Berhampur, Nov 19: Two girls drowned while bathing in a pond in Ganjam district Sunday, the police said.

The deceased were identified as 10-year-old Rohani Rout and her younger sister, seven-year-old Sandhyarani Rout, daughters of Abakash Rout of Jarada village in the district, a police officer said.

The incident took place in Kirtipur village in Hinjili area. The sisters were visiting their maternal grandfather's place along with their mother.

The sisters were bathing in the pond while their maternal grandfather, Narshu Polai, was washing clothes. The girls suddenly slipped into deep waters and cried for help but villagers could not rescue them, the police officer said.

The bodies were later fished out of the pond and sent for post-mortem at the MKCG Medical College and Hospital, he said, adding two unnatural death cases were registered.

Nicaragua's Palacios crowned Miss Universe

The 23-year-old mental health activist and audiovisual producer is the first from her country to win at the international beauty pageant

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 19: Nicaragua's Sheynnis Palacios, a 23-year-old mental health activist and audiovisual producer, has been crowned Miss Universe for the year 2023, marking her country's first win at the international beauty pageant.

The 72nd edition of the Miss Universe pageant was held Saturday night at the Jose Adolfo Pineda Arena in San Salvador, El Salvador.

Miss Thailand Anntonia Porsild emerged the first runner-up and Miss Australia Moraya Wilson was named the

second runner-up at the event.

Miss Universe shared the update on its official Instagram page.

"MISS UNIVERSE 2023 is @sheynnispalacios_of!" the post read.

Palacios was crowned by the USA's R'Bonney Gabriel, who held the title of Miss Universe for the year 2022.

According to Miss Universe, Palacios is from Managua, Nicaragua.

"She usually prefers to be behind the camera, but she's come out of the wings because she believes in finding solutions for as many of the world's problems

as she can. As a problem-solving kind of person, she put herself through the communications program at her university by working in her mom's snack business. When the business faltered in an economic crisis, her mother migrated north to find a better job, and she became the economic and emotional support for her grandmother and young brother," the organisation said in the Instagram post.

As Miss Universe 2023, Palacios' cause will be mental health, which stems from her own experiences with anxiety. "Coming from a country where this issue is rarely addressed, she started an accessible initiative called 'Understand Your Mind,' in which she interviews a specialist on emotional care in her television segments. She has also produced events and other audiovisual projects on this theme.

"Her goal in life is to work in the service of humanity, by running a newsroom and produc-

ing content and commercials for international brands. In her spare time, she rescues cats and dogs, and loves a good mental game and puzzle," the organisation added.

Palacios bested entrants from 83 other countries, including Miss India Shweta Sharda, who was called into the list of top 20 contestants. The official Instagram handle of Miss Diva congratulated Sharda on her campaign at the pageant.

"The moment our LIVA Miss Diva Universe 2023, Shweta Sharda was called into the Top 20. Shweta, the nation is proud of your representation and we cannot wait to welcome you back with lots of love. Thank you for raising our flag high at the @missuniverse pageant," the organisation said in the post.

Erica Robin, who was crowned the first ever Miss Universe Pakistan 2023, also made it to the top 20. American singer-song-

writer John Legend performed his popular track 'All of Me' at the ceremony.



leisure



MICHAEL B JORDAN TO DIRECT CREED 4

Actor Michael B. Jordan who made his directorial debut with *Creed 3*, in which he also starred as heavyweight champ Adonis Creed from the *Rocky* spin-off film series is set to direct the upcoming fourth installment of *Creed*, confirms franchise producer Irwin Winkler.

BTS' JUNGKOOK'S GOLDEN ALBUM LANDS AT NUMBER 1 ON SALES CHART

Korean boy band BTS' Jungkook is basking in the success of his newly rolled-out debut album *GOLDEN*. Adding another feather to the cap, Jungkook's debut album, featuring a total of 11 tracks, has claimed the number 1 spot on the Album Sales Chart.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

When taking any decisions about the future, common sense is a good thing to possess. Make your calculations, seek guidance, take out the astrological charts, but, Ganesh says, in the final reckoning let your common sense prevail.

TAURUS

Your business and professional affairs will be well planned and organized this day, says Ganesh. Everything will run as scheduled. Your outstanding managing abilities, your business acumen will get noticed and appreciated. The home front may, however, not be as bright. The family scene is likely to be cheerless and gloomy. Forget your natural postures and preferences.

GEMINI

Financial matters could become a cause of worry. You need to cut down on unnecessary expenses. You could look at investing in real estate. You will spend the evening blissfully with your spouse or partner, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Can too much of love be a bad thing? Well, you will find it today, warns Ganesh. Today you may find your relationship in throes of chaos. There may be an outburst of emotions by both of you. And, if you both share the same sun sign then the situation may get out of control due to such overflow of emotions. Thus, it's advisable that you keep a strict tab on your sentiments.

LEO

You will not compromise with your principles today, and will feel satisfied with yourself as a result. However, do not lose your conciliatory approach. You need to be practical and businesslike about your professional affairs, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

Ganesh advises you to knit emotions and reasoning together. There may be an emotional overkill in the afternoon today. However, luck will turn out to be in your favour later in the day when you decide impulsively to go for an outing.

LIBRA

Ganesh says today is a good day for any government related work. Those of you who are government officials will find the day beneficial to them. Your life partner will prove lucky for you and you will be able to spend quality time with your dearest friends. The evening will be one that you will cherish for a long time to come.

SCORPIO

Lucky are your children today, as you shower love, care and affection on them. Promotion or increment awaits you at work. There's a woman behind every successful man they say. In your case, your spouse is likely to be your constant supporter. This will make you feel complete and satisfied, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Love life and your sweetheart are likely to occupy your day. You may build castles in the air! You would like to give your wardrobe a makeover. To sum it up, you and your friends set out on a shopping spree and splurge big time! Make the most of the benevolent day, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN

Some unexpected turn of events may leave you upset, but you will still manage put up a happy face and continue with your work. You'll divert your mind somewhere else and eventually change your mood, too. If you expecting some good news from the foreign shores, today the wait will be finally over, foresees Ganesh.

AQUARIUS

You don't only speak for yourself, but also for those who suffer from injustice and discrimination. Don't take more load on your shoulders than you can carry, advises Ganesh, otherwise others will criticise you. Listen to your loved ones; understand their desires and needs to build a more harmonious environment at home.

PISCES

You will have no unnecessary worry today. You will be very tolerant and generous today and thus will readily forgive people. This may be very good but ensure that people don't take advantage of you.

Katrina on her showbiz growth

Mumbai: Actress Katrina Kaif who completes 20 years in the industry and is enjoying the success of *Tiger 3*, reflects on her journey from being a 'total newcomer' to someone who has found her 'voice as an artiste'.

In an interview with media, she said, "It's been an incredible journey, the kind of people I got to work with... The directors I worked with gave so much to me as an artiste and as a person. I have been a part of such wonderful films that have been loved, stories that have been loved by the audi-

ence and those they have connected with. I have learnt a lot about myself."

The *Welcome* actress further adds, "As we grow and change, it's gratifying to witness that transformation reflected in our work. The person you are now on set differs from who you were two decades ago. This evolution manifests on screen, conveying your mindset, beliefs, and inner self. My ongoing aim is authenticity, making choices aligned with my present self, ensuring honesty resonates on screen."

"I've always aspired to explore action, especially inspired by female-centric films. In Hindi cinema, I see a significant space for this genre. Through projects like *Tiger* and *Zoya's* action sequences,

we've successfully carved that niche. *Zoya*, as a character, goes beyond glamour, becoming a vital element in the film. The positive audience response allows us the liberty to further expand on this in the future," she concluded. AGENCIES



EMRAAN DEFENDS TIGER 3 AGAINST CRITICISM

Mumbai: Actor Emraan Hashmi spoke about the criticisms being leveled against *Tiger 3*, as a certain section of the audience have questioned its idea of patriotism.

In an interview with media agency, the *Jannat* actor said, "War always created more problems. And if you ask the people of a nation, they always want peace. Ultimately, a hero is somebody who rises above what the preconceived notion of patriotism is, and does things for the larger good. And that's what the film projects the narrative as, and in that sense, it's a very progressive film."

"There are a dime a dozen films that are jingoistic, and have this pitch of bashing so-and-so country. We tried to do something that was right, otherwise we could've easily gone down that road. And then, the same people who are questioning the patriotism would've then said, 'Yaar same cheez dikha di tumne'. Ultimately, you do what you do, and the numbers speak for themselves," he ends. AGENCIES

Dhoom director Sanjay Gadhvi dies at 57

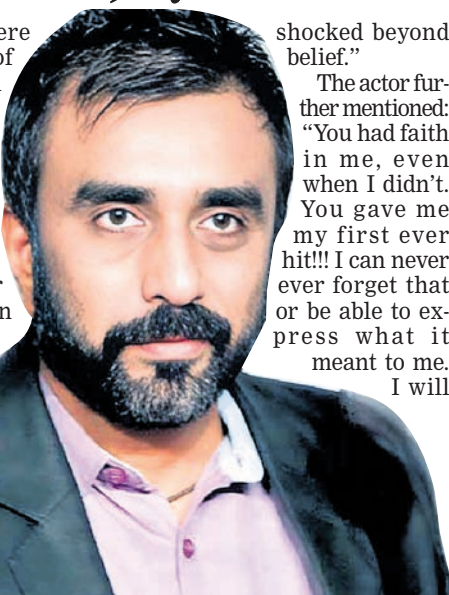
Mumbai: Director Sanjay Gadhvi, who broke new grounds in the industry with his *Dhoom* franchise (*Dhoom* and *Dhoom 2*), passed away Sunday in Mumbai due to cardiac arrest.

Sanjay Gadhvi, who made his directorial debut with *Tere Liye* followed by *Mere Yaar Ki Shaadi Hai*, registered a breakout success with *Dhoom*, and followed it up with its sequel *Dhoom 2*.

The Filmmaker's untimely demise has left the team of his *Dhoom* franchise, including Abhishek Bachchan, John Abraham and Hrithik Roshan, 'shocked' and 'saddened'.

Actor Abhishek Bachchan, took to his Instagram and wrote: "I took this photo of

Sanjay whilst we were filming the climax of *Dhoom 2* in South Africa. We made two films together -- *Dhoom* and *Dhoom 2*. Sanju, when I spoke to you last week and we were reminiscing about our shoots and memories I would never have imagined even in my craziest dreams that I would have to write a post like this. I'm



shocked beyond belief."

The actor further mentioned: "You had faith in me, even when I didn't. You gave me my first ever hit!!! I can never ever forget that or be able to express what it meant to me. I will

cherish your friendship always. Rest in peace my brother."

Hrithik Roshan shared a heart-breaking note on his X (formerly Twitter) handle and wrote, "Deeply saddened by the loss of my dear friend Sanjay Gadhvi. Forever grateful for the moments we shared. He was instrumental in bringing out the Aryan in me. Couldn't have done it without him. Rest in peace my friend. You will be missed."

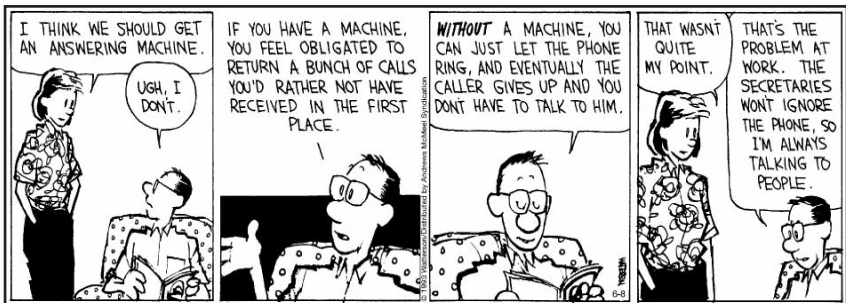
John Abraham posted Sanjay's picture and wrote on X, "Remember the times I spent with you on the film closest to my heart #Dhoom. May the angels always ride with you. Rest in peace Sanjay Gadhvi." AGENCIES

FUN post

PEANUTS



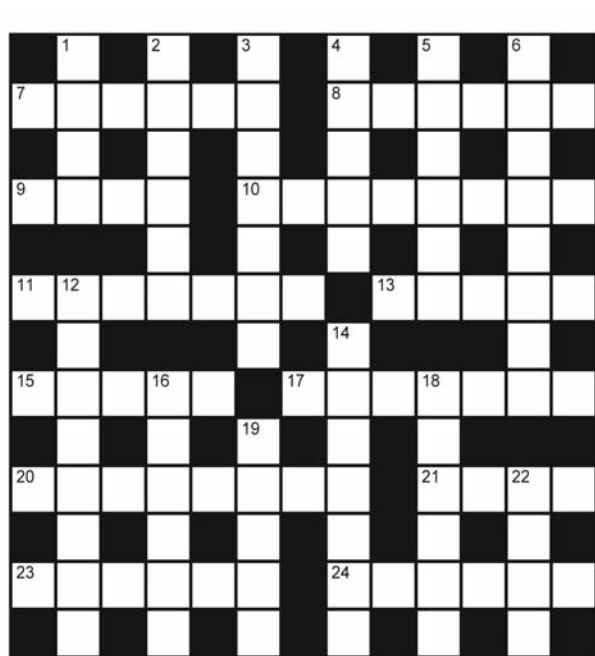
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



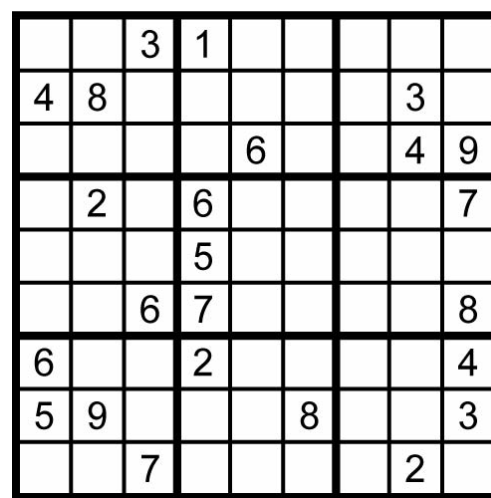
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Tristan's love
 - 8 Hard stuff
 - 9 Lyra's brightest star
 - 10 Critic
 - 11 Vertical
 - 13 Roofing material
 - 15 Speedy
 - 17 Prejudice
 - 20 Terminating
 - 21 Canyon sound
 - 23 Fisherman
 - 24 Dreaded fly
 - 4 Drink garnish
 - 5 Piggery sound
 - 6 Wisecracker
 - 12 Pipes and such
 - 14 Fretful
 - 16 Go bad
 - 18 Minded
 - 19 Unit of petrol
 - 22 Sautéed meat dish
- Down**
- 1 Part of an archipelago
 - 2 Mixture of soluble salts
 - 3 Fireplaces

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.

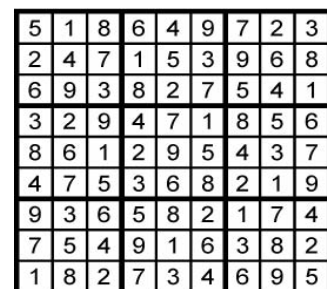


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



Odisha Information and Public Relations (I&PR) Minister Pradip Kumar Amat light the ceremonial lamp to inaugurate Odisha State Day Celebration at India International Trade Fair-2023 in New Delhi, Sunday

downtown



ORGANELLE FARMS SECOND OUTLET OPENS IN CITY

BHUBANESWAR: Dignitaries, including Dharitri and **Orissa POST** Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy, actress Elina Samantray and Organelle Farms founder Poonam Mohapatra, attended the launching of the second outlet of the premium organic food brand at Surya Nagar in Bhubaneswar, Sunday. With over 200 individuals engaged in the production process, Organelle Farms has been offering high-quality and chemical-free produce cultivated through traditional farming techniques.

