



Triptii's revelation

Actor Triptii Dimri shares how a hurtful comment turned the turning point of her acting career

LEISURE | P2



Israel deepens raids

Israeli forces blow up homes and besiege schools and shelters for displaced people Monday, residents and medics say

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Combating inflation

Cumulative rate hikes of 2.5 percentage points by the RBI since May 2022 negatively hit headline inflation by 1.60%, says RBI paper

BUSINESS | P11



Blow for hockey

Hockey is set to be axed from 2026 Commonwealth Games as the host city of Glasgow looks to cut costs, as per reports

SPORTS | P12

State govt hikes DA by 3 per cent

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Ahead of Diwali, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday announced a 3 per cent hike in dearness allowance (DA) and dearness relief (DR) for state government employees and pensioners. With this hike, the DA rose from 50 per cent to 53 per cent, effective July 1, 2024, according to a release from the Chief Minister's Office.

Additionally, the government has increased 3 per cent DR for pensioners, who will receive this adjustment in their October pension. This decision will benefit approximately 7.5 lakh state government employees and pensioners, the release stated.

Earlier, the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had approved a 3 per cent hike in DA for Central government employees and DR for pensioners. This additional instalment of DA over the existing rate of 50 per cent of the basic pay/pension is to compensate against price rise, the government had said.



CROWNS FOR QUEENS: Femina Miss India World 2024 Nikita Porwal (centre), 1st runner-up Rekha Pandey (left) and 2nd runner-up Aayushi Dholakia pose for pictures during a media interaction in Mumbai, Monday

'Dana' may hit Odisha coast October 24 night

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: A low pressure area formed over Bay of Bengal Monday is likely to turn into a cyclonic storm by October 23 which will cross between Puri in Odisha and Sagar Island in West Bengal in the intervening night of October 23 and 24, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

The IMD in its latest message said: "...continuing its move the system is very likely to cross north Odisha and West Bengal coasts between Puri and Sagar Island during the night of October 24 and early morning October 25 as a severe cyclonic storm with a wind speed of 100-110 kmph with gusting 120 kmph." The weather agency said the low-pressure area over eastcentral Bay of Bengal at 11:30am Monday.

"It is very likely to move west-northwestwards and intensify into a depression by October 22 morning and into a cyclonic storm by October 23, over east-central Bay of Bengal. Thereafter, it is very likely to move north-westwards and reach north-west Bay of Bengal off Odisha-West Bengal coasts by



Schools in 14 dists shut

The state government Monday announced closing of all the schools in 14 districts from October 23 to 25, in view of 'Dana'. Schools will remain shut in Ganjam, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Bha-drak, Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Angul, Khurda, Nayagarh and Cuttack.

October 24 morning," the IMD said. It has advised fishermen to return to shore by Monday evening and not to venture into the sea till October 26.

IMD DG Mrutyunjay Mohapatra Sunday said that Odisha is likely to bear the maximum brunt of the cyclonic storm. The cyclone would spend maximum time on the Odisha coast leading to heavy to very heavy rainfall and high speed wind up to 100 km/hour.

MURMU'S ODISHA VISIT POSTPONED | P3

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Once we know if AI means Aai, American-Indian, or Aspirational India, we'll begin exploiting it!

'Secular' core to Constitution: SC

The Supreme Court Monday thwarted another attempt to leave an ideological imprint on the Preamble of the Constitution of India by refusing to alter the introductory part of the Constitution which has long been considered sacrosanct. While junking a batch of petitions filed by former BJP Rajya Sabha MP Subramanyam Swamy, advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain and others, challenging the inclusion of 'Secular' and 'Socialist' in the Preamble, which was effected through 42nd Constitutional amendment brought in by Indira Gandhi government in 1976, the top court maintained that 'Secular' has been the core feature of the Constitution. Nevertheless, the court's ruling has put to rest, for the time being, attempts to tinker with the living document by a majoritarian mindset with little care for the consequences the nation might face. In 2015, 'Secular' and 'Socialist' were found missing from an advertisement of I&B Ministry which created a furore. Learning little from the sentiments, the BJP government again made another audacious attempt by deleting the twin words from the Preamble in the copies of the Constitution presented to MPs on the opening day of the new



Parliament building in 2023. Significantly, the judgment came in the backdrop of CJI DY Chandrachud's recent candid reflection that he had turned to God for a resolution to the Ram Janmabhoomi dispute when Justice Ranjan Gogoi was the Chief Justice, and he was slated to be the next CJI

A bench comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Sanjay Kumar said, "This court has in a number of judgments held that secularism was always part of the basic structure of the Constitution. If one looks right to equality and the word 'fraternity' used in the Constitution, there is a clear indication that 'Secularism' has been held as the core feature of the Constitution."

The words "Socialist" and "Secular" were inserted into the Preamble of the Constitution under 42nd Constitutional amendment moved by the Indira Gandhi government in 1976.

The amendment changed the description of India in the Preamble from a "sovereign, democratic republic" to a "sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic". During the hearing, Jain submitted that Dr BR Ambedkar had opined that the inclusion of the word "socialism" would curtail personal liberty. He added that Preamble cannot be changed through amendments. Justice Khanna said there were different meanings of socialism and one "should not take the meaning adopted in Western countries".

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 21: The Supreme Court Monday said "Secularism" has always been held to be part and parcel of the basic structure of the Indian Constitution. The top court said this while hearing a batch of petitions filed by former Rajya Sabha MP Subramanyam Swamy, advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain and others, who have challenged the inclusion of words "socialist" and "secular" in the Preamble of the Constitution

SC puts brakes on madrasa diktat

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 21: The Supreme Court Monday stayed the operation of the communications issued by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) urging states to shift students of unrecognised madrasas to government schools.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra took note of the submissions of senior advocate, appearing for Muslim organisation Jamiat Ulema-i-Hind, that the communications of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and consequential ac-

tions of some of states needed to be stayed. The NCPCR, June 07, 2024, wrote to the Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh directing that the recognition of madrasas not complying with the RTE Act be withdrawn.

Later, June 25, 2024, the NCPCR wrote to the Secretary, Department of Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education at the Centre to issue directions to all states/Union territories (UTs) to conduct inspections of the existing madrasas with the UDISE Code. The recognition and UDISE Code of madrasa that do not comply with the norms under the RTE Act, 2009 was sought to be withdrawn with immediate effect. The NCPCR also requested

the Union to not extend the UDISE system to madrasas. A separate category of UDIE may be created to capture information about all madrasas including recognised, unrecognised and un-mapped, the NCPCR recommended the Union.

After that, June 26, 2024, the UP Chief Secretary wrote to all District Collectors to "conduct a detailed investigation of all government-aided/recognised madrasas in state that admit non-Muslim children" and to "ensure immediate admission of all children enrolled in madrasas into schools".

A similar instruction was issued by the Government of Tripura August 28, 2024.

Pact with China on LAC patrolling

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: India Monday announced it has reached an agreement with China on patrolling along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, in a major breakthrough in ending the over four-year-long military standoff ahead of a likely meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Russia this week.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said the agreement was finalised following negotiations by the two sides over the last several weeks and that it will lead to a resolution of the is-

suues that had arisen in 2020. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said Indian and Chinese soldiers will be able to resume patrolling in the way they had been doing before the border face-off began and the disengagement process with China has been completed.

It is understood that the agreement will facilitate patrolling in Depsang and Demchok areas as there were major unresolved issues in these two areas.

Prime Minister Modi and President Xi are likely to hold a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in the Russian city of Kazan either Tuesday or Wednesday. **MORE P11**

Govt to tweak rules to tackle bomb threats



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 21: Close on the heels of grounding of around 100 flights in a week owing to hoax bomb calls, Union Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu Monday said the government is contemplating to take legislative actions to deal with instances of bomb threats to airlines, including placing perpetrators of such threats in the no-fly list.

In the last one week, nearly 100 flights of Indian airlines received bomb threats, said reports.

At a briefing in the national capital, Naidu said amendments are being planned to aviation security rules as well as the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982.

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) is continuously in touch with Ministry of Home Affairs on the situation of bomb threats to flights, he said. To a query on whether there is a conspiracy behind the threats, Naidu said investigations are on, and did not offer any specific comments. **MORE P9**

TRUST GOES FOR A TOSS

AGENCIES

Kaushambi (UP), Oct 21: On an auspicious day when every woman, especially those in north India, pray for the long life of her husband by observing fast, a woman of Ismailpur village in Kaushambi district of Uttar Pradesh allegedly killed her second half by poisoning him, turning 'Karwa Chauth' into 'Kadwa' - a Hindi term meaning bitter. According to reports, the woman committed the crime hours after finishing the 'Karwa Chauth' fast. The woman has

When 'Karwa Chauth' turned 'Kadwa'

been taken into custody by the police for allegedly killing her husband by poisoning his food, officials said Monday. Sirathu circle officer Awadhesh Kumar Vishwakarma said Shailesh Kumar, 32, a resident of Ismailpur village in Kada Dham area, suddenly fell ill Sunday night after having dinner prepared on the occasion of 'Karwa Chauth' festival. He was admitted to the local community health centre where he died during treatment, the officer said. Shailesh's family filed a complaint accusing his

wife Savita, 30, of poisoning his food, Vishwakarma said.

Based on the complaint, a case was registered against Savita under Section 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 123 (poisoning) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the CO said. The accused woman has been taken into custody and is being questioned, he added. Reports also said Savita was having an affair with another woman. When Savita was breaking her fast in the evening, she had an argument with Shailesh but things



seemed to return to normal soon after. The couple ate together, after which Savita asked Shailesh to go to a neighbour's house to get some-

thing and then fled. Shailesh's brother Akhilesh said he was rushed to a hospital, where he also recorded a video declaration stating that Savita had poisoned his food. He died during treatment.

Kaushambi Superintendent of Police Brijesh Kumar Shrivastava said, "The crime was reported from Ismailpur village. The woman allegedly poisoned her husband after they had a fight. The man died during treatment. A case has been registered, the woman has been arrested and the body has been sent for post-mortem."

leisure



BRITNEY SPEARS HAS 'MARRIED HERSELF'

Pop star Britney Spears has declared she has 'married myself' a year after she split from her third husband Sam Asghari. Britney has now shared a video of herself wearing a white dress and a wedding veil and declared she's tied the knot with herself.

RAPPER RALAN STYLES SHOT DEAD IN STREET ROBBERY

Baby Shark rapper Ralan Styles was shot dead at a property in Columbus, Ohio, in the early hours of Sunday morning in an alleged street robbery. According to *DailyMail.com*, the 22-year-old musician was targeted for his neck chain and then shot multiple times during a confrontation.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
A favourable day as any can be, says Ganesh. You are happy and content with what you have, and you've planned and are working towards what you want. A romantic date may prove interesting or throw up a controversy – decide where you want to take it.

TAURUS
There is every possibility that you will enjoy a good rapport with people around you, predicts Ganesh. You will think with your stomach today, craving for delicacies. Such a feeling might be because of repressed hunger. Something refreshingly different might be on the cards today, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
Your highly competitive nature will push you to perform better and better. You don't even know what being second best means. Getting in touch with like-minded people will only make your resolve stronger. Your desire to be the best will make you take interest in everything that can help you improve.

CANCER
Your business acquaintances will come forward in the manner that may seem nothing short of some divine intervention. This means that they will virtually save your neck from the guillotine, predicts Ganesh.

LEO
Motivating people through your own actions is one way; the other is to let your words do the talking. Both are equally effective, says Ganesh. With a bit of help from the stars, today, it is your words that shall hold more weight than your actions, as you make optimum use of your presentation skills.

VIRGO
It is quite possible that you will live financial challenges that are thrown at you, as they whet your appetite for success. You will come up with innovative ideas and improved methods of problem-solving. Ganesh assures you that your current business ideas will work wonders.

LIBRA
Trivialities should be the least of your concerns today. Do not let the small things faze you out. Remember that it is the overall picture that matters, and not one small stroke of the brush. Bear this in mind, since you may come under some pressure from subordinates at your workplace. Just remember to consider all possibilities before making any decisions.

SCORPIO
You will live the day in two dominant shades, feels Ganesh. One part of your day will be tinted in nostalgia and thinking, while the other will be spent in making up for the time you lost while star gazing and ignoring your work. Do not let the ghosts of your past haunt you because some things are best left behind while making a new beginning, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Look before you leap, says Ganesh. Cupid has strung his bow and aimed an arrow at you. Love's labour will easily aid you to woo a young, tender heart. But don't be swept away by easy prospects and guard your reputation at all costs.

CAPRICORN
It will be one of those mundane days with nothing remarkable happening on any front. But don't be disheartened, advises Ganesh; planetary movements indicate there may be a change coming soon, most likely a good one. So, perk up and look forward to tomorrow.

AQUARIUS
You do have a way with words and today, you may succeed with your gift of the gab! But Ganesh says that your confused feelings may come in the way of your triumphant achievement.

PISCES
The fount of your creativity spurts today like there is no tomorrow. For lesser mortals, it takes inspiration, perspiration and a lot of desperation to come up with something creative. You, on the other hand, keenly remember the lessons from your past efforts, and use them today to scale new heights, says Ganesh.

Triptii on career turning point

Mumbai: Triptii Dimri stepped into showbiz eight years ago with *Laila Manju*, followed by *Bulbbul*, for which she won critical acclaim. However, Ranbir Kapoor-starrer *Animal* changed the game for her.

In a conversation with a news portal, the *Qala* actress, shared the turning point of her career.

The 30-year-old admitted "It's been quite a journey", as she acknowledges the eight years of hard work behind her recent fame. "Some people think it happened overnight – it did happen with one film, yes – but there's eight

years of hard work behind it. Eight years on the field, and another two years of auditioning and being rejected."

Recalling a particularly disheartening experience, Triptii revealed how a hurtful comment fuelled her determination. She shared, "Someone taunted me and said something very mean, and that was the day I thought I can't leave the city without making it. When you are new to this industry, you don't know a lot of things, and you are confused because you often don't know what's right or wrong."

The actress went on to add, "Something that might be right for another person and must have worked for them, might not work for you. Those days, there was a lot of confusion and chaos. There is a lot of chaos now, too, but I prefer the current chaos over that chaos. Now, I have no time to breathe, eat or sleep."



Mumbai: Known for *Hero*, *Meri Jung*, *Ghayal* and *Damini*, yesteryear actress Meenakshi Seshadri is back in showbiz, and is raring to get started her second innings in the industry.

Talking about her return to the industry after 3 decades, the *Dilwala* actress told this agency, "I want to say that I have returned to India to work in films and rejoin the entertainment industry. You can expect my films to provide clean entertainment."

While speaking about the importance of education and awareness in creating a safe environment for women, the actress said, "I want to emphasise that daughters and sons are equal, and both should have the



Meenakshi eager to start 2nd innings

opportunity for a bright future. This should be our collective effort."

The actress feels fortunate that several of her films have been centred around women, and have conveyed powerful messages to empower them.

KARWA CHAUGH

Breaking tradition, Vikrant touches wife Sheetal's feet

Mumbai: Actor Vikrant Massey posted a series of photos Monday where he is seen breaking his wife Sheetal's fast. The couple travelled to their hometown in Himachal Pradesh to celebrate the festival. In one of the images, Vikrant is seen touching his wife's feet, breaking stereotypes.

Taking to his Instagram handle, the 12th Fail star shared photos, giving fans a glimpse into their intimate celebrations. Along with the post, he wrote, "Ghar".

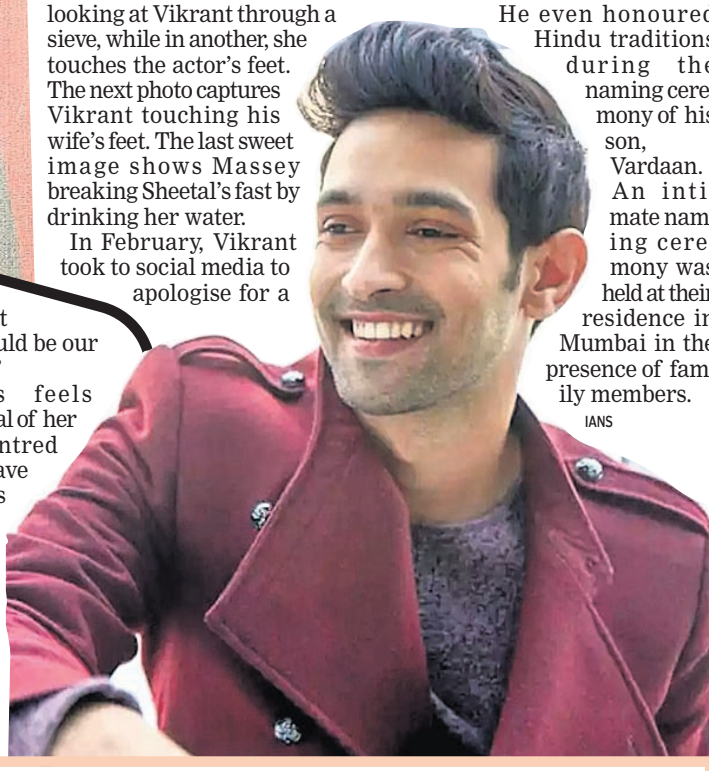
The first photo showed Sheetal looking at Vikrant through a sieve, while in another, she touches the actor's feet. The next photo captures Vikrant touching his wife's feet. The last sweet image shows Massey breaking Sheetal's fast by drinking her water.

In February, Vikrant took to social media to apologise for a



tweet he made in 2018 regarding a murder case. He clarified that his intention was never to offend the Hindu community. In recent years, he has actively celebrated various Hindu festivals.

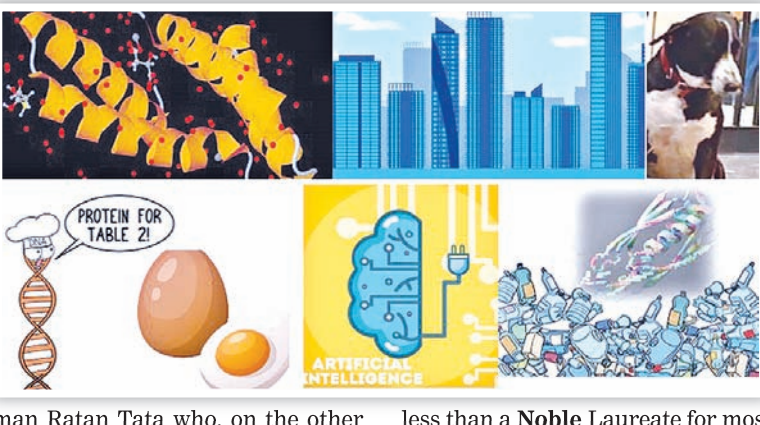
He even honoured Hindu traditions during the naming ceremony of his son, Vardaan. An intimate naming ceremony was held at their residence in Mumbai in the presence of family members.



