



## NAVIGATING AGEISM

Actor Rani Mukerji expresses gratitude for audience who helped her break ageism barrier in cinema

LEISURE P2



## THIRD GROUP OF HOSTAGES

In a third set of releases under a 4-day Israel-Hamas ceasefire deal, militants free 17 more hostages, including 14 Israelis

INTERNATIONAL P10



## TITLE ELUDES INDIAN DUO

Satwiksairaj & Chirag go down Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang in China Masters badminton final

SPORTS P12

## PREZ ON 2-DAY VISIT TO STATE

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar/Paradip, Nov 26:** President Droupadi Murmu Sunday arrived here on a two-day visit during which she is scheduled to grace 'Boita Bandan Utsav' at Paradip Port in Jagatsinghpur district Monday.

She was received at the Biju Patnaik International Airport by Governor Raghubar Das, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and others.

This is the President's second visit to Odisha in a week. She had spent three days in her home district Mayurbhanj and Sambalpur from November 20.

According to her programme, Murmu, who will be the first President to visit Paradip Port since its inception in 1962, will grace the 'Boita Bandana' (boat worshipping) ceremony, which commemorates Odisha's ancient maritime glory.

She will also virtually inaugurate a multi-modal logistic park and lay foundation stones for a new reservoir and water treatment plant for the Port Township and next-gen vessel traffic management and information system. She is also likely to interact with the members of the fishing community during her visit to Paradip.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



What first time? Whenever we dial him, his phone is always on flight mode!

| WEATHER                          |     | BHUB   | CTK    |
|----------------------------------|-----|--------|--------|
| TEMP                             | MAX | 29.2°C | 29.2°C |
|                                  | MIN | 17.8°C | 19.2°C |
| Humidity                         |     | 74%    | 79%    |
| Rainfall                         |     | Nil    | Nil    |
| Forecast<br>PARTLY CLOUDY<br>SKY |     |        |        |

## SHORT TAKES

### Historic Balyatra begins today

**Cuttack:** Balyatra, one of Asia's biggest open air trade fairs, will kick off on Mahanadi riverbank here on the occasion of Kartika Purnima, Monday. The district administration and Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) have made elaborate arrangements to ensure smooth conduct of the annual fair, which celebrates the glorious maritime history of Odisha. As many as 60 platoons of police personnel will be deployed in and around the fairground to ensure safety and security of the Balyatra hoppers. "At least 120 CCTV cameras and six watch towers have been installed across the fairground to keep a tab on the anti-socials," an official said.

### Floyd murder convict stabbed in US prison

**Minneapolis:** Derek Chauvin, the former Minneapolis police officer convicted in the death of George Floyd, was stabbed in a prison in Arizona, Minnesota, Attorney General Keith Ellison confirmed Saturday. "I am sad to hear that Derek Chauvin was the target of violence," Ellison said in a statement. Chauvin is serving a 21-year federal sentence for violating Floyd's civil rights, as well as a concurrent 22-12 years for murder on his conviction in a state court.



**RACE AGAINST TIME:** Vertical drilling underway during the rescue operation to extract 41 workers trapped in the under-construction Silkyara Bend-Barkot Tunnel in Uttarkashi, Sunday. PTI PHOTO

## Wait gets longer

AGENCIES

**Uttarkashi, Nov 26:** Rescuers began drilling vertically Sunday from the top of a mountain under which 41 workers got trapped two weeks ago while working on a highway tunnel in the Himalayas, officials said. If it does not face any hurdle, it will take nearly 100 hours to reach the trapped workers from the top of the hill above the tunnel.

"Vertical drilling has begun and (a stretch of) up to 20 metres was drilled Sunday," a National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited official said.

The vertical approach was one of the at least five options on which preparatory work had begun some days back, as anxiety mounted over the fate of the 41 men trapped in the under-construction tunnel on Uttarakhand's Char Dham route.

Rescue workers have to drill down 86 metres to reach the tunnel. By evening, the heavy drilling equipment had bored down to about 19.5 metres.

NHIDCL Managing Director Mahmood Ahmed said vertical boring would be over by Thursday if there are no more hurdles.

As the drilling progresses, 700-mm wide pipes are being inserted to create an escape passage.

## Andhra woman found dead in Odisha hotel

HUSBAND OF DECEASED MISSING

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** A woman from Andhra Pradesh was found dead under mysterious circumstances in a hotel room at Berhampur Saturday night, police said Sunday. The deceased was identified as Krishnaveni Konapalli of RV Nagar in GK Veedhi Mandalam of Visakhapatnam district.

The sanitary staff and the hotel manager knocked at the room door but there was no response. The manager immediately informed the hotel owner who called the Baidyanathpur police.

Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M Sunday told media persons that the local police received information at around 10 pm Saturday that a woman's body was found in one of the rooms of the Berhampur Lodge located near Gollundi chhak and a police team, along with a forensic team and senior officers rushed to the spot immediately.

"She had come to the lodge November 19 along with her husband, Sameedmon AS, from Kollam, Kerala. The husband is missing. They were married for three years. An unnatural death case was registered and an inquest was conducted in the presence of an executive magistrate," the SP said. The police have informed the victim's family members who will reach Berhampur soon. "So far we have come to know from the victim's family that they were against the relationship so the woman had eloped," the SP added.

He said that police are checking the video footage of CCTV cameras installed in the locality and will seek to identify a person who allegedly met the couple at the hotel.

The hotel manager told the investigating officials that the couple while checking in the hotel informed the staff that they had come to Berhampur for medical treatment.

## PNEUMONIA OUTBREAK IN CHINA

# States asked to review readiness

*The state authorities advised to implement Operational Guidelines for Revised Surveillance Strategy in the context of Covid-19*

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** The Union Health Ministry has advised states to immediately review public health preparedness in view of recent reports indicating a surge in respiratory illness in children in northern China.

In a statement Sunday, the ministry said it has decided to proactively review preparatory measures against respiratory illnesses as a matter of abundant caution.

"This is noted to be important in view of the ongoing influenza and winter season that

results in an increase in respiratory illness cases. The Government of India is closely monitoring the situation and indicated that there is no need for any alarm," it said.

In a letter to all states and Union territories, the Union health secretary has advised them to immediately review public health and hospital preparedness such as availability of beds, drugs and vaccines for influenza, medical oxygen, antibiotics, personal protective equipment, testing kits and reagents, functionality of oxygen plants and ventilators, and infection control practices.

The state authorities have been advised to implement the Operational Guidelines for Revised Surveillance Strategy in the context of COVID-19, shared earlier this year, which provides for integrated surveillance of respiratory pathogens presenting as cases of influenza

### No novel virus: China

**Beijing:** A surge in respiratory illnesses across China that has drawn the attention of the World Health Organisation is caused by the flu and other known pathogens and not by a novel virus, the country's health ministry said Sunday. Recent clusters of respiratory infections are caused by an overlap of common viruses such as the influenza virus, rhinoviruses, the respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, the adenovirus as well as bacteria such as mycoplasma pneumoniae, which is a common culprit for respiratory tract infections, a National Health Commission spokesperson said.

like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory illness (SARI).

They have also been asked to ensure that the trends of ILI and SARI, particularly among children and adolescents, are closely monitored by the dis-

trict and state surveillance units of the Integrated Disease Surveillance Project (IDSP).

The data of ILI/SARI is required to be uploaded on the IDSP-IHIP portal.

The state authorities have been asked to send nasal and throat swab samples of patients with SARI, particularly children and adolescents, to the Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratories for testing for respiratory pathogens.

The cumulative effect of implementation of these precautionary and proactive collaborative measures is expected to counter any potential situation and ensure the safety and well-being of the citizens.

Recently, information shared by the WHO has indicated an increase in respiratory illness in northern parts of China. This is predominantly attributed to usual causes such as influenza and SARS-CoV-2.

# Hunting belonged to everyone, not just to males

## PREHISTORIC WOMEN ENGAGED IN HUNTING, THEIR ANATOMY SUITABLE FOR IT, SAY US RESEARCHERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** Prehistoric women not only engaged in the practice of hunting, but their anatomy and biology would have also made them intrinsically better suited for it, scientists have claimed.

Drawing their conclusions from both archaeological and physiological evidence, the researchers from US universities found that "hunting belonged to everyone, not just to males."

They said that through their studies, published in the journal American Anthropologist, they

were "trying to correct the history that erased women from it," instead of erasing or rewriting history.

Their archaeological findings regarding the women's injuries and the women being buried with their hunting weapons suggested that no "strict sexual division of labour existed," especially in prehistoric societies, where survival was an all-hands-on-deck activity.

"There weren't enough people living in groups to be specialised in different tasks. Everyone had to be a generalist to survive," said Cara Ocobock, an assistant professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Notre Dame.

The researchers found injuries in the women resulting from close-contact hunting, akin to what is attributed to Neanderthals' "up-close-and-personal style of hunting," which



meant that the hunters would often have to get up underneath their prey in order to kill them.

"As such, we find that both males and females have the same resulting injuries when we look at their fossil records," said Ocobock, adding, they found the patterns and rates of wear and tear equally in both women and men.

Further, in Peru, they found evidence of early female hunters of the Holocene period buried with hunting weapons.

"You don't often get buried with something unless it was important to you or was something that you used frequently in your life," said Ocobock.

"Furthermore, we have no reason to believe that prehis-

toric women abandoned their hunting while pregnant, breastfeeding or carrying children," she added.

The physiological findings told the story of the prehistoric women's capabilities of performing the arduous physical activity of hunting prey and their ability to hunt successfully for prolonged durations, the researchers said.

They found that the female body was both metabolically and structurally advantageous in terms of endurance and effectiveness for prehistoric hunters.

Metabolically, the hormones estrogen and adiponectin, which are typically found in greater amounts in women than in men, enabled efficient burning of fat for energy and protecting the muscles from breaking down, they said.

The hormones helped the women to endure, "which would

have been critical in early hunting because they would have had to run the animals down into exhaustion before actually going in for the kill," according to the researchers.

Structurally, the typical "wider hip structure of the female" enabled them to rotate their hips and lengthen their steps, eventually helping them get farther faster, Ocobock explained.

"When you look at human physiology this way, you can think of women as the marathon runners versus men as the powerlifters (or weightlifters)," she said. All these revelations together find importance in the current political moment where sex and gender are in the spotlight, she said.

"And I want people to be able to change these ideas of female physical inferiority that have been around for so long," Ocobock said.



# leisure



## KYLIE REGRETS GETTING COSMETIC PROCEDURE

Reality TV star Kylie Jenner recently opened up about regretting getting a cosmetic procedure at the age of 19. Admitting to regret some of her past decisions, she stated: "I've never touched my face, but just even getting my breasts done when I was 19 and getting pregnant soon after, not obviously planning to be pregnant at 19, [is a regret of mine]."

## TAYLOR REACHES OUT TO FAMILY OF DECEASED FAN

Singer Taylor Swift has reached out to the grief-stricken family of Ana Clara Benevides, a fan who died during the Brazil leg of her Eras Tour due to high temperature. Paying her respects to the 23-year-old, Swift privately went to meet the family and help them in their dark hour, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
 Today the stars advocate that you concentrate on money matters and how to save some, and in this purpose you will remain engrossed. However, Ganesh advises you not to neglect domestic duties lest you encounter a morose spouse. So carry on and make a dash for that movie as planned. Don't cancel it.

**TAURUS**  
 You are likely to turn excessively self-centred today, says Ganesh. This could cause you to be very insecure. You will have a tendency to control and dominate others. There is a likelihood that you may, thereby, jeopardize important relationships.

**GEMINI**  
 Ganesh opines that today you might feel a little blue and under the weather. You may harbour feelings of loneliness today. Your repressed emotions and yearnings as well as your intellectual leanings will likely come to the fore today, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
 Your ideas today are source of your energy. A situation may arise, which will force you to take hard decisions later. A new business or venture may prove beneficial. Your magical touch will bestow success in every endeavour. Ganesh is with you.

**LEO**  
 You might be the man of the house, but to make that house a home, you need a family. So keep that in mind, says Ganesh, and remember that your family is the foundation of your success. Make every possible effort to make your family's roots stronger.

**VIRGO**  
 Today might just bring those emotions to the fore that have been lying in the closet of your heart since long. You will even develop a bonding – a sentimental attachment – with your belongings. But, if and when you don't find the surroundings to your liking, you shall be like a fish out of the water.

**LIBRA**  
 Unleash the artist in you today! Don't be surprised if you happen to discover a love for the fine arts. The stars bestow on you refined aesthetic sense. As a result, your penchant for interior decoration is sure to get a boost. There is also the possibility of you capitalising on the commercial aspect of your newly acquired hobby, says Ganesh.

**SCORPIO**  
 Family matters have been screaming for long for your attention now. Your estranged spouse may deal the final blow to sever all ties, foretells Ganesh. But keep calm, and hold that tongue, advises Ganesh. Your priority should be to secure your family's peace.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
 The nerd in you will rise to the fore today. Religious literature will catch your fancy. Ganesh also sees you diving deep into pages of detective tomes, murder and science fiction. Au contraire, find some relief from the roller-coaster by listening to some soothing music.

**CAPRICORN**  
 The chances of you meeting financial success are few, but they are there nonetheless, says Ganesh. If you really want to improve your account balance and settle all the burgeoning debts, focus on what all needs to be done, and get it done without delay. You will make merry later in the day and will enjoy the company of your loved ones.

**AQUARIUS**  
 The day is taxing. You may find that others have dumped their share of work on you. But you are not one to admit defeat, and will deal with the challenge squarely, says Ganesh. You will outwit your opponents, and toast your success by stargazing!

**PISCES**  
 While your day is unlikely to be very satisfactory, keeping your expectations low will help lessen your disappointment, says Ganesh. However, the evening is likely to be as refreshing as your day was depressing, with all the socialising in store for you. A rollicking party awaits you with good food, wine and music as accompaniments.

## Neena's unusual take on feminism

**Mumbai:** Actress Neena Gupta recently in an interview shared her unique views on feminism and highlighted the importance of financial independence, regardless of gender.

In a recent conversation with Ranveer Allahbadia, the *Badhaai Ho* actress shared, "I want to say that it's not necessary to believe and think about 'falu feminism' or the idea that 'women are equal to men.' Instead, focus on being financially independent and pay attention to your work."

She further said, "That's the main message I want to convey. Additionally, men and women are not equal. The day men start getting pregnant, that day we will be equal."

In conclusion, she said, "I was single for a very long time and it was so difficult. Whenever I would go to a party, I wouldn't speak to any friend's husband for a long time so that he doesn't feel that I am giving any wrong hints. A lot of men would think that I am available because

I was single. It was a major issue. I've had some really bad relationships, but I move on."



## Pari calls out on misleading fan clubs

**Mumbai:** Actress Parineeti Chopra has taken offence to fan clubs of other artists putting out fake quotes attributed to her in favour of the artists they represent. She warned that she'd take action against the said fan clubs, without specifying the context.

Parineeti took to her Instagram Stories on Saturday to pen a note warning the fan clubs. She wrote, "I am seeing fan clubs put out quotes in favour of their artists, using my name. These are fake. I have given no interviews/quotes about anyone, congratulating them or appreciating them. I am watching, and will be reporting you. Also - get your facts checked first! A little Googling never hurt anyone (smile emoji)."

On the work front, Parineeti will be next seen in *Chamkila* and was last seen in *Mission Raniganj*.

## 'An actor shouldn't be judged by their age'

**Panaji:** Actress Rani Mukerji during the conversation at IFFI said audience has helped her break the 'ageism barrier', enabling her to play a wide variety of characters and an artist's age should not matter while essaying a role.

"My audience has loved me and accepted me over the years. They have helped me to break the ageism barrier and I will promise that I will work till I'm 80. I don't think an actor should be judged by their age. It's only because our cinema is known as popular cinema and want to see young people on screen all the time because that's what compels the youth to kind of go and watch," Mukerji said.

"Remaining youthful in spirit is wonderful, but acknowledging your age and choosing

roles aligned with it is crucial for audience acceptance. I intentionally make decisions to offer relatable content, emphasizing the significance of self-acceptance, aging gracefully, self-care, and maintaining a pleasing appearance for my audience", the *Mardaani* actress added.

She ends with, "My life's sole aim is to maintain the youthful appearance I had two decades ago. I prioritize a healthy lifestyle to sustain this look, understanding that audiences expect a pleasing image when investing in my work. I take breaks to rejuvenate, grateful for the continuous support over 27 years, and hope for the same for the next 27."

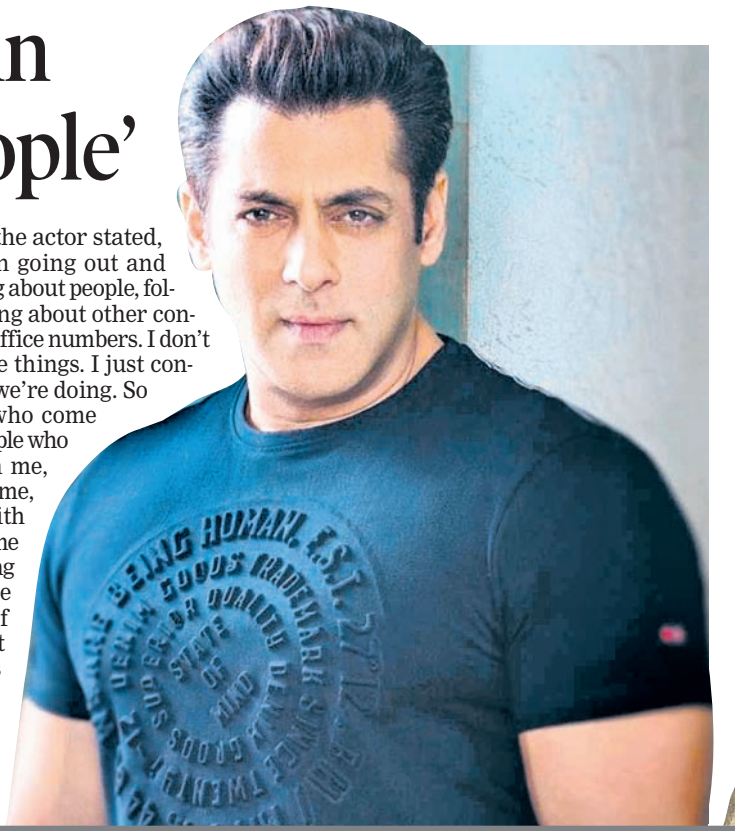
## 'I don't believe in bitching about people'

**Mumbai:** Actor Salman Khan who is currently basking in the success of his recently released film, *Tiger 3*, in an exclusive interview talked about his years of struggle before the debut film and admitted not following his contemporaries' box office collection.

