



Ananya's wish

Ananya Panday shares her aspirations to take on some of Kareena Kapoor's most iconic characters

LEISURE | P2



Aid to Gaza hit

UN agency for Palestinian refugees halts aid deliveries through the main cargo crossing into Gaza Strip

INTERNATIONAL | P10



GST collection up

Gross GST collections grow 8.5% to over ₹1.82 lakh crore in November on higher revenues from domestic transactions

BUSINESS | P11



Title drought ends

PV Sindhu ends her title drought since 2022 by emerging champion in women's singles at the Syed Modi Int'l tourney

SPORTS | P12

'Bhubaneswar' to rule Bargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Dec 1: Bhubaneswar Pradhan from Sarla village in this district will rule over the Mathura-turned Bargarh town in the upcoming 'Dhanu Yatra', the largest open-air theatre in the world, as he was selected Sunday to portray the role of demon king 'Kansa'. The mythical extravaganza will commence

DHANU YATRA January 3, 2025, and continue for 11 days.

In preparation for this much-awaited festival, the selection process for the role took place Sunday at Biju Patnaik Town Hall here. Among the candidates, Bhubaneswar Pradhan secured the top position, earning the opportunity to enact 'Kansa' character. Pradhan is no stranger to this iconic role, having performed in previous editions of the popular festival and winning hearts with his stellar performance.

Notably, Hrushikesh Bhoi, the previous actor playing Kansa, was disqualified for the role owing to a controversy over allegations of accepting bribes from bereaved families for transporting deceased's body in the Mahaprayana (hearse) vehicle.



PRAYERS FOR PROTEST: Members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) and devotees chant devotional songs during a protest against the arrest of Hindu spiritual leader Chinmoy Krishna Das in Bangladesh, in Bangalore, Karnataka, Sunday

PM concerned over threats from digital frauds, deepfakes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday expressed concern over the potential threats generated on account of digital frauds, cybercrimes and AI technology, particularly the potential of deepfake to disrupt social and familial relations.

Addressing the concluding session of the 59th All India Conference of Director Generals/ Inspector Generals of Police, the Prime Minister also called for the use of technology to reduce the workload of the police constabulary and suggested that the police station be made the focal point for resource allocation.

Modi noted that wide-ranging discussions had been held on national and international dimensions of security challenges and expressed satisfaction on the counter strategies that emerged during the conference, an official statement said.

As a counter measure to the potential threats generated by digital frauds, cybercrimes and AI technology, the Prime Minister called on the police leadership to convert the challenge into an opportunity by harnessing India's double AI power of artificial intelligence and Aspirational India.

He expanded the mantra of SMART policing and called on the police to become strategic, meticulous, adaptable, reliable and transparent.

The SMART policing idea was introduced by the PM at the 2014 conference in Guwahati. It envisaged systemic changes to transform the Indian police to be Strict and Sensitive, Modern and Mobile, Alert and Accountable, Reliable and Responsive, Tech-savvy and Trained (SMART).

Trump threatens BRICS

AGENCIES

Washington, Dec 1: President-elect Donald Trump Saturday warned BRICS countries against any move to replace the US dollar and has sought a commitment from the nine-member group that includes India, Russia, China, and Brazil.

BRICS, formed in 2009, is the only major international group of which the United States is not a part. Its other members are South Africa, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, and the United Arab Emirates. Turkey, Azerbaijan and Malaysia have applied to become members and several other countries have expressed interest in joining.

Over the past few years a few of its member countries, in particular Russia and China, are seeking an alternative to the US Dollar or create own BRICS currency. India has so far not been part of the move.

Trump Saturday warned BRICS nations against such a move. "The idea that the BRICS Countries are trying to move

away from the Dollar while we stand by and watch is OVER (sic)," the president-elect said in a post on Truth Social, a platform owned by him.

"We require a commitment from these Countries that they will neither create a new BRICS Currency, nor back any other Currency to replace the mighty U.S. Dollar or, they will face 100% Tariffs and should expect to say goodbye to selling into the wonderful U.S. Economy (sic)," Trump warned.

"They can go find another 'sucker!' There is no chance that the BRICS will replace the US Dollar in International Trade, and any Country that tries should wave goodbye to America (sic)," he said.

While the US dollar is by far the most-used currency in global business and has survived past challenges to its preeminence, members of the alliance and other developing nations say they are fed up with America's dominance of the global financial system.

The dollar represents rough-

DE-DOLLARISATION



ly 58 per cent of the world's foreign exchange reserves, according to the IMF and major commodities like oil are still primarily bought and sold using dollars.

The dollar's dominance is threatened, however, with BRICS' growing share of GDP and the alliance's intent to trade in non-dollar currencies—a process known as de-dollarisation.

At the 2023 summit in South Africa, BRICS countries committed to study the feasibility of a new common currency. A proposal in this regard was made by the Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula de Silva. India, an important pillar of

They can go find another 'sucker!' There is no chance that the BRICS will replace the US Dollar in International Trade, and any Country that tries should wave goodbye to America

DONALD TRUMP | PRES-ELECT, US

BRICS, has said it is against de-dollarisation.

"At times India has expressed interest in alternative currency. It can serve as a reserve mechanism. I wonder how do you see that right now, what you see as the role of the dollar and these discussions about your national policy," India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had said during his appearance at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace this fall.