Novel proteins, noble men, and nibbling issues

The last fortnight to me was not much about the long tailed 'once-in-a-lifetime' C/2023 A3 comet sighting but a great deal more about the spectacular (telltale) tale of **building blocks** that create and support our one life- the proteins. Structure of 20 million of these were decoded and new synthetic ones created by Man (3 remarkable scientists here) and his natural intelligence (NI) along with the Machine (AI), fetching the 2024 Nobel in Chemistry; for having conferred the greatest benefit to mankind through the gateways of science.

In the same breath, my conscience presses me to acknowledge the noble



man Ratan Tata who, on the other side of the gate to heaven, was no

less than a Noble Laureate for most Indians. He may have also constituted

a central dog-ma/pa (pet dog Goa knows better) unrelated to human or canine genes. His vision and die-hard determination were perhaps the **building blocks** that created everlasting edifices of industry and society, cemented by compassion and integrity.

On occasions, we witness the deficiency of such integrity and/or adequate neural networking of the human brain leading to mismanagement and dismissal; mentioned here in relation to the mid-day meal of primary school children being devoid of its quota of eggs and protein requirement. If this seems unpassable, you may be **strumped** by the hideous dogmatic accusations of pet dogs get-

ting stolen to be passed as food. On all accounts, the machines may have gotten to deep learning, when shall we?

Anyhow, considering the noble cause of bettering the nutritional status in children, the free Midday nibble can perhaps be enriched by the combo of NI and AI that can compute, design, and hopefully create novel edible proteins!

On other days, the Nobel-winning, folded synthetic creations can quietly sit in a corner nibbling away piles of our discarded plastic creations. For a fleeting second, I fear if, before the unfathomable prowess of AI, will NI feel compelled to fold its cards!

DR RACHNA RATH

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

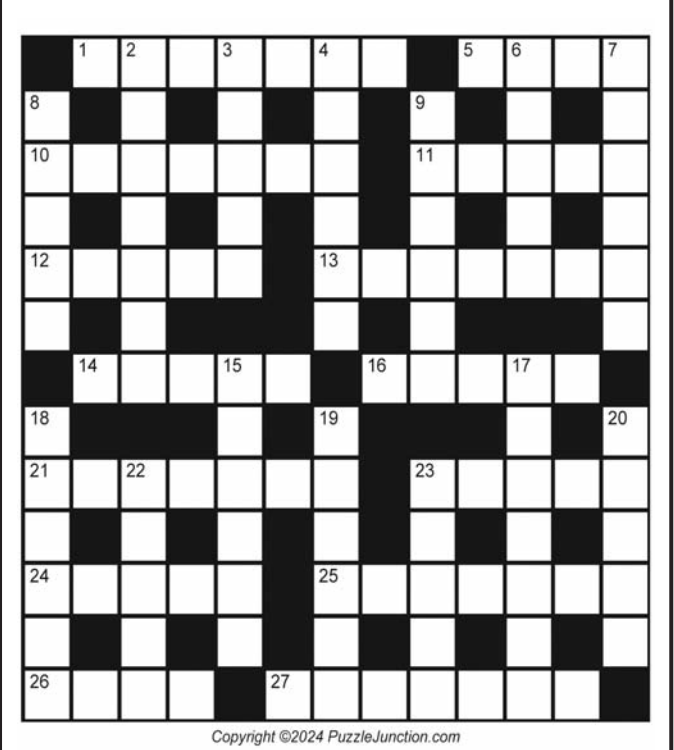


BREVITY



FUN post

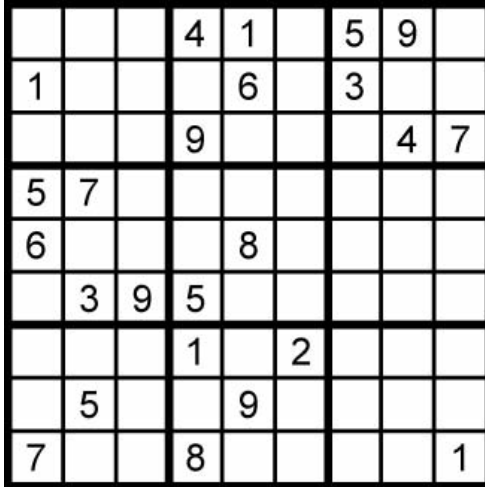
CROSSWORD



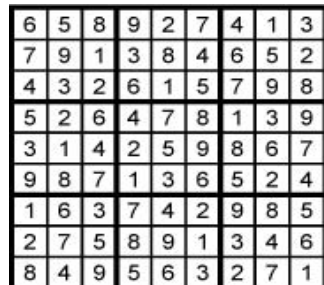
- Across
- 1 Progress
 - 5 Allege as fact
 - 10 As a rule
 - 11 Barbeque
 - 12 Domesticates
 - 13 Corsage
 - 14 Bribery
 - 16 Loan shark's interest rate
 - 21 Witness
 - 23 Pie choice
 - 24 Crush
 - 25 Top sports performer (3-4)
 - 26 Fibbed
 - 27 Gab
 - 29 Disgorges
 - 15 Timberland
 - 17 Performance of music or dance
 - 18 Force
 - 19 Mend
 - 20 Sound of contempt
 - 22 Part of an act
 - 23 Type of whale

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

IN SYNC

Artistes perform at an event organised by 'Udra' to mark Kumar Utsav, at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Monday



CYCLONE 'DANA'

GOVT FULLY PREPARED: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday said the government is fully prepared to successfully tackle the situation arising out of a possible cyclone while safeguarding the wealth of the state. Majhi, who conducted a meeting to review the possible storm response at Lok Seva Bhawan earlier during the day, said a 24-hour control room has been set up in the office of the Special Relief Commission (SRC), and the exact position of the storm is being closely monitored. "District Magistrates have been instructed to be alert and take the necessary steps," he said.

Cyclone 'Dana' is likely to hit the Odisha coast Thursday morning.

The Chief Minister said evacuation of people to safe places, communication, electricity, provision of food and drinking water, health services, supply of relief goods and control of black market will be given special emphasis during the emergency response.



"Our government prioritises the safety of the people. We are focusing on keeping every life safe and ensuring zero accidents," he said, asking people not to panic and prepare themselves as per the information issued by the government.

No leave for Agri officials from Oct 23 to 25: Dy CM
Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singhdeo directed Chief

District Agriculture Officers (CDAOs) across the state to ensure that department officials did not avail any leave during October 23-25 in view of impending cyclone Dana.

The direction came during an emergency pre-cyclone meeting of all CDAOs held under the chairmanship of Singhdeo who also holds Agriculture & FE and Energy portfolios. Singhdeo alerted all the offi-

cers and advised them not to be panic and be prepared to face all types of challenges due to the possible cyclone. He said the mobile phone of all concerned officials should be on 24x7. He also said control rooms shall function at all CDAO offices as well as at Krushi Bhawan in Bhubaneswar during the period.

Principal Secretary Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment (DAFE) Arabinda Kumar Padhee and Director, Agriculture & Food Production Premchandra Choudhary were present at the meeting.

Padhee informed that all department officers have been alerted regarding the cyclone while their leaves have been cancelled till October 25. He said crop management advisory are being disseminated through Krushi Samrudhi Helpline (155333) and over social media platforms, prioritizing the paddy farmers and coastal districts. He also informed about the crop contingency plan and seed reserve policy of the department.

Tourists asked to leave Puri



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: With the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasting a severe cyclonic storm with wind speed of 100-120 kmph slated to hit the Odisha coast by October 25, the state government Monday issued an advisory, asking tourists to vacate the Holy City of Puri soon.

Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) Minister Suresh Pujari issued the advisory after a review meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday.

"The tourists who have come to Puri should leave the seaside town soon as the district is likely to be affected by the severe cyclonic storm," Pujari told reporters. Pujari said that the Puri district administration has also been asked to discourage people from visiting the pilgrim town from Tuesday till the cyclone makes landfall as it could

cause damage.

Meanwhile, the Puri district administration erected red flags along the beach Monday and prohibited everyone from entering the sea.

Apart from deploying life-guards, the government used public address system to alert people and asked people not to enter the sea. The administration fears that there could be high currents in the sea water at present before the landfall of the cyclone, an official said.

Stating that October 24 and 25 are two crucial days for the state, the minister said that the district administration has been asked to take care of the hundreds of women who have come to the town for observing 'Kartik Brata'. These women, called 'habishyalis', visit Srimandir every day during the holy month of Kartik.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida, who is also in charge of the Tourism de-

partment, asked the authorities of the Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) to ensure all facilities for the tourists who have been staying in state-owned guest house Panthanivas.

She said the safety of tourists is a priority for the state government.

Meanwhile, Pujari said that officials who have prior experience in management during cyclones have been deployed in districts that have been identified as cyclone-prone this time.

"The officials will assist the district administrations in the management of the cyclone," Pujari said, adding that 24/7 control rooms have been operationalised in the vulnerable districts.

The minister said the district Collectors have been empowered to declare holidays of schools, Anganwadi centres and colleges in the prone districts till normalcy is restored.

He said the Centre has agreed to send one helicopter which will be kept in readiness at Bhubaneswar airport for deployment for emergency work. It will be used for rescue and relief operations, the minister said.

The Urban Development department also asked the authorities of urban local bodies to remain prepared to deal with possible water-logging, and ensure uninterrupted supply of drinking water and other basic necessities of people during the cyclone.

11 NDRF TEAMS ON STANDBY

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 21: The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has kept 11 teams in Odisha on standby for deployment in the wake of an impending cyclonic storm in the Bay of Bengal which is likely to make a landfall between Puri and Sagar Island Thursday, a government statement said Monday.

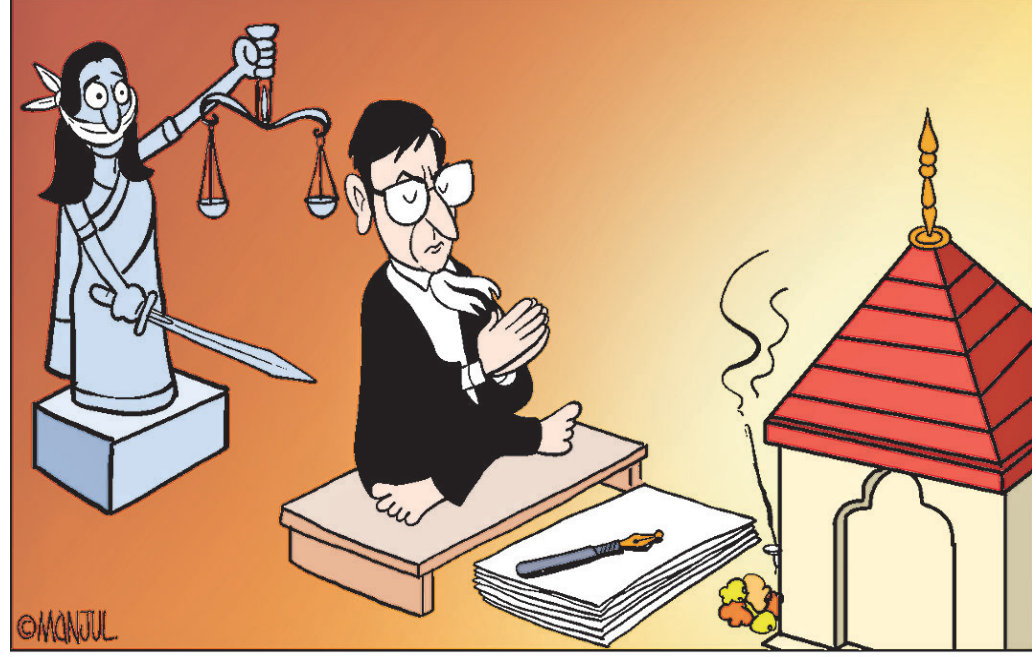
Fourteen NDRF teams have also been kept ready for deployment in neighbouring West Bengal, the statement added.

In a meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) to review preparedness for the impending cyclone Monday, Cabinet Secretary TV Somanathan was also informed that additional rescue and relief teams of the Army, Navy and Coast Guard along with ships and aircraft have been kept in readiness.

Besides Central agencies, the chief secretaries of Odisha and West Bengal also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the Director General of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) briefed the committee about the current status of the deep pressure area on the Bay of Bengal which is likely to turn into "a cyclonic storm by 23rd October 2024 over east-central Bay of Bengal."

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



NGT FORMS PANEL TO PROBE ILLEGAL MINING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has constituted a joint committee to investigate the allegations of rampant illegal stone mining in and around Nischinta hill under Gondia tehsil of Dhenkanal and submit a report by the second week of December this year.

The panel - comprising representatives of MoEF&CC Regional Officer (Bhubaneswar), Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Director of Mines and Geology, Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB) and District Magistrates of Dhenkanal and Jajpur - will meet within two weeks, undertake site visits, look into the grievances of the applicant, verify the factual position and take appropriate remedial action, the eastern zone bench of the environment watchdog ordered while hearing a plea filed by 'Youth United for Sustainable Environment Trust'.

"The OSPCB will be the nodal agency for coordination and compliance. The factual and ATR should be submitted at least one week before the next date of hearing," the NGT said, posting the next hearing to December 20, 2024.



The NGT also served notices on the Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary of Forest department, Dhenkanal District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, Gondia Tehsildar, Divisional Forest Officer of Dhenkanal, OSPCB Member Secretary, Director of Mines and Geology and Deputy Director of Mines seeking their responses on the allegation at least by the second week of December this year.

The petitioner had informed the tribunal that illegal mining is rampant in and around Nischinta hill despite imposition of Section 163 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023.

"Crooks are extracting more than 20,000 tonne of stone illegally by blasting and using heavy machines. Illegal quarries and four stone crushers are operating in Raigada village under Gondia tehsil in brazen violation of

norms," the petitioner alleged. The petitioner urged the NGT to direct the authorities to identify and prosecute the unscrupulous elements operating the stone quarries and stone crushers.

"The authorities should assess the extent of minerals, including black stone, excavated illegally and its market value, cost of restitution and environmental compensation and subsequently recover it from the persons involved," the petitioner said.

The petitioner also urged the tribunal to direct the District Magistrate to initiate criminal proceedings under Section 19 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986 against the mining mafias. These apart, constitution of a court monitored special task force for stringent enforcement of mining and environment laws against the mafias was among the petitioner's prayers.

MURMU'S ODISHA VISIT POSTPONED

BHUBANESWAR: President Droupadi Murmu's scheduled three-day visit to Odisha from Wednesday has been postponed in view of the impending cyclone that is likely to hit the state's coast October 25. Murmu was scheduled to visit Bangripasi, Uparbeda, Rairangpur, Puri and Bhubaneswar during her stay. "I am directed to convey that due to unavoidable circumstances the visit of the Hon'ble President from 23rd to 25th October, 2024 stands postponed," a communication from the President's secretariat to the Odisha Chief Secretary read. Sources said that her tour has been postponed in view of the impending cyclone that would hit Odisha coast by October 25. The President was scheduled to land at Bangripasi helipad in Mayurbhanj district October 23 to lay the foundation of three new railway lines and three other developmental projects. Officials said that the President was scheduled to visit Puri the next day to have a darshan of Lord Jagannath and to attend the 75th anniversary celebration of Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, one of the oldest Ayurvedic medical colleges in the country. She was also supposed to attend the 40th convocation of Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology.



Prez to present National Water Awards '23 today

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: President Droupadi Murmu will present the National Water Awards 2023 Tuesday, recognising the outstanding contributions to water management and conservation across India.

Organised by the Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD&GR) under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, the awards honour the efforts in nine categories ranging from best state to best civil society, according to an official statement.

In the fifth edition of the awards, Odisha has secured the first prize in the 'Best State' category, with Uttar Pradesh following in second place. Gujarat and Puducherry have jointly claimed the third spot.

These awards come with citations, trophies, and cash prizes in certain categories, recognising a total of 38 winners, including joint recipients.

RED CRABS ISSUE EARLY CYCLONE, TSUNAMI WARNING

A RARE MARINE CREATURE, THE RED CRAB IS SEEN ON THE DESOLATE AND STILL BEACHES OF TALASARI, DAGARA, CHANDIPUR AND BALARAMGADI ON BALASORE COAST ADJOINING THE SALINE FORESTS WHILE THE BEACHES IN ASIA, EUROPE, AUSTRALIA AND AMERICA ARE THE NATURAL HABITATS OF THIS MARINE CREATURE

PRADIP DAS, OP

Bhograi, Oct 21: Red ghost crab which plays an important role in preserving the ecological balance in the mangrove forests, maintaining biological diversity and protecting the marine environment have the unique ability to predict about natural calamities like cyclonic storms and Tsunamis in advance, a report said.

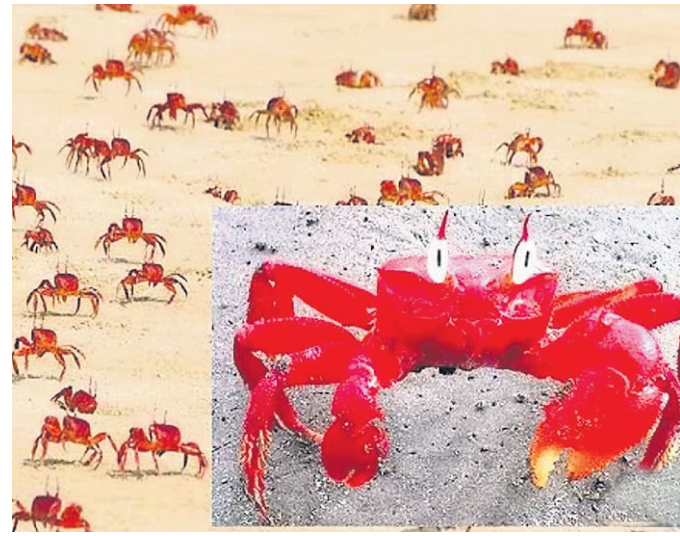
A rare marine creature, the red crab is seen on the desolate and still beaches of Talasari, Dagara, Chandipur and Balaramgadi on Balasore coast adjoining the saline forests while the beaches in Asia, Europe, Australia and America are the natural habitats of this marine creature.

