



## SUHANA'S CONFESSION

Actor Suhana Khan says she doesn't handle well the challenges of facing social media scrutiny, but she's trying

LEISURE P2



## SIZZLING EARTH

For the sixth month in a row, earth sets a new record for heat by registering the hottest-ever November

INTERNATIONAL P10



## BISHNOI TOPS CHART

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi bags the No. 1 spot in ICC T20I bowling rankings with a good show against Aussies

SPORTS P12

### SHORT TAKES

#### Naik appointed Addl CEO of state

**Bhubaneswar:** The Odisha government appointed Wednesday IAS officer, Dr Noonsavath Thirumala Naik as the additional chief electoral officer of the state. "The post of additional chief electoral officer, Odisha is declared equivalent in status and responsibility to the post of additional secretary provided in the IAS cadre of the state," the Odisha government said in a notification. The 2009 batch officer had been serving as Labour Commissioner, Odisha with additional charge of State Mission Director, Odisha Livelihoods Mission in the past.

#### Odisha govt bans strike by health staff

**Bhubaneswar:** The Odisha government has banned any kind of strike or cease-work by staff of the Health department in the state for a period of six months. Strikes by nurses, paramedics, technicians and other Class-III and Class-IV employees of Health department including the contractual employees have been banned for a period of six months by exercising the power conferred by the Odisha Essential Services (Maintenance) Act 1988, the state Home department said in a notification Wednesday. This has been done to ensure uninterrupted health services at government-run medical colleges and hospitals, district headquarters hospitals, community and primary health centres and all other state-run health facilities including police hospitals.

#### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



With the declining number of states under INC rule, soon there might not be any government left for us to criticise

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	69653.73 ↑ 357.59
NIFTY	20937.70 ↑ 82.60
DOLLAR	83.37 ↓ ₹0.03
EURO	90.05 ↓ ₹0.38
GOLD	₹62,466 ↑ ₹281
SILVER	₹75,268 ↓ ₹11

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	23.6°C	24.0°C
TEMP MIN	20.4°C	21.2°C
Humidity	76%	75%
Rainfall	21.4mm	15mm
Forecast	Light to moderate rain	



**BEATING THE HEAT:** A firefighter wearing safety equipment walks through raging flames during a function organised Wednesday on the occasion of Civil Defence Annual Day in Bhubaneswar. PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK

## Odisha tops list in fire-related deaths

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** Odisha topped the list of states registering the highest number of deaths due to fire-related accidents in India according to the latest report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB). The report on 'Accidental Deaths & Suicides in India' has revealed that 1,219 persons including 906 males and 313 females died in fire accidents in Odisha during 2022. This is a slight decrease in comparison to the number of deaths reported in 2021 (1,248).

Odisha also recorded 1,222 fire mishaps which were highest among Indian states in 2022. As per the report, the country witnessed a total of 7,566 cases of fire accidents during 2022. Odisha accounted for 16.2 per cent of the total fire mishaps that occurred in India.

A total of 446 persons including 403 males and 43 females died in 449 fire mishaps which occurred due to electric short circuit during 2022 in Odisha.

The NCRB report also said that Odisha witnessed the maximum number of accidental deaths due to the forces of nature such as lightning, heat or sun strokes, exposure to cold, drowning, falls, poisoning and accidental fires. A total of 2,445 persons died due to these causes last year.

Odisha with 316 deaths, held the third spot among the states with highest number of deaths due to lightning in 2022. The state also witnessed the second highest snakebite deaths in the country in 2022. A total of 1,052 persons including 932 males and 120 females died due to snake bite in Odisha during 2022.

## 100 job sites blocked

ALL THESE WEBSITES WERE USING SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS TO DUPE VICTIMS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 6:** The Union Home Ministry said Wednesday that more than 100 websites that were being operated from overseas and involved in organised illegal investments and part-time job frauds have been blocked and banned.

These websites were identified and recommended for blocking by the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), an initiative of the Home Ministry aimed at addressing cybercrimes in a coordinated and comprehensive manner through its National Cybercrime Threat Analytics Unit (NCTAU), an official spokesperson said here.

Most of these websites were involved in fraud job-related schemes. They used reputed social media platforms for their digital advertisements using keywords like 'ghar baithe job' (Do jobs sitting at home) and 'ghar baithe kamai kaise karen' (how to earn while sitting at home) in multiple languages luring victims.

The targets were often retired employees, women and unemployed youths seeking part-time jobs with whom the fraudsters engaged through WhatsApp or Telegram. The websites then convinced the victims to perform tasks such as liking and subscribing to videos or rating maps.

Victims were initially given a commission and then persuaded to invest more for higher returns. Once the victims deposited larger sums of money, those were frozen, resulting in them being deceived, the spokesperson said.



However, the spokesperson also said that detecting such websites and taking action against those can only happen with public cooperation. To combat cybercrime and protect citizens from threat actors, the Home Ministry urged people to promptly report phone numbers and social media handles used by fraudsters to the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP).

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) invoked its power under the Information Technology Act, 2000 to block these websites, who facilitated organised illegal investments and part-time job frauds, and they were found to be using digital advertisements, chat messengers and rented accounts.

The proceeds from these economic frauds were being laundered out of India through methods such as card networks, cryptocurrency, overseas ATM withdrawals and international Fintech companies, the

### 72% INDIANS DUPED ONLINE

**New Delhi:** A whopping 72 per cent of all Indians have fallen prey to various kinds of online scams/frauds in the last two months, according to an e-survey conducted by 'YouGov', the details of which were released Wednesday. While 20 per cent of those surveyed admitted to losing money in online frauds, 47 per cent said a family member or friend had been gyped. The scams were of a varied nature - fake job rackets, online shopping, investment scams, bank/card phishing frauds, lottery or fake rewards offers, government or social media deceptions, fraudulent loans, dating/romance lures and fake charities, etc.

spokesperson informed. "Avoid transactions with unknown accounts as they may be involved in money laundering or even terror financing, potentially leading to account blocking by the police and legal action," the spokesperson advised people.

## Man dies during dad's last rites

PNN & AGENCIES

**Borigumma, Dec 6:** In a heart-wrenching incident, a 27-year-old man died while preparing for his father's cremation at Kamta village in Koraput district Wednesday. The man, identified as Benudhar Mandal, was a social activist. Benudhar was standing close to the funeral pyre when a heavy branch of a tree fell on him.

Police later said that Benudhar suffered multiple injuries on his head and body. He was bleeding profusely and had lost consciousness on the spot itself, they added. He was rushed to the hospital, but was declared brought dead on arrival.

"Benudhar's 67-year-old father Laxman died at his residence around 1.00am early Wednesday. Later, he and his family brought the body of his father to their native village at Kamta for last rites," said a police official of B Singhpur police station.

"While the relatives and family members were busy making arrangements for cremation, Benudhar went to the backyard to answer nature's call. He was walking towards the crematorium when a branch of the tree situated on the premises came crashing down on him and he subsequently died due to the injuries he sustained," the police official stated.

"Benudhar sustained severe head injuries and was immediately rushed to the community health centre here where the



Benudhar Mandal

doctors declared him dead on arrival, the police official said.

Eye-witnesses to the incident said that due to the effect of cyclonic storm 'Michaung', the area had been experiencing heavy and incessant rains for the last couple of days. They added that the rain must have damaged the branch due to which it became loose and fell off.

Family members of Benudhar informed that they will now conduct both the cremations together. They said that they were waiting for the police to hand over Benudhar's body after completion of the post-mortem.

"We all are very sad because of the double misfortune that has hit the family," said Baikuntha Mandal, a cousin of Benudhar. He said that Benudhar's family should get some form of compensation from the government as he was the sole bread-winner for his family. Others also praised Benudhar for his social work.

## Family cries foul after prisoner dies by suicide

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, Dec 6:** An under-trial prisoner died by suicide by hanging himself at the Jajpur Road sub-jail in Ragadi under Korei block of Jajpur district, Wednesday. Officials however, failed to ascertain the cause for which the deceased took the drastic step.

The deceased was identified as Balaram Behera, 29, a resident of Mangalpatna village under Panikoi police limits in the district. He died by suicide by hanging himself from the ceiling of an under-construction room inside the prison. Police said that Behera had been in prison for 49 days after being arrested on charges of molesting and assaulting a widow.

This is the second suicide case within the jail premises in the last two years while another's attempted suicide failed. This has raised a question mark on the security of the prisoners lodged inside the sub-jail.

The deceased's brother Dilip Kumar Behera however, alleged foul play. He alleged that Balaram has been tortured and murdered as he protested against the food being provided in the prison and had complained to the magistrate.

## Rahul politically immature: Pranab's biography

BOOK WRITTEN BY FORMER PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER DWELLS ON THE UNEASY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GANDHI FAMILY AND MUKHERJEE

AGENCIES

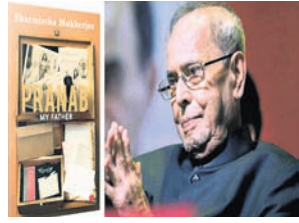
**New Delhi, Dec 6:** Sharmistha Mukherjee, the daughter of late former President and Congress veteran Pranab Mukherjee, said Wednesday that her dad was upset about the way party leader Rahul Gandhi trashed an ordinance that was brought in by the then UPA government in 2013 to save convicted leaders like RJD supremo Lalu Yadav from disqualification.

Sharmistha also goes on to add in the book titled *Pranab, My Father: A Daughter Remembers* that the former President referred to Rahul as 'politically immature'.

The book has been written on the basis of a diary that the former President maintained. The book quotes Pranab describing Rahul as 'Has Gandhi-Nehru lineage without political acumen'. In the book Pranab has also described Rahul as 'courteous and full of questions but not yet politically mature'.

More importantly however, the book states that Rahul's public tearing of a proposed ordinance on convicted netas in public did not please Pranab at all. He thought that it was the final nail in the UPA coffin.

Sharmistha writes, "He (Pranab) was angry and red-faced. 'Who



does he (Rahul) think he is? He is not a member of the Cabinet. Who is he to publicly trash a decision of the Cabinet? The Prime Minister is abroad. Does he not even realise the implication of his actions and the effect it will have on the PM and government? What right does he have to humiliate

the Prime Minister like this?'" Pranab had asked.

In the book Sharmistha has said the former Prez was also unhappy about Rahul's frequent absence from Parliament after the party's dismal performance in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls.

"Baba (Pranab Mukherjee) said he (Rahul Gandhi) should put his thoughts coherently. Rahul said he would meet him, but there was not much interaction between both leaders during the UPA regime from 2004 to 2014," Sharmistha tells in the book.

In the book, Sharmistha has also recalled an incident where her

father took a sarcastic dig at Rahul over his prime ministerial ambitions. "Rahul Gandhi came to see Baba (father) while he was walking in the Mughal Gardens in the morning. He disliked being disturbed while walking or doing puja. But still, he met him. Later, I came to know that Rahul Gandhi was supposed to meet him in the evening," she wrote.

"When I asked Baba about this, he was not amused. He sarcastically said if 'Rahul Gandhi's office cannot differentiate between AM and PM, how can he become the Prime Minister?'" she states in the book.

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## WOULDN'T CHOOSE TO BE AN ACTRESS TODAY: JOLIE

Los Angeles: Angelina Jolie has spoken about her perspective on Hollywood and said that she wouldn't choose to be an actress if she were starting out in this era. "I wouldn't be an actress today," Jolie said in an interview with WSL.

## SARANDON FIRED FROM MOVIE FOR SUPPORTING PALESTINE

Actress Susan Sarandon has been asked to leave the thriller film *Slipping Away* amid her anti-Semitism controversy. In the wake of the October 7 massacre by Hamas, Sarandon has been under fire for her latest outburst for saying Jews are "getting a taste of how it feels to be Muslim in America."



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Good news may bring cheer to you today! A job, a wedding, some profit... it could be personal or professional. Giving your best is almost a habit with you, says Ganesh, and it will pay off today.

**TAURUS**  
Ganesh predicts that today, you will be successful in money matters. There is, at best, only an outside chance that any stimulating event or thrilling escapade will occur today. In short, the day may be boring. Fret not as the dreary day may change into an exhilarating evening, feels Ganesh.

**GEMINI**  
You will long for some privacy today, says Ganesh. You may end up earning a large amount of money, mostly through some private venture. The day will be a greatly profitable one for cashiers, money lenders and those in retail business. Keep working hard to achieve success.

**CANCER**  
Today, there is a strong possibility that you may face unexpected job changes. You are likely to spend lavishly to please family and friends. You may feel we make money to spend on loved ones. Still it would probably be a good idea to count every penny before using it, says Ganesh.

**LEO**  
Being good to oneself is not vanity. To Ganesh, it seems as if you take this statement to heart, since it looks quite possible that you make your personal care number one priority today. On the flip side though, you become aware of the fact that the harder you try the more it seems you have to.

**VIRGO**  
The time today is ripe to venture into a new business. Projects that have been put-off will finally be completed. Looking into the week ahead, you are most likely to give yourself an energy zap. Parties will be all fun and entertainment. Your kids will bring home joy and pride and this will brighten the mood even more, says Ganesh.

**LIBRA**  
The Bhagavad Gita says, "Do your duty without expecting the fruit." Remember this important lesson and strive hard to put in extra efforts to finish off whatever you undertake to do. Worrying about results will only hamper your progress. Go with the flow and let results come to you.

**SCORPIO**  
Life is the best teacher, they say. And today, you even experience this. You may learn to survive the neck-tight competition in the market. This may invite a lot of envy, but nothing shall bother you. Ganesh reminds you of the adage, 'To err is human, to forgive is divine,' so, it's fine even if you commit some errors.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Today shall be a rather decisive day, speculates Ganesh. Situations that have pushed you into a corner will force you to make rash decisions. But take stock of the situation and assess the long-term consequences of your actions beforehand, advises Ganesh.

**CAPRICORN**  
Mark this date on the calendar as today is going to be one of the most important days of life, the reason being you are going to meet somebody who is will stay with you through out your life. Though it may seem time bore you, but your relationships will keep you busy today. Visits to religious places are on the cards for you.

**AQUARIUS**  
You may rave and rant, but all you'll get from colleagues or juniors are wishy-washy excuses for a job not done. Ganesh advises that you take care to finish your own work before you help others. The stars say that your beloved will smoothen your creased brow.

**PISCES**  
You will need broad shoulders to deal with the added responsibilities which will be heaped on your plate today. And while the work will be draining, the satisfaction of a job well done will more than ease your stress.

# Suhana on social media scrutiny

**Mumbai:** Suhana Khan is all set to make her acting debut in Zoya Akhtar's upcoming film *The Archies*. In a recent interview, Suhana spoke about her role in the film, her struggles with social media scrutiny, and her hopes for the future. In *The Archies*, Suhana plays the role of Veronica Lodge, a central character in the popular *Archie Comics*. When asked about what attracted her to the role, Suhana said, "For me, it was Zoya who drew me in. It's an opportunity, especially for your first film, that you just can't refuse."

When asked why she chose Suhana for the role of Veronica, Zoya responded, "She is a very vulnerable princess. I wanted Ronnie (Veronica's nickname) to be very vulnerable, and she is a princess; she doesn't have to try." Coming back to Suhana, the star kid also opened up

about the challenges of facing social media scrutiny. She said, "To be honest, I don't handle it very well, but I'm trying. Ironically, facing mean comments has made me appreciate kindness even more. Meeting real people, especially girls, is heartwarming, seeing their warmth towards you. So that helps me a lot to separate the two, as one is reality and the other is not."

*The Archies* is scheduled to be released on Netflix December 7. IANS



Netizens call Dunki trailer disappointing



**Mumbai:** Shah Rukh Khan's upcoming film *Dunki* unveiled its trailer Tuesday but it seems like the trailer hasn't managed to keep up with the expectations of the audience, especially after SRK's two blockbuster hits *Pathaan* and *Jawan* which released this year.

*Dunki*, which marks the first collaboration between the megastar and the superstar director Rajkumar Hirani, is not an action film. It rather bears the signature of Hirani, who is known for his entertaining films. Netizens, who were expecting a spectacle were in for a not so pleasant surprise as the film

focuses more on drama. Several netizens took to Twitter and expressed disappointment at the trailer.

Reacting to the trailer, one user wrote: "Boring. Plot has nothing new to offer. Accent is so annoying. I don't understand the need to mix Punjabi & Hindi. It doesn't even sound comical."

Another wrote: "The less I say about the trailer, the better. The Punjabi accent feels forced, the dialogues lack impact, and I struggle to connect emotionally with the story. This might be the weakest film from Hirani that I can recall. Feel free to call for my head. Cheers."

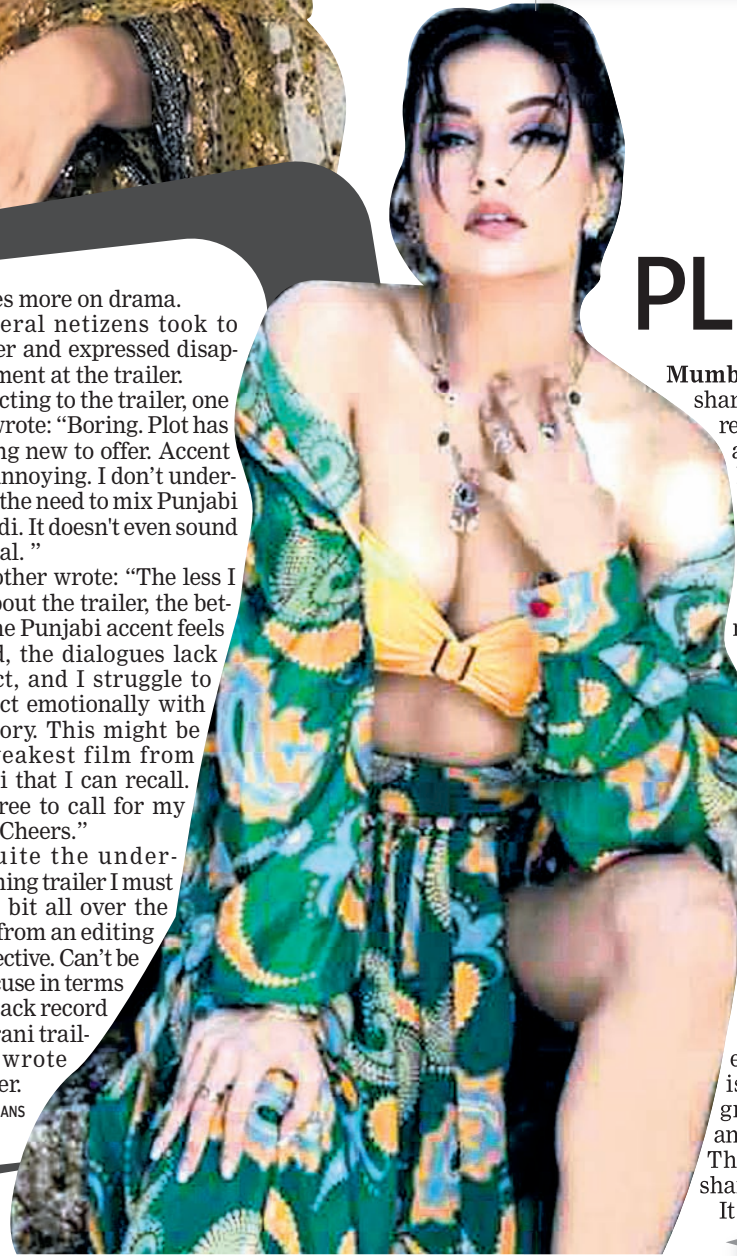
"Quite the underwhelming trailer I must say. A bit all over the place from an editing perspective. Can't be an excuse in terms of a track record of Hirani trailers," wrote another. IANS

### DRAMA FESTIVAL ON ODISIA LEGENDS: DAY II



Divine theatre troupe of Jatni (Khurda) Wednesday presented *Shephalira Mahaka*, a biographical play on the life and activities of Utkalbharti Kuntala Kumari Sabat. Written by Sanjay Hati, the play was directed by Biplab Keshari Satpathy. The festival is organised by Odia Language, Literature and Culture (OLL&C) Department in collaboration with Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi to celebrate the lives of legends and social reformers of the state. OP PHOTO

# DIVYA'S GUILTY PLEASURE



**Mumbai:** Actress Divya Agarwal has shared her opinions on the ongoing reality show *Temptation Island India*, and said how the show has become her go-to for guilty pleasure.

