



INDIA'S GLOBAL FACE

Deepika Padukone, the first Indian star, attends prestigious Academy Museum Gala in Los Angeles

LEISURE P2



WAR ENTERS SOUTH

Israel presses ground campaign deep into south, sending desperate residents fleeing amid severe bombardment

INTERNATIONAL P10



SHOCKING ACCIDENT

A national-level shooter partially loses his left thumb after a 10m air pistol cylinder exploded

SPORTS P12

Stock markets surge over 2% to new high

Mumbai: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty soared more than 2 per cent to settle at record high levels Monday, marking the fifth straight day of gains as the BJP's victory in assembly polls in three states boosted investor sentiment. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,383.93 points, or 2.05 per cent, to close at a lifetime high of 68,865.12. The index touched an intra-day record peak of 68,918.22. The barometer logged its biggest single-day jump since May 20, 2022. The total market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies surged by ₹5.81 lakh crore to ₹343.48 lakh crore. **P11**

IAF trainer aircraft mishap kills 2 pilots

New Delhi: Two pilots of the Indian Air Force were killed Monday morning when their trainer aircraft met with an accident near Hyderabad, officials said. The IAF has ordered a Court of Inquiry to ascertain the cause of the accident. The incident occurred in Toopran mandal of the Medak district in Telangana, according to the local police. One Pilatus PC 7 Mk II trainer aircraft met with an accident today morning during a routine training sortie from the Air Force Academy, Hyderabad, an IAF official said. It is with deep regret that IAF confirms that both the pilots on board have sustained fatal injuries, he said.



STORM GATHERS: A local wades through a waterlogged road during heavy rain triggered by Cyclone Michaung in Chennai, Monday

No haven for women

4% RISE IN CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN; 31,982 RAPES ACROSS INDIA IN 2022

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 4: With 7,327 cases of assault on women - with intent to outrage their modesty - Odisha stood fourth in the country in 2022, as per the latest data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). The national figure in this facet of violence against women stood at 85,300 in the same period. Assault on women was the maximum in Maharashtra which topped the chart in 2022 with a total 11,512 cases, followed by Uttar Pradesh (10,548 cases) and Rajasthan (8,508 cases). Neighbouring Andhra Pradesh closely trailed Odisha for the fifth spot in the national tally with 5,884 cases.

The NCRB has reported a significant increase in crimes against women in the country, with a total of 4,45,256 cases registered in 2022, a four per cent rise compared to the previous year, which recorded 4,28,278 cases.

The crime rate per lakh women population increased from 64.5 in 2021 to 66.4 in 2022, emphasising the urgency of addressing gender-based violence.

A total of 12 states and Union Territories including Odisha recorded crime rates against women higher than the national average of 66.4.



The crime rate per lakh women population increased from **64.5** in 2021 to **66.4** in 2022

At **103**, Odisha recorded crime rates against women higher than the national average of **66.4**

According to the NCRB, in 2022, as many as 250 women were murder-cum-rape/gangrape victims across the country.

"There were a total of 6,516 dowry death victims while 4,963 incidents of abetment to suicide of women were reported," the data stated.

As per the NCRB report, Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest number of crimes against women incidents at 65,743. Among Union Territories, Delhi topped with 14,247 incidents of crime against women.

The NCRB data revealed a disturbing picture as 31,982 women were raped in 2022. The data stated that Rajasthan recorded the highest number of rapes at 5,399 followed by Uttar Pradesh (3,690), Madhya Pradesh (3,029), Maharashtra (2,904), and Haryana (1,787).

A disturbing rise was observed in crimes against children, with 1,62,449 cases reported, marking an 8.7 per cent increase from 2021.

SURGE IN CYBER CRIMES MARKS 2022

NEW DELHI: Shedding light on the alarming surge in cyber crimes across the country, NCRB's comprehensive data for 2022 revealed that a total of 65,893 cybercrime cases were registered in 2022, marking a substantial 24.4 per cent increase from the previous year's 52,974 cases. The crime rate in this category rose from 3.9 in 2021 to 4.8 in 2022. A staggering 64.8 per cent of the cases were motivated by fraud. Extortion followed at 5.5 per cent, and sexual exploitation constituted 5.2 per cent highlighting the pressing need for enhanced cybersecurity measures and public awareness.

Archana Nag to walk out of jail

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: 'Blackmailer' Archana Nag is all set to walk out of Jharpada Jail, with the Orissa High Court Monday granting her conditional bail in connection with a case registered by the ED.

In order to get bail, Justice Gourishankar Satapathy said, Nag will have to provide two sureties of ₹2 lakh each. "She

(Nag) will have to cooperate with the investigating agency. Besides, she will not provoke the witnesses and will have to share her contact details like mobile number and residence address with the investigating agency," Justice Satapathy said, adding that Nag will have to surrender her passport to the court.

Nag's lawyer Jaydeep Pal said his client will walk out of jail after completion of formalities,

most likely Wednesday.

The HC had April 11 this year granted bail to Nag in connection with a case registered with the Nayapalli police for allegedly blackmailing Odia film producer Akshaya Parija. Earlier, August 2, the court had granted bail to Nag in connection with a case registered with the Khandagiri police for allegedly employing her associate Shradhanjali Behera in her bid to honey-trap bigwigs.

ZPM dethrones MNF

In a first, Mizoram set to be ruled by a non-Congress and non-MNF government since its creation in 1987

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, Dec 4: The Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) stormed to power in Mizoram by dethroning the Mizo National Front (MNF) bagging 27 seats in the 40-member House Monday. The MNF won 10 seats, BJP (2) and Congress (1), Election Commission officials said.

MIZORAM POLLS Prominent ZPM winners include the party's CM face Lalduhoma, who secured the Serchhip seat defeating his MNF rival J Malsawmzuala Vanchhawng by 2,982 votes.

Chief Minister and MNF chief Zoramthanga lost to ZPM's Lalthansanga by 2,101 votes, the Election Commission said. He later called on Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati and submitted his resignation, officials said.

In the 2018 assembly elections, the

MNF had won 26 seats. This will be the first time in the history of Mizoram that the northeastern state will be ruled by a non-Congress and non-MNF government since its creation in 1987.

Nine out of 11 MNF ministers who contested the polls lost. Home Minister Lalchamliana did not contest the elections. The 73-year-old ZPM chief Lalduhoma first contested the Mizoram assembly polls on a Congress ticket in 1984, but lost to People's Conference party nominee Lalhmingthanga by a margin of 846 votes.

Lalduhoma, an ex-IPS officer who served as the in-charge of former prime minister Indira Gandhi's security, had earned the dubious distinction of being the first MP to be disqualified under the anti-defection law.

13 KILLED IN MANIPUR GUNFIGHT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Dec 4: At least 13 people, suspected to be the cadres of the outlawed PLA terror group, were killed after a gunfight in a remote border village of Manipur's Tengenoupal district Monday.

As soon as the information was shared with police, teams were dispatched to Leithu village, 15 km from the Myanmar border, where they found bodies of at

least 13 people, the officials said. Quoting some witnesses, the officials said that a gunfight had broken out Monday noon after which the bodies had been found.

Initial reports suggest that these could be cadres of the Valley-based insurgent group People's Liberation Army, whose ban under the UAPA was extended recently. The area has remained peaceful and was not touched by the ethnic conflict that rocked Manipur.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I'm very happy with the election result. Less work for us before 2024 election

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIAION
SENSEX	68699.52 ↑ 1218.33
NIFTY	20642.70 ↑ 374.80
DOLLAR	83.40 ↑ ₹0.04
EURO	90.79 ↓ ₹0.05
GOLD	₹62,700 ↓ ₹412
SILVER	₹75,761 ↓ ₹832

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	28.4°C	28.2°C
TEMP MIN	22.6°C	21.4°C
Humidity	71%	64%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light to moderate rain	

'Rizz' crowned Oxford Word of the Year

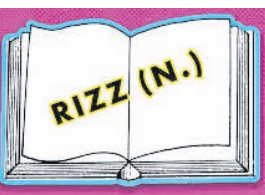
Defined as the ability to attract a romantic or sexual partner, the Gen Z slang is believed to be a shortened form of the word 'charisma'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Dec 4: Rizz, which implies romantic appeal, has been crowned 'Word of the Year 2023' by Oxford University Press (OUP) Monday as best reflective of the mood, ethos and preoccupations of the past year.

Rizz is a colloquial noun defined as "style, charm, or attractiveness; the ability to attract a romantic or sexual partner".

Etymologically, the term is believed to be a shortened form of the word "charisma", taken from the middle part of the word, which is an unusual word



formation pattern. "Rizz is a term that has boomed on social media and speaks to how language that enjoys intense popularity and currency within particular social communities — and even in some cases lose their popularity and become passe — can bleed into the mainstream," said Casper Grathwohl, President of Oxford Languages, OUP.

"This is a story as old as language itself, but stories of linguistic evolution and expansion that used to take years can now take weeks or months. The spike in usage data for rizz goes to prove that words and phrases that evolve from internet culture are increasingly becoming part of day-to-day vernacular and will continue to shape language trends in the future," he said.

OUP lists other examples of similar word formation patterns as fridge from refrigerator and flu from influenza. Rizz can also be used as a verb, in phrases such as "to rizz up", which means "to at-

tract, seduce, or chat up (a person)".

According to linguists, expansions into other parts of speech like this can indicate that a word is becoming more prominent in the language.

This year, OUP short-listed eight words based on widespread use and put them to the public to vote for their favourites last week. Through head-to-head competitions over a four-day voting period, the British public narrowed down the shortlist of contenders to four finalists: rizz, Swiftie, prompt, and situationship.

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leisure



ROBERT DOWNEY JR. NOT REPRISING IRON MAN ROLE

Hollywood star Robert Downey Jr will not be coming back as Iron Man in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, says Kevin Feige, president, Marvel Studios. Downey Jr. last played the role in 2019's *The Avengers: Endgame* when the superhero died, reports *deadline.com*.

MAREN MORRIS WANTS TO STAY SINGLE IN 2024

I Could Use a Love Song singer Maren Morris says she is happy to stay single next year. The 33-year-old split from husband Ryan Hurd - the father of her three-year-old son Hayes - in October after five years of marriage.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Your ability to let go things will reflect in your personal as well as your professional life. Today could be a significant day for you, and Ganesh advises you not to forget your special abilities. Make good use of them so that others too can benefit.

TAURUS
This day you will be prone to be stubborn and uncompromising in your business and professional dealings and thereby inviting unnecessary problems. Ganesh urges you to guard against this tendency and conduct yourself cordially and amiably with your colleagues and clients.

GEMINI
You need to break free from the shackles of your daily routine. Trying to finish all your tasks as per your schedule will give rise to unnecessary worry. To manage your time creatively is the best way to beat the stress. Talking to your elders is a good way to calm your shot nerves, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Your social prestige will go up. People will praise your personality traits and try to emulate you. You will be a role model, too. Ganesh feels that this will be highly profitable day for you.

LEO
You will try to take up new projects to the best of your abilities today. You will be able to successfully tackle all your tasks today. You will face a little instability in your personal relationships, but will be able to solve all issues successfully, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Today you will feel monetarily much stronger than you have ever felt, says Ganesh. You will realise the need to make monetary arrangements for some unforeseen financial instability that may occur in the future. Your leadership qualities will be appreciated by people around you.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today you will use your mental competency to complete all your work on time. You may not give complete attention to your family as you will be spending time in the office or at work. Your extraordinary intelligence will be showcased at work today. Ganesh says do not forget your family which has played a huge role in your success.

SCORPIO
Be vigilant; keep your eyes and ears open for all the events happening around you, says Ganesh. Your intuition is trying to tell you something, trust it. Think and act positively, the rest would fall in place.

SAGITTARIUS
Keeping all the work aside, you may be painting the town red today. Falling in love is exciting, isn't it? However, for all those who are already in a relationship, Ganesh shows a red signal. Avoid arguments with your loved one. He suggests, Impress 'the special one' with a bouquet of red roses and make up for all the petty fights during the day.

CAPRICORN
Opportunities don't knock on the door twice. Today, you'll answer the door and utilise the opportunity to the most, predicts Ganesh. Positive results will be visible and you'll stand a chance to overtake your competitors. Even if the competition is fierce and opponents try everything to pull you down, you'll not let them win the battle. Socially, you will be very popular today.

AQUARIUS
You have changed your approach towards life from materialism to mysticism. Your friends and family members are pleasantly surprised to see this change. Later on the day, you may plan to visit a temple or other religious places, foresees Ganesh.

PISCES
You are striving hard to influence your destiny. You are not going to kneel down without a fight against heavy odds. With persistent efforts you will succeed in achieving your goals. While victory is a given, hard work will be necessary.

In a first, Deepika attends Academy Museum Gala

Mumbai: Deepika Padukone is in attendance at the Academy Museum Gala in Los Angeles. She is the first Indian star to be invited to the prestigious event.

The guest list included big names, including Selena Gomez, Robert Downey Jr, Natalie Portman, Elizabeth Banks, Olivia Wilde, Danaï Gurira, Sandra Oh, Billie Eilish, Finneas O'Connell, Saoirse Ronan, Gemma Chan, Cara Delevingne, Kendall Jenner, Hailey Bieber, and others.

The Academy Museum Gala is the second biggest stage after the Oscars which is organised by the same board.

Earlier this year Deepika was seen on the stage at the Oscars to present the Indian song act.

Deepika Padukone attended the Academy Museum Gala 2023 in a one-shoulder gown

The event is the second biggest stage after the Oscars organised by the same board

and stole the spotlight with her sensational look. Deepika took to Instagram Stories, where she shared a string of pictures dressed in a dark purple velvet floor-sweeping gown with a plunging neckline. She completed her look for the event with some sparkly diamonds.

On the work front, Deepika had a fabulous year with *Pathaan* and *Jawan*. She will next be seen in *Fighter* alongside Hrithik Roshan and Anil Kapoor.

Deepika also has *Kalki 2898 AD* with Prabhas and Amitabh Bachchan.



Odia girl Lipika in BAFTA's Breakthrough list

The initiative aims at identifying creative talents from UK, USA and India and giving them access to professional training and coaching

Bhubaneswar: When the film industry in Odisha is struggling with a crisis of originality, in a stunning development, Odia filmmaker Lipika Singh Darai has been chosen as one of the ten participants from India for the prestigious BAFTA Breakthrough initiative.

Organised by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA), in partnership with Netflix, the initiative identifies exceptional creatives in film, games and television, and supports them at 'critical breakthrough career moments' by giving access to coaching and networking.

For Lipika, a multiple national-awards winner known for her documentaries like *Backstage* and *Night and Fear*, it is indeed a critical moment in career. "To make an independent film, having an independent voice in Odia is impossible at this point. It's not easy to get local funds or a local producer," says Darai who initially wanted her first fiction feature to be produced in Odisha.

"Looking at the state of independent films, I realised I need to expand my area of interest and get support of film fraternities like IFFR, Hubert Bals and

BAFTA," she says. Looking forward, as she hopes to gain collaborative opportunities for herself, she aims to support other filmmakers of the state, especially women as the local industry hasn't historically offered a friendly environment to women.

"I feel I need to start thinking about how we can build a creative eco-system. I really want to extend some support from my side as now I have some sort of experience and knowledge," she says.



Prachi opens up on her 'meal of memories'



Mumbai: Prachi Desai has revealed how Manoj Bajpayee and Naga Chaitanya Akkineni pampered her with sumptuous meals during the shoot of *Silence 2*, and *Dhootha* respectively.

Despite the diversity of the projects, both actors shared a heartwarming commitment to ensuring Prachi's well-being, particularly through the universal language of food.

On the set of *Dhootha*, Chaitanya emerged not only as a talented co-star but also as a culinary companion.

Beyond scenes and scripts, he took it upon himself to pamper Prachi with an array of delightful dishes from his cloud-kitchen.

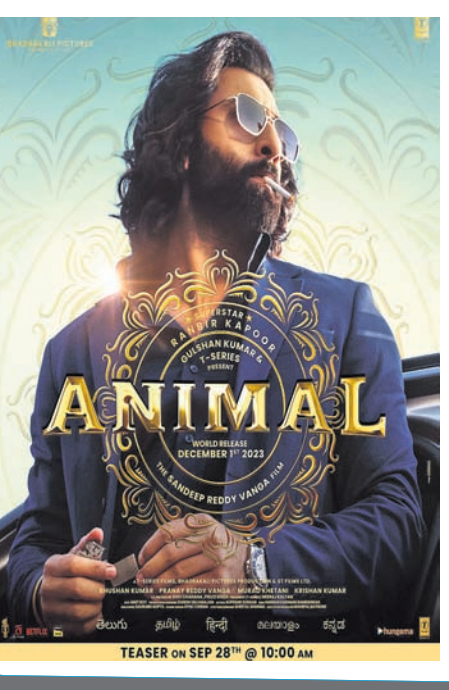
Switching gears to *Silence 2*, Prachi found herself under the nurturing wing of Manoj. Renowned for his generosity, Manoj took the art of co-star care to another level. Not only did he provide sage advice and acting wisdom, but he also ensured Prachi was well-fed.

From cooking sumptuous meals himself to exploring local delicacies, Manoj's thoughtful gestures translated into a culinary journey that paralleled their on-screen collaboration.

Talking about the same, the actress said: "Working with Naga and Manoj felt like sharing a meal of memories on and off-screen - where their kindness became the secret ingredient that made every project special." Ians

ANIMAL DOMINATES GLOBAL BOX-OFFICE

Los Angeles: Ranbir Kapoor's recently released film *Animal*, directed by Sandeep Vanga Reddy, has not just set the Indian box-office on fire but has also emerged as the Number 1 film globally surpassing the likes



of *Napoleon* and *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes* with \$42.1 million, according to data published by ComScore.

The film, which is gore galore and credits Ranbir as a superstar, features Ranbir in dual roles. It released across 38 global territories. The worldwide gross total includes \$6.1 million in North America where it was released across 850 locations and opened at Number 7, reports *Variety*.

In *Animal*, Ranbir plays the son of India's richest man (portrayed by Anil Kapoor) who takes on an antagonist played by Bobby Deol. The cast also includes Rashmika Mandanna.

As per *Variety*, in second position, Ridley Scott's Apple Original Films-produced and Sony Pictures-distributed action epic *Napoleon* collected \$35.7 million worldwide, including \$28.6 million internationally.