"I think you have us confused for someone else because we have never actively targeted the dollar. That's not part of either our economic policy or our

political or our strategic policy. Some others may have," Jaishankar said.

"What I will tell you is a natural concern there. We often have trade partners who do not have dollars to take. So, we now have to look at whether we forgo dealings with them or do we find some settlement which works otherwise. So, there's no, I can say malicious intent vis-a-vis the dollar in business. We are trying to do our business," he said.

"Sometimes you make it difficult in the use of dollars. We have some trade partners with whom trade in dollars becomes difficult because of your policies. We have to obviously look for workarounds. But for us, as we spoke about rebalancing, we spoke about multiple obviously all of this is also going to reflect on currencies and economic needs," said the External Affairs Minister October 1 this year.

Research shows that the US dollar's role as the primary global reserve currency is not threatened in the near future.

7 Maoists killed in gunfight with Telangana police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Dec 1: Seven Maoists, including a key leader of the outlawed group with a ₹20 lakh bounty on his head, were killed in an exchange of fire with the police in Mulugu district of Telangana Sunday morning, police said.

Among those killed was Kursam Mangu alias Bhadraru, a Telangana state committee member and the Yellandu-Narsampet area committee secretary of the banned CPI (Maoist), along with a woman cadre, they said, adding that six of the seven slain Maoists were natives of Chhattisgarh.

The exchange of fire took place during a combing operation in the Chalpaka forest area of Eturnagaram mandal, involving Greyhounds, an elite anti-Naxal force of Telangana Police, and the Maoists. The operation was ongoing at the time. Superintendent of Police Shabarish P said that two AK-47 rifles were among the weapons seized from the scene.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The clock that Mahayuti has does not tick

Actor eats live pig on stage, sparks outrage



POST NEWS NETWORK

Hinjilicut, Dec 1: In a shocking display of inhuman behaviour, an actor consuming a live pig on the stage during a drama performance has sparked widespread outrage in the state.

During a stage performance at Ralaba village under this block in Ganjam district, the performers were seen brutally slaughtering and consuming a pig. A video of the event, held November 24, has gone viral on social media platforms, drawing strong reactions from various quarters. The video also showed venomous snakes being used on the stage.

The event occurred during

Climate change: ICJ to take up its largest case ever

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Hague, Dec 1: The top United Nations court will take up the largest case in its history Monday, when it opens two weeks of hearings into what countries worldwide are legally required to do to combat climate change and help vulnerable nations fight its devastating impact.

After years of lobbying by island nations who fear they could simply disappear under rising sea waters, the UN General Assembly asked the International Court of Justice last year for an opinion on "the obligations of States in respect of climate change."

"We want the court to confirm that the conduct that has wrecked the climate is unlawful," Margaretha Wewerinke-Singh, who is leading the legal team for the Pacific island nation of Vanuatu, told The Associated Press.

In the decade up to 2023, sea levels have risen by a global

average of around 4.3 centimetres, with parts of the Pacific rising higher still. The world has also warmed 1.3 degrees Celsius since pre-industrial times because of the burning of fossil fuels.

Vanuatu is one of a group of small states pushing for international legal intervention in the climate crisis.

"We live on the front lines of climate change impact. We are witnesses to the destruction of our lands, our livelihoods, our culture and our human rights," Vanuatu's climate change envoy Ralph Regenvanu told reporters ahead of the hearing.

Any decision by the court would be non-binding advice

and unable to directly force wealthy nations into action to help struggling countries. Yet it would be more than

From today, the Hague based court will hear from 99 countries and more than a dozen intergovernmental organisations over two weeks

It's the largest lineup in the institution's nearly 80-year history

just a powerful symbol since it could serve as the basis for other legal actions, including domestic lawsuits.

On Sunday, ahead of the hearing, advocacy groups will bring together environmental organisations from around the world. Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change — who first developed the idea of requesting an advisory opinion — together with World Youth for Climate Justice plan an afternoon of speeches, music and discussions.

From Monday, the Hague-based

court will hear from 99 countries and more than a dozen intergovernmental organisations over two weeks. It's the largest lineup in the institution's nearly 80-year history.

Last month at the United Nations' annual climate meeting, countries cobbled together an agreement on how rich countries can support poor countries in the face of climate disasters. Wealthy countries have agreed to pool together at least \$300 billion a year by 2035 but the total is short of the \$1.3 trillion that experts, and threatened nations, said is needed.

Fifteen judges from around the world will seek to answer two questions: What are countries obliged to do under international law to protect the climate and environment from human-caused greenhouse gas emissions? And what are the legal consequences for governments where their acts, or lack of action, have significantly harmed the climate and environment?

leisure



JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE CANCELS THIRD SHOW

Singer Justin Timberlake has cancelled another show of his ongoing 'Forget Tomorrow World Tour' following a back injury and citing doctors' instructions. Timberlake shared a health update on Instagram saying the December 2 show in Oklahoma City was being called off.

RUPERT GRINT TO PAY \$2.3M TAX BILL

Rupert Grint, widely recognised for his role as Ron Weasley in the Harry Potter films, has been ordered to pay \$2.3 million (Rs 19 crore) after losing a long-running dispute with the UK tax authorities. The decision follows a legal dispute that began in 2019.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
 Your dream to make it big may culminate this evening and you will have to make a dash for it. However, you will also do your utmost to resist quick choices. Ganesha says whatever the consequences, you will choose wisely.