Divya's relationship with fiancé Apurva has ignited numerous conversations among netizens, and their story has emerged as a fan favourite, underscoring the significance of timing and patience in a relationship.

Talking about *Temptation Island India*, Divya shared: "Apurva and I were approached for the show, and we were like, 'No way, the concept is too overwhelming, we cannot!' It's a funny show and has become my go-to for guilty pleasure. It reminds me of my days on *Splitsville*, but these guys, they are too good."

The *Cartel* actress said that the concept of the show is not something that is relevant to the concept of the shows in India.

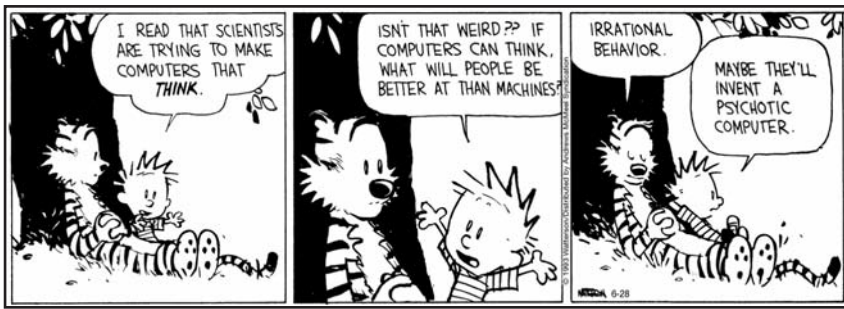
"But, production-wise the makers are doing a great job. The show is executed very well and looks great. I'm loving the Mouni Roy and Karan Kundrr's duo in the show. They are handling it very well," shared Divya. It is streaming on JioCinema. AGENCIES

### FUN post

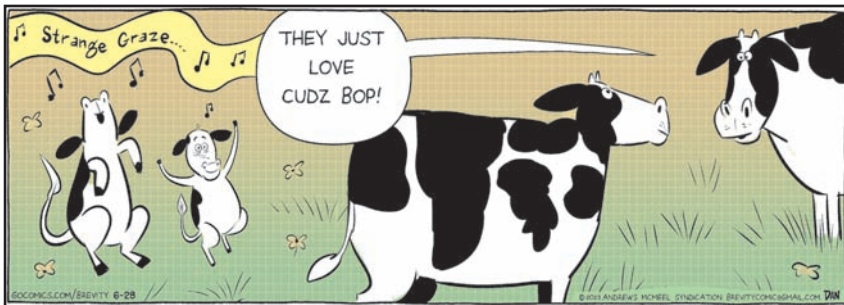
### PEANUTS



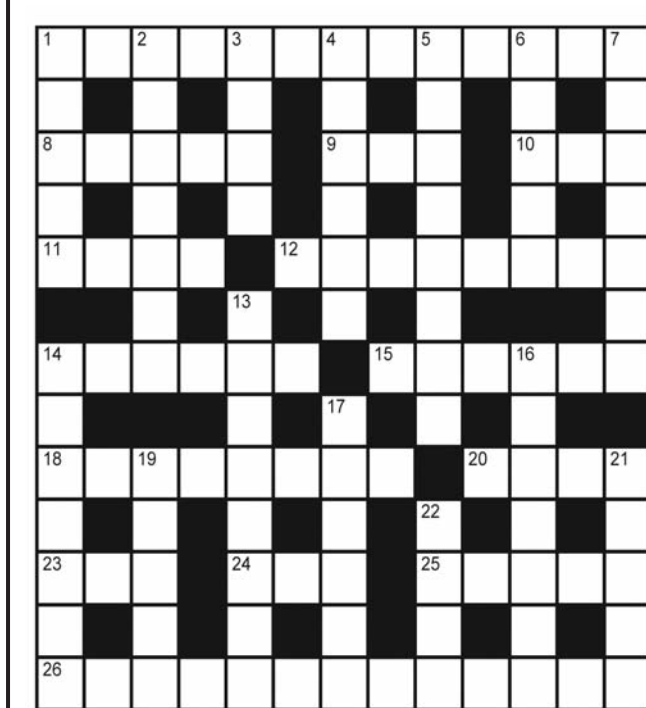
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



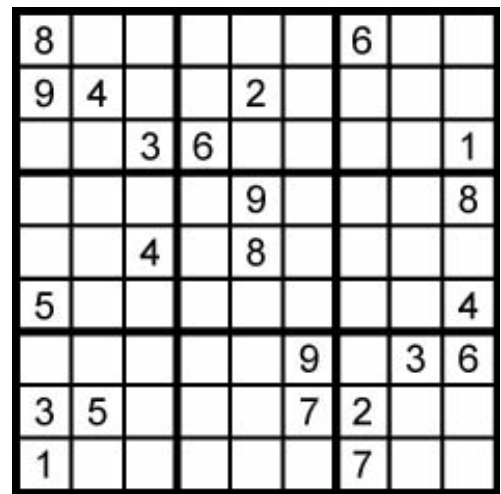
### CROSSWORD



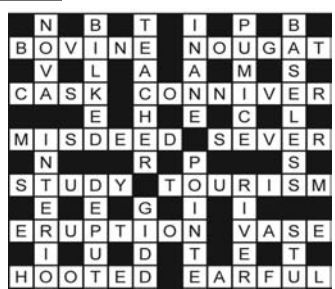
- Across**
- 1 Olympics event (6,7)
  - 8 Plucks and rejects
  - 9 Journal
  - 10 Cobbler's tool
  - 11 Durable wood
  - 12 Food poisoning
  - 14 Criminal
  - 15 Marcus of Cleo fame
  - 18 Winter vehicle
  - 20 Time to beware
  - 23 Solidify
  - 24 U-boat
  - 25 Hit the road
  - 26 Wagga Wagga locale (3,5,5)
  - 4 Respectful greeting
  - 5 Tiff
  - 6 Basra native
  - 7 Art exhibit site
  - 13 Gulfweed
  - 14 Geometric shape
  - 16 Eccentric
  - 17 Chess move
  - 19 Not on deck
  - 21 Footfalls
  - 22 Imperfection
- Down**
- 1 Aspect
  - 2 Chivalrous
  - 3 Hurry up

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown

## RAISING DAY

A contingent of home guard personnel taking out a parade at Police Line Ground in Puri, Wednesday, to mark the Raising Day of Civil Defence and Home Guards



# Michaung: Govt seeks crop damage reports

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** Though severe cyclonic storm 'Michaung' made a landfall in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh coast, widespread rain due to its impact caused damage to standing crops in southern Odisha forcing the state government to seek damage assessment reports from district Collectors.

The storm has now weakened into a well marked low pressure area. The system is likely to continue to move north-northeastwards and weaken further into a low pressure area, IMD said.

Meanwhile, the IMD has withdrawn the warning on fishermen's entry into the sea and also distance cautionary warnings on ports as the cyclone has fully entered into the land mass.

Under the system's influence, light to moderate rainfall occurred at most places over south Odisha districts and at a few places in north interior part of

the state.

Pottangi (Koraput) recorded 11cm rain followed by Similiguda (Koraput) 9cm, Koraput 7cm, Chitrakunda K Guma (Malkangiri) 6cm, Padia (Malkangiri) 5cm, Nandapur (Koraput) 5cm, Lamataput (Koraput) 4cm, Kotpad (Koraput) 4cm, Jeyapore (Koraput) 4cm, Korukunda (Malkangiri) 4cm, Borigungma (Koraput) 4cm, and other places.

The Regional Meteorological Centre, Bhubaneswar, said as much as 42mm rainfall was recorded at Gopalpur between 8:30am and 5:30pm of Wednesday followed by 40.3 mm at Chhatrapur, Nuapada (22.2mm), Khurda (22mm) and Bhubaneswar (21.4mm)

Though there is no more cyclone threat for Odisha, Michaung's remnants will cause widespread rains in Koraput, Nabarangpur and Nuapada districts where yellow warning has been issued up to 8:30am of Thursday, Met office said.

Gajapati district administration had kept all schools shut Wednesday owing to heavy rains. Reports from Ganjam, Gajapati, Koraput, Malkangiri, Rayagada, Nabarangpur and Kalahandi said normal life was severely hit because of rainfall.

Meanwhile, Odisha's Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu has asked all district Collectors to submit their respective reports on crop damage caused due to impact of the cyclone.

"Widespread rain has occurred across that state during the last couple of days under the influence of 'Michaung', which might have caused damage to standing Kharif and horticulture crops. To ameliorate the sufferings of the affected farmers, Agricultural Input Subsidy, as per norms of the State Disaster Response Fund, will be provided to farmers sustaining crop loss of 33% and above," SRC wrote to district collectors.



WINTER RAIN: Commuters caught in downpour triggered by cyclonic storm Michaung in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

# Satabhaya, Pentha worst hit by coastal erosion

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** Kendrapara's Satabhaya and Pentha sea beaches have experienced the highest level of coastal erosion in Odisha, according to data shared by the Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister (of State) Ashwini Kumar Choubey in Lok Sabha, recently.

With a total erosion of 44,94,576.08 square metre, the Satabhaya beach has lost the most amount of land to sea, while the Pentha beach has lost a total of 36,45,514.06 square metre. Similarly, Aryapalli beach in Ganjam has suffered erosion of 6,76,471.18 square metre and the Golden Beach in Puri lost 3,78,979.57 square metre.

"Some stretches of India's shoreline are subject to varying degrees of erosion due to natural causes or anthropogenic activities. The erosion does impact communities residing in the vulnerable areas, including fishermen," said Choubey in a reply to Sundargarh MP Jual Oram's queries about coastal erosion and the government's response in this regard.

The minister informed that the National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) under the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences



An abandoned temple on the shrinking Satabhaya beach

has monitored shoreline changes in the country and observed that 33.6 per cent of India's coastline is vulnerable to erosion, while 26.9 per cent is under accretion and 39.6 per cent is in stable condition.

As per the data, out of the 21 beaches monitored by NCCR, while seven beaches have seen erosion over time, 14 have experienced accretion (deposition driven by tides).

Hukitola beach in Kendrapara has seen the highest level of accretion (deposition driven by

tides) in the state, with the beach gaining 56,51,304.28 square metres.

Similarly, the Dagara beach has seen 38,154.27 square metre accretion while the Satpada beach in Puri has witnessed addition of 11,90,005.73 square metres. Though both erosion and accretion are natural processes and happen simultaneously, in Odisha, erosion has been destructive in places like Satabhaya.

"Satabhaya has already been eaten up by the sea. People from seven villages have been shifted

to the Bagapatia rehabilitation colony in Pentha, though geosynthetic tube treatment has been done to prevent erosion, the area is experiencing damages and in future the force of the sea will overwhelm all these preventive measures," said Odisha Environmental Society secretary Jaya Krushna Panigrahi.

In his reply, Choubey informed

## BEACH FACTS

Out of the 21 beaches in Odisha monitored by the National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), seven have seen erosion over time, while 14 have experienced accretion (deposition driven by tides), according to data shared by Union Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister (of State) Ashwini Kumar Choubey in Lok Sabha

Coastal Accretion in Square Metre	
Hukitola Beach	5,651,304.28
Dagara Beach	3,81,542.70
Satpada Beach	1,19,005.73
Paradeep Beach	684,719.25
Astaranaga Beach	667,896.55
Gahirmatha Beach	570,899.12
Ramchandri Beach	184,573.19
Chandipur Beach	138,066.82
Puri	42,295.56
Parikud Beach	40,901.68

# Work for betterment of people: Naveen



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday called the newly recruited state civil services officers as agents of transformation for a new Odisha and asked them to work towards the betterment and welfare of people.

Patnaik said this while addressing the 'Nijukti Parba' programme for the newly recruited Odisha Civil Services (OCS) officers. As many as 421 officers joined the OCS cadre on the day, the appointment letters of which were distributed by the Chief Minister.

Noting that people are at the centre of the democratic system, Patnaik said, "Your every thought and action should be directed towards the betterment and welfare of the people of Odisha."

"You are not just civil servants, but the real agents of transformation for a new Odisha, an empowered Odisha," Patnaik said, adding that the state government has been focusing on recruitment drives for the youth.

Stating that most of the departments have been following regular calendar to fill up their vacancies, the Chief Minister

## Chief Minister distributes appointment letters to 421 newly recruited OCS officers at 'Nijukti Parba'

said as many as 1,269 civil service officers have been recruited in the last five years.

While welcoming the officers, the Chief Minister said, "Your journey has just begun, work hard, stay committed."

"I expect nothing less than your absolute best," he said suggesting the newly recruited officers to follow 5T (team work, technology, transparency, timely completion of projects leading to transformation) principles and "Mo Sarkar" (My government) programme.

The Chief Minister also launched the Quarter Management System 2.0 developed by CMGI (Centre for Modernizing Government Initiative) as an initiative of the general administration department under 5T Principle. This will be a complete faceless end-to-end online quarter management solution for all stakeholders.

## 2-yr RI for former OMC manager in DA case

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Dec 6:** A special Vigilance court here Wednesday convicted a former government official in a disproportionate assets case and sentenced him to two years of rigorous imprisonment.

The convict, Rabinarayan Behera, formerly worked as a manager at the Kalarahanga unit of the Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC).

The Cuttack district Vigilance court heard the case and pronounced its judgment subsequent to the filing of a case by the Odisha Vigilance against Rabinarayan under Sections 13 (2), 13 (1) (e) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, following the discovery of assets disproportionate to the government servant's known sources of income.

Furthermore, the court also slapped a fine amount of ₹50,000 on Rabinarayan, and in default of payment, he will have to face an additional imprisonment for a period of 6 months, Vigilance sources said.

Meanwhile, the Vigilance department officials said they will be approaching the competent authority for stoppage of Rabinarayan's pension following his conviction in the corruption case.

# Sample question papers for Class X students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** The state government has decided to distribute sample question papers to Class X students who will appear in the annual High School Certificate Examination (HSC), Examination 2024 conducted by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha.

The Directorate of Secondary Education, Odisha, has asked all district education officers (DEOs) to make arrangements so that the sample question papers prepared as per the existing examination patterns reach all the students.

"One set of sample question papers prepared in tune with the existing examination pattern of the annual High School Certificate Examination 2024 in all subjects, i.e. Odia, English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Mathematics, Science and Social Sciences have been sent. The sample question papers will facilitate students of Class X to understand the question pattern and will enable them for preparing the ensuing annual HSC examination 2024," Secondary Education Director Susanta Kumar Dash told the DEOs.

The DEOs have been asked to share the sample question patterns with all headmasters of



secondary schools in their districts and ensure that the sample papers reach all the students.

The director further instructed the education officials to prepare multiple sets of question papers for the HSC examination 2024 utilising the resource teachers available at the district level and share the same to the directorate

for further dissemination in the form of a digital repository of question bank.

Class X students and teachers welcomed the decision of the government and said it would help the students to acquaint themselves with the pattern of examination before appearing for it.

The annual High School Certificate, Madhyama, and State Open School Certificate Examinations for 2024 are scheduled to be conducted simultaneously from February 20 to March 4, 2024. However, the timetable of the examination is yet to be announced by the BSE.

# Crops like corn tolerate ozone pollution better than others

Certain crops are less prone to harm caused by ground-level ozone pollution, according to a study that opens the door to better models for predicting crop responses to the effects of climate change.

The findings, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, also pave the way for developing more resilient varieties that can sustain humanity's increasing demand for food, feed, fibre and fuel.

A team of scientists at Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), US

found that the so-called 'C4' crops like corn and sorghum tolerate increased ozone levels better than 'C3' crops, like rice or snap beans. A crop is designated as C3 or C4 depending on whether the CO2 it captures from the air is initially converted into a 3-carbon or 4-carbon compound, they said.

The general ability of C4 crops to tolerate increases in ground-level (or tropospheric) ozone better than C3 crops has long been suspected but not widely tested under actual field conditions, said Lisa Ainsworth, a research molecular biologist at ARS. Together with ARS research



plant physiologist Christopher Montes and a UIUC team led by Shuai Li—Ainsworth conducted

an extensive analysis of both published and unpublished data.

They culled the first dataset from 46 journal papers and the second set from 20 years' worth of open-air experiments conducted in the US, India and China.

Their analysis focused on the responses of five C3 crops (chickpea, rice, snap bean, soybean and wheat) and four C4 crops (sorghum, corn, giant miscanthus and switchgrass) to both ambient levels of ozone and increased concentrations of the gas, ranging from 40 to 100 parts per billion.

Of particular interest were

changes in the crops' photosynthetic capacity, chlorophyll content and fluorescence (a form of measurement for the pigment), antioxidant leaf activity, biomass material and seed yield.

C3 and C4 crops differ in how their leaves capture carbon dioxide from the air as a key component of photosynthesis.

While both C3 and C4 crops use the enzyme called rubisco to convert carbon dioxide into sugars, C4 crops isolate rubisco in specialised cells where the concentration of carbon dioxide is very high.

This enables higher rates of photosynthesis and greater ef-

iciency of water use. Thus, C4 plants have lower stomatal conductance, resulting in less diffusion of carbon dioxide and ozone into leaves.

The team found that exposure to increased ozone levels correlated with reduced chlorophyll content, fluorescence and seed yield in C3 crops more than the C4 group.

But there were differences within the two categories of crops as well, with snap bean, rice, wheat, chickpea, soybean, maize, giant miscanthus, sorghum and switchgrass being ranked the most to least ozone sensitive.