Capital Hospital to transform into state-level referral facility

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Nov 19: If things go well, Capital Hospital in Unit-VI area of the City will soon be shifted to Patia-Chandrasekharpur-Gadakana locality, with the state government recently directing the General Administration (GA) department to allocate 35 acre land in the posh locality for the purpose.

According to sources, Capital Hospital will be transformed into a state-level referral facility. Norms mandate a hospital to have at least 3,200 beds for being a state-level referral facility.

“However, Capital Hospital currently has only 750 beds, and space crunch has been hindering further expansion of the premier state-run hospital,” they said.

“As Unit-VI area is well connected to Biju Patnaik International Airport, Secretariat, Assembly, VIP quarters and Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology, it often witnesses traffic snarls throughout the day. And further infrastructure development will add to the woes,” they said.



While the existing infrastructure in Unit-VI area will be used for PGIMER, Capital Hospital will be shifted to the 35-ac land in Patia area

In order to overcome the issue, the state government has decided to separate Capital Hospital from Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER).

While the existing infrastructure in Unit-VI area will be used for PGIMER, Capital Hospital will be shifted to the 35-acre land in Patia-Chandrasekharpur-Gadakana

locality that will be allocated by the GA department, they said.

“The 3,200 beds will be divided between the two facilities. 500-seat capacity auditorium and quarters for 2,000 employees will also be built as part of the transformation. Human resource allocation will also be done in accordance with the plan,” they said, adding that 650 quarters will be vacated and 500 slum dwellers will be ‘evicted and subsequently relocated’ for the mega initiative that is expected to take state’s healthcare to newer heights.

The Health and Family Welfare department has been asked to formulate a fresh expenditure plan for the purpose.

Prez on 3-day visit to Odisha, AP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 19: President Droupadi Murmu will visit Odisha and Andhra Pradesh from November 20-22 to attend a host of programmes, according to a statement issued by the Rashtrapati Bhavan Sunday.

The President will attend the inaugural session of the 36th Annual Conference and Literary Festival of All India Santali Writers’ Association at Baripada Monday.

“On the same day, she will also inaugurate an Eklavya Model Residential School at Kuliana,” it said.

She will inaugurate a skill training centre at Pahadpur village November 21, the statement said.

Subsequently, Murmu will visit Badampahar railway station from where she will flag off three new trains (Badampahar-Tatanagar MEMU, Badampahar-Rourkela Weekly Express and Badampahar-Shalimar Weekly Express). The President will also inaugurate new



The President will attend the inaugural session of 36th Annual Conference and Literary Festival of All India Santali Writers’ Association at Baripada Monday

Rairangpur postal division, release a commemorative cover of Rairangpur postal division and lay the foundation stone for redevelopment of Badampahar railway station, it added.

Murmu will travel from Badampahar to Rairangpur in Badampahar-Shalimar express.

President Murmu was born in a Santhali tribal family at Uparbeda village in Mayurbhanj district.

She had served as an honorary teacher at Sri Aurobindo Integral Education Centre, Rairangpur from 1994 to 1997. In 2000, Murmu was elected from Rairangpur constituency as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Odisha and continued to hold the post till 2009, serving two terms.

The President will also attend the 15th annual convocation of Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology, Burla Tuesday evening.

Murmu will launch the National Education Campaign-New Education for New India, organised by Brahma Kumaris at Sambalpur November 22, the statement said.

Later, she will visit Puttaparthi where she will attend the 42nd convocation of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, it added.

29-YEAR-OLD DIES AS SUV FALLS INTO CUTTACK CANAL

CUTTACK SADAR: A 29-year-old man died after the sports utility vehicle (SUV) he was driving fell into a canal under Kandarpur police limits in Cuttack, an official said Sunday. The mishap took place when Deepak Behera, a resident of Siddheswarpur under the police limits, was returning home in his Hyundai Creta (OD05-BM-6644) in the wee hours of Sunday. “Deepak lost control over the vehicle following which the SUV veered into Biribati-Kainjanga Machhanga canal in Athanga area,” an official said, quoting eyewitnesses. On being informed, Kandarpur police reached the spot and pulled the vehicle out of the canal using a tractor after hours-long effort. “The 29-year-old’s body was recovered from car and sent for post-mortem to Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar,” said the official.

Seminar on climate change organised

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 19: A seminar highlighting climate change issues and the steps that could be taken for their resolution was organised here, Sunday. The programme stressed on the need for relying on alternative resources in the face of changing climatic conditions which is seen taking a toll on human health.

Addressing the seminar, Orissa High Court judge Justice Sanjeeb Kumar Panigrahi said, the entire society must be apprehensive about the impending dangers of climate change and the impact it has brought to our lives. In a bid to secure a safe future, every individual must consider to shift his/her interest towards sustainable goals, he added.

He also stated that emerging technologies have the potential to bring a key change in the issue.

State Information Commissioner Sushant Kumar Mohanty highlighted his concerns on the growing menace of ‘climate change’ and ‘rising temperature’.

“The recent human actions to ensure infrastructure development have desecrated the levels of soil, air and water. The systematic strike on these elements has also led to a variation in weather cycles”, he said.

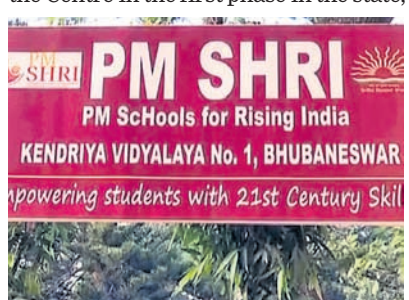
The event organised by Nature Care Institute, a voluntary organisation, was based on the theme- “Climate change and Resilient Development”.

Pradhan launches PM SHRI scheme in state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 19: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Sunday launched the Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) scheme in Odisha.

Out of 97 central schools and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas, the scheme will be implemented in 63 institutes run by the Centre in the first phase in the state.



A total of ₹7.27 crore was released for 37 central schools and ₹5.43 crore for 26 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas

Pradhan said.

The Centre had asked all the states and Union Territories to sign MoUs with the Department of School Education and Literacy of the Ministry of Education for implementation of the scheme. The Odisha government, however, is yet to do it.

“The PM SHRI scheme will be implemented in the state with more than ₹120 crore,” the Union minister said. For 2023-24, the Centre has sanctioned

₹50.8 crore for the state’s schools run by the Centre, of which ₹12.7 crore has already been released in the first instalment.

A total of ₹7.27 crore was released for 37 central schools and ₹5.43 crore for 26 Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas.

Pradhan said the government of India is providing about ₹70,000 crore to various states each year for development of the education sector and Odisha is getting nearly ₹4,200 crore each year under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan and PM Poshan schemes.

Expressing displeasure over non-implementation of the PM SHRI scheme in Odisha government-run schools, the Union Minister said development of education and students is a combined responsibility and the state government should come forward for this.

“In the last one year, I have written letters to the Chief Minister (Naveen Patnaik) thrice for implementation of the PM SHRI scheme in Odisha schools. I once again request the CM with folding hands to consider it,” he said.

The Centre had launched the PM SHRI scheme September 7, 2022.

“A few states have not implemented the scheme for political reasons and I am sure that Odisha is not part of those states. If the scheme would have been implemented in only two schools in each block and municipality, Odisha schools could have received ₹1500 crore funds from the Centre,” Pradhan said.

Earlier in the day, he inaugurated administrative-cum-academic and hostel-guest house building of the Eastern Regional Language Centre here.

Boosting Connectivity & Cultural Ties

Indian Railways is not only a medium to connect distances, but it is also becoming an important medium to connect the country's culture, tourism and pilgrimage centres.

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

Flagging off of

Extension of Banaras-Sambalpur Express to Visakhapatnam

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By

Dharmendra Pradhan
Minister of Education & Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India

Ashwini Vaishnav
Minister of Railways, Communications, Electronics and Information Technology, Govt. of India

On 20th November 2023 at 1600 hrs.,
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Pat for state's newborn care

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 19: Odisha has received 'appreciation award' for the 'best NBSU reporting state' and for taking care of newborns in newborn stabilization units (NBSU) at the national workshop on National Newborn Week (NNW) and SAANS Campaign 2023 at New Delhi.

The Health and Family Welfare department Sunday on their social media account informed that "Proud moment for the state as Odisha has received 'appreciation award' at the national workshop on NNW and SAANS Campaign 2023 at New Delhi November 17 for Best NBSU Reporting State and taking care of newborns in newborn stabilization units."

"The state has recorded the highest decline in infant mortality rate in the country and the second highest decline in maternal mortality rate," informed Women and Child



Development Minister Basanti Hembram recently.

Odisha is one of the few states that has introduced and effectively ensured gender and child budgeting, resulting in constant flow of funds for improvement of women and children's nutritional status, early child care and empowerment of adoles-

cents, said Hembram

The state government has also extended the benefits of Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) to children under 5-18 years of age whose names are not in the list but their parents are enrolled under the scheme. Children below five years of age are already provided coverage under BSKY on the basis of self-declaration by the card holder that the child belongs to their family.

Notably, National Newborn Week is celebrated every year in the country from November 15 to 21. The main objective of this week is to reinforce the importance of neonatal health as a key priority area of the health sector and to reduce infant mortality by improving health care conditions for infants in the neonatal period. And SAANS Initiative was launched in 2019 to accelerate action to reduce deaths due to childhood pneumonia.



BOOK LAUNCH: Dharitri and Orissa POST Editor Tathagata Satpathy and Higher Education Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak along with other dignitaries attend a book launch event organised by 'Bhadrak Zilla Sanskritika Sammelana Tyagabhumii' at Geeta Govinda Sadan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Mission Shakti teams' exposure tour to Dubai



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 19: Recognising the role women play in development and transformation of societies and local communities, the state government has accorded importance to women-centric policies and programmes, and facilitated exposure visits to international destinations.

Recently, 36 district level federation (DLF) and block level federation (BLF) leaders representing Angul, Bolangir, Balasore, Bargarh, Boudh, Cuttack, Deogarh, Ganjam, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Jharsuguda, Kandhamal, Kendrapara, Keonjhar, Koraput, Malkangiri, Mayurbhanj, Nayagarh, Puri and Sundargarh were felicitated at Mission Shakti Bhawan, Bhubaneswar. The delegation was warmly received by Mission Shakti Commissioner-cum-Secretary Sujata R Karthikeyan.

In an effort to showcase the achievements of Mission Shakti and provide global exposure to its leaders, the state government, through Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC), has facilitated exposure visits to SHG leaders to international destinations.

Mission Shakti BLF leaders embarked on a three-day exposure visit to Dubai from November 15 to 17. This follows the successful visit of DLF leaders to Dubai and Singapore on the first flights from Odisha in May this year. The exposure visit to Dubai promises not only cultural exchange but also valuable learning experiences.

The delegates had the chance to witness international best practices, engage in dialogues with global leaders, and explore innovative business models. The exposure to diverse markets and entrepreneurial ecosystems in Dubai will undoubtedly broaden their perspectives, fostering a deeper understanding of global trends and strategies.

Speaking about the visit, Nayagarh BLF president Meena Kumari Swain said, "We are grateful to our Chief Minister for giving us this opportunity to visit Dubai. It was an enriching experience for us to visit Dubai, and we appreciate the invaluable experience gained during our tour."

Ravenshaw alumni donate 2 e-vehicles

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Cuttack, Nov 19: To help physically challenged students, East Hostel Alumni Association (EHAA) of Ravenshaw University donated two e-vehicles (e-autorickshaws) Sunday for their convenience.

The keys were handed over to the university authorities in presence of members of the EHAA, some physically challenged students, and current boarders of the East Hostel.

The e-vehicles (e-autorickshaws) will enable the physically challenged students to reach their respective departments and the library from their hostels as it is difficult for them to travel the distance on foot inside the campus. The e-vehicles,



which are built with all-metal front portions, will ensure better safety features for the riders while commuting inside the varsity campus.

On behalf of the university authorities, registrar Kanhu Charan Mallik, Pratibha Kumar Mohapatra from the department of botany and Odia assistant professor Ashish Kumar Sahu and East Hostel warden Sarat Kumar Rout were present.

BMC to set up 120 community toilets

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 19: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) on World Toilet Day, Sunday, announced to build 120 community toilets and induct six more cesspool vehicles in City. The facilities will be provided to the City dwellers at free of cost.

City Mayor Sulochana Das urged the denizens to adopt three-pronged methods for water conservation which includes proper usage, correct practice and delivery and behavioural change. In the face of looming climate crisis, everybody needs to practice resilient methods to curtail impacts of environ-



“In the face of looming climate crisis, everybody needs to practice resilient methods to curtail impacts of environmental change”
SULOCHANA DAS | BMC MAYOR

mental change, she added.

The announcement was made at a programme jointly hosted by BMC and Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR) here, Sunday.

Notably, CFAR has an association with BMC to ensure community led developmental initiatives. In a step forward, CFAR had organised a weeklong campaign in sup-

port of transgender and women SHGs involved in income generation and managing sanitation service.

Attending the programme, First Secretary, Economic Development, Australian High Commission, Belinda Costin, said the government will work in tandem with BMC to end manual scavenging and scale up mechanised desludging across the City, including in informal settlements.

The programme was attended by BMC additional commissioner Suvendu Kumar Sahoo, deputy commissioner Manoranjan Sahoo and transgender activist Meera Parida among several other key officials.



SOAKED IN DEVOTION: Women offer water to setting Sun as part of the Chhath Puja near Kuakhai riverbank in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Audition held for 'KIIT Nanhipari'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 19: Regional audition for the 23rd 'KIIT Nanhipari Little Miss India Competition' was held here Sunday. Auditions for 'Nanhipari', a national level talent haunt competition for girls between ages 14-16, are held every year in almost all states of the country.

Inaugurating the event, KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta said, the competition gives the participants a platform to explore their talent and strengthen their potential to participate in bigger events with confidence. "KIIT-DU carries out several social outreach activities and 'KIIT Nanhipari' is one of them," he added.

The core team members including Rekharani Mishra, Soma



Mohanty, Malaya Mohapatra, and Shradhanjali Nayak were present on the occasion. The grand finale of the competition will be held here December 26 and 27.

"The competition made a humble beginning in 2001 at Keonjhar, Odisha. Since then, the event has progressively become a national event of repute. A host of attractive prizes have been introduced this year.

The prize money for the winner is ₹21 lakh, ₹3 lakh as cash prize and 100 per cent academic fee waiver subject to a maximum of ₹18 lakh for studying in any discipline at KIIT DU. The 1st runners up would win ₹10 lakh, ₹1 lakh cash prize and a maximum of ₹9 lakh for studying any discipline at KIIT. And the 2nd runners up would get ₹9.5 lakh, ₹50,000 cash prize and a maximum of ₹9 lakh for studying any discipline at KIIT," informed a KIIT official.

There are several categories for the participants to compete in such as Miss Rapunzel for the girl with the most beautiful hair; Miss Photogenic for the girl with the best pose in the photoshoot round; Miss Selfie for the maximum likes on Facebook, and Miss Active for the most active girl in sports round.