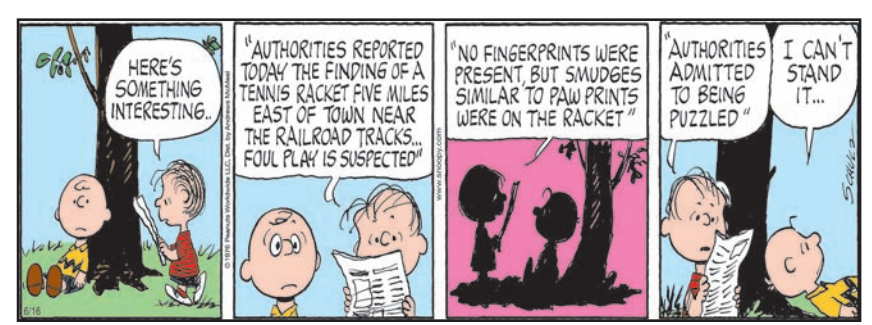
The *Bodyguard* actor stated, "I don't know. All the hard work that usually people right now say that once we get the film, we'll work on it, all these things I've done much before I came into the industry with 4-5 years of struggle that I did before *Maine Pyar Kiya* and *Biwi Ho To Aisi*. All these things and all this hard work was put in there."

He said, "I don't think you guys see me going out, you don't catch me anywhere, no parties. I shoot, I go back home. All the discussions that I have, it is either on Being Human, family stuff, or friends and discussions about the movie shots that hard work is done at home with the director and on the script."

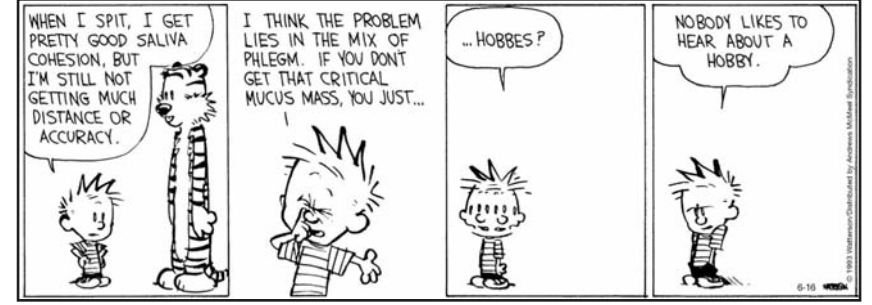
In conclusion, the actor stated, "I don't believe in going out and gossiping, bitching about people, following and tracking about other contemporaries' box-office numbers. I don't believe in all these things. I just concentrate on what we're doing. So even the people who come home are those people who are working with me, have worked with me, or are working with me currently or some people who are going to work with me ahead, and of course I have a set of 4-5 friends who've been there since time unknown and that's my life."



### PEANUTS



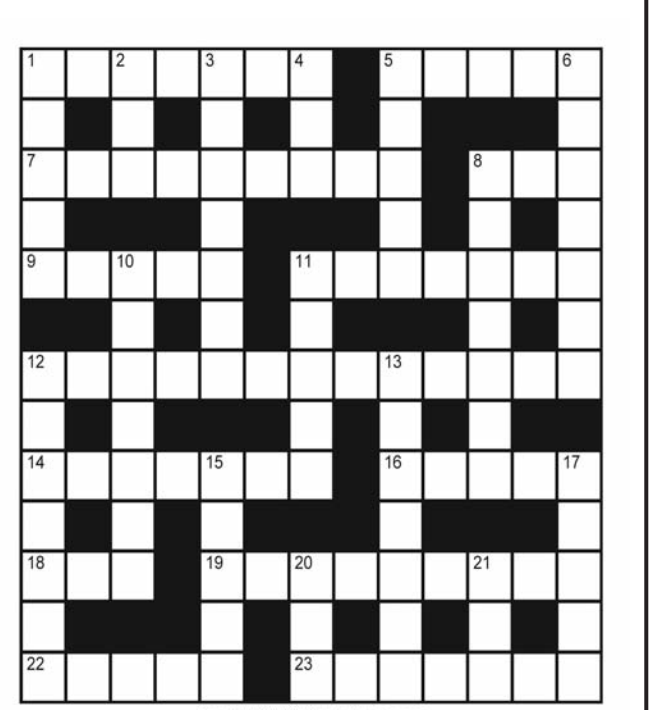
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



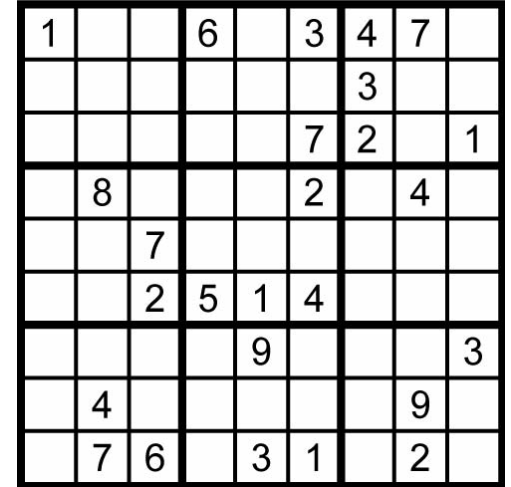
### FUN post CROSSWORD



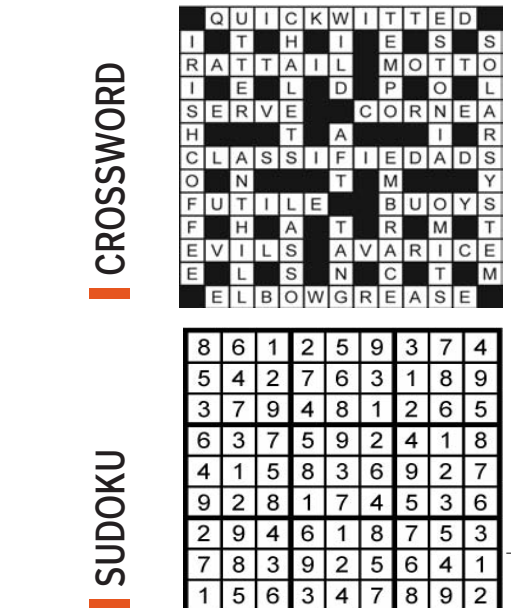
- Across**
- 1 A, B or C, e.g.
  - 5 Praises
  - 7 Fighters
  - 8 Lab eggs
  - 9 Not now
  - 11 Diver's breathing device
  - 12 Make the best of a bad situation (4,3,4,2)
  - 14 Bulldog ant
  - 16 Fragrance
  - 18 Frigid
  - 19 Neck injury result, maybe
  - 22 Wooden shoe
  - 23 At last!
  - 6 Hollywood hopeful
  - 8 Acorn dropper (3,4)
  - 10 In need of a drink
  - 11 Move furtively
  - 12 Rainbow fish
  - 13 Greek letter
  - 15 Suggestions
  - 17 Toothsome
  - 20 Brit. fliers
  - 21 Our sun
- Down**
- 1 E, I or O, e.g.
  - 2 Bluejacket
  - 3 Sub-Saharan scourge
  - 4 Wimple wearer
  - 5 Cow catcher

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# downtown

## KEEPING TRADITION ALIVE

Paper and thermocol boats up for sale for Kartika Purnima at Unit-I market in Bhubaneswar, Sunday



## Naveen congratulates Ravenshaw University

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Sunday congratulated students, faculty members and staff of Ravenshaw University in Cuttack as the varsity was accorded the highest A++ grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

Taking to X, formerly Twitter, the CM said, "The accreditation will further transform the higher education landscape in #Odisha and give a boost to research and innovation at the iconic university."



Meanwhile, upon hearing the news of the A++ grade from NAAC, hundreds of Ravenshaw University students gathered for a celebration Sunday as well. The campus resonated with the sounds of cheers and laughter. The enthusiasm spread to faculties and staff alike as smiles broke out uncontrollably.

Notably, in a meticulous evaluation, NAAC members assessed Ravenshaw University across seven important parameters. With an impressive total CrWGP of 3,582 out of 1000, the university has achieved the A++ status, marking a significant rise from the previous 'A' grade conferred in 2016.

## Governor, CM pay tributes to founding fathers of Constitution

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** On the Constitution Day Sunday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik paid humble tributes to the visionaries who drafted the country's Constitution and reaffirmed his government's commitment to uphold the spirit of democracy, justice, and equality enshrined in the foundational document of the country and to follow the rule of law in letter and spirit.

On the occasion, Governor Raghuraj Das also paid tributes to the great thinkers and visionaries for giving the country a solid foundation by envisioning a Constitution that ensures justice, liberty and equality for every citizen of the country.

GHAR GHAR SAMBIDHAN CAMPAIGN WAS LAUNCHED BY COMMITTEE FOR LEGAL TO POOR (CLAP) TO PROMOTE CONSTITUTIONAL AWARENESS AND STRENGTHEN CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION IN CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

THE CAMPAIGN WILL WORK TO DEEPEN PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY BY ENABLING CITIZENS TO PLAY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLES IN THE FUNCTIONING OF CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES

Meanwhile, Ghar Ghar Sambidhan campaign was launched by Committee for Legal to Poor (CLAP) to promote constitutional awareness and strengthen citizen's participation in constitutional governance. The campaign will work to deepen participatory democracy by enabling citizens to play constructive roles in the functioning of constitutional bodies.

Speaking on the occasion, Bikash Das, president of CLAP, said that constitutional governance is not a privilege of few elected representative, it is to be cherished by democratic society as a whole. Citizens can both exercise their fundamental rights and fundamental duties, provided there is substantial knowledge to take informed and effective decisions.

## 'Ensure bank linkage to Mission Shakti groups'



The Collectors and ULB officials have been asked to organise special drives involving Mission Shakti groups and bankers in order to facilitate the sanction of bank loans on the spot and expedite the credit

The state government has announced interest-free loans up to Rs 5 lakh for Mission Shakti groups for the socio-economic empowerment of women self-help groups in the state

The officials have also been urged to create awareness of interest subvention benefits among the self-help groups

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the MUKTA scheme in April 2020 with a focus on reducing economic vulnerabilities and enhancing resilience of urban poor and migrant labourers

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** The state government has asked all district Collectors to facilitate bank linkage to Mission Shakti groups engaged in projects sanctioned under Mukhya Mantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan (MUKTA).

To streamline the execution of MUKTA projects sanctioned in 2023-24, the Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) department has written a letter to Collectors, municipal commissioners, and executive officers of different Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), in this regard.

The state government has announced interest-free loans up to Rs 5 lakh for Mission Shakti groups for the socio-economic empowerment of women self-help groups (SHGs) in the state.

"It is requested to impress upon all the officials concerned of 115 ULBs for ensuring bank

linkage of all MSGs, who have been given work orders for the execution of MUKTA projects as implementing agency for 2023-24," read the letter sent Friday.

The Collectors and officials of ULBs have been asked to organise a special drive involving Mission Shakti groups and bankers to facilitate the sanction of bank loans on the spot and expedite the credit. They were also urged to create awareness of interest subvention benefits among the SHG members.

However, the selected Mission Shakti groups executing MUKTA projects must not be bank defaulters, the department said.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the MUKTA scheme in April 2020 with a focus on reducing economic vulnerabilities and enhancing the resilience of the urban poor and migrant labourers.



**PAYING HOMAGE:** Dharitri and Orissa POST Editor Tathagata Satpathy speaks during an event organised by Information and Public Relations department and Biren Mitra Foundation at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday, to mark the state-level birth anniversary celebration of former Chief Minister Biren Mitra. Dignitaries, including former minister Prafulla Chandra Ghadai and Biren Mitra Foundation chairperson Priyadarshi Mishra are seen

## Absconder nabbed from Kandhamal

**Bhubaneswar:** The Commissionerate Police, in its month-long manhunt, arrested the accused Subhasis Pradhan from Kandhamal district, here Sunday in a case related to the physical and verbal assault against the complainant Sajan Samanwaya. In this regard, a complaint was registered by Bharatpur Police station officials under Section 452, 341, 324 and 294 under IPC provisions. The officials said that Pradhan will be produced before a local court shortly.

## Assam CM offers prayers to Trinity

AGENCIES

**Puri, Nov 26:** Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma had a darshan of Lord Jagannath and His siblings at Srimandir here, Sunday.

After offering prayers to the sibling deities, he said the country could not give a befitting reply to the 26/11 Mumbai attackers.

"It is a very sad day for all of us. Had Modi been the PM then instead of Manmohan Singh, things would have been totally different," Sharma told reporters.

On November 26, 2008, ten Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists from Pakistan arrived by sea route and in an indiscriminate fire killed 166 people, 18 of them security personnel, and injured several others during a 60-hour siege in Mumbai.

The Assam CM said Modi would have given a befitting reply to the attackers. "It is really sad that we could not give a proper reply," he said.

Sarma, who was welcomed by the temple administration at the Lion's Gate of the 12th century shrine, said, "It is considered most pious to have darshan of the trinity during the last five days of Kartik month."

The Assam CM was accompanied by Puri MLA Jatany



Sarangi and BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra. Sarma also proposed that his government will set up a yatri niwas in the temple town to facilitate stay of the devotees visiting Jagannath temple from the north-eastern state.

"I will write to the Odisha government to provide necessary assistance to construct a yatri niwas in Puri for the devotees coming from Assam to have darshan of Lord Jagannath," he said.

Sarma recalled he had earlier visited the temple alone. This time, he came with his family to seek the blessings of Lord Jagannath, he said.

## DEVOTEES TO HAVE DARSHAN ALL NIGHT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, Nov 26:** Keeping in view the huge number of devotees thronging the Pilgrim City for Kartika Purnima, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Sunday decided to allow devotees to have a darshan of the sibling deities throughout the night on eve of the auspicious day.

A decision in this regard was taken after deliberations with the temple servitors, informed SJTA Chief Administrator Ranjan Kumar Das, Sunday.

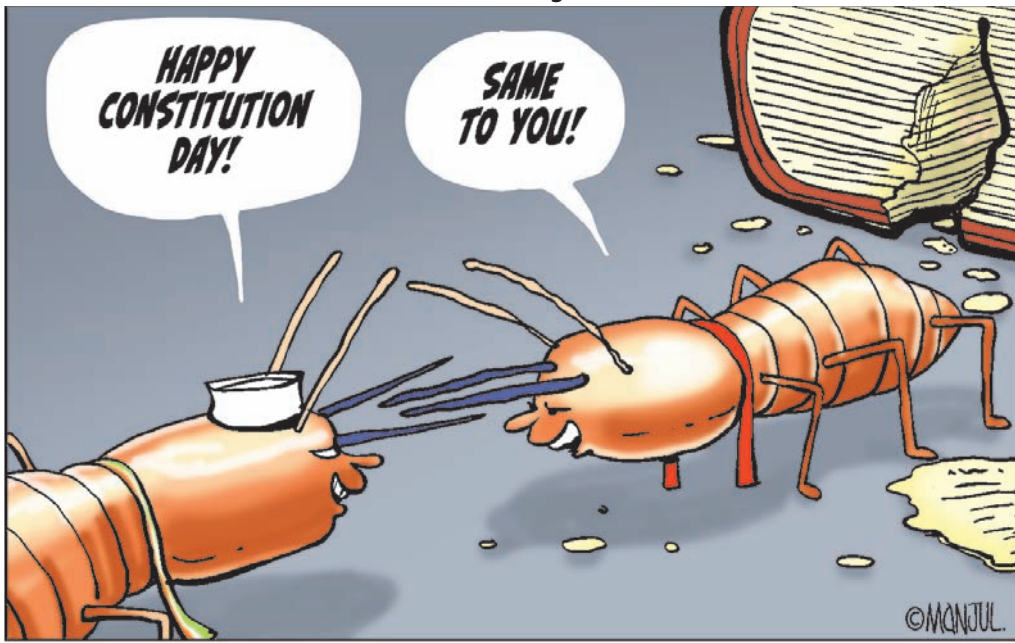
The deities will adorn the Rajarajeswar Beshha (golden attire) on Kartika Purnima, Monday.

According to the SJTA chief administrator, elaborate security arrangements and traffic management have been done for smooth darshan of the deities in the special attire.

As many as 10 platoons of police personnel are deployed for crowd control, while separate arrangements have been made to regulate the movement of vehicles in the Holy City, Puri Superintendent of Police Kanwar Vishal Singh said.

Apart from police personnel, lifeguards will be deployed on the beach and special patrolling teams have been arranged for the beach-side.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## Legal experts decry calls for a 'new Constitution'

Of late, the argument that the Constitution of India has 'outlived its time' and, therefore, the country needs a new Constitution, befitting contemporary times seems to be escalating. Those in favour of the argument have either associated the 'colonial legacy' of the document or have cited examples of nations that have had constitutions with shorter lifespans. But legal experts point out that the Constitution is a seven-decade old 'living document' which will always stand the test of time, the Bar and Bench wrote.

Speaking to the premier legal news portal, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said the Constitution was framed by those with exemplary foresight as a result of which it has withstood challenges posed so far. "Our Constitution is complete document and there is absolutely no need of having a new one," Mehta said.

He, however, argued that over a period of time, by the process of interpretation, certain new theories were implanted in the original Constitution which are too individualistic and subjective in their approach and application. And, therefore, Mehta thinks concepts like constitutional morality and manifest arbitrariness could perhaps have not been envisaged by the framers of the Constitution in the wide sense in which it has been applied.

"These subjective concepts, judicially implanted, needs to be given a serious fresh look as it has the potential of creating an imbalance in the constitutionally demarcated separation of powers without leaving any level playing field. A piece of legislation reflecting collective will of the citizens of the country can be declared void on a very personal, subjective and individualistic notion of 'manifest arbitrariness' or 'lack of constitutional morality'," said Mehta.

He is of a firm personal view that there is absolutely no need to have a new Constitution and all the organs under the Constitution must follow the Constitution keeping in mind one fundamental fact.

Former Advocate General of Maharashtra Darius Khambata called the Indian Constitution a 'masterpiece' and opined that its endurance is a positive feature.

"It provides a foundation for a path into the future for independent and free Indians. It has stood the test of time marvelously, despite frequent amendment. Today's vibrant and aspirational India would not have been possible without the ethos and spirit of the Constitution we have," he said.

The idea of a 'new Constitution', without any conception of what that would look like, is a fantasy, he opined while

speaking to Bar and Bench.

"Look at our neighbours and the several Constitutions they've had and where they are. Look at the US which has had the same Constitution for well over 200 years and see the stability and economic well-being that it has brought."

Adopted by the Constituent Assembly November 26, 1949, the Constitution of India has, by the sheer fact of its age, proved itself to be an enduring document.

According to a 2009 study by Thomas Ginsburg, Zachary Elkins, and James Melton of the University of Chicago Law School, the average lifespan of constitutions across the world since 1789 is 17 years. Their estimates also showed that one-half of constitutions are likely to be dead by age 18, and by age 50, only 19 per cent remain.

The Constitution of India, which enters its 74th year this November, stands out in this context. That isn't to say that the Constitution is a static fossil. It has undergone 106 amendments



just altering constitutional values, but on replacing and enacting a new Constitution of India.