TAURUS
 Physical and mental fitness will top your priority list today. You are likely to take special interest in working out and doing mental exercise, predicts Ganesha. Keep up the hard work and the efforts today will pay rich dividends in future. You will have a fabulous time with your loved one tonight, hopes Ganesha.

GEMINI
 You are likely to throw a small treat for your relatives. Though the rest of the day will be spent cleaning the utensils and putting the place in order, you will manage to get some time for your friends, maybe by arranging a slumber party. A day full of partying and post-party cleaning, except for the evening yoga classes.

CANCER
 Today, you are likely to exhibit tremendous patience while dealing with your loved ones. Giving them a patient ear is your way of saying that you care. Some may, however, think otherwise. But that's your problem, says Ganesha. At work, you will make plans and ensure a smooth implementation of those plans.

LEO
 The stars bring out the best in the artist hidden inside you. It may not be a Picasso or a Rembrandt, but nonetheless, today, your work shall stand out as exceptional. Ganesha foresees an afternoon spent in making use of the excellent communication and oratorical skills that you possess.

VIRGO
 A day to don both - those trainers and that thinking cap. Exercise those muscles and that mass of grey cells, says Ganesha. Work hard and you'll get paid rich dividends for it. A romantic tryst with your loved one promises to end the day on a high note.

LIBRA
 Today, it's a straight path to success, thanks to your straightforward manner. Ganesha foresees some small things that may trouble you in a big way early on in the day. But negotiate around them, and then it's all smooth sailing from there on. On the business front, expect to roll in money from diverse sources.

SCORPIO
 Ganesha advises you to practice caution today. There may be a lot of people who may be green with envy as you are better than them in every way. Words of wisdom by you may not only change their opinion about you, but also win you accolades in social circles.

SAGITTARIUS
 Those into aerobics and callisthenics will find themselves on the top of their game today. Expect a sudden turn of events sometime from afternoon. Ganesha sees you prowling the corridors of power at work today. You shall synchronise your career and family superbly.

CAPRICORN
 The heaps of files waiting to get disposed of may finally reach your desk. You will be prompt in dealing with pending work, and will get all the support you need from your subordinates, says Ganesha. For those engaged in business, keep your vigil, especially while dealing with your competitors. You have the potential to beat them in their own game.

AQUARIUS
 Life reveals itself to you in the simplest of things today. It will dawn upon you that you have a lot going for yourself, personally and professionally. This appreciation reflects in the small considerations that you show to your loved ones. This is perfection, asserts Ganesha.

PISCES
 You will be in pursuit of educational and intellectually stimulating activities today, says Ganesha. Novel business proposals are likely to crop up in the afternoon. Your magnetism is likely to net you a date later in the evening.

Konark Dance Festival begins

KONARK: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated the annual Konark Dance Festival and International Sand Art Festival in Puri Sunday.

Majhi, along with Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida, who is also in-charge of the Tourism department, lighted the ceremonial lamp.

The five-day festival is being hosted by Tourism department, in collaboration with Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi (OSNA) and Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC).

The opening evening at the festival celebrated India's rich classical dance traditions. The event commenced with an Odissi dance recital by Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, followed by Kathak performance by Malti Shyam and group from New Delhi.

The Odissi performance began with a soulful invocation to Lord Jagannath, based on Sri Jagannath Astakam by Adi Shankaracharya. It transitioned into 'Bhavranga' and 'Shakti', narrating tales of divine power and the dynamic energy of Lord Shiva embodied in the feminine form of Shakti, the statement said.

The performance was choreographed by Guru Lingaraj Pradhan and Guru Pankaj Kumar Pradhan and music com-



SCINTILLATING SHOW: Artists from Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, Bhubaneswar perform Odissi during the inaugural day of 35th Konark Festival at open air auditorium, Konark in Puri district Sunday

posed by Bijay Kumar Jena and Bijay Kumar Barik.

Kathak dance recital and Nartan Manjari were performed by Malti Shyam's group, celebrating the eternal bond between the divine and the devotee through intricate rhythms and fluid movements. The dance was choreographed by Malti Shyam, it said.

Simultaneously, the 14th International Sand Art Festival transformed the pristine Chan-

drabhaga beach into a canvas of creativity. It featured 129 celebrated sand artistes, including eight international participations from the UK, Mexico, Germany, Japan, Russia, Portugal, Spain, and Sri Lanka.

The festival highlighted this year's thematic masterpieces alongside contributions from artistes representing Odisha and seven other Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra

Pradesh, Telangana, Gujarat, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. A total of 35 sand art creations were made on the themes of women empowerment, Odia asmita (pride) and world heritage and monuments.

The Konark Festival is being live streamed across Odisha Tourism's social media platforms and telecast live on DD Bharati from December 1 to 5.



MUMBAI: Singer-songwriter Dua Lipa surprised the audiences at her Mumbai concert when she pulled off a stunner with a mash-up of her song *Levitating* and *Wo Ladki Jo Sabse Alag Hai* from the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer *Baadshah*.

Dua pulls off SRK stunner

The mash-up is a viral hit, and was created by DJ Ruchir. Dua Lipa performed at MMRDA Grounds in Bandra Kurla Complex as a part of Zomato Feeding India Concert.