Napoleon is playing on more than 21,500 screens in 63 markets. The key market still to release is South Korea, where it releases on December 6. In third place, Lionsgate's *The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes* grossed an estimated \$29.4 million globally from 88 territories over the weekend, taking its international total to \$123 million and the global gross to \$244 million.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

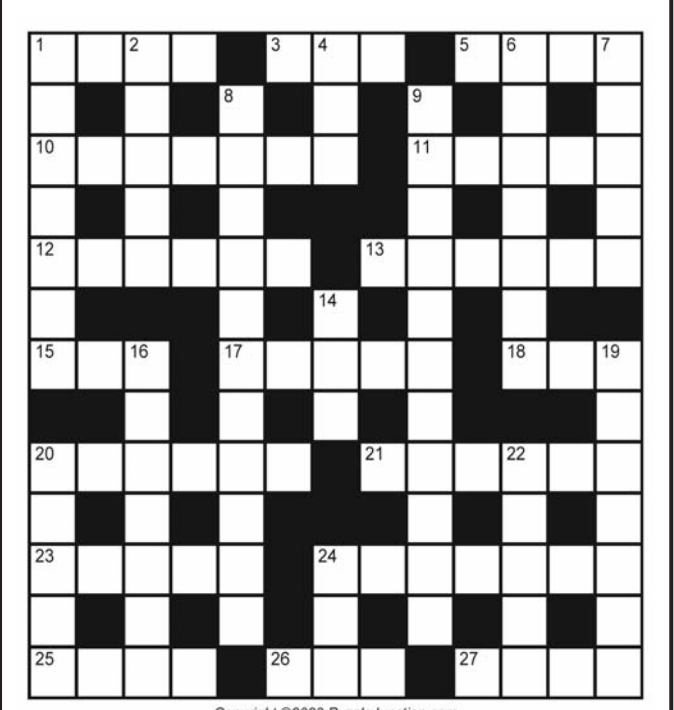


BREVITY



FUN post

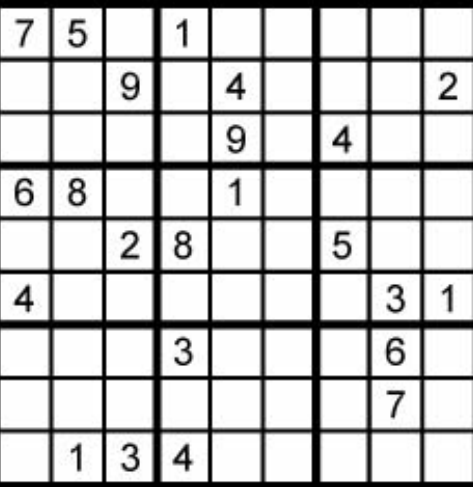
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Rooster's pride
 - 3 King topper
 - 5 Dovetail
 - 10 Shangri-la
 - 11 Foyer
 - 12 Acquire
 - 13 Position
 - 15 Small carpet
 - 17 Embankment
 - 18 Malaysian export
 - 20 Quatrain
 - 21 Muscular
 - 23 Whimsical
 - 24 Captivate
 - 25 Neutral colour
 - 26 Hideout
 - 27 Radiate
 - 7 Big name in games
 - 8 Azure blue
 - 9 Egotist's hope (6,5)
 - 14 Lab eggs
 - 16 Alluring beauty
 - 19 Carelessness
 - 20 Move furtively
 - 22 Intense hatred
 - 24 Stinger
- Down**
- 1 Frankness
 - 2 Worth
 - 4 Chinese tea
 - 6 Gone but not forgotten

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

MARCH TO THE LORD

Devotees from Niali carry offerings in traditional baskets for Srimandir deities in Puri ahead of Prathamasthami, Monday



Economic offences northward in state

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Odisha witnessed an increase in economic crimes in 2022 as compared to the previous year.

As per the latest data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) in 'Crime in India in 2022', with 6,229 cases, economic crimes in the state rose by 1.86 per cent last year as against 6,115 cases registered in 2021. The year 2020 saw 4,028 incidents of offences involving financial crimes.

Experts said the rise in the economic offences in the state is a reflection of the national scenario which they attributed to capacious increase in frauds and counterfeiting.

India recorded 1,93,385 incidents of economic offences in 2022, an 11.1 per cent rise over 2021 when the country saw 1,74,013 cases of such offences. In 2020, 1,45,754 cases of economic offences were reported from across the nation, revealed the NCRB data.

Rajasthan reported the maximum of 27,848 economic offences in the country, followed by Telangana (26,321) and Uttar Pradesh (22,409).

Of the three categories of economic offences - criminal breach of trust (Sections 406 to 409 of IPC), FCF (forgery, cheating and

Odisha sees 8,240 cases of crime against children



Odisha witnessed 8,240 incidents of crime against children in 2022, a 4.31 per cent rise from the previous year, according to the latest statistics released by the NCRB.

According to NCRB's 'Crime in India in 2022', Odisha registered 8,240 cases of crime against children in 2022 as against 7,899 such incidents in 2021. In 2020 when Covid pandemic gripped the nation, Odisha saw 6,330 such cases. The data revealed India reg-

istered 1,62,449 cases of crime against children in 2022, an 8.7 per cent rise over 2021 when the country saw 1,49,404 such cases. The year 2020 witnessed 1,28,531 cases of crime against children.

Maximum cases of crime against children in 2022 were related to kidnapping and abduction and under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. Odisha saw at least 2,423 cases filed under the POCSO Act, 2012 in 2022 as compared to 63,414 cases recorded nationally.

Similarly, 5,606 incidents of kidnapping and abduction were registered in Odisha in 2022, while as many as 74,284 such cases were recorded nationally across the country.

fraud) (Sections 420, 465, 468, 471, 231-243, 255 and 489A to 489E of IPC) and counterfeiting (Sections 231-243, 255 & 489A-489E of IPC), FCF accounted for maximum of such cases (1,70,901), followed by criminal breach of trust (21,814) and coun-

terfeiting (670) in 2022.

Odisha followed the national pattern in categories of economic offences. FCF cases (5,352) topped the state's list, followed by 865 criminal breach of trust incidents and 12 counterfeiting cases last year.



CULTURAL FETE: Artistes from Assam perform Bihu during an event organised at Baliyatra in Cuttack, Monday

PIC: RAKISHORE MOHANTY

BALIYATRA EXTENDED TILL TODAY

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Keeping in view the rousing public interest, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday extended the Cuttack Baliyatra by one day. The fair will now conclude December 5 instead of December 4.

The Chief Minister directed the Cuttack district administration to take necessary steps in this regard.

The maritime trade fair in the Silver City has now become a major attraction as people in large numbers throng the bank of Mahanadi river every year.

The fair, which started on the day of Kartik Purnima, was supposed to end Monday. However, it was extended by one day and will now culminate Tuesday.

The historic Baliyatra got off to a colourful start November 27. Finance Minister Bikram

Keshari Arukha had inaugurated the eight-day festival at Gadagadia Ghat on the bank of Mahanadi river, adjacent to the 10th-century Barabati Fort ruins.

Spread over more than 20 acres, the two fairgrounds have housed more than 2,000 makeshift stalls, officials said. Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) has allotted nearly 450 stalls to beneficiaries of self-employment schemes.

Rural producers and artisans

have packed their stalls with ethnic items, ranging from products made of golden grass and terracotta to wooden and bamboo items.

Food stalls at Baliyatra emerged as major crowd pullers as revellers were seen crowding stalls selling 'Thunka Puri' and 'Dahi Bara'. Rides such as swings, merry-go-rounds and giant wheels were seen attracting youth and children in large numbers.

Sasmit appointed to VCs' panel for 4th time

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Dec 4: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Sasmit Patra was Monday appointed to the panel of vice-chairpersons (VCs) for the fourth time by Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhanekar.

Patra has been appointed to the panel for the fourth time. He was appointed to the panel of VCs for the first time in 2020 by then Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu and was reappointed in 2022.

Significantly, Dhanekar Monday reconstituted the panel of vice-chairpersons comprising eight members with the appointment of 50 per cent women MPs.

The chairman appointed Congress MP Phuloo Devi Netam, and BJP MPs Phangnon Konyak, Darshana Singh and Sonal Mansingh, BJD's Sasmit Patra, YSR Congress Party's V Vijayasa Reddy, Trinamool Congress' Sukhendu Sekhar Ray and Independent MP Kartikeya Sharma.

It is to be mentioned here that the vice-chairpersons preside over the Upper House in the absence of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman.

Michaung: Heavy rain in 5 districts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Five districts in south Odisha are likely to receive heavy rainfall with severe cyclonic storm 'Michaung' all set to make landfall in Andhra Pradesh coast Tuesday.

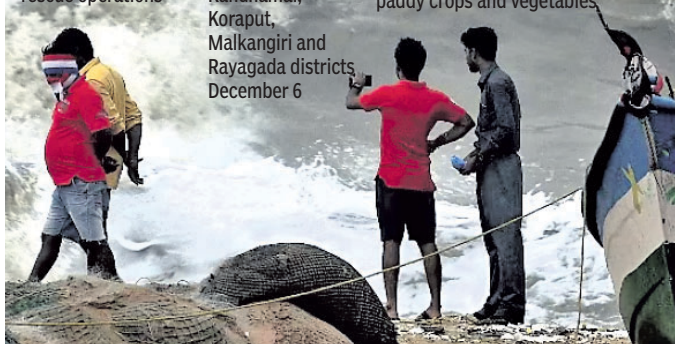
Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu said five teams of ODRAF (Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force) and eight fire service teams have been deployed for immediate rescue operations in Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati and Ganjam districts which are going to experience heavy downpour due to the impact of the approaching storm.

The severe cyclone over the Bay of Bengal is set to make landfall between Nellore and Machilipatnam, close to Bapatla, in Andhra Tuesday morning.

The system was moving in the sea at a speed of 10 kmph and lay centered around 80km southeast of Nellore, 120km north-northeast of Chennai, 210km south of Bapatla and 250km south-southwest of Machilipatnam at 5:30pm, the IMD said in its latest bulletin.

"It is likely to intensify gradually and move nearly northwards almost parallel and close to the southern Andhra Pradesh

- Five teams of ODRAF and eight teams of fire service were deployed in 5 districts - Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati and Ganjam - for immediate rescue operations
- Yellow warning of heavy rain issued for one or two places in Ganjam, Gajapati, Puri, Nayagarh, Khurda, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kandhamal, Koraput, Malkangiri and Rayagada districts, December 6
- Two Chennai-bound flights from Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar were cancelled Monday
- East Coast Railways has cancelled movement of 60 trains
- There is a possibility of damage to paddy crops and vegetables



The severe cyclone over the Bay of Bengal is set to make landfall between Nellore and Machilipatnam in AP

coast and cross it between Nellore and Machilipatnam, close to Bapatla, during the forenoon of December 5 as a severe cyclonic storm with a maximum sustained wind speed of 90-100 kmph, gusting to 110 kmph," the IMD said. Though there will be no major

impact on Odisha, IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said the eastern state will receive light to moderate rainfall Monday night and the intensity will further increase and heavy rain is expected Tuesday.

Additional SRC Padamanav Behera said Odisha is likely to receive rainfall in the southern districts. There is a possibility of damage to paddy crops and vegetables in the state. The Agriculture department has advised farmers to procure grains in the five districts.

Two Chennai-bound flights from Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar were cancelled as heavy rain battered Tamil Nadu Monday under the influence of the cyclone. The East Coast Railways has cancelled the movement of 60 trains in view of the cyclone.

The weatherman also issued a yellow warning of heavy rain for one or two places in Ganjam, Gajapati, Puri, Nayagarh, Khurda, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kandhamal, Koraput, Malkangiri and Rayagada districts on December 6. The IMD also warned of squally weather conditions, with wind speed reaching 35-45 kmph, gusting to 55 kmph along and off the Odisha coast in Gajapati, Ganjam, Puri and Jagatsinghpur districts from the evening of December 4, and it is likely to gradually increase to 40-50 kmph, gusting to 60 kmph, from the evening of December 5 for the subsequent 12 hours. It would gradually decrease thereafter.

Fishermen have been advised not to venture into deep sea along and off the Odisha coast from December 4-6.

Meanwhile, farmers have started harvesting their standing matured crops as advised by the state government, an official said.

Naveen greets Modi for BJP's victory in 3 states

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for BJP's victory in three states in the recent Assembly elections.

Patnaik, who is also the president of the ruling Biju Janata Dal in Odisha, spoke to the PM over phone and conveyed his greetings to Modi, an official release issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said.

The saffron party has won recently held Assembly elections in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, the results of which were announced Sunday.

However, the BJD also asserted that the results will have no impact on Odisha politics or the electoral prospects of the ruling party in the eastern state.

"No state has a leader of the stature of Naveen Patnaik. The recent state assembly elections will have no impact on Odisha, according to my assessment," BJD MP Amar Patnaik said in a statement.

The BJP is the main opposition party in Odisha.

In a press conference, BJP Odisha unit president Manmohan Samal claimed that the saffron party will form the government in Odisha next year.

Elections to Odisha Assembly are due along with Lok Sabha polls early next year.

Samal claimed that Modi has immense popularity in Odisha and that will reflect on the polls. He alleged that the state government was knee-deep in corruption. "The Modi government has sanctioned nearly ₹19 lakh crore for Odisha in the last nine years but the funds were not utilised properly. Many youths have migrated to other states for work," he said.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee president Sarat Pattanayak, on the other hand claimed the grand old party will oust the BJD from power.

"The Congress defeated a regional party in Telangana and this will be repeated in Odisha," Pattanayak said, adding people have now realised the BJD and the BJP were two sides of a coin.

COP28 prez speaks out after 'no science' remarks spark fury

SULTAN AL JABER SAID COMMENTS HE MADE CLAIMING THERE WAS 'NO SCIENCE' BEHIND CUTTING FOSSIL FUELS WERE MISREPRESENTED

IT'S THE LATEST CONTROVERSY CREATED BY THE COP28 PRESIDENT, WHO IS ALSO CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE STATE-OWNED ABU DHABI NATIONAL OIL COMPANY

The head of the UN climate change summit in Dubai, Sultan al Jaber, sparked fury among climate leaders after saying there was no science to suggest phasing out fossil fuels will limit global warming to 1.5C.

Addressing the controversy over the remarks, the Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology of UAE stressed that the phasing out of fossil fuels was essential.

"Everything this presidency has been working on, continues to work on, is focused on and centered around the science," the COP28 president was quoted as saying in a press conference by British free-to-air television news channel and organization, SKY News.

He said his comments had

been misrepresented to get maximum coverage and hit out at what he called the "constant and repeated attempts to undermine the work of the COP28 presidency".

The controversial remarks were made during an online question and answer session last month, a video obtained by The Guardian revealed Sunday.

He was replying to Mary Robinson, former Irish president and a former UN climate envoy, who said nations needed to commit to phasing out fossil fuel usage.

He said: "There is no science out there, or no scenario out there, that says the phase-out of fossil fuel is what's going to achieve 1.5C..."

"A phase-out of fossil fuel, in my view, is inevitable, it is es-



sential. But we need to be real, serious and pragmatic about it."

Al Jaber added later: "Please help me, show me the roadmap for a phase-out of fossil fuel that will allow for sustainable socioeconomic development, unless

you want to take the world back into caves." Scientists and campaign groups reacted with anger to his remarks.

Teressa Anderson, from ActionAid International, described his comments as "com-

pletely divorced from the reality of hundreds of millions of people on the frontline of climate catastrophe".

Mohamed Adow, director of Power Shift Africa, added: "The recent comments from the COP28 president show how entrenched he is in fossil fuel fantasy and is clearly determined that this COP doesn't do anything to harm the interests of the oil and gas industry." Meanwhile, Bill Hare, the chief executive of Climate Analytics, told The Guardian: "This is an extraordinary, revealing, worrying and belligerent exchange. 'Sending us back to caves' is the oldest of fossil fuel industry tropes: it's verging on climate denial."

It is the latest controversy created by the COP28 president, who is also chief executive of

the state-owned Abu Dhabi National Oil Company.

Critics have questioned his suitability for the role, due to his background in the oil industry. He has also faced allegations that the UAE wanted to use the summit to strike new oil and gas deals - claims he has denied and described as 'false'.

The 2015 Paris Agreement aims to limit the world's average surface temperature to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. Global temperatures have already increased by more than 1.2C since 1880, it is estimated.

The limit is seen as crucial to stave off the more dangerous impacts of climate change - with reducing or eliminating harmful emissions widely seen as the best way of achieving the goal.

Physical disability not a barrier to growth: CM



Chief Minister said that the society and the family of differently-abled persons should bring transformation in their attitude to enable them to march ahead with self-confidence

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Physical disability is not a barrier in individual growth and success. Everything depends on attitude and will power, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) here, Sunday.

Speaking at an event on virtual mode here, the Chief Minister said the society and the family of differently-abled persons should bring transformation in their attitude to enable them to march ahead with self-confidence. They must be encouraged at all levels, he said.

"The people with special needs have shown their potential in various fields. They have created their identity in art, literature, education, sports and sev-

eral other fields. The state government has regularly encouraged them with special welfare schemes and will continue to do so in future also," Patnaik said.

The CM praised internationally-acclaimed badminton player Pramod Bhagat as a youth icon of the country and urged the PwDs to identify their potential and establish themselves.

Minister of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Ashok Panda spoke on activities and programmes undertaken by the government for the welfare of PwDs, SDG targets, enhancement of opportunities in the field of employment, self-employment, skill development, digital literacy and use of technology in different interventions.

Principal Secretary of Skilled Development and Technical Education Usha Padhee said the PwDs have become inspirational sources for the society in spite of their challenges and barriers. BMC Mayor Sulochana Das, MLA and Bhubaneswar (North) Sushant Kumar Rout, also spoke on the occasion.

Bisnupada Sethi, Principal Secretary, SSEPD department, in his welcome address, described the significance of the celebration and emphasised on social jus-

LEGAL AID CAMP AT BJB COLLEGE

Bhubaneswar: International Day of Persons with Disabilities was observed at BJB College, by Khurda District Legal Services Authority in collaboration with district administration. A mega legal aid camp was also organised with an aim of extending various government benefits to persons with disabilities. The camp was inaugurated by Acting Chief Justice of High Court of Orissa-Legal Services Authority Justice Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi. As many as 16 stalls were constructed for the camp and a legal aid stall was installed for PwDs making them aware of their constitutional rights. A total of 10 wheel chairs, 5 tricycles, 2 hearing aids, a laptop, one artificial limb and pension and marriage assistance were given to the PwDs on this occasion.

Along with inclusive growth also spoke on the occasion. The three-day mega event included a huge assembly of PwD students, teachers, NGO representatives, social engineers and civil society workers.

In a colourful function at KIIT University Campus to mark the event, the guests on dias deliberated on various issues related to PwDs such as the theme of the year, activities and programmes undertaken by the government for their welfare, SDG targets, enhancement of opportunities in the field of employment, self-employment, skill development and even digital literacy and use of technology in different interventions for their welfare.