On Independence Day 2023, two articles were published on Livemint and News18, authored by public personalities who are associated with the ruling party. In one of the articles, Bibek Debroy, a member of the PM's Economic Advisory Committee, argued that constitutional amendments won't do and that we should draft a new Constitution. In the other article, Alok Bansal, Director of the India Foundation, argued that parliamentary democracy should be replaced with a Presidential form of government.

These articles prompted heated reactions from all quarters, and

as of today, the 42nd of which, passed during the Indira Gandhi regime, altered it most significantly.

It is this living nature of the Indian Constitution that has the potential to be used both as a bulwark against brute majoritarianism and as a hammer to chip away at the rights and freedoms of citizens. Recent developments indicate that the ruling party's sights might be set on not just altering constitutional values,

the Centre quickly issued statements distancing itself from the authors' opinions. While the fears of some were assuaged, those of a more skeptical outlook believe that the government was merely testing the waters through the authors who were relative outsiders.

In his recent book entitled The Colonial Constitution, Arghya Sengupta argues that the fact that much of the Constitution is inspired by the Government of India Act, 1935 passed during the British rule in India, makes it a colonial document.

According to senior advocate Sriram Panchu, a new Constitution is the last thing we need right now. History has witnessed various governments across the world wield their power to alter the very foundations of democracies.

When the ruling party has a significant majority in Parliament and seems to be particularly adept at using hyper-nationalistic rhetoric to stir the masses, concerns regarding the misuse of power are bound to arise.

Those concerns can't be said to be completely misplaced either, because while we have not witnessed just one drastic move, we have seen small, incremental changes that some would argue, undermine India's democratic setup.

Indeed, the recent calls for a new Indian Constitution came

in the backdrop of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Har Ghar Tiranga, and the Bharat v India debate. The government also introduced three new Bills to replace the CrPC, IPC and the Indian Evidence Act, all with new decolonised names.

In the last decade alone, the Centre abrogated Article 370 and provided for 10 per cent reservation for EWS through the 103rd constitutional amendment. The present regime also introduced the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), the Farm Laws (which were later revoked in the face of widespread protests), the Information Technology Rules, 2021, and the electoral bonds scheme. It found itself accused of misusing Sedition laws and hampering the independence of central investigative agencies, muzzling the media and disrupting the powers of state governments through Governors.

The impact of these actions is reflected in public discourse, people's movements and, pertinently, in challenges before the Indian judiciary. That brings us to the role of the judiciary in shaping the Indian Constitution.

While stopping short of calling the idea of a new Constitution a threat to democracy, legal experts seem to be unified in saying that the Constitution of India, as it stands, is capable of enduring future challenges.



NATIONAL MILK DAY

# Milk production has increased threefold in last 2 decades: CM



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** Milk production in the state has increased threefold in the last two decades, informed Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik during National Milk Day celebration here at Lokaseva Bhavan, Sunday.

The CM said that Milk is essential for growth of children because of its nutritious properties and the government is providing financial assistance up to Rs 1 crore under the Mukhyamantri Krushi Udyog Yojana for entrepreneurship development in the dairy sector.

THE STATE GOVERNMENT IS PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE UP TO ₹1 CRORE UNDER THE MUKHYAMANTRI KRUSHI UDYOG YOJANA FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN THE DAIRY SECTOR

The National Milk Day, observed for the first time in the state, was joined virtually by dairy farmers and officials from all the districts.

In a video message, the Chief Minister said that the day is observed in India in honour of Verghese Kurien, the father of white revolution, then going on to pay tributes to Kurien.

The CM further said that under 5T initiative, an ultra-modern dairy plant of five lakh litre capacity per day has been established at Arilo. Around three lakh dairy farmers are

being benefitted through OMFED and the state government is taking measures like vaccination, deworming of cattle. As dairy farming is related to development of farmers and women of the state, the state government is putting focus on it.

Fisheries and Animal Resources Development minister Ranendra Pratap Swain said that OMFED and private dairies in the state must ensure production and supply of quality products for consumers of the state.

Department Principal Secretary Suresh Kumar Vashishth has said that financial assistance of Rs.18 lakh is being provided to farmers to establish small dairy units with two buffaloes as a measure of providing livelihood and multiplying their income.

Kishore Chandra Pradhani, president of OMFED, Sudhansu KK Mishra, CGM of NABARD, Gautam Patra, convener of SLBC and Ramesh Hazra, director of AH&VS also spoke on the occasion.

Around 400 participants, including dairy farmers, entrepreneurs, OMFED officials, plant managers, OMFED board members, officials from F&ARD and other departments were present at the event.



ATTITUDE OF PRAYER: Children perform a song during National Cultural Festival organised by Avantika Academy of Cultural and Social Welfare at Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

## 'RIGHT TIME FOR CADETS TO SET A GOAL IN LIFE'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** To commemorate the golden jubilee year, BJEM School observed the NCC Day here, Sunday.

Joining the programme as chief guest, Col Sudeep Sinha, Commanding Officer, 6 (O), Bn. NCC Puri hoisted the NCC flag, and witnessed the parade.

Addressing the cadets, he said, "You all are at a stage of life

when you need to set a goal for yourself. To achieve your aim, follow three mantras of success-passion, sincerity and hard work." School chairman Raghunath Mishra advised the cadets to work hard and try to join any of the armed forces because it is the only opportunity to serve the motherland.

Pratap Kumar Jena, manager of the school said that there cannot be any service like the serv-

ice to motherland and BJEM School is proud to have many of its students doing this great service.

School Principal Sandhya Jena welcomed the gathering and highlighted the importance of NCC Day.

Speaking on the occasion, the guest and alumni of the school, Captain Amulya Ratna Mishra, Indian Navy emphasized on leadership quality for joining the

armed forces and asked the students to develop this trait in them. Ex-cadet and Prime Minister's Best Cadet Awardee, RDC-2014 Manish Banerjee encouraged the students to join NCC during their school life to serve the nation later.

Vice Principal of the School Pallabi Mohapatra said NCC is the mission of life; it's not only about uniform or uniformity, but it's about unity.

## DAV Unit VIII holds annual exhibition



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** Vipodha... Bestowing Inspiration, the ebullient endeavour of the scholars of DAV Unit VIII was inaugurated here, Saturday.

All the dignitaries along with the Principal Ipsita Das were given a floral welcome. With the AI generated QR code and password by the ATL team of the school, the portal was unlocked and the exhibition was declared open.

The exhibition was inaugurated by the chief guest Odisha University of Technology and Research vice chancellor Bibhuti Bhushan Biswal. Addressing the gathering he said, "Students are the ambassadors of a brighter tomorrow and they can bring a promising future for the country with their innovation and can inspire everyone with their ingenuity".

A total of 29 stalls were put on display with 237 exhibits of Science, Mathematics, Social Science, Environmental Studies, Computer, Art and Craft and AI. As many as 538 participants took part in the event.

The special food court with 9 stalls and different food exhibits tickled everyone's taste buds. A sand art with the 17 SDGs and selfie-point grabbed everyone's attention.

The Regional Director Keshaba Chandra Satapathy, Assistant Regional Officer cum Principal Sujata Sahu, Chairman of school managing committee Santosh Upadhyay, DN Mishra, Principals of the sister concern schools Bipin Kumar Sahoo, Balamram Mohapatra and Binodini Dash were the dignitaries to grace the event. The event concluded with prize distribution ceremony.

## 'Nothing impossible if one has determination'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) Deemed to be University celebrated its third annual convocation here, Saturday.

In the event, 302 students including five Ph.D. scholars received their degrees.

The dignitaries present on the occasion included Odisha Governor Raghubar Das, Chhattisgarh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan, G20 Sherpa of India and former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant and internationally renowned Indian music composer and three-time Grammy award winner Ricky Kej.

The University conferred Honoris Causa degrees of D.Litt. upon three distinguished personalities. Governor Harichandan, president and spiritual head of the Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh Chidanand Saraswati and Sopnendu Mohanty, Chief FinTech Officer, Monetary Authority of Singapore & Chairman, Board of Elevari, Singapore.

Governor Das, in his address, said, "KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta has proved that no work is impossible if one has determination. KISS students have made Odisha proud time and again in the fields of academic achievements and

sports". Congratulating the degree recipients, he said, youth power is India's advantage today. They have ideas and innovation, are bold to take risks, and possess 'can do spirit', he added.

Lauding Samanta, Governor Harichandan said that KISS is a praiseworthy initiative for the empowerment of tribal people.

Addressing the graduates, he said that as conscious and educated citizens, you have the responsibility to ensure that even the poor and those living on the margins get benefits of equality before the law and other constitutional provisions.

In his address, Kant said, "I have visited many academic institutions in India and abroad, but have not seen institutions like KIIT & KISS anywhere."

The planet is facing a serious environmental crisis and the only way to make a difference is to change ourselves, said Kej.

Saraswati said that it is heartening to see that 11 of the 15 medal recipients are girls. "This is a symbol of the new Bharat," he said.

Mohanty advised students to master the art of survival and develop academic and professional competencies for success.

Samanta gave welcome address while KISS DU Registrar PK Routray proposed vote of thanks.

## IITs, IIMs advised to become multi-disciplinary: Pradhan



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Sunday said that the Centre has advised IITs and IIMs to become multi-disciplinary to venture beyond their respective areas of specialisation.

Pradhan, while speaking at the inauguration of Odisha Research Centre, said priority has been given to imparting multi-disciplinary education through the National Education Policy, 2020 and IITs and IIMs will also move in this direction.

Odisha Governor Raghubar Das, his Chhattisgarh counterpart Biswa Bhushan Harichandan

and Pradhan jointly inaugurated the centre here at an event.

The centre will conduct research on art, culture, archaeology, tradition and literature, sociology of Odisha, political process and political culture, agriculture, commerce, business and industry, development trends of contemporary Odisha, science and technology and healthcare, and future technology.

It will also work on smart cities, climate change, protection of the environment, sustainable development, semiconductors, rare earths and advanced minerals, the minister said.

In 2036, when Odisha will celebrate the centenary of its for-

matation, and in 2047, when the country will celebrate the centenary of India's independence, the ORC will prepare a roadmap for the development of Odisha and Odia language, he said.

The centre was established in collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Indian Knowledge Systems Division, Ministry of Education, IIM Sambalpur, IIT Kharagpur and IIT Bhubaneswar.

The objective of the Centre is the development of innovative epistemological frameworks to explore varied and nuanced dimensions of Odisha's history, culture, economy and society.

## Odia investors meet UK Prime Minister Sunak

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar/London, Nov 26:** In a landmark development for Indo-UK economic relations, Odia investor and entrepreneurs Biswanath Patnaik and Arun Kar recently met with UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, along with his core committee members, for a high level investors dinner meet in London.

The meeting marked a significant step towards fostering collaboration and investment between the UK and Odisha, as the duo outlined their ambitious plans for socio-economic development in the UK and their home state.

Patnaik is the chairman and mentor and Kar is the managing director of Finnest Group of Companies, a private equity investment firm operating under the BNP Group umbrella.

Their venture, Finnest Group, has gained international recognition, gracing the cover of Forbes magazine in March 2023, attesting to their commitment to excellence and innovation.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak commended the vision and dedication of Patnaik and Kar, assuring them of the UK government's support and cooperation.



## WORKAHOLICS FEEL WORSE EVEN WHILE WORKING: STUDY

**W**orkaholics are more likely than others to feel sick even when engaged in work they are most passionate about, finds a study.

The study led by a team of Italian researchers from universities of Trento and Bologna involved 139 full-time workers, mostly employed in back-office activities.

A psychological test was first used to assess the participants' level of work dependency.

Afterward, the scholars analysed the mood of the workers and their perception of workload using a technique known as the "experience sampling method".

Their results, published in the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, showed that most workaholic workers have, on average, a worse mood than the others.

The researchers said that contrary to popular notion, people who are addicted to work do not derive more pleasure from their work activity.

Workaholism also shares similarities with other addictions, such as gambling or alcoholism.

"The results seem to confirm that, as in other forms of behavioural and substance addiction, the initial euphoria gives way to a negative emotional state



that pervades the person even while at work," said Cristian Balducci, a professor at the Department for Life Quality

Studies at the University of Bologna (Rimini Campus).

"The negative mood observed in workaholics may indicate el-

evated daily stress levels and that could be the cause of the higher risk for these individuals to develop burnout and cardiovascular problems," he added.

In addition, the results demonstrated that, unlike other workers, workaholics, on average, consistently maintain a more negative mood throughout the day, with no significant variations attributed to the passage of time or fluctuations in workload.

The relationship between work addiction and bad mood was, in fact, more pronounced in women than in men, indicating a greater vulnerability of women to workaholism. Researchers suggest that

this phenomenon may depend on an increased role conflict experienced by workaholic women, caught between the internal tendency to over-invest in their work and the external pressures stemming from gender expectations still deeply rooted in our culture.

"Furthermore, considering that workaholics often hold positions of responsibility, their negative mood could readily influence that of colleagues and co-workers. This poses a risk that organisations should seriously consider, intervening to discourage behaviours that contribute to workaholism," added Balducci.

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# Boita Bandana: Politics of celebration in Rourkela

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, Nov 26:** Rourkela celebrates Boita Bandana with pomp and gaiety every year. However, this year's celebration looks like a big political showdown between two leaders, both belonging to BJD; thus bringing out in the open the infighting within the party here.

There are a couple of associations who celebrate Kartika Purnima. Prominent among them are the Utkala Sanskritika Parishad (USP) which has been doing it for the last two decades, and the Civil Township Sanskritik Parishad (CTSP). On the surface, the apparent aim is to commemorate the rich cultural heritage of the state. However, in reality the entire celebration is to establish political prowess.

USP is led by Kuna Bihari Das, the chairman of the state Youth Welfare Board. Its second press meet made it clear that there would be no place for the local heavy-weight and Minister for Labour Sarada Nayak. The guest list showed Hockey India Chief Dilip Tirkey, Energy Minister Pratap Deb, who doesn't pull well with Sarada and Raghunathpalli MLA Surat Tarai and others.

Kuna and Sarada, once very close, are almost sworn enemies now. "Sarada was always invited

to Sector-2 USP's celebration. Now because Kuna is against him, he is not being invited. It is a kind of snub," said a Sarada supporter.

Das has made his intention of contesting from Rourkela clear. This has become the reason for the differences between him and Sarada. But, another Sarada follower said, "He thinks by organising the Jiban Bindu he will from here. Does he even have a cadre base with him? And he no longer belongs to Rourkela because his family has moved from the city, lock, stock, and barrel. Rourkela doesn't need another Gurupada Nanda (referring to the late Congress MLA)."

Meanwhile, the CTSP, which began celebrating only in 2022, is also leaving nothing to chance. It is organising a star-studded night. The guest list shows the names, among others, Sundargarh district observer and Minister Priti Ranjan Ghadei and Sarada Nayak. It is no secret that Sarada and Priti, pull on together.

"We know Sarada is behind the celebration there because of obvious reasons. But, who cares? We are not bothered about it," said a USP volunteer.

This development has certainly added much ammunition to Rourkela's political atmosphere.

# Killer stretch: 39 lives lost in 2 yrs

EXPANSION OF DWARASUNI GHAT ROAD ON NH-49 HINGES ON HOPES

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bangiriposhi, Nov 26:** The 17-km long stretch of Dwarasuni ghat on the NH-49 in Mayurbhanj district connecting Mumbai with Kolkata has the ill-reputation of a death trap with the narrow stretch of highway being bloodied in mishaps that occur every other day.

Countless precious lives have been lost on this road leaving scores of families without a breadwinner. The deaths do not show even a distant sign of any let-up as mishaps continue to take place.

A survey conducted by the Mayurbhanj Regional Transport Office (RTO) brought to the fore that vehicles struggle while alighting down the curves of the narrow ghat road making brake fails the chief cause behind frequent mishaps taking place along the Dwarasuni stretch.

The survey also showed big potholes, absence of signage and reflective tapes, damaged crash barriers as other major issues giving rise to the fatal accidents.

Furthermore, the narrow and congested ghat road gets blocked frequently resulting in strong traffic snarls whenever an accident takes place. The scene of hundreds of vehicles getting stranded on the route for hours together is a regular sight. The persistent problem of traffic



FILE PHOTO

congestion has triggered resentment among local residents.

It is worth mentioning that an eight-kilometre long stretch of the NH-49 from Bangiriposi passes through Similipal tiger reserve. Hundreds of heavy as well as light vehicles ply through the road every day.

Frequent accidents on the Dwarasuni ghat road have led to loss of lives on the stretch at regular intervals. Several agitations have been carried out demanding expansion of the hilly road but so far they have failed to give any result.

The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, NHAI, the state government and the police — all have failed miserably in reducing the frequency of mishaps.

Defiant drivers to some extent are also behind many ac-

cidents. Notably, the unforgiving stretch on NH-49 has taken as many as 39 lives in the last two years and rendered over 300 commuters critically injured or maimed.

The NHAI has failed to carry out its expansion and double-laning works as the environmental clearance has been delayed for long. Despite repeated written appeals by local residents to widen the road, the Mayurbhanj forest department and the NHAI authorities are yet to take any concrete step.

Disappointed local residents have been protesting the inaction for the last two years since July 29, 2020. The Bhanja Sena has also observed road blockades and strikes calling for a solution to the perennial problem.

Union Minister Biseswar Tudu has held detailed discussions

about the problems of Bangiriposhi ghat road with the Union Minister of Environment and Forests and Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways.

As per the assurances of both the ministers, Tudu twice visited the highway site and regularly conducted review meeting with the officials on the issue.

Senior NHAI officials, district administration, forest and police personnel accompanied him during the field visit of the highway. Tudu's visit yielded some results as some humps were constructed on the slopes of the highway and barricades were put up at many places. Moreover, warning signage and street lights were put up at accident prone zones while the roadsides were repaired and filled with soil.

The accidents were minimised but the steps hardly brought any relief.

Recently, Tudu, while attending a review meeting on Central schemes in Bhubaneswar, held discussions with Birendra Singh, regional officer of NHAI and project director JP Verma about the highway and directed to start the expansion works of the Dwarasuni ghat road by December, this year.

However, it remains to be seen whether works will start by December or Tudu's tall talk will turn out to be a hoax.

# 2 injured in Ganjam crude bomb attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Berhampur, Nov 26:** Two persons were injured after crude bombs were hurled at them in Ganjam district, police said Sunday.

The incident happened in Haripur village in Khallikote police station area Saturday when Niranjan Das (27) and Srinivas Das (25) were in the verandah of their house, they said.

The incident is the fallout of long-time enmity between two groups, which often result in violent clashes, they added.

Two persons have been detained for interrogation, said Jagannath Mallick, the inspector-in-charge of Khallikote police station.

"We have identified those behind the incident, and a search is on to nab them," he said.

During searches in the village, explosives used for making crude bombs were found, police said.

Though tension gripped the area following the incident, the situation was under control, they said.

"We are keeping a close watch on the situation. Forces have been deployed in the village to prevent a further flare-up," another police officer said.