Need equity in fighting antimicrobial resistance: Experts

As low-income countries are more vulnerable to developing microbial resistance, experts have called for a new approach that prioritises equity and sustainability

Microbes such as bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi form part of our everyday lives – they live in us, on us and around us.

We need them for healthy digestion, immune function, and the synthesis of essential nutrients, and we depend on them for farming and industrial processes.

But microbes also cause disease in people, animals and plants. That is why science has developed an arsenal of antimicrobials that kill them or slow their spread.

Over time, microbes develop resistance to antimicrobials, and some eventually evolve into

so-called "superbugs" that no longer respond to the drugs. So we see more and more untreatable infections appearing in hospitals and communities.

This phenomenon, known as antimicrobial resistance (AMR), means that common illnesses and diseases may become life-threatening again.

Recent figures show that antimicrobial resistance has been linked to close to 5 million deaths annually – more than the total combined death toll of HIV/AIDS and malaria. It is further estimated that deaths related to drug-resistance could increase to 10 million per year by 2050, overtaking cancer as a leading cause of death worldwide.



Over time, microbes develop resistance to antimicrobials, and some eventually evolve into so-called 'superbugs' that no longer respond to the drugs. So there are more and more untreatable infections appearing in hospitals and communities

Recent figures show that antimicrobial resistance has been linked to close to 5 million deaths annually. Most human deaths from antimicrobial resistance occur in sub-Saharan Africa. Drug resistance is a growing concern in malaria and tuberculosis in these regions

Policy options must be carefully considered with all those involved and by embedding public and community voices without having pre-determined solutions in mind, they have said

World AMR Awareness Week aims to improve awareness and understanding of this silent killer. Researchers suggest that we need urgent global action to counter antimicrobial resistance. However, current efforts that focus on solutions developed in high-income settings may not be suited to the societal and economic challenges in low- and middle-income countries.

Members of a multidisciplinary Global Convening Programme set up by The British Academy to look into solutions to this problem that are fair and inclusive. If we want people to become less dependent on antibiotics, we must address the factors that create dependency on antibiotics in the first place.

Antimicrobial resistance is a global issue, but there are

some regional differences. Most human deaths from antimicrobial resistance occur in sub-Saharan Africa. Drug resistance is a growing concern in malaria and tuberculosis in these regions.

Low-income environments often go hand in hand with the use of cheap antimicrobials that may be of poor quality or even falsified. These create the ideal conditions for resistance to emerge. Many are sold over the counter for self-diagnosed ailments. Antibiotics are among the most widely used antimicrobials. Between 2000 and 2015, the use of antibiotics increased by 65% worldwide.

Globally, however, more antibiotics are used in animals and agriculture than for human health. Of all antimicrobials, 73% are used in animals raised for food.

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KILLER HIGHWAYS

150 DIE IN 10 MONTHS ON DHENKANAL ROADS

Illegal diversions, unfinished road works on NH-53 and NH-55 spell doom for the commuters



violators after a written complaint is filed with the SP. He also stressed on completion of the unfinished road works on the highways by the month of March.

According to reports available from the Regional Transport department, 150 lives were lost and 347 persons injured in 337 road accidents that took place on the highways from January to October. However, 163 persons had died during the same period in 2022, departmental sources said.

Members attending the meeting urged the authorities of Works department to put up signs and information plaques on the roads under their authority and near schools and colleges in the civic body area.

Members also demanded to evict the stray cattle and bulls roaming on roads in the town. They also demanded for immediate repairing of the road connecting Huban block via Kiplash, Gondia and Sarangi in the district.

Regional Transport Officer Pranaya Kumar Mishra, motor vehicle inspector Debashis Swain, executive officer Debi Prasad Rout of Dhenkanal Municipality, Sadar SDPO Bibhuti Bhushan Mohapatra and members of various committees including the road safety committee attended the meeting.

district.

The matter came to the fore at a meeting of the District Road Safety Committee recently held at the Sadbhavana Conference Hall of the district Collectorate. The Additional District Magistrate (Revenue) Lalit Mohan Behera presided over the meeting.

Behera asked the stakeholders like Regional Transport department, Works department and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to strictly abide by the decisions taken in the meetings as a means to prevent the increasing road mishaps on the highways.

In the meeting, he also drew the attention of NHAI authorities about the illegal intersections, diversions or cuttings being made connecting the road-side dhabas on the NH-55 and NH-53.

He assured that stringent action will be taken against the

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Nov 19: Illegal diversions and unfinished road works have led to an upsurge in road accidents in Dhenkanal district and staggering figures of the resultant loss of lives have come to the fore.

The issue assumes significance as an alarming 150 lives were lost and 347 persons injured in as many as 337 road accidents that have occurred in the district during the past 10 months from January to October this year.

The roads have turned into deathtraps taking precious human lives while critically injuring many others in various mishaps on a daily basis.

If the casualties are any indication, the National Highway-55 and National Highway-53 are increasingly proving to be killer highways for the commuters passing through Dhenkanal dis-



YOGA FOR HEALTH: Girls perform Yoga as part of a programme held in Kujang College in Jagatsinghpur district

OP PHOTO

Alumni donate ₹50 lakh to GM University

PNN & AGENCIES

Sambalpur, Nov 19: Gangadhar Meher University (GMU), Sambalpur has received Rs 50 lakh donation from alumni and local people in the last two months, an official said.

A retired school teacher Aparna Mahapatra had donated Rs 20 lakh to the GMU Monday. The contribution was made from the trust established in the memory of her late daughter, Roshni Mahapatra.

The donation will be utilised to establish a fellowship programme for PhD scholars at the varsity. Though Aparna is not an alumnus of the institution, her

elder sister studied here, said the official of the university.

A retired principal of the Parsuram Mishra Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (PMLASE), Sambalpur, Kishori Dash, who is an alumna of the institution, donated Rs 10 lakh to the institution on October 10.

She donated the fund towards the scholarship account of the university which will be utilised for the monthly fellowship of a meritorious female PhD scholar, said the official.

A 92-year-old old academician Giridhari Prasad Guru, who was principal of the erstwhile Gangadhar Meher College (now university), contributed Rs 10

lakh to the institution October 6. He is also an alumnus of the institution.

According to the varsity official, the donation, made by Professor Guru, will be placed in a fixed deposit, and the annual interest amount will be utilised by the varsity to award scholarships, based on criteria determined by the donor.

Apart from the individual contribution, the institution also received funds from a sports organisation in this period. On September 5, Sambalpur-based sports organisation, Meher Association, which comprises alumni of the institution, donated Rs 10 lakh for the devel-

opment of sports infrastructure of the institution. The money was donated under the 'Mo College/University Abhiyan'.

"The alumni and locals are coming forward to donate because of their strong attachment with the institution. Moreover, the perception about the growth of the institution outside is also a reason," said deputy registrar of the varsity, UC Pati. In June this year, retired professor Shankar Prasad Pati, who is an alumnus of the institution, donated Rs 10 lakh to his alma mater under the 'Mo College/University Abhiyan' so that it can be utilised in a better way for the benefit of students.

Ivory smuggling racket busted; 2 tusks seized

POST NEWS NETWORK

Thakurmunda/Baripada, Nov 19: Forest officials busted an ivory smuggling racket as it arrested four persons and seized two tusks from their possession during a raid at Dillaganj near Champajhar on Thakurmunda-Udala road in Mayurbhanj district, Sunday.

The accused were identified as Nityanand Singh, 24, Chamuru Singh, 23, of Hudisahi village in Podadiha, Lachhu Singh, 30, of Khuladi village under Kaptipada police limits and Raju Bankira, 27, of Dangadiha village under Mahuldiha police limits. The seized pair of tusks weighs 3.5 kg, Thakurmunda forest ranger Kishore Panigrahi said.

The accused persons carrying the tusks from Podadiha area under Kaptipada sub-division were on their way to Thakurmunda area. Meanwhile,



the forest officials reportedly received an intelligence input alerting them about the possible bid to sell off the tusks.

Acting on the tip-off, Thakurmunda ranger Kishore Panigrahi and Karanjia ACF Madan Mohan Mohanta formed a team and lay in hiding at Dillaganj on Thakurmunda-Udala road. They pounced on the five persons riding on three bikes and seized the tusks while one of them managed to escape. Further investigations were on.

Tearful adieu to martyred jawan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Nov 19: The last rites of Ishwar Chandra Dora, a martyred jawan of the Border Security Force (BSF), were performed with full state honours at his native Belakhandi village under Kesinga block in Kalahandi district, Sunday.

Dora was found dead Friday under mysterious circumstances at the BSF outpost in Lankamura on Tripura-Bangladesh border. A couple of days ago, he had left for his duty, but surprisingly he was found dead near an iron bridge across a creek at Lankamura the next morning.

Reports said after his body was brought to his native village Sunday, people from various walks of life including political leaders rushed to his village to pay their last respects to the departed jawan. A Guard of Honour was accorded amid a huge crowd giving a tearful farewell to the martyred jawan.

2 JUMBO ELECTROCUTIONS IN 10 DAYS IN KEONJHAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Nov 19: There is no let-up in elephant deaths in Keonjhar as forest officials recovered the carcass of yet another tusker from a jungle under Telkoi forest range in the district, Sunday.

The animal was found to be aged eight when forest officials recovered the carcass. However, forest department is yet to ascertain the actual reason behind the jumbo death. It is suspected that it might have been electrocuted after coming in contact with live wires laid on the ground for poaching and to prevent wild animals from straying into farmlands and destroying standing crops.

Reports said that two herds comprising over 25 elephants are roaming in the area. The matter came to the fore after locals spotted the tusker lying dead on a farmland near Nilapasi



Mundasahi in Akula village under Bimala forest beat about

13 km from Telkoi forest range and informed the forest officials.

On being informed, forest officials rushed to the spot while a joint task force launched an investigation. A team of veterinarians were also pressed into service to conduct a post-mortem.

When contacted, Telkoi ranger Shivaji Mohan Rao said locals were being questioned and the circumstantial evidences examined. The actual reason behind the jumbo death could be ascertained only after the post-mortem report is available, he said.

Notably, as many as four elephants have died in the last one and half months in the district.

This is the second elephant fatality due to electrocution in the district within just 10 days as a tusker was electrocuted recently at Golabandha forest section in Keonjhar forest division, November 10.

Tourists throng Daringbadi

Daringbadi: With the mercury levels falling sharply and settling around the 10 degree Celsius mark, winter has spread its shroud of mist at Daringbadi, the Kashmir of Odisha. As rain has completely vanished, it is mostly sunny during the day and from evening onwards chilling weather prevails in the hills. With that, tourists have started flocking in droves to relish the wintery winds at the popular winter destination in state. Especially people from West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra are visiting and spending a couple of days and nights at Daringbadi. Tourists thronged the hill view park, coffee gardens, children's park, pine forests at Duluri, lovers' point, Patabandha waterfall, Rishimal and Jogimath tourist spots in huge numbers. BDO Gangadhar Patra here has directed to open night shelters in all panchayat offices and directed the panchayat executive officers (PEOs) to give shelter to the helpless people there.

GRAINS TO GAINS

Empowering women through brown rice in Karlaghati

UPHOLDING COMMITMENT TO TRADITION, THESE WOMEN ORGANICALLY GROW THE ENDANGERED INDIGENOUS PADDY VARIETY 'LUSURI' AND MANUALLY PROCESS THE RICE USING THE TRADITIONAL TOOLS LIKE 'DHENKI', SHOWCASING A LABOUR OF LOVE THAT HONORS THEIR CULTURAL HERITAGE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Nov 19: In the picturesque village of Karlaghati, a transformative journey unfolds as 20 self-help group (SHG) members of Karlaghati Van Surakhya Samiti (VSS), under Ujalpur forest management unit in Sundargarh forest division, carve a path to self-reliance and sustainable agriculture.

Empowered by the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project (OFSDP-II), Shivani SHG and Maa Maria SHG initiated brown rice business in 2019, and they have not looked back ever since.

Over the past four years, these determined women have turned their dreams into reality through relentless dedication and strategic collaboration. With crucial support from the OFSDP-II and the guidance of the P-NGO team leader Digambar Upadhyay and development officer Manoranjan Mallick, they have not only established a thriving brown rice enterprise but also demonstrated a remarkable entrepreneurial spirit.

In 2022, the SHGs achieved a significant milestone by selling an impressive 64 quintal brown rice,



translating into substantial revenue of Rs 3.20 lakh. Undeterred by challenges, their success story continues into 2023, with the earnings reaching Rs 98,000 in just nine months.

The journey of these 20 women goes beyond economic success; it is a narrative of self-reliance, determination, and community resilience. Through the OFSDP-II in Sundargarh forest division, they have not only contributed to economic growth but also embraced the responsibility of preserving local traditions and safeguarding the environment.

An integral part of the initiative involves the cultivation of the endangered indigenous paddy vari-

ety 'Lusuri' using organic methods on five acre of land. Upholding their commitment to tradition, the women manually process the rice using the traditional tools like 'dhenki', showcasing a labour of love that honors their cultural heritage.

As Karlaghati's brown rice revolution continues to unfold, it serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for rural communities, demonstrating the potential for self-reliance and sustainable practices in agriculture.

Malati Ekka, a successful brown rice seller, said, "With the support of OFSDP-II and the ongoing collaboration with the voluntary organisation 'SEWAK', we have

achieved self-reliance through the trade of organic brown rice.

"In the upcoming days, the goal is to involve every woman in the village, with the aim of exporting our organic brown rice and establishing it as a unique brand within the state and beyond," she added.

Sundargarh DFO Pradeep Mirase wholeheartedly supports and commends the inspiring women of Karlaghati for their dedication to sustainable agriculture and community well-being. He attributes the success to the hard work and consistent efforts of these visionary women.

Through the OFSDP-II, essential support in the form of a revolving fund, capacity building, and market linkages for their organic brown rice is provided, offering alternative livelihoods to reduce pressure on forest resources.

As these empowered women continue to lead the way in self-reliance, cultural preservation, and environmental stewardship, the anticipation is for the on-going growth of this remarkable journey. Their success story stands as a beacon of empowerment and sustainable progress, serving as an example for others to follow.

Half of Berhampur ITI students become certified energy-literates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, Nov 19: The government-run Industrial Training Institute (ITI) in Berhampur Sunday claimed it has become the first ITI in the country where nearly half of its students became certified energy literates.

This means the students are now well aware of energy conservation, use of renewable energy and curbing of carbon footprints, which are caused by global warming, ITI Berhampur Principal Rajat Panigrahy said.

Out of 3,300 students of the institute, around 1,600 of them have become certified energy literates, he said.

The certificates were given to the ITI students who cleared an examination conducted by the Energy Swaraj Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation, formed with the aim to establish energy independence across the world.

Energy Swaraj Foundation is grateful for your contribution to global sustainability and your support in the Energy Swaraj Movement,



read the certificate. Panigrahy said this is an initiative to help the students protect the environment and campus sustainability.

Other students were also appearing for the online exams to become energy literate. Our aim is for all the students of the institute to become energy literate, the principal added.

Energy Swaraj Foundation was founded by Chetan Singh Solanki, a solar scientist and professor at IIT Bombay, who is known as the Solar Man of India.