FESTIVE FERVOUR: Heavy rush of people at Market Building in Unit II area of Bhubaneswar, Monday, on the eve of Prathamastami, an occasion marked by prayers for the life and prosperity of the eldest child in the family

OP PHOTO

MCL's hosp named after freedom fighter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: The state government Monday renamed Nehru Shatabdi Hospital of Mahanadi Coalfield Ltd (MCL) as 'Pabitra Mohan Pradhan Government Hospital'.

The state health and family welfare department informed about the development in a post on X. Pradhan was a freedom fighter and served as deputy chief minister of Odisha.

"After careful consideration, #Odisha Government has approved to name the Nehru Shatabdi Hospital of MCL as 'Pabitra Mohan Pradhan Government Hospital', which will function as the future teaching hospital of the proposed medical college," the department said.

According to the notification by the department, the state government had approved setting up of a new medical college in the name of 'Pabitra Mohan Pradhan Medical College & Hospital' at Talcher in August 2023.

In July, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had announced that the proposed medical college at Talcher in Angul district will be named after freedom fighter and former deputy CM Pradhan.

No capping required on iron ore production in Odisha: Centre

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Dec 4: The Union Ministry of Mines has opposed imposition of capping on production of iron ore in Odisha stating that it would be highly detrimental towards achieving the common developmental goals of the nation.

The ministry has filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court in pursuant to its order dated August 14 asking the Union government to decide whether a cap on mining can be put in Odisha or not. It told the apex court that Odisha is the backbone of iron ore production in the country and contributes more than half of the total production. Odisha's share in the total iron ore production of the country was 54.46 per cent in 2022-23.

"It is clear that no capping is warranted on the production of iron ore in the state of Odisha," the affidavit said.

It said steel being an important pillar in achieving the economic goals of the nation and in making India self-reliant, any such capping would be highly detrimental to achieving the



common developmental goals of the nation.

"Therefore, Ministry of Mines is of the considered view that no capping is warranted on production of iron ore in Odisha," the affidavit said, adding, there was no requirement for any study on capping on iron ore production by the Central Empowered Committee (CEC).

While hearing the matter on Monday, the apex court asked the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to give its view on whether iron ore mining in Odisha can be capped, keeping sustainable development and intergenerational equity in mind.

The ministry argued that the resources of any mineral are

not static and with constant efforts at exploration the resources keep getting augmented. The ministry termed the petitioner's contention about scarcity of iron ore in future as wholly unfounded.

"In comparison to the total production of 1,724.73 million tonnes of iron ore in Odisha during the period 2000-01 to 2022-23, the resource augmentation of iron ore in Odisha has been 5,557.24 million tonnes during the corresponding period. The resource augmentation of iron ore in Odisha has been at the rate of 3.22 times the rate of production of iron ore during 2000-01 to 2022-23," the ministry said.

The Union ministry also asserted that out of total Obvious Geological Potential (OGP) area or potential mining bearing area identified by the Geological Survey of India in Odisha, only 28.48 per cent has been covered under exploration with assessment of mineral content. It added that 71.52 per cent of the OGP area for iron ore in the state is yet to be geologically explored to estimate the iron ore resources of the state.

Medical boards at dist level for transgenders

Bhubaneswar: The state government has set up medical boards at the district level to assist transgender persons, a health department order said. The Health and Family Welfare department has constituted medical boards at district level for consultation, treatment and counselling facilities for transgender persons during their sex reassignment surgery, it said. The medical boards have been set up as per the recommendation made by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to central and state authorities. "As per the advisory issued by NHRC for ensuring the welfare of transgender persons to the union and state government, in order to enhance the welfare and rights of transgender persons, a district level medical board is hereby constituted...to assist transgender persons regarding their health issues," said the order issued by the department on December 1.

Energy sustainability conclave 'ESCON' held



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: A state level energy sustainability conclave "ESCON-2023" was organised recently at the auditorium of Trident Academy of Technology. The conclave was inaugurated by chief guest retired IRS officer Sivapada Swain. GRIDCO Managing Director Trilochan Panda and GRIDCO Director (Finance & Corporate Affairs) GB Swain were the guests of honour.

Four technical sessions were held on this occasion that include 'Renewable Energy in Odisha - A Post Policy Overview',

'Intelligent Efficiency in Energy - Go Smart and Save Energy', 'Redefining the Future Mobility - Carbonless with EV and Hydrogen' and 'Challenges for the Grid - Managing the Intermittent Green Energy Injections'.

Panelists from senior executives from different government bodies, energy advisory and academia conducted the sessions. According to the delegates and students, the sessions were highly educative and eye-openers for them regarding the role of energy in climate change mitigation and checking the global warming.

Preparatory meet for Skill Conclave at WSC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: A preparatory meeting for the upcoming 2nd Odisha Skill Conclave was held here Monday at the World Skill Centre under the chairmanship of Skill Development and Technical Education Minister Pritiranjana Gharai in presence of department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee and other key officials.

In the second edition, the conclave aims to foster a dynamic ecosystem that empowers the youth with relevant skills, aligning them with the evolving demands of the job market under the NUA Odisha umbrella.

At the meeting, the Minister



outlined the strategic vision for the Skill Conclave, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive and inclusive approach to skill development expressing his hope for it to serve as a platform to bridge the gap between education and industry.

"He also assured commitment to incorporating innovative ini-

tiatives in skill development, including the integration of emerging technologies and fostering entrepreneurship among the youth. The conclave is anticipated to showcase pioneering models for skill enhancement," informed an official.

Given the diverse landscape of Odisha, the preparatory meeting

discussed the importance of tailoring skill development programmes to address regional needs. Special attention will be given to sectors that have high growth potential in specific regions of the state.

"The meeting laid groundwork for the agenda of the Skill Conclave, which will include panel discussions, workshops, and interactive sessions. Renowned experts and industry leaders will share insights on trends, challenges, and opportunities in the realm of skill development," informed the official.

As per sources, the time and venue for Odisha Skill Conclave will be decided in upcoming meetings.

Plastic pollution from cigarettes costs \$26bn per year globally

The costs of environmental pollution caused by plastics in cigarette butts and packaging amount to an estimated USD 26 billion every year, according to a study.

The analysis, published in the journal Tobacco Control, found the costs to be USD 186 billion every 10 years—adjusted for inflation—in waste management and marine ecosystem damage worldwide.

These costs may seem small compared with the overall economic and human toll of tobacco, but they are cumulative and preventable, the researchers

said. Although great strides have been made in developing policies to curb or ban single use plastics around the globe, tobacco's plastic has been overlooked, they said.

The team noted that this is despite the fact that cigarette filters—the main component of cigarette butts—are the most common item of rubbish collected on the planet. And they are made of single use plastic.

The researchers drew on currently available public data sources for cigarette sales, clean-up costs, and plastic waste on land and sea.



These sources included the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Tobacco Atlas, and the World Wildlife Fund. The researchers

The analysis, published in the journal Tobacco Control, found the costs to be USD 186 billion every 10 years—adjusted for inflation—in waste management and marine ecosystem damage worldwide

The team noted the fact that cigarette filters—the main component of cigarette butts—are the most common item of rubbish collected on the planet and they are made of single use plastic

estimated the annual and 10-year projections of the environmental and economic costs of tobacco plastic.

Ten-year projections were included because cigarette butts

are reported to take 10 years to degrade. The researchers estimated that the annual economic cost of cigarette plastics waste is around USD 26 billion, made up of USD 20.7 billion in marine ecosystem damage and USD 5 billion in waste management costs, adding up to USD 186 billion over 10 years.

"Although this amount is small compared with the annual economic losses from tobacco (USD 1.4 trillion per year) and may appear insignificant compared with the 8 million deaths attributable to tobacco each year, these environmental costs should not be

downplayed as these are accumulating and are preventable," said Deborah K Sy, from Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control, Thailand.

Countries with the highest number of cigarette butts are mostly low and middle income countries—the same where the 'leakage' rate for plastics into the environment, thought to be between 1 and 14 per cent, is likely higher, she adds.

The costs of tobacco product plastic pollution are likely highest in China, Indonesia, Japan, Bangladesh and the Philippines, the estimates suggest.

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Ring-road project pushed into uncertainty

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, Dec 4: Construction of a portal frame bridge over the Mahanadi river to save Sonepur town from regular floods has run into rough water.

The Odisha government undertook a plan to construct a ring road around this town with the bridge and the foundation stone for it was laid by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in 2011.

PORTAL FRAME BRIDGE IN SUBARNAPUR DIST



It has written a letter to super-intendent engineer Damodar Kaibarta of Works department urging him to cancel the old agreement and return the earnest money deposited.

The bridge was scheduled for completion by 2022. However, only 10 per cent of the project has been completed, sources said.

Sources said that the Water Resources department had constructed an embankment to protect the residents from floods as well as to address the burgeoning population and traffic problems in this town.

However, work on the portal frame bridge from Kumbharpada to Dasamati ghat is yet to be

completed. The 1,150 metres long bridge is most vital component of the whole project. The Works department had floated tenders amounting to ₹56.90 crore four years back for this purpose.

Sources also informed that so far ₹5 crore has been paid to the agency involved in construction work. District Collector Bimalendu Ray pulled up the agency after reports about slow pace of work on the bridge appeared in media.

Sitanshu Mishra, president of 'Zilla Sachetan Nagarik Manch' termed the disruption of work as 'unfortunate'. "The agency went slow on the project after being selected. The Works department also neglected and took a lot of time in submitting the project designs due to which work has stopped," he added.

Elephant carcass found, electrocution suspected

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Dec 4: Forest department officials Monday recovered the decomposed body of a female elephant from the Rajia reserve forest under Champua range in Keonjhar division.

Officials arrived at such a conclusion because the carcass was found lying beneath a 33KV line touching a non-insulated stay wire. They added that carcass was approximately 15 days old.

On being informed, divisional forest officer, HD Dhanraj along with officials and veterinarians rushed to the spot Monday noon and launched a probe. It has been alleged that officials got the information late due to lack of proper patrolling and monitoring in the forests.



Assistant Conservator of Forests Ashok Das said that a detailed investigation has been launched to find out the reasons behind the delayed reporting of the incident. He asserted that action will be taken against those found guilty.

Sources said that elephants in Champua range are spreading panic and destroying paddy crops since the past few months. As a result, man-animal conflict is increasing day by day. The villagers are spending sleepless nights to protect their crops. Despite efforts, the animals

are entering the villages to eat paddy. A minor boy Sunday sustained serious injuries in an elephant attack in Champua area.

Dhanraj meanwhile said that prima facie it appears to be case of electrocution. "The carcass is more than 15 days old and it has fully decomposed." Dhanraj said. He said that negligence of TPN-ODL staff in properly insulating the wires and lines are resulting in the increase in electrocution deaths of tuskers.

Rape, murder mystery of woman cracked; 5 arrested

PNN & AGENCIES

Phulbani, Dec 4: A man along with his four friends allegedly raped his sister and then killed her in Kandhamal district, police said here Monday. The gruesome incident took place in Chakapad police station area November 3, but the man and his accomplices were arrested Saturday, police added.

The 25-year-old victim came to know that his brother was having an illicit relationship with his sister-in-law. She asked him to end it and threatened she would inform others about it. To prevent such a development, the accused hatched a plan to eliminate his sister, police said.

On the day of the incident, the woman went to a nearby forest to collect Siali leaves. Her elder brother was also there with his cows. The accused called four friends to the forest and all got drunk. Under the influence of alcohol, they took turns in raping the victim, police said.

As the woman fought back, they strangled her, and then attacked her with an axe, killing her on the spot, informed Lalit Mohan Sagar, the inspector-in-charge of Chakapad police station said.

The brother also lodged a missing person's complaint with the police November 6, Sagar added.

The woman's decomposed body was found in the forest November 7. During post-mortem, it was found that she had been raped by multiple people and then killed, Sagar said. The police launched an investigation and finally manage to identify all the accused, he added.

OSHB's callousness adds to house owners' woes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Dec 4: The entire functioning of the Odisha State Housing Board here is nothing but hogwash. Besides, its closure looks imminent as the staff strength of this once vibrant office has reduced to tokenism with no new visible project here.

The office, set up here in 1975, had undertaken three massive housing projects to satiate the needs of the city. "But, today this is nothing but a skeletal representation. The office is just for the sake of tokenism. It also can't function with such a meagre staff strength," said an aggrieved house owner here, who is waiting to get a transfer of the property to his

name. He again said, "For every minor work one has to go to Bhubaneswar as the staff here can't do anything. Also even for the smallest of work, one has to grease their palms."

"Why one shall run to Bhubaneswar when there are over 5000 house owners in Rourkela?" asked Bimal Bisi, president of Odisha Housing Board Land and House Owners Association (OHBHLOA).

Today there are only six staff in the Rourkela office, which includes one assistant engineer Budheswar Oram and two clerical staff and rest sub-staff. At present Odisha has over 40,000 housing board houses of which 25,000 are in Bhubaneswar. Here in Rourkela, there are three projects, all completed long back. The Basanti Colony project, which started in 1975, has 2,367 houses.



The Chhend Phase-I-II-III have 1035, 832 and 972 houses, the total of which comes to 5,206 houses on 310 acres of land. All these four projects helped bring a turnaround in the housing board's financial status.

The office here was earlier a divisional one. "Next only to Bhubaneswar is Rourkela where so many houses have been constructed and the Birsa Munda project has been shelved. However, project after project is coming up in

Bhubaneswar," said Bisi. He further questioned, "Is Rourkela the stepchild of the government or it is outside the state?"

Rourkela has a heavy demand for houses. After the completion of the Chhend projects, in the early 1990s' no new one has come up here. Officers come here on posting and go away within six months and during that period they hardly attend office," alleged Bisi.

"Two big apartment complex projects got shelved due to lack of political will and bureaucratic meddling," informed Bisi. "I had a couple of meetings with the chairman and general manager of the housing board, explaining the plight of the house owners and regarding new projects. They listened to me and promised the sky but nothing happened," said Bisi.

Paper Publication notice with details of a court case and summons to defendant.

IND BARATH ENERGY (UTKAL) LIMITED PUBLIC NOTICE regarding transmission line work and safety regulations.

UTKAL GRAMEEN BANK POSSESSION NOTICE regarding a security interest in property.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RENGALI LEFT BANK CANAL DIVISION, e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE No. RLBCD-P_-04/2023-24.

UTKAL GRAMEEN BANK POSSESSION NOTICE regarding multiple security interests in property.

Lifer to man for killing IIC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Aska, Dec 4: A local court here convicted Monday a person in the murder of Shergad police station IIC Manoranjan Mishra and sentenced him to life imprisonment. The convict was identified as Samir Panda. Additional District and Sessions Judge Prabir Kumar Choudhury also slapped a penalty of ₹10,000 on him, apart from the prison term. In default, Samir has to undergo an additional four months of rigorous imprisonment, the judge observed while delivering the order.

The court sentenced Samir under various sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC). This was stated by special public prosecutor Trilochan Parida and government advocates Sudhanshu Kumar Panda and Surya Prakash Rao. Parida and his associates pleaded the matter on behalf of the Odisha government.

It should be pointed out that the then IIC of Shergad police station, Manoranjan was killed on the night of November 26, 2010.

Earlier, among the three accused including Samir, the court had sentenced Susant Behera to life imprisonment. However, it had acquitted another accused Sunil Behera for lack of proper evidence. Now Samir has been given the same prison term as that of Susant. The court also directed the government to hand over the penalty amount to the slain police official's wife.

Elephants trample 2 farmers to death

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 4: Wild elephants trampled to death two farmers at Jaritapu village in Tangi block of Khordha district here late Sunday night. The deceased were identified as Krushna Chandra Pradhan of Pariorada village and Laxmidhar Behera of Bariko village in Khurda district.

Three wild elephants have been seen wandering near Bariko village in Tangi forest range for the last few days. The farmers of nearby villages gathered in the paddy fields to protect the crops from the jumbos. The deceased persons who also went there to drive away the elephants and protect their paddy crop did not return till late night. The villagers found their bodies in the rice field Monday morning.

Sources stated that the wild elephants trampled Krushna and Laxmidhar while the duo was sitting in a field to protect the crops.

Informed, the police and forest officials reached the spot. "Our staff was present near the spot and they also stopped the villagers from going near the elephants and the paddy fields. However, they went to their fields without paying heed to the advice of the forest officials," said Divisional Forest Officer Poornima P.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, GAJAPATI, PARLAKHEMUNDI NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement.

FOCUS STATE POLLS

VERDICT & AFTERMATH



The Congress confronts a formidable adversary in the entrenched BJP, which has maintained a decade-long hold at the Centre and across multiple states

cautionary signal for these regional players. The Congress confronts a formidable adversary in the entrenched BJP, which has maintained a decade-long hold at the Centre and across multiple states. The BJP commands considerable resources, including political leverage, a disciplined cadre, substantial financial assets, and substantial media support. The Congress confronts an intricate array of internal hurdles necessitating a comprehensive overhaul in leadership, organisational structure, and ideological positioning. Reinstating public trust demands a cohesive agenda and a definitive vision for the nation. Strengthening alliances within the Opposition, forming a unified front against the BJP and NDA, stands as a pivotal strategy. The party's focus extends to mobilising and galvanising its workforce, appealing to diverse societal segments—especially urban, middle-class, and youthful demographics—whose affiliation with the party has wavered.

As the 2024 Lok Sabha elections loom, the Congress faces a formidable challenge from PM Modi and the BJP, demanding rectification of weaknesses and deficits. Resuscitating its fortunes is imperative, establishing itself as a robust and effective Opposition force is crucial for the Congress' resurgence and relevance in the political landscape.

The impact of this verdict on the INDIA alliance remains to be fully understood. The unexpected turn against Congress' expectations implies a shift in its bargaining power within the coalition. The party will likely need to negotiate and collaborate more closely with alliance partners such as RJD, JD(U), TMC, SP, and AAP, respecting and considering their agendas and objectives moving forward.

The writer is a political strategist.

In recent state Assembly polls across Chhattisgarh, MP, Mizoram, Rajasthan, and Telangana, a clear verdict has reshaped the political landscape, affirming BJP's dominance in MP with increased representation while snatching power from Congress in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. However, Congress has experienced a loss of control in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan while securing authority in Telangana. This electoral outcome signifies BJP's reinforced position in north and Congress' strengthened foothold in south.