HOLY MONTH: Two girls making a Rangoli under a wood apple tree in Dhenkanal town on the eve of Kartika Purnima, Sunday

OP PHOTO

# 2 critical in bee attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Patana, Nov 26:** Two persons including a woman sustained critical injuries after being stung by a swarm of honeybees on Guludipashi-Soraskola road under this block in Keonjhar district, Sunday.

The injured persons were identified as Kuni Dehury, a woman from Jhatipada village and Baishakhu Paida of Guludipashi village under Bada Patana panchayat of the block.

Reports said that bees had built a beehive on a large banyan tree on roadside of Guludipashi village. The incident occurred after a kite pecked on beehive Sunday morning. The bees rushed out of their hive and stung the passers-by on the road at that time.

Kuni was discharged after being administered with treatment at Patana community health centre while Baishakhu is still undergoing treatment.

# Charred body of woman recovered; murder alleged



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatna, Nov 26:** A charred body of a widow was recovered from her house at Chicheiguda village under Junagarh police limits in Kalahandi district, a source said Sunday. The deceased was identified as Padmabati Meher, 40, in the village.

The deceased's brother Balam Meher alleged that she was burnt to death by some miscreants when she was alone in the house, Saturday night. He suspected that the murder might

be the fallout of a family dispute.

It is suspected to be a case of pre-planned murder, as the door of the deceased woman's house was found locked from outside, the source added.

On being informed, Junagarh police reached the spot and launched an investigation. A scientific team was also pressed into the service. A case has been registered in this connection and the truth will be revealed after the investigation gets completed, Junagarh IIC Seshadev Behera said.

# NURTURING NEIGHBOURHOODS CHALLENGE Rourkela among India's top 10 cities

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Nov 26:** Rourkela has found itself among the top 10 cities in the country in 'Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge'.

Following this, the Smart City Limited and Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) have undertaken several developmental projects to create child-friendly environment in the city.

The main thrust is being given to those kids who belong to the economically weaker sections of society. "We are making the place friendlier for them," said Subhankar Mophapatra, ADM, CEO RSC and Commissioner of

RMC. For the holistic development of the kids, it is essential that they get enough space to play and for that, the unused places in the slums areas are being developed.

In this regard, a workshop was organised by RSC and RMC recently. Different projects have been undertaken under the 'Nurturing Neighbourhoods Challenge'. The workshop aimed at augmenting the projects being undertaken under this challenge, and for that, all the agencies involved in this were invited to this workshop.

The main thrust area was to prepare a roadmap for the future which will be to create

an atmosphere, which is basically friendly for the kids.

Building as a learning aid (BALA) is being used to create new Anganwadis in the city. A friendly atmosphere, safe drinking water, Mamata Room, toilets and bathrooms, attractive drawings on the walls and other amenities are the new features to make the place more attractive and all these have helped in enhancing the enrolment of the kids.

The CEO and ADM informed that "efforts are on to make Rourkela the best child-friendly city in the country. For that, many developmental works are being undertaken continuously."

# Koraput farmers learn skills to grow aromatic crops

ORMAS TO FACILITATE MARKETING OF RURAL PRODUCE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Koraput, Nov 26:** In a bid to augment the income of tribal farmers, the Koraput district administration in collaboration with CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP), Lucknow, imparted techniques for value addition of aromatic crop cultivation.

The farmers were imparted training at a one-day workshop here recently. "Tribal-dominated Koraput is an aspirational district where traditional agriculture is the



FILE PHOTO

primary livelihood. Through value addition, we aim to significantly enhance the income of farmers," said Prasant Kumar Raut, a scientist of CSIR.

Aromatic crops such as lemon grass, menthe, geranium, eucalyptus, scented rose, jasmine,

chamomile and turmeric are being grown in the fields of tribal farmers in the district under the CSIR-Aroma mission and livelihood development programme of the district.

More than 100 individuals, including around 50 tribal women farmers, participated in the programme, indicating a keen interest and commitment from the local farming community.

Officials said the initiative is expected to not only augment the income of tribal farmers, but also contribute to the economic development of the region.

"Farmers in the district are now actively engaged in the pro-

duction of essential oils and the workshop was helpful to them for value addition of their produce by creating essential oil-based commodities such as incense sticks, room sprays, roll-ons, and other toiletry products," said Roshan Kartik, deputy director, Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS), Koraput.

The official said as ORMAS has a wide network for marketing rural products, the farmers will not face any problem in selling their produce.

More than 100 individuals, including around 50 tribal women farmers, participated in the programme

# Spirulina-coated chikki empowers Sundargarh women

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh, Nov 26:** Rangadhira Square in this town has gained fame and recognition for a unique product - Spirulina-coated chikki - manufactured by 'Maa Laxmi Producers' Group'.

Chikki is a sweet in which fried groundnuts are caramelised in desi jaggery. The jaggery is liquefied in large utensils and fried groundnuts along with millets are added to it gradually. Once the entire mixture is fried, it is semi-dried and then poured on large wooden plates and is rolled evenly. The mixture is then cut into several pieces and packed for marketing. Chikki is a very popular local sweet dish and is extremely liked by children due to its sweetness. However, the



Five chikki manufacturing units, including Maa Laxmi Producers' Group, have been opened in this district with financial support from District Mineral Foundation

The group earns almost Rs 9 lakh per month from the initiative out of which Rs 7 lakh goes towards investment and operational costs

due to its high-protein content.

It should be stated here that Spirulina is an algae and is known as 'superfood' because of its high protein, Vitamin B and copper content. It is famous in countries like China. Some Indian states like Karnataka are also harvesting Spirulina in large quantities. In Odisha too, Spirulina is slowly gaining popularity.

Five chikki manufacturing units have been opened in this district with financial support from District Mineral Foundation (DMF). Among them is Maa Laxmi Producers' Group. Around 40 women members from 10 self-help groups (SHGs) are active members of this centre. They

work from 10am to 6pm in two shifts. The members have been trained and are skilled in handling the chikki preparation process.

The company which started operations in August 2021 manufactures 45 to 50 quintals of Spirulina chikkis every month. These are then sent to Anganwadi centres at Lefripada, Tangarpalli, Hemgiri and Balishankara blocks. Spirulina-coated chikkis are also sent to three childcare institutions. More than 18,000 kids get health benefits eating this type of chikki.

Regular production of chikki has opened up vistas of economic opportunity for the women who are engaged in this set-up.

Maa Laxmi Producers' Group earns almost Rs 9 lakh per month from the initiative out of which Rs 7 lakh goes towards investment and operational costs. Each woman worker earns approximately Rs 5,000 to Rs 6,000 per month. It may seem to be a paltry amount but plays a big role in their livelihood support.

Since, the last two years, the women are managing the business at the chikki-making unit in a seamless manner. Not only are they engaged in its manufacturing, they look after the distribution aspect also. Spirulina-coated chikkis have certainly added sheen to their lives and made them self-reliant.

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
Tender No: eT-M-KUR-HQMSC-CLG-238-23  
NAME OF WORK: MECHANIZED CLEANING OF BHUBANESWAR HEAD QUARTER BUILDING AND RAIL HOUSE, CLEANING AND HOUSEKEEPING OF RAIL KUNJ, RAIL AWAS, AUDITORIUM, OFFICERS CLUB, SWIMMING POOL, BANQUET HALL, BADMINTON HALL, RAIL MUSEUM AND INDOOR STADIUM INCLUDING DOOR TO DOOR COLLECTION OF GARBAGE, SEGREGATION AND DISPOSAL OF SOLID WASTE FROM COLONY TO THE NEARBY DUMPING YARD OR AS DIRECTED BY LOCAL MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES- BHUBANESWAR FOR A PERIOD OF 3 YEARS (1096 DAYS).  
Advised Value: ₹ 15,24,93,859.22. EMD: ₹ 9,12,500/- Tender Document Cost: ₹ 11,800/-, Period of Completion: 36 Months  
Bidding Start Date: 22.11.2023, Date of closing of tender: at 1530 Hrs. of 06.12.2023.  
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Complete information including e-tender documents are available in website: <http://www.irps.gov.in>  
Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, PR-808/O/23-24, Khurda Road



FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

# CLIMATE & WAR



A recent study from Brown University's 'Cost of War' project says it may not be surprising that the world's largest industrial-military complex is also the biggest polluter on Earth

damage in any population ever studied." Much of this is blamed on the use of depleted uranium munitions by US forces.

Sustained engagement as in the case of the current conflicts doesn't help attempts to curb emissions. The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 and the Paris Agreement of 2015 had left out military emissions saying any limitation could impinge on national security. Thus, defence forces are not bound by international climate agreements to report or cut their carbon emissions from military vehicles, flying jets and sailing ships.

Now, environmental groups and academics from the British universities of Lancaster, Oxford and Queen Mary are pushing for more transparent military emissions reporting. There has been some work undertaken to examine this question. The UK Military is looking at emissions reductions by 2050 - setting the foundations, minimising and fitting for the future. In India, while it is the fifth largest spender on military and ranked between 20 and 25 on the list of GHG emissions, climate change does not feature as a prominent concern. In the Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces 2017, it is acknowledged only from the security perspective, as a 'non-traditional' challenge.

How much a different approach can help with the military is left to be seen. A report titled 'Climate Collateral', published by the Amsterdam-based Transnational Institute says there is little scope for militaries to be 'green' for the following reasons - lack of fuel alternatives, new weapon systems are no less polluting, most GHG reduction strategies are vague and based on false assumptions. But it is essential that ways are explored to cut the carbon footprints of militaries and not add their emissions to the pain of an ailing climate. Otherwise, the ill-effects of war will hinder efforts to save future generations from inheriting an uninhabitable planet.

The writer is an independent researcher and author.

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Conventional calculations of the cost of war seldom include a major casualty: the environment. The toll is huge and runs on. This can be seen now with the world in the midst of war and truce. The Russia-Ukraine conflict started last year and shows no sign of letting up. The Israel-Hamas war saw the first break in seven weeks of fighting after a ceasefire came into effect November 24. The two conflicts have seen a rapidly rising death toll, many injured and huge numbers of missiles, weapons and dollars in billions pouring in to stoke the fires. The harm this kind of conflict causes the environment is unimaginable and difficult to compute.

In addition, it comes at a time of an escalation in the climate crisis. As wildfires raged in Izmir, Turkey and July was on track to being the hottest recorded month, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned that the era of global warming had ended and that of "global boiling" had begun. A few months later in October the latest standoff in Gaza started. The cost of such wars is multifarious. In conventional sense it has been thousands of lives lost and billions of dollars spent. But what about the cost on the climate? The use of rockets and missiles, tanks or even the overall conducting of a war entails a massive consumption of resources and highly detrimental impacts. Impacts are of two kinds - direct and indirect. For the first, there is a loss of vegetation, emissions from vehicular usage or the use of gasoline-powered energy sources in war camps. The second does not lend itself to such exemplification. It is much more difficult to understand and quantify the latter; however it is the one that needs to be watched as it continues well past the actual conflict. For instance, B2B Bombers when deployed, apart from emitting GHG also leave behind persisting cirrus clouds contributing significantly to aircraft emissions forming part of climate emissions' warnings.

As large-scale users of fuels

and other energies, militaries account for 5.5% of GHG emissions. That number may not immediately strike anyone as staggering - but for context - had the US Department of Defense been a country - it would be the 55th largest emitter of GHGs. In other words, a singular department of one country, through its activities would be ahead of 140-odd countries of the world. A recent study from Brown University's "Cost of War" project says it may not be surprising then that the world's largest industrial-military complex is also the biggest polluter on Earth. In its "quest for security" America spends more on the military than any other country and much more than the military spending of its major rivals, Russia and China, says the study. With an armed force of more than two million people, 11 nuclear aircraft carriers and the most advanced military aircraft the US is capable of projecting power anywhere in the world. And it is. The US has been continuously at war since late 2001, with the US military and State Department currently engaged in more than 80 countries in counter-terror operations. All this capacity and use of military force requires great energy most of which is sourced from fossil fuel. The Department of Defense is the world's largest institutional

user of petroleum "and correspondingly, the single largest producer of GHG in the world" finds the study.

Since the present period of American conflicts began with the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the US military is estimated to have emitted a staggering 1.2 billion tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere. In comparison, the entire annual carbon emissions of the UK are around 360 million tonnes. The massive additional burden is not justifiable as the biggest components of the US military's carbon footprint have been in unnecessary wars and occupations that were not in any way connected with national security interests. In Afghanistan, in addition to emitting millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide during the conflict, the US military footprint contributed more directly to the immediate destruction of the Afghan environment.

The environmental havoc wreaked by the war in Iraq has been worse. It led to a spike in CO2 emissions through military activity and poisoning of the environment by toxic munitions. The environment has become so toxic in some places that it has led to elevated rates of cancer and crippling birth defects. A British doctor who co-authored two studies on the environmental impact of US military operations in Fallujah said the city's population suffers "the highest rate of genetic



Ishan Chauhan

AS LARGE-SCALE USERS OF FUELS AND OTHER ENERGIES, MILITARIES ACCOUNT FOR 5.5% OF GHG EMISSIONS

## Truce Band-aid

The four-day ceasefire and hostage-release deal between Israel and Hamas, brokered by Qatar and the US, has begun since 7 a.m. local time November 24. It marks the first break in Israel's continuous seven-week-long bombardment of the Gaza Strip following unprecedented air and ground strikes on southern Israel by Hamas October 7. The four-day respite from the horrors of war is expected to result in the exchange of 150 Palestinian women and children imprisoned in Israeli jails for 50 women and children hostages held by Hamas. It also offers an opportunity for aid to percolate into the battered, bruised and bleeding enclave where nearly 15,000 people have been killed in the bombing, including more than 6,000 children.

The measure does not by any means indicate that an end to the war is in sight. Nearly 200 hostages still remain in the hands of Hamas, while the Israeli counter-offensive in Gaza has been described by Martin Griffiths, the UN humanitarian chief as "the worst ever complete and utter carnage". For, two-fifths of the estimated 14,000 dead in Gaza are children, and 1.7 million people constituting three-quarters of Gaza's population have been displaced.

Given the mood of the Israeli government and Hamas that controls Palestine, the assessment made by Oxfam does not appear to be an exaggeration. It has called the deal "a band-Aid that will be ripped off a bleeding wound after four days." The fear for a bleak prospect of the truce is prompted by statements made by both Israel and Hamas. The Israel Defence Forces (IDF) say that it is an operational pause, not a ceasefire, whereas Netanyahu has told the world that Israel will continue with the war. Hamas do not lag behind and assert that their hands will remain "on the trigger." This is certainly no language of peace.

Nevertheless, there is a flicker of hope. The truce itself is a welcome outcome of the pressure mounted by the international community and grieving relatives of the Israeli hostages on the Israeli government to make saving human lives more important than politics. The sight of family reunions and the suffering of hostages may hopefully build support in Israel for a lengthier truce. Moreover, once foreign journalists get a chance to see with their own eyes the actual devastation in Gaza by means of access might result in international pressure to increase further. In that case peace may have a chance, however short-lived in the contest of regional dynamics. What, however, is to be admired is that the IDF, notwithstanding international pressure, is able to continue its incessant bombing and attacks primarily because of political unity at home. The multi party Israeli coalition government, headed by Benjamin Netanyahu, did not try to hog all credits for the war. Realizing the situation was grim, it allowed all opposition parties to join in on a national crisis situation. That enabled the Israelis to seemingly ignore international pressure and show their steadfastness in protecting common citizens of that country. This is so unlike some other countries where politicians think they can thrive only if they can manage a slaughter of their own citizens. That kind of event draws support for them that results in electoral victories.

Ever since Netanyahu chose to fight for his own political survival with the support of some of the extremists in his cabinet, the quest for the solution to the Palestinian question virtually turned into a mirage. The increasingly strident rhetoric of this Far-Right group to hound out Palestinians from their homes in Gaza and the West Bank and expand Israel's occupation of territories may not be conducive to a solution.

On the other hand, Hamas showed their claws and fangs and struck terror in Israel, calculating that their action would intimidate the Far-Right-driven Israeli government. That was certainly a miscalculation as the subsequent events and pulverisation of a major chunk of Gaza has proved. The most despicable aspect of this confrontation is that neither side spared women and children to achieve their respective ends. Both have come across as blood-thirsty monsters where women, children and the old are considered collateral damage.

Critics of Israel may argue that Hamas offensive, even though at an incalculable human cost, has forced the comity of nations to sit up and take note of the design of the Far-Right group doing backseat driving of Israeli government to legalise its occupation and turn Palestinians first in Gaza and then in West Bank into homeless destitute.

However, the positive result of such a tactic that caught Israel unawares, is that the Biden administration has already made it clear that it will not brook a full-scale expansion of Israeli operations into the south. It would not be unreasonable to hope that the offensive might lose its intensity, though it will continue indefinitely. Such a scenario would be better than that of nearly 200 children getting killed every day according to UN estimates. The deal, therefore, is welcome and the international community needs to work in unison to prolong it as long as possible. Durable peace and order through negotiation and dialogue seem to be a near impossibility in the Middle East.

### WISDOM CORNER

A thing of beauty is a joy forever: its loveliness increases; it will never pass into nothingness. JOHN KEATS

The flower that smells the sweetest is shy and lowly. WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul - and sings the tunes without the words - and never stops at all. EMILY DICKINSON

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1895: Alfred Nobel signs his last will. Alfred Nobel signed his last will which called for his estate and fortune that he made as the inventor of dynamite to be used for creating awards for those who contributed to the benefit of mankind. The will created 5 awards - in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature and peace, and was signed in the Swedish-Norwegian Club in Paris.

1919: The Treaty of Neuilly, outlining the post-World War I peace terms for Bulgaria, was signed between the defeated country and the Allied powers.

1978: Harvey Milk and George Moscone are assassinated. Milk was the first openly-gay person to be elected in local government in California. He and George Moscone, San Francisco's mayor at the time, were killed by a former member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

1989: World's first living liver transplant. 21-month old Alyssa Smith became the first person to receive a liver transplant from a living donor, her mother Teresa Smith at the University of Chicago Medical Center. The transplant occurred under the supervision of surgeons Christoph Broelsch, Richard Thistlethwaite, Thomas Heffron, and Jean Emond.

### LOL

#### Drummer problems

A musical director was having a lot of trouble with one drummer. He talked and talked and talked with the drummer, but his performance simply didn't improve.

Finally, before the whole orchestra, he said, "When a musician just can't handle his instrument and doesn't

improve when given help, they take away the instrument, and give him two sticks, and make him a drummer."

A stage whisper was heard from the percussion section: "And if he can't handle even that, they take away one of his sticks and make him a conductor."

### SPECTRUM POLITICS

## The drama of falling populists

Consider the following three-scene play. In the first scene, it is October 10, 2023. Jaroslaw Kaczyński, the soon-to-be-deposed little "Big Man" of Poland's populist ruling party, Law and Justice (PiS), does what he does on the tenth day of every month. He lays flowers at the monument commemorating his twin brother, then-President Lech Kaczyński, and 95 others who died when their plane tried to land in thick fog at Smolensk airport in Russia, in April 2010.