The Talasari beach draws scores of people who throng the beach to get a glimpse of the red ghost crab that turn up in such huge numbers that the sand seems to turn red in colour. Zoologists claim that these red crabs and horseshoe crabs, another rare type of crab have survived in this planet for the last several centuries. The blood of

the horseshoe crab is used in preparation of medicines for critical diseases while the red crabs help in protecting the environment.

Environmentalists and zoologists are of the view that more research needs to be done on this rare crab as they help in predicting natural calamities like cyclonic storms and Tsunamis. Their population has started declining while the species are facing extinction due to pollution, destruction of mangrove forests, rampant riding of bikes on the sea beach, deafening sound emanating from the trawlers, plastic and polythene pollution and poaching of the marine creature.

Sources said over 1,000 million red crabs are seen on the deserted beaches of Odisha and West Bengal. The horseshoe crab and the red crab can be seen on Udayapur, Talasari, Bichitrapur, Dagara, Choumukh, Haskara, Dublagadi, Khandia river mouth as well as in Gahirmatha marine sanctuary of Bhitarkanika National Park in coastal Kendrapara district. They guard



their burrows during the day and come out and move on the beach at night.

Similarly, these crabs are also seen in Digha, Shankarpur, Mandarmani, Sagar Island and in Sundarban of neighbouring West Bengal. They live in swampy mangrove forests and in the sand dunes of the sea beach by building a burrow of 20 to 25

inches.

These crabs have two antennae on their upper part through which they can see their enemies from a distance and can hide themselves in the burrows. They survive on small marine creatures on the beach and the vegetation in the saline forest. The female crab lays eggs twice a year - November and March.

The number of eggs they lay at a time is around 1,000 to 2,000. Some zoologists claim that the male or king crab can survive upto 20 to 30 years while some other claim they live upto four to six years.

Some small and big red crabs grow upto four to nine inch in length and seven to nine inch in height. These crabs play a crucial role in increasing the fertility of the soil and aid in growth of the mangrove forests and the vegetation in the area. They also help in maintaining the ecological diversity by inhaling carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere.

Saswat Kumar Jena, an environmentalist and zoologist, said that the red crabs are good sources of Omega-3 fatty acid, Vitamin B12 and they help in controlling unusual heartbeats in humans.

On the other hand, the horseshoe crabs are used to prepare medicines for chronic and serious illness among the humans and helps in controlling the global warming, eminent scientist Siddheswar Pati said.

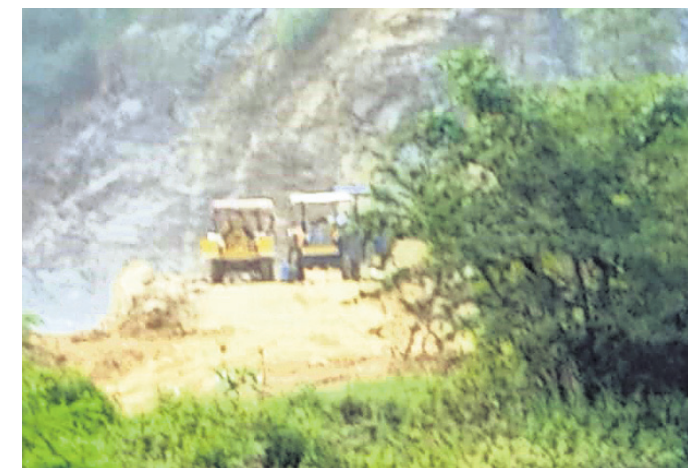
Zoologist and Professor Bhaskar Behera demanded to conduct more research on the red ghost crabs through establishment of laboratories in various universities like the one for horseshoe crabs in Fakir Mohan University in Balasore.

Eminent artist and environmentalist Keshu Das said the protection of red ghost crabs is quite important for the conservation of marine creatures, their food and environment conservation for which the efforts to protect these crabs should continue.

Abhijit Kumar Das, president of an environmental outfit Ananta Das Foundation, said various measures have been undertaken in relocation of red and horseshoe crabs. Efforts are also being made to put an end to rampant bike riding on the sea beach, forest protection and free the beach of plastic, polythene and other wastes, he added.

Bhograi MLA Goutam Buddha Das said he will raise the issue of safety of red and horseshoe crabs, and environmental degradation in the state Assembly.

People sceptical about raids as black stone loot continues



ment are allegedly hand in gloves with the illegal miners. The police and tehsil officials allegedly receive monthly cuts from these miners and stay mum on the rampant loot and smuggling of black stone and other minerals. This results in loss of precious revenue for the state government while the illegal miners get richer by plundering the hills and destroying the local environment.

Locals alleged that the district administration has assured to stop illegal mining several times but has failed to curb it due to lack of proper coordination between the Minor Minerals, Forest and police departments.

The Dharmasala MLA Himanshu Sekhar Sahu has been writing in regular intervals to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and the mining officials requesting to step up patrolling in the black stone quarries and take steps as per law.

The Minor Minerals department had urged the Jenapur police to initiate criminal proceedings against the illegal black stone smugglers. However, the Jenapur police urged the Minor Minerals department to identify the illegal black stone quarries and submit a list. In this tug of war, people and observers are anxious to know when the satellite mapping will be done to identify illegal quarries, and when they will be served with penalty notice.

When contacted, Deputy Director Jayprakash Nayak of Minor Minerals department in Jajpur said there is dire need of police assistance to curb the loot of black stones from the quarries for which he has held discussions with the Jajpur Superintendent of Police. The problem will be resolved after appointment of a mines manager in the quarries. However, the quarries will be shut if the miners do not appoint managers by October 31.

WHILE OFFICIALS ARE HAPPY ABOUT THE RECENT RAIDS WHICH EXPOSED THE ILLEGAL BLACK STONE MINING IN QUARRIES OF DHARMASALA TEHSIL IN JAJPUR DISTRICT, RESIDENTS HAVE TERMED THE RAIDS AS 'EYEWASH'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Oct 21: A recent joint raid on the illegal black stone quarries in Dharmasala tehsil of Jajpur district has evoked mixed reactions.

The personnel of Minor Minerals, police and Forest departments jointly raided the illegal black stone quarries, Saturday. The raids unraveled rampant loot of costly black stone from Quarry No 2/3 on the Dankari foothills and from many quarries in Barada and Malagoda mouzas under the tehsil.

Buoyed with this disclosure,

the Minor Minerals department was learnt to be preparing to take action against the illegal and unscrupulous traders.

The Minor Minerals department has even warned to close down the illegal black stone quarries in operation if the leaseholders do not appoint a mine manager by October 31 as per the order of the Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS). Meanwhile, the Minor Minerals department has sought the help of district police for taking necessary action.

While officials are happy about the raids taking place in the illegal black stone quarries, residents are sceptical on the outcome of the raid. The former, however hopes that the raids will rattle the illegal miners and be able to curb illegal mining. It is suspected that the illegal miners might have looted black stones to the tune of ₹5 crore during last two months.

However, the residents affected by air and water pollution due to the illegal mining have little hope on these raids. They alleged that the raids are just eyewash and the wrongdoing will start again just a few days after the raids.

This is because the police personnel and tehsil officials who are from the Revenue depart-



IN SYNC WITH TRADITION: People check for clay lamps from a roadside vendor at Gole Bazar in Sambalpur, Monday as Diwali draws near

OP PHOTO

2 DEATHS IN 7 DAYS

Tension after farmer dies in jumbo attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Oct 21: A farmer was killed in elephant attack late Sunday night while guarding his paddy field from a herd in Kushkala village under Bhuyana and Juang Pirha (BJP) forest range under Keonjhar forest division. The deceased has been identified as Maheshwar Mahanta (52). This is the second human casualty within a week owing to man-elephant conflict in Keonjhar division.

The death sparked tension in the area as irate people blocked the Suakati-Dubuna road demanding compensation and protection from elephants. Later, the Forest department and police personnel reached the spot and reached a written understanding after discussion with the locals, following which the agitation was called off and vehicular movement returned to normal after about nine hours.

The officials paid the next of the kin of the deceased an im-



mediate compensation of ₹60,000 from the Forest department, ₹30,000 from Red Cross funds and assured a job in the elephant squad for one of the family members.

According to sources, a group of 32 elephants has been roaming around Kusakala, Kalanda and nearby areas of Banspal block over the past few days, eating paddy crops, vegetables and damaging houses. Panic grips

the area as the Forest department has failed so far in driving the elephants away from human habitations to the forest.

At the same time, people have been losing sleep over the menace and are chasing away elephants to protect their houses and paddy crops. Maheshwar had gone to his farmland as usual to guard paddy crops. At around 1am, he got down from a tree house on the farm to see the sit-

uation when a female elephant, separated from the herd, attacked him suddenly.

Villagers got to know about the matter Monday morning and informed the Forest department. Forest department officials along with police of Nayakote police station rushed to the spot and sent Maheshwar to the hospital, where the doctor declared him dead. Later they tried to chase away the elephant.

Range Officer, BJP range Nayankant Sahu said, "Compensation will be paid to the deceased family. We are trying to drive the elephant away from human habitation and inform the local people not to go near it and to exercise caution while going out of the house in the evening and early morning."

A few days ago, an elephant squad member was killed in attack by a tusker in Sadar range area. Elephant attacks claiming the lives of two people in a week's time have added to the worries of the Forest department.

20 injured after 2 buses, van collide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mohana, Oct 21: More than 20 people were injured in an accident involving two buses and a pickup van in Gajapati district around 2am Monday, police said.

According to police, a government-operated bus had broken down on Ramgarh Ghat road within the jurisdiction of Mohana police station as passengers waited for another bus to continue their journey from Puri to Malkangiri.

At that time, a speeding private bus hit the stationary bus from behind before overturning and colliding with a pickup van that was also on the road, SK Raju, driver of the government-run bus, said.

Police said around 20 passengers of the private bus suffered injuries.

"They were initially taken to Mohana Hospital and six passengers were later shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur after their condition worsened," a police officer said, adding that the accident was possibly caused by dense fog.

Obscene video of PEO, woman in panchayat office triggers outrage



POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, Oct 21: A video of the intimate moments of a panchayat executive officer (PEO) and a woman in the office of a gram panchayat under this block in Keonjhar district has sent shockwaves in the district after it went viral on social media platforms, sources said Monday.

Chatters went abuzz after the video went viral in the government WhatsApp group. In the video, the PEO is seen engaging in sexual act with the woman inside the panchayat office. However, it is not known when the obscene video was shot. Sources, however said it has gone viral from the month of September.

Reliable sources said that the

woman seen in the video is reportedly working in supply works under Public Distribution System (PDS). It is alleged that the officials posted in the block are aware of the development but have chose to remain tightlipped on the matter.

This has raised question marks as the local sarpanch and the members of women self-help groups have demanded a probe and stringent action against the culprits as they prepare to gherao the block office over the development.

When contacted, Joda block gram panchayat officer Kanhu Chran Majhi said he has no information regarding the development and only the Public Distribution department could comment on the issue.

YOUTH'S BODY FOUND IN JAJPUR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, Oct 21: Police Monday recovered a youth's body with injury marks from the banks of Baitarani river in Jajpur district. The deceased was identified as Mataka Munda, 27, a resident of Ghatagaon area in Keonjhar district, police said.

Mataka had been working as a daily labourer and was staying with a relative in Jajpur town, according to a police official. Locals discovered the body near Patapur village under Jajpur Town police limits and alerted the authorities.

Police arrived at the scene and sent the body for autopsy while launching an investigation. The circumstances surrounding Mataka's death were yet to be determined, police said. "We have sent the body for postmortem and are waiting for the report to ascertain the exact cause of death," the police officer said.

NHRC seeks ATR, compensation over death of 2 sewage workers

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, Oct 21: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Chief Secretary and the District Magistrate, Angul, to ensure the needful action and submit the action taken report (ATR) over the death of two sewage workers during the cleaning of a septic tank in Nuahata village under Banarpal police station limits in Angul district.

The NHRC also sought a report on payment of compensation of ₹30 lakhs to the next of kin of each of the deceased sewage workers within six weeks.

While adjudging a petition filed by rights activist Akhand, the NHRC issued such direction last week.

The petitioner drew the attention of the apex rights body on the tragic death of two manual scavengers, Raghu Hansda (28) and

Medha Nag (31) while they were engaged in cleaning a septic sewage tank in Nuahata village under Banarpal police station limits in Angul district.

The complainant further submitted that the Supreme Court, in its landmark judgement in Safai Karamchari Andolan vs Union of India & Ors. (2014), made it unequivocally clear that manual scavenging is illegal and directed all concerned authorities to ensure the complete eradication of the practice.

The top court further mandated a compensation of ₹10 lakh to the families of those who die while performing such hazardous tasks, irrespective of whether the employment was in the private or public sector.

Akhand requested the NHRC to consider the matter with urgency and take the necessary steps to deliver justice.

In a first, Bonda girl cracks OCS exam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Oct 21: A girl hailing from the primitive Bonda community from Bonda ghat under Mudulipada police limits and Khairaput block in this district became the first woman of the tribal community to crack the prestigious Odisha Civil Services (OCS) examination, the results of which were announced by the Odisha Public Service Commission, Saturday.

Bini Muduli, daughter of Raghu Muduli who works as a cook in a primary school at Khemaguru village under Khairaput block in this district.

Bini, a resident of Khemaguda near Govindapalli in the district and an Ayurvedic assistant by profession, secured 596th rank in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category after appearing the OCS exami-



nation in 2022-23.

Hailing from the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG), Bini received primary education at her native village. Later, she completed her Plus II education from the Jawahar Navodaya

Vidyalyaya (JNV) in Malkangiri and went on to graduate from Bikram Dev College in Jeypore.

She said that she prepared for the civil services examination by watching the videos from social media platform YouTube and re-

lied on self-study by taking help of study materials available online.

When contacted, Muduli said that she will work for women empowerment and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities in the coming days. She also aimed to ensure the proper implementation of pro-tribal schemes for the Bonda community's development.

She credited the success to her parents, teachers and friends, and urged all parents in the district to send their wards to the school. "My parents are my primary source of inspiration. I also owe my success to my teachers and friends who supported me throughout," she said.

Her achievement was welcomed with widespread celebration with villagers and local authorities felicitating her with a shawl and flower bouquet.

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
P.H.DIVISION, ANGUL**

No.C-802.Ph. (06764) 296431, Email-eehangul@yahoo.in

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

Bid Identification No.SE_PH_Division Angul-13/2024-25 dt.17.10.2024

1. Name of the Work	: 04 (Four) nos. of P.H. Work
2. Type of Bid	: Single Bid System
3. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 25.44 lakhs to Rs. 48.02 lakhs
4. Period of Completion	: 03 (Three) Months
5. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	: From 11.00 AM of 24.10.2024 to 5.00 PM of 07.11.2024
6. Last date/time of receipt of bids in the portal	: 5.00 PM of 07.11.2024
7. Date & Time of opening of technical bids	: 11.00 AM of 08.11.2024
8. Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Superintending Engineer, P.H. Division, Angul
9. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.	

**Sd./- (Er. Prasanta Behera)
Superintending Engineer
P.H.Division, Angul**

OIPR-13056/11/0006/2425

EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. ST-SBP-TENDER-2024-23, Dt.: 14.10.2024

NAME OF WORK : RENOVATION OF CONFERENCE HALL OF DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER BUILDING SAMBALPUR.

Tender Value : ₹ 57,12,572.89, Bid Security : ₹ 1,14,300/-

Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1100 hrs. on 05.11.2024.

No manual offers sent by Post/ Courier/ Fax or in person accepted against such e-tenders. Even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and receipt in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.irps.gov.in

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 (fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender.

Div. Signal & Telecom Engineer (Signal), PR-635/P/24-25 Sambalpur

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. ST-OT-TELE-AM-HG-BBS-430, Dt.: 14.10.2024

NAME OF WORK : TELECOM ASSET MAINTENANCE WORKS (ATTENDING BREAK DOWN & MAINTENANCE OF TELECOM SERVICES, EXECUTION OF TELECOM WORKS AND SUPPLY OF CRITICAL TELECOM MATERIALS BY OUTSOURCING AGENCY) FOR ZONAL HEAD QUARTERS OFFICES OF EAST COAST RAILWAY AT RAIL SADAN, RAIL VIHAR, CARRIAGE REPAIR WORKS HOPI MANCHESWAR, CENTRAL HOSPITAL/MANCHESWAR, GSD DEPOT MANCHESWAR & RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS AT RAIL VIHAR, RAIL KUNJ, RAIL KUTIR, MANCHESWAR AND RAIL AWAS COLONY IN THE SECTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER/TELE/HEAD QUARTER UNDER ASSISTANT SIGNAL & TELECOM ENGINEER/TM/ BHUBANESWAR FOR A PERIOD OF TWELVE MONTHS.

Tender Value : ₹ 1,72,10,396.59, EMD : ₹ 2,36,100/-

Bidding Start Date : 22.10.2024

Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1100 Hrs. of 05.11.2024.

No manual offers sent by Post/ Courier/ Fax or in person 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.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.irps.gov.in

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigendum issued for this tender.

Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, PR-636/P/24-25 Khurda Road

FOCUS NATION

A SLOWING ECONOMY



The next six months look like a challenging period for the economy as it navigates between the twin challenges of a slowing economy and still high inflation

There are several recent data points emerging from government and other sources that are pointing to an economy slowdown. Whether this is a cyclical slowdown or not, only time will tell. Whether this is a pattern which is aligned with the global economy slowdown, we will examine. And if this is cyclical i.e. temporary, then it is supposed to pick up six months later. But then an economy slowing down, even if cyclically, during the festive season is a worrying feature. In the last quarter of the calendar year, due to festive cheer and consumer spending, the economy usually gets a boost from consumer cheer and optimism. That seems to be missing.



Ajit Ranade

THE SHARE OF MANUFACTURING IS STUCK AT AROUND 16% OF GDP AND HAS NOT MOVED MUCH DESPITE STRONG INITIATIVES SUCH AS MAKE IN INDIA

First the data points. These are from industrial production, exports, tax collection especially Goods and Services Tax (GST). All these are from the government. Then there is the data and assessment from the Reserve Bank of India, which recently concluded its monetary policy meeting, and decided not to cut interest rates. The RBI conducts a sentiment survey and reports it every quarter, and this survey gives an indication of the future trajectory of the economy. Finally, there is data from private sources such as the Purchase Managers' Index (PMI) or quarterly results of companies which report their earnings, profits and growth.