The electoral dynamics have presented both national parties with formidable challenges. BJP faces the uphill task of expanding its influence in south, where it lost power, while Congress grapples with reclaiming its presence in north following electoral setbacks. Nevertheless, this electoral judgement reveals a geographical confinement for both BJP and Congress. This scenario presents a multitude of challenges for both entities, particularly in light of the forthcoming 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

The resounding success of BJP in MP, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan is poised to reshape the political narrative and policy trajectory of the nation. The BJP's decisive victories in these states solidify its political supremacy in the central region, amplifying the party's sway and establishing it as a formidable player in the broader spectrum of national politics. This fortified position is likely to empower the BJP to play a more assertive role in shaping key national policies, influencing legislative agendas, and crafting governance strategies. The triumph stands as a potent validation of the BJP's resonance and electoral mandate, amplifying the party's credibility and signaling sustained backing for its leadership, vision, and governance track record at the state level.

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However, following the setback in Karnataka, the BJP appears to confront closed doors in south, a sentiment amplified by the triumph of Congress in Telangana. As a party primarily concentrated in north, the BJP's top leadership faces the imperative task of formulating a strategic approach and policy framework to garner support from states in south.

The outcome of the elections dealt a blow to the Congress. Amidst this setback, the party found solace in its electoral success in Telangana. The party's diminishing influence in the Hindi belt poses a formidable challenge for its leadership. Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra demonstrated efficacy in Karnataka and Telangana but failed to translate into favourable electoral results in Chhattisgarh, MP, and Rajasthan. Even within the states where the party faced defeat, its performance fell below initial expectations.

Certainly, Rahul and key party figures devoted extensive effort during the election campaigns, yet the Congress encountered a shortfall in a committed cadre of party workers, unlike the robust network evident within the BJP. Despite internal discord within the BJP regarding

ticket allocation just ahead of the MP and Rajasthan elections, the party emerged victorious. Conversely, simmering discontent within the Congress in MP, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan played a pivotal role in its decline. Analysts suggest that the Congress leadership failed to grasp the grassroots realities.

Experts emphasise the urgent need for the Congress to revitalise its organisational framework and cultivate a dedicated support base. While there exists public acceptance of Rahul, it requires revitalisation. One expert advocates for the party to rekindle the organisational prowess exhibited by Sardar Patel to rejuvenate its cadre at the panchayat, district, and state levels. Additionally, there's a call for fortifying its youth, student, and women's wings, alongside a reconstruction of the Seva Dal, seen as essential for the party's resurgence.

The recent electoral outcome presents multifaceted challenges for a spectrum of parties. However, the BJP and Congress grapple with particularly daunting hurdles as national entities now seemingly confined to distinct northern and southern territories. The underwhelming performance of the BRS in Telangana and similar regional factions in other states acts as a



Anil Singh

THIS ELECTORAL JUDGEMENT REVEALS A GEOGRAPHICAL CONFINEMENT FOR BOTH BJP AND CONGRESS

The immediate fallout of the shock defeat of the Congress is that many leaders of the INDIA alliance seem hesitant to attend a meeting of the alliance convened on December 6. Leaders of the Janata Dal (United) and Trinamool Congress are questioning why the Congress did not hold the meeting earlier. They also put up a brave face for the alliance saying the election results showed not as much a success story of the BJP as the failure of the Congress.

TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh claims the party led by Mamata Banerjee can provide leadership in the battle to defeat the BJP in the country. That is of course mere bravado divorced from reality. JD (U) leader KC Tyagi sounded more realistic when he said the Congress' decision not to invite any of the constituents of the INDIA bloc for campaigning showed their "over enthusiasm and overconfidence." He believes INDIA alliance partners need to come together with new methods to take on the BJP.

The most significant noise that is being made is by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) which rightly claims it is now the largest Opposition party in north India since it rules Delhi and Punjab.

The Left too is upset with the Congress. Its new assessment in the light of BJP's resounding victory is that there is need for secular forces to redouble their efforts in order to safeguard people's livelihood and defend the secular democratic character of the Indian republic. These will have to be done with renewed vigour, said CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury.

Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) national spokesperson Subodh Kumar Mehta also spoke in the same language when he said it is important now more than before to sit together soon and rework plans for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Even if some in the Opposition bloc fear the Congress could now be a 'baggage' within the alliance, fact is that the Congress alone can be the pivot of INDIA. Certainly, its bargaining power is now blunted much after the debacle in the Assembly polls. The party's misplaced belief after the Bharat Jodo March led by Rahul Gandhi and victory in the Karnataka elections could have led to overconfidence and hence blunted its focus.

Seasoned political leader Sharad Pawar has said that the Assembly poll results will not impact the Opposition's electoral fortunes in the coming Lok Sabha polls and the INDIA bloc needs to stay united and redraw its strategy.

This could be an attempt to boost the Opposition's sagging morale. But, that is the only course left for now.

SPECTRUM CYBERSECURITY

Combating deepfake technology

Technology has advanced at a remarkable pace in recent years, providing many benefits to society. However, as technology has advanced a new set of crimes threatens the safety and security of individuals and communities. Deepfake has emerged as a serious threat to global democracy and social institutions. Deepfake is a term that merges the words deep and fake. Deep is derived from AI deep-learning technology, which entails multiple levels of processing, and fake denotes the fact that the content in question is not authentic. The initial identification of the malicious application of deepfake technology pertained to pornographic content. In 2017, the term deepfake came to be used for synthetic media, when a Reddit administrator started the subreddit "deepfakes" and began posting videos that used face-swapping technology to insert celebrities' likenesses into existing pornographic videos.

Deepfake videos, a new type of media manipulation, took the world by storm. It can manipulate various types of content, including videos, images, and audios. The most common applications involve replacing faces in videos, altering facial expressions, changing speech content, or even generating entirely new content featuring a specific individual. Deepfakes have raised concerns due to their potential to deceive and manipulate, posing risks in areas such as misinformation, identity theft, and privacy infringement.

Deepfakes can be created using various techniques, but they often involve a type of neural network called a generative adversarial network (GAN). GANs consist of two neural networks, a generator, and a discriminator, which are trained in opposition to each other. The generator creates synthetic content, and the discriminator evaluates how realistic it is. This adversarial training process continues until the generator produces content that is indistinguishable from real content.

In many cases, these deepfake videos target women, and they have the potential to cause threats, intimidation, and psychological harm to the individuals who are showcased in them. In addition, it has the potential to objectify women, which can lead to mental distress and, in certain situations lead to financial loss, job loss, and other negative effects. Deepfakes can potentially hurt society by eroding trust in traditional media and contributing to a culture of factual relativism. Deepfakes can be used in the political domain by nation-states to generate doubt and disorder in target countries, as well as by non-

individual. Deepfakes have raised concerns due to their potential to deceive and manipulate, posing risks in areas such as misinformation, identity theft, and privacy infringement.

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state actors such as militant organisations and extremist groups to inflame anti-state sentiments. Additionally, the presence of deepfakes may result in a phenomenon known as the "liar's dividend," when authentic information is disregarded as either fake news or a deepfake, thereby enhancing the credibility of denials and false narratives. Research shows that deepfake attacks were encountered by 66% of cybersecurity professionals in 2022. The recent incidence of deepfakes have been making headlines in India after a fake video of actor Rashmika Mandanna went viral.

Combating deepfakes is a challenging task that requires a combination of technological solutions, legal and policy measures, and public awareness. Here are some strategies that can be employed to address the issue like developing detection technologies, blockchain and watermarking. First is, invest in research and development of advanced deepfake detection technologies using AI and machine learning and encourage collaboration between industry, academia, and government to share expertise and resources in developing effective detection tools. Second is, explore the use of blockchain and digital watermarking technologies to authenticate the source and integrity of media content. These

technologies can help establish a verifiable chain of custody for digital assets, making it more difficult for malicious actors to create convincing deepfakes. The development of deepfake detection tools, regulations, and public awareness campaigns are among strategies employed to address the challenges posed by deepfake.

It is now necessary for technology companies to develop and implement tools and algorithms that can identify and mitigate the impact of deepfakes on their platforms. This may entail the deployment of more advanced algorithms as well as creation of new ways for detecting deepfakes based on context, meta data, or other factors. Governments can enact laws specifically targeting the creation and distribution of deepfake content. These laws may include penalties for those who use deepfakes for malicious purposes.

A multi-pronged approach that combines technological innovation, legal frameworks, and education is crucial to effectively address the challenges posed by deepfake technology.

The writer is a doctorate fellow in sociology at University of Hyderabad and research associate at Lok Sabha, Parliament of India.

WISDOM CORNER

Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word happy would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness. It is far better take things as they come along with patience and equanimity.

CARL JUNG

Appearance is something absolute, but reality is not that way - everything is interdependent, not absolute. So that view is very helpful to maintain a peace of mind because the main destroyer of a peaceful mind is anger.

DALAI LAMA

Have you learned the lessons only of those who admired you, and were tender with you, and stood aside for you? Have you not learned great lessons from those who braced themselves against you, and disputed passage with you?

WALT WHITMAN

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1484: Witchcraft condemned by Pope Innocent VIII. Innocent VIII condemned witchcraft this day in 1484 via papal bull, and subsequently he dispatched inquisitors to Germany to try witches and persecuted a chief exponent of Renaissance Platonism, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola.

1848: In his annual message to Congress, U.S. President James K. Polk confirmed the discovery of gold in California, helping to spark the Gold Rush, which brought an estimated 300,000 people to the territory.

1872: The American brigantine Mary Celeste was found abandoned some 400 nautical miles (740 km) from the Azores, Portugal; the fate of the 10 people aboard remains a mystery.

1977: Egypt breaks all relations with Arab countries. President Anwar al-Sadat broke all relations with Syria, Libya, Algeria, and South Yemen in response to these countries and the Palestinian Liberation Organization signing the Declaration of Tripoli. The declaration followed Sadat's visit to Israel.

2013: South African nationalist and statesman Nelson Mandela, who helped end the country's apartheid system of racial segregation and ushered in a peaceful transition to majority rule, died at age 95.

LOL

Caught red-handed

A shoplifter was caught red-handed trying to steal a watch from an exclusive jewelry store. "Listen," he said, "I know you don't want any trouble either. What do you say I just buy the watch and we forget about this?"



The manager agreed and wrote up the sales slip. The crook looked at the slip and said, "This is a little more than I intended to spend. Can you show me something less expensive?"



Dharendra Sahoo

DEEPAKES CAN POTENTIALLY HURT SOCIETY BY ERODING TRUST IN TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND CONTRIBUTING TO A CULTURE OF FACTUAL RELATIVISM

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, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Shot in the arm

Sir, The grand victory by the BJP in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh shows that people are ready to support if they find leaders and the party or alliance they support is ready to voice for the commoners. As for the BJP this result is definitely a shot in the arm and gets the leaders ready for the national final next year. Present day voters are no more the ones who were a gullible lot but have taken to serious thinking before casting their votes. They have started to show their likes and dislikes and that too diligently while choosing their candidate. The ruling party will have to fulfil the promises made to the people on a war footing. As for the Congress, it's yet again time for them to learn lessons seriously which they haven't so far. That they have got Telangana, the credit goes to the regional leaders. They have to understand that 'yatras', 'pilgrimage' and sarcastic jibes during election times and freebies will never win the hearts of voters. A strong panel of trustworthy, hardworking, out of the box thinking leaders to cooperate and coordinate is the need of the hour. Wrong alliances eyeing on vote bank, hollow rhetoric, antics and gimmicks are definitely things of the past.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

Soil pollution

Sir, Soil pollution has not received the same level of attention as water and air pollution. The chemicals emerging from industrial and agricultural practices cause land degradation. Though soil has the innate property to filter out contaminants, it can do so only to a limited extent, rest trickle out into the atmosphere. Direct contact with contaminated soil is a plausible reality. More than 90% of people's food is accrued through soil and, therefore, its conservation is crucial for the eco chain. No doubt, environmental scientists have in their armoury various remedies to combat soil contamination like surface leaching, bioremediation, thermal remediation, mycoremediation and phytoremediation. Nonetheless, on December 5, the World Soil Day, the responsibilities of an individual as an active contributor to prevention and elimination of soil pollution cannot be overlooked.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

'Ladli Behna' game-changer for Shivraj

Amid suspense over CM face, around 50 MLAs meet Raje

The longest-serving BJP CM in March launched the scheme, which provides eligible women ₹1,250 monthly financial assistance, and later promised to gradually hike the amount to ₹3,000



ing polls by a whisker in 2018, retained confidence of the BJP whose central leadership chose him the chief minister for a fourth term.

The BJP contested the November 17 assembly polls mainly using the aura of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, but Chouhan, who took over as the CM at the age of 46 in 2005, remains a formidable contender for the top post among a crowded pool of aspirants after the saffron party retained power in the state.

Having a carefully cultivated image of a family man coupled with simplicity, Chouhan was at the forefront of campaigning, presenting himself as one among people and promising further development besides coming out with populist welfare schemes, especially for women.

Assiduously working on his 'son of the soil' image, the soft-spoken leader easily identified himself with socio-economic concerns of farmers, villagers, women and youngsters.

Chouhan in March launched the Ladli Behna scheme, which provides eligible women ₹1,250

monthly financial assistance, and later promised to gradually hike the amount to ₹3,000.

Speaking about the scheme, seen as a game-changer, during the campaigning, Chouhan, in his rustic style, remarked "It has raised the stature of women in the household and now even mothers-in-law offers rotis spread with ghee (ghee-chupdi rotis) to their daughters-in-law. The scheme has made women self-reliant."

"The scheme has paid rich dividends to the party. In 2018, the turnout of women voters was 74.22 per cent, which in 2023 rose to 76.25, a rise of little over 2 per cent. It is believed females have voted in large numbers in favour of the BJP," claimed state BJP secretary Rajneesh Agrawal.

He informed that the women voters' turnout increased in 182 assembly seats, out of the total 230, this year.

Chouhan, who won the November 17 assembly elections this year by a margin of over one lakh votes from Budhni in Sehore district, has largely maintained a low-profile and remained focused on MP's development.

The BJP garnered 109 seats in the 230-member assembly in 2018, while its tally was 165 in the 2013 polls.

In the results declared Sunday, the BJP got 163 seats.

The saffron party's best-ever score was in 2003, the first assembly polls to be held after Chhattisgarh was carved out of Madhya Pradesh, when it won 173 seats under the leadership of firebrand BJP leader Uma Bharti.

During his nearly 18-year-long tenure as CM, barring 15 months of Congress rule (December 2018-March 2020), Chouhan transformed himself from being a shy, simple and vulnerable politician to an astute leader with a wide mass appeal.

This time, the ruling party fielded seven Lok Sabha members, including Union ministers Narendra Singh Tomar, Faggan Singh Kulaste and Prahlad Patel, and general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya.

The move sent out signals that the BJP has kept options open for the top post and Chouhan may not be the automatic choice if the party retains the state.

Despite not getting an open endorsement from the central leadership for the CM post, the BJP leader put his heart and soul into campaigning where he often got emotional during his speeches.



While rounds of meetings are going in Delhi to pick the CM, the BJP leaders, who are in the race for the CM post, have maintained strategic silence after the victory

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, Dec 4: Amid suspense over Chief Minister's face in Rajasthan, back-to-back meetings in Jaipur and Delhi are fuelling different speculations.

While rounds of meetings are going in Delhi to pick the CM, the BJP leaders, who are in the race for the CM post, have maintained strategic silence after the victory.

According to sources, state president CP Joshi and state in-charge Arun Singh have reached Delhi. They will reportedly meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and National President JP Nadda.

As senior BJP leaders and MPs reached Delhi, around 50 MLAs visited former CM Vasundhara Raje's residence on Monday. These include MLAs Kalicharan Saraf,

Babu Singh Rathore, Premchand Bairwa, Govind Ranipuria, Lalit Meena, Kanwarlal Meena, Radheshyam Bairwa, Kalulal Meena, KK Vishnoi, Suresh Rawat and Bhagchand Takra. BJP MLA from Nasirabad, Ramswaroop Lamba, after meeting Vasundhara Raje, said, "BJP has returned to Rajasthan only because of the work done by PM Modi and Vasundhara Raje. Raje has the support of 115 winning MLAs." MLA Vijay Singh Choudhary said, "The people of Rajasthan want Raje to become the Chief Minister."

Meanwhile, Raje's office team confirmed IANS that these MLAs came to her only to give a courtesy call. While many of them visited her, many of these were on their way, Raje's office team added.

RAJ POLLS

BJP makes inroads in BSP, Cong bastions

BHARAT JODO YATRA FAILS TO BOOST CONG

BJP WON 17 OF THE 21 SEATS FROM WHICH THE RAHUL GANDHI-LED YATRA PASSED IN MP

Gain of over 7% in vote share powers BJP to sweep MP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Dec 4: The Congress' hopes of the Bharat Jodo Yatra paying dividends in the Madhya Pradesh assembly polls have been dashed with the Bharatiya Janata Party winning 17 of the 21 seats from which the Rahul Gandhi-led yatra passed.

The BJP Sunday cruised to a two-thirds majority in Madhya Pradesh assembly, winning as many as 163 of the 230 seats in the House, leaving the Congress a distant second at 66.

Between November 23 and December 4 last year, the Bharat Jodo Yatra covered 380 kilometres through six districts of MP's Malwa-Nimar region, namely Burhanpur, Khandwa, Kharagone, Indore, Ujjain and Agar Malwa, which cumulatively have 21 seats.

In 2018, the BJP won 14 of these seats, while the Congress emerged victorious on seven. This time, the BJP bettered its tally to 17, reducing the Congress to four seats.

BJP's Archana Chitnis won Burhanpur and Manju Dadu won Nepanagar assembly segments in Burhanpur district. The Burhanpur seat was won in 2018 by Independent candidate Surendra Singh Shera, who was the Congress candidate this time.

In 2018, Congress' Sumitra Kasdekar won Nepanagar seat,



Between November 23 and December 4 last year, the Bharat Jodo Yatra covered 380 km through six districts of the central state's Malwa-Nimar region

but she later changed sides and was elected on a BJP ticket in the 2020 bypoll. The BJP has retained this seat.

BJP's Narayan Patel and Chhaya More also won from Mandhata and Pandhana, respectively.

In 2018, Pandhana seat was won by BJP's Ram Dangore, while Narayan Patel of the

Congress won from Mandhata seat. Patel later shifted to the BJP and won a bypoll in 2020. He was given the ticket again by the ruling party.

In Kharagone district, the Bharat Jodo Yatra passed through Badwah and Bhikangaon assembly seats. While BJP's Sachin Birla won from Badwah, Congress candidate Jhuma Solanki emerged victorious in Bhikangaon.

Both the seats were won by the Congress in 2018. Badwah MLA Sachin Birla later joined the BJP.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra covered all eight seats of Indore district. The BJP emerged victorious in all the eight seats.