Meanwhile, Zbigniew Komosa, a Polish entrepreneur who carries out a similar ritual on the tenth day of every month, lays a wreath commemorating the victims of the crash. But pinned to his offering is a note that reads: "In memory of the 95 victims of Lech Kaczyński, who, ignoring all regulations, ordered the pilots to land in extremely hazardous conditions. May you rest in peace."

Every month, Kaczyński has had Komosa's wreath removed. This time, however, the police attending Kaczyński are somehow less eager to do so, and Kaczyński must do it himself.

He tears the note off and carries the wreath away from the monument to cries of "thief" from Komosa and a friend who is filming the entire incident. Kaczyński then demands that the police arrest the wreath-layers or at least take down their names, while Komosa demands that they arrest Kaczyński for stealing private property.

The scene lasts around ten minutes as an increasingly frustrated Kaczyński tells the police that he is ordering them as the minister for security (a position he no longer holds) to arrest Komosa. Eventually, Kaczyński resorts to ringing a police commandant personally, but still to no avail.

In scene two, it is Sunday, October 15, 2023: Election Day. Kaczyński, not an early riser, shows up late in the day to vote. The polling station is crowded, because voter turnout is higher than in any election since fall of communism. Accompanied by his security detail, Kaczyński is astonished to be told by those in line that he is not permitted to jump the queue, and that he should go to the back to wait his turn. The scene is especially striking

because, as everyone knows, elderly voters are often allowed ahead as a matter of courtesy.

In scene three, it is November 13, 2023: The first session of the newly elected parliament, where four democratic opposition parties command a large majority. Since 2016, the parliament building has been surrounded by crowd-control barriers, reinforced by a strong police presence. But as this session commences, members of the public remove the barriers and stack them tidily to one side, while the police look on.

There is no storming of the parliament to worry about. The crowd is there to support the peaceful transfer of power, not to prevent it. But viewers of the play should know that this is not how the Polish police normally behaved during PiS's eight-year rule. For example, law enforcement responded brutally to women marching in protest against Poland's total ban on abortion in 2020; at the time, Kaczyński wanted to use the army to suppress the protests.

What conclusions can we draw from this drama? First, the authority to use violence or force

can evaporate unexpectedly and very quickly, sometimes even before a formal transfer of power. After all, the new democratic government, led by former European Council President and Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, is unlikely to be sworn in before December 13 - a full month after the events of scene three, and two months after scene two, when Kaczyński was told to go to the back of the line.

The moral of the story is that the longer authoritarians are in power, the more likely they are to stay in power by implementing policies and procedures to make it less likely that ordinary people will challenge their authority. For example, when Putin and Jinping turn up at their neighbourhood polling stations, other voters, like those Kaczyński encountered, are kept away. When authoritarian regimes are consolidating themselves, time is not on the side of the forces of democracy.

The writer is a former minister of Poland.

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Jacek Rostowski

WHEN AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES ARE CONSOLIDATING THEMSELVES, TIME IS NOT ON THE SIDE OF THE FORCES OF DEMOCRACY

### Virus concerns

Sir, This refers to "India monitoring outbreak of H9N2," OrissaPOST, November 25. The news of an outbreak of influenza-like illness in Beijing, Liaoning, and other places in China has raised concerns about the emergence of yet another new virus. In what appears to be a replay of the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic when China showed little interest in alerting the WHO quickly, China's National Health Commission has failed to report to the WHO the large number of undiagnosed pneumonia cases among children. A month after the respiratory illnesses spiked, the WHO became aware of the issue only through media reports. Finally, like in 2019, the WHO was forced to request China for detailed epidemiologic and clinical information, as well as laboratory results of pneumonia cases in children. One reason for China's reluctance to keep the global health body informed could be that the surge in respiratory illness was driven by known pathogens, including influenza and common bacterial and viral infections. China does not explain its failure to voluntarily keep the WHO informed about the unusually high number of cases last month, but China is duty bound to keep the WHO informed in time without being asked.

### Gubernatorial activism

Sir, Tamil Nadu Governor RN Ravi is always in the news for the wrong reasons. Governors of West Bengal, Kerala and Punjab, too, are known for their "activism." A Governor is the constitutional head of the state; he/she is expected to act on the advice of the state cabinet in line with Article 163(1) of the Constitution. Despite their high learning and intellectual capabilities, Governors are generally perceived to be toeing the line of the Centre because it is almost always the Opposition party governments at states that are at their receiving end. Their opinion matters, but in different ways. The powers of Governors are discretionary as per the famous 1988 report of the Justice RS Sarkaria Commission. The Commission had recommended that the Governors be "detached" with "no active political participation" at least some time before their appointment.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST  
B-15, Rissalgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

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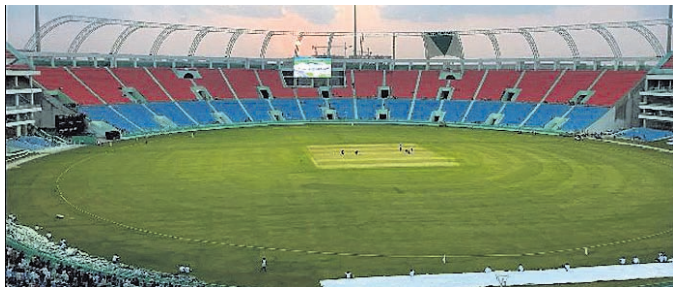
# Jammu stadium all set for resurrection today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jammu, Nov 26:** For the first time in more than three decades, Jammu's Maulana Azad Stadium will be bathed in floodlights, playing host to former cricketers from across the world – a prospect that has already set fans' hearts aflutter with anticipation.

Built in 1966, Maulana Azad stadium serves as one of the home grounds of the Jammu and Kashmir cricket team.

The last international match at the venue was held between India vs New Zealand December 19, 1988, before militancy sent the ground off charts for international gigs. The city of temples



will host four matches of the ongoing second season.

The Jammu-leg of the day-night series will begin Monday at 7pm with Manipal Tigers-led by Harbajan Singh taking on Southern Super Stars, captained by Australian cricketer Aaron Finch.

The match will be followed by an encounter between Irfan Pathan-led Bhilwara Kings and Southern Super Stars Wednesday. The match 11 of the Legend League Cricket season 2 will see India Capitals under the leadership of Gautam Gambhir taking

ing on Parthiv Patel-led Gujarat Giants Thursday at 7pm.

The fourth and the last match in Jammu will be played between Bhilwara Kings and Suresh Raina's Urbanisers Hyderabad Friday, starting at 3pm.

More than 100 former cricketers, among them Mohammad Kaif, Yusuf Pathan, Sreesanth, Robin Uthappa – from India, Shane Watson (Australia), Tilakarante Dilshan (Sri Lanka), Chris Gayle, Ricardo Powell, Dwayne Smith and Tino Best (West Indies), Kevin O'Brien (Ireland), Hashim Amla and Morne Morkel (South Africa), Kevin Petersen (England), Abdur Razzak (Bangladesh), Ross Taylor

and Martin Guptil (New Zealand), and Asghar Afghan (Afghanistan), will be coming to Jammu to play in these matches.

After Ranchi and Dehradun, our next destination is Jammu and Kashmir where international cricket is returning after a gap of 30 years. This is for the first time that 120 players of world fame are coming together (in Jammu) for competitive cricket, Legends League Cricket Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer Raman Raheja said.

He said there has been a tremendous response from the fans with 50 per cent of tickets at the 20,000 capacity stadium already sold.

# Under fear of constant Pak shelling, villagers push for bridge near IB



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Arnia (J&K), Nov 26:** Living under constant fear of shelling by Pakistan, villagers of forward Trava village in this sector of Jammu district are pushing for their long-standing demand of a bridge near the International Border to move to safer places.

The residents are currently using a makeshift structure of cement sewage pipes to cross a stream and want a permanent bridge for safe evacuation in case of cross-border firing.

A BSF jawan was killed in firing by Pakistan Rangers in Ramgarh sector of Samba district during the intervening night of November 8-9. This was the first loss of life on this side after renewed ceasefire was agreed upon by the two countries February 25, 2021.

Earlier, two BSF personnel and a woman were injured in cross-border firing in Arnia sector October 26, while another BSF jawan was injured in a similar incident October 17, causing panic among the border residents.

"The bridge to connect over 20 villages is a long standing demand of the border residents. I have raised the issue with the administration in 2019 but all our pleas have gone unanswered so far," sarpanch Trava Balbir Kour told PTI.

She said the bridge is being proposed at an area beyond Pakistani shelling range.

In case of Pakistani shelling, the vulnerable people can use the bridge to reach safer places, Kour said, adding after her representation to the administration, two years were consumed by the Covid pandemic and later a detailed project report was

**A BSF jawan was killed in firing by Pakistani Rangers on the intervening night of Nov 8-9 -- the first loss of life on this side after renewed ceasefire was agreed upon by the two countries Feb 25, 2021**

prepared by the Public Works Department.

Following heavy firing and shelling by Pakistan October 26, the sarpanch said the villagers met the visiting official team led by Divisional Commissioner Ramesh Kumar and raised the demand for the construction of the bridge on priority.

"I have heard that the Rural Development Department has been assigned the construction of the bridge and the work is likely to start in the coming days," Kour hoped.

Atma Ram, a villager, said the local panchayat used to carry out necessary repairs of the makeshift bridge every time after the monsoon season.

After the recent firing incidents from across the border, the situation has changed altogether and people want this bridge to be completed as soon as possible, he said.

Echoing Ram, another villager Ramesh Kumar said the bridge when constructed will prove as a lifeline for the border residents.

During the recent firing incidents, the people used the makeshift structure to move to safety but the problem with it is that no one can cross it quickly.

# Mizoram churches hold prayers for change in vote counting date



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Aizawl, Nov 26:** Churches in Mizoram held prayers to seek divine intervention to change the date of counting of votes for state assembly polls held November 7, a church leader said Sunday.

On Saturday, Mizoram Kohhran Hruaitute Committee (MKHC), a conglomerate of 15 major churches, had urged churches to organise prayers during church service Saturday night or Sunday to seek help from God so that counting is not held Sunday, which is a sacred day for the majority of Christians in the state, the leader said.

He said that prayers were held by some churches Saturday night, while others on Sunday.

In its letter to churches, the MKHC had expressed disappointment over no sign of progress in the efforts to reschedule the date of counting of votes.

Citing that leaders of the NGO Coordination Committee (NGOCC) will meet the Election Commission November 28, the MKHC urged church members to hold prayers to ensure that the efforts of the leaders bear fruit.

Mizoram Presbyterian Church, the largest denomination in the state, also separately urged its members to hold prayers to ensure that the date of counting is changed.

Meanwhile, a five-member delegation of NGOCC, currently camping in Delhi, will meet Chief Election Commissioner and other officials of the Election Commission Tuesday to re-appeal and press its demand for a change of date for counting of votes.

However, political parties, civil society organisations, churches and a church-sponsored poll watchdog in Mizoram had opposed it and sent numerous pleas to the Election Commission urging it to reschedule the counting date because it falls Sunday, a sacred day for Christians in the Christian-majority state.

## 'SEPARATE STATE'

# Manipur tribal MLAs meet Zoramthanga

IN A FIRST, KUKI-ZOS TO HOLD RALLIES IN 6 STATES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Aizawl/Imphal, Nov 26:** Ten Manipur tribal MLAs, including ministers, who have been demanding separate administrations (equivalent to separate state) for tribals in their state, have met Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga in Aizawl and sought his intervention to solve the ethnic crisis in Manipur.

To intensify the separate administrations demand for the tribals, the Kuki-Zo tribals, for the first time, would hold rallies in at least five other states besides Manipur November 29.

Manipur tribals' apex body Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) senior leader Ginza Vualzong Saturday said that the November 29 mega rally of the Kuki-Zo tribals would be held in Mizoram, Tripura, Delhi, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, besides different districts in Manipur.

Zoramthanga, who is the president of the ruling Mizo National Front (MNF), said that the tribal MLAs of Manipur including ministers met him in Aizawl Thursday and requested him to



hold talks with the Naga leaders in Manipur and Nagaland regarding the current ethnic turmoil in the neighbouring state.

He said that the Manipur legislators, belonging to Kuki-Zo tribals, wanted to maintain good relationship with the Naga tribal community in this time of ethnic strife in Manipur.

"I have requested the Manipur tribal MLAs and ministers to keep a close contact with the Union government and continue to apprise him of what is actually happening in Manipur," he said.

The chief minister reiterated that the MNF always stands with the ethnic kindred brothers and sisters in Manipur and other neighbouring states as well as Myanmar, Bangladesh and other countries.

Zoramthanga, his Cabinet colleagues and MNF MLAs had participated in the 'Solidarity March', organised by the NGOs Coordination Committee in Mizoram July 25 to express solidarity for the Kuki-Zo tribals, affected in the violence in Manipur.

Ten Manipur MLAs, including seven belonging to the ruling BJP, since the ethnic riots began in the state have been demanding a 'separate administration' for the tribals in the state. The Central and state governments and BJP leaders, on a number of occasions, rejected the demand and vowed to maintain a united Manipur. The ITLF, since the beginning of the ethnic strife, has been demanding removal of Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh.

# Freedom fighter's daughter proves citizenship after 3-year legal battle

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Guwahati, Nov 26:** After fighting a legal battle for more than three years, Seje Bala Ghosh, daughter of a freedom fighter from Assam's Bongaigaon district, has finally been successful in proving that she is an Indian citizen and not an illegal immigrant from Bangladesh.

She received the order copy from the Foreigners Tribunal (FT) earlier this week.

"Questioning my citizenship is a big insult to my father's sacrifices for this country, and I am still feeling humiliated," Ghosh told IANS.

She said, "My father was a freedom fighter. He was a close associate of Chandrashekhar Azad and sacrificed a lot for this country's freedom. But after seven decades of independence, his daughter was declared an illegal immigrant, which is really shameful."

Seje Bala is a devotee of Lord Krishna and lives alone in her home in the Salbagan village of Bongaigaon district in Assam.

"Perhaps this was ordained for me, but whoever brought this dishonour to my name will bear the consequences. My Krishna is keeping an eye on everything," the 73-year-old woman uttered.

According to her, in March 2020, shortly before the lockdown began, a group of police personnel arrived at her residence bearing a notice from the Foreigner's Tribunal.

Ghosh said, "I requested the police team inform me what my crime is because I was unable to read it. They told me that I have to appear in court (FT) be-



**Questioning my citizenship is a big insult to my father's sacrifices for this country, and I am still feeling humiliated**

SEJE BALA GHOSH

cause the court thinks I am an illegal immigrant from Bangladesh."

Seje Bala's son passed away a few years ago, and the rest of the family has abandoned her. The neighbours take care of her when she lives alone at her residence.

Members of the Assam-based NGO, Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP), contacted her during the initial lockdown in 2020 and began offering legal assistance.

Dewan Abdur Rahim, an advocate, was chosen by them to represent Ghosh's case at the tribunal.

According to Rahim, records indicate that Digendra Ch.

Ghosh, the father of Seje Bala, immigrated to Assam in 1947 due to religious persecution in then-East Pakistan.

"Seje Bala was born in 1951 in Balogara village in Mangaldoi district, and in the same year, her father's name appeared in the National Register of Citizens (NRC). A passport was issued in 1954 on the name of Digendra Ch. Ghosh, and his name was on the voter list for 1958 and a few subsequent years," the advocate said.

He further mentioned that they produced at least thirteen legitimate documents proving Seje Bala's family had lived in Assam before 1951.

"We also provided documents to demonstrate their relationship as father and daughter, together with the paperwork pertaining to Digendra Ch. Ghosh and Seje Bala's individual identities. In FT's verification, every document was deemed legitimate," Dewan Abdur Rahim stated.

Seje Bala initially appeared before the FT in 2021 in a wheelchair due to a fractured leg.

On November 4, this year, the FT provided its opinion following multiple hearings and stated that she was not an illegal immigrant.

The Foreigners Tribunal observed that Seje Bala's family moved to India in 1947 and stayed here. The documents are valid and show that her father's name was found in the refugee registration certificate, passport, NRC of 1951, and voter list of 1958.

Moreover, her mother's name also appeared on the Donation Slip of 1962 and the voter list of 1966 in Mangaldoi district.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Shillong, Nov 26:** 15 destinations in the northeast have been selected for development under the Central government's Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme, aiming to boost tourism in the region rich in cultural and natural heritage, according to officials. These include one from Manipur and two each from the seven other states in the northeast.

The move aims to not only boost tourism in the eight states but also help in further development in the region.

Northeastern states, some of which share borders with other countries, are known for their pristine beauty, blessed with majestic hills, scenic waterfalls and adventurous treks, and many of these sites have not been explored by tourists in general.

Tourism Ministry officials shared details on SD 2.0 scheme and updates on the PRASHAD scheme during the 11th edition of the International Tourism Mart (ITM) being held in Shillong from November 21-23.

The ministry on its opening day had announced that it has sanctioned Rs 29.32 crore for development of four key iconic religious tourism sites in Meghalaya under the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) scheme - Nartiang Shakti Peeth, Nongsawlia Presbyterian Church, Aitnar Pool and Charantala Kali Temple.

Nartiang Shakti Peeth is a centuries-old Durga temple in West Jaintia Hills and believed to be a Shakti Peeth; while



Nongsawlia Presbyterian Church is located in Sohra in East Khasi Hills; Aitnar Pool hosts a popular festival in West Jaintia Hills; and Charantala Kali Temple is in West Garo Hills district dedicated to Goddess Kali, according to officials.

Union Minister of State for Tourism Shripad Naik after inaugurating the mega conclave here has said that the Centre is working to bring more development in the northeast region while also emphasising on sustainability.

Besides the PRASHAD scheme, the government is taking steps to enhance value of tourism destinations in the region through its SD 2.0 scheme, officials said.

15 destinations in the northeast have been selected for development under the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme by the ministry in consultation with state governments and Union territories, a senior official said.

## SWADESH DARSHAN 2.0

# 15 destinations in NE to be developed

**Northeastern states, some of which share borders with other countries, are known for their pristine beauty, blessed with majestic hills, scenic waterfalls and adventurous treks unexplored by tourists in general**

Nacho and Mechuka have been selected from Arunachal Pradesh; Shillong and Sohra from Meghalaya, Aizawl and Champhai from Mizoram; Jorhat and Kokrajhar from Assam; Moirang (Bishnupur) in Manipur; Niuland and Chumukedima in Nagaland; Gangtok and Gyalshing in Sikkim; and Agartala and Unakoti in Tripura.

A number of planned tourism

experiences have received an in-principle approval under SD 2.0 scheme, according to officials.

Officials said that the project includes Police Bazaar-Wards Lake Cultural Zone in Shillong; Meghalayan-age cave experience in Sohra; MG Road experience in Gangtok in Sikkim; Mechuka Cultural Haat in Arunachal Pradesh; and rocket-cut heritage experience in Unakoti in Tripura.