# Pujari seeks bifurcation of dists, blocks in Odisha

**BJP MP Suresh Purjari sought formation of new districts, including Padampur; new subdivision including one in Brajarajnagar, and new blocks including two in Lakhanpur block of Jharsuguda district, and one in Melchamunda of Bargarh district**

**Include 169 communities in ST list of Odisha: Patra**

**NEW DELHI:** Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Sasmith Patra Tuesday reiterated the demand for inclusion of 169 left out communities in the ST list of Odisha. Speaking in Rajya Sabha, Patra said that at least 169 tribal communities in Odisha are still waiting for the ST status. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had written several letters in this respect to the Union government but the Centre is yet to take any decision on this. He added that the proposals for inclusion of certain tribal groups have been pending since 1970. Significantly, Patra also requested for inclusion of tribal languages Ho, Mundari, Bhumij Saora and Kui in the eighth schedule of the Constitution. Drawing the upper house's attention towards the hardship faced by over 10 lakh tribal women involved in plucking of Kendu leaves, the BJD urged for withdrawal of 18 per cent GST on Kendu leaves.

ation of districts in Odisha during 1993-94. He reorganised the districts in order to make administration transparent and bring it closer to the people, and converted 13 districts into 30 districts. Since then, no further district reorganisation has been done, though there have been agitations in different parts of Odisha demanding creation of new districts," Pujari said. The Bargarh MP also advocated for further bifurcation of 58 subdivisions in the state, including the formation of a subdivision in Brajarajnagar Assembly constituency in Jharsuguda district.

"The Odisha government has not reorganised the blocks for the last four decades. The last one was made in 1984, putting the number of blocks at 314 only. Now, the time has come for the bifurcation of large blocks and the formation of new blocks in Odisha including the bifurcation of Lakhanpur block in Jharsuguda district having 33 gram panchayats into three blocks, and the formation of a new Melchamunda block in the district of Bargarh," Pujari said.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, Dec 6:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Suresh Purjari Wednesday requested the Union government to impress upon the Odisha government for bifurcation of districts, subdivisions and blocks in Odisha to make administration more efficient and transparent. The BJP MP raised the issue in Lok Sabha during Zero Hour and sought bifurcation and formation of new districts, including Padampur; new subdivision including one in Brajarajnagar of Jharsuguda district and new blocks, including two in Lakhanpur block of Jharsuguda district and one in Melchamunda area in Bargarh district. "Former Chief Minister of Odisha, Biju Patnaik did bifur-



**ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT**

# Odisha launches two new contraceptives

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** Odisha has introduced two new contraceptives - sub-dermal implants (single rod) and subcutaneous injectable contraceptives (Antara) - as part of the state's Family Planning roadmap 2030 (FP2030), which is in line with the country's FP2030 vision.

The subdermal implant will be implemented in medical college and District Headquarter Hospitals (DHHs) across Ganjam and Cuttack districts, while the subcutaneous injectable contraceptive will be introduced in selected facilities in Gajapati and Balasore districts.

This was disclosed during the launching ceremony of the roadmap at a state-level event



itled 'Launching of FP2030 Roadmap and New Contraceptives', organised by the Directorate of Health & Family Welfare, govt of Odisha, in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday. Guests at the event included Brundha D, IAS mission director NHM Odisha, Bijaya Kumar Panigrahy, director of Family Welfare, Odisha and Andrea M

Wojnar, UNFPA representative India & country director Bhutan. The participants at the event included additional district public health officer (ADPHO) and district manager reproductive child health (DMRCH) from all thirty districts of Odisha, along with state-level officials, consultants and development partners.

Wojnar emphasized that the FP2030 roadmap and newer contraceptives will empower women for right-based reproductive health.

Bijaya Kumar Panigrahy added that the inclusion of these contraceptives expands the choices available to women, fostering informed decision-making and potentially increasing modern contraceptive prevalence rate. Instructions have been given to all concerned district officials for the successful rollout of the newer contraceptives and FP2030 roadmap.

Brundha D highlighted that FP2030 aims to create an environment where all women and girls can lead healthy lives and make informed decisions about contraception.

# BJEM organises annual athletic meet 'Zest-2023'



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** The two-day long 49th annual athletic meet of BJEM School, 'Zest-2023', was organised on the school campus here, Wednesday.

Gracing the function as the chief guest, India's ace sprinter Amiya Kumar Mallick inaugurated the athletic meet. In his address, Mallick encouraged the students to partici-

pate in various sporting events like sports, games, and yoga as they have direct positive impact on students' academic achievements.

Principal, Sandhya Jena inspired the students to show lots of spirit and energy while participating in the events of their skills and choice.

School chairman Raghunath Mishra, the guest of honour, said that sports and games are

integral part of a child's all round development and appealed the children to simultaneously take care of their ethics and discipline.

PK Jena, Manager of the SMC advised the students to make the best use of the facilities provided by the school and excel in sports in future.

Saroj Kumar Sahu, PET, presented the annual sports report for the session 2023-24.

The students, divided in houses, enthusiastically participated in various sporting events showcasing their athletic skills and fitness.

The guests present on the occasion included Addl Manager Sangram Keshari Nayak and members of SMC, Admin. supervisors Shibanee Pattnaik and BP Paikaray, supervisors Sucharita Das and Smita Mohanty and teachers' representative LD Mallick.

School vice principal Pallabi Mohapatra thanked the guests for their presence.

# CUO to host int'l conference today

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** The department of Sociology of Central University of Odisha (CUO), in collaboration with the World Centre for Women's Studies (WCWS), will organise the 9th annual conference on "Women in the 21st Century: Environment and Sustainable Development" from December 7 to 9.

The conference sub-themes are 'Women, Nurture the Nature Across the Globe', 'Gender and Environment in Literature', 'Film and Theatre', 'Women and Environmental Movements-Policy Perspectives', Women and Sustainable Development.

A special session will be on War: Women, Environment-Testimony. The Department of History and Institute of European Culture, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland, will conduct this special session online.



# 'GPs role critical for state's holistic devpt'

**BHUBANESWAR:** The holistic development of Odisha is only possible by strengthening the Gram Panchayats, which play a pivotal role in advancing the government's human development agenda at the village level, underlined the speakers and community members at the Odisha Vikash Conclave here, Wednesday. "The level of development in a village is evident through the facilities that it provides to enrich human life and sustain the surrounding environment," said Jagadananda, Co-Founder and Mentor of the Centre for Youth and Social development. Jagadananda was addressing at Day-1 of the conclave titled, "Dialogue on Building Resilient Gram Panchayats."

# CPR session held at SOA



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** A programme aimed at spreading awareness about prevention of cardiac death in young people was conducted online for the faculty, staff and students of the School of Pharmaceutical Sciences (SPS) and faculty of pharmaceutical sciences of SOA, here Wednesday.

The programme was conducted by the National Board of Examination in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) in association with the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI).

NBEMS President Abhijit Sheth inaugurated the Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) session and discussed how cardiac deaths could be prevented during activities like gyming, running, dancing and performing. Sanjeev Mittal and Debasish Dhar from Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi explained simple techniques of CPR pointing out that even a common man could save the life of a person in such an emergency.

The major objective of the programme was to spread awareness about CPR. It was organised by Pratap Kumar Sahu, Deputy Dean of the institute and Nodal Person for the programme, under the guidance of SC Si, Dean and Debajyoti Das, Additional Dean of SPS.

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# CRACKDOWN ON CRIMINALS Cops likely to go digital

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar:** Security arrangements ahead of the New Year celebrations here may witness increasing use of digital surveillance and criminal detection methods by the police. At a preparatory meeting held at the Commissionerate Police Wednesday to initiate crackdown on the criminal elements in the run up to the New Year celebrations, the discussion centred around adoption of digital technological features by the city cops to nab suspects in a crime incident.

Bhubaneswar DCP, Prateek Singh said the city might witness a spike in crime incidents, such as robbery or burglary, at celebration parties or marriage receptions that are attended by large number of people. Security will be stepped up to prevent any probable incident of crime, he added. DCP Singh further stated that the Commissionerate Police will conduct awareness camps in the coming days to educate denizens on keeping any suspected criminal encounters at bay.

# Devpt, policy in focus at 'Soch Vichar'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 6:** Second edition of the three-day-long Poverty and Human Development Monitoring Agency's (PHDMA) annual festival 'Soch Vichar' concluded here Tuesday, after deliberations on many issues related to development, livelihood, economy, and climate resilience.

On the concluding day, PHDMA member secretary Roopa Roshan Sahoo urged young professionals to excel in their respective fields and expand the organisation's reach in Odisha.

In a panel discussion on climate change and its impacts on the region, the four experts educated the participants through observations from the field experiences on 'climate resilience and livelihoods in Odisha.'

The panel included Giri Rao



of Vasundhara, Swapnasri Sarangi of Foundation for Ecological Security, Gautam Kumar Pradhan of SELCO Foundation and Amulya Kumar Khandai, integrator at PHDMA.

In a follow up session, Zoya Khan, research manager at EPIC India spoke on 'Evidence-based research: Methodology and its future in Odisha' and touched upon issues like evidence-based policy making, educating the lawmakers, emissions trading between industries, carbon offsets, national carbon markets and how air quality index is affecting

life expectancy. During a panel discussion on 'Delivering governance: Odisha on the move,' Dipak Samantara, former director of the National Academy of Broadcasting and Multimedia called for creation of more awareness on the various government schemes and welfare measures so that people stay updated on them.

Professor Niraj Kumar dean of School of Rural Management, Xavier University Bhubaneswar called for support for those at the grassroots level. The onus, according to him, lies on implementing agencies to focus on the management aspects of the schemes. Joining the forum, UNDP state head Abha Mishra cited the example of the Odisha government using e-portals and technology to enhance transparency in governance for the welfare of the people.

# Menstrual cycle before 13yrs may up diabetes, stroke risk

**G**irls who start their menstrual cycles early at a young age -- before the age of 13 -- could be at an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes and stroke in midlife, a US research published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) Nutrition Prevention & Health has found.

Further, having periods early in life, especially before 10 years of age, is also associated with an increased risk of getting a stroke before the age of 65 in those having diabetes, researchers found after analysing data of more than 17,000 women aged between 20 and 65.

The researchers from Tulane University and Brigham and Women's Hospital in the US said that being an observational study,

they couldn't establish the causes behind these associations.

"Earlier age at [first menstrual cycle] may be one of early life indicators of the cardio-metabolic disease trajectory in women," they suggested in their study.

The women included in the study came from the nationally representative cross-sectional National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 1999-2018. The women had specified the age at which they had had their first menstrual cycle.

Of the women studied, about 10 per cent, or 1773, reported a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes. Further, 11.5 per cent of these, or 203, reported some type of cardiovascular disease, the researchers found.

They quantified the increased



risk of type 2 diabetes due to beginning to menstruate early in life as 32 per cent (periods at age

10 or before) through 14 per cent (age 11) to 29 per cent (age 12). They also found that men-

struating before turning 10 was linked with a more than doubling in stroke risk among women below the age of 65 with diabetes. Specifically, they calculated the risk to be 81 per cent among those having their first period at the age of 11, 32 per cent at 12, and 15 per cent at 14.

"One potential pathway explanation may be that [such] women are exposed to oestrogen for longer periods of time, and early [menstruation] has been associated with higher oestrogen levels," the researchers explained.

They also said weight could be another important factor influencing the results, as when they adjusted the data for weight, the observed associations between

age at first menstrual cycle and stroke complications weakened slightly, albeit remaining significant.

The researchers said that these findings supported the possibility that age of getting the first period may be incorporated into early-life strategies for preventing diabetes and progression of diabetes complications.

"These findings add another dimension to the potentially less well understood determinants of cardio-metabolic risk, particularly in women who have been relatively underrepresented in this area of research," said Sumantra Ray, Executive Director of the NNEdPro Global Centre for Nutrition & Health, which co-owns BMJ Nutrition Prevention & Health.

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# Resumption of slurry pipeline work kicks up row in Keonjhar

The development has sparked fear of job loss and resentment among the truck owners and youths in the mineral bearing district



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, Dec 6:** After a brief lull, laying of slurry pipelines for supply of minerals has started in Keonjhar district. The district administration's move to allow the industrial and mining firms again to lay down slurry pipelines has kicked up a row with the project threatening to deprive thousands of truck owners and lakhs of this district's residents of their livelihoods, a report said Wednesday.

With large volume of water required to wash iron ores and supply slurry through the pipelines, the project threatens to dry up the river and eventually result in a severe water crisis.

The development has sparked fear and resentment among the truck owners and youths in the mineral-rich district. They apprehend that supply of minerals through slurry pipelines will render them jobless and drive them to penury.

Moreover, use of large volume of water to wash the ores will lead to water shortage in rivers and may even force the water bodies to change their course.

Mineral extraction is the major source of revenue in Keonjhar district and its economy is highly dependent on the mines. Earlier, the transportation of minerals was mostly done by trucks. This

had helped over 10,000 truck owners and lakhs of families to earn their livelihood either directly or indirectly from the mines. However, transportation of minerals through slurry pipelines is set to hit the livelihood of the truck owners and the families dependent on the mines for a living.

Owing to such fears, the truck owners have been opposing the transportation of minerals through slurry pipelines. Several slurry pipelines are being laid completely overlooking the interest of the truck owners and the local residents.

Sensing the anger among truck owners, the administration had stopped work on the slurry pipeline passing through Keonjhar town. However, after a brief lull, the project has started again flaring up anger and resentment among the truck owners.

Dillip Kumar Panda, former vice-president of truck owners' association has warned that the truck owners will be forced to resort to agitations if their demands are not met soon.

Reports said that a majority of the truck owners have failed to get mineral loads after mining and industrial firms started supplying minerals through slurry pipelines, apart from trains. As a result, many of the trucks are lying idle on the roads while many owners have sold off their trucks.

Pradip Barik, former general secretary of truck owners' association, said that the truck business in the district will completely collapse if the situation continues for long.

He alleged that the firms have established beneficiation plants to wash the iron ores and supply those through slurry pipelines. The dirt and waste from iron ores are washed in these beneficiation plants and later supplied through the slurry pipelines, which will also deposit waste in the area, he said.

The iron ores mined here will help in development of other districts but will lead to impoverishment of Keonjhar residents. The youths will go astray after being deprived of a livelihood, he added.

Ajay Sahoo, working president of Keonjhar Nagarik Manch said the district is witnessing a decline in water level for various reasons. In this situation, supply of large volume of iron ores along with water through the slurry pipelines will result in severe water crisis in the district. It will also adversely impact the state government's piped water supply project, he alleged.

Now, several companies are supplying minerals through slurry pipelines by digging up the ground, Ayaskant Pattnaik, a truck owner alleged. This has become a cause of concern for many youths who eke out a living by buying truck on loans for the job. The truck business will completely collapse if this situation persists, he said.

Former MLAs Pranaballav Nayak, Subarna Nayak, Hrushikesh Nayak expressed concern over the development. They questioned the silence of ruling and opposition parties on the issue and demanded them to protect the interests of residents and the district instead of the industrial and mining firms.



**IN MEMORIAM:** Residents of Ambedkar Nagar and members of Buddhist Society take out a rally on the occasion of Mahaparinirvan Diwas of Dr BR Ambedkar in Sambalpur, Wednesday

## Maoist posters surface in Boudh

**Boudh:** Maoists of the Kandhamal-Kalahandi-Boudh-Nayagarh (KKBN) division have put up posters in various villages under Shagada police outpost in this district. In the posters it has asked people to observe People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) week, a source said here Wednesday. This year, the PLGA week - during which Maoists organise meetings in villages and offer tributes to the Red rebels who have been killed in police encounters - is being observed December 2 to 9. In the posters, the Maoists have also given a call to stop the cultivation of ganja. They have warned of strict retaliation if people do not heed to their order.

## Leopard hide seized; 6 poachers held

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatna, Dec 6:** Forest department officials from Odisha and Chhattisgarh jointly conducted an anti-poaching operation in bordering areas of the two states and arrested six people while they were negotiating to sell off a leopard hide, officials said Wednesday.

The accused were identified as Ganesh Goud and Lakshman Goud of Tikrapada, Naba Naik of Kuml in Nabarangpur district, Naba Majhi and Dhoba Majhi of Hadashila village under T Rampur police limits in



Kalahandi district, poacher Rushi Majhi of Chanchraguda village under Jaypatna police limits in Kalahandi district. This was stated at Dharmagarh at a press conference by Kalahandi South DFO R Kalai Bhanan, Wednesday. During the operation conducted Monday at Ambapani

ghati, one leopard skin was seized and five persons were detained, they said.

Upon interrogation, the Forest department personnel came to know about involvement of another person in the illegal practice, who was arrested following a raid at Chanchraguda village in Jaipatna area, the official said.

A country-made gun, python skin and bear bones were recovered from the house of the arrested person, he said.

The five detained persons were arrested Wednesday, the official added.

## RSP signs MoU with ALIMCO for artificial limb distribution

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Dec 6:** Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) and Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for distribution of artificial limbs, aids and assistive devices amongst persons with disabilities and senior citizens in various areas of the steel plant's impact zones.

An amount of ₹90 lakh has been sanctioned for the people residing in the direct impact zones of RSP which comprised the revenue blocks of Bisra, Nuagaon, Kuarmunda and Lathikata, Model Steel Villages and resettlement colonies of RSP and slums of industrial and municipal area of

Rourkela, a RSP release said. Another ₹17 lakh has been sanctioned for the Odisha Group of Mines (OGOM) areas like Bolani, Barsuan and Koida.

ALIMCO is a mini ratna company which produces artificial limbs for persons with disabilities (Divyangjans) and aids and assistive devices for senior citizens. As per the MoU, the beneficiary lists shall be obtained from the Odisha government through respective block offices and distribution camps will be held at different locations.

Assistive devices such as battery-operated motorized tricycles, hand-propelled tricycles, wheelchairs, hearing aids, braille kits and others will be provided to the divyangjans.

## POCSO court awards 10-yr RI to youth

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasure, Dec 6:** Special judge of POCSO court here, Ranjan Kumar Sutar, convicted a rape accused and sentenced him to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) Wednesday.

The convict, identified as N Ramarao of Simulia police limits in Balasure district, was accused of raping a minor girl in 2018. Police arrested him and remanded him to judicial custody after the survivor's family members lodged a complaint.

The judge also slapped a fine of

₹2,000 on Ramarao, apart from the punishment. In default, Ramarao has to undergo additional six months of imprisonment, the judge observed while delivering the order.

This was stated here by special public prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda who pleaded the matter on behalf of the state government. The judge passed the order after examining the statements of nine witnesses, 20 documents and police charge sheets.

The judge also directed the district legal services authority (DLSA) to give away ₹4 lakh ex-gratia to the minor survivor.

## Group clash in Keonjhar village leaves 5 critical

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Ghasipur, Dec 6:** At least five persons including two women sustained critical injuries while several others were injured in a group clash allegedly over past political enmity at Agarda village under Ramchandrapur police limits in Keonjhar district, Tuesday night.