ELECTION OFFICER STATE FEDERATION OF LABOUR & CONSTRUCTION COOPERATIVES LTD., BHUBANESWAR ELECTION NOTICE

Order No.01 Date: 16.11.2023
In exercise of power conferred on me under O.C.S. Act, 1962 and O.C.S. (Elections to the Committee) Rules-1992 and directions of the State Cooperative Election Commission, vide Notification No. - 1869 dt.02.11.2023, I, Sri Priyabrata Panda, ARCS O/o the RCS (O), Bhubaneswar-cum-Election Officer of State Federation of Labour & Construction Co-operatives Ltd., Bhubaneswar do hereby notify that the Election to the Members of the Committee of Management of State Federation of Labour & Construction Co-operatives Ltd. will be held on date 21.01.2024.
The election will be held for 21 No. of Members for the Committee from 21 constituencies, one from each constituency. The detail programme will be published in due time.
Sd./- Election Officer
State Federation of Labour & Construction Co-operatives Ltd., Bhubaneswar

To love is not to possess, but to give oneself.

THE MOTHER



Mixed Signals

The world is still at a loss to comprehend why US President Joe Biden rubbed China's President Xi Jinping the wrong way after their much awaited and much needed meeting took place in San Francisco. It was expected that the meeting would result in a thaw in US-China relationship that would benefit the rest of the world both economically and politically. But, almost out of the blue Biden called Xi a dictator. The whole world knows Xi is certainly a dictator and Biden had no need to state it so explicitly when the main purpose of the high profile meeting was to prepare the ground for rapprochement for mutual benefits in the backdrop of their strained, acrimonious relations. It's indeed a serious question why Biden made this seemingly diplomatic blunder.

China hit back immediately saying the remarks were absurd and a provocation, an unexpected flare-up following attempts by both sides to reduce friction.

In fact, Biden made his comments just a day after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken had completed a visit to China aimed at stabilizing relations that Beijing says are at their lowest point since formal ties were established in 1979.

There is no gainsaying that Xi has become China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong after securing a precedent-breaking third term as president in March and head of the Communist Party in October. He presides over a one-party system that many human rights groups, Western leaders and academics call a dictatorship because it lacks an independent judiciary, free media or universal suffrage for national office. Critics of Xi and his party are censored online and risk detention and even death off line.

Biden's remarks, soon after his meeting with Xi, were some of his most direct. Predictably, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning called the remarks "extremely absurd" and "irresponsible" and said they seriously violated facts, diplomatic protocol and China's political dignity.

Experts say a behind-the-scenes power struggle drove Xi all the way to California to meet face-to-face with his US counterpart for the first time in a year. Xi's summit with Biden came three months after the Chinese Communist Party's annual summer conclave where the current party leadership, led by General Secretary Xi, was given some harsh advice from party seniors about China's economy. The retired but influential elders also spoke on China's diplomatic issues, specifically in relation to the US. They are known to have stressed that a stable China-US relationship laid the groundwork for today's prosperous China and that the current leadership should avoid putting those ties under strain.

Xi's visit to the US and meeting with Biden is being interpreted as a gesture to primarily honor what the elders said at the meeting in August at the Beidaihe seaside resort. The trip also came after an old friend and ally - son of former powerful Chinese leader and President Liu Shaoyi - was able to implicitly criticize Xi's "autocratic" regime by writing a paper describing Mao Zedong.

Xi and Biden spent about four hours together, including a two-hour discussion, on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit held in San Francisco.

Biden's direct remarks slamming Xi's style of functioning sound all the more strange since it is he who told Xi that he valued their conversation because he thought it is paramount that they understand each other clearly, "leader to leader," with no misconceptions or miscommunication. He even went to the length of saying that they have to ensure that competition does not lead to conflict.

Xi in turn not only concurred, but said he was still of the view that major-country competition is not the prevailing trend of current times and cannot solve the problems facing China and the US or the world at large.

It may not be difficult to understand that despite these politically correct statements and posturing, there was a trust deficit. For, neither leader was smiling during the exchange, which indicated the relationship would not ease any time soon.

However, some progress was made. The two sides agreed to reopen communications between their militaries.

Biden knew and possibly wanted to take advantage of Xi's desperation for the meeting for his domestic compulsion. He also has to take care of his constituency for the coming election and a little anti-Xi noise would help in countering Republican propaganda of the US coming close to China.

It could also be possible both leaders may have had a tacit understanding which is why China's reaction to Biden's comments is tempered by the optimism that the interests of the two countries cannot be harmed by agent provocateur.

WISDOM CORNER

Put light against light - you have nothing. Put dark against dark - you have nothing. It's the contrast of light and dark that each give the other one meaning. **BOB ROSS**

Everyone's opinions about things change over time. Nothing is constant. Everything changes. And to hold onto some dogged idea forever is a little rigid and maybe naive. **FRIDA KAHLO**

Our attitudes control our lives. Attitudes are a secret power working twenty-four hours a day, for good or bad. It is of paramount importance that we know how to harness and control this great force. **IRVING BERLIN**

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1910: Francisco Madero launched a failed revolt that nonetheless sparked the Mexican Revolution by inspiring hope in such leaders as Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, who then mobilized their ragged armies.

1923: Traffic signal patented. American Garret Morgan was awarded the patent for an automated traffic signal. Morgan's invention was not the first of its kind, but unlike the other traffic signals which just had stop and go signals, his traffic light had a third signal that warned drivers about changes in the stop and go lights. This signal was the precursor for today's yellow light.

1945: Nuremberg trials begin. The trials were led by the International Military Tribunal and were held to prosecute high-ranking members of the Nazi party for war crimes committed during the Second World War. Of the 23 people tried, 14 were sentenced to death.

LOL

Lost far from home

A police car pulls up in front of grandma Bessie's house, and grandpa Morris gets out. The polite policeman explained that this elderly gentleman said that he was lost in the park...and couldn't find his way home. "Oy Morris," said grandma, "You've



been going to that park for over 30 years! So how could you get lost?" Leaning close to grandma, so that the policeman couldn't hear, Morris whispered, "I wasn't lost...I was just too tired to walk home."



Ari Juels & Eswar Prasad

BEHIND THE SCENES, THE CRYPTO INDUSTRY HAS STARTED USING TECHNOLOGY TO SHIFT THE BALANCE BACK TOWARD INNOVATION

The vertiginous fall of Sam Bankman-Fried, the disgraced founder of the cryptocurrency exchange FTX who was recently convicted of fraud and money laundering in New York, has cast a harsh light on a largely unregulated market. For all the supposed wonders of the blockchain technology underpinning cryptocurrencies, the headline-grabbing events of the past few years indicate an industry in turmoil.

In addition to the criminal activity that led to the spectacular collapse of FTX in 2022 and Bankman-Fried's guilty verdict in early November, US regulators have sued Binance, the world's largest crypto exchange, for allegedly operating a "web of deception." An industry-wide reckoning looms. Will crypto always be a magnet for fraud and malfeasance, or can it eventually transform and democratise finance?

An increasingly obvious paradox has emerged. Satoshi Nakamoto, the pseudonymous creator of Bitcoin, proposed the idea of a purely peer-to-peer version of electronic cash in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis, when confidence in governments and central banks was at its nadir. Soon after the launch of Bitcoin in 2009, Nakamoto wrote that "the root problem with conventional currency is all the trust that's required to make it work." Today, the system that was supposed to eliminate the need for trust between people and in traditional financial institutions is experiencing a crisis of trust.

Cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Ethereum rely on computer code and networks that are not controlled or managed by a central party. Remarkably, such decentrali-



For all the supposed wonders of the blockchain technology underpinning cryptocurrencies, the headline-grabbing events of the past few years indicate an industry in turmoil

sation works. Transactions can be completed in a secure manner, without relying on a bank, credit-card company, or other institution. In principle, this should make financial systems less vulnerable to fraud and manipulation.

Unfortunately, grifters and unscrupulous companies have exploited customers and investors enamoured with the new technology and, in the process, obscured crypto's most compelling innovation: blockchain-enabled tools that can improve transparency and strengthen the trustworthiness of the financial sector. Maintained on computers around the world and publicly accessible by anyone with an internet connection, blockchains are digital ledgers that carry an immutable record of all transactions in a system. Their reliance on algorithms, rather than human interaction, creates a robust money trail that traditional financial infrastructure lacks.

So, how did we end up with a crypto industry that often contradicts its founding ethos? One answer is that any innovation

inevitably attracts speculative mania and chicanery, especially in the early stages of its development. In the nineteenth century, banks deceived examiners by padding gold reserves with nails. More recently, the dot-com era gave us the likes of Enron, while a biotech boom brought us Elizabeth Holmes and Theranos.

Another problem is that the industry's consumer-facing platforms have simply grafted old ways of doing business onto a technology designed specifically to do away with them. For example, while FTX was an "exchange" - a gateway to blockchain-powered cryptocurrencies - it did not make fundamental use of decentralised technologies. Ironically, most crypto holders today store their assets in exchanges that require high levels of trust and carry many of the risks of traditional financial institutions.

Behind the scenes, the crypto industry has started using technology to shift the balance back toward innovation. One example is the development of proof of reserves, a mathematically-based method that enables in-

stitutions to verify their crypto assets. Such tools could help prevent debacles like FTX, where the lack of transparency allowed Bankman-Fried to conceal financial fraud.

Importantly, proof of reserves and similar tools work best for cryptocurrencies, not for ordinary financial assets - including the US dollar. These technical advances have therefore prompted traditional financial institutions - the very ones Bitcoin sought to replace - to embrace crypto. JPMorgan, for example, has plans to move trillions of dollars of value on to the blockchain, while monetary authorities are exploring central bank digital currencies, which would involve using blockchain technology to issue digital versions of their fiat currencies.

To be sure, the crypto industry faces several daunting challenges: the large environmental footprint of Bitcoin mining, its use for illicit transactions, privacy shortcomings, and more. But, as proof of reserves suggests, the crypto community is innovating powerful new ways to harness the inherent transparency and trustworthiness of blockchain technology to create a more secure and flexible financial ecosystem.

As these innovations proceed, governments around the world are exploring ways to safeguard consumers from the crypto industry's excesses. They would do well to look past the headlines and seek a balanced approach that enables this remarkable technology to thrive.

Ari Juels is Co-Director of the Initiative for CryptoCurrencies and Contracts (IC3). Eswar Prasad is Professor of Economics at Cornell University. **PROJECT SYNDICATE**

SPECTRUM NATION

The underbelly of regulatory bodies



Satya Narayan Misra

AS INDIA MOVES TO A REGULATOR DRIVEN ECONOMY IT SHOULD SET UP ROBUST, PREDICTABLE, QUALIFIED AND WELL-RESOURCED REGULATORS

With the rise of globalisation and increased inflow of foreign capital, India has moved from "planning driven economy" of the 1970s to "regulator driven economy" now. Many of the policies governing our lives are being written within these regulatory bodies. In many ways, regulators are emerging as the fourth branch of the Indian government, combining functions of the other three - legislature, executive and judiciary. They are perceived as a speed breaker to the untrammelled march of market economics. As a society we have not yet thought hard and long enough about the implications of this shift in our democratic system.

Indian regulators are structurally different from regulators in other parts of the world. The evidence is rather mixed. While some regulators have made their sectors more efficient and better governed, others are showing signs of being mercurial, opaque and undemocratic. There is a need to pay closer attention to these seemingly esoteric institutions. In India, sadly, the laws that set up many regulators do not meet the three principles of good institutions.

First, the laws that set up regulators are often not tightly written. For example, according to payments regulations from 2007 the RBI shall be the designated authority for the regulation and supervision of payments sys-

tems. There is no outcome that the regulator is meant to achieve. In contrast the US securities regulator identifies the protection of investors, efficiency, greater competition and capital formation as its objectives. Second, most regulators in India need not be transparent about their functioning. Annual reports filed by SEBI lack details about its strategic goals, targets, and performance results, all of which are part of the US securities regulator's annual report.

On the third principle of independent oversight, institutional performance has been more mixed. Courts have been reticent to evaluate decisions of regulators and have stepped in only occasionally.

Our economic growth is at stake when trust is missing. For example, research conducted by a reputed Indian think tank found that the Indian food safety regulator is unpredictable and produces inconsistent regulations that have increased compliance costs for businesses. The RBI has been accused of undue haste in ordering that all data related to digital payments be stored in India and giving businesses only six months to implement it. Entrepreneurs in different sectors have also complained about the unpredictability of regulators that hamper their growth.

These institutional lacunae are hard to justify when the guiding objective behind creating

these regulators remains unfulfilled. While regulators were intended to bring sectoral experts into policymaking process, most of them are occupied by generalist bureaucrats. Regulatory bodies are often derisively called "parking lots" for retired government officials. Even though they adjudicate disputes, they do not have a judicial background. This means that nuanced interpretation of law is sometimes done by people, who are not trained to do so. This contributes to decisions of regulators being challenged before higher authorities. A study found that 62% of the orders by telecom regulator TRAI were challenged. This calls into question the credibility of Indian regulators as effective decision makers in their respective sectors.

Despite the challenges, regulators have played an important role in post-liberalisation India. The TRAI has stewarded the telecom boom and upheld consumer interest. Likewise, the RBI has effectively managed inflation.

The year 2018 saw an intense and public struggle between the central government and the RBI. To boost sluggish growth, the government wanted RBI to reduce the interest rate by convening a meeting of the RBI governor with the private sector honchos. The government also wanted to access RBI reserves so that it could boost its own spending before the Lok Sabha elections in 2019. In a speech in October 2018, Viral Acharya,

then deputy governor RBI said: "Governments that do not respect central bank's independence will sooner or later incur the wrath of financial markets, ignite economic fire and come to rue the day they undermine an important regulatory institution." Within two months Urjit Patel the RBI governor resigned and Acharya followed suit within a few months.

As India moves to a regulator driven economy it should set up robust, predictable, qualified and well-resourced regulators. They need to be independent of governments and accountable to the public. This can be achieved if their appointment and removal are not left to the sole discretion of government but a bipartisan committee.

The world of regulators seems to be too technical or too esoteric for everyday conversation. But India can no longer afford to turn a blind eye to these important institutions that shape our lives, from the food we eat to the phones in our hands and securities that we trade. Of the myriad ways that governments hold back aspiring India their unchecked control over regulators is the most perceptible and pervasive phenomena. In the orchestra of Indian democracy, regulators are like the bass players - their presence is critical but often their absence is felt. It is time we rejuvenate them.

The writer teaches Macro Economics.

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

Orissa POST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Hygienic future

Sir, It's unfortunate that half the global population lacks proper sanitation, recognised as a fundamental human right by WHO and UNICEF. Currently, 3.5 billion lack safe toilets, with 419 million practicing open defecation, causing diseases and claiming 1,000 children's lives daily. Urgency is clear as Sustainable Development Goal 6 aims for universal access to safe toilets and water by 2030. World Toilet Day, on November 19, stresses the essential need for cleanliness and hygiene. Since 2013, it raises awareness about those lacking safe sanitation, emphasising the crucial role of sanitation and water access in sustainable development. This year's theme, "Accelerating Change," urges personal action, addressing the UN report's warning of three billion people still lacking safe sanitation by 2030.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Rank stupidity

Sir, It was rank stupidity on the part of Salman Khan fans who burst firecrackers inside a theatre while watching the star's latest caper. Guess the IQ levels of the followers would match the levels of the person they follow. But they are not the only ones. Tamil actor Vijay's fans while watching the trailer of his latest movie, vandalised the theatre because they were not allowed to park their two-wheelers. When iconic movie stars have such followers, it is quite scary. To date, Vijay has not castigated his followers. However, Salman has had the courtesy to call out the action of his followers asking them not to resort to such vandalism.