The Ministry of Tourism has revamped its Swadesh Darshan scheme with an objective to create jobs, including self-employment for local communities, and preserve and enhance the local cultural and natural resources, the government has said earlier.

Under the scheme, the ministry provides financial assistance to state governments or Union Territory administrations or central agencies for development of tourism infrastructure in the country.





A police official pays tribute to the martyrs who laid down their lives while fighting terrorists during 26/11 attack, on its 15th anniversary in Mumbai



People take a boat ride as a flock of migratory birds flies over the Yamuna river on a hazy winter morning in New Delhi



Garos tribal artistes perform Wangala dance during the harvest festival at Chotipara in Assam's Goalpara district



People take part in the 'Swachh Navi Mumbai Half Marathon' in Navi Mumbai



NCC cadets show their skills during its raising day celebration in Kolkata



People pay last respect to the mortal remains of the students who died after a stampede during the annual festival of Cochin University of Science and Technology near Kochi



Senegalese women participate in the third edition of the Women's March for Climate in Dakar, Senegal



A farmer burns stubble at his farm in Dausa, Rajasthan



# national



After the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, people of Jammu and Kashmir have got nothing but problems and suffering  
OMAR ABDULLAH | NC VICE PRESIDENT

## SC TO HEAR ANDHRA PLEA TUESDAY

The Supreme Court is slated to hear Tuesday a plea filed by the Andhra Pradesh government challenging grant of regular bail to TDP supremo and former Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu in connection with the alleged Skill Development Corporation scam case



## of the day quote

Engineering deflection and factional feud and causing collapse of elected state governments have become a pattern in the country in recent times  
P CHIDAMBARAM | CONGRESS LEADER

A special status will benefit not just our SCs, STs and other backward classes, but also the poor among the upper castes. To put pressure on the Centre, I intend to launch a campaign  
NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CM

Other political parties may have millions of rupees but the AAP has the blessings of millions of people, who have benefitted from schemes for free healthcare, good education and pilgrimages  
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CM

# Won't let him work here: MP official crushed to death



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Uttarkashi, Nov 26: "Once he comes out, we will never allow him to work here again," a distraught Chaudhary said Sunday, waiting for the rescue of his son, who has been stuck inside the collapsed tunnel in Silkyara along with 40 others for two weeks.

Having lost his another son in an accident in Mumbai earlier, the farm labourer from Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh is now going through the terrible ordeal of waiting for the safe return of his second son.

"Manjeet is my only son left. If anything happens to him, how would my wife and I survive," he said amid the agonisingly slow progress of the rescue work. Manjeet, 22, is among the 41 workers trapped inside after a portion of the under-construction tunnel on Uttarakhand's Char Dham route collapsed following a landslide on November 12.

Manjeet's father, who reached here a day after the tunnel collapse, spoke to him Sunday through a communication channel set up by the authorities. "My son looked fine. I am a bit stressed though due to the delay in the rescue work. Today I told him this is a war but he should not be scared. We will succeed soon," Chaudhary said.

"We are very poor and came

HAVING LOST HIS ANOTHER SON IN AN ACCIDENT IN MUMBAI EARLIER, THE FARM LABOURER FROM LAKHIMPUR KHERI IN UTTAR PRADESH IS NOW GOING THROUGH THE TERRIBLE ORDEAL OF WAITING FOR THE SAFE RETURN OF HIS SECOND SON

MANJEET'S FATHER, WHO REACHED HERE A DAY AFTER THE TUNNEL COLLAPSE, SPOKE TO HIM SUNDAY THROUGH A COMMUNICATION CHANNEL SET UP BY THE AUTHORITIES

here after taking a loan of ₹9,000 against my wife's jewellery. Here, the administration gave me a jacket and shoes. They also repaid my loan," he said. The administration has set up a camp for the kin of the trapped workers outside the tunnel. They are allowed to talk daily with the trapped workers.

The communication between the trapped workers and their relatives is facilitated by a communication system set up through a six-inch wide pipe. Drilling to create an escape passage for the trapped workers got stalled after the auger machine went out of order on Friday. A plasma cutter from Hyderabad is being used to cut and remove the auger blades stuck in the rubble. Rescuers have also set up equipments to carry out vertical drilling to reach the trapped workers.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shahdol, Nov 26: A patwari, a local revenue department official, was crushed to death by a tractor-trolley used for transporting sand illegally in Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh, police said Sunday.

The police have arrested the driver of the vehicle in connection with the incident that occurred around midnight Saturday, an official said.

A patrolling team of government employees, including patwari Prasann Singh, intercepted the tractor-trolley transporting illegally mined sand near Son River in the Gopalpur area, Deolond police station in-charge Rajkumar Mishra said.

On reaching the river, Singh, posted as patwari in Khadda of Bohari tehsil, saw tractor-trolley carrying sand and tried to stop it, but the driver ran over him, he said. Singh was killed on the spot, while the accused driver fled with the vehicle, the official said. Shahdol's Superintendent of



Police (SP) Kumar Prateek the police began the probe immediately and identified the tractor and its driver Shubham Vishwakarma (25), who was arrested on Sunday morning.

A case under section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) has been registered against Vishwakarma, who is a resident of Maihar district, around 8 km from the scene of the crime, he said. The tractor has been seized and its owner has been identified, he added.

District collector Vandana Vaidya said following complaints of illegal sand mining, a joint team of the revenue, mining departments, and the police had inspected the area on November 23.

## TERROR MODULE CASE

# NIA conducts multi-state raids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Sunday conducted raids in several states in the Pakistan-backed Ghazwa-e-Hind terror module case, an official said.

The raids were conducted at the premises of suspects in Dewas district of Madhya Pradesh, Gir Somnath district of Gujarat, Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh and Kozhikode district of Kerala, leading to the seizure of incriminating documents and digital devices, a spokesperson of the federal agency said.



The official said the raids also revealed links of the suspects with Pakistan-based handlers. "These suspects were in contact with the handlers and were involved in propagating the radical, anti-India idea of Ghazwa-e-Hind," the spokesperson said.

The NIA raids were conducted as part of its ongoing investigation into a case, commonly referred to as the Ghazwa-e-Hind case, Patna (Bihar).

The case was initially registered on July 14 last year by the Phulwarisharif police in Bihar, following the arrest of Marghoob Ahmad Danish alias "Tahir" who was the administrator of the WhatsApp group Ghazwa-e-Hind, created by a Pakistani national identified as Zain, the official said.

The official said the accused, Tahir, had added many people from India as well as other countries, including Pakistan, Bangladesh and Yemen, to the group, which was also active on other social media platforms such as Telegram and BiP Messenger.

## SHORT TAKES

### Woman arrested

**Gadag (K'taka):** A woman has been arrested for allegedly strangling her grandson to death in a village in Gajendragad Taluk, police said Sunday. According to police, the incident occurred on November 22 but came to light only recently when the investigating police charged Saroja Gooli with strangulating her nine-month-old grandson Advik as she disliked her daughter-in-law Nagarathna. Police said Nagarathna gave birth to Advik in February this year at her parents' house and was there for about six months and returned to her home only three months ago.

### Farmer killed

**Deoria (UP):** A farmer was allegedly killed by a group of people over a land dispute when he was at his farm in Madanpur police station area here, police said Sunday. The police said they have arrested three persons in connection with the alleged murder. The incident took place on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday when Chandrashekar Yadav (55), resident of Piedra village under the Madanpur police station area, was guarding an electric pumping set on his farm, Circle Officer Anshuman Srivastava said. A few persons allegedly attacked him with a sharp-edged weapon and killed him, Srivastava said.

### Dalit boy thrashed

**Jaunpur (UP):** A 14-year-old Dalit boy was allegedly thrashed by some people in a village here under the Sujanganj Police Station, an officer said Sunday. Station House Officer Rohit Kumar Mishra said that the boy's father had on Friday filed a complaint saying some people from the village on a day before beat up his son and forced him to drink urine - the latter charge later turning out to be untrue. "We received the complaint on Friday and lodged an FIR on Saturday," Mishra said.

### Binay joins Cong

**Kolkata:** Gorkha leader Binay Tamang, who was earlier with the Trinamool Congress, joined the Congress at Kalimpong Sunday, a party leader said. Tamang, a former chairman of the semi-autonomous Gorkhaland Territorial Administration that governs the Darjeeling hills of West Bengal, accepted the flag of the grand old party from state Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury in the hill town. Tamang was a close aide of Gorkha Janmukti Morcha leader Bimal Gurung before falling out with him and joining the ruling party in the state.

# PM questions 'big families' on weddings abroad

IN HIS MANN KI BAAT RADIO BROADCAST, MODI SAID WHILE SHOPPING FOR WEDDINGS, PEOPLE SHOULD GIVE IMPORTANCE TO PRODUCTS MADE IN INDIA ONLY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday said he is troubled by the trend of some 'big families' conducting weddings abroad, and urged people to hold such celebrations on Indian soil so that the country's money does not leave its shores.

In his Mann Ki Baat radio broadcast, Modi said while shopping for weddings, people should give importance to products made in India only. "The wedding season as well has commenced now. Some trade organisations



estimate that there could be a business of around ₹5 lakh crore during this wedding season. While shopping for weddings, all of you should give importance to products made in India only," he said.

"And yes, since the topic of marriage has come up, one thing has been troubling me off and on for a long time... and if I don't open up my heart's pain to my family members, who else do I do it with? Just ponder... these days a new milieu is being created by some families to go abroad and conduct weddings. Is this at all necessary?" Modi said.

He stressed that if people celebrate the festivities of mar-

riages on Indian soil, amid the people of the country, the country's money will remain in the country. The people of the country will get an opportunity to render some service or the other at such weddings, he pointed out.

"Even poor people will tell their children about your wedding. Can you expand this mission of 'Vocal for Local'? Why don't we hold such wedding ceremonies in our own country?" Modi said.

"It is possible that the kind of system you want may not be there today, but if we organise such events, systems will also develop. This is a topic related to very big families. I hope this pain of mine will definitely reach those big families," the prime minister said.

In his remarks, Modi also asserted that when the people at large take charge of nation building, no power in the world can stop that country from moving forward.

Today, it is clearly visible in India that many transformations are being led by the 140

crore people of the country, he said.

"We have seen a direct example of this during this festive season. Last month in Mann Ki Baat I had laid emphasis on 'Vocal for Local' i.e. Buying local products. Within the last few days, business worth more than ₹4 lakh crore has been done in the country on Diwali, Bhaiya Dooj and Chhath," he said.

And during this period, tremendous enthusiasm was seen among the people in buying products Made in India, Modi said.

"Now even our children, while buying something at the shop, have started checking whether Made in India is mentioned on them or not. Not only that, nowadays, people do not forget to check the country of origin while purchasing goods online," he said.

Modi said that just as the very success of 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' is becoming its inspiration, the success of 'Vocal For Local' is opening the doors to a 'developed India - prosperous India'.

# UP ATS arrests 2 suspected of spying for ISI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Nov 26: The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Uttar Pradesh Police has arrested two men suspected of spying for Pakistani intelligence agency ISI and terror financing, the ATS said in a statement Sunday.



The ATS has arrested Amrit Gill alias Amrit Pal (25), a native of Punjab's Bhatinda, and Riyazuddin (36), a resident of Faridnagar under the Bhojpur police station area of Ghaziabad. The ATS team arrested Amrit Gill from Bathinda on November 23 and brought him on transit remand, while Riyazuddin was summoned to the ATS headquarters for questioning, from where he was arrested on Sunday.

According to ATS, information was received that some people are getting money from sus-

picious sources, which is being used in terror activities and espionage. The ATS has alleged that the duo were sending "sensitive confidential information" to ISI for money.

After investigation, an FIR was registered at the ATS police station under the relevant sections against Riyazuddin, Izharul Haq and others. Haq, according to the ATS, is currently lodged in a Bihar jail. The ATS will bring him to Lucknow on a remand in connection with the current case.

During the collection of evidence, the ATS analysed Riyazuddin's bank accounts and found information about ₹70 lakh transferred between March 2022 and April 2022. It was also transferred to different accounts.

In this series, money was sent to auto driver Amrit Gill, who provided information to the ISI. Amrit Gill had shared information about the Indian Army's tanks etc. Riyazuddin and Haq met while doing welding work in Rajasthan, and since then both were working for the Pakistani intelligence agency while keeping in touch with each other.



## Selective amnesia

An impression has gained ground that Governors appointed by the Modi government are on a warpath with the non-BJP governments in states. The Governors are making the lives of elected governments in states miserable. For example, Jagdeep Dhankhar as Governor of West Bengal was constantly involved in a

bitter battle with TMC's Mamata Banerjee which gladdened the heart of the Prime Minister which led him to the coveted post of Vice President. It is no secret that Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan was in the race for the top post and crossed swords with the Left Front government led by Pinarayi Vijayan on one issue or the other. Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi has also been involved in a bitter battle with the M K Stalin government. The Supreme Court finally stepped in when the matter came to head over Governors sitting over files relating to bills sent by respective state governments for approval. But not all the Governors crossed swords with Opposition-ruled states and many of them enjoy cordial relations with them. For example, Thawar Chand Gehlot, Governor of Karnataka and Congress Chief Minister Siddaramaiah have extremely cordial relations so far. Rajasthan Governor Kalraj

Mishra is a good host to Congress Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot though PM Modi bitterly accuses him of many scams and ED is also after his family members. Similarly, Chhattisgarh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan is having a harmonious relationship with the Bhpesh Baghel government. The Telangana Governor, Tamilisai Soundararajan is another example of cordiality with the Chief Minister, K. Chandrashekar Rao. The West Bengal Governor after being on a warpath with Mamata Banerjee is sending signals of backing down. Yet, there is no explanation as to why some states are witnessing this selective amnesia.

## Tit for tat

The Congress may be flexing its muscles in the expectation of winning Madhya

Pradesh and Chhattisgarh Assembly polls and claiming to have an edge in Telangana as well over BRS' K. Chandrashekar Rao. The Congress refused to share any seat with any of its INDIA allies in the Assembly polls. The Congress' argument was that the INDIA alliance is for the Lok Sabha polls only. The allies are now waiting to give the Congress back in the same coin in the Lok Sabha polls. Be it JMM in Jharkhand, Samajwadi Party in UP or even RJD in Bihar, all are upset with the Congress and in no mood to allocate more Lok Sabha seats to Congress than it actually deserves in 2024.

## Fewer women in poll fray

The BJP and Congress may have been pinning their hopes on the women voters in the current round of Assembly

elections in four major states. But when it comes to giving tickets, the track record of both the national parties is very poor. Of the 719 Assembly seats in four states (Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Chhattisgarh), the Congress has fielded 87 women candidates while the BJP has given tickets to 76. It was only in September this year when the BJP passed the Women Reservation Bill allocating 33% seats to women in Lok Sabha and Assemblies. But the BJP fielded only 11% women and the Congress just 12%. In Madhya Pradesh, the Congress has fielded only 30 women in the 230 Assembly constituencies, while the BJP 27. In Chhattisgarh, the Congress gave tickets to 18 out of 90 seats and the BJP to 15 women. The number in Rajasthan was 27 out of total 199 seats for Congress, and 19 for the BJP. In Telangana, out of 119 Assembly seats, the Congress has chosen 12 women candidates and the BJP 15 women.



# international

## of the day quote

Today, tomorrow or the day after, the PVV will be part of government and I will be prime minister of this beautiful country

**GEERT WILDERS** | PM CANDIDATE, THE NETHERLANDS

In an era marked by rapid changes and complex challenges, India emerges not just as a nation of immense diversity and cultural richness, but also as a key player on the international stage, embodying the principles of cooperation, peace and mutual respect

**RUCHIRA KAMBOJ** | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN

The deliberate denial of medicine, fuel, food and water to the residents of Gaza is tantamount to genocide

**CYRIL RAMAPHOSA** | PRESIDENT, SOUTH AFRICA

## SHORT TAKES

### Pak SC okays plea to remove Prez

**Islamabad:** A petition has been filed in Pakistan's Supreme Court seeking President Arif Alvi's removal as the head of the state over "misconduct" and failure to maintain impartiality in performing his duties, according to media reports Sunday. The petition, filed by one Ghulam Murtaza Khan Saturday, alleges that the president has been evasive in performing his constitutional obligations, the Dawn newspaper reported. "He has violated the Constitution and committed gross misconduct; therefore, he is not eligible to continue his duties as the president and needs to be declared that he should not continue as president of Pakistan," the petition said.

### WHC concludes

**Bangkok:** The three-day World Hindu Congress concluded here on Sunday with a resolve to strengthen unity amongst Hindu organisations and effectively counter "visceral hatred" and biases against the Sanatan Dharma. At the parallel sessions during the WHC, delegates also resolved to support Hindu public representatives elected in foreign countries to fight political narratives against them. The next World Hindu Congress will be held in Mumbai in 2026.

## MIGRANTS' MENACE

REUTERS

**Brussels, Nov 26:** The European Union is dealing with an increase in legal and illegal arrivals by migrants, prompting some member states to temporarily re-introduce border controls within what is normally a zone of free movement.

The bloc's Schengen rules allow such action "as a last resort" in cases that are deemed serious threats to internal security or public policy.

These countries have reinstated stricter checks:

### AUSTRIA

Austria introduced checks at its border with the Czech Republic in October, set to last until December 6. As of November, it extended border controls with Slovenia and Hungary until May 2024, citing pressure on the asylum reception system, threats of arms trafficking, criminal networks linked to the war in Ukraine, and people smuggling.

### DENMARK

Denmark in August tightened border control for arrivals, including those from Schengen countries, at Copenhagen airport to boost security after incidents of Koran burnings.

It has prolonged checks on

# Fragile ceasefire back on track

**Hamas releases third group of hostages as part of truce deal**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Jerusalem, Nov 26:** The fragile cease-fire between Israel and Hamas was back on track Sunday as the militants freed 17 more hostages, including 14 Israelis, in a third set of releases under a four-day cease-fire deal.

Red Cross representatives transferred the hostages out of Gaza. Some were handed over directly to Israel, while others left through Egypt. Israel's army said one was airlifted directly to an Israeli hospital.

The Israeli hostages ranged in age from 4 to 84 and included Abigail Edan, a 4-year-old girl whose parents were killed in the Hamas attack that started the war October 7. In all, nine children ages 17 and younger were on the list, according to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office.

Separately, Hamas said it had released one of the Russian hostages it was holding, "in response to the efforts of Russian President Vladimir Putin" and as a show of appreciation for Moscow's position on the war. Israeli army radio had reported that it was an Israeli-

## ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR



Russian dual national.

Israel was to free 39 Palestinian prisoners later Sunday as part of the deal. A fourth exchange is expected Monday — the last day of the cease-fire during which a total of 50 hostages and 150 Palestinian prisoners are to be freed. All are women and minors.

International mediators led by the US and Qatar are trying to extend the cease-fire.

The cease-fire agreement has brought the first significant pause in seven weeks of war, marked by the deadliest Israeli-Palestinian violence in decades and vast destruction and displacement across the Gaza Strip.