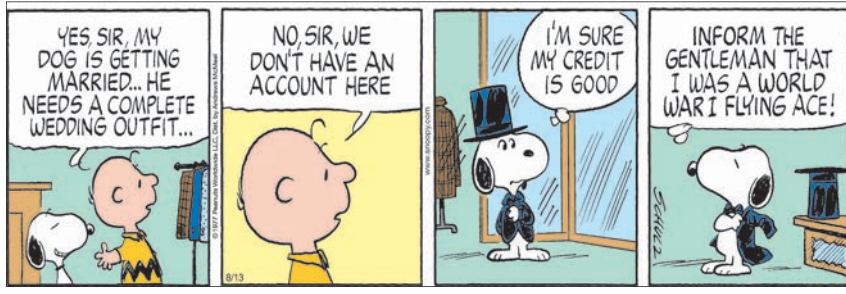
A few days ago, Dua spoke about the mash-up of

her song *Levitating* with *Wo Ladki Jo Sabse Alag Hai*. She admitted that she also heard the viral track at the time and was "blown away" by it. She called the mashup "amazing".

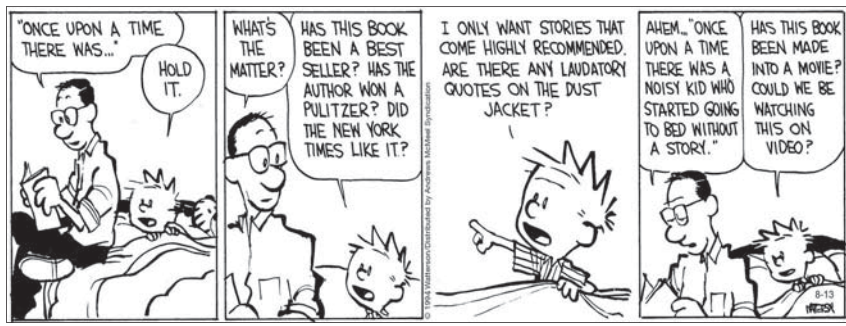
Dua earlier came to India for a holiday in Rajasthan where she made the most of her holiday as she went completely unnoticed. Indian playback singer Jonita Gandhi opened Dua's set November 30. Dua Lipa is one of the most loved singers of the current generation. Her accolades include seven Brit Awards and three Grammy Awards.

She released her eponymous debut album in 2017, which peaked at number three on the UK Albums Chart and spawned the singles *Be the One*, *IDGAF* and the UK number-one single *New Rules*. She was honoured with the Brit Awards for British Female Solo Artist and British Breakthrough Act in 2018.

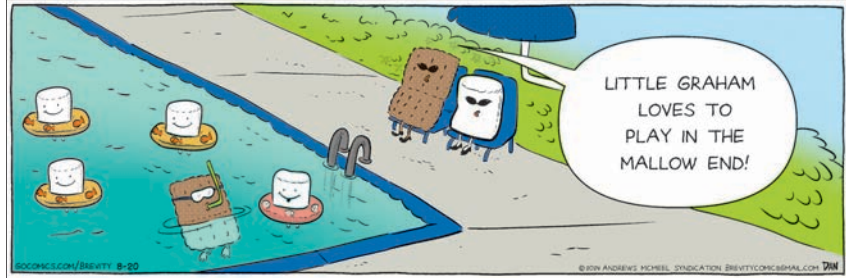
PEANUTS



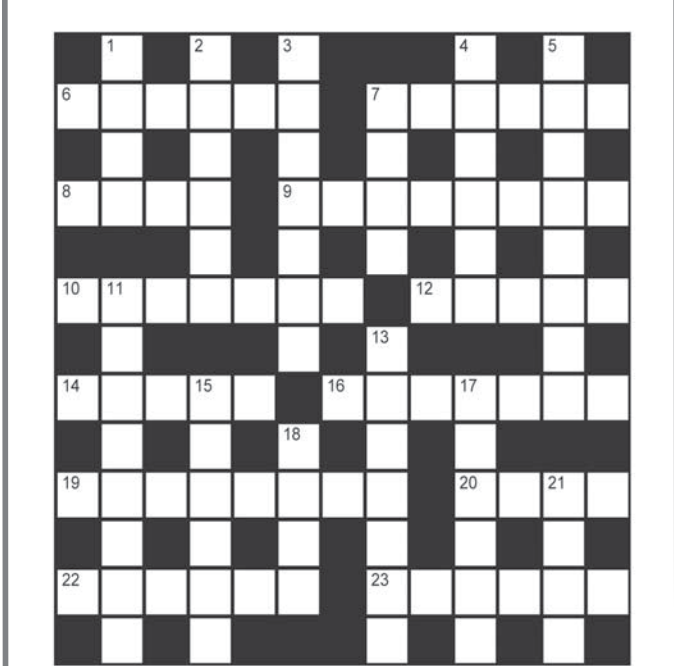
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