The index of industrial production (IIP) went down in August. The growth rate was going down for three months in a row. The August number (negative 0.1) is the lowest in nearly two years. While IIP is known to be volatile and subject to post facto changes and adjustments, the trend is clearly showing a slowdown, especially in manufacturing. Mining activity was negatively impacted by unseasonal rains, but manufacturing slowdown is to be noted. The sale of automobiles, one of the important drivers and indicators of manufacturing growth, fell by 19% in September, just as the festival

season got started. Related to this is the two-month strike at the Tamil Nadu factory of Samsung Electronics. This factory accounts for nearly Rs 20,000 crore of Samsung's sales revenue in India, and is a crucial example of attracting foreign investors into India. This month the Managing Director of Swedish Volvo Group in India too cautioned that the country's manufacturing sector has to rev up substantially to drive sustainable and high GDP growth. The share of manufacturing is stuck at around 16% of GDP and has not moved much despite strong initiatives such as Make in India.

The shift away from China, or at least diversifying away from China for many Western companies, was supposed to lure them to India. But that has not happened yet in a big way. India's big plans on setting up a semiconductor complex, as also initiatives for green hydrogen and electric vehicles are long on ambition, but short of actual progress on the ground. Another aspect which is crucial to the growth of the manufacturing sector is the shortage of skills. Earlier this year the Taiwanese Minister for Foreign Affairs had cautioned India about addressing the shortage of skilled engineers if it wants to attract investments in chip making and semiconductor manufacturing. Taiwan is keen to help India in electronics manufacturing but other hurdles such as infrastructure and high import tar-

iffs have to be overcome. The irony in India is that while there is a shortage of skills required for manufacturing, nearly 30% of college graduates in the 25 to 30 age group are unemployed. This means that college education is not making them industry ready or employable. This is a dire comment on the state of education curricula and role of academic institutions in getting the youth ready for work. This is felt in a variety of sectors including auto, auto ancillaries, textiles and mining.

The other data pointing to weakness is the fall in merchandise exports in August to \$34.7 billion, leading to a widening of trade deficit. The rupee dollar rate also dropped below 84 causing concerns about the deficit and inflation. The Purchasing Managers' Index was at an eight-month low at 56.5 in September, down from 57.5 in August. This is an indicator of the bullishness of factory managers of future outlook.

The trend in collections in GST also points to a slowing economy. The collection in September at Rs 1.73 lakh crore was lower than in August which was Rs 1.75 lakh crore. The September collection was barely 6.5% higher than last year. Net of refunds the total collection for September was Rs 1.53 lakh crore, barely 3.9% higher than one year ago. Since GST is a transaction tax, it keeps pace with the growth of nominal GDP, which is growing at around 10% or higher (due to inflation

and volume growth). If GST is growing slower than nominal GDP surely that is a sign of worry. To add to this worry, is the news that the GST council may consider a hike in GST rates, to make up the shortfall that may arise, if the compensation cess is removed. The cess has been imposed all these years to pay to state governments to compensate for their estimated loss due to surrender of right to impose state sales tax.

Thus, there are indicators from various quarters of an economy slowing down. Even manufacturing employment went down from 12 to 11% of the workforce, and employment in agriculture has gone up from 43% in 2018-19 to 46% now, an increase of 6.8 crore workers. But workers going back to agriculture and rural areas means they are going to lower wages and lower productivity jobs as compared to manufacturing and services. This might mean lower purchasing power and hence lower consumer spending. We need to sharply increase manufacturing employment, for an increase in consumer spending as well as in household incomes.

It is still true that India's economy is growing faster than most other large economies, including China. But keep in mind that the US growing at 3% is like India growing at 30%, since the former is ten times bigger. And the US is not experiencing a slowdown yet. So, India's slowdown cannot be attributed to a global phenomenon. Besides we also need to worry about the impact of the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, and of rising oil prices, and of inflation too. Even the RBI which should have decreased interest rates to spur economic growth, chose not to, because of the worry about inflation. The next six months look like a challenging period for the economy as it navigates between the twin challenges of a slowing economy and still high inflation.

The writer is a noted Pune-based economist.
@THEBILLIONPRESS

Pollbound Japan

In electoral politics the ruling dispensation often tries to offset the anti-incumbency mood of the electorate by changing the head of the government with a cleaner and new face whose mettle is yet to be tested. Sometimes the strategy works, sometimes it does not. In recent times in India the BJP has tried the tactic in some state elections and has achieved a measure of success. The beleaguered ruling Liberal Democratic party (LDP) in Japan is desperately making a bid for retaining power using the same method as all eyes are on whether it will secure a majority in the national election a few days away. The party has been dogged by corruption scandals, an economic crisis and deep dissatisfaction with its top leadership. The financial scams and cost of living crisis have assumed such proportions for the past few months that many in the country are even writing off the LDP notwithstanding the disarray in the Opposition. The LDP has been in office for most of the past seven decades.

The election on 27 October is being held a year before it is due following a surprise resignation of the former Prime Minister, Fumio Kishida whose popularity nosedived due to his party's alleged involvement in financial scams. The Japanese voters are seething with rage against the ruling party. Such a situation seemingly prompted the party to replace Kishida with Shegeru Ishiba hoping that a new face may help it win back the people's confidence. The gamble may pay off as opinion polls suggest many believe the party will be returned to office winning a majority of the 465 seats of the lower house. Some polls predict the LDP would benefit from a divided Opposition. A poll last weekend by the Kyodo news agency put the LDP at 26.4 per cent, well against the main Opposition, the Constitutional Democratic Party's 12.4 per cent.

However, a new poll by the Nikkei suggests the party could fail to secure a majority. The LDP is aiming to retain at least 233 seats to secure an outright majority – a modest ambition given its current total of 256 seats.

Ishiba's victory in the LDP leadership race about a month back raised hopes that a gentler version of LDP would emerge from the turmoil of recent months. He is widely seen as a moderate alternative to the ultra-conservative Sanae Takaichi, his main rival. The 67-year-old, soft-spoken Ishiba, a former banker, made the right noises as a liberal leader even before he became PM. He indicated he supported same-sex marriages and the right of married couples to use different surnames. The twin issues are being voiced with full vigour by Japanese women in recent times. These are social and cultural shifts his party has opposed.

He also vowed to take tough measures against LDP lawmakers who plunged the party into crisis following revelations that they had siphoned off unreported profits from the sale of tickets for party events into secret slush funds.

But in an apparent attempt to placate his rightwing opponents inside the LDP, Ishiba has backpedalled since he assumed charge, telling parliament last week that changing the law on married surnames – in which women almost always take their husband's name – and the ban on gay marriages "require further examination." Likewise, he refused to comment on any reforms to Japan's male-only succession laws. These pronouncements could damage his poll prospects.

Ishiba's current public support stands at just 28 per cent, according to a recent opinion poll. This marks the lowest initial approval for a new Japanese leader since 2000. Even though this is slightly better than former Prime Minister Kishida's 18.7 per cent before he exited the leadership race in September, it still fails to reach the critical 30 per cent threshold, which analysts consider a "danger zone" for political leaders.

Japan is at crossroads now. The world is keenly watching the outcome of the election being held only about a week before the US presidential election. The electoral fortunes in the two developed countries will largely impact the rest of the world.

WISDOM CORNER

The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts; therefore, guard accordingly, and take care that you entertain no notions unsuitable to virtue and reasonable nature.
MARCUS AURELIUS

There are two kinds of people one can call reasonable: those who serve God with all their heart because they know him, and those who seek him with all their heart because they do not know him.
BLAISE PASCAL

Since boredom advances and boredom is the root of all evil, no wonder, then, that the world goes backwards, that evil spreads. This can be traced back to the very beginning of the world. The gods were bored; therefore they created human beings.
SOREN KIERKEGAARD

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1797:** First person to jump with a parachute. French balloonist André-Jacques Garnerin jumped out of a balloon over Parc Monceau in Paris using a silk parachute that he made himself.
- 1884:** International Meridian Conference adopts Greenwich, England as initial longitudinal meridian. 26 countries participated in the conference which was held in Washington, D.C. In addition to making the meridian passing through the Observatory of Greenwich as the initial meridian for longitude or 0 degree longitude, the conference also defined a universal day which would "begin for all the world at the moment of mean midnight at the initial meridian, coinciding with the beginning of the civil day and date of that meridian; and is to be counted from zero up to twenty-four hours."
- 1936:** End of the Long March in China. The Long March, a 6000-mile journey made by members of the Red Army led by Mao Zedong came to an end. The March was undertaken as a way to escape the Nationalist army of Chiang Kai-shek. The end of the March is also known in China as the "union of the three armies".
- 1962:** Cuban missile crisis. On this day in 1962, President John F. Kennedy alerted Americans to the Cuban missile crisis, declaring a naval blockade to prevent further missile shipments to the island country 90 miles (145 km) off the coast of the U.S.
- 1964:** French philosopher and writer Jean-Paul Sartre was announced the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature; however, he became the first person to decline the award.

LOL

Too tired to walk

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

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



SPECTRUM DEMOCRACY

The case for press freedom



Katrin Kivi

JOURNALISTS AROUND THE WORLD FACE INCREASINGLY COMPLEX AND RAPIDLY CHANGING PRESSURES THAT OFTEN ARE AS MUCH ECONOMIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL AS POLITICAL

The argument for a free press has always been strong. When journalists can work unimpeded, they fulfill essential democratic functions: holding those in power to account, scrutinising government performance, and highlighting underreported stories and perspectives. But press freedom is under threat like never before, and journalists around the world face increasingly complex and rapidly changing pressures that often are as much economic and technological as political. Democratic governments must therefore be steadfast in defending and promoting a free press at home and abroad. Two new reports make a compelling case for these efforts.

The first, published by the Media Freedom Coalition, a partnership of 51 countries spanning six continents, demonstrates the broader societal benefits of a free press. For example, media freedom is necessary for a properly functioning democracy and economy. This may seem obvious, because markets depend on a steady stream of reliable information about companies and their financial performance. But the evidence is even more robust: one study

found that companies in the media spotlight are less likely to window-dress their financial statements. Another shows that journalists are effective – sometimes more so than financial regulators – at spotting corporate fraud.

Another key area where independent media have demonstrated their enormous value is health. During the COVID-19 pandemic, high-quality news outlets played an indispensable role in disseminating accurate information and debunking misinformation about the virus. Moreover, media coverage can help give health issues that carry social stigma the attention they need to be placed on the public-policy agenda. For example, one study found that developing countries with a freer press were more likely to have government leaders who were committed to curbing HIV/AIDS.

Investigative journalists have long exposed environmental crimes as well, and continue to break major stories on climate change and related issues, such as air pollution and illegal fishing. The Media Freedom Coalition's report also highlights evidence showing that press freedom is posi-

tively correlated with more rapid adoption of renewable energy.

Of course, a free press is valuable in and of itself, given that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right that arguably underpins all others. After all, how can governments uphold human rights when there is no one to investigate and expose violations? But the evidence presented by the Media Freedom Coalition (which Estonia co-chairs) and the OSCE can help policymakers and campaigners make an undeniable case for media freedom being essential to healthy and prosperous societies.

The Media Freedom Coalition is doing just that. The co-chairs, Estonia and Germany, along with colleagues in government, civil society, media, and the legal sector, and with multilateral organizations such as UNESCO, work to develop interventions that support journalists at risk and promote policies that protect their right to report, as well as to build norms around emerging challenges such as transnational repression.

Diplomacy plays a vital role. As Estonia's Ambassador at Large for Human Rights and Migration, I have seen how em-

bassies are a valuable tool through which governments can promote media freedom. Diplomats are well-placed to advocate for a free press, both publicly and privately, and support host governments as they implement related reforms.

But effective diplomacy must be backed up with concrete action. This can take many forms, such as ramping up funding to support independent media, reforming domestic legislation to bolster press freedom, or providing emergency visas and safe refuge to reporters at risk – something that Estonia, which is ranked sixth on the latest World Press Freedom Index, is proud to do.

Repression of press freedom undermines human rights and prevents societies from reaching their full potential. But the case for protecting media freedom has never been stronger. It is now up to us – democratic states, including the members of the Media Freedom Coalition – to make this case more loudly than ever.

The writer is Co-Chair of the Media Freedom Coalition.
@PROJECTSYNDICATE

Unexpected restraint

Sir, The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meet at Islamabad went on predictable lines as far as the gist of the conference was concerned but the proceedings of the meet were eclipsed by the unexpected restraint displayed by the two "traditional adversaries," India and Pakistan. While India's representative at the SCO, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, was diplomacy personified while referring to cross-border terrorism, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif too did not lag behind. The Kashmir issue was not mentioned even once by the Pakistan Prime Minister, an unusual step by any Pakistan leader. The leaders of Pakistan usually leave no stone unturned in raising the Kashmir issue at any international forum. The biggest roadblock in building bridges between the two nations has always been the war of words between leaders of both sides to satisfy a few sections of their respective countries while the general public at large is quite keen on a thaw in bilateral relationship.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

A double delight

Sir, October 20, 2024 is a day no New Zealand cricket fan shall ever forget in the years to come. The New Zealand women's team won its first-ever T20 world cup title. Third time in the final was a charm for the White Ferns as they overcame South Africa by 32 runs to lift the title. It was the first ICC title for the women's side since winning the ODI World Cup in 2000. It was actually a double delight for the New Zealand fans, as earlier in the day their men's team did something nobody saw coming. They won a Test on the Indian soil for the first time since 1988. The triumph of the New Zealand women's team should make Kane Williamson in particular more ecstatic as the gentleman cricketer was devastated after his team lost the ODI world cup to England in the finals at Lord's five years ago on a bizarre boundary count.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

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

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J&K TERROR ATTACK

SC raps Karnataka govt for 'harassing' students

Karwa Chauth and the call that never came

SHASHI ABROL, AN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNER, WAS AMONG THE SEVEN PEOPLE KILLED WHEN TERRORISTS ATTACKED A TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION SITE ON THE SRINAGAR-LEH NATIONAL HIGHWAY SUNDAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Oct 21: Dressed in her finery, she waited for the phone to ring so she could break the Karwa Chauth fast she had kept for his long life. What came instead was the announcement of his death - Shashi Abrol had been killed in a terror attack in Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

News of his death came late Sunday night, long after the moon had risen, the sight millions of Hindu women look out for to break their daylong fast on the day. Fate could not have dealt Ruchi Abrol a crueler blow.

Shashi Abrol, an architectural designer, was among the seven people killed when terrorists attacked a tunnel construction site on the Srinagar-Leh national highway Sunday.

The attack took place when the team had returned from work to their camp late in the evening. The morning after, his wife held on to their three-year-old daughter, angry, anguished and bewildered at the same time. The couple also has a son studying engineering.

"I spoke to him in the evening. He didn't mention any threats. I was going to the temple as part of my Karwa Chauth fast, and we had a brief conversation. I tried calling him after I returned but he didn't pick up. After that, his phone was switched off," a sobbing Ruchi told PTI.

"I waited for his call but had no idea about the attack," she added at her home in Jammu's Talab Tillo area, her mother-in-law by her side.

No one told them what had happened until late at night. And then too, it came through the media, the family said.



“Elections, marathons, a new government being sworn in. None of these can conceal or brush under the carpet a truth most unpalatable. There is a problem at hand in Kashmir which for decades has claimed innocent lives & will continue to rage. Unless we acknowledge it & make genuine attempts to resolve it

ILTUA MUFTI | PDP LEADER

Ruchi was refusing to break her fast, said her sister-in-law Divya. Anxiety mounted as the hours passed by. Ruchi had completed her rituals and was waiting for a video call from her husband, everyone unaware of the magnitude of the tragedy that had befallen them.

"We tried to comfort Ruchi as we grew worried when his phone switched off late at night. We only learned about his death through the media, which shocked us all," Divya said.

Shashi was the family's sole breadwinner.

"What have they gained from this? How will she feed her children now? We curse them," she said. Shashi, who had been working for the construction com-

pany APCO in Sonamarg for the past six years, had last come



Her life is shattered. The festival of Karwa Chauth has turned into a day of catastrophe for us. Our dear Shashi Ji was killed in a cowardly act by terrorists

DIVYA | RUCHI ABROL'S (WIFE OF VICTIM SHASHI ABROL) SISTER-IN-LAW

home two months ago during his son's college admission.

"His aim was to see his son as a bright engineer," Divya said.

As news of Shashi's death spread, hundreds of neighbours, relatives and others visited the family home to offer their condolences.

The family criticised the government for failing to inform them promptly and urged the authorities to ensure the swift return of Shashi's body for the last rites.

"This is proof of how much peace and normalcy has been restored. Seven people were massacred. We lost our brother," Shashi's sister Urvasi said after the incident that came just four days after Omar Abdullah was sworn in as chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

The family called on the government to provide financial assistance. J.L. Abrol, Shashi's father, said they had never anticipated any danger in Kashmir. "We demand a job for my daughter in law to feed the family," he said.

"There is no breadwinner left in the family. How will his wife, who is a homemaker, feed the children? She should be given a government job. It is the government's duty to take care of them," a cousin Navin Suri said.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: The Supreme Court Monday pulled up the Karnataka government for "harassing" students by conducting board exams for different classes, and restrained it from declaring results of board examinations of classes 8, 9 and 10 till further orders.

A bench of Justices Bela M Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma directed that if the exam has not been conducted in any district, then it shall not be taken.

"Why are you harassing the students? You are the state. You should not behave like this. Don't make it an ego issue. If you are really concerned about the welfare of students, then please open good schools. Don't throttle them," the bench told senior advocate Devadatt Kamat, appearing for the Karnataka government.

The bench said no other state follows this model of education which is being followed by the Karnataka government.

Kamat said that the state government has withdrawn a circular for conducting board examinations for students of classes 5, 8, 9 and 10 in the current academic year in seven rural districts of the state.

The top court was informed

A apex court restrains the state from declaring results of half-yearly exams of classes 8 to 10

The state government has withdrawn a circular for conducting board examinations for students of classes 5, 8, 9 and 10 in the current academic year in seven rural districts of the state

that examination was conducted in 24 other districts as well.

It asked the state government to file an affidavit giving the exact details of the examination in four weeks.

The top court was hearing an appeal filed by Organisation for Unaided Recognised Schools against the March 22, judgement of the Karnataka High Court.

The high court's division bench had permitted the state government to conduct the board exams for different classes for the academic year 2023-24, overruling the March 6 order of a single judge's bench.