Hamas and other militant groups seized around 240 peo-

ple during the rampage across southern Israel that ignited the war.

The war has claimed the lives of more than 1,200 Israelis, mostly civilians killed by Hamas in the initial attack. More than 13,300 Palestinians have been

## Netanyahu in Gaza

In clear signs of Israeli control over parts of Gaza, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, along with his senior colleagues, entered the Islamist Hamas-ruled coastal Strip Sunday to meet Israeli soldiers to boost their morale and vowed to carry on the fight "until the end". Netanyahu received security briefings from commanders and soldiers and visited one of the tunnels that has been revealed, an official press statement said. "We are here in the Gaza Strip with our heroic soldiers. We are making every effort to return our hostages, and in the end we will return them all. We have three goals in this war: eliminate Hamas, return all of our hostages and ensure that Gaza will not go back to being a threat to the State of Israel," Netanyahu told the soldiers on the ground.

killed, roughly two thirds of them women and minors, according to the Health Ministry

in Hamas-ruled Gaza.

The cease-fire, which began Friday, was brokered by Qatar and Egypt and the United States. Israel has said the truce can be extended by an extra day for every additional 10 hostages freed, but has vowed to quickly resume its offensive once it ends.

## AID, RESPITE IN GAZA

The pause has given some respite to Gaza's 2.3 million people, still reeling from relentless Israeli bombardment that has driven three-quarters of the population from their homes and levelled residential areas. Rocket fire from Gaza militants into Israel also went silent.

War-weary Palestinians in northern Gaza, where the offensive has focused, returned to the streets. Entire city blocks in and around Gaza City have been gutted by airstrikes that hollowed out buildings and left drifts of rubble.

## HAMAS TOP COMMANDER EXECUTED

Hamas announced the death of Ahmed al-Ghannouch, who was in charge of northern Gaza and a member of its top military council. He is the highest-ranking militant known to have been killed in the fighting. Al-Ghannouch, believed to have been around 56 years old, had survived at least three Israeli attempts on his life, and was involved in a cross-border attack in 2006 in which Palestinian militants captured an Israeli soldier, according to the Counter Extremism Project, an advocacy group based in Washington. Hamas said he was killed along with three other senior militants, including Ayman Siam, who Israel says was in charge of Hamas' rocket-firing unit. The Israeli military had mentioned both men in a Nov 16 statement, saying it had targeted an underground complex where Hamas leaders were hiding. The Israeli military claims to have killed thousands of militants, without providing evidence, including several mid-ranking commanders it has identified by name.



## ASIAN POWERHOUSE

# China, Japan, S Korea agree to restart trilateral cooperation

REUTERS

**Seoul, Nov 26:** The foreign ministers of China, Japan and South Korea agreed Sunday to restart cooperation among the Asian neighbours and pave the way for a summit of their three leaders in the latest move to ease tensions in the vital region.

Even as China and the United States mend frayed ties, including a summit this month between President Xi Jinping and his counterpart Joe Biden, Beijing is concerned that Washington and its key regional allies are strengthening their three-way partnership.

Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo had agreed on annual summits from 2008 to bolster diplomatic and economic exchanges, but two-way rows and the Covid-19 pandemic interrupted the plan, with the three leaders last meeting in 2019.

The three top diplomats met in the South Korean port of



Busan for their first such meeting since 2019, after officials of the three countries agreed in September to arrange a trilateral summit at the "earliest convenient time".

China's Xi, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol may not be able to meet this year, but their summit is likely in the near future, South Korea's national security advisor Cho Tae-yong told Yonhap news TV.

The ministers agreed in their 100-minute talks to advance cooperation in six areas, including security, economy and technology, and promote concrete discussions to prepare for the summit, Japan's foreign ministry said in a statement.

South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin, who was also concerned about North Korean issues, told his counterparts it was "important to further institutionalise trilateral cooperation so that it will develop into a stable and sustainable system", his ministry said in a statement.

China's Wang Yi said the three countries should play an active role in promoting regional and global development with a "more progressive manner and attitude."

Japan's Yoko Kamikawa said greater trilateral cooperation would contribute to regional peace as the international security situation has become "more severe and complex than ever."



HURRICANE HORROR: A view of debris and damaged boats a month after Hurricane Otis hit Acapulco, Mexico REUTERS

## 4 Indians among 13 missing as boat capsizes

**ATHENS:** A cargo ship sank off the Greek island of Lesbos in stormy seas early Sunday, leaving 13 crew members, including four Indians, missing and one rescued, authorities said. The Raptor, registered in the Comoros, was on its way to Istanbul from Alexandria, Egypt, carrying 6,000 tons of salt, the coast guard said. It had a crew of 14, including eight Egyptians, four Indians and two Syrians, the coast guard said. The ship reported a mechanical problem at 7 am Sunday, sent a distress signal and shortly after disappeared about 4 1/2 nautical miles (8 km) southwest of Lesbos, authorities said. One Egyptian was rescued, a coast guard spokeswoman told The Associated Press. She said that eight merchant ships, two helicopters and one Greek navy frigate were searching for survivors. Three coast guard vessels had difficulty reaching the area because of rough seas, she added.

The spokeswoman spoke on condition of anonymity because the case was ongoing and she wasn't authorised to speak to the media. Northwesterly winds in excess of 80 kph (50 mph) per hour are blowing in the area, the national weather service said.



# European countries tighten borders



the Danish-German land border and in ports with ferry connections to Germany until May 2024, according to an EU commission report.

The government said it was responding to an increase in irregular migration, and cited threats posed by terrorism and organised crime, foreign intelligence espionage and the war in Ukraine.

### GERMANY

Germany announced controls in September on its land borders with Poland, the Czech Republic and Switzerland, set to stay in place until December 4. Berlin said it needed to respond to an immigration surge and high levels of smuggling.

Germany, which has Europe's biggest economy, has seen a sharp increase of first-time asy-

lum requests this year. Berlin has also extended land border checks with Austria until May 2024, saying this was in response to what it called a strain on its asylum reception system, security threats linked to Middle East terrorism, and Ukraine war.

### ITALY

Italy reinstated police checks at its northeast land border with Slovenia as of October 21, saying some migrants in transit on the Balkan route could be terrorists. The controls will be in place at least until December 9. Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi said in October they would likely be extended into next year.

### NORWAY

Norway, which belongs to the Schengen arrangement but is not an EU member, reinstated

border controls in its ports with ferry connections to the Schengen area as of November 12. It pointed to threats to its on-shore and off-shore infrastructure, and from foreign intelligence services.

These controls should last until May 5, 2024.

### POLAND

Poland has extended temporary controls on its border with Slovakia until December 3, pointing to migrants' efforts to illegally enter from there.

The government was rocked by a "visas for cash" scandal earlier this year, when the opposition accused it of being complicit in a system where people received visas at an accelerated pace without proper checks after paying intermediaries.

### SWEDEN

Sweden strengthened checks in August on its borders, giving border police more power including body searches and increased use of electronic surveillance.

The same month the government raised Sweden's terrorism threat level, saying it had thwarted attacks after Koran burnings triggered threats from Islamist militants. As of November it extended the border checks until May 2024.

### FRANCE

France as of November reintroduced controls on its borders with Schengen members, citing what it called terrorism threats. The controls should last until April 30, 2024. Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin had announced reinforced security in October at the Belgian border after the killing of two people by an assailant in Brussels.

### SLOVAKIA

Slovakia's government November 20 approved keeping temporary controls on its border with Hungary until December 23. The government is seeking to limit the number of illegal arrivals, having said in November that it detained roughly 500% more migrants who arrived illegally this year compared to 2022.

### SLOVENIA

Slovenia November 17 extended border controls with Schengen members until December 9. The government cited armed conflict in Ukraine, the Middle East and Africa, and elevated threats from organised crime and terrorism.

It also plans to re-introduce controls on those borders for six months, from Dec 22. In October, Slovenia had deployed police on border crossings with Croatia and Hungary.

## Sierra Leone declares nationwide curfew after attack on barracks



*There have been 8 military coups in West and Central Africa since 2020, delivering repeated blows to democracy in the region*

REUTERS

**Freetown, Nov 26:** Sierra Leone has declared a nationwide curfew after unidentified gunmen attacked a military barracks and attempted to break into an armoury in the capital, Freetown, the government said Sunday.

A government statement said the security forces were in control of the situation.

"In the early hours of Sunday, some unidentified individuals attempted to break into the military armoury at the Wilberforce barracks. They have been rebuffed," information minister Cherron Bah said in the statement.

## China, US trade barbs over US vessel in SCS

REUTERS

**Beijing, Nov 26:** China and the United States exchanged accusations at the weekend over the disputed South China Sea, after China's military said it had driven away a US warship that the US Navy said was on a routine freedom of navigation operation.

According to a post on the official WeChat social media account of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Southern Theatre Command Saturday, the Chinese military deployed its naval and air forces to "track, monitor and warn away" the US destroyer.

The US Navy said Sunday that the Hopper had "asserted navigational rights in the South China Sea near the Paracel Islands, consistent with international law".

This weekend's incident, China said, "proves that the United States is an out-and-out 'security risk creator' in the South China Sea".

Lieutenant Kristina Weidemann, deputy spokesperson for the US 7th Fleet, said in an emailed statement: "The United States challenges excessive maritime claims around the world regardless of the identity of the claimant. Unlawful and sweeping maritime claims in the South China Sea pose a serious threat to the freedom of the seas."



## POPE SUFFERS LUNG INFLAMMATION

Pope Francis Sunday revealed that he has a lung inflammation but will go later this week to Dubai to address the climate change conference. Francis skipped his weekly Sunday appearance at a window overlooking St Peter's Square, a day after the Vatican said he was suffering from a mild flu

Today marks the 15th anniversary of the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai. We honour the memory of the victims lost and pledge to continue to fight against acts of terror together with the Government of India

ERIC GARCETTI | US AMBASSADOR TO INDIA





# business



**India is going to play a crucial role in shaping responsible AI with the first-of-its-kind data privacy legislation and draft regulation over deepfakes**

**IVANA BARTOLETTI** | GLOBAL PRIVACY OFFICER, WIPRO LIMITED

## LIC EYE FINTECH ARM

As part of its digital transformation exercise, insurance behemoth Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) is exploring the possibility of setting up a fintech unit. LIC has initiated a total digital transformation project DIVE (Digital Innovation and Value Enhancement) and appointed a consultant to steer the project, LIC Chairman Siddhartha Mohanty said



## of the day quote

We are also planning to launch a series of products in the range of 5 to 25 kilowatts in the next year

**KN RADHAKRISHNAN** | DIRECTOR AND CEO, TVS MOTOR

Coal imports have increased by 121 per cent in the past one year alone and most coal is steam coal, available in abundance in India. India should focus on using local coal. Offering MSP on mustard and other similar oils will cut domestic prices and wean people away from inferior palm oil gradually

**AJAY SRIVASTAVA** | CO-FOUNDER, GTRI

The market will take further cues from US GDP data, crude oil inventories, US PMI data and Eurozone core CPI data

**ARVINDER SINGH NANDA** | SENIOR VP, MASTER CAPITAL SERVICES

## SHORT TAKES

### New norms for SMEs

**New Delhi:** BSE has put in place fresh guidelines for small and medium enterprises looking to migrate from its SME platform to the main board, whereby the applicant will be required to have a net worth of at least ₹15 crore for the preceding two financial years. Under the guidelines, the applicant firm needs to be listed on the SME platform for at least three years. Besides, they need to have 250 public shareholders before shifting to the main board. In addition, the SME should have a positive operating profit for at least any two out of three financial years and have a positive profit after tax (PAT) in the immediate financial year of making the migration application to the bourse. "The applicant should have a net worth of at least ₹15 crore for two preceding full financial years," BSE said in a circular. Further, the paid-up equity capital of the applicant should be more than ₹10 crore and the market capitalization should be at least ₹25 crore.

### Top firms' mcup up

**New Delhi:** The combined market valuation of four of the top-10 most-valued firms climbed ₹65,671.35 crore last week, with Reliance Industries emerging as the biggest gainer. Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 175.31 points, or 0.26 per cent. While Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, and Bharti Airtel were the gainers, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, State Bank of India, and Bajaj Finance faced erosion in valuation. Reliance Industries continued to hold the title of the most-valued firm followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, Bharti Airtel, ITC, State Bank of India, and Bajaj Finance.

## FALL IN REVENUE

# States likely to miss capex goals in FY24



**THE COMBINED REVENUE, FISCAL DEFICITS OF 21 STATES WIDENED TO ₹70K-CR AND ₹3.5L-CR, RESPECTIVELY, IN H1, FROM ₹50K-CR AND ₹2.4L-CR, RESPECTIVELY**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Nov 26:** Several states are likely to miss their capital expenditure targets for the ongoing fiscal due to polls and fall in revenue, according to an analysis. A steep fall in revenue receipts will further lead to a major compression in state capex, which during the first half of FY24 rose to a record 35 per cent. Ica Ratings Chief Economist Aditi Nayyar said. To maintain their Budget estimates, 21 states - whose capex and other macro data is available - will have to ensure that the capex run rate is maintained at 28 per cent in the second half, which is unlikely, since model code of conduct is likely to take effect in the March quarter before the general elections, Nayyar said. The combined revenue and fiscal deficits of these 21 states widened to ₹70,000 crore and ₹3.5 lakh crore, respectively, in the April-September period, from ₹50,000 crore and ₹2.4 lakh crore, respectively, in the year-ago period.

The report excludes Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Goa, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland.

While the growth of combined revenue receipts and expenditure of these 21 states in the period under review trailed Budget estimates, their capital outlays and net lending were higher.

This was boosted by the early releases under the scheme for special assistance to states for capital investments (or capex loan) in the April-October period of the current fiscal, Nayyar said.

This contributed to the increase in capex as a proportion of Budget estimates to 35 per cent in the first half of the fiscal from previous years' average of 30 per cent, she said.

Revenue receipts and expenditure increase by sub-10 per cent in the April-September period were significantly below the growth budgeted for the year.

The growth in combined revenue receipts of the 21 states slowed to 8.4 per cent in the period under review from 26.4 per cent in the year-ago period, mainly led by sharp contraction in grants from the Centre. Simultaneously, the annualised growth of combined revenue expenditure of these 21 states eased to 9.6 per cent in the first half from 15.5 per cent a year earlier.

Moreover, both revenue receipts and expenditure trailed the 18-19 per cent expansion indicated in their Budget estimates.

Barring Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Punjab, and Bengal, the capital expenditure of the remaining 16 states expanded in high double-digits.

## NEW MKTS OPEN

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Development Authority (APEDA), an organisation under the Ministry of Commerce, played an instrumental role in flagging off cashew nut shipments to the US, Bangladesh, Qatar and Malaysia to mark National Cashew Day November 23.

Bangladesh will be receiving its first-ever shipment of cashew nuts all the way from Odisha.

After Cote d'Ivoire, India is the second largest producer and exporter of cashew nuts with a share of more than 15 per cent, followed by Vietnam.

# India cashew head for US, B'desh, Qatar

Bangladesh will be receiving its first-ever shipment of cashew nuts all the way from Odisha



The demand for cashew products has been on the rise, and to see the industry evolve and thrive is a heartening moment. The growth is a testament to the hard work of the farmers, processors, and exporters

**ABHISHEK DEV** | CHAIRMAN, APEDA

India's top export destinations are the UAE, the Netherlands, Japan, and Saudi Arabia.

Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are the major Cashew producing states in India. India primarily exports Cashew Kernels with small quantities of Cashew Nut Shell Liquid and Cardanol.

With the UAE and the Netherlands remaining as the top export destinations for Indian Cashew Nuts, APEDA is working towards exploring new markets for cashew in the international markets of Japan, Saudi Arabia, UK, Spain, Kuwait, Qatar, the US and European countries.

In the future, APEDA may intervene in the automation of the

cashew industry. Training of professionals, registration of cashew processing units, and a traceability system will be formulated for cashew, replicating peanuts, he added.

APEDA jointly with its Regional Offices organised programmes to celebrate the National Cashew Day in seven states in collaboration with the Cashew Association, Exporters and Stakeholders. The event included a diverse range of activities such as interaction sessions with the stakeholder of Cashew, Platform for Networking, Knowledge Sharing, and discussion on industry trends and challenges faced in the sector.

# FPIs turn net buyers

FOREIGN INVESTORS POUR IN ₹378 CRORE IN EQUITIES IN NOV

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have pared their bearish stance on Indian equities during November as they made a net investment of ₹378 crore on the sharp decline in US treasury bond yields.

This came after FPIs dumped Indian equities worth ₹24,548 crore in October and ₹14,767 crore in September, data with the depositories showed.

Uncertain global factors continue to dictate the direction of foreign investments into the India equity markets

**HIMANSHU SRIVASTAVA** | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR (MANAGER RESEARCH), MORNINGSTAR INVESTMENT ADVISER

Before the outflow, FPIs were incessantly buying Indian equities in the last six months from March to August and brought in ₹1.74 lakh crore during the period.

"On the way ahead, we think that improving risk appetite in the EM (emerging markets) and falling risk-free yields in the US will draw FPI flows towards India," Hitesh Jain, Strategist, Institutional Equities Research at YES Securities India, said.

According to the data, FPIs



Overall, cumulative trend for 2023 remains healthy, with FPIs pouring in ₹96,340cr so far

made a net investment of ₹378.2 crore in Indian equities this month (till November 24).

Notably, foreign investors were buyers on four days this month with a big buying of ₹2,625 crore Friday.

"The better-than-expected decline in inflation in mid-October US has given the market confidence to assume that the Fed is done with a rate hike. Consequently, the US bond yields have declined sharply with the 10-year benchmark bond yield correcting from 5 per cent in mid-October to 4.40 per cent now. This has forced FPIs to slow down their selling," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Additionally, the debt market attracted ₹12,400 crore in the period under review after receiving ₹6,381 crore in October, data showed.

The inclusion of Indian G-Sec

in the JP Morgan Government Bond Index Emerging Markets has spurred foreign fund participation in the Indian bond markets.

Additionally, Indian debt is relatively attractive compared to debt in other emerging markets. Besides, Indian debt offers a relatively high yield compared to debt in developed markets, Bhuvan Rustagi, COO and Co-founder of Per Annum and Lendbox, said.

In terms of sectors, FPIs are likely to buy banking which they have been selling during the last 3 months. A large-cap led rally is likely in the market, going forward, Geojit's Vijayakumar said.

Sectors like capital goods and consumption will attract flows amid the government's emphasis on Capex and rural spending ahead of the national elections next year, YES Securities' Jain said.

# Oil firms fined for failing to meet listing norms

Seven oil refining, marketing firms have been slapped penalty of 5.42L for not having the requisite independent directors on board

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** State-owned oil and gas giants including IndianOil and GAIL (India) Ltd have been slapped with fines for the second quarter in a row for failing to meet listing requirements of having the requisite number of independent directors on board.