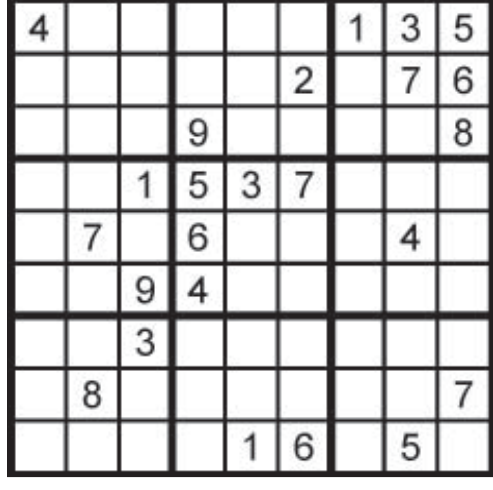
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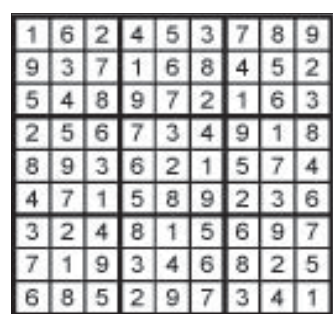
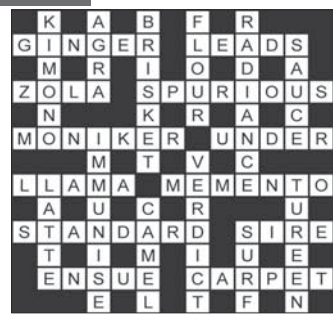
- Across**
- 6 Hunting expedition
 - 7 Pigeon hawk
 - 8 Tight
 - 9 Foot soldiers
 - 10 Farm equipment
 - 12 Upbraid
 - 14 Proverb
 - 16 It may have many legs
 - 19 Fire starter
 - 20 Knocks
 - 22 Provolone
 - 23 Maple droppings
 - Down**
 - 1 Tibetan monk
 - 2 Maneuver
 - 3 Go-between
 - 4 Recipe direction
 - 5 Gruel
 - 7 Small high-pitched flute
 - 11 The signal to stop (3,5)
 - 13 More or less
 - 15 Contraption
 - 17 Religious ceremony
 - 18 Calamitous
 - 21 James Hogg, e.g.

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

BUDDING AUTHORS

Odia Media Private Limited presents 'Pen In Books Young Author Award 2024' to winners at a City hotel Sunday



Burglars loot ₹30L from four flats



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: Drilling holes into the much-hyped security build up for the All-India DGP/IGP conference here, burglars broke into four flats at an upscale residential apartment on the City outskirts in the wee hours of Sunday, and decamped with cash and valuables worth over ₹30 lakh.

The audacious crime has raised serious concerns over security set up at apartments that have long been easy targets for burglars.

According to reports, the incident occurred at 'Bisal Gardens' apartment near Uttara Square under Pipli police station. The burglars allegedly gained entry into the residential complex by breaking the lock of the en-

try gate. The miscreants then plundered the four flats located in two blocks of the residential complex. Those include flat No-304, 107 and 212 in 'E' block, and Flat No-206 in 'A' block.

Significantly, the incident came close on the heels of three apartment burglaries reported in the City in the last one week.

Expressing anguish over the dismal state of security at Bisal Gardens, Debendra Prasad Rath, a resident, said the apartment's boundary walls are yet to be constructed. "It has been four years since we moved to our flat here, but the developer is yet to construct the boundary walls.

Besides, the apartment is not fully covered by CCTV surveillance despite multiple complaints. On top of this, just one guard has been deployed to look after the security of the entire complex," he said, adding that only one CCTV has been put up at the main entrance.

Meanwhile, the police have launched an investigation into the incident and are scanning footage from the lone CCTV to identify the burglars.

Inmates have raised concern over security at the apartment as a boundary wall is yet to be built



SHOW OF STRENGTH: Naval cadets conduct a rehearsal ahead of Navy Day celebrations at Blue Flag Beach in Puri, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Min: 300 truckloads of UP potatoes arriving today

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: Potato prices in the state will be stabilised soon after arrival of 300 trucks loaded with the tuber from Uttar Pradesh Monday, Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra said here Sunday.

The state government started procuring potatoes from Uttar Pradesh after the neighbouring West Bengal stopped transportation of the tuber to Odisha, the minister said.

Claiming that potato prices have been controlled within ₹35 a kg in the retail market, the minister said the prices will go back to normal rates after Monday.

Asked about the high prices of potatoes at markets, Patra



said stringent action would be taken against those involved in the black marketing of potatoes in the state.

The minister came down heavily on the West Bengal government for "stopping potato supply to Odisha".

"West Bengal has a stock of 7 lakh metric tonne of potatoes while its requirement is about 5 lakh tonne. Therefore, they can

supply the remaining 2 lakh metric tonne to neighbouring states. But West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has stopped the supply for no reason," Patra said.

The minister said the West Bengal government should reconsider its decision and supply potatoes to other states.

"One should help others. However, that is not happening here in case of potatoes. One state may have good production of rice and another may be producing more onion. The additional food grains should be provided to states where the requirement is high," the minister said.

Potato traders in Bengal may face a huge loss if their products are not supplied to other states, he added.

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: The 59th All-India DGP-IGP conference, which was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, among others, concluded here Sunday amid tight security.

City Police Commissioner Suresh Devadatta Singh said, "Amid potential threats, fool-proof security blanket was ensured during the event."