Jayanthi Subramaniam, CHENNAI

Vokkaliga face

Sir, R Ashoka, the Karnataka BJP's Vokkaliga face and seven-time MLA, has been chosen by the party as the leader of the Opposition. The 66-year-old RSS leader will become the 26th Opposition leader in the Karnataka Assembly Sulking MLAs Basangouda Patil Yatnal and Ramesh Jarkholi walked out, demanding that the post be given to a BJP leader from north Karnataka. Ashoka has committed to working alongside his party members and the JD(S) to expose the failures of the ruling Congress party.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

75% of 257 road accidents caused by over-speeding

THE OFFICIALS SAID STRICT DIRECTIONS WERE PASSED TO ESTABLISH 'NAKAS' (CHECKPOINTS) IN SENSITIVE AREAS TO STOP OVER-SPEEDING AND OVERCROWDING



AGENCIES

Jammu, Nov 19: As many as 112 people lost their lives in 257 road accidents since July last year in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, officials said on Saturday, attributing 75 per cent of these accidents to over-speeding and rash driving.

This information was shared at a meeting convened by Deputy Commissioner of Doda Harvinder Singh to assess the traffic worthiness of road infrastructure, transport facilities and the overall safety of commuters in the district following a bus accident on Wednesday that claimed 39 lives.

Of the 257 accidents, 25 per cent occurred due to roads and mechanical failure, the officials said, adding directions were passed at the meeting to have a road safety audit of all the roads by a technical committee within 20 days.

Singh, who is also the chairman of the District Road Safety Committee (DRSC) and Regional Transport Authority (RTA), instructed stakeholder agencies to coordinate and complete the mapping of roads within 15 days to create an integrated map.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed the implementation of the road safety plan and the Integrated Road Safety Database and Electronic Detailed Accident Report, the officials said.

They said it was decided by the DRSC to declare spots having less than 100-metre visibility as black spots.

Additionally, the DC directed for installation of speed limit

298 vehicles fined

JAMMU: In a crackdown on traffic violators, the Jammu and Kashmir Police fined the owners of 298 vehicles and impounded 20 of them in Doda and Rajouri districts, officials said. Three drivers have also been arrested during the drive against violation of the Motor Vehicles rules, they said. The action has been taken by the police and the administration in view of public complaints of overloading, rash driving and bad condition of roads following the devastating accident in Trungal Assar area of Doda district that led to the death of 39 people and injuries to 19 Wednesday.

sign boards and crash barriers with glow tape along roads to ensure a safer commuting environment.

The meeting decided to establish small traffic booths and install CCTV cameras and cat's eye equipment along the roads, the officials said, adding the direction to dismantle the encroachment along the highway and other roads were also passed.

The officials said strict directions were passed to establish 'nakas' (checkpoints) in sensitive areas to stop over-speeding and overcrowding.

The DC also directed the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO) to enforce the compulsory installation of CCTV cameras in every passenger vehicle, particularly in minibuses and buses.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police, Jammu zone, Anand Jain visited Wednesday's accident site at Assar.

HP: 2,050 schools to get facelift in coming yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Nov 19: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu recently said 2,050 schools in the state will be given a facelift in the coming years.

Chairing a review meeting of the Education Department here, he said these institutes will prove to be a milestone in providing quality education from the next academic session.

Sukhu said 2,050 primary to senior secondary level schools would be given a facelift and made 'Chief Minister Schools of Excellence' in a phased manner by 2026-27.

He directed the concerned officials to prepare a list of these schools by December 31.

Apart from these, English medium government schools will also be opened in the state, the chief minister said, adding that the 'School Adoption Program' will also be started soon where officials from block, sub-division and district levels will be involved, a statement issued here said.

He also directed the departmental officers to explore the possibilities of roping in the guest lecturers, for which on-line applications would be invited and a provision would be made to employ them in schools with vacant posts for a year or so.

Sukhu instructed the department to prepare a detailed proposal for the guest lecturer scheme.



A calendar should be prepared to ensure mandatory 220 teaching days in an academic session to the students along with other activities, the chief minister

said, adding that compulsory training of teachers will also be conducted on the first appointment. He said that in order to im-

prove the level of education, possibilities of obtaining cooperation from central government agencies as well as major non-government organisations should also be explored.

Admission in class 1 at the age of six years should be ensured in government educational institutions, he said. Sukhu also reviewed the progress of the Rajiv Gandhi Day-Boarding School being opened in every assembly constituency in the state.

He said that the present state government will complete the construction work of Atal Adarsh Vidyalaya which was started by the previous BJP government in Gohar, Dharampur and Bangana and adequate funds would be made available for them.

Himachal Pradesh cabinet proposes winter session from Dec 19-23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Nov 19: The Himachal Pradesh cabinet Saturday decided to convene a five-day winter session of the assembly from December 19-23 in Dharamshala, and sent its recommendation to the governor.

The cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu gave its approval to adopt the criteria mandating students to be at least six years of age while seeking admission to Class 1 in all schools of the state for academic session 2024-25.

It also decided to appoint 4,500 para-workers in the Jal Shakti Vibhag, besides giving its nod to filling up 25 posts of the excise and taxation inspectors and 10 posts of the horticulture development officers.



The cabinet decided to cancel the allotment of Jangi Thopan Powari Hydro Electric Power Project (780 MW) made in favour of power producer SJVN Ltd as the company has failed to achieve required progress in the project's implementation within the stipulated time period.

During the meeting, the state cabinet also gave its nod to bring more areas of Shimla, Chopal and Kullu under the planning area to check the haphazard construction in these areas.

HP to set up 49 anganwadi centres

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hamirpur (HP), Nov 19: The Himachal Pradesh government will construct buildings for 49 anganwadi centres in Hamirpur district at a cost of ₹5.88 crore, officials said Saturday.

Hamirpur Deputy Commissioner Hemraj Bairwa said the state government is taking positive steps to ensure proper nutrition and pre-school education of the children in the age group of three to six years, a statement issued here said.

Efforts are being made to provide the best facilities in the anganwadi centres and to construct buildings for such facilities currently being run from private buildings, Bairwa said. Balveer Singh Birla, District Programme Officer, Women and Child Development department said the government has approved the construction of buildings for 49 anganwadi centres in Hamirpur district.

These buildings will be built under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment



Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), he added. A total of ₹12 lakh will be spent on each building. A provision of ₹8 lakh will be made under the MNREGA for the anganwadi buildings, ₹2 lakh from the 15th Finance Commission and ₹2 lakh from the Women and Child Development Department, Birla said.

The district programme officer said all formalities are being completed to start the construction work of these buildings at the earliest possible. Birla added that a total of 18,108 children aged between six months to six years are being provided nu-

trititious food in Hamirpur district at present.

Apart from these, nutritious food is also being given to about 3,000 pregnant women and about 2,500 lactating women, he said. A total of 1,351 anganwadi centres are currently being operated in Hamirpur district, of which 623 such facilities are being run from private buildings, 190 in the premises of primary schools, 437 in other government buildings and 94 are being run in its own buildings, according to Women and Child Development department.

Royal Bengal Tiger pair to roar in Jammu zoo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Nov 19: A pair of Royal Bengal tigers arrived in Jammu from Tamil Nadu Friday and they have been put in quarantine for a week at the Jammu zoo here, officials said.

On November 8, a pair of Asiatic lions - a male and a female - had been brought to the zoo from Gujarat.

The tigers - a male and a female - were brought from the Arignar Anna Zoological Park, Wildlife Warden Amit Sharma said.



The tigers have been brought here in exchange of a pair of Himalayan Black Bears. This was done as part of an animal exchange programme, officials said.

"Earlier, we have brought an Asiatic lions, which will be under quarantine for the next three days. Today, there was a new addition of the Royal Bengal tigers," Sharma said.

He said that as far as acclimatisation in concerned, their quarantine initially will be in room heater conditions.

The tigers are housed in a naturalistic and enriched enclosure having a space of more than 4,500 square metres, according to Central Zoo Authority norms, the officials said.

Sharma said that they will be integrated in the zoo after their quarantine ends November 25 or 26.

Apple growers to get CA store in Kinnaur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Nov 19: Iceland-based company Geotropy Iceland would set up a controlled atmosphere (CA) store at Tapri in Kinnaur district on a pilot basis using innovative geothermal technology, benefiting local apple growers, officials said Saturday.

A pact was inked between the state government and the company in this regard, in the presence of Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, a statement issued here said.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Managing Director of Horticultural Produce Marketing & Processing Corporation (HPMC), Sudesh Kumar Mokhta, and Chairman of the Geotropy Iceland, Thomas Ottobansson.

The CA store would have a storage capacity of 1,000 tonnes and would be constructed at an estimated cost of ₹8 crore.

The state government would provide all possible assistance to the company for realising this project, as geothermal energy was a renewable source that minimises greenhouse gas emissions, the chief minister said.

The adoption of geothermal technology is useful in reducing carbon footprints, aligning



The CA store would have a storage capacity of 1,000 tonnes and would be constructed at an estimated cost of ₹8 crore

with the state government's goal to preserve the environment. I am hopeful that the first geothermal technology-based CA store would be complete within a period of one year, he added.

In the times to come, additional geothermal technology-based CA stores would be established in the Sutlej Valley area, the chief Minister said and directed the concerned officials to explore the possibilities of utilising this new age technology for electricity generation in the state.

HP govt slashes firewood rates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Nov 19: In a major relief to the state's tribal people, the Himachal Pradesh government Friday said that the rates of firewood would be slashed from ₹1,300 per quintal to ₹805 per quintal.

The government also said it would sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Iceland government November 18 for construction of cold storages with geothermal energy.

Making the announcements, Revenue and Tribal Development Minister Jagat Singh Negi said the government has decided to give a subsidy to the State Forest Corporation by cutting the firewood rates by about ₹500 per quintal.

This subsidy would help the tribal people procure firewood from the corporation at ₹805 per quintal instead of ₹1,300 per quintal earlier, Negi told media persons.

The use of firewood increases significantly in tribal areas during the winters due to extreme cold conditions and reduction in rates would be a big



relief for the tribals, he said.

He added that the government gave relief to people despite the acute financial crunch and the worst-ever natural disaster that recently hit the state.

The state's tribal people predominantly reside in Lahal and Spiti and Kinnaur districts and parts of Chamba district.

The government would sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Iceland government November 18 for construction of cold

storages with geothermal energy. In case the pilot project is successful, it will be replicated, he added.

Expressing concern over the frequent landslides on the strategically important Hindustan-Tibet Highway (National Highway No 5), Negi said that besides Army personnel, farmers and horticulturists are also facing hardships due to the damaged roads but the Centre is not paying due attention.

In case the Centre is not able to restore roads, it should release money to the state to take up the restoration work, Negi demanded, while adding that reckless cutting of hills for construction projects is also responsible for landslides.

Himachal: 55,420 PwD voters identified so far

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

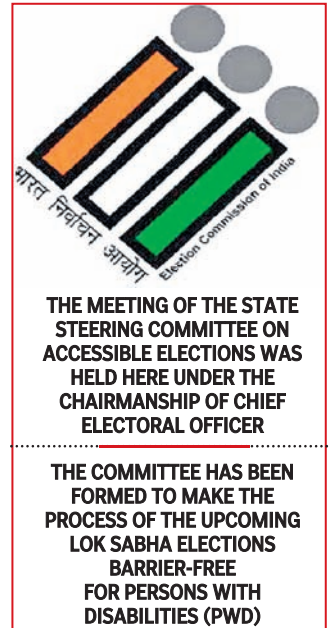
Shimla, Nov 19: The election department has identified 55,420 persons with disabilities eligible to vote, Chief Electoral Officer Manish Garg said on Saturday, adding that more people will be added to the list soon.

The meeting of the State Steering Committee on Accessible Elections was held here under the chairmanship of Chief Electoral Officer. The committee has been formed to make the process of the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections barrier-free for persons with disabilities (PwD).

Issues related to barrier-free registration and voter participation were discussed extensively to enable maximum registration of PwD voters and provide them with necessary facilities, a statement issued here said.

The list of PwD voters was being provided to block-level officers so that eligible voters could be registered and identified on time, Garg said. Anganwadi and ASHA workers would also be included in the campaign, he said. He said that eligible persons with disabilities can also get themselves registered through the Saksham App.

Videos with Hindi subtitles,



THE MEETING OF THE STATE STEERING COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS WAS HELD HERE UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER

THE COMMITTEE HAS BEEN FORMED TO MAKE THE PROCESS OF THE UPCOMING LOK SABHA ELECTIONS BARRIER-FREE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PWD)

hoardings in sign language were also being prepared for voting awareness among PwD voters in view of the Lok Sabha elections next year, Garg said.

He said that all basic facilities prescribed by the Election Commission of India would be provided to the PwD voters at all polling stations in the state. Special training would be given to polling personnel to make them sensitive to the needs of PwD voters, he added.



Israeli soldiers are seen during a military operation in the Balata refugee camp, West Bank



Artists perform during an event organised on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, at the Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum in New Delhi



Devotees perform rituals during 'Chhath Puja' in Haridwar



India's humanitarian aid for the people of Palestine arrives in Egypt



An anti-smog gun sprays water droplets to curb air pollution at India Gate, in New Delhi



IAF's 'Suryakiran' aerobatic team fly-past at the start of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 final between India and Australia, at the Narendra Modi Stadium, in Ahmedabad



Participants run during the 38th Akhil Bharatiya Indira Marathon in Prayagraj



Security personnel carry the mortal remains of ITBP jawan Joginder Kumar during his funeral in Samba district, Jammu and Kashmir

of the day quote

The development of sustainable jet fuels is a much-needed step to decarbonise the economy and there is also the need to rapidly adopt new propulsion technologies such as electric, hydrogen and hybrid at a large scale

DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

I am not speaking about paid surveys. I speak to people in villages and cities, shopkeepers, labourers and traders... I, today, say the tally in the coming Lok Sabha elections will be 13-0 in favour of the AAP. We will also win the Chandigarh seat

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

If the Congress is in power, there is bound to be corruption and loot and under the saffron party's rule, there will be development

JP NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Digvijaya ends protest in MP

Chhatrapur: Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh Sunday ended his sit-in protest outside Khajuraho police station in Chhatrapur in Madhya Pradesh against the death of a party worker during Assembly polls held on November 17. A Congress worker identified as Salman Khan died after being run over by a car during a clash with Bharatiya Janata Party functionaries in Rajnagar Assembly seat. Singh began his protest on Saturday along with party MLAs Alok Chaturvedi and Vikram Singh and had stayed overnight in a tent outside the police station.

Pharmacist held

New Delhi: The Delhi Police has arrested a 42-year-old pharmacist for his alleged involvement in death of a patient during surgery in a clinic in south Delhi's Greater Kailash, officials said Sunday. The pharmacist used to refer patient to the clinic where two patients recently died during surgery. The police have arrested four persons, including a quack, in the case. Neeraj Agarwal, who runs the Agarwal Medical Centre, Jaspreet Singh (both MBBS doctors), Agarwal's wife Pooja and former laboratory technician Mahender Singh were arrested on November 14 and produced in a court on November 16, which sent them to five-day police custody.

Five arrested

Guwahati: The Guwahati Police claimed to have busted an inter-state drug cartel, arresting five peddlers hailing from Manipur, including two women, and recovering nearly ₹2.5 crore worth of heroin. Another person, believed to be an associate of the peddlers, has also been apprehended, a senior police officer said. Guwahati Police Commissioner Diganta Barah said teams were formed to nab them from different locations of the city on Saturday night.