The critically injured persons were identified as Golak Jena, Sanjay Jena, Tima Jena, Dahani Jena and Purnima Jena of Agarda village. All of them were rescued and admitted to the Anandapur sub-divisional hospital for treatment.

Reports said that the clash was fallout of a simmering tension between two groups of villagers over past political enmity in the village. The dispute had resolved after police intervened in the matter.

However, the issue flared up again Tuesday when the mem-



bers of the two groups pelted stones and assaulted each other with lathis. Several persons were injured including five critically in the violence.

On being informed, Ramchandrapur police reached the village and launched an investigation into the group clash. Police registered two separate cases over complaints filed by each group. Police force has been deployed in the village. The violence taking place ahead of the 2024 general elections has posed challenges for the police.

## Minor girl dies in bonfire blaze

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Phiringia, Dec 6:** A nine-year-old girl died after getting caught up in flames from a bonfire at Minguni Padar village under Sumerubandh panchayat of this block in Kandhamal district, Tuesday night.

The deceased was identified as Lakshmi Priya Kanhar, 9, daughter of Krushna Kanhar in the village. The incident occurred when the girl was warming herself around a bonfire to save her from biting cold prevailing in the area. She was engulfed in flames when her dress accidentally caught fire. Family members rescued her in critical condition and rushed her to the Phiringia hospital.

Later, she was shifted to the Phulbani hospital after her condition deteriorated. There, however, she succumbed to her burn injuries during treatment. Phiringia police registered a case of unnatural death and conducted a post-mortem of the body.

## FROM BALD HILL TO LUSH GREEN FOREST

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh, Dec 6:** The remarkable success story of Sagarpali Van Surakhya Samiti (VSS) under Tangarpali block in Sundargarh district took centre stage in the second edition of the national-level webinar 'Community Conference on Commons' organised by the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES).

The selected success story, titled 'Transformation of Bald Hill into a Lush Green Forest', authored by SEWAK team leader Digambar Upadhyay, was presented in the prestigious forum during the first session on the initial day of the three-day webinar.

Out of numerous success stories submitted by various government and private organisations as well as individuals from India, Bangladesh, and Nepal, Sagarpali VSS's story was among the top 80 selected for presentation.



REPRESENTATIVE PICTURE

The national-level webinar aimed to showcase and celebrate impactful initiatives from across the region. In the inaugural session of the first day, Digambar Upadhyay delivered a compelling presentation on the success story of Sagarpali Van Surakhya Samiti under the Sundargarh forest division.

The narrative covered the innovative initiatives for forest protection and management initiated by the villagers of Sagarpali

since 1985, highlighting the collaboration with the Odisha Forest Development Project-2 and the continuous support and guidance from the voluntary organisation 'SEWAK'.

Key aspects of the presentation included the 'Thengapali', 'Mutidhan' system, SHRAMADAN plantation, protection of paddy fields and forests from fire, and strategies to reduce community dependence on forests through income-generating pro-

grammes. The presentation also emphasised on biodiversity conservation, alternative fuels, and wildlife conservation. The success story was highly appreciated by the audience, serving as a shining example of joint forest management, demonstrating effective collaboration with the Sundargarh forest division and the collective efforts of community forest management, supported by the Odisha Forest Development Project-II.

Representatives from Sagarpali VSS including Debanand Mahaling and Bharti Patel shared their experiences during the programme, highlighting the importance of community motivation, participation, and action in achieving sustainable conservation goals.

The virtual event witnessed active participation from members of Sagarpali VSS, Ujalpur Range Officer Debadatta Nanda, Forester Vinod Kumar Pattanaik, SEWAK

Secretary Pradeep Kumar Brahma, SEWAK Chairman Amiya Kant Naik, Finance Manager Nilambar Upadhyay, Development Officers Haripriya Naik, and Manoranjan Mallick, among other staff members.

The success story of Sagarpali VSS stands as a testament to the power of community-led conservation efforts, showcasing the positive impact of collaborative initiatives in preserving and enhancing natural resources. The recognition received at the national level further underscores the significance of such grassroots initiatives in fostering sustainable environmental practices.

The author of the case study, Digambar Upadhyay, expresses gratitude to RCCF Arun Kumar Mishra, Sundargarh DFO Pradeep Miras, ACF Mohan Hemram, Sundargarh DMU, Ujalpur FMU, SEWAK management, and all the villagers of Sagarpali for their unwavering support and guidance.

EAST COAST RAILWAY	EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No: SBP-ELECT-2023-T-184	Tender Notice No. 58/ET/SBP/ENGG/2023-24, Dt. 02.12.2023
Named Work: OPERATION AND ESCORTING OF POWER CAR (LWRM) & LSRD COACHES INCLUDING TRIP MAINTENANCE (D-1 CHECK) OF POWER CAR ORIGINATING FROM SAMBALPUR COACHING DEPOT FOR A PERIOD OF 03 YEARS.	e-Tender No. 33-ET-DENS-SBP-23
Approx cost of work: ₹2,43,99,668.30, EMD/Bid Security: ₹2,72,000/-, Cost of Bid Security: ₹10,000/-, Completion period of work: 36 Months from the date of issue of LOA.	Name of the Work: EXECUTION OF CIVIL WORK FOR PORS DEPOT AT SIKIR YARD IN CONNECTION WITH TSR (P)-33.546 TKM IN JHARSUGUDA ROAD-TITLAGARH SECTION.
Tender closing date & Time: 1100 hrs of 20.12.2023.	Approx cost of the work ₹ 4,25,19,301.93, Bid Security: ₹ 3,62,600/-, Completion Period for the work: 06 months.
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.	Tender closing date & time: at 1500 hrs of 26.12.2023.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>	No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website fifteen days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/Corrigendum issued for this tender.	Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/ Sambalpur	Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), Sambalpur
PR-847/0/23-24	PR-858/0/23-24

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that Harekrushna Sahoo, S/o. Paramananda Sahoo, resident of Jharkapali, P.O. Khaprakhol, District Bolangir, Odisha, has lost Regd. Sale Deed No. 3376 Dtd.09.12.2005 executed by Nirmla Mallick in favour of Dilip Kumar Chakra and Regd. Sale Deed No. 3349 Dtd.30.10.2006 executed by Dilip Kumar Chakra in favour of Pukhraj Pugulia pertaining to Plot No. 378/877 (Gharaban) area Ac.0.040 decimals under Khata No. 205/132 of Mouza: Nahaka Unit No. 5 in Bhasanagar Tahasil under District: Jajpur. These documents are related to Plot No. 378/877 area Ac.0.04 decimals under mutation Khata No. 205/132 recorded in his name Harekrushna Sahoo of the above address has applied for a housing loan to the LIC Housing Finance Ltd., Jajpur Road by offering mortgage of the said property title documents. All concerned therefore having any claim over the property purchased under the said documents, i.e. Original Regd. Sale Deed No. 3376 Dtd.09.12.2005 and original Regd. Sale Deed No. 3349 Dtd.30.10.2006 are required to file their claim with the undersigned within 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that the property having link with the said document is free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as a mortgagor and the Company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 (Fifteen) days of publication of this notice.

Cuttack Dt.06.12.2023 Sd./- (U.K. Mishra), Advocate, Phone: 9437314816 LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Jajpur Road Area Office, Jajpur Road

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that Saroj Kumar Dhal, S/o. Rabindranath Dhal, resident of Village: Dimilia, P.O.: Nuapataka, P.S.: Narasinghpur, District: Cuttack, Odisha, has lost (1) Regd. Sale Deed No. 11831301195 Dtd.09.12.2013 executed by Jyostha Singh & others in favour of Bijaylaxmi Barik, (2) Mutation ROR No. 403/215 in the name of Bijaylaxmi Barik, (3) Regd. Sale Deed No. 11832100087 Dtd.11.01.2021 executed by Bijaylaxmi Barik in favour of Dambardhar Behera and (4) Mutation Khata No. 403/1170 in the name of Dambardhar Behera, pertaining to Plot No. 322/1575 (Gharaban) area Ac. 0.027 decimals under Khata No. 403/1426 of Mouza: Madhuban in Baranga Tahasil under District: Cuttack. These documents are related to the Plot No. 322/1575 (Gharaban) area Ac. 0.027 decimals under Khata No. 403/1426 recorded in his name. Saroj Kumar Dhal of the above address has applied for a housing loan to the LIC Housing Finance Ltd., Cuttack by offering mortgage of the said property title documents. All concerned therefore having any claim over the property purchased under the said documents, i.e. Original Regd. Sale Deed No. 11831301195 Dtd.09.12.2013, Mutation ROR No. 403/215, Original Regd. Sale Deed No. 11832100087 Dtd.11.01.2021 and Mutation Khata No. 403/1170 are required to file their claim with the undersigned within 15 (fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that the property having link with the said document is free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as a mortgagor and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 (fifteen) days of publication of this notice.

Cuttack Dt.06.12.2023 Sd./- (U.K. Mishra), Advocate, Phone: 9437314816 LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Cuttack Area Office, Link Road, Cuttack

### AN INVESTOR EDUCATION AND AWARENESS INITIATIVE

Do join us to learn more about Mutual Funds.

Date and Venue: Saturday, 9th December, 2023; 12:30 am onwards. at Hotel Harjit Residency, Dayal Towers, VSS Marg, Sambalpur, Odisha. For registration, please contact: Indranil Bose, Mobile: 91231 47315.

Registration is compulsory. The registration time will be from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm. No walk-ins will be allowed.

75th Anniversary of SEBI

Investor Education and Awareness Initiative

Visit <https://www.hdfcfund.com/information/key-know-how> to know more about the process to complete a one-time Know Your Customer (KYC) requirement to invest in Mutual Funds. Investors should only deal with registered Mutual Funds, details of which can be verified on the SEBI website ([www.sebi.gov.in/intermediaries.html](http://www.sebi.gov.in/intermediaries.html)). For any queries, complaints & grievance redressal, investors may reach out to the AMC's and/ or Investor Relations Officers. Additionally, investors may also lodge complaints directly with the AMC's, if they are unsatisfied with the resolutions given by AMC's they may raise complaint through the SCORES portal on <https://scores.gov.in>. SCORES portal facilitates investors to lodge complaint online with SEBI and subsequently view its status. In case the investor is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaints raised directly with the AMC's or through the SCORES portal, they may file any complaint on the Smart ODR on <https://smartodr.in/login>.

Mutual Fund Investments are subject to market risks, read all scheme related documents carefully.

FOCUS ALL INDIA JUDICIAL SERVICE

# LONG OVERDUE



**National-level recruitment procedure will certainly attract far better talents to the judiciary than the present system which confines the competition to a particular state**

During celebration of Constitution Day 26th November this year in the Supreme Court, President Droupadi Murmu has advocated the initiation of All India Judicial Service (AIJS) for the selection of district judges from across the country. The President has noted that this process would ensure opportunities to talented candidates from diverse backgrounds throughout the country to enter the judicial service. At present district judges are being appointed by respective High Courts (HCs) through open recruitment-examinations where Advocates of the Bar with the age-group of 35-45 years and having a minimum of 7-years' experience can appear. The recruitment process now is thus confined to candidates of respective states only. Article 233 (1) mentions that a person can be appointed or promoted to the post of district judge in a state by Governor in consultation with the concerned HC. Creation of AIJS is expected to remove this narrowness and broaden the arena for the entire nation, thus attracting the best talents into the judiciary.

As per the Constitutional provision AIJS can be created by passing only a resolution in Rajya Sabha (RS) supported by two-third members present and voting. Article 312, Clause (4) makes it clear that creation of AIJS will not be considered as an amendment to the Constitution as per Article 368. Despite this simple process of introducing AIJS, it has not been created for the last six decades, only because no unanimity on this issue could be reached among state governments and HC as they apprehend it would tell upon independence of judiciary and federal structure.

The present Union government seems to be seriously contemplating for quite some time for creating AIJS. It will empower the UPSC to conduct entrance examinations for the post of district judges. Most of the states and HC are, however, opposing the idea for creation of AIJS. On a previous occasion, out of 24 HCs,

only 2 supported it, 6 wanted amendments and 11 opposed it. The rest 5 did not respond. Similarly out of 29 states, only 2 states supported it, 8 opposed it, 5 expressed reservations on some points, and 14 did not respond. This obstinacy persists despite the fact that the existing entrance and appointment process have miserably failed to address three major problems - filling up the large number of vacant posts in time, bringing merit and talent into the institution, and bringing social justice and equity into the process.

We can understand the seriousness of the issue if we take few examples from Odisha. In 2019 the Orissa HC notified inviting applications from both advocates and judges for 22 posts of district judge (8 for Bar and 14 for judges). 335 lawyers and 17 judges appeared in the written examination. Only 3 lawyers and 1 judge qualified the written test. After interview, only 2 lawyers finally qualified to be district judge, and the only one from the judiciary failed. 20 vacancies still persisted. The predicament was more precarious in the previous year - 2018. Entrance examination was held by Orissa HC for 18 DJ-posts (6 from Bar and 12 from in-service). 270 lawyers and 17 judges appeared in the exami-

nation, but none of them could qualify for the post in the written test. Thus 18 posts of DJ remained vacant in the state upto the next year. The condition in other states is no better. The crisis became more serious after a 3-Judge Bench of SC, after interpreting Article 233 (2), gave the landmark verdict in 2020 that no judicial officer will be eligible for appointment as district judge by way of direct appointment.

The setting up of the AIJS may not be panacea to all ills of judicial recruitment, but it will certainly be far better than the present system on several aspects. National-level recruitment-procedure will certainly attract far better talents to the judiciary than the present system which confines the competition to a particular state. Quality and speed of justice will certainly improve. The competitive-examinations held by UPSC will be certainly more regular, systematic and transparent. The Commission has proved its integrity, credibility and efficiency beyond any doubt in past several decades. Contrarily, there have been substantial allegations of nepotism and favoritism against the present system of appointment.

The apprehension that AIJS will curtail the power of the HCs and state governments and that'll tell upon our federal structure, is unfounded as the HCs will never lose the power of appointment of and control over district judges. Also without consent of Governors, i.e. the state government, no such appointments can be made. Another apprehension is that appointment of persons of other states having no knowledge of local language will hamper justice. If the IAS and IPS officers can learn languages other than their mother-tongues, why not IJS judges can? AIJS is long overdue, and has become indispensable. There must be no further delay for its creation.

*The writer is an advocate & columnist. Views are personal.*



Jayakrishna Sahu

**THE SETTING UP OF THE AIJS MAY NOT BE PANACEA TO ALL ILLS OF JUDICIAL RECRUITMENT, BUT IT WILL CERTAINLY BE FAR BETTER THAN THE PRESENT SYSTEM ON SEVERAL ASPECTS**



Jayati Ghosh

**Governments, especially in low- and middle-income countries, are understandably wary of ISDS mechanisms that allow foreign investors to seek compensation for policy changes that affect their business**

## Unjust & Undemocratic

Imagine a scenario where a private company effectively creates and controls its own jurisdiction within a sovereign country. This company introduces its own currency, enacts laws, and establishes courts, prisons, police forces, and even intelligence services. It formulates its own tax, labour, and environmental regulations (or lack thereof), regardless of their compatibility with national laws.

Now imagine that this company adopts bitcoin as its official currency and announces plans to privatise public services. It replaces the existing judicial system with an "arbitration center" and even introduces a fee-based citizenship model that requires signing a "social contract" designed to encourage good behaviour. Eventually, the country's democratically elected government steps in to stop this nonsense and affirms that national laws apply equally to this jurisdiction. But instead of complying, the company sues the government for billions of dollars, citing its projected financial losses.

This scenario, seemingly lifted straight out of a dystopian novel, is precisely what is happening today in Honduras. The Honduran government is currently contending with seven international investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) claims filed by various private corporations. One US company based in Delaware, Honduras Próspera, is suing the country for a staggering \$10.7 billion, which represents two-thirds of the government's projected budget for 2023.

The story begins with the 2009 military coup that ousted the democratically elected Honduran President, Manuel Zelaya. Following the coup, the new government quickly enacted a law to establish Special Development Regions with the characteristics described above. In 2012, Honduras' Supreme Court struck down the law, owing to its blatant infringement on Honduran sovereignty. In response, the National Congress impeached several of the justices and replaced them with more amenable appointees. This judicial overhaul set the stage for the introduction of the similar Zones for Employment and Economic Development (ZEDE) law in 2013.

There are currently three ZEDEs in Honduras: Próspera, Orquídea, and Ciudad Morazán. These entities operate as independent city-states, inspired by the libertarian fantasies of billionaire investors like Peter Thiel and Marc Andreessen, who have long dreamed of crypto-based tax havens that flout basic democratic norms. Laws permitting unlimited expansion have facilitated the expropriation of land belonging to local residents. In the Próspera ZEDE, 44% of the governing authority's members are directly appointed by the corporate owner, and an additional 22% are elected by landowners whose votes are proportional to the size of their property.

These developments triggered widespread public outrage both within Honduras and around the world. After the leftist Libre party, led by President Xiomara Castro, won the 2021 election, the new administration quickly fulfilled its campaign promise to repeal the ZEDE law, a move that was widely supported by the Honduran public.

But Próspera pushed back, claiming that its agreement with the previous government guaranteed a 50-year period of legal stability, acknowledged the supremacy of investor rights and privileges, and included "safeguards" under international investment law through the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) and the United States-Honduras bilateral investment treaty. While Próspera continues to operate St. John's Bay, its "flagship city," the company is seeking compensation from the Honduran government for daring to enforce its own national laws.

Governments, especially in low- and middle-income countries, are understandably wary of ISDS mechanisms that allow foreign investors to seek compensation for policy changes that affect their business. Originally, ISDS was meant to prevent the expropriation of private assets through nationalisation. But the definition of expropriation has been expanded to such an extent that it can now include any government action that investors believe could negatively affect their profits, such as new regulations and taxes.

When disputes arise, they are resolved through international arbitration tribunals. There are now several such tribunals, including public ones, such as the World Bank's International Center for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, and private bodies like the London Court of International Arbitration and the Singapore International Arbitration Center. But these tribunals overwhelmingly favour investors. Arbitrators can force governments to pay huge damages, with no legal recourse to appeal decisions. Moreover, the system is designed to allow corporations to bring claims against states while preventing governments from suing private companies. This apparent bias has prompted some developing countries to withdraw from the ICSID.

The US has played a pivotal (and regrettable) role in establishing this system. In 2020, then-presidential candidate Joe Biden strongly criticized ISDS, writing, "I don't believe that corporations should get special tribunals that are not available to other organizations." Biden went on to say that he opposed "the ability of private corporations to attack labor, health, and environmental policies" through the ISDS process, as well as the "inclusion of such provisions in future trade agreements." Since then, Biden has honoured his promise to exclude ISDS clauses from future trade agreements. But they still apply to existing treaties like the one currently affecting Honduras.