BJP's Usha Thakur and Madhu Verma won from Mhow

and Rau, respectively.

In Indore-1 seat, BJP general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya won by defeating sitting MLA Sanjay Shukla.

BJP's Ramesh Mendola (Indore-2), Golu Shukla (Indore-3), Malini Gaud (Indore-4) and Mahendra Hardia (Indore-5) also won.

Besides, Tulsi Silawat, who switched over to the saffron party from the Congress in 2020, won from Sanwer seat.

Before crossing into Rajasthan on December 4 last year, the Bharat Jodo Yatra covered Agar Malwa and Susner Assembly seats of Agar Malwa district.

BJP's Madhav Singh won Agar Malwa seat, while Bhairo Singh of the Congress bagged

Susner seat. The BJP won the Agar Malwa assembly seat in 2018 but lost it to the Congress in a 2020 bypoll, necessitated by the death of sitting MLA Manohar Untwal. The Susner assembly seat was won in 2018 by Independent candidate Vikram Singh Rana, who later joined the BJP.

BJP's Mohan Yadav and Anil Jain won from Ujjain South and Ujjain North seats, respectively. Satish Malviya of the BJP won from Ghatiya and Mahesh Parmar of the Congress emerged victorious from Tarana seat. Dinesh Jain from the Congress won Mahidpur assembly seat.

In 2018, four of the five seats in Ujjain districts were won by the BJP, leaving the Congress with just one victory. The four seats which the Congress won on the route that the yatra covered in MP are Bhikangaon, Tarana, Mahidpur and Susner.

Incidentally, Congress leaders had claimed that the Bharat Jodo Yatra was the reason for the Congress' win in Karnataka in May this year. In the southern state, the party won 15 of the 20 assembly seats through which the Rahul Gandhi-led yatra passed.

Later in October this year, the Congress gave credit to the yatra for its win in polls to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Kargil.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Dec 4: The BJP has registered a spectacular victory in Madhya Pradesh assembly elections by garnering 48.55 per cent votes, a gain of more than seven per cent compared to 2018, which also cemented the saffron party's position in the state's bipolar politics.

The party got 41.02 per cent of votes in the 2018 elections.

The BJP Sunday cruised to a two-thirds majority in Madhya Pradesh assembly, winning as many as 163 of the 230 seats in the House, leaving the Congress a distant second at 66.

The Congress' vote share remained almost the same at 40.40 per cent as against 40.89 per cent (2018) as its tally plunged from 114 to 66 seats. However, a gain of more than 7 per cent votes propelled the BJP from 109 seats in 2018 to 163 seats this time.

In 2003, the BJP got 42.50 per cent votes and won 173 seats, while the Congress got 38 seats with a vote share of 31.6 per cent. In 2008, BJP's vote share stood at 37.64 per cent with 143 seats. For the Congress, it was 32.39 per cent with 71 seats.

The saffron party got 44.88 per cent of votes in 2013 and bagged 165 seats as against Congress' 58 seats with a 36.38 per cent vote share.

In 2018, the BJP got 41.02 per cent votes and won in 109 constituencies, while the Congress topped the race with 40.89 per cent vote share and 114 seats.

4 priests fielded by BJP elected to Raj Assembly

ONE AMONG THEM IS A FORMER 'COW' MINISTER, WHILE ANOTHER IS CAMPAIGNING AGAINST TEMPLE DEMOLITION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Dec 4: Four Hindu priests have been elected to the Rajasthan Assembly in this election after being fielded by the BJP which wooed voters on the Hindutva plank, vociferously raising issues of alleged minority appeasement.

Among the four priests turned politicians, Baba Balaknath, who is an MP from Alwar and has won from the hotly-contested Tijara seat, has often courted controversies with his remarks, while Balmukund Acharya, elected from Hawa Mahal, came into limelight after he launched a campaign against the "demolition" of temples in the area.



Monday, a video appeared online where Balmukund, fresh from his victory, is purportedly giving directions to an official on the phone to remove roadside shops selling non-vegetarian food at the Chandi Ki Taksal area in his constituency.

"Can non-veg be sold in the open on the road? Answer in yes or no. Are you endorsing them? Remove the roadside shops selling non-vegetarian at Chandi Ki Taksal area. Check their licences. I will take a report from you in the evening. Do I have to come to you to collect the report or you will come?" he said.

"The street vendors making non-veg seen on roadsides should not be seen from immediate effect. I will take a report from you in the evening," he is heard saying on the phone.

Balmukund defeated Congress' RR Tiwari by a narrow margin of 914 votes in the Hawa Mahal constituency which has a sizeable Muslim electorate. The seer, during his campaign, had claimed that scores of temples in the Hawa Mahal area were demolished as a part of a conspiracy and had assured the people that if voted to power, these would be rebuilt.

Otaram Dewasi, mahant of Mundara Mata Temple, was the

first minister for gopalan (cow husbandry) in the previous BJP government led by Vasundhara Raje but lost in the 2018 elections. He is now elected from Sirohi. The other three priests are new to the Assembly.

Balaknath, 39, who belongs to the same Nath sect that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath represents, has emerged as a strong leader after his victory in Tijara, a seat the BJP had won only once between the first election in 1951 and 2018.

The Election Commission had served a notice to Balaknath over his statement where he compared the assembly elections to an India-Pakistan match, though he later clarified that he was "encouraging" people to turn out in maximum numbers to increase the voting percentage.

The remote Pokaran constituency of the desert state saw the highest polling percentage as BJP's Swami Pratap Puri, head of the Taratara Math in Barmer, crossed swords with Congress' Saleh Mohammad,

son of a Muslim religious leader Ghazi Fakeer.

Puri's supporters said the seer avenged his defeat in 2018 as-

sembly polls where he had lost by 872 votes. This time the Hindu leader won by a margin of 35,427 votes.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, BHAWANIPATNA
KALAHANDI-766001, ODISHA
Mail: eobptm@yahoo.com; Phone No. 6670 230424
No. 4293/BPM Dated: 02.12.2023
No. C-2001- The Executive Officer, Bhawanipatna Municipality invites a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Selection of an Agency for providing Facility Management Services (FMS) at New Model Bus Stand, Bhawanipatna, Odisha. The RFP documents covering the details of information, eligibility criteria, selection process, and other terms & conditions can be downloaded from www.kalahandi.nic.in / www.bhawanipatnamunicipality.in from dtd. 02.12.2023. The last date for submitting the RFP documents along with processing fees of Rs. 10000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand) & EMD of Rs 5,00,000/- (Five Lakh) only in shape of Demand Draft in favour of "Executive Officer, Bhawanipatna Municipality" payable at Bhawanipatna through regd. / speed post with receipt is only upto 5.00 PM on dtd.30.12.2023. The pre-proposal meeting will be held in the Conference hall of Collectorate, Kalahandi on dtd. 08.12.2023 at 11.00 AM. The received bids will be opened at 11.00 AM. on 01.01.2024. The Authority reserves the right to accept/reject any/all proposals/terminate the entire selection process at any stage without assigning any reason thereof.
Sd./- Executive Officer, Bhawanipatna Municipality
OIPR-13100/11/0011/2324



People from the Dalit community stage a protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi



Locals run away from a herd of wild elephants that had gathered in a paddy field in search of food, at Kathiatoli in Nagaon district, Assam



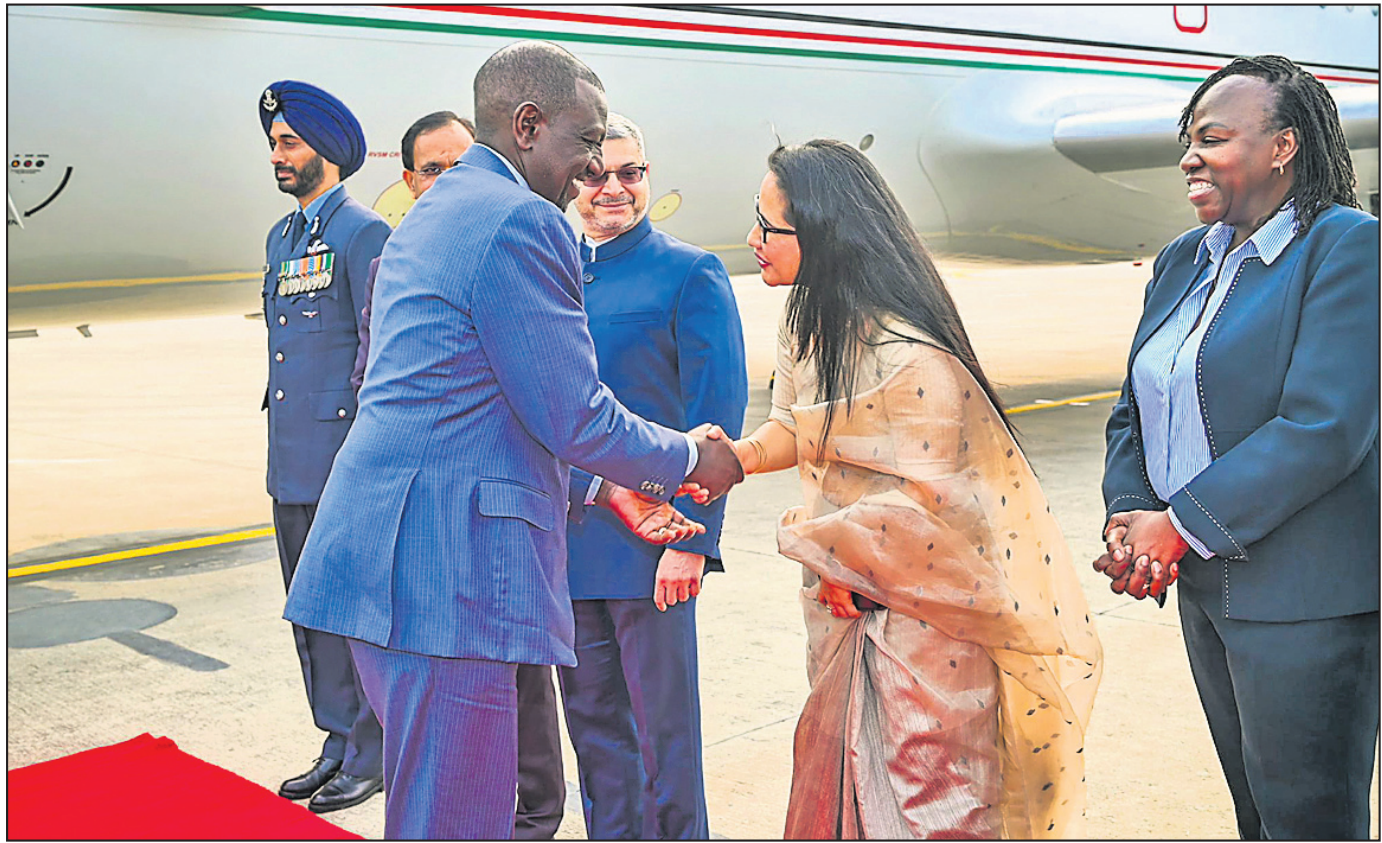
Revellers depicting devils play with a ball before a traditional St. Nicholas procession in the village of Lidecko, Czech Republic. This pre-Christmas tradition has survived for centuries in a few villages in the eastern part of the country. The whole group parades through the village for the weekend, going from door to door



An artisan gives finishing touches to an artwork inspired by wooden dolls of West Bengal's Burdwan district as part of preparations of the inauguration of the 29th Kolkata International film festival, in Kolkata



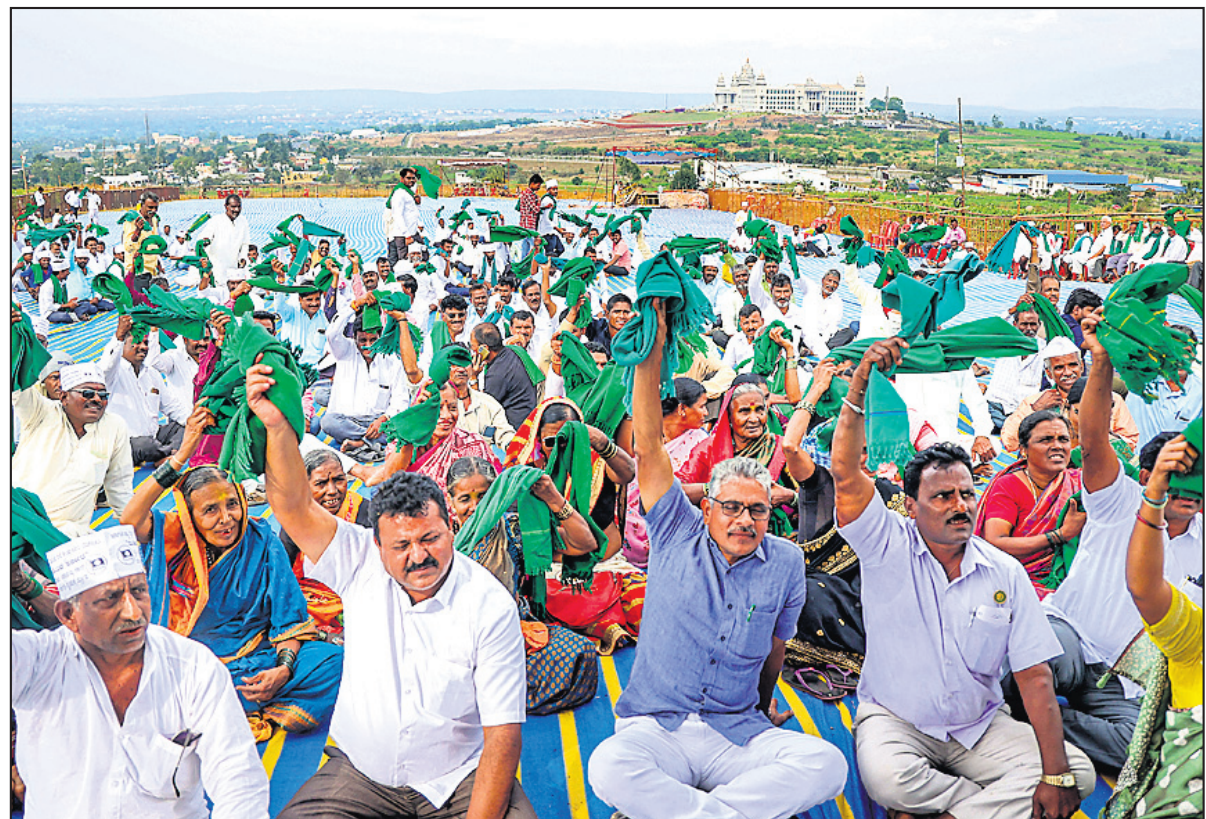
West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee during the inauguration of a museum at the Platinum Jubilee Memorial building of West Bengal Legislative Assembly, in Kolkata



President of Kenya William Samoei Ruto arrives in New Delhi



A visitor looks at part of the 2017 installation "Mass" during the press preview of the Ron Mueck exhibition at the Triennale Museum, in Milan, northern Italy. According to the museum, it is the first solo exhibition of the Australian sculptor in Italy and the first time the installation "Mass" is displayed in Europe. The exhibition opens to the public on December 5



Farmers stage a protest outside Suvarna Vidhana Soudha during the Winter Session of Karnataka Legislative Assembly in Belagavi district, Karnataka

national

of the day quote

It seems that the country has made up its mind to ensure that BJP forms its government, winning the 2024 Lok Sabha elections with a clear majority

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

It is natural for all the people to be doubtful, surprised and worried when the results of the assembly elections in the four states were one-sided. Considering the entire atmosphere of the elections, such a strange result is a matter of concern for the people and very difficult to accept

MAYAWATI | BSP CHIEF

It is my clear opinion that the Madhya Pradesh elections should have been contested as INDIA alliance. Had some seats been shared with the alliance parties, such as Akhilesh's party, (Samajwadi Party), the Congress would have fared far better. His (Akhilesh's) party has good support in some areas, including some 10-12 seats known as the strongholds of the party. It was Kamal Nath who opposed sharing of seats with him (Akhilesh)

SANJAY RAUT | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

SHORT TAKES

6 killed in Himachal

Shimla: Six people were killed and as many sustained injuries when their vehicle fell into a gorge near Sunni in Shimla district on Monday morning, police said. The mishap took place at Kudharghat, about 35 km from here, when the driver of the ill-fated pickup truck lost control of the vehicle, police said.

Three children die

Firozabad (UP): Three children were killed in a fire in Khadi village in the Jasrana Police Station area, police said Monday. The children were sleeping in their hut in the Dera Banjara area when it caught fire late Saturday night.

Drone found

Chandigarh: A drone was found near the India-Pakistan International Border in Punjab's Amritsar district early Monday, a BSF spokesperson said. At around 3:40 am, the BSF troops intercepted movement of the drone near village Chan Kalan in Amritsar.

Labourers rescued

Silchar (Assam): Three stone-quarry labourers, allegedly abducted by Manipur-based militants from Assam's Cachar district, were rescued in neighbouring Dima Hasao Monday, police said. The labourers of Chiri quarry in Udharbond area were "kidnapped" Saturday.



The fight is big. To fight a big party like BJP we will have to make a lot of preparations. We have to be under strict discipline and have to fight the strategy with which they (BJP) are getting majority. I hope results will be different in future

AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF

SC EXTENDS INTERIM BAIL GRANTED TO JAIN

The Supreme Court Monday extended till December 11 the interim bail granted to former Delhi minister Satyendar Kumar Jain in a money laundering case



CHENNAI GOES UNDER WATER

FIVE KILLED IN RAIN-RELATED INCIDENTS IN CHENNAI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Dec 4: Cyclone Michaung wreaked havoc across Chennai and its neighboring districts, inundating the city, causing disruptions in flights and trains, and startling residents with a video capturing a crocodile crossing a submerged road.

The relentless downpour, reminiscent of the 2015 deluge, paralysed daily life, prompting authorities to declare a public holiday and dispatch rescue teams to aid a city besieged by torrential rains.

Residents hurried to purchase and replenish supplies, with a high demand for drinking water. The continuous downpour resulted in power outages and internet disruptions. Cyclonic storm Michaung, expected to cross the Andhra Pradesh coast on Tuesday forenoon, loomed near Chennai and Pondicherry, bringing heavy rainfall.

The latest update from the weather office has forecast the likelihood of heavy rains accompanied by strong winds on



Monday night. Transportation services took a severe blow, with numerous trains and flights canceled. Waterlogged roads presented challenges for the scarce number of road users. Operations at the Chennai airport were halted from 9:40 am to 11 pm, with about 70 flights canceled due to incessant rains and waterlogging affecting the runway and tarmac, as stated by the Airport Authority of India.