Elephants kill man

Jamshedpur: A 26-year-old man was trampled to death by a herd of wild elephants in Jharkhand's East Singhbhum district, police said Sunday. The incident happened near Sunsunia village in Chakulia forest range of Ghatsila division on Saturday evening when the victim, Santosh Munda, went out to relieve himself, they said. Munda tried to flee on seeing the herd, but he was attacked by the wild elephants, police said.



The railways should roll back dynamic pricing of train tickets and pay more attention to the safety and security of travellers

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

SC TO HEAR PLEAS TODAY

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear Monday two separate pleas of the Tamil Nadu and Kerala governments, alleging a delay by the respective state Governors in giving assent to bills passed by the assemblies



U'khand tunnel collapse: Gadkari reviews rescue op

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Uttarkashi (Uttarakhand), Nov 19: Drilling to prepare an escape passage for 41 workers - trapped at Silkyra tunnel collapse site for a week now - remained suspended on Sunday, while Union Minister Nitin Gadkari who reviewed the rescue operation said another large diameter pipeline was being pushed through the rubble to provide essential supplies to them.

An American auger machine which was brought as a replacement had to be stopped on Friday afternoon after it hit some hard surface while drilling through the rubble in the collapsed part of the under-construction tunnel, following which officials on Saturday began preparations to drill a vertical hole from the top of the hill.

However, Gadkari said horizontal digging seems to be the "best option" and if the auger machine does not encounter any obstacles "it might reach the trapped workers in two-and-a-half days".

The minister said the workers are trapped in an area of the tunnel where they can move around. They have electricity, open space, food, water and oxygen. "Saving the trapped workers and evacuating them at the earliest is the biggest priority," the



Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami review the rescue operation

minister, who was accompanied by Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, said at a press conference in Silkyra after holding a meeting with experts.

No drilling had begun at the site till Sunday evening but officials said preparations are on to restart the auger machine to bore through the rubble and insert large diameter steel pipes to prepare an escape route for the trapped workers.

"Preparations are underway to restart the auger machine and resume drilling and pipe laying at the tunnel. Apart from one pipe through which food is being supplied to the trapped workers, another large-diameter pipe has also been pushed

up to 42 metres to have another lifeline," Disaster Management Secretary Ranjit Kumar Sinha said in Silkyra.

"The Union minister has also suggested that there is space between the top of the debris and the roof of the tunnel which can be explored by robots to see if some pipe for life support can be pushed through it," he said.

Explaining what led to the suspension of the drilling work, Gadkari said it was working alright through soft soil but after it encountered some hard objects it applied more pressure causing vibrations inside the tunnel which posed a danger to the lives of rescue workers.

29 soldiers who crossed over sent back to Myanmar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, Nov 19: Twenty-nine Myanmar soldiers, who fled to Mizoram following intense gunfights with militia group People's Defence Force (PDF), were sent back to their country Sunday, an official said.

With these, a total of 74 Myanmar army personnel, who crossed over to India after their camps were overrun by militia groups in the recent gunfight, have been escorted back to their country, she said.

These 29 soldiers had entered Mizoram on November 16 after their camp at Tuibual in Myanmar's Chin state, a few km from the international border, was overrun by Chin National Defence Force (CNDP) - a local militia group affiliated with the PDF.

"These soldiers were airlifted by defence authorities to Moreh in Manipur. From Moreh, they went to Tamu, the nearest Myanmar town," the official said. Incessant rains disrupted the process, which prolonged their stay in India, she added.

The Myanmar soldiers came on foot to Saikhumpha in Mizoram's Champhai district near Tiau river, the natural boundary between India and Myanmar, and were received by the Assam Rifles and state police, the official said. They were in the custody of Assam Rifles before they were sent back to their country, she said.

Netanyahu must be shot dead: Cong MP

BJP state president K Surendran Saturday said Unnithan's speech echoed "terrorist propaganda" and sought immediate legal action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kasaragod (Kerala), Nov 19: Senior Congress leader Rajmohan Unnithan has come under criticism over his remarks that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is a "war criminal" and should be shot dead without trial for allegedly murdering Palestinians in the Gaza strip.

Condemning the Kasaragod MP's remarks, the state BJP unit termed it "deplorable". At a recent Palestine solidarity event organised by the United Muslim Jama'ath, a collective of mosques in and around Kasaragod town, Unnithan said another Nuremberg trial was the need of the hour.

In a video which has gone viral, Unnithan said: "The Nuremberg trial was held after the Second World War, and the war criminals were shot dead without trial. Another Nuremberg trial is the need of the hour. Because Benjamin Netanyahu is standing in front of the world as a war criminal. It is time to shoot down Benjamin



Netanyahu - who has violated the Geneva convention - without trial, such is the amount of murders he has committed."

BJP state president K Surendran Saturday said Unnithan's speech echoed "terrorist propaganda" and sought immediate legal action. In a post on X, Surendran said, "Outraged by @INCIndia MP Rajmohan Unnithan's reckless and inflammatory speech at the Palestine Rally. His call for the murder of Israeli PM Netanyahu is deplorable, echoing terrorist propaganda. This isn't political discourse; it's a dangerous incitement akin to jihadist extremism. We demand immediate legal action against such radical rhetoric. This isn't about politics; it's about preventing the spread of terrorist ideology."

More than 11,500 Palestinians have been killed, while another 2,700 have been reported missing, believed buried under rubble after the ongoing Israeli attack. Around 1,200 people have been killed on the Israeli side, mainly civilians during Hamas' October 7 attack.

932 FIRs against farmers for burning crop residue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Nov 19: Punjab police has registered 932 FIRs against farmers for burning crop residue since November 8 while a fine of ₹1.67 crore has been imposed in 7,405 cases, a senior official said Sunday.

According to the Special Director General of Police Arpit Shukla, red entries were made in the revenue records of 340 farmers for stubble burning.

He said concerted efforts by the Punjab Police to prevent stubble burning have yielded significant results as case of farm fire fell "drastically" in the last two days. On Sunday and Saturday, the state recorded 740 and 637 farm fire cases respectively.

Paddy straw burning in Punjab and Haryana is considered one of the reasons behind the alarming spike in air pollution levels in the national capital in October and November. Delhi's air quality index stood at 290 at 7 am.

The 24-hour average AQI of Delhi, recorded at 4 pm every day, was 319 on Saturday, 405 on Friday and 419 on Thursday.

In many parts of Haryana and Punjab, air quality indices re-

According to the Special Director General of Police Arpit Shukla, red entries were made in the revenue records of 340 farmers for stubble burning

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

mained in 'very poor' and 'poor' categories.

Amid a spike in pollution levels in Delhi-NCR, the Supreme Court on November 7 directed Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan to ensure crop residue burning was stopped "forthwith", saying it cannot let "people die" due to pollution.

Thereafter, DGP Gaurav Yadav appointed Arpit Shukla the police nodal officer to monitor action against stubble burning.

In a statement, Shukla said legal action is being initiated against those found burning stubble. He exhorted farmers to cooperate and not burn crop residue, which will not only lead to the deterioration of the environment but will also affect the health of children.



Devotees from Thailand take part in the Kathina Chivar Dana Robe ceremony at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya

PTI PHOTO

Woman, daughter die of electrocution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Nov 19: A 23-year-old woman and her nine-month-old baby girl died when the former accidentally stepped on a live electric wire lying unattended on the pavement near Hope Farm here early Sunday, police said.

The incident occurred at around 6 am when Soundarya and her child Suviksha were walking home after arriving from Tamil Nadu, sources said, adding that their luggage-trolley



bag and other belongings were lying scattered at the scene.

According to police, both the mother and the child were electrocuted and died on the spot with burns. The Kadugodi police rushed to the spot and shifted the

bodies to the hospital for further procedures. A case of negligence was registered against the concerned Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) officials, and three of them were being questioned.

Stating that an inquiry is on into the incident, Karnataka Energy Minister K J George said, the line man, Assistant Engineer (AE) and Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) have been suspended for dereliction of duty, and the state govern-

ment will give ₹5 lakh to the kin of each deceased.

"In a deeply unfortunate incident, a lady and a child have lost their lives to electrocution. We have taken up an inquiry into the incident that has led to these unfortunate deaths and are awaiting the report. The line man, AE and AEE have been suspended for dereliction of duty. Anyone else responsible for this accident will be dealt with tough actions, so that such mishaps do not recur in the future," he posted on X.



Modi fixing 2024 nuts & bolts

Prime Minister Modi may have been addressing one rally after the other in four out of five poll-bound states to bring fortunes to the BJP. But he has not lost sight of

adding votes in his kitty for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls as well. He has been travelling to non-poll bound states to woo tribal and other sections. Political analysts are baffled that the ED has suddenly gone silent against the Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren lately. This is despite the fact that Soren did not get any relief from courts against several summons issued by the ED and it was expected that Soren may be arrested anytime soon. But ED opted to stay quiet and no one has heard about the case for weeks together. Is something cooking in Jharkhand it seems the BJP is working on a plan to strengthen states where it is not in power to

add Lok Sabha seats in its kitty.

All eyes on Balaknath in Rajasthan

The BJP may have been finding going tough in Madhya Pradesh due to internal bickerings. But it has closed ranks in Rajasthan where many chief ministerial aspirations are in the race for the top post. So much so that a bunch of Lok Sabha members have also been fielded in the Assembly polls sending the signal that the game is wide open. There is the former Union minister, Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, who fancies himself for the top job though he was

unceremoniously dropped as minister and no one knows why because he had not been given any party post either. Then there is Diya Kumari who is a Lok Sabha MP and her supporters feel that she is the perfect choice, given the passage of the women's reservation bill. Secondly, Diya hails from the royal family of Jaipur and is considered to be an ideal person to replace Vasundhara Raje Scindia, another royal family member and claimant of the CM's post. But many BJP insiders say that there is a dark horse in Balaknath. The monk-cum-Lok Sabha MP, Balaknath's name is being mentioned for the top job. Why was he picked no one

has the answer as his name came from the high command. It seems the BJP wants to groom such Sanyasis whose life is devoted to the cause of society and they earn the faith of the people. Yogi Adityanath in UP is a living example.

Modi gov't reforms go for a toss

Respective of the outcome of the Assembly polls in five states, the reform process initiated by the Modi government itself during the past couple of years have come to a grinding halt. While the Citizenship (Amendment) Act was

passed in 2019 as the biggest ever reform, the rules are yet to be notified. The National Register of Indian Citizens (NRC) has also been put in the cold storage for the past four years. In the process, the first phase of Census 2021 was postponed due to the outbreak of the COVID pandemic. The delay in census will also push back the process delimitation exercise though the Modi government is determined to undertake Census only after the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The Modi government has been unable to bring in any major electoral reform either though it is showcasing electoral bonds as a major weapon to eliminate black money in the polls.

international

of the day quote

Currently there is no deal reached yet on the release of Israeli hostages held in the Gaza Strip

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER

What our people are enduring in terms of killing and destruction surpasses human capacity

MAHMOUD ABBAS | PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT

We consider the criminal US a principal culprit in all these crimes in Gaza and against Palestinians

MOHAMMAD BAGHER QALIBAF | PARLIAMENT SPEAKER, IRAN

SHORT TAKES

Pak army kills four militants

Islamabad: Pakistan security forces killed four militants in a shootout during an overnight raid in the country's northwest near the border with Afghanistan, the military said Sunday. A military statement said security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in the Khaisoor area of North Waziristan district, where they exchanged fire with militants. It said troops seized weapons and ammunition from the militants' hideout.

Two killed as hurricanes rage

MOSCOW: Two people were killed when a tree crushed their car as hurricanes with winds reaching 38 metres per second hit several regions in Russia's Siberia on Sunday. Another two people were hospitalised by the falling tree in the Russian city of Novokuznetsk, TASS news agency quoted a regional official. Sergei Kuznetsov, the head of Novokuznetsk, said an emergency had been declared in the city after strong winds damaged electricity lines and buildings, adding that local schools and kindergartens would not work Monday.

Quake jolts Japan

Tokyo: A 5.0-magnitude earthquake rocked southeast of Honshu, Japan Sunday, the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences said. The quake that hit the region at 0635 GMT, was epicentred at 30.71 degrees north latitude and 142.10 degrees east longitude, Xinhua news agency reported. Its depth was 10.0 km.

Rally in Pakistan

Lahore: Tens of thousands of supporters from Pakistan's main religious political party rallied in the eastern city of Lahore on Sunday against Israel's bombing of Palestinians in Gaza and what it said is the world's failure to protect Gazans. Amid anti-Israeli and anti-American slogans the emotionally charged crowd also called for jihad, or holy war.

Argentines vote

Buenos Aires: Voters in Argentina were heading to the polls Sunday in a presidential runoff election that will determine whether South America's second-largest economy will take a rightward shift. Populist Javier Milei, an upstart candidate who got his start as a television talking head, has frequently been compared to former US President Donald Trump. He faces Economy Minister Sergio Massa of the Peronist party, which has been a leading force in Argentine politics for decades. On Massa's watch, inflation has soared to more than 140% and poverty has increased.



I am a Hindu. I believe that God is true. God has sent us here for a purpose. It is our duty to realise the purpose of God. It is our moral duty. The core of our religion is that God resides in all of us

VIVEK RAMASWAMY | INDIAN-AMERICAN
REPUBLICAN PREZ ASPIRANT

BIDEN REJECTS CEASEFIRE CALLS

US President Joe Biden has rejected the growing demands at home and abroad for a ceasefire in Gaza, saying it will be used by Hamas to regroup and rearm itself and perpetuate its dominance



Hamas battles Israeli forces



31 premature babies evacuated from Al Shifa hospital in joint UN-Palestinian Red Crescent operation

Israeli forces, trying to push into north Gaza's Jabalia refugee camp but facing heavy Hamas resistance, urge residents to evacuate to south Gaza 'to preserve your safety'

AGENCIES

Gaza/Jerusalem, Nov 19: Hamas militants battled Israeli forces trying to push into Gaza's largest refugee camp Sunday and Israeli air strikes to the south killed dozens of Palestinians, witnesses said, as a US media report of a nascent hostage release deal was denied.

The Washington Post said on Sunday that US mediators were close to a deal between Israel and Hamas to free dozens of women and children held hostage in Gaza in exchange for a five-day pause in their war that would help boost emergency aid shipments to Gaza civilians, citing people familiar with the matter.

The Post had reported on Saturday that a tentative deal had been reached, and this was denied by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US officials, with a White House spokesperson saying efforts were continuing to clinch a deal.

Hamas took about 240 hostages during its deadly cross-border rampage into Israeli communities October 7, which prompted Israel to lay siege to Gaza and invade the Palestinian territory to eradicate its resistance remains fierce in pockets of the heavily urbanised north including parts of Gaza City and the sprawling Jabalia and Beach refugee camps, according to Hamas and local witnesses.

Qatari prime minister says he has growing confidence that a hostage deal between Israel and Hamas will be reached, and that remaining challenges were 'very minor just practical and logistical'

ing Islamist group.

Reuters reported November 15 that Qatari mediators had been seeking a deal between Israel and Hamas to exchange 50 hostages in return for a three-day ceasefire, citing an official briefed on the talks. At the time, the official said general outlines had been agreed but Israel was still negotiating details.

On Sunday, Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman al-Thani told a press conference in Doha that the main sticking points blocking a hostage release deal were now "very minor" - mainly practical and logistical issues.

The delicate hostage talks coincide with Israel preparing to expand its offensive against Hamas to densely populated Gaza's southern half after air strikes killed dozens of Palestinians, including civilians reportedly sheltering at two schools.