The single judge of the high court had nullified the state government's decision of October 2023 to hold board exams for different classes through the Karnataka State Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB).

THOUSANDS PAY RESPECTS TO SLAIN DOCTOR

Srinagar: Just two weeks ago, the house echoed with laughter as hundreds gathered for his daughter's wedding. On Monday, cries of anger and anguish rang through Dr Shahnawaz's Budgam residence and the streets around it, the celebration so quickly giving way to mourning. Slogans of 'Naara-e-Takbeer, Allahu Akbar' (Allah is the greatest) were heard as many thousands paid their last respects to the 52-year-old killed in a terror attack Sunday in Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir. The doctor and six labourers were gunned down by terrorists at a tunnel-construction site on the Srinagar-Leh national highway. People arrived from Naydigam in Soibugh area of Budgam and adjoining areas for the Shah Nawaz's last rites. "This has come like a bolt of lightning from the sky. The family was still celebrating the wedding and now this news," said Ali Mohammad, a neighbour of the doctor. By the time the ambulance carrying the mortal remains of the doctor reached his native village, the mourners' numbers had swelled and they hailed him as a martyr. They participated in the prayers ceremony and paid their last respects. He was then taken to be laid to rest in his ancestral graveyard amid religious slogans. The doctor is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.



MORNING THUNDERSTORMS

Rare showers catch Bangalore off guard

The administration has declared a holiday for schools following heavy stagnation of water at crucial junctions of the city like the Silk Board, making going from one place to another almost impossible

citizens as in some parts of Bangalore the sun shone brightly. Although, those in affected areas have posted videos and photos of their inundated roads and service roads, justifying the need for holiday and the work-from-home option.

Climate scientist Pradeep, who keeps a tab on rains in Bangalore, via @BengaluruRain, has observed that such morning thunderstorms in October are rare. "Some parts of West Bangalore crossed 60mm. However, it appears to have slightly weakened," he posted on his X page Bangalore Rain Alert.

One of the X users, Dr Rajath Athreya (@FoolzWizdom), a neonatologist from Bangalore had posted videos from Outer Ring Road (ORR).

"This is now on a stretch of ORR, which doesn't usually get inundated. Anyone that does not need to be out on the roads please do not venture out," he commented.

Another user, @travel_vb, had also posted videos from Ring Road, stating that, "Crumbling infrastructure in a city where everyone works so hard every single day and pays some of the highest taxes only to deserve hazardous living conditions."

The official handle of Citizens Movement, East Bangalore also questioned the never-ending taxes imposed on citizens while giving them subpar infrastructure.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Oct 21: Amid the heavy downpour in the city, residents of many flood-affected areas have taken to social media to pour out their woes ranging from waterlogging to complaining about "crumbling" infrastructure.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow alert for both Bangalore Urban and Rural for Monday.

The administration has declared a holiday for schools following heavy stagnation of water at crucial junctions of the city like the Silk Board, making going from one place to another almost impossible.

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, for its part, has issued an advisory urging people to "stay indoors, close windows and doors and avoid travel if possible".

But these announcements came under criticism from ne-



Farmers carry sacks of freshly harvested ginger to load them into a truck in view of the rainy season, at Saganipura in Chikkamagaluru district, Karnataka

Karnataka logs 10.2% GSDP growth in FY24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Oct 21: Karnataka has registered a robust GSDP growth of 10.2 per cent in 2023-24, the state government said Monday.

Citing a data from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the government said in a statement that the state has significantly surpassed the national average of 8.2 per cent.

"Initially, the National Statistical Estimate (NSE) had projected a modest 4 per cent GSDP growth for Karnataka, but this was revised to 13.1 per cent by the end of the fiscal year, indicating early underestimation of the state's economic performance," the statement read.

The government pointed out that this feat was achieved despite severe challenges, including the worst drought in a decade and a slowdown in global IT markets.

The state's agriculture sector faced negative growth due to drought conditions, while Karnataka's dependence on the IT and hardware sectors—accounting for 28 per cent of its Gross State Value Added (GSVA)—made it vulnerable to global economic downturns, according to the statement.

J&K MLAs administered oath, Omar takes pledge in Kashmiri

CM OMAR ABDULLAH HAS VACATED THE BUDGAM ASSEMBLY SEAT AND RETAINED THE GANDERBAL CONSTITUENCY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Oct 21: The newly elected members of the Jammu and Kashmir assembly were administered oath Monday by protem speaker Mubarak Gul, with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah taking the pledge in the Kashmiri language.

The 54-year-old Leader of the House was the first MLA to be administered the oath.

Omar Abdullah, son of Farooq Abdullah and his British wife Mollie Abdullah, had often faced criticism for not being able to speak his native language.

While the third generation politician from the Abdullah family is fluent in English, his fluency in vernaculars like Hindi,



Urdu and Kashmiri was poor at the start of his political career in the late 1990s.

However, during his first tenure as chief minister from 2009 to 2014, Omar Abdullah took

lessons to improve his speaking skills in these three languages. And Monday, he took the oath as

MLA in Kashmiri. Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary took oath in English.

The oath-taking ceremony of the MLAs marks an end to the six-year-long legislative hiatus.

There are 51 first-time members including BJP MLA from Kishtwar Shagun Parihar, who is the youngest member at 29. The NC veteran and MLA from Char-e-Sharif, Abdul Rahim Rather, is the oldest at 80.

The National Conference (NC) emerged as the single largest party in the assembly polls held in September and October.

The oldest political party of Jammu and Kashmir has formed the government with external support from the Congress, which has six MLAs.



national

of the day quote

The Parliament delimitation process may encourage the couples to have many children and give up thoughts of a small family. But whatever be the outcome, provide Tamil names to your children

MK STALIN | CM, TAMIL NADU

We have almost finalised (on candidates), we have sought the opinion of our ministers. They have been given the responsibilities...we will send our proposal to Delhi (high command), they will discuss and decide

DK SHIVAKUMAR | DEPUTY CM, KARNATAKA

Karhal has always given historic victories to the Samajwadi Party. This time our candidate will win with an even bigger margin

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY (SP) PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Coimbatore car bomb blast: 3 more held

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency Monday arrested three more accused in the 2022 ISIS-inspired Coimbatore car bomb blast case. With the arrest of Aboo Hanifa, Saran Mariappan and Pavas Rahman, the NIA has unearthed the terror financing angle in the case, according to a statement issued by the probe agency. The investigations revealed that the three accused had colluded to provide funds for the commission of the terror act, the NIA said. "Aboo Hanifa was employed as a faculty in Kovai Arabic College, where Jamesha Mubeen and other arrested accused persons got radicalised in ISIS ideology," the statement said.

Navy chief on 4-day UAE visit

New Delhi: Navy Chief Adm Dinesh K Tripathi will visit the UAE from October 21-24 to strengthen defence cooperation between the two countries and explore new avenues of cooperation between their navies, an official statement said Monday. Adm Tripathi will also witness the conduct of the third edition of the India-UAE bilateral naval exercise, the defence ministry said in the statement.

Delhi to set up special courts for disabled

New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Atishi has approved a project to set up special courts for the people with disabilities in the city, an official statement said Monday. Its a "historic step" by Delhi government towards ensuring justice for people with disabilities, Atishi said in the statement. The courts will be designed to accommodate the specific needs of individuals with disabilities, ensuring that judicial proceedings are conducted in an inclusive manner, the statement said.

Over 20 lakh parents to attend mega PTM

Chandigarh: More than 20 lakh parents of students from around 20,000 government schools are expected to attend a mega parent-teacher meeting (PTM) in Punjab Tuesday, state Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains said Monday. The PTM will facilitate meaningful dialogue between the educators and parents, enabling them to share feedback about the academic progress of the students, their behavioural patterns and overall development, both in and outside the school environment, Bains said.



I urge upon your kind office to issue directions to the concerned ministry to immediately reconsider the decision on the price escalation in the overall interest of the health and wellbeing of the common people

MAMATA BANERJEE | CM, WEST BENGAL

EC APPOINTS AJAY KUMAR SINGH AS NEW DGP OF POLLBOUND JHARKHAND

The Election Commission Monday appointed Jharkhand cadre senior-most IPS officer Ajay Kumar Singh as the state DGP, sources said, days after the poll panel removed Anurag Gupta as the acting police chief. An officer of the 1989 batch of the Indian Police Service, Singh was selected from a panel of three IPS officers whose names were sent by the state government



GANDERBAL TERROR ATTACK

Massive combing operation launched

NIA SLEUTHS COLLECT EVIDENCE FROM SITE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Oct 21: Security forces launched a large-scale combing operation in the area adjacent to tourist spot Sonmarg Monday, a day after a horrific terror attack at a tunnel construction site in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal claimed seven lives.

National Investigation Agency (NIA) agents scoured the scene for crucial evidence as army, CRPF, and police units spread out across the hills surrounding the construction area to track down the perpetrators and their accomplices involved in one of the deadliest attacks on non-local labourers in the Kashmir valley. The assailants believed to be Pakistani terrorists, meticulously studied the site layout before executing their plan. They first targeted the labourers' mess before proceeding to the officers' quarters.

Officials suspect that the attackers may have had prior knowledge of the site, potentially having worked there previously or receiving support from locals present at the location. Eyewitnesses recounted the cold-blooded firing by the attackers. The officials said CCTV footage from the area is being scrutinised.

The Resistance Front, a shadow organisation linked to the banned Lashker-e-Taiba, has



Meanwhile, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Monday said security forces will avenge the killing of construction workers in the brutal attack in Ganderbal and the terrorists and their associates will remember it for the time to come

claimed responsibility for the barbaric act.

In a region that has been plagued by terrorism for over three decades, this area had not experienced such a violent incident before. The attack, which left a doctor and six labourers dead, unfolded when the staff had returned to their camp late in the evening after working on the tunnel project.

The terrorists, two in number, indiscriminately opened fire on the group. Among the deceased were Dr Shahnawaz Dar, Faheem Nasir, Kaleem, Mohammad Hanif, Shashi Abrol, Anil Shukla and Gurmeet Singh.

The NIA's investigative team visited the site to gather crucial

evidence that could aid in identifying the attackers.

As leaders of various political parties and outfits condemned the attack, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah expressed determination not to let vested interests impede the region's progress and development.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha vowed to avenge the brutal attack, holding Pakistan accountable for instigating violence in the area.

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah also lashed out at Pakistan, saying Islamabad will have to stop terror incidents here if it wants to have friendly relations with India.

He said there can be no talks

Anti-Pakistan protests break out in Jammu

A day after a deadly terror attack at a tunnel construction site in J&K's Ganderbal left seven people dead, members of the Shiv Sena Dogra Front and Rashtriya Bajrang Dal Monday burned Pakistani flags in Jammu in protest against the killings amid slogans against the neighbouring country. The protesters demanded that the terrorists involved in the fatal attack be eliminated at the earliest to restore confidence among the people. Blaming Pakistan squarely for the attack, the agitators claimed it was the fallout of the frustration among the terrorists after the peaceful Assembly elections and the formation of an elected government in Jammu and Kashmir. Led by Shiv Sena Dogra Front President Ashok Gupta, the protesters also burned the effigy of Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif in response to the "dastardly" attack in Ganderbal, raising "Pakistan Hai Hai" slogans.

between New Delhi and Islamabad till the neighbouring country stops killings in Jammu and Kashmir.

"How can there be talks? You kill our innocent people and then you call for talks. First, stop the killings," Abdullah said.

Activist Wangchuk ends hunger strike

HOME MINISTRY TO RESUME TALKS WITH LADAKH GROUPS DECEMBER 3

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk Monday ended his fast along with others, after the home ministry assured them that the talks on Ladakh's demands will be resumed in December.

Join Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Prashant Lokhande met the activists, who were sitting on an indefinite fast at Delhi's Ladakh Bhawan since October 6, and handed them a letter from the home ministry.

The letter said the high-powered committee of the ministry, which was holding talks with representatives from Ladakh, will meet them next December 3.

Following this, Wangchuk and his supporters decided to break their fast and called off the sit-in.

"On the 16th day of our fast, I am happy to say that our main appeal has been resolved. Just now, the joint secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, came here at the Ladakh Bhawan and handed me this letter, which says the talks going on between the apex body of Leh and the KDA in Kargil with the Central government will be resumed very soon, by December," Wangchuk said.

He hoped that the outcome of the talks between the ministry



I just hope that I do not ever again have to do another anshan (fast) for this reason and it will result in a very happy ending. I want to, on this occasion, thank everybody who supported us in this effort

SONAM WANGCHUK | CLIMATE ACTIVIST

and the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance, the two socio-political organisations from the two regions of Ladakh, will be positive.

"The talks will be carried out by these bodies and I hope that very good outcomes will come, not just for Ladakh but for the whole nation."

"I just hope that I do not ever again have to do another anshan (fast) for this reason and it will result in a very happy ending. I want to, on this occasion, thank everybody who supported us in this effort," Wangchuk said.

Jaishankar slams Canada for its 'double standards'

The bilateral ties nosedived after Canada linked Indian High Commissioner Sanjay Verma and other diplomats to Nijjar's killing



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Monday hit out at Canada for its "double standards" as the ties between New Delhi and Ottawa came under severe strain over the killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil last year.

"Double standards is a very mild word for it," Jaishankar said while explaining how Canada treats other diplomats and the "licence" their diplomats try to use while in India.

Last week, New Delhi expelled Canadian Charge d'Affaires Stewart Wheeler and five other diplomats following Ottawa's fresh allegations of the Indian government's involvement in Nijjar's killing in British Columbia.

India also recalled its high commissioner and five more diplomats, who are on their way

If you threaten the Indian high commissioner, he is supposed to accept it as freedom of speech, but if an Indian journalist says the Canadian high commissioner walked out of the South Block looking very grumpy, it is apparently foreign interference

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

back to India. The Canadian government had said the Indian diplomats were expelled from the country.

"I think there are some very specific issues. Canada asked us to subject our high commissioner to a police inquiry and we chose to withdraw the high commissioner and diplomats," Jaishankar said at the NDTV World Summit.

"They seem to have a problem if Indian diplomats are even trying to make efforts to find out what is happening in Canada on matters which directly pertain to their welfare and security. But look what happens in India. Canadian diplomats have no problem going around collecting information on our military, police, profiling people, targeting people to be stopped in Canada," he said.



People buy lanterns ahead of the Diwali festival, in Nagpur, Maharashtra, Monday

PTI PHOTO

MAHARASHTRA POLLS

MVA meet to seal seat sharing deal: Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: The Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) constituents would meet Tuesday in Mumbai where the final seat-sharing deal for the Maharashtra Assembly polls would be sealed, AICC in-charge of state Ramesh Chennithala said Monday.

He said the Congress' Central Election Committee deliberated the names of nominees for 63 seats at its meeting at the AICC headquarters here.



Chennithala said that after the seat-sharing deal is sealed at a Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) meeting scheduled at 3 pm

Tuesday in Mumbai, another CEC meeting will be held October 25.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former party chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, Congress general secretary (In-charge, Organisation) K C Venugopal, Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole and AICC in-charge of state Chennithala, among others, attended the CEC meeting at the AICC headquarters.

Nitrogen-fixing plant diversity declines with over-fertilisation

Researchers find that excessive nitrogen from agriculture and industry makes the plants less competitive, leading to simplified plant communities with fewer species

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: An increase in nitrogen levels in the atmosphere due to human activities, including fertiliser use and pollution is reducing diversity among nitrogen-fixing plants, posing a threat to both biodiversity and ecosystem stability, a study has found.

Nitrogen-fixing plants con-

vert nitrogen gas from the air into products, like ammonia, which is then used by the plant to grow. These plants help maintain healthy ecosystems by adding nitrogen to the soil.

Researchers, including those from Mississippi State University, US, found that excessive nitrogen from agriculture and industry makes these plants less competitive, leading to simplified plant communities with fewer species.

"While others predicted climate change might benefit nitrogen fixers, our research shows otherwise. Humans are changing Earth in multiple ways that affect nitrogen fixers, and nitrogen deposition is overwhelming as a harmful effect," Ryan A Folk, an assistant professor at Mississippi State University and

Nitrogen-fixing plants convert nitrogen gas from the air into products, like ammonia, which is then used by the plant to grow, helping in maintaining healthy ecosystems by adding nitrogen to the soil



co-author of the study published in the journal Science Advances, said.

Folk said that nitrogen, the

first number listed on a bag of fertiliser, is often the most important plant macronutrient in natural and agricultural systems, so

Humans are changing Earth in multiple ways that affect nitrogen fixers, and nitrogen deposition is overwhelming as a harmful effect

RYAN A FOLK | ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

the loss of these plants threatens both biodiversity and ecosystem stability.

The researchers selected 971 pairs of plots from 53 sites that included at least one nitrogen-fixing plant in either a baseline survey conducted between 1940 and 1999, or a last resurvey conducted between 1995 and 2019.

Data for analysis was taken from the forestREplot database, which is maintained by Ghent University, US, and helps assess

how forest plant communities around the world are changing.

"From the baseline survey to the last resurvey, most plots lost N-fixers (65 per cent), losing, on average, 72 per cent of the baseline nitrogen-fixer richness. Not only the number but also the proportion of nitrogen-fixer species in the community declined, on average, by two per cent between the baseline and the last resurvey," the authors wrote.

The authors said that assessments of changes in long-term diversity among nitrogen-fixing plant communities are rare.