In May, more than 33 members of Congress, led by Senator Elizabeth Warren and Representative Lloyd Doggett, sent a letter to US Trade Representative Katherine Tai and Secretary of State Antony Blinken, urging them to support Honduras in the ISDS case. But the Biden administration has allowed this obscene process to unfold in US courts, even though it contradicts the president's stated position regarding the unjust and undemocratic nature of the ISDS process.

The Honduras ISDS case represents a crucial test for the Biden administration. Allowing such extreme double standards to prevail, particularly in a matter as clear-cut as this, would irreparably damage any remaining US claim to global leadership.

*The writer is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.*

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### WISDOM CORNER

- Let come what comes, let go what goes. See what remains. RAMANA MAHARSHI
- If you are lonely when you're alone, you are in bad company. JEAN-PAUL SARTRE
- Almost everybody is born a genius and buried an idiot. CHARLES BUKOWSKI

### SPECTRUM SELF-HELP

## The sock holes of a leader

Imagine your socks have tiny holes, and your toes are subtly poking through. When required, you hesitate to take off your shoes.



Shivaji Mohinta

**IN THE WORLD OF MANAGEMENT, GOOD LEADERS ARE EXPECTED TO DEMONSTRATE EMPATHY**

This scenario mirrors our professional lives in more ways than one. There are leaders who, like these holey socks, have unnoticed shortcomings, and it's only when they face a situation that they become conscious and hesitant. We hold our ground to avoid embarrassment, much like we regret ignoring the warning signals of changing our socks.

In the world of management, good leaders are expected to demonstrate empathy. They should be able to step into their team members' shoes for a deeper understanding of issues. But how can you step out when you're wearing patchy socks?

When we're blind to the holes in our socks, we tend to hide, procrastinate, and avoid addressing the root causes. This leads to inadequate leadership - what we might call "The Sock Holes of a Leader." Drawing a metaphor between competence

and sock holes allows us to communicate this problem effectively.

A leader with "sock holes" will avoid dealing with critical challenges, leading to blame-shifting, post-mortems, and unnecessary delays, which only exacerbate the problem.

So, what can be done to remedy this? The acronym is "RE-PAIR".

**Recognition:** The first step towards recovery is recognition. Spotting the hole early and preventing it from growing bigger. Identify your weaknesses and embrace a continuous journey of self-improvement. Self-ego and vanity often come in our way, which prevent us from seeing these imaginary sock-holes.

**Elimination:** When we are aware of our inherent weaknesses, we can make consistent efforts to eliminate them. This journey towards self-improvement keeps us on course and grounded. Being conscious of our limitations helps in reaching out to relevant people who possess more knowledge in those

subjects.

**Preventing Escalation:** While you may not become an expert, strive to be a good student to hone your skills. Ignoring your weaknesses exposes your vulnerabilities, both personally and professionally. Just as unnoticed sock holes gradually expand, unaddressed issues like customer feedback or employee dissatisfaction can escalate, leading to long term business erosion.

**Advice & Opinions from Experts:** Just like we would go to a cobbler to mend our shoes, for any leadership issues, it is important to seek help of external consultants, coaches or seniors who can offer a fresh perspective and tailored solutions to improve on your skills or address a particular problem.

**Interest to Step Out:** The most important step is the willingness to step out from your own shoes. To do this without hesitation, you need to wear the right pair of socks - free of holes. The more equipped you are, the more confident you become. Empathy thrives when you're

not constrained by your own shortcomings.

**Re-skilling:** Adapt your skills according to your job role and changing times. Stay future-ready by proactively preparing for new challenges and pre-empting them. In today's digital world, reverse mentoring is an excellent opportunity to learn from the younger generation.

A grave problem is turning a blind eye to the sock holes. In the modern business world, ignorance is no longer bliss. Clinging on to status quo can lead to stagnation and eventual failure. One example of such a business leader who faced a downfall due to his inability to address the financial "holes" was Vijay Mallya of Kingfisher Airlines.

So, stay vigilant and ensure the socks remain hole-free. After all, leaders who can spot them and take timely action are the ones who ultimately step into the shoes of success.

*The author is a business consultant & a certified NLP Coach*

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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

### No let-up

Sir, Natural disasters are seen as acts of nature God. However, what Chennai has witnessed in the aftermath of cyclone 'Michaung' is clearly the lack of human action, as the city's residents yet again bore the brunt of nature's fury. For many in Chennai, it is a repeat experience of the 2015 floods caused by cyclone 'Vardah'. Come November-December every year, citizens of Chennai are getting more scared as even moderate rains wreak havoc on the city and affect normal life considerably. Over the years, unfortunately, governments of the two Dravidian parties have failed in their preparedness and response mechanisms to confront the relentless force of nature. And it is the fate of Chennai that it should brace itself to be hit by cyclones every year in future also.

*Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI*

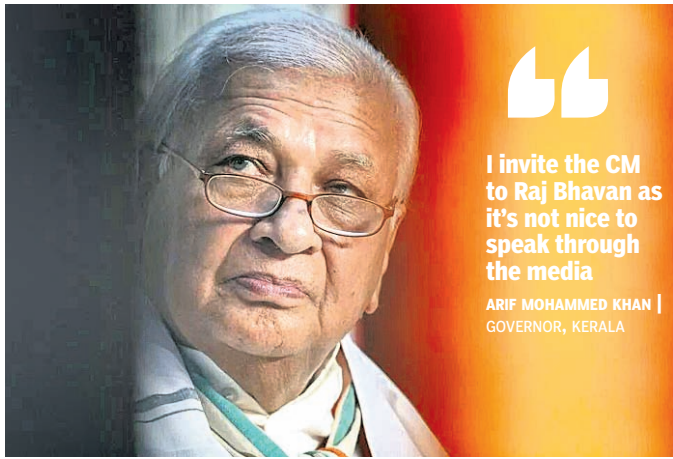
### Crushing defeat

Sir, The results of the three Hindi heartland states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh are seen as major setbacks, not only for the Congress but also for the Opposition's unity. These results have dealt significant damage to the grand old party's national standing. Following its big victories in Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh, Congress was on its way to becoming a significant pillar in the Opposition alliance. At the same time, Rahul Gandhi will suffer a significant setback. During his Bharat Jodo Yatra last year, he not only attempted to create an environment for Congress in the country, but also presented himself as a serious leader. A key reason cited for the defeat is the Congress' overconfidence and pride following its victories in Karnataka and Himachal. Also state-level Congress leaders took decisions based on their stubbornness, resulting in the party's defeat. According to reports, leaders such as Ashok Gehlot, Kamal Nath, and Bhupesh Baghel distributed tickets as per their will, ignoring the party survey report. The Sanatan Dharma issue also played a role in the Congress' crushing defeat in Madhya Pradesh. DMK's Udhayanidhi Stalin had sparked outrage by equating Sanatan Dharma to dengue and malaria. The silence of Congress and the rash statements made by some leaders, in an attempt to defend themselves polarised the situation.

*Abhijit Roy, JAMSHEDPUR*

# Open to advice, not pressure: Kerala Guv

**IF GOVT WANTS SWIFT ACTION ON ORDINANCES AND BILLS THEY NEED TO EXPLAIN THE URGENCY, SAYS KHAN**



**I invite the CM to Raj Bhavan as it's not nice to speak through the media**  
ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN | GOVERNOR, KERALA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 6:** Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan Wednesday said he was open to advice from the state government, but not pressure from them.

Khan's statement assumes significance as he has admitted that he succumbed to the pressure from the state government with regard to the re-appointment of Gopinath Ravindran as vice-chancellor (VC) of Kannur University, a decision that has been quashed by the Supreme Court.

The Governor, speaking to reporters here, said he succumbed to the government pressure only because there was a legal opinion from the Advocate General (AG), the highest law officer in the state, in favour of the re-appointment.

"I have said before the whole of the media that what I did was wrong. But, I succumbed to that pressure only because there was a legal opinion from the AG. Otherwise, the political pressure I would have resisted."

"If I have some confusion about the legality of something, to whom would I go? The AG. He is the highest legal officer in the state," Khan said.

He claimed that while agreeing to the re-appointment he had said that the AG's opinion was illegal and he wrote the same on the file.

On being enquired about the status of the vacant VC positions in several universities in

the state, Khan said that he as Chancellor has set the process in motion for filling those posts as soon as the apex court judgement came.

He, however, said that the positions were vacant for so long, in some cases almost a year, because of the state government.

Khan said that according to media reports, the state government had asked university syndicates not to send their nominee for the search and selection committees and to wait for his tenure as Governor to end.

With the SC verdict coming, the appointment process was set in motion, it will take some

time, he said.

Asked, whether he would seek the government's advice with regard to the appointments, Khan said, "I am open to advice from them, but I am not open to pressure from them."

The Supreme Court, while quashing Ravindran's re-appointment, had berated the Left government for its unwarranted intervention in the matter.

The apex court had found fault with Khan's order reappointing Ravindran to the post, saying the Governor had earlier abdicated or surrendered the statutory powers for re-appointing the VC.

It also said it is the Chancellor who is conferred with competence under law to appoint or reappoint VCs. No other person, even the pro-chancellor or any superior authority can interfere with the functioning of the statutory authority, it had held.

Following the verdict, Khan had said that state Higher Education Minister R Bindu was not to be blamed as the CM had used her for seeking the re-appointment of Ravindran.

He had accused Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan of having exerted pressure on him in the matter.

# K'taka sees 86% increase in crimes against senior citizens in 2020-22

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, Dec 6:** Crimes against senior citizens in Karnataka increased by 86 per cent from 2020 to 2022, latest data released by the National Crime Records Bureau a few days ago showed.

According to the statistics, the number of such cases increased from 853 in 2020 to 1,583 in 2022. The corresponding figure in 2021 was 1,442. Many of the senior citizens were victims of forgery, cheating and theft, the report said.

An analysis of the NCRB 2022 data shows that among 28 states in India, Karnataka recorded the seventh highest number of crimes against senior citizens. Madhya Pradesh was at the top of the list with 6,187 cases followed by Maharashtra with 5,059 and Tamil Nadu with 2,376.

The rate of such cases in Karnataka stood at 27.3 per lakh population while the rate of charge-sheeting in such cases was at 77.8, according to the NCRB data.

Out of the total number of FIRs filed in such cases, the maximum - 367 - were registered under simple hurt (under IPC sections of voluntarily causing hurt and voluntarily causing hurt by



dangerous weapons or means), followed by 313 cases related to forgery, cheating and fraud while 175 cases related to theft, the NCRB data showed.

Crimes against senior citizens in Karnataka also included 91 cases of murder, 48 cases of attempt to murder, 18 cases of grievous hurt, 65 cases of assault on women with intent to outrage their modesty, four cases of kidnapping and abduction and two cases of rape.

The state also registered 61 cases of robbery, 58 cases of criminal trespass and 56 cases of criminal intimidation in which senior citizens were the victims in 2022, the NCRB data stated.

Six cases related to crimes against senior citizens were transferred to another state or agency last year. It was observed that in 147 FIRs, the cases were true, but there was either in-

## CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN UP 46%, 8K CASES IN 2022

Karnataka recorded a 46 per cent increase in crimes against children over the last two years, official statistics in the latest NCRB report released a few days ago show. Police registered 7988 cases in 2022 in comparison to 5471 in 2020 and 7261 the next year. Many of these cases were under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), the report said. An analysis of the 2022 NCRB data shows that among 28 Indian states, Karnataka recorded the eighth highest number of crimes against children. Maharashtra was first on that list with 20,762 cases followed by Madhya Pradesh (20,415) and Uttar Pradesh (18,682). The rate of cases related to crimes against children in Karnataka stood at 41.3 per lakh population while charge-sheeting in such cases was at 58.5, according to the 2022 NCRB data.

sufficient or untraceable evidence or no clues to close the files. Totally 1,396 cases were disposed of by the police, the data showed.



**RAGING BULLS:** Participants during a state-level bullock cart race at Kempanahalli, near Chikmagalur in Karnataka, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

# Armless woman gets driving licence

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 6:** Her relentless efforts of six long years for a driving licence finally paid off when Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan himself handed over the document to 32-year-old disabled Jilumol M Thomas.

Jilumol, who was born without hands, had always dreamt of driving a car using her legs but her requests were challenged on technical grounds.

"Mobility was my biggest handicap and now I am excited as I have got the licence thus getting over my biggest impediment," said Thomas, who is a freelance designer. The first hurdle was cleared when a driving school at Vaduthala in Ernakulam district agreed to register her as a student.

"We were not too confident, but she proved our perceptions wrong by her grit, determination and commitment. Very soon



we realised that she will be able to make it," driving school owner Jopan said. Vi Innovations Pvt Ltd in Kochi, which did the desired electronic modifications on her 2018 Maruti Celerio using assistive technology, also played a key

role in her achievement. It was also the huge support she got from the State Commission for Persons with Disabilities, that she got the directive to the Motor Vehicles department to grant her the sanction for the licence.

# HC no to abort 30-week pregnancy of minor rape survivor

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kochi, Dec 6:** The Kerala High Court has rejected a plea for abortion by the mother of a 14-year-old rape survivor presently in the 30th week of her pregnancy.

Justice Devan Ramachandran nixed the plea after observing the Medical Board's opinion that an abortion was no longer possible and that, at this stage, the baby would have to be delivered alive.

Apodictically, this is not a case where the victim child's health is a risk on account of the pregnancy; nor are there any lethal foetal abnormalities detected. The pregnancy is almost in its 9th month and the fetus is gaining weight and fat, getting closer to its eventual birth weight. Its vital organs, like the brain and lungs, are almost fully developed, preparing for life outside the womb, the court pointed out.

That said, no doubt, the child

is still very young - just 13 to 14 years in age, and what happened to her is certainly statutory rape, the court clarified.

The judge, however, made it clear that these observations were only made with reference to the present case and must not be construed to favour the accused, who is facing proceedings under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO Act).

The judge proceeded to reject permission for the victim child's

abortion since the pregnancy was at an advanced stage.

This court is saying as afore only for one reason, namely that the pregnancy is now very advanced, with the Medical Board speaking with unanimity that the "uterus corresponded to 30 weeks of gestation with good foetal heart. The fetus has, in fact, life with heart rate; and hence, termination of the pregnancy at this stage is impossible, as also untenable,"

the court added.

The court concluded that the provisions of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act cannot be invoked in this case to abort the pregnancy. However, the Court assured the petitioner that her daughter will receive legal protection.

With these observations, the court closed the petition after directing the Child Protection Officer to provide regular support to the petitioner and her family.

# Kerala BJP to relaunch 'sneha yatra' for Christian outreach



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kottayam (Kerala), Dec 6:** Seeking to reach out to minority communities ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, the BJP unit in Kerala has decided to resume its 'sneha yatra' - an outreach programme aimed to connect with the state's Christians. The party initially launched the initiative during this year's Easter.

In a meeting of the saffron party's state committee, it was decided to carry out the yatras during the Christmas season.

MT Ramesh, the general secretary of the BJP's Kerala unit, told reporters after the meeting that the political possibilities for the NDA have increased in the state.

The BJP-led NDA will be expanded by including like-minded people and parties ahead of the polls, he said.

Party leaders and workers will visit Christian homes between December 20 and 30. The objective of the 'sneha yatra' is to bring the Christian community closer to the party, Ramesh said.

The party has also decided to carry out 'padayatras (foot marches)' across the state with an eye on the Lok Sabha polls, he added.

Prominent BJP leaders and workers had conducted the 'sneha yatra', visiting Christian homes and religious heads on the occasion of Easter earlier this year.

# Memorial soon for Mysuru Dasara's centrepiece jumbo

**THE MAJESTIC ELEPHANT DIED IN A FIGHT WITH A ROGUE TUSKER DURING A CAPTURE OPERATION IN KARNATAKA'S HASSAN DISTRICT MONDAY**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bangalore, Dec 6:** Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Wednesday announced a memorial for the 63-year-old elephant 'Arjuna', the centrepiece jumbo of the famous Mysuru Dasara procession, which died during an operation in a forest to capture a wild tusker, December 1.

Arjuna carried the golden 'howdah' of Goddess Chamundeshwari during the historical Mysuru Dasara celebrations.

Speaking to reporters, CM Siddaramaiah stated that the memorial will be built by the government and will come up at the

site in the forest and also at HD Kote town in Mysuru district.

"I have sought all information in connection with the death of the Arjuna elephant. We have asked to build a memorial in the forest in Sakleshpur, where it died and we have also given directions to build a memorial in HD Kote", CM reiterated.

Arjuna had carried the Golden Howdah during Dasara for eight times. He died accidentally. The elephant should have lived for a longer time. It died as the elephant was used in wild elephant capture operation, CM Siddaramaiah stated.

Mahut Vinu, who looked



after Arjuna, recounted that, during the operation Arjuna got hurt in the leg and started bleeding. In spite of this, he fought with a wild elephant. After that his leg was hit by a bullet in a misfire. Arjuna would have fought and won single-handedly. But, he could not win due to injury in the leg. The wild ele-

phant killed it. Arjuna had saved the lives of 10 persons and gave away his life, he said.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah expressing sorrow earlier stated that Arjuna had participated in the Jambhu Savari eight times, becoming a beloved figure, and calmly carried the 750-kilogram golden

'howdah' in the procession. Arjuna lost his life in a fight with a wild tusker. CM Siddaramaiah remembered Arjuna's significant service to Goddess Chamundeshwari and the lasting image of his majestic walk amid lakhs of people during the procession.

Former CM Basavaraja Bommai had also expressed condolences, stating that Gajaraja Arjuna who carried the Golden Howdah eight times during Dasara, lost his life in an operation to capture a wild elephant. Bommai prayed for the soul of Arjuna to rest in peace.

Arjuna died Monday after being fatally injured by a wild elephant in Sakaleshpur of Hassan district. Arjuna was brought to Hassan for an operation to capture the disruptive wild elephant in Yeslur. During the operation, sharpshooters

fired a tranquilizing dart at the wild elephant, which then attacked Arjuna from the front, resulting in his death.

Arjuna was captured in 1968 during a Khedda operation in the Kakanakote forest. He carried the golden 'howdah' before retiring in 2020 after completing 60 years of service.

**OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, DHAMNAGAR**  
Pin:-756117(Odisha), Tel. No-06786-236056, E-Mail: dhamnagar.nac@gmail.com  
No.4440/Date:04.12.2023

**1st Corrigendum Notice**  
No.C-2026:The Call Notice No.3861/Date:21.11.2023 & Bid Identification No.05/DNRNAC/2023-2024 for the 4 (Four) Nos. of projects has been partially modified due to same technical issue. Hence the critical dates has been changed as detailed below.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for bidding		Last Date & Time seeking Tender Clarification	Last date of receipt of Original Documents	Date & Time of Opening Tender
		From	To			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Executive Officer, NAC Dhamnagar	05/DNR NAC/ 2023-2024	11.12.2023 At 10.00 AM	22.12.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.	22.12.2023 upto 5.00 PM	26.12.2023 Upto 5.00 PM	27.12.2023 At 11.00 A.M.