Israeli forces invaded late last month after a devastating aerial blitz in response to Hamas's shock October 7 attack, and say they have wrested control of large areas of the north and northwest and east around Gaza City. But guerrilla-style Hamas

resistance remains fierce in pockets of the heavily urbanised north including parts of Gaza City and the sprawling Jabalia and Beach refugee camps, according to Hamas and local witnesses.

Witnesses reported heavy fighting overnight between Hamas gunmen and Israeli ground forces trying to advance into Jabalia, the largest of the enclave's camps with nearly 100,000 people.

Jabalia has come under repeated Israeli bombardment that has killed scores of civilians, Palestinian medics say, with Israel saying the strikes have killed many militants harbouring there.

After daybreak Sunday, Israel's military called on residents of several Jabalia neighbourhoods to evacuate towards south Gaza "to preserve your safety", in Arabic messages on social media platform X.

Gaza's Health Ministry raised its death toll from the unrelenting Israeli bombardment to 12,300, including 5,000 children. Israel's blitz has reduced swathes of the north to rubble, while some two-thirds of Gaza's population of 2.3 million have been displaced to the south.

'DEATH ZONE' AT GAZA'S BIGGEST HOSPITAL

A team led by the World Health Organization (WHO) that visited Al Shifa, Gaza's biggest hospital, on Saturday described it as a "death zone", days after Israeli forces seized the premises to root out an alleged Hamas command centre underneath it.

The WHO team reported signs of gunfire and shelling and a mass grave at Al Shifa's entrance, and said it was making plans for the immediate evacuation of 291 remaining patients, including the war-wounded, and 25 staff.

On Sunday, 31 premature babies were evacuated from Al Shifa in a joint operation by the UN and the Palestinian Red Crescent and taken south in ambulances towards the Emirates Hospital in Rafah, the aid group said.



UNCERTAIN JOURNEY: Afghan refugees living in Pakistan prepare to leave the country

Houthi rebels hijack Israeli-linked ship, take crew hostage



AGENCIES

Jerusalem, Nov 19: Yemen's Houthi rebels seized an Israeli-linked cargo ship in a crucial Red Sea shipping route Sunday, officials said, taking over two dozen crew members hostage and raising fears that regional tensions heightened over the Israel-Hamas war were playing out on a new maritime front.

The Iran-backed Houthi rebels said they hijacked the ship over its connection to Israel and took the crew as hostages. "All ships belonging to the Israeli enemy or that deal with it will become legitimate targets," the Houthis said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office had blamed the Houthis for the attack on the Bahamas-flagged Galaxy Leader, a vehicle carrier affiliated with an Israeli billionaire. It said the 25 crew members had a range of nationalities, including Bulgarian, Filipino, Mexican and Ukrainian, but that no Israelis had been on board.

The Houthis said they were treating the crew members "in accordance with their Islamic values," but did not elaborate on what that meant. Netanyahu's office condemned the seizure as an "Iranian act of terror." The

Israeli military called the hijacking a "very grave incident of global consequence."

Israeli officials insisted the ship was British-owned and Japanese-operated. However, ownership details in public shipping databases associated the ship's owners with Ray Carriers, which was founded by Abraham "Rami" Ungar, who is known as one of the richest men in Israel.

Ungar told The Associated Press he was aware of the incident but couldn't comment as he awaited details. A ship linked to him experienced an explosion in 2021 in the Gulf of Oman. Israeli media blamed it on Iran at the time. The complex world of international shipping often involves a series of management companies, flags and owners stretching across the globe in a single vessel. Two U.S. Defense officials confirmed that Houthi rebels seized the Galaxy Leader in the Red Sea on Sunday afternoon local time. The rebels descended on the cargo ship by repelling down from a helicopter, the officials said, confirming details first reported by NBC News. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the matter.

There were 24 Indian military personnel to manage the first helicopter, 25 Indians to manage the Dornier aircraft, 26 personnel to manage the second helicopter, and two more for maintenance and engineering, Firuzul was quoted as saying by the Maldivian media. He said that President Muizzu, who won the presidential election in September, has initiated efforts to expel all 77 from the Maldives. The Maldives is one of India's key maritime neighbours in the strategic Indian Ocean Region and the overall bilateral ties including in areas of defence and security have been on an upward trajectory under the government of Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. The Maldives is also one of the biggest beneficiaries of India's Neighbourhood First policy. During a meeting with Union Minister of Earth Sciences Kiren Rijiju here on Saturday, Muizzu officially requested the Indian government to have their military personnel removed from the Maldives. Rijiju called on Muizzu, widely seen as a pro-China leader, at his office, a day after attending the Maldivian leader's inauguration ceremony. Muizzu had built his Presidential campaign against Solih on the promise of expelling Indian military personnel from the Maldives.

77 Indian military personnel in Maldives: Official

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Male, Nov 19: There were 77 Indian military personnel in the Maldives and the new government here was reviewing more than 100 agreements signed with New Delhi, a senior Maldivian official said Sunday, a day after President Mohamed Muizzu formally requested India to withdraw its troops from the island nation.

Addressing a press conference here, the Undersecretary for Public Policy of the Presidential Office, Mohamed Firuzul Abdul Khaleel said the new administration has established that there are 77 Indian military personnel in the Maldives.

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SNIPPETS

PML-N indicates plan B for making Sharif PM

Islamabad: Indicating that it has already prepared a plan B to ensure that Nawaz Sharif becomes the prime minister of Pakistan for a record fourth time, a senior PML-N leader has said that if there are legal hurdles for this, the party will remove them if voted back to power. Pakistan is going to the polls February 8. The 73-year-old Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Sharif returned to Pakistan from London on October 21 after four years of self-imposed exile. After his arrival, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) restored Nawaz's appeals against his conviction in the Avenfield Apartments and Al-Azizia corruption cases but did not fix any date for the hearing. Nawaz has been on protective bail.

Around 3K trucks stuck at Ukrainian border

Kyiv: About 3,000 mostly Ukrainian trucks were stuck on the Polish side of the border as of Sunday morning due to a more than 10-day blockade by Polish truckers, Ukrainian authorities said. Polish truckers earlier this month blocked roads to three border crossings with Ukraine to protest against what they see as government inaction over a loss of business to foreign competitors since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Ukrainian officials said last week Kyiv and Warsaw had again failed to reach an agreement to stop the protest.

61 soldiers killed in Gaza: IDF

Tel Aviv: The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Sunday said that three more IDF soldiers were killed by Hamas in Gaza taking the total number of soldiers killed to 61. The IDF identified the three killed soldiers as Sgt. Maj (Res) Rani Tahan, operations Sergeant of the 261st Reserve Brigade's 8717th battalion, Master Sgt (res) of the 261st Reserve Brigade's 8717th battalion, and Maj (res) Chen Yahlom who was with the Artillery Corps 8159th battalion. The IDF said that it has made substantial progress in the war with the army entering the strong holds of Hamas and have captured the Northern Gaza strip. It warned the civilians in Khan Younis area of Southern Gaza to leave towards the Rafah border as the Israel Security Agency (ISA) has claimed the presence of Hamas in the Khan Younis area of South Gaza.

Memphis shooting suspect kills self

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Memphis (US), Nov 19: A suspect in Tennessee died of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot while on the run early Sunday after he allegedly killed four and seriously injured a fifth victim during a deadly outbreak of domestic violence Saturday night, police said.

Officers found Mavis Christian Jr, 52, in his car during a manhunt following the shootings at three locations in Memphis that left three women and a teenage girl dead and critically wounded another teen girl.

Memphis Police Department officers responded to a report of a shooting at 9:22 pm on the 100 Block of Howard Drive. Police found a woman with an apparent gunshot wound who was pronounced dead at the scene.

Investigators determined there were two other connected fatal shootings. At Field Lark Drive, a woman and a 13-year-old girl were killed and a 15-year-old girl was critically wounded. Another woman was found fatally shot on Warrington Road, Memphis Police Officer Christopher Williams said.

Archaeologists scared to open China's 1st emperor's tomb

Archaeologists are terrified to open the tomb of Qin Shi Huang, China's first emperor who has been buried for 2,200 years.

The tomb of Qin Shi Huang, who ruled from 221 BC to 210 BC, is guarded by a terracotta army of soldiers and horses.

The discovery was found by farmers back in 1974 in the Shaanxi province of China. While archaeologists explored the area, they have never opened the tomb itself - and within good reason.

According to IFL Science, not only do archaeologists believe it will cause damage, but there are rumours of deathly booby traps

that could kill curious intruders.

Writings by Chinese historian Sima Qian 100 years after Qin Shi Huang's death claim "Palaces and scenic towers for a hundred officials were constructed and the tomb was filled with rare artifacts and wonderful treasure." He continued: "Craftsmen were ordered to make crossbows and arrows primed to shoot at anyone who enters the tomb."

"Mercury was used to simulate the hundred rivers, the Yangtze and Yellow River, and the great sea, and set to flow mechanically." Even if those alleged crossbows failed thousands of years later, there are still fears of liquid mer-



cury seeping through the cracks. "Highly volatile mer-

cury may be escaping through cracks, which developed in the

Archaeologists worry that the tomb of China's first emperor contains deadly booby traps

An ancient Chinese historian wrote that the tomb was filled with mercury and crossbows ready to fire

A 2020 study found that mercury concentrations around the tomb were higher than expected

structure over time, and our investigation supports ancient chronicle records on the tomb, which is believed never to have been opened/looted," one 2020 paper suggests, as per the publication. Scientists have reportedly toyed with the idea

of using non-invasive techniques to open the tomb, however, they have not yet come to fruition.

Fears of mercury are not the only thing stopping archaeologists from excavating the tomb, as there are also concerns that this could damage it.

The terracotta army and Qin Shi Huang's tomb complex are designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites and remain some of the most significant archaeological discoveries in history.

Researchers hope that scientific advancements may finally unveil the tomb's long-guarded secrets.

AGENCIES

business

of the day quote

As FTAs are based on mutual benefits, India should negotiate firmly for the UK to offer similar elevated GI protection to Indian products to a higher range of Indian products too

NILANSHU SHEKHAR | FOUNDED PARTNER, KANALYSIS

The market's stability may be influenced until the conclusion of state elections, at which point a discernible trend might materialize

SANTOSH MEENA | HEAD OF RESEARCH, SWASTIKA INVESTMART

We are keen to get external investments for Switch Mobility but only from the right strategic partner

SHENU AGARWAL | MD AND CEO, ASHOK LEYLAND

SHORT TAKES

Infra cost overrun

New Delhi: As many as 411 infrastructure projects, each entailing an investment of ₹150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns of more than ₹4.31 lakh crore in October this year, an official report said. According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, which monitors infrastructure projects worth ₹150 crore and above, out of 1,788 projects, 411 reported cost overruns and 837 projects were delayed. "Total original cost of implementation of the 1,788 projects was ₹24,78,446.60 crore, and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be ₹29,09,526.63 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of ₹4,31,080.03 crore (17.39 per cent of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for October 2023 said.

Dabur's new plant

Mumbai: Leading FMCG and ayurvedic products maker Dabur is planning to set up a new factory in South India in less than a year's time, as its business scales in the region, according to company's CEO Mohit Malhotra. Dabur, which now gets 20 per cent of its domestic sales from South India with its business there doubling in the last 5-6 years, is identifying gaps and usages to launch products customised to the markets, he told PTI in an interview. Dabur India, which has an annual capex of around ₹350-450 crore, also plans to expand its manufacturing activities in the international markets catering to regions such as the Middle East and Europe.

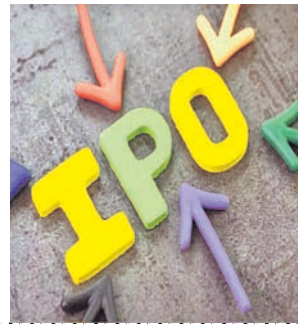


More and more Indian entrepreneurs from Europe and the United States are heading back to India where the economy is growing and opportunities are large

SAURABH SRIVASTAVA | FORMER CHAIRMAN, NASSCOM

FLURRY OF IPOs EYE ₹7,300 CRORE

The initial public offering (IPO) lane will be busy in November with five companies, including Tata Technologies and Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd, tapping the primary market next week to raise over ₹7,300 crore collectively. The other three companies whose maiden public issues are ready to open are Fedbank Financial Services, Flair Writing Industries, and Gandhar Oil Refinery India



RECORD-SHATTERING RISE

MFs' NFO mop-up surges 4X

Overall flows in mutual funds since the start of this year stood at ₹80K-cr so the momentum towards equity is also resulting in NFOs getting good flows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 19: Mutual funds' collection through new fund offerings (NFOs) surged nearly four times to ₹22,000 crore in the July-September period this fiscal compared to the preceding quarter as 48 new schemes hit the market.

Going forward, more NFOs can be expected in the coming quarters as several AMC become operational and offer similar and differentiated products to the equity and debt investors, Gopal Kavalireddi, Vice President of Research at Fyers, said. "To support these listed businesses, AMCs would be interested in launching more schemes across equity and hybrid categories, especially in the mid-, small-, and micro-cap market capitalisations," he added.

During the quarter that ended in September 2023, 48 schemes were launched, which were cumulatively able to garner ₹22,049 crore at the NFO period. This was way higher than 25 NFOs that col-



lected ₹5,539 crore during their NFO period in the June quarter, according to data compiled by Morningstar India.

Usually, NFOs come during a surging market when investor sentiments are high and optimistic. The NFOs were floated to capitalise on the mood of investors and attract their investment as they were willing to invest at that time.

Feroze Azeez, Deputy CEO of Anand Rathi Wealth, said this huge inflow in NFOs is primarily due to the overall sentiment towards equity.

Explaining further, he said that SIP (Systematic Investment Plan) flow increased to ₹16,900 per month.

Additionally, the increased risk appetite of investors for financial assets, especially equities, is prompting AMCs to introduce fresh offerings, Fyers'

With investors firmly believing in the India growth story and the emergence of new segments in organised space, more and more companies are seeking funds through primary and secondary market offerings

GOPAL KAVALIREDDI | VP (RESEARCH), FYERS

Kavalireddi said.

Further, consolidation of existing AMCs led to expanded offerings by newer management across categories and the addition of newer asset management companies like Bajaj Finserv pushed investors to allocate more to investments, he added.

Categories like differentiated passive strategies thematic or sector funds which tend to be the

flavour of the season are the most one for fund managers. The highest number of schemes were launched in the sectoral category - 13 followed by 12 other ETFs.

In terms of fund collection, the sectoral category amassed ₹5,725 crore, followed by multi-asset allocation fund (₹4,791 crore), multi-cap fund (₹3,277 crore) and liquid funds (₹3,083 crore).

With an increased risk appetite for equities and awareness of products and offerings, retail investors opt for higher-risk products like thematic and sectoral funds compared to other products.

The ability of sectoral funds to deliver high returns during high economic activity outpaces the returns from passive schemes like ETFs and Index funds. This helped AMCs launch more sector funds vis-a-vis ETFs, Fyers' Kavalireddi said.

In terms of new schemes that collected the highest AUM during that quarter are ICICI Pru Innovation Fund, Baroda BNP Paribas Value, Bajaj Finserv Flexi Cap, HDFC Defence Fund and HSBC Consumption Fund.

Azeez suggested investors not to jump into NFOs as the fund being launched is new and has no track record and there is no additional benefit of investing in an NFO wait period.