The Southern Railway reported the suspension of many trains originating from Dr. MGR Chennai Central to destinations such as Coimbatore and Mysuru, offering full refunds to affected passengers. As a result of inundation, 14 subways in the city were closed, and authorities removed uprooted trees from 11 locations.

Reacting to a viral video of a crocodile spotted in suburban Perungulathur during heavy rains, Additional Chief Secretary Supriya Sahu reassured the public, stating, "There are a few mugger crocodiles in several water bodies in Chennai. These shy animals avoid human contact. Wildlife officials are on the job to prevent any untoward incidents. Please refrain from approaching these creatures."

Residents from severely affected areas, like Perungudi, Ashok Nagar, and Tambaram, shared their experiences of power outages, waterlogging, fallen trees, and transportation disruptions. Joe Prakash, a resident of the Perungudi, said, "The winds started at around 3 am on the 4th of December and the power supply got cut off and the whole

community has been facing power issues due to waterlogging. As the water levels rose even the generator was switched off and we have been without power from 11am till now."

Prakash added, "The water levels rose so high that all the cars had to be taken out of the apartment parking and kept on the road sides." In the past 24 hours, Perungudi in Chennai received 29 cm of rainfall, while Avadi in Tiruvallur district recorded 28 cm, and Mamallapuram in Chengalpet received 22 cm. The weather office warned of continued heavy rainfall and strong winds in the four districts. The India Meteorological Department's update detailed the trajectory of Cyclone Michaung, projecting its movement towards the south Andhra Pradesh coast and its expected crossing between Nellore and Machilipatnam on December 5.

To manage the situation, the Tamil Nadu government declared a public holiday for educational institutions, government and private offices, financial institutions, and banks in Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kancheepuram, and Chengalpattu districts on Tuesday. Private companies were urged to enable work from home for employees in affected regions.

Raghav Chadha's suspension revoked



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: AAP MP Raghav Chadha was Monday held guilty of presenting misleading facts to the media by the Privileges Committee of Rajya Sabha and was allowed to attend the House proceedings after his suspension was ended through a motion.

Chadha was also held guilty by the RS Committee of adding names of members in the proposed select panel without their consent. A motion to end his suspension was moved in the house by BJP member GVL Narasimha Rao, which was adopted by a voice vote that said his suspension so far is "sufficient punishment" for him.

Ahead of the motion, Rajya Sabha chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said, "the committee after deep and thoughtful consideration finds Raghav Chadha guilty of both the charges."

"Charge 1: that he intentionally and deliberately presented misleading facts to the media, misinterpreted proceedings of the Council resulting in affront to the authority of the Chairman, Rajya Sabha and engaged in outrageous defiance of the resolutions of the House and directives of the Chairman, Rajya Sabha," the chairman said while reading out the panel report.

"Charge 2: For including the

names of Members in proposed Select Committee without their consent in blatant transgression of rule 72 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha)," the chairman also announced.

Dhankhar said, "As regards the sentence, the Committee finds the suspension suffered by him since 11th August, 2023 from the House thus far as sufficient sentence that will meet the ends of justice."

"The Committee stands committed to upholding the sanctity of parliamentary proceedings and safeguarding the integrity of the institution. The Committee expresses hope that Shri Raghav Chadha, Member will reflect and introspect."

"The Committee expects Shri Raghav Chadha to uphold the expected standards of conduct and decorum befitting a Member of Parliament," the Chairman said.

Earlier, Elamaram Kareem, a member of the panel, presented the report of the Privileges Committee of the Rajya Sabha in the House.

Later, GVL Narasimha Rao, who is also a member of the RS privileges panel, moved the motion under Proviso to Rule 256 (2) of the Rules of Procedure for Conduct of Business in the Council of States (Rajya Sabha).

CHADHA WAS HELD GUILTY BY THE RS COMMITTEE OF ADDING NAMES OF MEMBERS IN THE PROPOSED SELECT PANEL WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT

A MOTION TO END HIS SUSPENSION WAS MOVED IN THE HOUSE BY BJP MEMBER GVL NARASIMHA RAO, WHICH WAS ADOPTED BY A VOICE VOTE THAT SAID HIS SUSPENSION SO FAR IS "SUFFICIENT PUNISHMENT" FOR HIM

RS PASSES POST OFFICE BILL

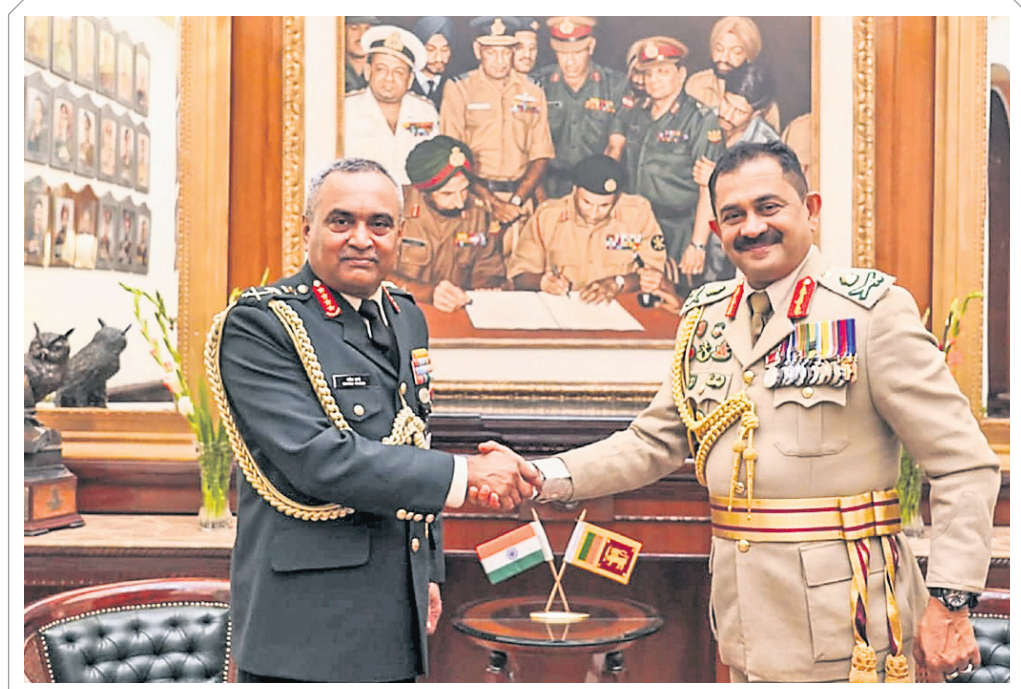
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: The Rajya Sabha Monday passed the Post Office Bill, 2023 that seeks to repeal the 125-year-old Indian Post Office Act and consolidate and amend the law relating to post offices in the country.

According to the proposed legislation, "the central government may, by notification, empower any officer to intercept, open or detain any item in the interest of the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, emergency or public safety, or upon the occurrence of any contravention of any of the provisions of any law for the time being in force".

Replying to the discussion for the consideration of the Bill in the Upper House of Parliament, Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw explained the provision for interception. "In a society which is as complex and diverse, and times which are as difficult as they are, it is very important that interception is done. This kind of a provision is kept for national security," he said.

The Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha during the Monsoon Session of Parliament. According to the statement of objects and reasons of the bill, over the years, the services available through post offices have diversified beyond mail and the post office network has become a vehicle for delivery of a variety of citizen-centric services, which necessitated the repeal of the Indian Post Office Act, which was enacted in 1898 primarily to address the mail services provided through the post offices.



Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pande with Commander of the Sri Lankan Army Lt. General Vikum Liyanage during a meeting, in New Delhi, Monday

Discuss Moitra's expulsion report: Oppn

The opposition members made the demand during the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee chaired by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to finalise the agenda for the House this week

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: Opposition members Monday demanded a discussion in the Lok Sabha on the Ethics Committee report, recommending the expulsion of TMC member Mahua Moitra,

before any decision was taken on the matter.

The opposition members made the demand during the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee chaired by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to finalise the agenda for the House this week.

Parliamentary sources said the report of the Ethics Committee on the expulsion of Trinamool Congress leader Moitra from the Lok Sabha was expected to be tabled in the House on Tuesday. The report was listed for presentation in the Lok Sabha on Monday, but the agenda item was not taken up by the presiding officer, raising questions over the continuance of Moitra



as a parliamentarian.

The Business Advisory Committee also decided to allot 12 hours for discussion on the three bills to replace the colonial-era criminal laws. It also decided to allocate three hours for discussion on the Chief

Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill.

The Lok Sabha's Ethics Committee, chaired by BJP member Vinod Sonkar, had adopted its report at a meeting on November 9, recommending Moitra's expulsion from the lower house over the "cash-for-query" allegation.

Six members of the panel, including Congress member Preeti Kaur who had earlier been suspended from the party, voted in favour of the report. Four members of the panel belonging to opposition parties submitted dissent notes.

Bill aimed at regulating legal profession, curbing touts passed by Lok Sabha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: A Bill which aims at regulating the legal profession by a single Act and seeks to target "touts" was passed by the Lok Sabha on Monday with Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal saying there should be no role of such persons in the country's courts.

The Bill was already cleared by the Rajya Sabha in the Monsoon session. This is the first bill passed by the Lower House of Parliament in the Winter Session, which began Monday. Replying to a debate on the Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023, Meghwal said this Bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on August 3 and it was discussed in the Lok Sabha today.

The Bill provides that every high court and district judge can frame and publish lists of touts (those who procure clients for legal practitioner in return for any payment).

The minister also said that the Narendra Modi government has decided that colonial-era laws, which have no utility, should be repealed.

So far, 1,486 such laws have been repealed and some are in the process of being repealed, Meghwal said.

"I will give you a description of the 10 years of the (Congress-led) UPA government. After Narendra Modi came to power, 1,486 laws were repealed. During the 10 years of Manmohan Singh ji, not even one such colonial-era law was repealed, which means there was no such thought on it," Meghwal said.

He also said the suggestion that there should be a policy on transfer of judges is very good.

Shun negativity, PM tells Oppn; INDIA bloc allies target Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Kolkata, Dec 4: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday told the opposition to shun negativity and learn from defeat, a day after the Congress' huge poll debacle in three Hindi heartland states which also drew increasing criticism from its allies in opposition bloc INDIA.

The remarks by Modi came after the BJP on Sunday retained Madhya Pradesh with a two-thirds majority and ousted Congress in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh in the Assembly polls. In a face saver for the Congress, the party defeated incumbent BRS in Telangana. Giving "good advice", the prime minister asked the opposition not to vent its frustration inside Parliament over the assembly polls defeat and move forward leaving behind "negativity", say-

ing that may change the people's perspective towards them.

"The country has rejected negativity," said Modi while talking to the media outside Parliament ahead of the start of the Winter Session. "If I speak on basis of the assembly poll results, this is a golden opportunity for friends in opposition. Instead of making plans for venting frustration over defeat, they should learn from this defeat, leaving behind the habit of negativity of the last nine years. If they move forward with positivity this session, the country will change its perspective towards them. A new door could open for them," he said.

As Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal said the party will introspect on the "disappointing" performance, senior TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee



claimed that the Congress was suffering from complacency and called for addressing its "internal strife" before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

"I don't want to blame anyone, but I will say that many Congress leaders are suffering from complacency and pride. They are not providing oppor-

tunities to those deserving and are striving to stay in the limelight. The drawback of the Congress is that the deserving workers were not given a chance to work, and the competent ones were sidelined," Banerjee, the de facto number two in the TMC, a key constituent of INDIA alliance, told reporters in Kolkata.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said she won't be able to attend the December 6 meeting of INDIA bloc leaders in Delhi, citing prior engagements in North Bengal. The Trinamool Congress (TMC) supreme said she was unaware of the meeting date and indicated that had she been informed in advance, "she would have rescheduled her itinerary."

Leaders of the INDIA bloc are set to meet at the residence of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge in Delhi to formulate a strategy for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Key aides of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar also made a push for a "credible face" like the JD(U) supremo for leading the INDIA coalition.

Statements to this effect came from ministers and senior JD(U) leaders Vijay Kumar Chaudhary and Ashok Chaudhary, both of

whom, in separate conversations with journalists acknowledged the Congress as "the big brother" in the coalition, but asked it to "show a big heart".

"Had all the parties been taken along by the Congress in the three states, the BJP would have been defeated," said Vijay Kumar Chaudhary, who holds important portfolios in the state.

His views were echoed by Ashok Chaudhary, a former working president of the JD(U) state unit, who, incidentally, was formerly with the Congress and headed its Bihar unit.

"Had leaders like Nitish Kumar and Mamata Banerjee (Bengal CM) been invited to campaign, it would have boosted the Congress' prospects. Just look at our ally Samajwadi Party, which fielded so many candidates in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan," he said.

international



Beyond being a war criminal, Netanyahu, who is the butcher of Gaza right now, will be tried as the butcher of Gaza, just as Milosevic was tried

TAYYIP ERDOGAN
PRESIDENT, TURKEY

RECORD SNOW BLANKETS MOSCOW

Temperatures in parts of Siberia plummeted to minus 50 degrees Celsius while blizzards blanketed Moscow in record snowfall and disrupted flights as winter weather swept across Russia. Temperatures of minus 50 C have become less common in recent years because of climate change, with permafrost showing increasing signs of thawing



of the day quote

Putin is dragging us back to the law of the jungle. He has to be defeated



GEOFFREY R PYATT
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ENERGY RESOURCES, US

So extreme heat has to be viewed as one of the most dangerous results of changing climate, especially in India. It is happening, and we know it's happening.



HILLARY CLINTON
FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE, US

I am writing to you on behalf of Medecins Sans Frontieres to implore you to do everything within your power to ensure an immediate and sustained ceasefire in the Gaza Strip



CHRISTOS CHRISTOU
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT, MSF

SHORT TAKES

3 ships attacked

Riyadh: Three commercial vessels came under attack in international waters in the southern Red Sea, the US military said Sunday, as Yemen's Houthi group claimed drone and missile attacks on two Israeli vessels in the area. The Carney, an American destroyer, responded to distress calls and provided assistance following missile and drone launches from Houthi-controlled territory, according to US Central Command. Yemen's Houthi movement said its navy had attacked two Israeli ships, Unity Explorer and Number 9, with an armed drone and a naval missile.

No relief for Khan

Islamabad: A special court here ruled Monday that jailed former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan and ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi would be indicted again December 12 in the cipher case for allegedly leaking a diplomatic cable. The in-prison hearing of Khan, 71, and Qureshi, 67, began from the start Saturday after a ruling by the Islamabad High Court last month declared the jail trial illegal on procedural grounds and also nullified its proceedings. Hitting back, Khan said that he will include former army chief General (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa and US embassy officials as witnesses in his defence in the cipher case.

400 kids rescued

Johannesburg: Border officials in South Africa say they have intercepted dozens of buses carrying more than 400 young children from Zimbabwe without parents or legal guardians in an anti-trafficking operation. The officials say the children were being "trafficked" into South Africa, although an organization representing foreign nationals living in South Africa says it's likely the children were being sent to visit their parents, who are working in South Africa, for the end of year holidays. The buses were sent back to Zimbabwe. Over 1 million Zimbabweans live in South Africa, many of them illegally, having moved to their southern neighbor over the past 15 years to escape Zimbabwe's economic turmoil.

IS claims bombing

Manila: Islamic State militants claimed responsibility for a deadly bombing at a Catholic Mass in the Philippines Sunday that killed at least four people and injured 50 others. The attack was carried out in a university gymnasium in Marawi, a city in the south of the country besieged by Islamist militants for five months in 2017.

Climate finance takes centre stage at COP28 summit

POORER COUNTRIES TO NEED \$2.4 TRILLION/YEAR BY 2030 TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

REUTERS

Dubai, Dec 4: Money pledges grabbed the spotlight again at COP28 in Dubai Monday as delegates turned their focus to the yawning gap in the need for climate finance and what's on offer.

The United Arab Emirates, the host of this year's conference, pledged \$270 billion in green finance by 2030 through its banks, and several development banks made fresh moves to scale up their funding efforts, including by agreeing to pause debt repayments when disaster strikes.

But leaders of the region's biggest economy and the world's biggest oil producer Saudi Arabia have so far not attended the UN summit, in sharp contrast to their participation in last year's COP27 conference in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.



"The scale of the climate crisis demands urgent and game-changing solutions from every industry. Finance plays a critical role in turning our ambitions into actions"

AHMED AL-JABER | PRESIDENT, COP28

UAE banking sector vows \$270bn in green finances by 2030

Vulnerable nations asking for billions; current pledges around \$700mn only

VAST NEEDS

The amount of cash needed for the energy transition, climate adaptation and disaster relief is overwhelming.

A report released Monday estimated that emerging markets and developing countries will need \$2.4 trillion a year in investment to cap emissions and adapt to the challenges posed by climate change.

"The world is not on track to realise the goals of the Paris Agreement. The reason for this failure is a lack of investment, particularly in emerging market and developing countries outside China," said co-author Nicholas Stern, chair of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment.

"The central challenge is to ac-

celerate and implement the fostering and financing of this investment from a range of sources." Vulnerable countries that are already being hit by costly climate disasters are asking for billions more through a newly formed disaster fund, although current pledges are only around \$700 million.

In a news conference, Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley urged countries to go beyond voluntary pledges and pleas to charities and private investors and instead to consider taxes as a way to boost climate funding. A global 0.1% tax on financial services, for example, could raise \$420 billion, she said, while a 5% tax on global oil and gas profits in 2022 would have yielded around \$200 billion.

Other delegates, including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, have called for an end to fossil fuel subsidies which

have hit a record \$7 trillion per year. Activists with the Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development said they worried the sums pledged would be inadequate.

MOVING MONEY

The biggest pledge Monday came from the UAE's banking system, joining peers in other regions in pledging to lend more to green projects. It followed a Friday pledge of \$30 billion for climate-related projects from the oil producing Gulf state.

Elsewhere, France and Japan said they would support a move by the African Development Bank to leverage IMF Special Drawing Rights for climate and development.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, meanwhile, said it would include climate resilient debt clauses in new loan deals with some poorer countries.

11 climbers dead, 12 still missing as volcano erupts



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Padang, Dec 4: The bodies of 11 climbers were recovered Monday a day after a furious eruption of the Mount Marapi volcano as Indonesian rescuers searched for 12 apparently still missing.

Marapi has stayed at the third highest of four alert levels since 2011, a level indicating above normal volcanic activity and prohibiting climbers or villagers within 3 kilometres of the peak, said Hendra Gunawan, the head of the Centre for Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation.

"This means that there should be no climbing to the peak," Gunawan said, adding that climbers were only allowed below the danger zone, "but sometimes many of them broke the rules to fulfil their satisfaction to climb further."