**Sd./- Executive Officer Dhamnagar NAC**  
OIPR-13197/11/0007/2324



Rashtriya Rajput Karni Sena supporters burn tyres during a protest over the killing of their leader Sukhdev Singh Gogamedi, outside the Metro Mas Hospital in Jaipur. Markets were closed in Jaipur and some other Rajasthan districts and protesters blocked roads and stopped trains Wednesday after the bandh call. Governor Kalraj Mishra spoke to Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the phone and summoned the state chief secretary, home secretary, police chief and Jaipur police commissioner to review the law and order situation in the state. The police set up a special investigation team (SIT) to probe into the killing of the Rajput leader who was shot dead by two men at his Jaipur house Tuesday. They also killed an "accomplice" who had accompanied them to the house



Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud pays tribute to BR Ambedkar on his death anniversary, at Supreme Court in New Delhi



Brigadier Vivek Narang, Deputy Assistant Chief of Integrated Staff IDC (A), HQ IDS, with Col (GS) Christian Schmidt, Director, Department International Cooperation Armed Forces Office and others during the 16th edition of India-Germany Military Cooperation Sub Group meeting in New Delhi



Members of the California Faculty Association rally and picket during a strike at San Francisco State University



Pope Francis is greeted by nuns during his weekly general audience in the Pope Paul VI hall at the Vatican



Members of Raza Academy gather at Minara Masjid to observe the anniversary of Babri Masjid demolition in Mumbai, Maharashtra



Civil Defence personnel perform Mizo Bamboo Dance during the celebration of All India Civil Defence and Home Guard Day in Guwahati, Assam



# national

## of the day quote

They (BJP) are the biggest pickpockets in the country and people have suffered the most due to this

MAMATA BANERJEE | BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

The Congress has performed well in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chattisgarh. These things happen in electoral politics. Earlier, there were Congress governments in these states... Now BJP has won. There is no need to discuss much on such issues. The Congress has won Telangana this time

NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

The recent assembly election results of four states also strengthen the fact that the atmosphere at the time of elections is different but the results of the elections are completely different. This is a new issue on which public concern is necessary

MAYAWATI | BSP CHIEF

## SHORT TAKES

### MVA slams Maha govt over riot cases

Nagpur: Maharashtra opposition leader Vijay Wadetiwar slammed the Shiv Sena-led government over the highest number of riot cases in the state and its "failure" to tackle farm distress, setting an aggressive tone for the winter session of the legislature beginning here Thursday. On the eve of the winter session, the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) boycotted the customary tea party hosted by the government.

### Doctor kills wife, 2 kids & ends life

Rae Bareilly (UP): A doctor posted at a Railway hospital here allegedly killed his wife and two children before committing suicide, police said Wednesday. The incident came to light Tuesday night when the doctor's colleagues informed police after no one from the family answered phone calls.

### UCO Bank accounts under CBI scanner

New Delhi: The CBI investigation into surprise credits totalling Rs 820 crore in the accounts of UCO Bank customers has brought under the agency's scanner thousands of recipient accounts which were opened around the dates the transfers took place, officials said.

### Agartala-Jorhat flight service soon

Agartala: To boost regional air connectivity, private carrier SpiceJet will soon introduce direct flights on Agartala-Jorhat route, an official said here Thursday. The development comes after Tripura Transport Minister Sushanta Chowdhury sought Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia's intervention for the introduction of flight services on two routes- Agartala (Tripura)-Jorhat (Assam) and Agartala-Hyderabad (Telangana).

### BJP Parl Party to meet today

New Delhi: The BJP Parliamentary Party will hold its first meeting during Parliament's Winter Session Thursday and is likely to felicitate Prime Minister Narendra Modi for leading the party to massive wins in three Assembly polls. The BJP Parliamentary Party, which includes all its Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members, generally meets every week during the session.

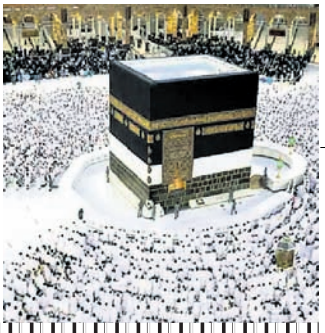


It is common for northern India and Nepal to occasionally experience moderate earthquakes due to fluctuations in seismic activity as the region is situated near active faults

KIREN RIJU | UNION EARTH SCIENCES MINISTER

## GOOD NEWS FOR HAJJ PILGRIMS

Saudi Arabia has unveiled a series of "transformative" measures like quick visa processing, accessibility, logistical support and additional flights to ensure a more enriching experience for Indian pilgrims undertaking spiritual journey to Mecca, Saudi Minister of Hajj and Umrah Tawfig bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah said Wednesday



## BJP MPs, including Union Ministers, elected to Assemblies quit Parl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: Union ministers Narendra Singh Tomar and Prahlad Singh Patel resigned from Lok Sabha on Wednesday as the BJP decided that all of its 12 MPs recently elected to state assemblies will quit Parliament, amid strong indications that they may join the new governments in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan.

The move has given rise to the view that the party leadership may bring in new faces at the helm in all the three states. Senior leaders, however, declined to comment on such a development. BJP president J P Nadda accompanied 10 of them as they tendered their resignations from Parliament. Two others, Union minister Renuka Singh and Mahant Balaknath, will also be quitting, party leaders said.

Other MPs who quit are Rakesh Singh, Uday Pratap Singh and Riti Pathak from Madhya Pradesh; Kirodi Lal Meena, Diya Kumari and Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore from Rajasthan and Gomati Sai and Arun Sao from Chhattisgarh. All except Meena are Lok Sabha members. Meena is a Rajya Sabha member.

Patel said the 10 MPs took Prime Minister Narendra Modi's blessings before tendering their resignations. All three Union ministers will also be quitting the Modi government as a procedural formality.

Tomar is a Cabinet minister handling the crucial agriculture portfolio, and their departure have sparked a fresh buzz within the party on whether Modi will induct new members in his council of ministers ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.



# MICHAUNG MAYHEM

The devastation caused by Cyclone Michaung brought back the memories of the 2015 deluge in Chennai --- the disaster was a result of the heaviest rain in several decades and poor reservoir management

AGENCIES

Chennai, Dec 6: Residents grappled with stagnant water and power disruption in parts of the city and its suburbs Wednesday, two days after Cyclone 'Michaung' wreaked havoc in the metropolis and neighbouring districts, even as civic agency personnel were involved in relief and rehabilitation efforts.

The government said power was kept suspended in some areas as a "preventive measure" as the cables were under water, while asserting all efforts were being taken to restore normalcy.

Another day's holiday was declared for schools and colleges in Chennai December 7. The cyclone-triggered heavy rainfall had led to inundation in localities including Velachery

## Rajnath Singh to visit TN today

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will visit Tamil Nadu Thursday to assess the flood situation in the state and hold a meeting with Chief Minister M K Stalin, sources said. Singh, who will travel to Tamil Nadu as a representative of the central government, will conduct an aerial survey of the flood-hit areas. The defence minister will visit Tamil Nadu to see the damage caused by the recent floods besides holding a meeting with the chief minister, the sources said. Officials from the Union Home Ministry will accompany the defence minister during his trip.



and Tambaram. On Wednesday too, people were seen leaving their homes in the areas surrounded with water to safer zones, carrying their children and wading through the stagnant water. They called for help, including pressing more boats to

ferry people to higher ground. Chief Minister M K Stalin visited some of the affected areas and distributed food and essential commodities to people put up at a relief centre in the city. He inspected activities undertaken by the city civic body to drain

## LS passes J&K Reorganisation, Reservation (Amendment) Bills

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 6: The Lok Sabha Wednesday passed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, which seeks to nominate two members from the Kashmiri migrant community and one representing the displaced persons from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) to the legislative Assembly.

The House also passed the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, which seeks to change the nomenclature of a section of people who are eligible for quota in appointment and admission.

The Bills were passed after more than six hours of debate spanning over two days and a spirited reply by Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The Home Minister said the two bills re-



lated to Jammu and Kashmir brought by the government will give justice to those deprived of their rights for the last 70 years and asserted that reservation to the displaced people will give them a voice in the legislature. He said that Jammu and Kashmir has suffered due to two blunders committed by the country's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru - first announcing ceasefire and then taking the Kashmir issue to the United Nations. "Had Jawaharlal

Nehru taken right steps, PoK would have been part of India now. It was a historic blunder," he said. The Home Minister said a plan to have zero terror incident in Jammu and Kashmir has been in force for the last three years and it will be successful by 2026 when there will be no violence.

Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Amit Shah Wednesday blamed India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's "two major blunders" -- declaring a ceasefire without winning the entire Kashmir and taking the issue to the United Nations -- for the sufferings of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. In his speech, Shah said if Nehru had taken the right steps, a large chunk of territory would not have been ceded and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir would have been part of India.

water. He also wrote to the Centre seeking an interim flood relief of Rs 5,060 crore to tide over the situation.

Many users on social media site 'X' shared videos of residential localities still being surrounded by stagnant water, claiming many residents were stuck inside. The hashtag #Velachery was trending on the microblogging site. Power supply had not resumed in parts of the city including Kilpauk and Kattupakkam.

There were no disruptions in operations at the airport while the Southern Railway announced cancelling a number of services and diversion of many others.

However, it announced resumption of the suburban services on the Chennai Egmore-Chengalpeta and Chennai

Beach-Arakkonam routes with frequency of 30 and 45 minutes, respectively. Services on the Tiruvottiyur-Sullurpeta line will be operated in a hourly frequency, it said in an update.

State Chief Secretary Shiv Das Meena told reporters that water was draining in many parts of the city. Over 200 boats have been pressed into service in different areas.

Food packets were also being air-dropped in certain areas in north and south Chennai, he added. While the usual daily supply of milk to Chennai and its surrounding areas was 19 lakh litres, a supply of 14 lakh litres was ensured on Wednesday. Of this, state-run Aavin contributed 10 lakh litres. The usual quantum of supply was will be restored from Thursday onwards, Meena said.

## SNIPPETS

### Ratan Tata flags fake interview recommending investments

New Delhi: Veteran industrialist and former Tata Group Chairman Ratan Tata Wednesday issued a "fake" alert for misusing his name on social media to "exaggerate investment" with risk-free and 100 per cent guarantee. In a post on Instagram, Tata called out a post from a user by the name of Sona Agrawal that used a fake interview of him in a video recommending investments. In the fake video, Tata addresses Sona Agrawal as his manager. The video also showed messages of people receiving money in their account. Tata wrote FAKE on the video and also on the screenshot of the caption of the video.



increase from 2021 but a 15.57 per cent decline from 2020, according to the NCRB. Last year, the maximum of these 1,523 cases were lodged in Uttar Pradesh (217) followed by Rajasthan (191), Maharashtra (178), Tamil Nadu (146), Telangana (119), Andhra Pradesh (109), and Madhya Pradesh (108), the data showed.

### Leaders of 17 INDIA bloc parties meet

New Delhi: Floor leaders of 17 parties of the INDIA opposition bloc on Wednesday met at the residence of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and discussed steps to be taken to improve coordination among them to take on the BJP in Lok Sabha elections. Kharge had invited the leaders over dinner and another meeting would be held in the third week of December that will be attended by top leaders including some chief ministers from the opposition parties. Among Congress leaders present at Kharge's residence were former party chief Rahul Gandhi, its leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and deputy leader in Rajya Sabha Pramod Tiwari, besides general secretaries K C Venugopal and Jairam Ramesh.



### Rise in hate-speech cases: NCRB

New Delhi: More than 1,500 cases were registered under IPC section 153A that penalises promoting enmity between different groups, including offences of hate speech, across India in 2022, a 31.25 per cent



## 'Garba' declared as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO

GARBA IS A "RITUALISTIC AND DEVOTIONAL DANCE" THAT IS PERFORMED ON THE OCCASION OF THE FESTIVAL OF NAVRATRI WHICH IS DEDICATED TO THE WORSHIP OF THE FEMINE ENERGY OR 'SHAKTI', THE UNESCO WEBSITE SAID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Dec 6: UNESCO has approved the inclusion of Gujarat's traditional Garba dance in its 'Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity', Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel announced here Wednesday.

"The age-old tradition of devotion to Goddess Mother in the form of Garba is alive and growing. Garba which has become the identity of Gujarat has been approved by UNESCO under its intangible cultural heritage list," Patel said in a post on X.

"This is a moment of pride for Gujaratis spread all over the world. This is a result of im-

portance being given to the heritage of the country under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and such heritage being taken to the world. Congratulations to the people of Gujarat," Patel further said.

The inclusion was made under the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage during the 18th meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage which began in Kasane, Botswana, Tuesday.

"Garba of Gujarat is the 15th ICH element from India to join this list. This inscription underscores Garba's pivotal role



as a unifying force that fosters social and gender inclusivity. Garba as a dance form is entrenched deeply in ritualistic

and devotional roots, involving people from all walks of life and it continues to thrive as a vibrant living tradition bringing

communities together," an official release said.

The dance takes place around a perforated earthenware pot lit with an oil lamp, or an image of the mother goddess Amba. The dancers move around the centre in a counter-clockwise circle, using simple movements while singing and clapping their hands in unison, it further said. Starting with slow circular

movements, the tempo slowly builds up to a frenzied whirling. The practitioners and bearers of Garba are broad and inclusive, from the dancers to the musicians, social groups, craftspeople and religious figures involved in the festivities and preparations, it said.

Garba fosters social equality by diluting socio-economic, gender and religious structures. It continues to be inclusive of diverse and marginalized communities, thus strengthening social bonds, it said. Traditions or cultural phenomena from India such as Ramlila, Vedic Chants, Kumbh Mela and Durga Puja have already been recognised by the UNESCO list.

# international

## of the day quote

War is always a defeat. No one wins, everyone loses. The only ones who win are the weapons makers

POPE FRANCIS | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

American democracy, I give you my word as a Biden, is at stake. If Trump wasn't running I'm not sure I'd be running. We cannot let him win

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

A bill is being prepared to imprison migrants with criminal records for violent or sexual offenses because they pose an unacceptable risk to the public

ANDREW GILES | IMMIGRATION MINISTER

## CLIMATE ON BRINK

# 2023 to smash all heat records

### NOVEMBER BECOMES 6TH STRAIGHT MONTH TO SET HEAT RECORD THIS YEAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dubai, Dec 6:** For the sixth month in a row, Earth set a new monthly record for heat, and also added the hottest autumn to the litany of record-breaking heat this year, the European climate agency calculated.

And with only one month left, 2023 is on the way to smashing the record for hottest year.

November was nearly a third of a degree Celsius (0.57 degrees Fahrenheit) hotter than the previous hottest November, the European Space Agency's Copernicus Climate Change Service announced early Wednesday.

November was 1.75 degrees Celsius (3.15 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times, tying October and behind September, for the hottest above

average for any month, the scientists said.

"The last half year has truly been shocking," said Copernicus Deputy Director Samantha Burgess. "Scientists are running out of adjectives to describe this."

November averaged 14.22 degrees Celsius (57.6 degrees Fahrenheit), which is 0.85 degrees Celsius (1.5 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than the average the last 30 years. Two days during the month were 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times, something that hadn't happened before, according to Burgess.

So far this year is 1.46 degrees Celsius (2.6 degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than pre-industrial times, about a seventh of a degree warmer than the previous



warmest year of 2016, Copernicus scientists calculated. That's very close to the international threshold the world set for climate change.

The 2015 Paris climate agreement set a goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times over the long term and failing that at least 2 de-

2023 is very likely to be a cool year in the future unless we do something about our dependence on fossil fuels

SAMANTHA BURGESS | DEPUTY DIRECTOR, COPERNICUS

the hottest fall the world has had on record, Copernicus calculated.

Copernicus records go back to 1940. United States government calculated records go back to 1850. Scientists using proxies such as ice cores, tree rings and corals have said this is the warmest decade Earth has seen in about 125,000 years, dating back before human civilization. And the last several months have been the hottest of the last decade.

Scientists say there are two driving forces behind the six straight record hottest months in a row. One is human-caused climate change from the burning of coal, oil and gas. That's like an escalator. But the natural El Nino-La Nina cycle is like jumping up or down on that escalator.

## Italy pulls out of China's Belt and Road Initiative

OVER 100 COUNTRIES HAVE SIGNED PACTS WITH CHINA TO COOPERATE ON BRI INFRA AND PROJECTS SINCE THE SCHEME WAS LAUNCHED IN 2013

REUTERS

**Rome, Dec 6:** Italy has officially informed China that it is quitting the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), dismissing fears the move might sour relations and damage the Italian economy, government sources said Wednesday.

Italy in 2019 became the first and so far only major Western nation to join the trade and investment programme, ignoring warnings from the United States that it might let China take control of sensitive technologies and vital infrastructure.

However, when Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni took office last year, she said she wanted to withdraw from the deal, which was championed by President Xi Jinping, saying it had brought no significant gains to Italy.

The 2019 accord expires in March 2024 and an Italian government source said Rome had sent Beijing a letter "in recent days" informing China that it would not be renewing the pact. "We have every intention of maintaining excellent relations with China even if we are no longer part of the Belt and Road Initiative," a second government source said.

"Other G7 nations have closer relations with China than we do, despite the fact they were



Italy signed pact in 2019 expecting big boost to exports Hoped-for economic gains did not materialize Rome says still expects good relations with Beijing

REUTERS

never in (the BRI), he added.

Italy will assume the presidency of the G7 in 2024.

More than 100 countries have signed agreements with China to cooperate on BRI infrastructure and building projects since the scheme was launched in 2013. The then Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte hoped for a trade bonanza when he signed up in 2019, but Chinese firms seemed to be the main beneficiaries.

Italian exports to China totalled 16.4 billion euros (\$17.7 billion) last year from 13 billion euros in 2019. By contrast, Chinese exports to Italy rose to 57.5 billion from 31.7 billion over the same period, according to Italian data.

Italy's main euro zone trading partners France and Germany exported significantly more to China last year, despite not being part of the BRI, which is modelled on the old Silk Road that linked China to the West.

Meloni, who heads a conservative coalition, has been keen to burnish her credentials as a committed pro-NATO leader and a government source said that she had assured US President Joe Biden earlier this year that Italy would quit the BRI.

## US aid killing Gazans

Despite Gaza death toll soaring, US unlikely to rethink weapons supplies to Israel

REUTERS

**Washington, Dec 6:** Facing a soaring death toll from Israel's renewed offensive in southern Gaza, the Biden administration is trying to pressure its ally to minimize civilian deaths while stopping well short of the kind of measures that might force it to listen, such as threatening to restrict military aid.

Top US officials, including Vice President Kamala Harris and Secretary of State Antony Blinken, have urged Israel publicly to conduct a more surgical offensive in the south to avoid the heavy civilian casualties inflicted by its attacks in the north.

About 900 people in Gaza were killed in Israeli airstrikes between Friday when a truce ended and Monday, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, about the same number killed in strikes in Gaza over the four days following the Hamas cross-border raid on Israel October 7, though fewer than the 1,199 who died in the four days following the start of Israel's ground offensive on northern Gaza Oct 28.