FPIs turn buyers after two months

Foreign investors buy ₹1,433cr in equities in Nov

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 19: After sustained selling in the last two and a half months, FPIs bought Indian equities worth ₹1,433 crore thus far in November, mainly due to the decline in US treasury bond yields and crude oil prices.

Foreign Portfolios Investors (FPIs) were net sellers till November 15. However, they reversed the selling trend by infusing money during November 16-17, data with the depositories showed.

"The ongoing festive season in India has been seen as a contributing factor to the renewed interest of FPIs in the Indian market. Alongside this, a decrease in US Treasury bond yields and a decline in crude oil prices alleviated some of the pressures that prompted the sell-off earlier," Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Adviser India, said. Some intermittent corrections in the markets could have also provided buying opportunities in a few pockets, he added.

Before the fund infusion, FPIs dumped Indian equities worth ₹24,548 crore in October and ₹14,767 crore in September, data showed. Prior to the outflow, FPIs were



Total investment by FPIs in equity has reached ₹97,405 crore and over ₹47,800 crore in the debt market this year so far

incessantly buying Indian equities in the last six months from March to August and invested ₹1.74 lakh crore during the period.

The prolonged sell-off by FPIs, which began in early September, was influenced by several factors - the uncertain trajectory of US interest rates, increased yields on US treasury bonds, the impact of higher crude oil prices, and the intensification of geopolitical tensions arising from the conflict between Israel and Hamas.

Additionally, the debt market attracted ₹12,330 crore in the period under review after receiving ₹6,381 crore in October, as per the data.

RECORD SALES

Festive boost to luxury cars

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 19: Luxury carmakers Mercedes and Audi have dispatched record units this festive season as the demand for high-end cars continues to grow in the country.

Driven by brisk sales throughout the year, the luxury car industry in India is hopeful of achieving its best-ever performance this year.

In an interaction with PTI, Mercedes-Benz India Managing Director Santosh Iyer said the festive season this year from Onam to Diwali has been better than last years', owing to multiple new launches, an attractive portfolio and also strong customer sentiment.

"We have seen record deliveries during Dussehra, Dhanteras and Diwali reflecting customer enthusiasm," he noted. Audi India Head Balbir Singh Dhillon said the company has witnessed an 88 per cent growth with 5,530 units retailed in January-September 2023.

"We have been operating with one of our highest-order banks in recent times. This festive pe-



riod marked bigger celebrations for Audi India as we witnessed our highest-ever festive season sales in the last seven years," he added. This year, the luxury car industry in India will surpass 2018 volumes - and reach the 46,000-47,000 unit mark, he noted.

Lamborghini India Head Sharad Agarwal said India is one of the fastest growing markets globally and has the 3rd largest millionaire population.

The Indian luxury car market was valued at \$1.06 billion in 2021 and is expected to reach over \$1.54 billion by 2027, registering a CAGR of more than 6.4 per cent during the forecast period 2022-2027, he noted.

The 89-day festive period this year between August 17 and November 14 saw overall passenger vehicle retail sales cross the 10 lakh mark. The 71-day festive season last year had witnessed sales of around 8.10 lakh units.

Open AI CEO may return, considers new AI venture

A planned sale of OpenAI employee shares that would value the startup at about \$86 billion on paper hangs in the balance after the sudden firing of CEO Sam Altman and a slew of top executive departures

REUTERS

Washington, Nov 19: Sam Altman, the just ousted CEO of OpenAI, is discussing a possible return to the company behind the ChatGPT bot even as he considers launching a new artificial intelligence (AI) venture, a person briefed on the matter said Saturday.

A day after the board fired him in a surprise move that rocked the tech world, Altman was talking with OpenAI executives about improving the company's governance structure while he discusses with some core OpenAI researchers and



others loyal to Altman how they could start a new AI company, the person said.

The possibilities of a return or a restart for Altman, seen by many as the face of generative AI, are in flux, said the source, who asked not to be named because the source was not authorized to speak on behalf of the parties involved.

OpenAI and Altman did not reply to requests for comment.

Investors in OpenAI, including its biggest backer Microsoft, are discussing damage control, including possibly pushing the board to restore Altman as CEO, fearing a mass exodus of talent without him, other sources said.

Khosla Ventures, an early backer of OpenAI, wants Altman back at OpenAI but "will back him in whatever he does next," the fund's founder Vinod Khosla posted on X Saturday.

Microsoft declined to comment. It reportedly owns 49% of the company, while other investors and employees control 49%, with 2% owned by OpenAI's nonprofit parent.

Emotions ran high Saturday as current and former employees were angered by Altman's sacking and worried over how an upcoming \$86 billion share sale could be affected by the sudden management upheaval.

OpenAI, a nonprofit co-founded by billionaire Elon Musk, launched ChatGPT November 30 last year, setting off a global sensation over generative AI technology that quickly became the world's fastest-growing software application. It set off a wave of investments and announcements across industries to use AI to enhance everything from financial services and healthcare to entertainment and media.

The market valuation of seven of the top 10 valued firms climbed ₹1,50,679.28 crore last week, with IT majors Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys emerging as the biggest gainers, amid an overall optimistic trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 890.05 points or 1.37 per cent. Reliance Industries, TCS, HDFC Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ITC and Bharti Airtel were the gainers while ICICI Bank, State Bank of India and Bajaj Finance faced erosion from their market valuation.

The valuation of TCS jumped ₹62,148.99 crore to ₹12,81,637.63 crore, emerging as the biggest gainer from the top 10 pack. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Infosys rallied ₹28,616.98 crore to ₹5,96,681.75 crore.

The mcap of Reliance Industries climbed ₹28,111.41 crore to ₹15,93,893.03 crore and that of HDFC Bank surged ₹11,136.61 crore to reach ₹11,42,215.81 crore.

The market valuation of Hindustan Unilever soared ₹10,032.75 crore to ₹5,94,317.36 crore and that of Bharti Airtel advanced ₹6,828.74 crore to ₹5,32,585.63 crore.

ITC added ₹3,803.8 crore taking its valuation to ₹5,47,808.43 crore.

However, the mcap of State Bank of India tumbled ₹14,502.5 crore to ₹5,02,589.52 crore and that of ICICI Bank fell by ₹11,308.97 crore to ₹6,46,254.41 crore.

The market valuation of Bajaj Finance diminished by ₹4,973.68 crore to ₹4,46,169.40 crore.

Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued company followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India and Bajaj Finance.

Mcap of 7 of top 10 firms swells ₹1.50 lakh crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

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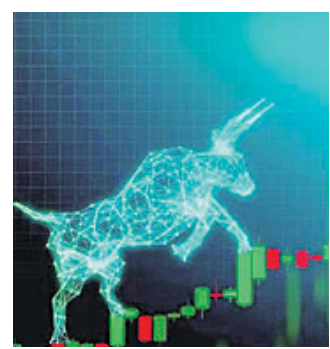
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Conditions not ripe to make ₹ a hard currency: GTRI

HARD CURRENCIES ARE WIDELY ACCEPTED AROUND THE WORLD FOR INTERNATIONAL TRANSACTIONS AND ARE CONSIDERED A RELIABLE AND STABLE STORE OF VALUE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 19: India should become a middle-income country and then push to make INR (rupee) a hard currency, and till then, it must promote the settlement of global trade in the local currency, think tank GTRI said Sunday.

Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said that transforming a currency into a hard currency is a complex process that hinges on several pivotal factors.

Firstly, economic stability is paramount; a country must exhibit low and stable inflation, consistent growth, and a balanced trade environment. This stability underpins confidence among international investors and trading partners, it added.

Equally crucial is the implementation of strong fiscal and monetary policies by the gov-

ernment and central bank, including effective national debt management and sensible interest rate policies, it said, adding aspiring for reserve currency status is a significant aspect.

This status is typically achieved when a currency is widely used and trusted, and reciprocally, it gains trust because of its widespread use.

Political stability also plays a critical role, as it reassures external entities of the nation's economic consistency, it said.

The US Dollar is the most dominant hard currency, often considered the world's primary reserve currency. It is used in a significant majority of international transactions and as a benchmark currency for most commodities. The presence of a currency as a hard currency reflects perceived stability, reliability, and economic strength of



A pivotal step in this transformation is making the rupee fully convertible on the capital account, a key trait of hard currencies. However, this move is fraught with complexities, primarily exposing the economy to volatile capital flows that can destabilise the currency

AJAY SRIVASTAVA | CO-FOUNDER, GTRI

its issuing country.

"The process requires significant systemic changes, which could, potentially, destabilise India's economy. Therefore, it might be more prudent for India to wait until its economy grows further and reaches a middle-income status before aspiring to make the INR a hard currency.

In the meantime, India should work to make local currency settlements more robust. This approach would allow the economy to stabilise and strengthen, making the transition smoother and less risky. Presently, conditions are not ripe for India pushing to make INR a hard currency," the GTRI said.

We batted poorly: Rohit

Sindhu turns to 'mentor' Prakash

Djokovic cruises past Alcaraz

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Turin, Nov 19: Top-ranked Novak Djokovic will be bidding for a record-breaking seventh ATP Finals title when he takes on home favorite Jannik Sinner in the final.

Djokovic took less than 90 minutes to beat Carlos Alcaraz 6-3, 6-2 in the semifinal between the top two ranked players Saturday night, after Sinner had earlier dispatched Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 6-7(4-7), 6-1.

The 36-year-old Djokovic is currently tied with Roger Federer on six titles at the season-ending tournament for the year's top eight players, while Sinner is the first Italian to reach the final. However, Sinner recorded his first-ever victory over Djokovic earlier this week and the Serbian will also have to contend again with a passionate, partisan crowd.

Serbian to meet homeboy Sinner for season-ending title



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Nov 19: Eyeing a third Olympic medal, ace Indian shuttler PV Sindhu will now move her base from here to Bangalore to train under the legendary Prakash Padukone in the build up to the Paris Games. Sindhu had a week-long stint under Padukone in September and before the Asian Games, she had indicated that she would be training under him. The 28-year-old, who is nursing a niggle in her left knee, finally revealed the move in a social media post.

"For those wondering and constantly asking me, the cat is finally out of the bag!!," Sindhu wrote on 'X'. "Prakash sir is assuming the role of the mentor in my setup. I started training with him at the end of August, and it's been uphill ever since," wrote the former World Champion.

"He's more than a mentor; he's my guide, my guru, and, above all, a true friend. I whole-

heartedly believe he possesses the magic to bring out the absolute best from my game," Sindhu said.

"I am so grateful he reached out to me with one call when I was in Japan, and we've built on that connection exceptionally well. Dear sir, I AM PUMPED!! Looking forward to training with you! Let's get to work," wrote Sindhu, who had won a silver at the Rio Olympics under chief coach Pullela Gopichand.

In February, Sindhu had parted ways with Korean coach Park Tae-Sang, who was instrumental in her winning the bronze medal at the Tokyo Olympics.

Recovering from a sore left knee, Sindhu has opted for a protected rank of No 10 which will be locked in BWF standings until she recovers. She sustained the injury on her left knee and pulled out during her second round women's singles match against Thailand's Supanida Katethong at the French Open, October 26.



"He's been playing fantastic tennis, arguably the best tennis of his life," Djokovic said. "We played a very close match the other night," the Serbian said.

Alcaraz and Djokovic had played each other four times previously and won two each. The latest battle between the two never hit those levels of drama, however, as Djokovic clinically took his chances after recovering from having to stave off two breakpoints in the opening game.

Djokovic nosed in front in the eighth game as Alcaraz - playing in his first ATP Finals - saved one breakpoint but then hit a backhand into the net to leave Djokovic serving for the set.



Jasprit Bumrah and other Indian players including skipper Rohit Sharma look distraught after a review goes against them

ric catch was unfortunate," Dravid said.

"The Australians were the better team on the day and they used the conditions to their advantage. However, even then I would say we have had a fantastic run. Certainly we would have liked to end with the trophy, but you also need a little bit of luck for that," Dravid added.

Rohit said the team were looking to score around 280 when Virat Kohli and KL Rahul were batting. "When KL and Virat were batting, we were looking at 270-280, but we kept losing wickets," pointed out Rohit.

The 36-year-old credited the way centurion Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne batted and put up a massive 192 runs for the match-winning fourth-wicket stand for the Aussies.

"Australia stitched a big partnership after losing three wickets. With 240 on the board, we wanted early wickets but credit to Travis Head and Marnus Labuschagne. They put us completely out of the game," Rohit pointed out.

coach Rahul Dravid here Sunday. "The result hasn't gone our way and we know that we were not good enough on the day. But I am proud of the team. Honestly, 20-30 runs (more) would've been good. We didn't bat well enough," said Rohit after the game.

Dravid on the other hand,

termed Rohit's dismissal unfortunate, but was quick to admit that Australia used the conditions better than the hosts.

"We couldn't get a partnership going and we lost wickets at regular intervals. That is why we couldn't force the pace. Also Rohit's dismissal to a ter-

ON THE SIDELINES

SACHIN'S GIFT FOR KOHLI

AHMEDABAD: Star India batter Virat Kohli received a prized memorabilia ahead of the World Cup final against Australia here Sunday - the iconic No.10 jersey of his idol Sachin Tendulkar. The former batting great gifted Kohli his signed jersey worn in his last ODI, the Asia Cup match against Pakistan at Mirpur in 2012. Kohli had broken Tendulkar's record for most one-day centuries during the World Cup semifinal Wednesday against New Zealand at Mumbai. "A special occasion & a special pre-match moment. There's CLASS written all over this gesture! The legendary Sachin Tendulkar gifts Virat Kohli his signed jer-

sey from his last ODI," the BCCI wrote on X, with a picture of Kohli holding the jersey.

Kapil Dev not invited

Captain of the 1983 ODI World Cup winning team Kapil Dev was conspicuous by his absence at the Narendra Modi Stadium here. Kapil said that he had not been invited by the BCCI so he did not go to Ahmedabad. "Wasn't invited. They (BCCI) didn't call me, so I did not go. As simple as that. I wanted the whole 1983 team to be there with me, but I guess because it's such a big event and people are so busy handling responsibilities, sometimes they forget," Kapil told a news channel

Stars in abundance

Many celebrities, including those from the Hindi film industry were present at the ODI World Cup final at the Narendra Modi Stadium here. Married Bollywood couple Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone was among the celebrities while Ayushmann Khurrana was also among the crowd. Others present to cheer India were Shah Rukh Khan, his son Aryan Khan, former badminton great Prakash Padukone and Shanaya Kapoor. Former India skipper and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly was also present in the stands along with Union Minister Anurag Thakur. PM Narendra Modi was also present at the venue.

WHEN CRICKET CAME CALLING AT AHMEDABAD



1 SECURITY BREACHED: A pro-Palestine fan, breached security to invade the field and tried to hug Virat Kohli during the game Sunday before being arrested

2 The Indian and Australian teams pose with kids before the game

3 KNOCK IN VAIN: KL Rahul, who top-scored for India raises his bat after reaching his half century against Australia

4 SEA OF BLUE: Thousand of fans gather outside the stadium with a poster of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma before the game

5 COMPLETELY DISTRAUGHT: A kid grabs his head in disbelief after the dismissal of Virat Kohli in the final against Australia at Ahmedabad Sunday

6 DEADLY DUO: Century-maker Travis Head and batter Marnus Labuschagne are all smiles as they pose with the ICC World Cup trophy after defeating India in the final

7 WELL DONE MATE: Virat Kohli congratulates members of the Australian team after the end of the final Sunday

PTI PHOTOS