About 75 climbers had started their way up the nearly 2,900-metre mountain Saturday and became stranded. Eight of those rescued Sunday were rushed to hospitals with burns and one also had a broken limb, said Hari Agustian, an official at the local Search and Rescue Agency in Padang, the West Sumatra provincial capital.

All of the climbers had registered at two command posts or online through West Sumatra's conservation agency before they climbed, Agustian said. It was possible others took illegal roads or local residents were active in the area, but it couldn't be confirmed, he said.

'NO SAFE AREA IN GAZA'

Israel's dirty game



ISRAEL ORDERS MORE GAZANS TO FLEE BUT LATER BOMBS AREAS WHERE IT SENDS THEM

REUTERS

Gaza, Dec 4: Israel ordered people out of swathes of the main southern city in the Gaza Strip Monday as it pressed its ground campaign deep into the south, sending desperate residents fleeing even as it dropped bombs on areas where it told them to go.

Israel's military posted a map on X Monday morning with around a quarter of the city of Khan Younis marked off in yellow as territory that must be evacuated at once. Three arrows pointed south and west, telling people to head towards the Mediterranean coast and towards Rafah, near the Egyptian border.

The Israeli military's chief Arabic-language spokesperson later said in a post on X that the central road out of Khan Younis to the north "constitutes a battlefield" and was now shut. Access would be permitted on the western outskirts of the city, while in Rafah, a short "tactical

They told (people) to move from the north to Khan Younis, since the south is safer. And now, they've bombed Khan Younis. Even Khan Younis is not safe now, and even if we move to Rafah, Rafah is not safe as well. Where do they want us to go?

NESRINE ABDELMOTY | A RESIDENT OF GAZA

suspension of military activities" would allow access until the early afternoon.

In Rafah, bombing at one site overnight had torn a crater the size of a basketball court out of the earth. A dead toddler's bare feet and black trousers poked out from under a pile of rubble. Men struggled with their bare hands to move a chunk of the concrete that had crushed the child.

"We were asleep and safe, they told us it was a safe area, Rafah and all," said Salah al-Arja, owner of one of the houses destroyed at the site. "There were children, women and martyrs," he said. "They tell you it is a safe area, but there is no safe area in all of the Gaza Strip, it is all lies and manipulations."

Israel blames Hamas for putting civilians in danger by operating from civilian areas, in-

cluding in tunnels which can only be destroyed by large bombs. Hamas denies it does so.

As many as 80 percent of Gaza's 2.3 million people have fled their homes in an Israeli bombing campaign that has reduced much of the crowded coastal strip to a desolate wasteland.

Medical officials in the enclave say bombing has killed more than 15,500 people, with thousands more missing and feared buried in rubble.

Israel launched its assault to annihilate Gaza's ruling Hamas Islamists in retaliation for an October 7 cross-border attack by its gunmen, who killed 1,200 people and seized 240 hostages according to Israeli tallies.

ISRAEL'S AIM IN NORTH 'ALMOST MET'

"The goals in the northern section have almost been met," the commander of Israel's armoured corps, Brigadier-General Hisham Ibrahim, told Israel's Army Radio. "We are beginning to expand the ground manoeuvre to other parts of the Strip, with one goal: to topple the Hamas terrorist group."

The military released footage of troops patrolling in tanks and on foot, in fields and in badly damaged urban areas, and firing from weapons, without specifying the location in Gaza.

Israel says its evacuation orders are aimed at protecting civilians from harm, and called on international organisations to help encourage Gazans to move to the areas labelled safe on Israeli maps.

The United Nations said the areas in the south that Israel has ordered evacuated in the three days since the truce had housed more than 350,000 people before the war - not counting the hundreds of thousands now sheltering there from other areas.



SPACE RACE: South Korea Monday successfully conducted a flight of a solid-fuel rocket carrying a satellite over the sea near Jeju Island, amid a growing space race with neighbouring North Korea

PTI PHOTO

US out of money: WH warns Congress

Biden's nearly \$106bn ask to fund ambitious border for Ukraine, Israel and US border security hangs in balance

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Dec 4: The Biden administration on Monday sent Congress an urgent warning about the need to approve tens of billions of dollars in military and economic assistance to Ukraine, saying Kyiv's war effort to defend itself from Russia's invasion may grind to a halt without it.

In a letter to House and Senate leaders and also released publicly, Office of Management and Budget Director Shalanda Young warned the US will run out of funding to send weapons and assistance to Ukraine by the end of the year, saying that would "kneecap" Ukraine on the battlefield.

She added that the US already has run out of money that it has used to prop up Ukraine's econ-



omy, and "if Ukraine's economy collapses, they will not be able to keep fighting, full stop." "We are out of money — and nearly out of time," she wrote.

Biden has sought a nearly \$106 billion aid package for Ukraine, Israel and other needs, but it has faced a difficult reception in Capitol Hill, where there is growing scepticism about the magnitude of assistance for Ukraine and where even Republicans supportive of the funding are insisting on US-Mexico border policy changes to halt the flow of migrants as a condition for the assistance. Meanwhile, the GOP-controlled

We are out of money to support Ukraine in this fight. This isn't a next year problem. The time to help a democratic Ukraine fight against Russian aggression is right now. It is time for Congress to act

SHALANDA YOUNG | DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

House has passed a standalone assistance package for Israel, which is fighting a war with Hamas in Gaza, while the White House has maintained that all of the priorities must be met.

Congress already has allocated \$111 billion to assist Ukraine, including \$67 billion in military procurement funding, \$27 billion for economic and civil assistance and \$10 billion for humanitarian aid.

Young wrote that all of it, other than about 3 per cent of the military funding, had been depleted by mid-November.

Kim appeals to women as birth rates drop

North Korean leaders latest appeal for women to have more children was made during the country's National Mothers Meeting, the first of its kind in 11 years

REUTERS

Seoul, Dec 4: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has called for efforts to tackle the isolated country's falling birth rates, describing the challenge as "everyone's housekeeping", state media KCNA reported Monday.

"Preventing a decline in birth rates and good childcare are all of our housekeeping duties we need to handle while working with mothers," Kim said at National Mothers Meeting.

The United Nations Population Fund estimates that as of 2023 the fertility rate, or the average num-



Many families in North Korea also don't intend to have more than one child these days as they know they need lots of money to raise their kids, send them to school and help them get jobs

AHN KYUNG-SU | HEAD OF DPRKHEALTH.ORG, NORTH KOREA

ber of children being born to a woman in North Korea, stood at 1.8, amid an extended fall in the rate during recent decades.

The fertility rate remains higher than in some of North Korea's neighbours, which have been grappling with a similar

downward trend. South Korea saw its fertility rate drop to a record low of 0.78 last year, while Japan saw its figure drop to 1.26.

The dwindling birth rates in South Korea have caused a shortage of pediatricians, while one city is hosting matchmaking

North Korea's total fertility rate, or the average number of babies expected to be born to a woman over her lifetime, was at 1.79 in 2022, down from 1.88 in 2014

events to boost birth rates.

North Korea, which has a population of about 25 million people, has in recent decades also had to contend with serious food shortages, including deadly famine in the 1990s, often a result of natural disasters such as floods damaging harvests.

The North Korean leader thanked mothers for their role in strengthening national power. "I too always think about mothers when I have a hard time dealing with the party and the state's work," Kim said.

US 'illegally' entered SCS: China

REUTERS

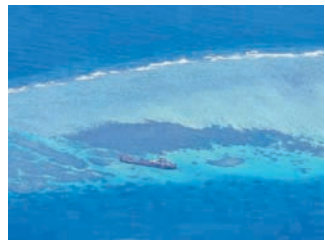
Beijing, Dec 4: China's military Monday said a US Navy ship illegally entered waters adjacent to the Second Thomas Shoal, a disputed South China Sea atoll that has recently seen several maritime confrontations.

"The US seriously undermined regional peace and stability," a spokesperson for China's Southern Theater of Operations said in a statement, adding that the US disrupted the South China Sea and violated China's sovereignty.

China is in disputes with several of its neighbours over its extensive claims of territorial waters in the South China Sea.

The US Navy said the USS Gabrielle Giffords, an Independence-class littoral combat ship, was conducting routine operations in international waters in the South China Sea, consistent with international law.

"Every day the US 7th Fleet operates in the South China Sea, as



they have for decades," the US Navy said in a statement. "These operations demonstrate we are committed to upholding a free and open Indo-Pacific region."

In recent months, China has had several runs-ins with Philippine vessels, and protested about US ships patrolling disputed areas.

According to the Chinese military, the US ship moved into waters adjacent to what China calls the Renai Reef, also known as Second Thomas Shoal, a part of the Spratly Islands. The Second Thomas Shoal lies in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone, according to an United Nations tribunal ruling in 2016.

business

of the day quote

We announce our foray into Nepal as a significant stride in our global expansion. Our commitment to sustainable mobility aligns seamlessly with the dynamic market in Nepal, and we are excited to launch our advanced electric two-wheelers partnering with the Kedia Organisation

SANJAY BEHL | CEO, GREAVES ELECTRIC MOBILITY

We were trying to come back. Now the India premium market has evolved finally. We are stitching a growth story, continue to grow both top line and bottom line and innovate and bring new products to the country

SUNIL NAYYAR | MD, SONY INDIA

We look forward to collaborating with Asian Development Bank over the coming years to meet India's target of achieving 500 GW of renewable capacity by 2030.

SUMANT SINHA | FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN, AND CEO, RENEW



The average gross monthly GST collection in FY 2023-24 now stands at Rs 1.66 lakh crore and is 11 per cent more than that in the same period in the previous financial year

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

3RD LAYOFF ROUND: SPOTIFY TO AXE 1,500

Music streaming giant Spotify said Monday that it will lay off around 1,500 employees, or 17% of its headcount, to bring down costs, after letting 600 of its staff go in January, and 200 more in June. After a round of job cuts at the start of the year by tech companies, some have begun reducing their workforce again, with announcements coming from Amazon to Microsoft-owned LinkedIn



STOCKS SHINE

Best day of '23 for D-St

Stock markets surge over 2% to hit lifetime highs after state poll results showed political stability in the country

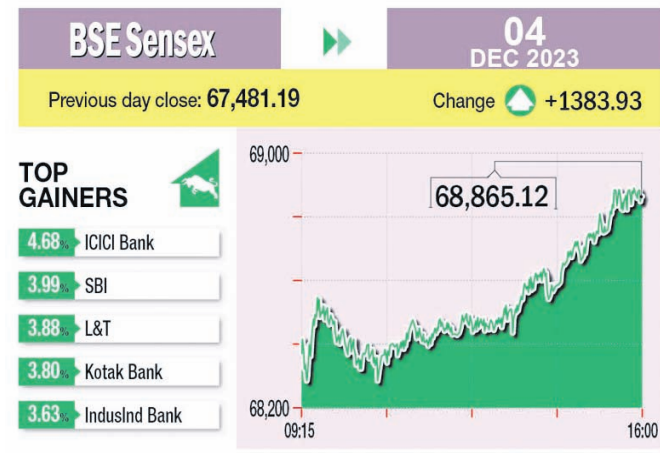
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 4: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty soared more than 2 per cent to settle at record high levels on Monday, marking the fifth straight day of gains as the BJP's victory in assembly polls in three states boosted investor sentiment.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,383.93 points, or 2.05 per cent, to close at a lifetime high of 68,865.12. The index touched an intra-day record peak of 68,918.22. The barometer logged its biggest single-day jump since May 20, 2022.

The broader Nifty also climbed 418.90 points, or 2.07 per cent, to hit its all-time closing high of 20,686.80. On the 50-stock benchmark Nifty, 44 closed with gains.

Among the Sensex firms, ICICI Bank and SBI led the index with the maximum gains of 4.68 per cent and 3.99 per cent, respectively. Other major gainers were Larsen & Toubro, Kotak Mahindra Bank and HDFC Bank. On the other hand, Wipro and



TOP GAINERS

4.68	ICICI Bank
3.99	SBI
3.88	L&T
3.80	Kotak Bank
3.63	IndusInd Bank

SENSEX CLOSES AT LIFETIME HIGH OF 68,865.12
NIFTY HITS ALL-TIME CLOSING HIGH OF 20,686.80

All the sectors have broadly participated in the rally with an optimism that the FII's will continue its value buying, indicating positive commentary on the global inflation data and stable domestic macroeconomics

VINOD NAIR | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Last 5 sessions: Investors richer by ₹14.76L-crore

The combined market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies hit an all-time high of Rs 343.48 lakh crore Monday amid a rally in equities. Following the sharp uptick in the market, investors became richer by over Rs 5.81 lakh crore Monday. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms jumped by Rs 5.81 lakh crore to Rs 343.48 lakh crore from Rs 337.67 lakh crore Friday. In the last five trading sessions, investors' wealth has gone up by Rs 14.76 lakh crore.

Tata Motors defied the trend and traded in negative.

"The benchmark index hits its all-time high following the landslide victory of BJP in elec-

tions in three states. It spurred a rally with an anticipation that the country will witness a stable government post the general elections next year," Vinod Nair,

Head of Research at Gejot Financial Services, said.

Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd said all sectors participated in the

SHORT TAKES

Nearly 8cr ITRs filed

New Delhi: As many as 7.76 crore tax returns for income earned in 2022-23 have been filed till December 2 and more are expected to be filed by this month end, Parliament was informed Monday. In 2022-23 financial year, 10.09 crore PAN holders paid taxes for income earned in 2021-22. "For the corresponding period, 7.76 crore returns have been filed till December 2, 2023, and more returns are expected to be filed till the last date, i.e. December 31, 2023," Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha. The total net direct tax collection during 2022-23 is Rs 16.63 lakh crore out of which income tax collection is Rs 8.08 lakh crore.

Gold touches peak

New Delhi: Gold prices Monday increased Rs 450 to hit a fresh record high of Rs 64,300 per 10 grams in the national capital amid strong global trends, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 63,850 per 10 grams. However, silver remained flat at Rs 80,200 per kilogram. "Gold prices extended gains Monday, trading at a record high of Rs 64,300/10 gram, up by Rs 450 following a bullish trend in the overseas markets," HDFC Securities' Senior Analyst of Commodities Saumil Gandhi said. In the international markets, gold was trading higher at \$2,077 per ounce while silver was down at \$25.40 per ounce.

LTFH, arms merge

New Delhi: L&T Finance Holdings (LTFH) Monday announced the completion of merger of subsidiaries, L&T Finance (LTF), L&T Infra Credit (LTICL), and L&T Mutual Fund Trustee, with itself. With this merger, all the lending businesses will be housed under one entity i.e., LTFH, with it becoming the equity listed operating lending entity, the non-banking finance company, which offers a range of products and services under the L&T Finance brand, said in a release.

IEX trade jumps

New Delhi: The Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) Monday posted 17.5 per cent growth in its overall trade volume to 9,136 million units (MU) in November 2023 as compared to the year-ago period. The exchange had recorded total trade volume of 7,764 MU in November 2022, as per IEX data.

Over 1.06L cos voluntarily exited in last 5 years: Govt

7,946 foreign firms have also registered their Indian subsidiary firms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: More than 1 lakh firms voluntarily exited under the companies law in nearly five years, the government said Monday.

Besides, many companies have sought voluntary liquidation under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

"From FY 2018-19 to FY 2023-24 (up to 30th November, 2023) 1,06,561 companies have exited voluntarily under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013. From FY 2018-19 to FY 2023-24 (up to 30th September 2023) final reports of 1,168 companies have been submitted by liquidators under section 59 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 (Code), of which final dissolution orders have been passed by NCLT in 633 cases during the said period," Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh told the Lok Sabha.

Section 248(2) of the Companies Act pertains to voluntary exit of companies while Section 59 of the IBC relates to voluntary liquidation of companies.

In the last five years, Singh said the time taken for voluntary exit under Section 248(2) of the



Companies Act, 2013 has varied between an average of 6-8 months to even 12-18 months in some cases.

Under the IBC, the average time taken for dissolution of companies after submission of final report by the liquidator has been in the range of 7-9 months. The average time taken by liquidator to submit final report for Adjudication to NCLT has been about 14 months, Singh, who is Minister of State for Corporate Affairs, said in a written reply.

In a separate written reply, Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said 7,946 foreign companies have registered their Indian subsidiary companies during the period from FY 2018-19 to FY 2022-23 (up to November).

"The increase in foreign direct investment indicates the confidence of the foreign investors in the business atmosphere of the country," she added.

MOMENTUM BUILDS

Bitcoin tops \$40K for 1st time since May '22

REUTERS

London, Dec 4: Bitcoin has broken above \$40,000 for the first time since May 2022 as it rides a wave of momentum on broad enthusiasm about US interest rate cuts and as traders bet on the imminent approval of US stock market-traded bitcoin funds.

The world's biggest cryptocurrency hit as high as \$41,748 Monday, its highest since April 2022, seemingly casting off the funk that had settled over crypto markets following the collapse of FTX and other crypto-business failures last year.

It was last up 4% at \$41,627. Its 50% rally since mid-October has "seemed to mark a decisive shift away from the bearishness of 2022 and early 2023," said Justin d'Anethan - head of business development for Asia-Pacific at Keyrock, a digital assets market making firm.

D'Anethan said evidence of institutional buying through November showed a new leg of interest and that although reversals ahead were not inconceivable, lows hit around \$16,000 a year ago "probably marked the bottom".

Bitcoin is up by over 150% so far this year.

Ether, the coin linked to the Ethereum blockchain network, also rose to a 1-1/2 year high Monday, hitting \$2,264. Both bitcoin and ether remain far below their record highs, hit in 2021, of \$69,000 and \$4,868 respectively.

India to become \$5tn economy early in Amrit Kaal, says FinMin

AT THE END OF 2022-23, THE INDIAN GDP STANDS AT \$3.7TN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: India will become a \$5 trillion economy early in the 'Amrit Kaal' on the path to achieve the goal of becoming an advanced economy by 2047, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said Monday.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has projected India to become a \$5 trillion economy with the third largest GDP in 2027-28.

The \$5 trillion milestone will be crossed with the help of a strong rupee which will result from macroeconomic stability, he said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

"The government has set the goal of becoming an advanced economy by 2047. In the process, it will become a \$5 trillion economy early in the Amrit Kaal," Chaudhary said.

At the end of 2022-23, the Indian GDP stood at \$3.7 trillion. In 1980-81, size of the Indian economy was \$189 billion, which increased to \$326 billion after a decade. In 2000-01, the size of the GDP rose to \$476 billion.