Human-caused increase in nitrogen levels in the air reduces diversity in nitrogen-fixing plants in ways that could strongly affect natural nitrogen fixation, they said.

national



We are living virtually in the fourth industrial revolution where information is key to all our activities, from agriculture to education to communication. Everything is around communication these days. Technology is a game-changer
JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT

NEWLY ELECTED HARYANA MLAS TO TAKE OATH OCT 25

The newly elected members of the Haryana Assembly will be administered oath here October 25. Senior Congress leader and party MLA Raghuvir Singh Kadian (80) will be the pro-tem Speaker in the 15th Haryana Legislative Assembly and will administer the oath. But before that Kadian will be administered oath by Governor Bandaru Dattatreya as acting speaker



of the day quote

It is the government's duty to provide houses for policemen. We will build 10,000 residential quarters by 2025 for which ₹2,000 crore has been allocated
SIDDARAMAIAH | CM, KARNATAKA

The assembly election is being conducted ahead of schedule. While Maharashtra is holding it on time, Jharkhand has been included unexpectedly. Interestingly, polls that traditionally occurred in five phases are now being held in just two, all under a BJP conspiracy
KALPANA SOREN | JMM MLA

We have arrived at a consensus on 210 seats. It is a significant achievement. We aim to contest polls as a joint force and we will defeat the forces looting Maharashtra
SANJAY RAUT | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

X POST OF THE DAY

The Railways have admitted that 2,61,233 posts are vacant against the sanctioned posts of 14,63,286 in non-gazetted categories. That is a whopping 17.85 per cent or 1 out of every 6 posts! Why are they vacant? Were not 10 years long enough to fill the posts? On the one hand, there is huge unemployment. On the other hand, accidents happen every week because of failure of monitoring and superintendence. Is this the meaning of 'minimum government, maximum governance'? This is simply bad and incompetent governance
@PCHIDAMBARAM_IN

SHORT TAKES

14 farmers arrested for stubble-burning

Chandigarh: Fourteen farmers were arrested in Haryana's Kaithal district over the past few days for burning stubble in their fields, a police official said Monday, as pollution levels in the region, including the national capital, soar. Stubble-burning in Haryana and neighbouring Punjab is often blamed for the rise in pollution levels in Delhi, especially during the post-harvest season of October and November. "During the past few days, fourteen farmers were arrested for burning stubble, but they were later released on bail as the offence is bailable," Kaithal's Deputy Superintendent of Police (Headquarters) Birbhan said over the phone. Cases have been lodged under the provisions of Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act and other relevant provisions of the law for burning stubble, he said.

Five Naxalites gunned down

Mumbai/Gadchiroli: Five Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district Monday, police said. The gunfight, in which commandos of the C-60 specialized combat unit of the Gadchiroli police played a leading role, took place in a forest in Bhamragadh taluka in the eastern Maharashtra district and comes just one month ahead of the state Assembly polls. A press release issued by the office of the Gadchiroli Superintendent of Police (SP) said in view of the November 20 elections, a group of Naxalites had gathered in the forest on the Maharashtra-Chhattisgarh border for the last two days and was planning an attack.

HOAX BOMB THREATS TO AIRLINES

Centre mulls legislative measures

NEARLY 100 FLIGHTS HAVE RECEIVED BOMB THREATS IN ONE WEEK, WITH AT LEAST 8 OF THEM GETTING DIVERTED, AND ALSO CAUSING HARDSHIP TO HUNDREDS OF PASSENGERS AS WELL AS SENDING SECURITY AGENCIES INTO A TIZZY



The civil aviation ministry is planning to amend the aircraft security rules as well as SUASCA

At a briefing in the national capital, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu said the aircraft security rules will be amended to strengthen them and once the perpetrator of a bomb threat to a flight is caught, the person will be placed in the no-fly list

Civil Aviation Act (SUASCA), 1982 whereby the perpetrators could be arrested and probe can be initiated without a court order for offences when an aircraft is on the ground. Nearly 100 flights have received bomb threats in one week, with at least 8 of them getting diverted,

and also causing hardship to hundreds of passengers as well as sending security agencies into a tizzy. The civil aviation ministry is planning to amend the aircraft security rules as well as SUASCA. Currently, the aviation norms mainly pertain to dealing with in-flight offences.

At a briefing in the national capital, Naidu said the aircraft security rules will be amended to strengthen them and once the perpetrator of a bomb threat to a flight is caught, the person will be placed in the no-fly list. SUASCA deals with many offences such as those committed at airports, onboard an aircraft and disruption to air navigation facilities. While it mentions about offences that happen in-flight, the minister said the Act also has to cover offences on the ground and at airports also.

Most of the bomb threats, which later turned out to be hoaxes, were issued through social media. "We are trying to make amendments and the legal team has worked on it. We need consultations with other ministries also... we are definitely pushing forward to have changes in the Act also so that it addresses offences that happen when the flight is on the ground and also make it cognisable offence," he said. Cognisable offences are those in which the accused can be arrested and an investigation can be initiated by the police without the order of a court.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: The government is planning legislative actions to deal with bomb threats to airlines, including placing the perpetrators in the no-fly list, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu said Monday and asserted that efforts are being taken to tackle the situation without compromising passengers' safety and security. Amendments are being proposed to The Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of

Remarks on PM's degree: SC upholds summon issued to Kejriwal

New Delhi: Former Delhi chief minister and AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal is set to face trial in a defamation case over his alleged remarks over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's educational qualification after the Supreme Court Monday dismissed his plea to quash summons. A Gujarat Metropolitan court had summoned Kejriwal and AAP's Sanjay Singh in the defamation case over their alleged "sarcastic" and "derogatory" statements related to PM Modi's educational degrees. Gujarat University Registrar Piyush Patel had filed the defamation case against the politicians over their alleged comments after the Gujarat High Court set aside an order of the chief information commissioner (CIC) for providing information about Modi's degrees under the Right to Information Act.

NEET-UG reforms: SC grants 2 weeks more to expert panel to file report

Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday extended by two weeks the time granted to the Centre-appointed seven-member expert panel to file its report on exam reforms after reviewing the National Testing Agency's functioning in holding the NEET-UG. The top court August 2 had passed its formal order and expanded the remit of the seven-member expert panel, headed by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief K Radhakrishnan, to review the functioning of the National Testing Agency (NTA) and recommend exam reforms to make the controversy-ridden NEET-UG (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test Undergraduate), transparent and free from malpractices.

UPSC coaching deaths: SC stresses on uniform standards to ensure students' safety

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday stressed on having "uniform standards" to the extent possible to ensure safety and security of students studying at coaching centres. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan was hearing a matter related to the deaths of three civil service aspirants at a coaching centre in the national capital in July due to the flooding in the building's basement. The three students drowned in the basement library of Rau's IAS Study Circle July 27 in Delhi's Old Rajinder Nagar area after it was flooded following heavy rains. The top court was informed by senior advocate Siddharth Dave, who is assisting the top court as an amicus curiae, about the broad areas that required attention. Dave referred to the aspects of fire safety, fee regulation, student to classroom area ratio, student to teacher ratio, installation of CCTVs, medical facilities, mental health care and counselling for those studying at coaching centres. He suggested that all states be impleaded as parties in the matter.

Agitating junior docs withdraw hunger strike

Chief Minister Mamata, junior doctors hold 2-hour talks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 21: Agitating junior doctors Monday evening withdrew their weeks-long hunger strike over the RG Kar incident, hours after a meeting with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The medics also called off their proposed shutdown in the state's health sector Tuesday. "In today's meeting (with the CM), we did get the assurance of some directives, but the body language of the state government was not positive. The common people have wholeheartedly supported us. They, as well as the parents of our deceased sister (RG Kar hospital victim), have been requesting us to call off the hunger strike, keeping in mind our deteriorating health. We are therefore withdrawing our 'fast-unto-death' and also Tuesday's total shutdown in the health sector," said Debashish Halder, one of the junior medics. The decision was taken following a general body meeting of the doctors.



RG KAR RAPE-MURDER

Earlier in the day, a 17-member delegation of the medics met Banerjee at the state secretariat and discussed various issues, including the prevailing "threat culture" in hospitals, justice for their deceased colleague and systemic changes in the state's health-care infrastructure. During the talks, held on the 17th day of the 'fast-unto-death' by a section of the agitating doctors, which was streamed live for the first time, Banerjee urged the junior medics to end their fast, stating that most of their demands had been addressed, while rejecting the one on removing the state health secretary. Although both sides agreed on the prevailing threat culture, they differed on the underlying forces and situations that promote it.

'Northward shift in summer winds worsening heatwaves in north'

THE STUDY REVEALED THAT THE SHIFT, WHICH OCCURRED AFTER 1998, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR 25% OF THE OBSERVED VARIATIONS IN FREQUENCY, DURATION, AND TOTAL CUMULATIVE HEAT IN SUMMER HEATWAVES IN THE REGION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: High-altitude winds during summers have shifted northwards in recent decades, worsening heatwaves over north central India, a study led by the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay has found.

The northward shift in these winds at 10-20 kilometres above sea level, along with rising temperatures post-1998, accounts for 25 per cent of the changes in frequency, duration and overall heat during heatwaves in the region, researchers found. A temperature increase in the Pacific Ocean around 1998 likely triggered the change in wind patterns, which was possibly exacerbated by global warming, the researchers suggested. "This change in high-altitude wind patterns is making heatwaves happen twice more often

as compared to pre-1998, with more than double cumulative heat during the heat wave. This is really worrying for the large populations who live in this area," corresponding author Arpita Mondal, Associate Professor at IIT Bombay, said. Incorporating these wind patterns in climate models can help predict heatwaves more accurately, thereby informing forecasts and long-term projections, and developing heat action plans, the authors said. The findings are published in the journal Geophysical Research Letters. While global warming is increasingly making heatwaves more frequent and intense, the study showed that changing patterns in winds at high-altitudes is also playing a role, the authors said. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) defines a heat-



wave in the plains as a temperature of 45 degrees Celsius or above, with a lower threshold in other regions. For the analysis, the researchers used temperature datasets of the IMD and weather-related ones from the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) Reanalysis from 1973



Boys at play at the bank of the Hooghly river under a cloudy sky, in Nadia, Monday

For the analysis, the researchers used temperature datasets of the IMD and weather-related ones from the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) Reanalysis from 1973 to 2022. While global warming is increasingly making heatwaves more frequent and intense, the study showed that changing patterns in winds at high-altitudes is also playing a role

the band of strong upper tropospheric winds. "We find that the meridional shift in the subtropical westerly

jet explains more than 25 per cent of the variability in heatwave characteristics over North-Central India, implying that the increase in heatwaves post-1998 is associated with a northward shift of the jet," the authors wrote. "This change (in wind patterns) isn't just affecting India but also the nearby areas like Pakistan and Middle East," said Jha. The research shows how important it is to understand changes in wind patterns, whether they're natural or caused by climate change, are making heatwaves worse in this region, he said.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) defines a heatwave in the plains as a temperature of 45 degrees Celsius or above, with a lower threshold in other regions

the band of strong upper tropospheric winds. "We find that the meridional shift in the subtropical westerly

HIMACHAL MOSQUE ROW

Demolition of 3 storeys starts

According to the MC Court order, the Waqf Board and the president of the mosque committee have to demolish the unauthorised portion of the mosque in two months at their own cost



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Oct 21: The demolition of three unauthorised storeys of the disputed Sanjauli mosque in Shimla started Monday after permission was granted by the Waqf Board, the president of the mosque's managing committee Muhammad Latif said.

The demolition started with the removal of the roof amid tight police security. Latif told the PTI Monday evening. "The Waqf Board has granted the permission and allowed us to go ahead following which labourers were called and work to open the roof started today," he added.

After receiving the October 5 order of the Municipal Commissioner (MC) Court directing the Waqf Board and president of Sanjauli Mosque Committee to demolish three storeys of the five-storey disputed structure, the same was communicated to the Waqf Board which gave the go-ahead, Latif told reporters here Monday.

According to the MC Court order, the Waqf Board and the president of the mosque committee have to demolish the unauthorised portion of the mosque in two months at their own cost. "Funding is the main issue as

neither the public nor the government would give money to demolish the structure and the mosque committee has to bear the expenses from its limited resources", said Latif who was part of the delegation which submitted the representation offering to demolish the unauthorised floors of the mosque September 12, a day after 10

people were injured during a protest demanding demolition of a portion of the mosque.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said that this is perhaps the first such example in the state where the people of the Muslim community have come forward to demolish the unauthorised mosque to

maintain peace themselves. He said people of all religions live here with respect and have the right to work in Himachal Pradesh.

Welcoming the move of the Sanjauli Mosque Committee to start the process of demolition of unauthorised stories of the mosque, Himachal Public Works Minister Vikramaditya Singh said, "It is a good gesture on the part of the mosque committee to abide by the decision of Municipal Commissioner's court and voluntarily pull down the unauthorised portions."

It is a good gesture on the part of the mosque committee to abide by the decision of Municipal Commissioner's court and voluntarily pull down the unauthorised portions
VIKRAMADITYA SINGH | HIMACHAL PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER

international



Countries such as India, Brazil, as well as representatives of Africa should have been on a permanent basis in the Security Council for a long time. This is necessary to ensure representativeness, representation of the global majority

SERGEY LAVROV | FOREIGN MINISTER, RUSSIA

MUIZZU INTRODUCES UPI IN MALDIVES

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu has taken 'necessary steps' to introduce India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in the archipelago nation, slated to benefit the Maldivian economy substantially



of the day quote

This vote took place under unprecedented interference and intimidation by Russia and its proxies, aiming to destabilise the democratic processes in the Republic of Moldova

PETER STANO | EU SPOKESPERSON

The Global South looks to India for leadership. As a matter of fact, if there is any country that can sort out today's problems, it is India

DASHO TSHERING | PM, BHUTAN

I assure you that we will continue to work in this direction. We are ready to make any efforts to resolve crises and in the interests of peace, in the interests of both sides (Russia-Ukraine)

SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN | PRESIDENT, UAE

SHORT TAKES

Brazil President cancels BRICS trip

Brasilia: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva Sunday canceled his trip to Russia for the BRICS summit, following medical advice to temporarily avoid long-haul flights after a head injury at home that caused a minor brain hemorrhage. In a statement, the presidential office said Lula, 78, will now participate in the BRICS meeting via videoconference. He was initially scheduled to depart at 5 pm Sunday. According to a medical report issued earlier Sunday by the Sirio Libanes Hospital in Brasilia, Lula suffered a laceration to the "occipital region" in the back of his head Saturday. The report said Lula "was advised to avoid long-distance air travel but is otherwise able to carry out his regular duties."

Self-exiled Turkish spiritual leader dies

Saylorsburg: Fethullah Gulen, a reclusive US-based Islamic cleric who inspired a global social movement while facing accusations he masterminded a failed 2016 coup in his native Turkey, has died. Abdullah Bozkurt, the former editor of the Gulen-linked Today's Zaman newspaper, said Monday that he spoke to Gulen's nephew, Kemal Gulen, who confirmed the death. Fethullah Gulen was in his eighties and had long been in ill health. The state-run Anadolu Agency quoted Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan as saying the death has been confirmed by Turkish intelligence sources. Gulen spent the last decades of his life in self-exile, living on a gated compound in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains from where he continued to wield influence among his millions of followers in Turkey and throughout the world.

Cuba restores power

Havana: Cuba's power-grid operator said it had restored electricity to parts of the capital Havana Monday following a fourth major grid failure in 48 hours, while Tropical Storm Oscar lashed the island's eastern end. Strong winds and heavy rain uprooted trees and scattered downed power lines in places, complicating recovery efforts. Energy and Mines Minister Vicente de la O Levy said technicians were working carefully to avoid another electrical collapse given "complex" circumstances. "The last thing we want is that, as a consequence of a fallen power line, we suffer another collapse of the system," de la O Levy said.

ISRAEL STORMS SHELTERS

MEDICS AT THE INDONESIAN HOSPITAL SAYS THAT ISRAELI TROOPS STORMED A SCHOOL AND DETAINED THE MEN BEFORE SETTING THE FACILITY ABLAZE

REUTERS

Cairo, Oct 21: Israeli forces blew up homes and besieged schools and shelters for displaced people on Monday as they deepened their operations in Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip, residents and medics said.

They also rounded up men and ordered women to leave the camp, they said.

Medics at the Indonesian Hospital told Reuters that Israeli troops stormed a school and detained the men before setting the facility ablaze. The fire reached the hospital generators and caused a power outage, they added.

Health officials said they refused orders by the Israeli army, which began a new incursion into the north of the Palestinian territory over two weeks ago, to evacuate the three hospitals in the area or leave the patients unattended.

Troops remained outside the hospital but did not enter, they said. Medics at a second hospital, Kamal Adwan, reported heavy Israeli fire near the hospital at night.

"The army is burning the schools next to the hospital, and no one can enter or leave the hospital," said one nurse at the Indonesian Hospital, who asked not to be named.

Palestinian health officials said 18 people had been killed in



UNRWA remaining shelters are so overcrowded, some displaced people are now forced to live in the toilets. According to reports, people attempting to flee are getting killed, their bodies left on the street. Missions to rescue people from under the rubble are also being denied

PHILIPPE LAZZARINI | HEAD OF UN PALESTINIAN REFUGEE AGENCY UNRWA

Jabalia and eight elsewhere in Gaza in Israeli strikes.

The Israeli military said troops were continuing ground operations across the Gaza Strip. It said in a statement that over the past day, troops had dismantled militant infrastructure and tunnel shafts and killed fighters in the Jabalyia area. It did not comment on the immediate situation regarding the hospitals and camps.

Blinken's another push
US Secretary of State Antony Blinken will make another push for a ceasefire when he heads to the Middle East Monday, the State Department said, seeking

to kickstart negotiations to end the Gaza war and also defuse the spillover conflict in Lebanon.

The top US diplomat's latest trip to the region, his eleventh since the October 7, 2023 attack on Israel by Palestinian militant group Hamas that triggered the Gaza war, comes even as Israel has intensified its military campaign in Gaza and in Lebanon against the Iran-aligned Hezbollah militia.

The US is trying to resolve complex interlocked conflicts after Israel raised the stakes by assassinating the leaders of Hezbollah, including its veteran secretary-general Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza while showing no sign of reining in its ground and aerial offensives.

ISRAELI TROOPS BESIEGE HOSPITALS IN NORTHERN GAZA
FOOD, WATER RUNNING OUT
OPERATIONS INTENSIFY AFTER DEATH OF HAMAS LEADER
UN SAYS IT IS DEEPLY CONCERNED BY SITUATION

'Israel busts spy ring acting for Iran'

JERUSALEM: Israel's security services have broken up a spy ring that was gathering information on behalf of Iranian intelligence in the latest attempt by Tehran to recruit Israelis for espionage, the Shin Bet and police said Monday. Seven Israelis from Israel's north, including the port city of Haifa, were arrested after an investigation found they had gathered intelligence on Israeli military bases and energy and port infrastructure, a joint Shin Bet and police statement said. Israeli police said the security breach was among the most serious ever seen by Israel. "The assessment is that the activity of the members of the ring has caused security damage to the security of the state," a senior source with the Shin Bet security service said. The suspects, who included two minors, had been tasked by two agents from Iran's intelligence service to carry out hundreds of information gathering tasks on military bases across the country, the Israeli statement said. The targets included a power plant in the northern town of Hadera, military bases with an emphasis on the air force and navy, as well as Israel's Iron Dome air defence batteries and ports, the statement said.