While Shah inaugurated the conference at Lok Seva Bhawan November 29, Prime Minister Modi chaired the meetings Saturday and Sunday.

After spending three days in the Capital City, both the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister departed for Delhi from Biju Patnaik International Airport.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and DGPs of all the states and Union territories at-



tended the conference.

Sources said the conference deliberated on several security-related issues apart from chalking out roadmaps to counter existing and emerging national security challenges such as left-wing extremism, coastal security, narcotics, cybercrime and economic security.

The conference also discussed the implementation

of the new criminal laws and initiatives and best practices in policing.

Odisha Police had made elaborate security arrangements amid threats from extremist groups.

Khalistani separatist leader Gurbhawan Singh Pannun had Saturday sent a threat mail to city-based journalist Akshay Sahu, exhorting his followers

to disrupt the ongoing All-India DGP-IGP conference. Pannun had warned to disrupt flight services in the City, asking people to stop flying from and to Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA).

Earlier, Pannun had referred Bhubaneswar as 'Terror City', and said 'Modi-Shah-Doval' evil axis has brought the biggest security threat to the City.

Man sets son ablaze; daughter-in-law dies

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, Dec 1: In a shocking incident fueled by a familial dispute over money, a man reportedly poured petrol on his son and set him on fire, resulting in the death of his daughter-in-law and critical injuries to his son. The harrowing incident occurred at Godisahi Barasinga village under this police limits Saturday night.

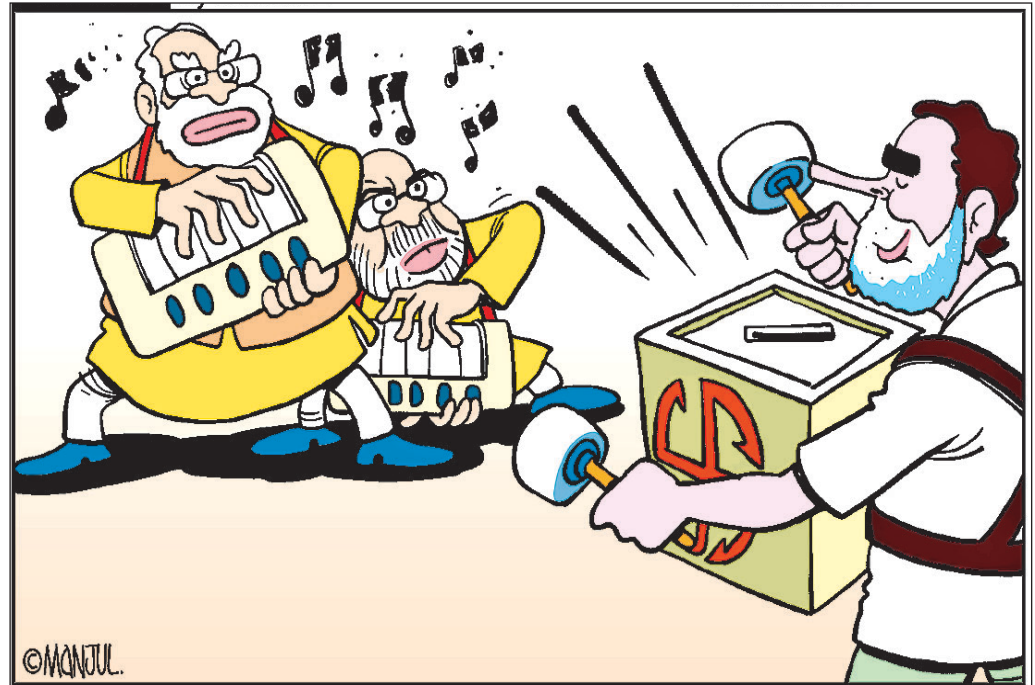
According to reports, accused Gobardhan Rout, under the influence of alcohol, attacked his son Dinabandhu after a heated argument over financial issues. Gobardhan demanded money from Dinabandhu, who had refused to comply, citing that he had recently given him ₹5,000 earlier. The dispute escalated into a verbal altercation, during which Gobardhan fetched petrol and set his son ablaze. Dinabandhu's wife Sasmita rushed to save him but got caught in the flames.

Meanwhile, their three-year-old son, who was playing in the room, was rescued by his grandmother. Hearing the screams, neighbours rushed to the scene and extinguished the blaze with water before rescuing both victims.

The critically injured duo was taken to a private hospital in Cuttack and later shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) for advanced treatment.

However, Sasmita succumbed to her injuries Sunday morning, while Dinabandhu continues to battle for his life at SCBMCH. Accused Gobardhan attempted to hide on the roof of the house but was apprehended by Barang police.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



NHRC NOTICE TO GOVT OVER KEONJHAR DENGUE DEATHS

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, Dec 1: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued a notice to the Principal Secretary of the state Health & Family Welfare (H&FW) department, seeking a detailed report on the lack of healthcare facilities in Keonjhar district.

The notice was prompted by a petition filed by rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

The apex human rights panel of India passed the order last week, following concerns raised by the petitioner about the dire condition of health-

care in Keonjhar, where residents are reportedly dying of dengue due to inadequate care and treatment at the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) and medical college.

Keonjhar is the home district of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

The petition highlighted a news report from October 2, which detailed the death of 37-year-old Biri Biswakarma October 1 due to dengue, alongside several other affected residents.