Washington is for now ruling out withholding delivery of weapons or harshly criticizing Israel as a means of changing its tactics because the US believes the existing strategy of privately negotiating is effective, according to two US officials.

"We think what we're doing is moving them" a senior US official said, citing how Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shifted from refusing to allow aid into Gaza to allowing nearly 200 trucks of assistance a day, saying those improvements were the result of intense diplomacy, not threats.

But the US official said re-



We are going to continue with our campaign to destroy Hamas, a campaign that the United States sees eye to eye with us about

EYLON LEVY | GOVERNMENT SPOKESPERSON, ISRAEL

ducing military support to Israel would carry major risks. "You start lessening aid to Israel, you start encouraging other parties to come into the conflict, you weaken the deterrence effect and you encourage Israel's other enemies," the official said.

The United States has called its support unwavering. The Israeli government appears unmoved by international demands to change its strategy. "I must admit I sense that the prime minister feels zero pressure, and that we will do whatever it takes to achieve our military goals," Netanyahu's foreign policy adviser Ophir Falk told Reuters last week when asked about the international pressure on Israel.

**SIGNIFICANT US LEVERAGE**

The United States gives Israel \$3.8 billion in military aid annually, ranging from fighter jets to powerful bombs that could destroy Hamas tunnels, and the Biden administration has asked Congress to approve an additional \$14 billion.

Such support gives Washington "significant leverage" over how the war against Hamas is conducted, said Seth Binder, director of advocacy at

The Project on Middle East Democracy.

"Withholding certain types of equipment or delaying refilling stockpiles of various arms would force the Israeli government to adjust strategies and tactics because they would not be guaranteed to have more in the pipeline," said Binder. "To date, the administration has demonstrated an unwillingness to use that leverage."

Weighing on Biden is the 2024 presidential election, even as senior aides have stepped up calls for Israeli restraint. Any attempt to cut aid could hurt the Democratic president with pro-Israel independent voters as he seeks re-election.

Biden also faces pressure from a faction of progressive Democrats who want the US to set conditions on military aid to its closest Middle East ally, and for the president to support calls for an immediate ceasefire.

Fighting between Israel and Hamas resumed Friday after a seven-day pause to exchange hostages and prisoners and deliver humanitarian aid. Israel is retaliating for an Oct 7 attack by Hamas militants that it says killed 1,200 people and took about 240 hostages.

## RARE TRIP

### Putin talks oil, Gaza, Ukraine on ME visit

REUTERS

**Moscow, Dec 6:** Russian President Vladimir Putin will meet Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Saudi Arabia Wednesday, during a rare trip abroad, to discuss oil production, OPEC+ and the wars in the Gaza Strip and Ukraine.

Putin's meeting with the prince, known as MbS, comes after oil prices fell despite a pledge by OPEC+, which groups the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies led by Russia, to further cut output.

Putin arrived in Abu Dhabi for talks with President Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan who called Putin his "dear friend". He is due to then travel to Saudi Arabia for his first face-to-face meeting with MbS since October 2019.

The Kremlin said they would discuss energy cooperation, including as part of OPEC+, whose members pump more than 40% of the world's oil.

"Our relations, largely due to your position, have reached an unprecedentedly high level," Putin told Sheikh Mohammed, known as MbZ, at the presidential palace. "The UAE is Russia's main trading partner in the Arab world."

Putin said Russia and the UAE cooperated as part of OPEC+, adding that they would talk about the Israeli-Hamas conflict and the situation in Ukraine.

The Kremlin chief's last visit to the region was in July 2022, when he met Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in Iran.



It was not immediately clear what Putin, who has rarely left Russia since the start of the Ukraine war, specifically intends to raise about oil markets with the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, the world's largest crude exporter, just days after disagreements delayed a key OPEC+ meeting.

As well as oil, they will talk about the war between Israel and Hamas militants, the situation in Syria and Yemen, and broader issues such as ensuring stability in the Gulf, the Kremlin said. A Kremlin aide said Ukraine would also be discussed.

Putin will host Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in Moscow Thursday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

## Iran blasts animals into space

Iran claims it sent a capsule capable of carrying animals into orbit as it prepares for human missions

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Tehran, Dec 6:** Iran said Wednesday it sent a capsule into orbit capable of carrying animals as it prepares for human missions in coming years.

A report by the official IRNA news agency quoted Telecommunications Minister Isa Zarepour as saying the capsule was launched 130 kilometres into orbit.

Zarepour said the launch of the 500-kilogram (1,000-pound) capsule is aimed at sending Iranian astronauts to space in coming years. He did not say if any animals were in the capsule.

He told state TV that Iran plans to send astronauts into space by 2029 after further tests involving animals.

State TV showed footage of a rocket named Salman carrying the capsule.

Iran occasionally announces successful launches of satellites



and other spacecrafts. In September, Iran said it sent a data-collecting satellite into space. In 2013, Iran said it sent a monkey into space and returned it successfully.

Reports said the country's Defense Ministry built and launched the Salman rocket while the capsule was built by the Iranian civil space agency. Media reports did not say where the launch took place. Iran usually makes launches from Imam Khomeini Space Centre in north-

ern Semnan province. It says its satellite program is for scientific research and other civilian applications. The US and other Western countries have long been suspicious of the program because the same technology can be used to develop long-range missiles.

In 2020, Iran's Revolutionary Guard said it put the Islamic Republic's first military satellite into orbit, unveiling what experts described as a secret space programme.

## I won't be dictator again, says Trump

REUTERS

**Washington, Dec 6:** Donald Trump said Tuesday that he will not become a dictator if he becomes US president again except "on day one", after warnings from Democrats and some Republicans that America was in danger of becoming an autocracy if he wins the 2024 election.

Republican presidential candidate Trump had to be asked twice during a televised town hall event in Iowa to deny that he would abuse power to seek revenge on political opponents if re-elected to the White House. "No. No. Other than day one," Trump said when asked to deny he would become a "dictator" if he wins the November election.

Trump said on the "day one" he referred to, he would use his presidential powers to close the southern border with Mexico and expand oil drilling.

Trump, seeking a second White House term in a likely election re-match with Democratic President Joe Biden, has frequently promised "retribution" on political opponents if he gains power again.

## INDIA MATTERS

### PIO with roots in Kashmir aims for US Congress

**Washington:** Krystle Kaul, an Indian-origin foreign policy and national security expert with roots in Kashmir, has announced that she will run for the US House of Representatives from a Congressional district in Virginia with a focus on core issues like public safety, education and healthcare. Kaul, if elected in 2024, would be only the second Indian-American woman to be elected to the House of Representatives after Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal. Pramila Jayapal's sister Susheela Jayapal has also thrown her hat in the race to the Congress from the third Congressional District of Oregon. Both Kaul and Susheela Jayapal, from the Democratic Party, will have to win the party's primary next year to bag the party's nomination for the November 2024 general elections.



### Novelist Chand gets S'pore's highest arts accolade

**Singapore:** Eighty-one-year-old Indian-origin writer Meira Chand was among the three Singaporeans conferred the Cultural Medallion, the city-state's most prestigious arts accolade, in recognition of their artistic excellence and contribution to enriching the country's arts and culture scene. Chand, fellow novelist Suchen Christine Lim and Malay dance veteran Osman Abdul Hamid received the award from President Tharman Shanmugaratnam at a ceremony held at the Istana on Tuesday, The Straits Times newspaper reported. The award comes with an SGD 80,000 grant for each recipient to support their artistic pursuits. A Singaporean of Swiss-Indian parentage, Chand, along with Lim, is the first English-language female writer to be conferred the award since Ho Minfong in 1997. Chand is an award-winning novelist known for her depiction of multicultural societies. Her "The Painted Cage" (1986) was longlisted for the prestigious Booker Prize, the report said.



### Sikh separatist murder bid: US waits on India probe

**Washington:** The United States has said it will wait to see the results of the investigation announced by India concerning allegations of the involvement of an Indian official in a plot to assassinate a separatist Sikh leader in the US. "We have noted at the most senior levels of this government - the secretary of state has raised this directly with his foreign counterpart that we take this issue very seriously. They told us they would conduct an investigation," State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller told reporters at his daily news conference Tuesday. "They have publicly announced an investigation. Now, we will wait to see the results of the investigation...." Miller said in response to a question. American prosecutors have linked an Indian official to a man charged with conspiring to assassinate Sikh separatist Gurbaj Singh Pannun on US soil.

# business

## of the day quote

The difference in actual project cost and normative cost under Bharatmala Pariyojana is due to increase in cost of raw material, increased land acquisition cost, construction of high speed corridors and increase in GST rates

If global companies engage in price cartelisation, we have (also) found out the solution. Why we have gone to nano urea and nano DAP. We have 2 lakh Kisan Samridhhi Kendras through which we are educating farmers about alternate fertilisers

We are spending over Rs 2,000 crore this year on R&D

### SHORT TAKES

#### Bank of Maharashtra opens new branch



Bhubaneswar: Bank of Maharashtra, a leading public sector bank inaugurated its new branch at Bhanjanagar Main Road in Ganjam district. Anil Kumar Sethy (OAS), Sub-Collector, Bhanjanagar inaugurated the branch. Bhanjanagar branch is the 50th branch of Bank of Maharashtra in the state. The branch will actively handle all types of banking transactions and customer needs. Alok Kumar Mishra, Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone, Satyajit Rout, Branch Manager, Berhampur Branch, Pujashree Sahu, Branch Manager, Nayagarh Branch and Brajabandhu Sahu, Branch Manager, Bhanjanagar Branch and other staff members were present on this occasion.

#### Govt to sell upto 8 pc in IRCON

New Delhi: The government will sell upto 8 per cent stake in IRCON through an offer for sale beginning Thursday, which will help mop up about Rs 1,100 crore. "Offer for Sale in IRCON opens tomorrow (Thursday) for non-retail investors. Retail investors can bid on Friday. Govt. Would divest 8 per cent equity, including greenhoe option," Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said in a post on X. The government will sell about 7.53 crore equity shares, representing 8 per cent in the railway PSU at a floor price of Rs 154 apiece. The OFS, if fully subscribed, would fetch about Rs 1,100 crore to the exchequer. The government currently holds 73.18 per cent in IRCON, an engineering and construction firm.

#### M&M to hike vehicle prices

New Delhi: Mahindra & Mahindra Wednesday said it will hike prices of its passenger and commercial vehicle model range from January next year. This adjustment is in response to the rising costs due to inflation and increased commodity prices, the company said in a statement. The company has made efforts to absorb as much of these additional costs as possible. However, a portion of this increase will be passed on to customers, it added.



(India) needs high economic growth to invest in energy transition... We basically need the time to move away from coal towards other fossil fuels, and later on towards other renewable energy

### MOODY'S GIVES NEGATIVE OUTLOOK FOR GLOBAL BANKS

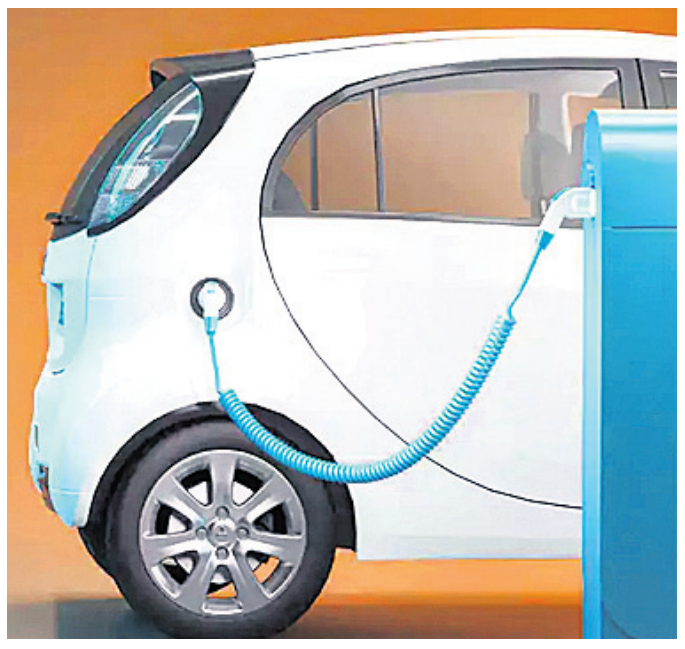
Moody's Investors Service Wednesday said the outlook for global banks for 2024 is negative as central banks' tighter monetary policies have resulted in lower GDP growth. It said Indian banks' profitability will increase further on lower provisioning expenses and robust growth in higher-yielding retail segments.



# EVs accelerating end of the oil age

GLOBAL EV SALES NOW MAKE UP ABOUT 13% OF ALL VEHICLE SALES AND ARE LIKELY TO RISE TO BETWEEN 40%-45% OF THE MARKET BY THE END OF THE DECADE, ACCORDING TO THE IEA

Dubai, Dec 6: There is plenty of hand-wringing on display at the COP28 climate conference in Dubai about the slow pace of reducing the consumption of fossil fuels to fight climate change. But one positive that delegates can point to is the growing fleet of electric vehicles (EVs) worldwide that is already making a surprisingly big dent in demand. Growing sales of EVs in recent years have led forecasters to speed their projections for when global oil use will peak, as public subsidies and improved technology help consumers overcome the sometimes eye-popping sticker prices for battery-powered cars, according to industry experts. The Paris-based International Energy Agency (IEA), a grouping of 29 industrialised nations, expects world oil consumption to hit its zenith at the end of this decade at 103 million barrels per day, after making regular adjustments from its 2017 forecast of a nearly 105 million bpd peak in 2040.



Transportation is responsible for about 60% of world oil demand, with the United States alone accounting for around 10%, according to the IEA. That share should fall, as the IEA expects EVs will have erased some 5 million barrels per day of world oil demand by 2030. Global EV sales now make up about 13% of all vehicle sales and are likely to rise to between 40%-45% of the market by the end of the decade, according to the IEA. That is thanks to a blend of increasingly stringent efficiency standards and subsidies introduced by various governments about the world since the 2015 Paris Agreement to hold global warming to within 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures.

The latest subsidy measures include the US Inflation Reduction Act's \$7,500 tax credit for purchasing a new EV, passed last year and intended to help offset high sticker prices. While those numbers are big, the IEA has said EV sales would need to be even higher - on the order of 70% of the market by 2030 - to keep to the Paris Agreement target for limiting warming. Whether sales can scale those heights is uncertain. EV makers including General Motors, Ford and Stellantis in recent weeks have delayed or scrapped plans to accelerate production amid rising labour costs and signs that higher interest rates are slowing growth in the United States. In the longer term, though,

falling costs for EV batteries have some researchers feeling optimistic. The rate of future EV adoption is going to depend heavily on EV pricing and the availability of charging stations, according to industry experts. China has the advantage on both counts. The average EV in China cost 31,165 euros (\$33,964) in mid-2023, according to UK research firm JATO Dynamics. The cheapest EV in China was 8% less expensive than the cheapest gasoline-powered equivalent car, JATO found. That is thanks to massive government subsidies and easy availability of rare earths that are crucial in EV production. EVs have about a quarter of the market in China, and the country is expected to lead global growth. In the United States, by contrast, the average price for an EV is more than \$53,000, according to automotive research company Kelley Blue Book, around \$5,000 more than a gasoline-powered car. The United States also lags well behind China in total number of public charging stations. An industry-funded white paper released in October by the Electrification Institute noted that the United States has about 52,000 public charging stations, Europe about 400,000 and China about 1.2 million. Even so, EVs are expected to grow to up to 50% of new U.S. car registrations by 2030, according to the IEA, as drivers are drawn to the improving technology, falling prices and the prospect of sidestepping volatile prices at gas pumps.

# Auto retail sales soar to record high



New Delhi, Dec 6: Automobile retail sales in India rose to a record high in November, aided by the best ever monthly performance across passenger vehicle and two-wheeler segments, dealers' body FADA said Wednesday. The overall retail sales stood at 28,54,242 units last month, 18 per cent higher over 24,09,535 units in November 2022.

Passenger vehicle (PV) retail sales rose to 3,60,431 units as compared to 3,07,550 units in the year-ago period, registering a growth of 17 per cent. Similarly, two-wheeler registrations rose by 21 per cent last month to 22,47,366 units from 18,56,108 units in November last year. "November '23 has become a historic month for the Indian auto retail industry as 28.54 lakh vehicles were sold, thus overtaking the previous high of March '20 when the industry sold 25.69 lakh vehicles," Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) President Manish Raj Singhanian said in a statement. Two-wheeler and passenger vehicle segments created new records last month, he added. The two-wheeler segment saw sales of 22.47 lakh vehicles, an increase of 1.77 lakh vehicles compared to the previous high of March 2020, while the passenger vehicle category also sold 3.6 lakh units, over 4,000 units more when compared to the previous high of October 2022, Singhanian said. He noted that PV sales last month were fuelled by Deepawali and the launch of new and appealing models. The improved supply chains, coupled with new launches, effectively catered to the festive demand, marking the peak point in sales, Singhanian said. However, the period following the festivities saw a noticeable slowdown, coupled with a critical challenge of slow-moving inventory due to a mismatch in demand and supply, which is still not resolved, he added. "This issue casts a shadow over the otherwise positive trends, highlighting the need for strategic adjustments in inventory management," Singhanian said. Two-wheeler sales were aided by enhanced demand in rural areas, new product launches, and better model supply, he added. Three-wheeler retail sales rose to 99,890 units last month, registering a growth of 23 per cent from November 2022.

# 'RBI UNLIKELY TO CUT RATES BEFORE JUNE'

Mumbai, Dec 6: The Reserve Bank-led Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is unlikely to tweak repo rates till June next year, according to a foreign brokerage report. The bi-monthly MPC meeting started Wednesday and the decision on rates will be announced Friday. According to the report by Deutsche Bank, the interest rate cycle appears to have peaked and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is unlikely to go for further hikes, unless absolutely necessary. The rate is likely to be cut in June, it said.



The RBI hiked the repo rate last February 23, when it was raised to 6.5 per cent. With the RBI continuing to maintain tight liquidity, short-term rates are hovering around 6.85-6.9 per cent, which is 35-40 bps higher than the repo rate. "We see the central bank cutting the policy repo rate by 75 bps in 2024 and another 25 bps in early 2025. Earlier, we were expecting a 100 bps of repo rate cut in 2024 itself, starting from April 2024, but given that the Fed is likely to start cutting rates from June 2024, we have pushed back the start of the rate cut cycle to June 2024," the analysts said. "We now expect 25 bps rate cuts in each of the quarters beginning from Q2 of 2024 totalling 100bps of easing in FY25, which will likely bring down the repo rate to 5.50 per cent by early 2025," they said. However, the analysts said the RBI's final decision will depend on the Fed's move on rates. If Fed goes for a rate hike in early 2024, or does not go for a rate cut in the whole of next year, it could delay the RBI's rate cut cycle. The report said India's economy will double in size to USD 7 trillion by the end of the decade with per capita income also nearly doubling to USD 4,500 by 2030. And even before the end of this decade, India is likely to become the third largest economy after the US and China, overtaking Japan and Germany, the analysts said. However, Deutsche Bank cut their forecast for the next two years, citing the current tight interest regime.