Stock exchanges have fined oil refining and fuel marketing giant Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), explorers Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd, gas utility GAIL, refiners Bharat Petroleum

Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL), and Engineers India Ltd ₹5.42 lakh, stock exchange filings showed.

In separate filings, the companies detailed the fines imposed by the BSE and NSE but were quick to point out that appointment of directors was done by the government and they had no role in it.

The fines were for not having the requisite independent directors in the second quarter. They had faced fines for the same reason in the first quarter as well.



While the companies have now been slapped with a uniform ₹5.42,800 fine, ONGC was previously slapped with ₹3.36 lakh fine, IOC ₹5.36 lakh and GAIL ₹2.71 lakh fine. HPCL and BPCL were each asked to pay ₹3.6 lakh fine, while Oil India had faced a penalty of ₹5.37 lakh. Listing norms require com-

panies to have independent directors in the same proportion as executive or functional directors. They are also required to have at least one woman director on the board.

In its filing, IOC said it has informed the BSE and NSE that "being a government company, the power to appoint directors (including independent directors) vests with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), Government of India and hence the non-appointment of women independent director on the Board during the quarter ended September 30, 2023 was not due to any negligence / fault by the company."

IOC said it "should not be held liable to pay the fines and the same should be waived-off."

Stating that it has been regularly taking up with MoP&NG for appointment of requisite number of independent directors (including woman independent director) to ensure compliance with corporate governance norms, the company said it had received similar notices from the stock exchanges in the past imposing fines and its waiver request was considered favorably by the exchanges.

GAIL said "the non-compliance with regard to the composition of the Board was neither due to any negligence/default by the company nor within the control of GAIL's management and continuous efforts were also made to meet the compliance requirements."

# Black Friday sees record \$9.8bn in US online sales

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**San Francisco, Nov 26:** Black Friday generated a record \$9.8 billion in US online sales, up 7.5 per cent from a year ago.

According to Adobe Analytics, mobile shopping accounted for \$5.3 billion of online sales.

The best-selling categories on Black Friday were electronics such as smartwatches and televisions, as well as toys and gaming, reports CNBC.

"We've seen a very strategic consumer emerge over the past year where they're really trying to take advantage of these marquee days, so that they can maximise on discounts," Vivek Pandya, a lead analyst at Adobe Digital Insights, was quoted as saying.

Pandya noted that influencers and social media advertising have made it easier for consumers to spend money on their mobile devices.

However, shoppers were price-conscious, managing tighter budgets as a result of last year's record inflation and interest rates.

A total of \$79 million of the sales came from consumers who used the 'Buy Now, Pay Later' flexible payment method, up 47 per cent from last year.

Adobe collects data by analysing one trillion visits to retail websites in the US, 18 product categories, and 100 million unique items.

Black Friday continued the momentum from Thanksgiving Day when online sales totalled \$5.6 billion, an increase of 5.5 per cent from last year.

# Mega IPO show ends on a high, all eyes on listing day

INVESTORS Poured AN UNPRECEDENTED ₹2.6L-CR INTO FIVE ISSUES THAT AIMED TO COLLECT ₹7,380CR

AGENCIES

by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), with lenders having to curb borrowings for investment.

Consequently, subscription in the high net-worth individual (HNIs) category was considerably lower compared with that of qualified institutional buyers (QIBs).

Tata Technologies, marking the first public issue from the Tata Group in the last two decades, had a subscription of over 69 times, creating a significant demand of ₹1.57 lakh crore against the issue size of ₹3,043 crore. The QIB portion was subscribed 203 times, with the HNI portion receiving bids 62 times the amount on offer. The retail segment saw a subscription of



16.5 times.

The ₹501 crore Gandhar Oil Refinery public issue was oversubscribed 64 times. The issue garnered a demand of ₹22,639 crore.

Tata Technologies commanded a grey market premium of ₹415 per share over the upper end of the issue price band of ₹500 per share. Similarly, the grey market

price of Gandhar Oil was ₹76 over the issue price of ₹169, while Fair Writing was trading at a premium of ₹80 over the issue price of ₹304. A higher grey market premium over the issue price is seen as an indicator of listing gains.

In the case of Flair Writing's public issue, bids were 47 times more than the issue size, re-

sulting in demand of ₹19,550 crore compared to the issue size of ₹593 crore.

The Fedbank Financial Services IPO had a relatively subdued response, with the issue being subscribed 2.2 times.

The ₹2,150 crore public issue of Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) that closed Thursday was subscribed 38.8 times, amounting to ₹59,153 crore.

Bankers suggest that subdued conditions in the secondary market, coupled with significant liq-

uidity as investors hold onto cash in anticipation of a market decline, may have contributed to the substantial demand for public issues.

They note that the reasonable pricing of IPOs is attracting strong demand from a diverse group of investors, serving as a safeguard against fluctuations in the secondary market.

So far in 2023, 47 companies have successfully raised ₹44,298 crore through IPOs compared with 40 that raised ₹59,300 crore in 2022.



# Batters set up India victory

JAISWAL, GAIKWAD, KISHAN AND RINKU LET THE WILLOW TALK BEFORE BOWLERS' IMPRESSIVE SHOW HELP INDIA TAKE 2-0 LEAD IN FIVE-MATCH SERIES WITH 44-RUN WIN IN 2ND T20I AGAINST AUSTRALIA



**Thiruvananthapuram, Nov 26:** Yashasvi Jaiswal, Ishan Kishan and Ruturaj Gaikwad gave a telling manifestation of their talent with twinkling fifties, the catalyst of India's 44-run win over Australia in the second T20I here Sunday. India are now leading the five-match series 2-0.

Opener Jaiswal led the charge of India's young brigade with a sparkling 53 (25b, 9x4, 2x6), guiding India to a massive 235/4 in the company of Ishan (52, 32b, 3x4, 4x6) and Gaikwad (58, 43b, 3x4, 2x6). Not only the trio, but Rinku Singh also played a crucial cameo (31 n o, 9b, 4x4, 2x6) that in a way changed the complexion of the game.

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi (3/32) then muffled the Australian top-order with two quick blows, and the visitors were eventually limited to 191/9 despite aggressive knocks by Tim David (37, 22b, 4x4, 2x6) and Marcus Stoinis

(45, 25b, 2x4, 4x6). Skipper Matthew Wade (42 n o, 23b, 1x4, 4x6), despite losing out of partners at the other end, played an impressive knock. Pacer Prasidh Krishna grabbed three wickets (3/41) to accentuate Australia's fall as they lost five wickets for 16 runs.

Australia needed to score at 11.8 runs per over to hunt down India's total. Openers Matthew Short and Steve Smith made an urgent beginning, procuring 31 runs in the first two overs.

But Bishnoi jettisoned Short in the third over and Josh Inglis, who made a hundred in the first match at Visakhapatnam, in the fifth over as Australia slipped to 39/2. It soon transpired to 58/4 after Smith fell to Prasidh and left-arm spinner Axar Patel gobbled up Glenn Maxwell, as the Indian bowlers produced a disciplined effort.

However, Australia found some fight through David and Stoinis, who pummelled the Indian attack

for 81 runs for an entertaining fifth wicket stand that came in just above seven overs.

Australia made 104/4 in the 10 overs and looked good for a comeback. But Bishnoi bagged the crucial wicket of David. Stoinis too did not last long as his attempted heave off Mukesh ended with Axar near the straight boundary. From that point, an Indian victory was a mere formality.

But for all that, the Indian camp should profusely thank three young, talented batters - Jaiswal, Kishan and Gaikwad. Australian captain Wade's decision to bowl first keeping in mind the dew factor did not pay off as his bowlers faltered against the Indian troika.

The ball came off the pitch a tad slow but the Aussie bowlers were wayward, offering width to Indian batsmen. They were happy to oblige, especially Jaiswal. He took on Sean Abbot in a breathtaking fashion.

The Australian pacer rightly

took the pace off his deliveries but he erred in the line and length, offering a chance for the Indian opener to free his hands as India motored on in the Power Play segment which produced 71 runs.

Jaiswal brought up his fifty in 24 balls, but he could not extend the innings as a rather wild slash off pacer Nathan Ellis was grabbed by Adam Zampa at backward square leg.

But that did not really affect the Indian innings as Gaikwad combined with Kishan, who made his second fifty in as many matches, to garner 87 runs for a bruising second wicket alliance. India touched 101/1 after 10 overs.

India progressed at around 11.5 runs per over in the middle phase of the innings despite spinners Zampa and Tanveer Sangha bowling relatively better spells. Kishan reached his half century in 29 balls with a massive six. Gaikwad too reached his fifty off 39 balls.

It might appear an industrious

innings, but Gaikwad's solidity allowed others to launch into the Australian attack. Kishan too could not build on his innings as he lost balance while trying to wallop Stoinis out of the ground, hoicking a simple catch to Ellis in the deep.

However, Rinku chipped in with his customary cameo and ensured that India finished strongly. The left-handed Rinku robbed 25 runs off the 19th over bowled by Abbot as he leaked 56 runs off three overs in total. The final over bowled by Ellis went for 20 runs as India reached a total that remained out of Aussies' reach.

# Hardik returns to MI after intense drama

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** Hardik Pandya Sunday returned to his "spiritual home" Mumbai Indians after an all-cash deal trade-off with Gujarat Titans was formally completed following 72 hours of intense drama.

The IPL retention window was closed at 5 pm Sunday, and at that point, Gujarat Titans named their IPL-winning captain in the retention list raising a lot of eyebrows.

However it was learnt that the formal paperwork wasn't yet completed and hence IPL and BCCI didn't give greenlight of approval for the most anticipated move of this transfer season.

"Yes, Hardik's trade off got completed after 5 pm. The deal is now formalised and he is a Mumbai Indians player. It's been a tripartite all cash deal. MI have traded their all-rounder Cameron Green to RCB in an all cash deal. After that they had requisite funds to settle an all-cash deal with Gujarat Titans and procure Hardik's services," a senior BCCI official and IPL Governing Council member told PTI on conditions of anonymity.



**Odisha's Subhanshu Senapati has been released by Chennai Super Kings**

It must be mentioned that Green was bought by MI for a whopping Rs 17.5 crore during last auction and hence the money required to buy Hardik wasn't available till that deal was inked.

Pandya was picked by Gujarat Titans before 2022 auction from the list of available players for the two new franchises - GT and Lucknow Super Giants. His reported fee was Rs 15 crore and he led the side to back-to-back finals, winning the championship in maiden year and losing a thriller to CSK in 2023.

Mumbai Indians, who have one of the most systematic team building process, have roped in Pandya with a long term plan in

mind as there will be mega auction in 2025 and every franchise will try to build a new team with a young core.

However with India's ODI and Test captain Rohit Sharma still very much in the mix and perhaps franchise's biggest icon with five titles under his belt, it would be interesting what kind of decision the owners and top management with regards to leadership.

This must be mentioned that those in the know of things had an inkling that Pandya after two years at Titans wanted to move back to the franchise from where he had made a name and played seven seasons.

The lure of captaining IPL's most popular franchise with biggest fan base was also a reason apart from building his brand as a national skipper in one of the formats.

# Satwik, Chirag miss out on China Masters crown



**Shenzhen (China), Nov 26:** Star Indian shuttlers Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty fought valiantly before going down to the Chinese duo of Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang in an exciting men's doubles final of the China Masters Super 750 tournament here Sunday.

Satwik and Chirag, the Asian Games champions, lost 19-21, 21-18, 19-21 to the World No.1 Chinese pair; their first defeat in six finals this season.

The Indian pair gave ample display of their grit as they saved six championship points from 13-20 to 19-20 after recovering from 1-8 down in the decider, but Liang and Wang found their bearing just in time to win the first men's doubles China Masters title for the hosts in eight years. With this victory, Liang and Wang also avenged their Asian Games loss to the Indians.

In a finale of fluctuating fortunes, the Indian shuttlers couldn't produce their best as their defence, particularly Satwik's, wilted under the pressure of Liang and Wang, who looked in the zone. Wang rose to the occasion and stood tall in the key moments, winning the battle of the front court play with Chirag.

Chirag started with a service fault and then hit two miscued strokes as the Indians lagged 1-4. The slow start affected India as they were left to do the catch-up act. The Indians kept themselves in the hunt, levelling at 9-

9, 15-15 and 19-19 but Liang then unleashed a smash to earn a game point and sealed it, when Satwik went to net.

The Indians regrouped and staged a remarkable rally to win the second game 21-18 but Satwik and Chirag committed a series of unforced errors to allow the Chinese pair to make a rollicking start in the decider.

The Indians fell 1-8 behind before the Chinese pair grabbed an 11-6 advantage at the final break. The Chinese shuttlers kept an upper hand and earned seven championship points with Wang producing another stiff return. But then, Satwik and Chirag showed their grit as they went on to save six points to raise hopes of a twist. But the Chinese managed to get past them following another exuberant rally which ended with Chirag spraying into the net.

Satwik and Chirag have won the Badminton Asian Championships, Indonesia Super 1000, Korea Super 500, Swiss Super 300 and the Asian Games gold medal in a stellar year.

The BWF (Badminton World Federation) World Tour is divided into six levels, namely World Tour Finals, four Super 1000, six Super 750, seven Super 500, and 11 Super 300. One more category of the tournament, the BWF Tour Super 100 level, also offers ranking points.

Each of these tournaments offers different ranking points and prize money. The highest points and prize pool is offered at the Super 1000 level.

# Arsenal go top, Newcastle crush Blues

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, Nov 26:** It looks like Pep Guardiola has a fight on his hands in the Premier League if he is to win an unprecedented four titles in a row with Manchester City. Goals from Liverpool's Trent Alexander-Arnold and Arsenal's Kai Havertz on Saturday saw the defending champions knocked off the top of the table. Liverpool secured a 1-1 draw against City at Etihad Stadium and Arsenal scored late to beat Brentford 1-0.

Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool and Mikel Arteta's Arsenal are likely to lead the challenge to City's domestic dominance and Guardiola's bid to win an unprecedented fourth straight title in England's top tier. But threats lie elsewhere as well.

It is Klopp and Arteta who have experience of pushing Guardiola all the way in a long title race, with Liverpool the only team to break City's supremacy over the past six years when crowned champions in 2020.

Klopp has rebuilt the squad that won every major honor for Liverpool from 2019-22. And his



**RIGHT PLACE AT RIGHT TIME:** Kai Havertz celebrates his goal against Brentford helping Arsenal go top of Premier League standing, Saturday

new-look team served notice of its credentials by ending City's 100% winning record at home in the league.

The result meant Arsenal had its chance to go top, having led

game goalless.

Havertz's 89th-minute header completely changed the mood, securing a 1-0 win and moving Arsenal a point above City. Both Klopp and Arteta know it's where you finish at the end that counts. And Guardiola is a master of handling the pressure at the top.

**CHELSEA ROUTED**

Chelsea's heaviest loss under Mauricio Pochettino prompted Brazil defender Thiago Silva to say sorry to fans. "I'm devastated," said Silva in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter; after the 4-1 rout by Newcastle.

"I would like to apologize to everyone for the defeat, especially to my teammates who believe in me and support me every day. I take full responsibility." The Toons are sixth in the league standing with 23 points.

The Blues have now conceded four goals in back-to-back games, following the 4-4 draw with Manchester City earlier this month. The loss, which also saw Reece James sent off, ended the London club's recent revival after a run of just one defeat in eight league games.

# Verstappen wins Abu Dhabi GP for season's 19th win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Abu Dhabi, Nov 26:** Max Verstappen's outstanding season ended with a victory at the Abu Dhabi Sunday, earning the Formula One (F1) champion a record-extending 19th victory of the campaign and 54th overall to move into third on the all-time list.

Verstappen finished ahead of Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and Mercedes driver George Russell and also collected a bonus point for the fastest lap. His 54th career win moved him one ahead of former Red Bull great Sebastian Vettel, with only Michael Schumacher (91) and Lewis Hamilton (103) left ahead of him.

Red Bull won 21 of 22 races this season, with Sergio Perez claiming a couple of wins. Perez crossed the line in second place but dropped to fourth because of a 5-second time penalty. Leclerc let Perez go past him on the final lap in the hope that Perez would finish more than five seconds ahead of Russell, with Mercedes and Ferrari both fighting for second place in the constructors' championship.

# MBSG test awaits Odisha FC



**Kolkata, Nov 26:** Odisha FC will have deal with a Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG) team who would be keen to return to winning ways and keep their qualifying hopes alive in the AFC Cup penultimate round group D clash here Monday.

AFC Cup debutants Odisha FC, who suffered a 0-4 blanking at the hands of MBSG at home in their first match, have shown resilience and determination to bounce back, securing back-to-back victories against Maziya S&RC both at home and away.

The team, driven by the determination to avenge their previous loss, will be eager to bag all three points. Odisha FC will look up to

Brazilian forward Diego Mauricio who has scored twice in the AFC Cup. He was on the score sheet against Maziya S&RC in the previous game, helping the club come back and record a 3-2 win.

MBSG, on the other hand, had a positive start to their campaign, winning back-to-back matches. But they have suffered setbacks in their last two matches, first dropping points and then losing 1-2 to Bashundhara Kings to slip to second spot in the standings.

The Mariners need to bounce back to arrest their slide and keep their qualification hopes alive as they face Odisha in a key clash at the Salt Lake Stadium. The team will be looking to make use of the home advantage and are determined to bounce back from the 1-2 defeat in Dhaka, and regain their form.

Mohun Bagan have slipped behind Bashundhara to second spot on goal difference and they will end their group league campaign with an away clash against Maziya Sports and Recreation of Maldives December 11.

# Sinner dashes Djokovic hopes, leads Italy into Davis Cup final

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Malaga (Spain), Nov 26:** Novak Djokovic had three chances to finish off Italy and put Serbia into the Davis Cup final. But Jannik Sinner led Italy back from the brink of defeat, saving three consecutive match points before ending Djokovic's streak of 21 straight wins in Davis Cup singles matches to level the semifinal match at 1-1 Saturday.

Sinner then outdid the top-ranked Djokovic again in doubles to seal Italy's 2-1 comeback win and put it in the final for the first time since 1998.

Djokovic had hoped to cap a superb season, when he increased his Grand Slam haul to a record 24 titles after winning three more majors, by taking Serbia to its first Davis Cup final in a decade.

Miomir Kecmanovic beat Lorenzo Musetti 6-7(7-9), 6-2, 6-1 to give Serbia a 1-0 lead in their semifinal showdown, and Djokovic had Serbia on the cusp of the final when he faced Sinner in the second singles match.



But the fourth-ranked Sinner rallied to beat Djokovic 6-2, 2-6, 7-5. It was the third singles match between the top-ranked Djokovic and Sinner in 12 days. Sinner beat Djokovic in the ATP Finals group stage last week before Djokovic beat Sinner in the final to earn a record-breaking seventh ATP Finals title. Sinner then teamed up with Lorenzo Sonego in the doubles for a 6-3, 6-4 win over Djokovic and Kecmanovic.

Italy will face Australia in Sunday's final on the same indoor hard court in southern Spain. Italy's only title was in 1976. Its last final was in 1998.