Tripathy argued that despite the presence of a medical college and a super-specialty



district hospital, poor tribal patients often die without proper treatment or are referred to facilities in other regions.

Keonjhar, one of India's highest mining royalty-paying dis-

Min: Zero new HIV target for 2030

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar/Berhampur, Dec 1: The state government has set a target to ensure no new case of HIV infection by 2030 and is leaving no stone unturned to combat acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) by spreading awareness about the infectious disease, said Health and Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling Sunday.

The state has recorded around 50,000 active AIDS cases so far, said the minister while speaking on the occasion of World AIDS Day, Sunday.

"The state is witnessing a steady decline in the number of AIDS patients. The government aims at achieving zero new infection by 2030," Mahaling said.

Noting that AIDS cases were detected in all the 30 districts of the state, the minister said Ganjam accounts for the highest number of infections at 19,155



while Subarnapur reports the lowest at 146.

Stating that the Health department has stepped up efforts to ensure that "no new HIV cases emerge by 2030", the minister said the government is implementing preventive measures and raising awareness to achieve the goal.

AIDS is the late stage of HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) infection that occurs when the body's immune system is badly damaged because of the virus.

He said the state government would appoint 250 radiographers in government hospitals

as part of its efforts to strengthen healthcare infrastructure.

They are expected to bring significant improvements in diagnostic services, he said.

HIV infection was first detected in the migrant-prone Ganjam district with annually over 1,000 people tested positive for the virus. The rate of the positivity of HIV infection in the district, however, has been declining for the last five years.

But Ganjam still has the highest number of cases in the state, said Bijay Kumar Panda, chief district medical officer (CDMO).

The petitioner highlighted how, despite the presence of a medical college and a super-specialty district hospital, poor tribal patients often die without proper treatment

blood samples have to be sent to Cuttack or Bhubaneswar to confirm the presence of the dengue virus, a time-consuming process that has led to an increase in deaths.

The complainant urged the commission to intervene and take remedial action to safeguard the health and lives of residents. The petition also referenced a Supreme Court ruling that recognises the right to health as part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution.

The NHRC has directed the authorities to take necessary action and submit a report within four weeks. A copy of the order has been sent to the Chief Secretary for further action and information.

NGT notice to Govt over Luna river encroachment

Tribunal issues notice over alleged encroachment and unauthorised construction by Rajbir Construction Pvt Ltd on Luna riverbed in Kendrapara district



of the NGT, while hearing a petition by Alaya Samantary, a resident of Marshaghai, directed the authorities to submit replies within four weeks. The petitioner alleged that Rajbir Construction, the contractor for a 21km stretch of NH-53 (Chandikhole-Pa-radeep), had illegally encroached upon the floodplain of the Luna river and set up site camps, batching plants, and structures for parking vehicles and machinery.

that illegal constructions were taking place on Plot No. 705/861 (18.74 acres) and Plot No. 333 (21.6 acres), with no clearance from the Water Resources Department or the Tahasildar of Marshaghai.

The petitioner pointed out that an April 2024 letter from the Assistant Executive Engineer, Patkura Irrigation Sub-Division, to the Tahasildar flagged these unauthorised activities

The construction activities, including dumping sand and stone chips, have been disrupting the river's flow and harming the ecosystem

but no action was taken. Similarly, a May 2024 communication from the Superintendent Engineer, Kendrapara Irrigation, urging a joint inspection of the area also yielded no response.

An RTI query to the Odisha State Pollution Control Board revealed that Rajbir Construction had not been issued a Consent to Establish (CTE) or Consent to Operate (CTO). The tribunal has scheduled the next hearing for January 27, 2025, to further consider the matter.

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has served a notice to the Chief Secretary, requesting a response to a petition challenging the encroachment of the Luna riverbed at Badapal in the Marshaghai Tahasil of Kendrapara district by Rajbir Construction Pvt Ltd, Jharkhand.

The Forest and Environment department, District Magistrate Kendrapara, Marshaghai Tahasildar, Odisha State Pollution Control Board, State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), and the Water Resources department were also included as respondents.

The Eastern Zone Bench

I'm being sidelined in BJP: Jayanarayan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: Former minister and BJP MLA Jayanarayan Mishra has alleged that he has been sidelined in the saffron party and feels like having no significance in the organisation.

Speaking at a meeting to condole the demise of veteran BJP leader Samir Dey Saturday evening, Mishra alleged that he was being neglected by the party. He said Dey, during his lifetime, was denied due importance in the party and now he is also facing a similar situation. "I am being treated in a similar manner," Mishra said, adding that he was thrown out of ABVP in the past. He claimed that he has been of "no significance for the party now".

The Sambalpur MLA alleged that leaders in the party are using their henchmen to put him into trouble. "This is a foolproof plan against me," he said. Rejecting Mishra's allegation, Odisha BJP president Manmohan Samal said no one is sidelined in the party. "All workers and leaders in BJP get equal importance," Samal said.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Mrs. Dinky Somani, aged about 24 years, W/o Lalit Somani, Resident of Maheswari Colony, Malkangiri, P.O./P.S./Dist.- Malkangiri do hereby solemnly affirm and state on oath as follows. That, my parental name is Dinky Tapariya. After my marriage with Mr. Lalit Somani, I am known as Dinky Somani and I use it in all purposes. Accordingly it has been mentioned in my Aadhaar Card. That Dinky Tapariya & Dinky Somani is one and same person i.e. myself. That, I swear this affidavit in order to produce before the concerned authority to ascertain my name as Dinky Somani.