King Charles heckled in Australian Parliament

Indigenous senator Lidia Thorpe, known for her fierce opposition to the monarchy, shouts anti-colonial slogans at King of UK

REUTERS

Canberra, Oct 21: King Charles was accused of "genocide" by an Indigenous senator at Australia's Parliament House Monday, moments after he delivered a speech in which he paid his "respects to the traditional owners of the lands".

Charles, on his 16th official visit to Australia and his first major foreign trip since being diagnosed with cancer, had finished speaking when independent senator and Indigenous activist Lidia Thorpe shouted that she did not accept Charles' sovereignty over Australia.

"You committed genocide against our people," she said. "Give us our land back. Give us what you stole from us, our bones, our skulls, our babies, our people. You destroyed our land. Give us a treaty. We want treaty."

Thorpe, who has disrupted previous events protesting over the colonisation of Australia, was stopped from approaching the king, who spoke quietly to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on the podium but was otherwise unfazed. Thorpe was then escorted out of the chamber.

Thorpe has said the incarceration and violence caused by colonisation can only end with a national treaty between the government and Indigenous people to address First Nations' issues.

Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott from the conservative Liberal Party, who attended the event, told reporters it was an "unfortunate political exhibi-



tionism". A palace source said the king and queen were grateful to the many thousands of people who had turned out, adding they "are only sorry they didn't have a chance to stop and talk to every single one. The warmth and scale of the reception was truly awesome".

The protest was an outlier among a stream of tributes to Charles and Queen Camilla from dignitaries and well-wishers in the crowds, with Albanese speaking about the respect Australians had for their monarch and praising Charles for his long advocacy on climate change.

His speech made only a passing reference to the republican cause, which Albanese and much of his centre-left Labor party support.

"The Australia you first knew has grown and evolved in so many ways," he said. "Yet through these decades of change, our bonds of respect and affection have matured and endured."

SNIPPETS

No documentary evidence of Hasina's resignation: President

DHAKA: Bangladesh's President Mohammed Shahabuddin has said that he does not have any documentary evidence of Sheikh Hasina resigning as Prime Minister before she fled the country in August amidst student-led mass protests. President said he heard that Hasina had resigned as Prime Minister before she fled Bangladesh, but he does not have documentary evidence, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported Monday. Despite numerous efforts, the President said, he had failed to find any documents. "Perhaps she did not have the time," Shahabuddin said. Narrating the events of August 5, he said that at around 10:30 am, a call came to Bangabhaban from Hasina's residence, informing him that Hasina would meet him. "Hearing this, preparations began at Bangabhaban. Within an hour, another call came, saying she was not coming," the President said.

SK summons Russian envoy over North's troop deployment

SEOUL: South Korea summoned the Russian ambassador to Seoul, Georgy Zinoviev, Monday to criticise Pyongyang's decision to send thousands of soldiers to support Moscow's war in Ukraine, the foreign ministry said, calling for their immediate withdrawal. About 1,500 North Korean special forces soldiers are already in Russia acclimatising, likely to head to the front lines soon, Seoul's spy agency said Friday, with additional troops set to depart soon, Pyongyang's first such deployment overseas. South Korea, which has long claimed the nuclear-armed North is supplying Russia with weaponry for use in Ukraine, has expressed alarm over the deployment, which comes after Kim Jong Un and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a military deal in June. Vice foreign minister Kim Hong-kyun expressed Seoul's "grave concerns regarding North Korea's recent dispatch of troops to Russia and strongly urged the immediate withdrawal of North Korean forces and the cessation of related cooperation," the ministry said in a statement.



Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto poses for a group photo with newly-appointed cabinet ministers after their swearing-in ceremony at Merdeka Palace in Jakarta, Indonesia, Monday

PENTAGON CHIEF VISITS UKRAINE

REUTERS

Kyiv, Oct 21: US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced \$400 million in new arms for Ukraine Monday during a visit to Kyiv, in a show of solidarity just two weeks ahead of a US presidential election that is casting uncertainty over the future of Western support. Austin's trip, his fourth and

likely final visit as President Joe Biden's Pentagon chief, focused on US efforts to help Kyiv shore up its defenses as Russian forces slowly but steadily gain ground in eastern Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in a statement on X, appeared to renew calls for Washington to ease restrictions on using US-supplied weapons to hit targets deep in

Russian territory.

As Biden's administration winds down, Austin, however, signalled continuity in US support, and announced no changes to US policy. "The United States understands the stakes here, Mr President," Austin told Zelenskyy during a meeting, as he announced additional munitions, armoured vehicles and anti-tank weapons for Ukraine.

Jewish voters rethink longtime devotion to Democrats

Jews represent a sliver of the voting-age population in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin that Democrats have come to rely on in recent presidential elections

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Harrisburg, Oct 21: For Rona Kaufman, the signs are everywhere that more Jews feel abandoned by the Democratic Party and may vote for Republican Donald Trump.

It's in her Facebook feed. It's in the discomfort she observed during a question-and-answer at a recent Democratic Party campaign event in Pittsburgh. It's in her own family.

"The family that is my generation and older generations, I don't think anybody is voting for Harris, and we've never voted Republican, ever," Kaufman, 49, said, referring to Democratic

Vice President Kamala Harris. "My sister has a Trump sign outside her house, and that is a huge shift."

How big a shift? Surveys continue to find that most Jewish voters still support the Democratic ticket, and Kaufman acknowledges that she's an exception.

Still, any shift could have enormous implications in Pennsylvania, where tens of thousands of votes decided the past two presidential elections. Many Jewish voters say the 2024 presidential election is like no other in memory, coming amid the growing fallout from Hamas' brutal attack on Israelis last year.

Jews represent a sliver of the voting-age population in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, the so-called blue wall of states that Democrats have come to rely on in recent presidential elections. In a close election, they are a big enough constituency that the campaigns of Harris and Trump see the potential for any slippage to



As Pennsylvania plays a central role in the election, many say they've never seen such outreach from campaigns as they have now

swing a close contest.

That has forced Harris to walk a line between traditional Democratic constituencies with strong feelings about the war in Gaza, both Jews and Arab Americans, balancing support for

Israel with outrage over the deaths of Israeli and Palestinian civilians and destruction in the region. The Biden administration has been pressuring Israel to end its attacks, which continued last week with the killing of

Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar by Israeli troops.

Trump has looked to exploit the opening among Jewish voters especially, saying Harris "doesn't like" Jewish people, Jews who don't vote for him "need their head examined" and that he'll be the "best friend Jewish Americans have ever had in the White House."

In the past, surveys have shown that Jews overwhelmingly vote Democratic. A Pew Research Center poll released last month found that about two-thirds of Jewish voters back Harris. In 2020, about 7 in 10 Jewish voters supported President Joe Biden, according to AP VoteCast.

The question is whether that has changed, as Jews now see Israel's survival in a new light as its war with Hamas widens to Hezbollah and Iran.

That has put a new focus on the relationship between Israel and the US, which continues to provide military aid. And many Jews say rising acts of anti-

semitism in the United States and anti-Israel protests sweeping across cities and college campuses, including in Philadelphia, have made them feel unsafe.

In Pennsylvania, still fresh in many minds is a gunman absorbed by white supremacist ideology murdering 11 worshippers at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh in 2018, the deadliest attack on Jews in US history.

As Pennsylvania plays a central role in the election, many say they've never seen such outreach from campaigns as they have now.

From Trump on down, Republicans are attempting to win over Jewish voters by highlighting a Democratic Party torn between its traditional and unconditional support for Israel and a growing faction that has accused Israel of war crimes in Gaza, called for Israel to unconditionally stop attacking Hamas, and demanded that the US end its military support for Israel.

business

of the day quote

Decarbonization is not just essential for addressing climate change, but it is also crucial for securing our future generations

PRADIP KUMAR DAS | IREDA CMD

Every day, around 60,000 to 90,000 workers are joining the eShram platform, which demonstrates their confidence in this initiative

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION MINISTER

We love what we're building, we work like crazy, we just are genuinely so excited about what we're building. It's not really about money or personal wealth, because candidly, working 80-100 hours a week, we could have probably worked half of that with a lot less stress...

AADIT PALICHA | ZEPTO CO-FOUNDER AND CEO

Q2 RESULTS CORNER

Union Bank profit jumps 34%

New Delhi: State-owned Union Bank of India Monday logged a 34 per cent growth in its net profit at ₹4,720 crore for the second quarter ended September 2024. The Mumbai-based lender had earned a net profit of ₹3,511 crore in the same quarter a year ago. The total income increased to ₹32,036 crore during the quarter under review against ₹28,282 crore in the same period last year, Union Bank of India said in a regulatory filing. The bank reported interest income of ₹26,708 crore during the quarter compared to ₹24,587 crore in the year-ago period. However, net interest income (NII) declined 0.87 per cent to ₹9,047 crore from ₹9,126 crore in the second quarter of the previous year. The net interest margin too moderated to 2.9 per cent from 3.18 per cent at the end of the second quarter of the last financial year.

UltraTech Cement profit at ₹825 cr

New Delhi: UltraTech Cement Ltd Monday reported a consolidated net profit of ₹825.18 crore for September quarter 2024-25. It had posted a net profit of ₹1,280.38 crore in July-September FY24, according to a regulatory filing from the Aditya Birla group flagship firm. Revenue from operations was at ₹15,634.73 crore in the second quarter. It was at ₹16,012.13 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. Total expenses were at ₹14,837.44 crore in September quarter FY25. According to UltraTech, its consolidated results are "not comparable" due to the acquisition of an additional stake, increasing its holding to 54.79 per cent in the UAE-based Ras Al Khaimah Co. for White Cement & Construction Materials PSC (RAKW). UltraTech Cement's total income, which includes other income was at ₹15,855.46 crore.

Bajaj Housing Fin profit up 21%

New Delhi: Bajaj Housing Finance Monday reported a 21 per cent growth in net profit to ₹546 crore in the September quarter. The housing finance company had recorded a net profit of ₹451 crore in the same quarter a year ago. This is the first quarterly number after the company's listing last month on stock exchanges. Total income increased to ₹2,410 crore during the quarter under review from ₹1,912 crore a year earlier, Bajaj Housing Finance said in a regulatory filing. The company earned an interest income of ₹2,227 crore during the quarter, compared to ₹1,782 crore in the same period a year ago.



I think India has to also create innovation in technology, we can't just copy what we get from outside. We now need to make our products which the western world will copy from us

BABA KALYANI | BHARAT FORGE CMD

INDIA'S FIRST COAL EXCHANGE SOON

Union minister G Kishan Reddy Monday said that India's first coal exchange would be set up soon. A coal exchange is likely to facilitate more sellers and buyers to trade coal as a commodity. Talking to reporters on the sidelines of an event here, Reddy, who is coal and mines minister, said that coal exchange is likely to come up soon. The plan for setting up the coal exchange was discussed in a recent meeting, the minister said further.



Gold, silver hit all-time high on Diwali demand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Gold price surged by ₹750 to hit a record high of ₹80,650 per 10 grams while silver skyrocketed by ₹5,000 per kg in the national capital Monday, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Amid the intensifying conflict in the Middle East, an interest rate cut by the People's Bank of China (PBoC) aided the rally in the yellow metal as investors moved towards the safe haven assets, traders said.

Extending its gains for the fourth straight day, silver price zoomed by ₹5,000 to hit a fresh record high of ₹99,500 per kg from the previous close of ₹94,500 per kg Friday.

According to commodities market experts, the ongoing bullish sentiment in the silver market is primarily driven by industrial demand and gold's rally.

Silver's upward momentum appears strong. Investors are likely to continue to view dips as buying opportunities, keeping the white metal well-supported in the coming sessions, they said.

Additionally, gold of 99.5 per cent purity climbed ₹750 to hit a record high of ₹80,250 per 10 grams. The metal of 99.5 per cent purity had ended at ₹79,500 per 10 grams while gold of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at ₹79,900 per 10 grams on Friday.

Bullion traders attributed the jump in gold prices to pick-up in buying by local jewellers to meet increased demand in the festive and wedding season.



Further, a positive trend in the overseas markets as well as a fall in equity markets boosted the gold's safe-haven appeal, they added.

In July, gold and silver prices corrected sharply by 7 per cent in the local markets after the government slashed basic customs duty on gold and other metals.

However, the bullion prices rebounded as demand from Indian consumers increased due to ongoing festivals.

In futures trades on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for December delivery jumped ₹493 or 0.63 per cent to ₹78,242 per 10 grams.

During the day, the precious metal had surged ₹591 or 0.76 per cent to hit record ₹78,340 per 10 grams.

Silver contracts for December delivery bounced ₹2,822 or 2.96 per cent to hit a high of ₹98,224 per kg.

"Silver prices have gained strong upward momentum. As gold prices soar, retail buyers are increasingly turning to silver, viewing it as a relatively cheaper alternative at these levels, especially with gold now touching ₹78,000 for 10 grams. On the MCX, silver prices have surged to ₹98,000, supported by Comex silver climbing to USD 34 per ounce. A breach of the USD 34-mark has triggered fresh buying interest in silver, as market participants anticipate further gains," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said.

The rise in silver is being driven not only by its appeal as a more affordable precious metal but also by increasing demand from the electric vehicle (EV) sector and photovoltaic applications, which is expected to sustain global demand in the medium to long term, Trivedi

Rate hikes helped curb inflation: RBI paper



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 21: The cumulative rate hikes of 2.5 percentage points by the central bank since May 2022 negatively impacted headline inflation by 1.60 per cent, a paper by senior RBI staffers said Monday.

"Policy rate increases have anchored inflation expectations and modulated aggregate demand, generating disinflationary responses," the paper by Deputy Governor Michael Patra, Indranil Bhattacharyya, Joice John and Avnish Kumar, said.

Making it clear that the paper does not represent the views of the central bank, the study on monetary policy transmission found that monetary policy changes affect short-term interest rates more than long-term rates.

"The macroeconomic impact of monetary policy on aggregate demand and inflation indicate that the 2.50 per cent increase since May 2022 has negatively contributed to aggregate demand and headline inflation by 160 bps each till Q2:2024-25, working through various channels of policy transmission," it said.

ious channels of policy transmission," it said.

It can be noted that in the past, the RBI brass has denied that the elevated interest rates has had any impact on the growth. In the past, questions have also been asked in some quarters about the impact monetary policy can have on inflation when it is fuelled by supply-side factors.

The RBI paper released Monday argued that a significant negative impact on inflation expectations is observed on account of policy rate tightening on the real economy. The long-run elasticity of the policy rate with respect to inflation expectation reveals that an increase in policy rate anchors expectations effectively, it added.

It said anticipated policy changes do not have any instantaneous impact on long-term rates but policy 'surprises' significantly impact all market segments and across tenors.

"Policy surprises' are found to have a relatively lower but significant pass-through to the exchange rate and equity prices," it elaborated.

Data leaks: Irdai directs 2 insurers to conduct audit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Insurance regulator Irdai has directed two insurers to carry out audits of their IT systems following concerns over the recent instances of policyholders' data leaks.

The regulator is also in touch with their management to address the vulnerabilities.

Without naming the insurers, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) said it takes data breaches very seriously and asserted that it will continue to engage with the companies to ensure that the policyholders' interests are fully protected.

Star Health Insurance had recently admitted data breach. The name of the second insurer could not be immediately ascertained. "There have been reports of data leaks from two insurers recently," the regulator said. In a release, the Irdai said it is closely monitoring the situation in the case of the concerned insurers and has been in touch with their management.

Regular updates are being obtained to ensure that the policyholders' data and interests are fully protected and the company is taking all steps to arrest the threat posed by this breach, the regulator said. Irdai said it will continue to engage with the insurance companies to ensure that the policyholders' interests are fully protected. "The concerned insurers have been instructed to appoint an independent auditor to undertake a comprehensive audit of the company's IT landscape with the aim that there are no vulnerabilities and the IT system are adequate to meet the scale and complexities of their operations," the release said.



As part of the standard operating procedures of the concerned insurers, they reported the cyber incident to the government and Irdai, it added.

It also said the concerned insurers have ring-fenced the impacted IT system by isolating it and at the same time, appointed an external IT security company to undertake root cause analysis. "The audit firm reported vulnerabilities in the company's IT system and the methodology used by the threat actor to exploit the same, which were acted upon by insurers. The Containment, Eradication and Recoverability plan is being implemented by the insurers," Irdai said.

Further preventive steps outlined in the report are in the process of implementation to keep the policyholders' data safe and secure. System upgrades over immediate, short and medium periods, will be acted upon by the insurers, Irdai said. Also, the application programming interface vulnerabilities, gap assessment, vulnerability assessment and penetration testing issues are at an advanced stage of rectification.

Sensex, Nifty close lower on FII outflows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 21: Erasing initial gains, benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower Monday due to a sharp fall in Kotak Mahindra Bank and relentless foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share Sensex declined by 73.48 points or 0.09 per cent to settle at 81,151.27 with 21 of its constituents ending lower and nine closing higher. The barometer shot up 545 points at the opening but succumbed to selling pressure later and hit a low

of 80,811.23. The index gyrated 958.79 points between the day's high and the low level.

The NSE Nifty dipped 72.95 points or 0.29 per cent to 24,781.10.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Kotak Mahindra Bank tanked over 4 per cent after the company's quarterly earnings failed to cheer investors. Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank, Adani Ports, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Bharti Airtel, Hindustan Unilever and JSW Steel were the other big laggards.

HDFC Bank climbed nearly 3

per cent after the firm on Saturday reported a 6 per cent increase in September quarter net profit to ₹17,825.91 crore on a consolidated basis. On a standalone basis, the largest private sector lender's post-tax net grew to ₹16,820.97 crore during the reporting period, as against ₹15,976.11 crore in the year-ago period.

"The domestic market displayed considerable volatility, with key indices swinging between negative and positive terrain. Meanwhile, FIIs continued their strategic buying in

China while selling off in India, driven by weaker corporate earnings and valuation concerns. Concurrently, domestic Q2 earnings have been mostly underwhelming, with major private sector banks notably disappointing. However, DIIs have offered some support, mitigating the market's decline," said Vimod Nair, Head of Research, at Geojit Financial Services.