# Sustainable aviation fuel output to rise to 1.9bn litres in 2024

Geneva, Dec 6: The production of sustainable aviation fuel will double to more than 600 million litres this year and rise further to 1.875 billion litres in 2024, according to the global airlines' grouping IATA. As the global aviation industry works on decarbonisation ways, sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) will play a major role. At a recent conference hosted by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), stakeholders agreed to a global framework to promote SAF production in all geographies for fuels used in international aviation to be 5 per cent less carbon-intensive by 2030. Around 17.5 billion litres of SAF need to be produced to reach that level. On Wednesday, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said that in 2023, SAF volumes will reach over 600 million litres (0.5 million tonnes), which is double the amount of 300 million litres (0.25 million tonnes) produced in 2022. While making a presentation on SAF here, IATA's Director for Net Zero Transaction Hemant Mistry said that globally, 43 airlines have voluntary commitments and agreements related to SAF, which corresponds to around 13 million tonnes of fuel use by 2030. Global SAF accounting framework and regional feedstock value chains, among other factors, will help in ramping up production of SAF, he noted. Around 85 per cent of SAF facilities coming online over the next five years will use Hydrotreatment (HEFA) production technology, which relies on inedible animal fats (tallow), used cooking oil and industrial grease as feedstock. "In 2024, SAF production is expected to triple to 1.875 billion litres (1.5 million tonnes), accounting for 0.53 per cent of aviation's fuel need, and 6 per cent of renewable fuel capacity.



"The small percentage of SAF output as a proportion of overall renewable fuel is primarily due to the new capacity coming online in 2023 being allocated to other renewable fuels," IATA said. IATA Director General Willie Walsh said that even though SAF production was encouraging, the fuel as a portion of all renewable fuel production will only grow from 3 per cent this year to 6 per cent in 2024. "This allocation limits SAF supply and keeps prices high. Aviation needs between 25 per cent and 30 per cent of renewable fuel production capacity for SAF. At those levels, aviation will be on the trajectory needed to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050," he added.

# Markets scale fresh lifetime highs; Nifty nears 21k-level

Mumbai, Dec 6: Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty rallied for the seventh straight session to hit fresh lifetime highs Wednesday, driven by gains in index majors Reliance Industries, ITC and L&T amid persistent foreign fund inflows. Besides, receding crude oil prices in international markets also boosted sentiment, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex surged 357.59 points, or 0.52 per cent, to settle at a new record of 69,653.73. The barometer rose to 69,744.62 during intra-day. The broader index Nifty also climbed 82.60 points, or 0.40 per cent, to hit its fresh peak of 20,937.70. As many as 20 shares of the BSE benchmark index closed the session with gains, while 30 stocks in the Nifty ended in positive territory. Among major Sensex movers, Wipro closed with the maximum gain of 3.85 per cent, followed by ITC - 2.51 per cent higher. L&T and TCS gained 2.31 per cent and 2.13 per cent, respectively. Tata Motors, Nestle India, Infosys and Bajaj Finance were other gainers. On the other hand, NTPC, Axis Bank, UltraTech Cement and ICICI Bank ended the session with a loss of up to 1.58 per cent. In the broader market, the BSE largecap index rose 0.61 per cent, the midcap gauge gained 0.19 per cent, and smallcap advanced by 0.18 per cent. Among sectoral indices, utilities surged 3 per cent, followed by power (2.41 per cent). While oil & gas jumped 1.96 per cent, the IT index went up 1.48 per cent, capital goods advanced by 1.25 per cent, and tech rose by 1.18 per cent. In contrast, healthcare declined by 0.64 per cent, telecommunications slipped 0.58 per cent and bankex fell 0.50 per cent. Foreign institutional investors purchased shares worth Rs 5,223.51 crore Tuesday, according to exchange data. Meanwhile, in Asian markets, Hang Seng and Nikkei 225 finished with gains of 0.90 per cent and 2.04 per cent, respectively, while China's Shanghai Composite lost 0.11 per cent.

# Meals got costlier in Nov amid soaring prices: Report

Mumbai, Dec 6: There has been a month-on-month rise in cost of a typical veg as well as non-veg thali or a meal in November largely due to soaring onion and tomato prices, a domestic rating agency said in a report Wednesday. The uptick was attributable to a substantial 58 per cent and 35 per cent on-month increase in onion and tomato prices, respectively, Crisil MI&A Research said in its report. The rise in onion and tomato prices was prompted by festive



demand and lower output in the Kharif season due to erratic rainfall conditions. In November, the cost of representative home-cooked veg and non-veg thalis increased 10 per cent and 5 per cent on a month-on-month basis, respectively, the report said. On a month-on-month basis, the cost of the non-veg thali increased at a slower pace than that of the veg thali because of a marginal 1-3 per cent decline in prices of broilers, which account for 50 per cent of the non-veg thali cost, it stated. The cost of the veg thali rose 9 per year-on-year, driven by a 93 per cent and 15 per cent increase in onion and tomato prices, respectively.

Prices of pulses, which account for 9 per cent of the veg thali cost, also increased 21 per cent year-on-year, the report added. The average cost of preparing a thali at home is calculated based on input prices prevailing in North, South, East and West India. The monthly change reflects the impact on the common man's expenditure. The data also reveals the ingredients (cereals, pulses, broilers, vegetables, spices, edible oil and cooking gas) driving the change in the cost of the thali.

# INDIA EVES GO DOWN

Kaur & co suffer 38-run defeat against England in first T20 International



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Dec 6:** India failed miserably in all departments of the game as they suffered a comprehensive 38-run defeat against England in the first T20I of the three match series here Wednesday.

After opting to bowl, India dished out a shoddy fielding and bowling performance -- except for Renuka Singh's 3/27 -- to allow England post 197 for 6 and then could only score 159 for 6 in 20 overs to lose the match and concede 1-0 lead to England in the series.

Only Shafali Verma (52 off 42 balls) could score big in the Indian run chase. Captain Harmanpreet Kaur (26) and Richa Ghosh (21) failed to con-

vert their starts as India failed to mount a serious challenge to the big target.

India needed 74 runs from the last five overs and that turned out to be too much for the home side.

Left-arm spinner Sophie Ecclestone was the pick of the England bowlers with figures of 3/15 as she accounted for Shafali, Harmanpreet and Kanika Ahuja.

Shafali waged a lone battle of sorts, hitting 52 off 42 balls with nine fours but kept running out of partners until her innings ended, with the right-handed batter recording her seventh fifty in the format.

India's chase took early blows when Smriti Mandhana (6) was cleaned up by Nat Sciver-Brunt

## BRIEF SCORES

**England 197/6** (Danielle Wyatt 75, Nat Sciver-Brunt 77; Renuka Thakur Singh 3/27) beat **India 159/6** (Shafali Verma 52; Sophie Ecclestone 3/15) by 38 runs

in the third over and Freya Kemp struck on her first delivery, getting Jemimah Rodrigues (4) caught behind in the sixth.

But despite losing two key batters, India were 53/2 in the powerplay and looked set for having a crack at the big chase until England's spinners came into fray.

Coming off an injury lay-off, there were no visible signs of struggle for the parsimonious Ecclestone who cleaned up India

skipper Harmanpreet (26 off 21 balls, 3x4s, 1x6s) when her partnership with Shafali started to threaten the visitors.

Harmanpreet also looked to be getting into her elements but her charge was halted by Ecclestone who cramped the Indian skipper for room in the 11th over. Harmanpreet added 41 runs for the third wicket.

Richa Ghosh (21) and Shafali provided a glimmer of hope for India with their brisk 26-ball 40-run stand for the fourth wicket but Glenn broke their stand to peg the hosts back again.

The asking rate kept getting out of India's reach and the game's fate was decided much before the final ball.

England also did not make glaring mistakes like India did in the first half in the field, with the visitors' fielding in the deep being top-notch and their players taking most of the chances that came their way.

Richa was caught at long-on off Glenn in the 15th over and Shafali's fall in the 17th meant India's hopes were all but over.

Earlier, marauding fifties by Danni Wyatt (75) and Natalie Sciver-Brunt (77) powered England Women to 197 for six after early stuttering.

Wyatt and Sciver-Brunt put on a record 138 runs for the third wicket for England, which was also their first century stand against India in T20Is, after they were asked to bat first.

The hosts also appeared to have lost the steam soon after the early breakthroughs, failing to drive home the advantage as they were guilty of poor bowling and fielding.

# Bishnoi world's top T20I bowler

MAGICAL LEG-SPINNER JUMPS 5 PLACES TO DETHRONE RASHID KHAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dubai, Dec 6:** Young Indian leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi Wednesday rose to the top spot in the ICC T20I bowling chart on the back of his recent player of the series-winning performance against Australia.

The 23-year-old was India's go-to bowler in the just-concluded series against Australia, taking nine wickets from five games.

Bishnoi, who is on 699 rating points, has jumped five places to displace Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan (692) from the top slot.

## ICC RANKINGS

Sri Lankan spinner Wanindu Hasaranga and England's Adil Rashid, who both have 679 points, are in joint third. Sri Lanka's Maheesh Theekshana (677) completes the top five.

Bishnoi is the only Indian bowler in the top 10 in the shortest format even as Axar Patel climbed nine spots to be 18th.

Meanwhile, the swashbuckling Suryakumar Yadav, who captained India during their 4-



1 T20I series win against Australia, held on to the top spot among batters, while opener Ruturaj Gaikwad dropped a place to be seventh.

Hardik Pandya retained the third spot in the all-rounders' list, despite missing the series against Australia due to injury.

Bishnoi has extended India's dominance in the ICC rankings. The Indian team is already No 1 in all three formats while the

likes of Shubman Gill, Ravichandran Ashwin, and Suryakumar Yadav occupy top spots in rankings for ODI batters, Test bowlers, and T20I batters respectively. When it comes to all-rounders India also has Ravindra Jadeja occupying the numero uno position in Tests. With Bishnoi, Team India or Indian players are now at the top spot in 8 different categories of ICC Rankings.

## INDIA'S DOMINANCE

No 1 Test team - **India**  
No 1 ODI team - **India**  
No 1 T20I team - **India**

- No 1 ODI batter **Shubman Gill**
- No 1 Test bowler **Ravichandran Ashwin**
- No 1 Test all rounder **Ravindra Jadeja**
- No 1 T20I batter **Suryakumar Yadav**
- No 1 T20I bowler **Ravi Bishnoi**

# Odisha FC share spoils with MBSG in ISL thriller

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Dec 6:** Armando Sadiku scored two late goals as Mohun Bagan Super Giant earned a 2-2 draw against Odisha FC in the Indian Super League (ISL) at the Salt Lake Stadium here Wednesday.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant defender Subhasish Bose handled the ball inside the box in the 30th minute, handing a clear cut spot-kick to the visitors.

Ahmed Jahouh stepped up for the penalty duties, and made no errors, slotting the ball into the bottom right corner. However, the midfielder was not going to settle for only that.

Just before the half-time whistle, Diego Mauricio cut into the left side of the Mariners' box, showing some quick footwork before squaring up a pass for an onrushing Jahouh.

The former Mumbai City FC star struck it into the back of the net with his first touch, before embarking on a jubilant celebration. He was taken off for Lenny Rodrigues in the 57th minute as Sergio Lobera perhaps looked to safeguard the two-goal lead.

The Mariners struck back though, and in some riveting fashion. Kiyan Nassiri, who is only going strength to strength playing for the outfit, showed quick awareness to set up a goal with a short pass for Armando



Sadiku in the 59th minute.

The Albanian has arguably been overshadowed with illustrious offensive teammates like Jason Cummings and Dimitri Petratos. However, the forward, into his 15th year of professional football now, is not one to be taken lightly and he showed his presence tremendously.

With his first goal, Mohun Bagan cut back the Odisha FC lead.

But, for a long period, it appeared that it would end up being only a consolation strike and nothing else, until Hector Yuste found Sadiku at the centre of the box with a precise delivery that was shot past Amrinder Singh for the all-important equaliser.

# Rahim 1st B'desh batter to get out for blocking field

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mirpur, Dec 6:** Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batter Mushfiqur Rahim Wednesday became only the 11th player in Test cricket history, and first in 22 years, to be given out for "obstructing the field" on the opening day of the second match against New Zealand here.

Rahim, who became the first Bangladesh batter to be dismissed in this way, blocked a climbing delivery from New Zealand pacer Kyle Jamieson in the fourth ball of the 41st over, and then tried to keep the ball away with his right hand even though it was far from the off-stump.

The Kiwis quickly appealed and the on-field umpires referred the matter to the TV umpire Ahsan Raza who gave Rahim out. He made 35.

Bangladesh, who lead the series 1-0, were bundled out for 172 in their first innings but later reduced NZ to 55 for 5 at close of play.

The last player to be given out in Test cricket in a similar fashion was former England captain Michael Vaughan in the Bengaluru match against India in 2001. Vaughan had made 64 then.

Legendary England batter Len Hutton was the first player to be given out for "obstructing the field" during a Test match against South Africa in 1951.

## JUNIOR HOCKEY WORLD CUP

# India need to guard against complacency

Colts are striving to secure their fourth podium finish in the event after having won the tournament twice in 2001 (Hobart) and Lucknow (2016). They had clinched a silver medal way back in 1997 in England



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kuala Lumpur, Dec 6:** Their campaign has started off positively, but India must guard against complacency when they face Spain in their second Pool C match of the FIH junior men's hockey World Cup here Thursday.

Vice-captain Arajjeet Singh Hundal came out to be India's saviour, scoring a hat-trick as India overcame some anxious moments to beat Korea 4-2 in their opener Tuesday.

But India's coach CR Kumar was not too satisfied with the performance and said his side needs to be more clinical and avoid conceding unnecessary

penalty corners. India conceded six penalty corners, while earned just two against Korea. "We are very happy that we got the three points and that's the positive side. But we have to be more clinical in both circles. We conceded two goals in penalty corners which we need to pay attention to," Kumar said after the Korea match.

"We gave away too many penalty corners, six in the whole game where we had just two. We need to be more cautious."

Skipper Uttam Singh and his deputy Hundal are the only two players who have experience of the big event, having featured in the last edition of the tour-

nament, where India finished fourth in Bhubaneswar, losing to France in the bronze medal play-off match.

The Spaniards, who have a bronze medal in their kitty at the 2005 edition in Rotterdam, are India's toughest opponent in the pool, comprising Canada as the other side. But going by form, India will start as favourites against Spain Thursday.

India's last pool match is against Canada Saturday.

Pool A consists of defending champions Argentina, Australia, Chile, and Malaysia, while Pool B has Egypt, France, Germany and South Africa. Pool D is the toughest of the lot as Belgium, Netherlands, New Zealand and Pakistan will be vying for a quarterfinal berth. The top two teams from each pool will qualify for the quarterfinals.

The Indians played an attacking game from the onset Tuesday and would look to continue in the same vein but their defence will have to be cautious against counter-attacks which the Koreans used to great effect to earn penalty corners.

Spain too would be looking to exploit that weakness against the Indians.

# Will play IPL until I can't walk anymore: Maxwell



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Melbourne, Dec 6:** Star Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has vowed to play in the world's biggest cricket league, the IPL, "until he can't walk anymore".

The 35-year-old, who played a massive role in Australia's ODI World Cup-winning campaign in India recently, will once again don the colours of Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL next year.

"The IPL will probably be the last tournament I ever play, as I will play the IPL until I can't walk anymore," Maxwell was quoted as saying by Australian Associated Press (AAP) at the Melbourne Airport Wednesday.

"I was talking about how good the IPL has been to me through-out my career, the people I've met, the coaches I have played under, the international players that you get to rub shoulders with, how beneficial to my whole career that tournament has been," he said.

Maxwell feels Australian cricketers should play in the IPL for experience ahead of the T20 World Cup in the United States and the West Indies in June.

"Hopefully, a lot of our Australian players can get over to the IPL and get to work in slightly similar conditions to the West Indies, where it is a little bit drier, it will spin."

Maxwell will return to action as captain of Melbourne Stars in the Big Bash League opener against Brisbane Heat in the opener at the Gabba Thursday.

After winning the ODI World Cup by beating favourites India at home, Australia are now looking to reclaim the T20 world title which they won in 2021.

**You're rubbing shoulders with AB (de Villiers) and Virat (Kohli) for two months, talking to them while watching other games. It's just the greatest learning experience that any player could ask for**

**GLENN MAXWELL | ALL-ROUNDER, AUSTRALIA**

# SINCLAIR, WORLD'S TOP GOAL SCORER, HANGS UP BOOTS

Canadian great ends her storied 23-year career with a win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Vancouver, Dec 6:** Christine Sinclair, the world's top international goal scorer among both women and men, played her final match with the Canadian national team.

Sinclair, 40, ended her 23-year national team career with a 1-0 victory against Australia Tuesday at Vancouver's BC Place — renamed Christine Sinclair Place for the occasion.

Sinclair has scored 190 goals since she made her national team debut in 2000. Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, the game's top scorer among men, has 128 international goals.

It was Sinclair's 331st appearance for Canada, second

only in international soccer to retired US star Kristine Lilly, who played in 354 games.

"To see the growth of the game, see where it's at now, and the opportunities that are available, whether it's in the national team or playing pro. Honestly I never thought in my career that this was going to happen. And I just feel fortunate to be a part of that growth and it's incredible to experience the change," she said before the match.

More than 45,000 fans were on hand for the game. In addition to Sinclair, the team also honored midfielder Sophie Schmidt, who played in her final game after a 19-year national team career, and former goalkeeper Erin McLeod, who retired in January.

"Tonight, the world's greatest goalscorer — Christine Sinclair — is stepping onto the pitch with Team Canada for the last time. @Sincy12, thank you for inspiring all of us. Your impact on the game, and on sports in Canada, is something we'll be celebrating for quite some time," Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau posted on social media.

When Sinclair was subbed out in the second half, Schmidt took her place on the field after an emotional embrace.

With Sinclair, Canada won the gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics. She won bronze medals at both the 2012 and 2016 Games.

Sinclair is also among just five players to appear in six Women's

World Cups, and one of just three players to score in five. But a World Cup trophy eluded her. She was asked what advice she would give young players looking at a career in soccer.

"All the players on the national team, we were once that young kid that had aspirations and dreams of playing professionally, and representing Canada at World Cups and Olympics," Sinclair said.

Sinclair plans to play one more season for her club team, the Portland Thorns in the National Women's Soccer League.

**Sinclair has scored 190 goals since she made her national team debut in 2000. Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo, the game's top scorer among men, has 128 international goals**



**There's no secret. It's a lot of work but man it's the best job in the world. Just go for it. Anything's possible**

**CHRISTINE SINCLAIR**