In 2010-11, India's GDP jumped to \$1.71 trillion, and further increased to \$2.67 trillion in 2020-21. Chaudhary said the exchange rate is not an overlooked factor



GDP GROWTH OVER THE YEARS

1980-81	-	\$189 billion
1990-91	-	\$326 billion
2000-01	-	\$476 billion
2010-11	-	\$1.71 trillion
2020-21	-	\$2.67 trillion
2022-23	-	\$3.7 trillion

as it ranks India's GDP size in the world. "India is a market economy, and the government monitors economic progress through market-determined GDP and exchange rate," Chaudhary said.

He further said both domestic and international markets are the mechanisms that determine India's GDP, exchange rate and contribution of various sectors to GDP. Contribution of agriculture, industry and

services to nominal GDP in 2022-23 stood at 18.4 per cent, 28.3 per cent, and 53.3 per cent, respectively.

Chaudhary said the government also contributes to economic progress through policy interventions, including the measures announced in annual budgets.

Major initiatives taken by the government in the last 9 years for directly increasing the GDP include, implementation of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (IBC) Code, recapitalisation of public sector banks, rollout of Goods and Services Tax (GST), reduction in corporate tax, boost in effective capital expenditure, introduction of Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme in 14 sectors, continuous liberalisation of the FDI regime, and building of digital infrastructure.

Europe's world-leading AI rules facing do-or-die moment

BIG TECH FIRMS ARE LOBBYING AGAINST WHAT THEY SEE AS OVERREGULATION THAT STIFLES INNOVATION, WHILE EUROPEAN LAWMAKERS WANT ADDED SAFEGUARDS FOR THE CUTTING-EDGE AI SYSTEMS THOSE COMPANIES ARE DEVELOPING

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Dec 4: Hailed as a world first, European Union artificial intelligence rules are facing a make-or-break moment as negotiators try to hammer out the final details this week — talks complicated by the sudden rise of generative AI that produces human-like work.

First suggested in 2019, the EU's AI Act was expected to be the world's first comprehensive AI regulations, further cementing the 27-nation bloc's position as a global trendsetter when it comes to reining in the tech industry.

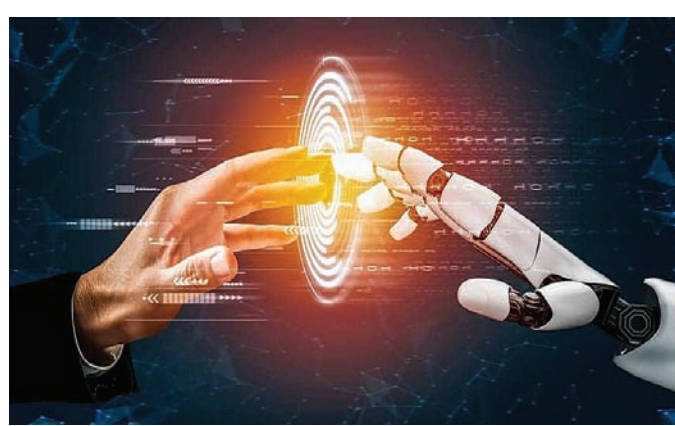
But the process has been bogged down by a last-minute battle over how to govern systems that underpin general purpose AI services like OpenAI's ChatGPT and Google's Bard chatbot.

Big tech companies are lob-

bing against what they see as overregulation that stifles innovation, while European lawmakers want added safeguards for the cutting-edge AI systems those companies are developing.

Meanwhile, the US, UK, China and global coalitions like the Group of 7 major democracies have joined the race to draw up guardrails for the rapidly developing technology, underscored by warnings from researchers and rights groups of the existential dangers that generative AI poses to humanity as well as the risks to everyday life.

"Rather than the AI Act becoming the global gold standard for AI regulation, there's a small chance but growing chance that it won't be agreed before the European Parliament elections" next year, said Nick Reiners, a tech policy analyst at



Eurasia Group, a political risk advisory firm.

He said "there's simply so much to nail down" at what officials are hoping is a final round of talks Wednesday. Even if they work late into the night as expected, they might have to scramble to finish in the new year, Reiners said.

When the European Commission, the EU's executive arm, unveiled the draft in 2021, it barely mentioned general purpose AI systems like chatbots. The proposal to classify AI systems by four levels of risk — from minimal to unacceptable — was essentially intended as product safety legislation.

AI is too important not to regulate, and too important not to regulate well. The race should be for the best AI regulations, not the first AI regulations

KENT WALKER | TOP LEGAL OFFICER, GOOGLE

Brussels wanted to test and certify the information used by algorithms powering AI, much like consumer safety checks on cosmetics, cars and toys.

That changed with the boom in generative AI, which sparked wonder by composing music, creating images and writing essays resembling human work. It also stoked fears that the technology could be used to launch massive cyberattacks or create

new bioweapons. The risks led EU lawmakers to beef up the AI Act by extending it to foundation models. Also known as large language models, these systems are trained on vast troves of written works and images scraped off the internet.

Foundation models give generative AI systems such as ChatGPT the ability to create something new, unlike traditional AI, which processes data and completes tasks using predetermined rules.

A group of influential computer scientists published an open letter warning that weakening the AI Act this way would be "a historic failure." Executives at Mistral, meanwhile, squabbled online with a researcher from an Elon Musk-backed nonprofit that aims to prevent "existential risk" from AI.

Wade scalp lifts Arshdeep

Results won't affect 'Bazball'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Dec 4: After leaking 37 runs in his first three wayward overs on a languid Chinnaswamy Stadium pitch, Arshdeep Singh's night was seemingly doomed. But then the left-arm pacer found a chance to redeem himself in the dying moments of the fifth T20 against Australia to seal a 4-1 series win. Arshdeep grabbed it with both hands, defending 10 runs in the final over to give India a six-run win, nailing a bouncer and yorkers that he looked so incapable of bowling during that horror start.

So, what was going through his mind when captain Suryakumar Yadav tossed the ball to him ahead of the 20th over: "I did not feel that it was bowling-friendly conditions as I bowled a lot of loose deliveries," Arshdeep began his post-match press meet, even allowing himself the luxury of a relieved chuckle.

The 24-year-old had in front of him an in-touch Matthew Wade and Arshdeep surprised him with a bouncer outside the off-stump and to be fair to the Aussies captain that ball ought to have been called a wide for the height.

The second ball was an inch-perfect yorker on the off-stump as Wade could only squirt it back to the bowler. Arshdeep missed a yorker again off the third delivery, but the low full-toss was enough for him to get the wicket of Wade through a catch in the deep by Shreyas Iyer.

Arshdeep thought the match



turned in India's favour at that moment. "I was just thinking that I have nothing to lose as I have already given away a lot of runs. Surya bhai was also saying the same thing that 'let's see how it goes.'"

"My gut feeling was to bowl a bouncer off the first ball to put some doubt in Wade's mind and once I got his wicket the belief came (in me) that we can win this match," said Arshdeep.

The pacer was effusive in his praise for the way Suryakumar led the side during this series. "Surya bhai gives a lot of freedom. We had played in a few batting-friendly pitches earlier in the series but he said wherever there are challenges opportunities too will be there."

"He was telling us not to worry about the results but to focus on the process and force the batsmen to score runs off good deliveries. He never put us under pressure," he said.

Arshdeep emphasised his point while giving context to it with the example of the last over here. "He told me to bowl whatever you want to in the death overs and his full support will be there. Sometimes, he gives a bit of input, you know, this kind of ball will be good at this stage," he added.

Arshdeep was not yet ready to think deeper into India's tour to South Africa, beginning in a week's time. "Right now, we are focusing on this series. We are not looking too far ahead (in terms of South Africa tour) and once we go there and see the conditions, will take a call accordingly," he said.

Bangalore, Dec 4: 'Bazball' has changed the dynamics of England's batting approach in Test cricket and their Kiwi coach Brendon McCullum is very clear that irrespective of outcome, his team won't deviate from its aggressive tactics against India in the five-Test series, where most tracks will offer substantial turn.

The term 'Bazball', coined after McCullum's nickname 'Baz' and the attacking philosophy that he endorses, has also found its pride of place in 'Collins dictionary'.

The meaning of 'Bazball' is "a style of test cricket in which the batting side attempts to gain the initiative by playing in a highly aggressive manner."

England will face India in five Tests at Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Rajkot, Ranchi and Dharamsala, starting January 25.

"We have got a huge challenge against a very good Indian team in five Tests in India," McCullum said at the Royal Challengers Bangalore Innovation Lab's Leaders Meet India.

"I am excited about it because you want to test yourself against the best side and I genuinely believe that India is the best in their own condition. It is going to be a good challenge for us. If we have success then fabulous, if we don't, then I know we will go down in the style that we want to go down," McCullum used the platform, signal his and his team's clear attacking intent for the marquee series.

In his address, McCullum also expressed his thoughts on the



essence of 'Bazball' and what it stands for: "We are playing the game, because we love cricket and we want to try and be as good at cricket as we possibly can. During the time that you are in the chair, you want to make sure you enjoy it and you shouldn't wait till the end of your career to do so. We are very lucky that we have had some immediate success but I don't think it is the ceiling for us."

The style of cricket has also allowed England to check the real potential of some of its younger players. "I think we have seen some guys who have unlocked their potential in the last 18 months or so and that's

what the job is as a leader; to get the most out of the people that you're in charge of," he added.

The 42-year-old also recalled his fearless and unbeaten knock of 158 off 73 balls in the very first IPL game. He credited the knock as the inspiration for the Bazball phenomenon.

"The reason why I daydream about that moment is because it literally changed my life. I was just a cricketer for New Zealand, where no one really knew what you did where you're from, or what you're capable of. But that day provided the platform, the forum, and the opportunity to change my life," he said.

FELIX GOAL HELPS BARCA WIN 1-0 OVER ATLETICO

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Dec 4: Joao Felix scored against his former club to give Barcelona a 1-0 win over Atletico Madrid and move the Catalan club closer to the top of the Spanish league standings Sunday.

Felix, playing on loan from Atletico after falling out with the club last season, scored with a neat shot over goalkeeper Jan Oblak in the 28th minute to give Barcelona the home victory.

The result put Barcelona back within four points of leaders Girona and Real Madrid, which won their matches Saturday. Madrid beat Granada 2-0 and Girona defeated Valencia 2-1. Atletico dropped to fourth place, three points behind Barcelona in third but with a game in hand.

Felix received a standing ovation when he was substituted by Ferran Torres in the 77th at

the Olympic Lluís Companys Stadium. The Portugal forward got the winner by flicking the ball over Oblak from a tight angle after a pass by Raphinha.

Barcelona goalkeeper Inaki Pena, replacing the injured Marc-Andre ter Stegen, made a few good saves toward the end to secure Barcelona's third win in four league matches.

Barcelona were coming off a 1-1 draw at Rayo Vallecano before beating Porto 2-1 to secure their return to the knockout stage of the Champions League for the first time after two consecutive group-stage eliminations.

Felix, a former Benfica player, also scored against Porto Tuesday. Diego Simeone's Atletico had won four in a row in all competitions, with two losses — including at Las Palmas — and eight wins in its last 10 league matches.



Joao Felix chips over an onrushing Jan Oblak for Barcelona's goal against Atletico Madrid, Sunday

City, Spurs play out thrilling stalemate

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, Dec 4: Pep Guardiola said it would be fun. Manchester City's clash with Tottenham definitely lived up to the pre-match hype after a thrilling 3-3 draw at Etihad Stadium Sunday.

Not that Erling Haaland was too happy after referee Simon Hooper denied Jack Grealish the chance to score a stoppage-time winner for the defending Premier League champions.

The Norway international reacted furiously when the whistle was blown for an earlier foul on him just as Grealish looked set to run through on goal. Haaland was booked for his response.

Haaland had been brought down by Tottenham defender Emerson Royal as City went in search of a winner after Dejan Kulusevski's 90th-minute equaliser. But as the forward regained his feet, Hooper appeared to gesture for play to carry on, with Haaland releasing Grealish with a pass.

It was then that the official blew his whistle, much to the anger of the home fans and City's players. Haaland went on to express his frustration at what had happened in a post on X, formerly known as Twitter, when responding to a video of the incident.

City had twice been ahead in the match and looked to have scored a winner when Grealish came off the bench to make it 3-2 in the 81st. Kulusevski's header earned Spurs a point and consigned City to a third straight draw in the league, leaving



Dejan Kulusevski (C) celebrates his goal with teammates; (inset) Erling Haaland confronts the referee after the match

Guardiola's team three points off league leader Arsenal in third. Liverpool, who beat Fulham 4-3, is a point ahead of City in second place.

Son Heung-min had put Spurs ahead in the sixth, but put through his own net three minutes later and Phil Foden struck in the 31st. Giovanni Lo Celso leveled the score in the 69th before strikes from Grealish and Kulusevski.

HOME RUN

Liverpool haven't lost at Anfield since being routed 2-5 by Real Madrid in the Champions League in February. But a run that now stretches to 19 games looked on the verge of being broken when Bobby De Cordova-

Reid put Fulham 3-2 ahead in the 80th Sunday.

The visitors had twice come from behind and De Cordova-Reid's goal looked like ending Liverpool's 100% winning record at home this season.

That was until goals from Wataru Endo and Trent Alexander-Arnold in the 87th and 88th minutes completed a dramatic 4-3 win for Jurgen Klopp's team. Victory moved Liverpool to within two points of leader Arsenal and maintained its proud home record.

CHELSEA PREVAIL

Chelsea didn't spend a British record of more than USD 130 million on Enzo Fernandez for his scoring prowess. But the

Argentina international struck twice to secure a battling 3-2 win against Brighton to help Mauricio Pochettino's side quickly put last week's 4-1 rout by Newcastle behind it.

Fernandez scored his first Premier League goal to put Chelsea ahead in the 17th and converted from the penalty spot for what turned out to be the winner.

Chelsea had to show resolve after going down to 10 men just before halftime when Conor Gallagher was sent off. Brighton threatened a comeback with a goal from Joao Pedro in stoppage time to make it 3-2 and then had a penalty overturned on video review.

'Inspired' Hope reveals his chat with MS Dhoni

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

North Sound (Antigua), Dec 4: Master chaser MS Dhoni's advice to "take the game deep" inspired Shai Hope to lead his side to a thrilling victory against England in the opening ODI, the West Indies skipper revealed.

Former Indian captain Dhoni is known for his calm demeanour and match-winning abilities, as he always looks to take the chase deep when the target is massive.

And after West Indies were reduced to 213/5 in pursuit of 326 here Sunday, Hope, a wicketkeeper-batter just like Dhoni, recalled a chat with one of the best finishers in the game.

"A very, very famous person, MS Dhoni — we had a chat a while ago, and he was saying, 'You always have a lot more time than you think,'" Hope said at the post-match presentation. "That's one thing that has stuck with me throughout the years I've been playing ODI cricket," Hope added.

West Indies faced the uphill task of scoring 106 in the last 10 overs. But along side Romario Shephard (48; 28b), Hope smashed an unbeaten 109 off 83 balls, that included four hits to the fence and seven maximums, to take eke out a memorable win here Sunday.

The 30-year-old struck three sixes in four balls off Sam Curran in the penultimate over of the chase to give West Indies a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. In the process, he also recorded his 16th ODI and fastest century of his career.

Shooter loses left thumb after explosion while training

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: A national-level shooter partially lost his left thumb when the 10m air pistol cylinder he was filling with compressed air exploded at a private range in Greenfield, Faridabad. The incident, that left everyone shocked, occurred Saturday evening.

Pushpender Kumar, a corporal with the Indian Air Force, was training at the shooting range for the National Championships, currently underway in Bhopal when he suffered severe damage to his left thumb, which required immediate hospitalisation. He is currently admitted to Indian Army's R&R hospital here.

A national coach told this news agency on condition of anonymity that while Pushpender was filling compressed air into the pistol cylinder from the main cylinder, the

incident happened. Air pistols and air rifles have a sleek gas cylinder attached just below the barrel. When the shooter presses the trigger, the compressed gas in the cylinder is released, which hits a hammer inside the air gun, ejecting the lead pellet.

The air pistol's cylinder has to be filled after a certain number of shots with the help of a compressor or a portable cylinder.

Earlier, carbon dioxide used to be the preferred gas to fill the cylinders but with the advancement in technology, compressed air cylinders, which look like smaller versions of LPG cylinders, are used to fill the air pistol cylinders.

Pushpender belongs to the Baghat district of Uttar Pradesh and, while he has not competed in internationally, he is a senior member of the IAF team. He had lost his mother nearly a



month back. "We are hopeful Pushpender will make 90-95 per cent recovery post surgery," said the coach. "Air pistol cylinders have to be replaced after a certain period of time and the gun manufacturers do it for free. Thankfully, Pushpender's shooting arm is safe."

The coach added that he had not come across such an incident in his career "though (gun) vendors say such incidents do

happen". It is not known whether the air pistol was personal or belonged to the Air Force.

The coach said that international rifle shooter from Meerut, Ravi Kumar, who is also with the IAF, was with Pushpender at the Army hospital to take care of him. Kumar, a World Cup bronze medallist, told PTI that Pushpender is doing well post surgery and should be released from hospital soon.

Another pistol coach at the Karni Singh range said that it is important that air pistol and rifle shooters replace their gun cylinders every 10 years or as directed by the weapon manufacturer.

"There is a possibility of a mishap if the refill cylinders are not replaced as directed by the manufacturers. I don't know the exact cause of the blast but one should not take it lightly as once the validity expires anything can happen," he said on condition of anonymity.

"Pushpender is a good shooter and I have known him for a long time. What I have been told is that he has undergone a major surgery. He is around 28-30 years old. Usually what happens is that the pressure gauge indicator on the air weapon's cylinder starts malfunctioning, giving incorrect reading. It leads to overfilling of the cylinder, which causes it to burst," he added.

NCLT issues notice to Byju's over BCCI plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 4: Insolvency tribunal NCLT has issued notice to Think & Learn Pvt Ltd, which provides online educational services under the brand name of Byju's, over a petition filed by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

The BCCI has filed a petition claiming dues of Rs 158 crore as an operational creditor under section 9 of the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code 2016.

Admitting BCCI's plea, a two-member Bangalore-based bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) issued notice to Think & Learn November 28, 2023.

The NCLT order further said,

"two weeks is granted to the Respondent (Byju's) to file a reply and one week thereafter is granted to the Applicant (BCCI) to file rejoinder, if any, after duly serving the copy on the other side".

The tribunal has directed to list the matter December 22, 2023, for the next hearing in this matter. During the proceedings, BCCI's counsel informed NCLT that a general notice was issued to Byju's through an e-mail dated January 6, 2023, with a default amount of ₹158 crore, excluding TDS.

Byju's first came on board back in 2019 when mobile manufacturer Oppo transferred the sponsorship rights to the online tutorial firm.