The BSE midcap gauge declined by 1.63 per cent and small-cap index went lower by 1.51 per cent.

iDestiny opens 2 new stores in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: iDestiny is thrilled to announce the grand opening of two Apple authorised reseller stores in Odisha. The new locations at Kavaka complex, Ainthapalli Main Road, Sambalpur and Dharma Nagar, Berhampur mark a significant expansion in its mission to provide the best Apple to Odisha's tech lovers. As East India's only Apple premium partner, iDestiny is now even closer to becoming the go-to destination for all things Apple. "This is an exciting milestone for iDestiny as we open two new stores in Odisha. Our focus remains on elevating the customer experience by ensuring availability, serviceability, reliability, affordability, and seamless device exchange options. We are confident that these stores will become the favourite Apple destinations for Sambalpur and Brahmapur's tech savvy citizens," said Vijay Dugar, Director iDestiny-Apple Authorised Reseller. With these new stores, iDestiny brings an extensive selection of Apple products and third-party accessories to a wider audience.



Canara Bank opens new branch

Bhubaneswar: With the aim of providing convenient opportunities to customers, Canara Bank opened its 174th branch in Odisha at Chandbali Monday. Canara Bank's Odisha Head & General Manager Jagdish Chandra inaugurated the branch in the presence of hundreds of customers along with Bhadrak Regional Head, Assistant General Manager V. Agilan, and LDM Nageswar Rao. The bank is planning to open more new branches in Odisha within the next few months. On this occasion, the GM said that Canara Bank is providing social banking and digital banking services to enable the customers to make cashless transactions in tune with Govt. of India initiatives viz. BHIM app, QR code, POS machines etc.



'Language of the country'

Balasar: "As per the Official Language Policy of the Government of India, the implementation of the Official Language Hindi is to be done through inspiration, motivation and rewards. By respecting all the Indian languages we should compose the Official Language Hindi as the language of the people so that the entire India can be united under the thread of One Language. Hindi is the only language that is understood, spoken and written from Kashmir to Kanyakumari." The above statements were delivered by Sudeep Dakua, Assistant General Manager and Zonal Head of UCO Bank, Zonal Office, Balasore. He further added that organizing various competitions under the Hindi Month - 2024 as a form of harmony in Indian language will create an excellent environment among the employees towards the Official Language Hindi. The programme was conducted by Dr. Sunil Kumar, Senior Manager- Official Language, Zonal Office, Balasore.



India's clampdown on Chinese products, investment

REUTERS

New Delhi, Oct 21: India and China have reached a deal on patrolling their disputed Himalayan frontier, aiming to resolve a four-year military stand-off, Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said Monday.

The two nuclear-armed neighbours have had tense relations since their troops clashed on the largely undemarcated frontier in 2020, leaving 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers dead.

Here are some areas affected by India's strained ties with China since then:
NO DIRECT FLIGHTS

The two countries have not had any direct flights for four years. China has been pressing India to restart direct passenger flights and India's aviation minister said last month the two countries discussed an early resumption of scheduled passenger flights.

VISA RULES FOR CHINESE TECHNICIANS

India increased scrutiny for visa applications from Chinese citizens in the wake of the border clashes. This hurt some of India's key manufacturing firms as stricter visa rules meant specialised engineers from China could not enter the country, leading to production losses.



After industry complaints, India recently decided to speed up processing of visas for

Chinese technicians.
NEW INVESTMENT VETTING RULES
In 2020, India stepped up

scrutiny of investments from companies based in neighbouring countries by adding an extra layer of vetting and security clearances, in what was widely seen as a move to stave off takeovers and investments by Chinese firms.

It has led to billions of dollars in proposed investment getting stuck in the approval process over the last four years, including the stalling or shelving of investment worth billions from companies like BYD and Great Wall Motor.

MOBILE APPS BAN
Citing data and privacy issues, India has banned about 300 Chinese mobile apps in-

cluding popular ones such as the battle-royale format game from Krafton Inc, a South Korean company backed by China's Tencent.

XIAOMI ASSET FREEZE

Indian authorities last year accused Chinese smartphone company Vivo Communication Technology of breaching some visa rules and alleged it siphoned \$13 billion in funds.

India has frozen more than \$600 million in Xiaomi assets for alleged illegal remittances to foreign entities, accusing the company of passing them off as royalty payments.

Both Chinese companies deny any wrongdoing.

HUGE HURDLE FOR HOCKEY

Reports say the game is set to be axed from 2026 Glasgow CWG; shooting, wrestling may also be dropped



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Oct 21: Hockey is set to be axed from the 2026 Commonwealth Games as the host city of Glasgow looks to cut costs, several media reports here stated but both the International Hockey Federation (FIH) and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) remained tight-lipped on the matter.

Hockey has featured in each CWG since making its debut in 1998, but according to reports here, the Glasgow Games organisers want to drop it from the schedule along with net ball and road racing to ensure a trimmed programme that would be easy on the budget.

Two other major sports - shooting and wrestling - in which India has had medal hauls in the past editions are also set to be dropped from the 2026 Glasgow CWG roster, which will lead a big blow to the country's hopes.

Commonwealth Games

HOCKEY HAS FEATURED IN EACH CWG SINCE MAKING ITS DEBUT IN 1998

Scotland (CGS) had said in their proposal that all the competitions of the 2026 CWG would be held in venues within an eight-mile-radius.

That will rule shooting out of the sports roster as the Barry Buddon centre in Dundee - the venue during the 2014 CWG - is more than 100km away from Glasgow.

Wrestling was not in the roster of the 2026 CWG when Australia's Victoria was to host the Games before pulling out.

Wrestling's inclusion has already been in doubt and the Glasgow Games will most likely drop the sport as the organisers have decided on having just 10 sports, out of which athlet-

icspara athletics and swimmingpara swimming have already been picked.

Scotland stepped in to save the 2026 Games after the Australian state of Victoria pulled out due to rising costs. The schedule is due to be unveiled Tuesday.

When reached out by PTI, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) declined to comment till the roster was officially out.

In a couple of days, the situation will be clear - you will get the information accordingly. From our side, until there is any official communication from CGF, we are not in a position to provide you any comment, an official said.

Hockey's exclusion from the Games would be a major blow for India as their men's team is a three-time silver-winner and two-time bronze-medallist in the sport. The women have won three medals, including a gold in the 2000 edition.

Sakshi bares it all in her book 'Witness'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Olympic bronze medal-winning former wrestler Sakshi Malik has said that Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia's decision to accept exemption from the Asian Games trials last year hit the image of their protest against Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh as it made their movement seem "selfish".

Sakshi, who was one of the three prominent faces of the prolonged protest, made this statement in her recently-released book 'Witness'. She said their protest developed cracks when "people close to" Bajrang and Vinesh began to fill their minds with "greed".

The three had alleged that Sharan Singh, the former head of the Wrestling Federation of India, sexually harassed women wrestlers during his tenure. The case is still being heard in a Delhi court.

The ad-hoc committee, that took over the administration of wrestling after WFI's suspension, exempted Bajrang and Vinesh from the 2023 Asian Games trials but Sakshi decided not to seek the favour as suggested by her colleagues.

Eventually, 32-year-old Sakshi did not compete while Vinesh suffered an injury before the Games and Bajrang failed to win a medal in Hangzhou.

"The old way of thinking selfishly was taking over once again. The people close to Bajrang and Vinesh had started filling their minds with greed. Now they were talking about this exemption from trials for the Games," Sakshi wrote in the book co-authored with journalist Jonathan Selvaraj but did not give names of those who influenced the duo.

"...Nothing good came of Bajrang and Vinesh's decision to take the exemption...their decision badly hurt the image of our protest. It put us in a situation where many supporters started



Nothing good came of Bajrang and Vinesh's decision to take the exemption...their decision badly hurt the image of our protest. It put us in a situation where many supporters started to think that we were actually in the protest for selfish reasons

SAKSHI MALIK | OLYMPIC BRONZE MEDAL-WINNING FORMER WRESTLER

to think that we were actually in the protest for selfish reasons," the 32-year-old said.

The protest ended after the wrestlers' march towards the new Parliament Building was halted by the Police May 28, 2023.

Both Vinesh and Bajrang joined the Congress party before the Haryana assembly elections earlier this month. The former contested and won from the Julana constituency, while the latter was made head of the party's national farmers' unit.

Before the political plunge, Vinesh endured a heartbreaking sporting loss when she was disqualified from the 50kg category Olympic finals in Paris for being 100gm overweight.

WAS HARASSED AS A CHILD

The 32-year-old from Haryana said she was molested in her childhood too by a tuition teacher but she kept quiet.

"I could not tell my family about it because I thought it was my fault. My tuition teacher from my school days used to harass me. He would call me over to his place for classes at odd times and sometimes tried to touch me. I was scared to go for my tuition classes but I could never tell my mom."

Talking about her struggles at the start of her career, Sakshi said she hated confrontations and would think of running away from her bouts at the beginning of her career.

"It's a fear that I've carried to the end of my career. I've never enjoyed the actual act of confrontation. I was an exceptionally slow starter in wrestling. I won my first bout only after nearly two years of my first stepping on a wrestling mat. It wasn't that I didn't have any physical skills."

"I was always one of the fastest and strongest girls at my coach-

ing centre for my age. But I never developed the fearlessness you needed for a fight. I would always get very nervous before my bouts."

But she was a picture of defiance during the protest against Sharan Singh and said the political class disappointed her.

She also alleged that former wrestler Babita Phogat, who is now a BJP politician, had selfish motives even though she portrayed herself as a well-wisher for the protesting trio.

"In hindsight, while I know that ending Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh's reign was the primary goal for Vinesh and Bajrang, I made the mistake of thinking that that was Babita's sole intention too."

"...She didn't just want to just get rid of Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh - she wanted to replace him."

Babita could not be reached immediately for a comment on this assertion.

In the book, Sakshi also claimed that her parents took away most of her award money. She also alleged that her family was against her match with fellow wrestler Satyawart Kadian but she took a stand for their relationship.

SHORT TAKES

Strong contingent

New Delhi: A strong Indian contingent, led by Vinay Desai, will compete in all four categories of the 16th World Bridge Games to be held in Buenos Aires from October 22 till November 3. The contingent comprises several stalwarts, including 2018 Asian Games gold medalist in men's pairs Pranab Bardhan (seniors), Raju Tolani and Jaggy Shivdasani (Open category), among others. A total of 34 countries are in the fray in the 'Open' section, while in the women's section, there are 24 nations.

Sabalenko on top

New Delhi: Aryna Sabalenka surpassed Iga Swiatek to climb back to the No 1 spot in the latest WTA rankings released Monday. Neither player was in action last week, but with continuing year-end adjustments for falling short of certain tournament quotas, Sabalenka dropped fewer points than Swiatek. Sabalenka has 9,706 points compared to second-placed Swiatek's 9,665, taking a narrow 41-point lead. American Coco Gauff is third with 5,963 points followed by compatriot Jessica Pegula (5,785) in fourth and Elena Rybakina in fifth with 5,471 points. "N1... Let's see for how long this time," Sabalenka posted on X after becoming the world No 1 player.

NZ to split riches

Wellington: Members of the New Zealand White Ferns cricket team which beat South Africa by 32 runs in the final of the women's Twenty20 World Cup in Dubai Sunday will split prize money of around \$2.3 million. That works out at around \$155,000 or NZD 256,000 per team member, a life-changing windfall for players who for years have struggled for years to achieve financial parity with their male counterparts. New Zealand's first-ever victory in the World Cup of cricket's shortest format was a massive surprise. The White Ferns had lost 10 consecutive T20 matches before beating South Africa in a warm-up match.

Barca rout Sevilla

Madrid: Robert Lewandowski scored two more goals to extend his league-leading tally to 12 and Barcelona routed Sevilla 5-1 to open a three-point gap on Real Madrid ahead of next weekend's "clasico." Pedri and Pablo Torre also scored Sunday for the Catalan club, which restored its lead of La Liga a day after second-place Madrid won 2-1 at Celta Vigo. Barcelona midfielder Gavi came off the bench to replace Pedri in the 83rd minute, making his return to action nearly a year after a serious knee injury.

RANJI TROPHY

Pattnaik's heroics save the day

ODISHA ESCAPE WITH DRAW, EARN THREE POINTS AGAINST J&K

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Oct 21: Sandeep Pattnaik's sublime performance helped Odisha avoid an outright defeat in their Ranji Trophy clash against Jammu & Kashmir here at the Barabati Stadium, Monday.

With a winning target of 269 in a minimum of 74 overs, Odisha collapsed in a heap and stared at certain defeat as they were reduced to 29/4 and then 93/7.

However, Pattnaik stood tall at one end and received some resolute support from the tailenders to deny Jammu & Kashmir full points. When play was called off, Odisha had reached 112/8, with No 3 batter Pattnaik unbeaten on 55 facing 222 balls. It was a half-century worth its weight in gold.

Thanks to their 2-run lead in the first innings, Odisha pocketed 3 points while J&K earned 1 from the drawn game.

Earlier in the day, J&K's Abdul Samad completed his second century of the match and was not out on 108 when skipper Paras Dogra effected a challenging declaration at 270/7 after an hour's play on the final day to push for a win.

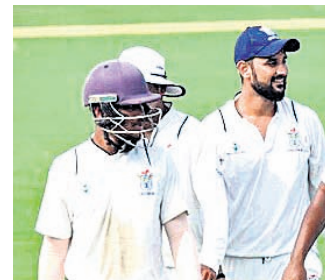
Free-stroking Samad, who had



compiled 127 off 117 balls in the first innings, stroked a run-a-ball unbeaten century, striking 5 fours and 6 sixes. The 22-year-old right-hander was adjudged Player of the Match.

Odisha showed no inclination to chase an outright win, and adopted a safety-first approach to try and ensure 3 points.

But they were in trouble before long, and kept losing wickets



without any partnership developing and the scoreboard moving at a snail's pace. After openers Shantanu Mishra (6 off 25 balls) and Anurag Sarangi (1 off 15) fell by the eighth over, Kartik Biswal quickly followed them back to the pavilion.

Skipper Govinda Poddar, who scored a brilliant 133 not out in the first innings, spent some time at the crease before being dismissed for 9 off 33 balls.

Biplab Samantaray (12 off 68) tried to give Pattnaik support, with the fifth-wicket pair negotiating 20 overs. The lower-order batters tried their best to stay at the crease in Pattnaik's company, with Rajesh Mohanty facing 60 balls for his 13, Ashishwad Swain 24 balls for 2 runs and Sumit Sharma 29 balls for 2.

Their ultra-defensive batting ultimately helped Odisha steal a draw.

Odisha had been awarded one point in their season opener against Tripura, which was abandoned without a ball bowled.

OFC back in ISL action as East Bengal FC visit



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: East Bengal FC will visit the Kalinga Stadium for the first game after the October international break of the Indian Super League 2024-25 season, as Odisha FC look to start with a winning run.

Odisha FC have had a disappointing start to the season with just one win in four games so far and will look to take advantage of East Bengal's purple patch that has kept the visitors winless this season.

Last season, East Bengal gave the home team an early scare by taking a lead in the first minute, before Diego Mauricio slotted home the equalizer from the spot in the 40th minute and Princeton scored off Jahouh's corner to complete the comeback for the Kalinga warriors.

The return of Carlos Delgado and Saviour Gama to training

will come as a huge boost to Odisha FC, who will hope the defenders will play some part.

In the pre-match press conference held at the Kalinga Stadium, Head Coach Sergio Lobera emphasized the importance of Odisha FC's clash. "We are approaching the game as we always do, aiming for three crucial points. While it's a special game for our fans, our focus remains the same - to put our best performance on the field. Our opponents are strong and despite their current position in the table, it doesn't reflect their true quality. It will be a challenging game, but we are confident, especially playing at home. We need to continue working in the best possible way, and hopefully, we can secure these vital points."

The match will kick off at 7:30 PM at the Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar.

ARCHERY WC FINAL

Deepika bags silver as campaign ends

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tlaxcala (Mexico), Oct 21: India's premier recurve archer Deepika Kumari won her fifth silver medal at the World Cup Final after losing the summit clash 0-6 to China's Li Jiaman, here.

Returning to the World Cup Final after three years following the birth of her daughter in December 2022, four-time Olympian Deepika was seeded third in the eight-archer field.

She had a smooth run through the semifinals but probably the pressure of gold medal match got to her against fourth-seed Li Jiaman, a team silver medalist from the Paris Olympics.

It was Deepika's ninth appearance at the World Cup Final where she has also bagged a bronze.

Dola Banerjee is the only Indian archer to have won a gold in the World Cup Final, having topped the podium in Dubai 2007.

In the men's recurve section, Dhiraj Bommadevara, despite leading 4-2, could not hold off the challenge from South Korea's Paris Olympics bronze medalist, Lee Woo Seok in the opening round and made an early exit.

The five-member Indian contingent, comprising three compound and two recurve archers, thus concluded their season-ending World Cup Final campaign with just one medal.

SOCIAL CAUSE

Women football players protest FIFA-Aramco deal

PLAYERS HIGHLIGHT SAUDI ARABIA'S RECORD ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND LGBTQ+ PEOPLE AND THE IMPACT OF ARAMCO'S OIL AND GAS PRODUCTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Zurich, Oct 21: Former US national team captain Becky Sauerbrunn and Netherlands forward Vivianne Miedema are among more than 100 women's

football players who have signed an open letter protesting FIFA's sponsorship deal with Saudi Arabia's oil giant Aramco.

The letter calls the deal, which includes sponsorship at the 2027 Women's World Cup in Brazil, "much worse than an own goal," citing Saudi Arabia's record on the rights of women and LGBTQ+ people and the impact of Aramco's oil and gas production on climate change.

Sauerbrunn voiced concern for women who are imprisoned in Saudi Arabia.

"The safety of those women, the rights of women, LGBTQ+ rights and the health of the planet need to take a much bigger priority over FIFA making more money," Sauerbrunn said



in comments via campaign group Athletes Of The World.

The letter calls on FIFA to replace Aramco "with alternative

The safety of those women, the rights of women, LGBTQ+ rights and the health of the planet need to take a much bigger priority over FIFA making more money

BECKY SAUERBRUNN | FORMER CAPTAIN, US

voice on the ethical implications of future sponsorship deals.

"This letter shows that as players this is what we don't want to stand for and accept within women's football. It's simple: this sponsorship is contradicting FIFA's own commitments to human rights and the planet," Miedema said.

FIFA's deal with Aramco was announced in April as part of ever-closer ties between Saudi Arabia and world soccer's governing body. FIFA is expected to confirm Saudi Arabia as host of the 2034 men's World Cup in December. It is the only candidate for the tournament.

"FIFA values its partnership with Aramco and its many others commercial and rights partners. FIFA is an inclusive organisation with many commercial partners also supporting other organizations in football and other sports," world football's governing body said in an emailed statement Monday, adding that commercial revenue is reinvested into developing women's football.