ODISHA DISABILITY CONCLAVE 2024 Stress on promoting rights for persons with disabilities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: The Odisha Disability Conclave 2024 was held Sunday in Bhubaneswar, organised by Voluntary Integration for Education and Welfare of Society (VIEWS) and the Odisha Association for the Blind (OAB).

The event emphasised the need for an inclusive and accessible state for persons with disabilities (PwDs) ahead of International Day of Persons with Disabilities December 3.

The conclave aimed to unite policymakers, government officials, civil society organisations, and the media to discuss the effective implementation of disability rights laws and policies in Odisha. The event was inaugurated by SSEPD department deputy secretary Samyashi Behera in the presence of former state commissioner for persons with disabilities Kasturi Mohapatra, Cooperation department additional secretary Sushanta Panda, Azim Premji Foundation's Rajiv Kumar Raul, and OAB president Maheswar Rout.



In his welcome address, VIEWS executive director S Bheema Rao said, "The Odisha Disability Conclave 2024 provides a platform for key stakeholders to discuss the challenges faced by PwDs in Odisha. I am glad that over 200 participants from across the state attended, showing a strong commitment to this cause."

Behera emphasised the importance of meeting the basic needs of PwDs—food, clothing, and shelter—and highlighted that according to the 2011 Census, Odisha had over 1.14 million differently-abled people, with numbers expected to rise.

Referring to a recent Supreme Court ruling that affirmed accessibility for disabled persons as a fundamental right, he said, "Effective implementation is crucial to making this right meaningful, and we must work collectively to achieve it."



PROMOTING RIGHTS: Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities department Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi flags off the Walk-A-Thon from Sikharchandi Square to Dutee Chand Athletic Stadium, KIIT University in Bhubaneswar, Sunday, ahead of International Day of Persons with Disabilities Tuesday

TPSODL commissions 33kv line for IISER, Berhampur

Company enhances power infrastructure ensuring reliable and sustainable energy supply for academic and research purposes

AGENCIES

Berhampur, Dec 1: Tata Power Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) has commissioned a dedicated 33kv power supply line for the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) Berhampur, marking a significant milestone in strengthening the infrastructure for India's education and research sector.

IISER Berhampur's 200-acre campus in Laudigam, Ganjam, serves as an academic and cultural hub, accommodating over 800 students and 250 research scholars from across the country, making it a hub of acad-



ic and cultural synergy.

The newly commissioned power line spans 21km, with 16.6km of underground cabling and 4.88km of overhead lines, ensuring a continuous and reliable power supply to IISER's facilities. The underground system enhances climate resilience, reduces maintenance needs, and improves safety—crucial for a coastal institution like IISER Berhampur.

TPSODL prioritised safety and operational reliability throughout the project, implementing tree trimming

near power lines, clearing vegetation around key structures, fencing infrastructure, greasing isolator blades, and ensuring proper earthing of cable leads.

Additionally, bird guards were installed along the 33kv line to protect birds from electrocution while maintaining an uninterrupted power supply.

"Our commitment to sustainable energy solutions aligns with India's vision for a resilient and future-ready power sector," said TPSODL CEO Amit Kumar Garg.

25th Odisha Bigyan 'O' Paribesh Congress held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: The silver jubilee session of the Odisha Bigyan 'O' Paribesh Congress, themed 'Fostering Science for Holistic Development,' concluded Sunday with a valedictory function jointly organised by the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) and CSIR-Institute of Minerals

and Materials Technology (IMMT).

Presided over by OES President Sundara Narayana Patro, the event featured former BPUT vice-chancellor Omkar Nath Mohanty as the chief guest and RMRC Director Sanghamitra Pati as the guest of honour.

Addressing the gathering, Mohanty discussed the ad-

vancements in science and technology, stressing the need for a balanced and holistic approach to development by regulating the use of technology in human life. Highlighting the impact of scientific research, Pati cited the Covid epidemic as an example of how science can provide effective solutions to diverse human challenges.

SAI International empowers tomorrow's changemakers

Over 30,000 attendees experienced a dynamic and student-led cultural festival, marking one of India's largest

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: The 16th edition of Unwind-2024, organised by the SAI International Education Group, drew over 30,000 attendees in Bhubaneswar Sunday.

Themed "The Voyage of Hope," the event, curated by Class XI Commerce and Humanities students under the guidance of their mentors, showcased a blend of creativity, innovation, and leadership, solidifying its position as one of India's largest student-led cultural festivals.

Housing and Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra inaugurated the event, praising its impact on fostering entrepreneurial and leadership skills in students. "Unwind-2024 equips the next generation with critical thinking, inno-

vation, and leadership skills, fulfilling the visionary goals of founder Bijaya Kumar Sahoo," he remarked.

The festival, envisioned in 2008 by Sahoo to inspire creativity and critical thinking in young minds, has grown significantly under the leadership of SAI International Education Group chairperson Silpi Sahoo, who continues to champion experiential learning and the development of future leaders.

The festival offered a wide range of activities and experiences, including arcade games, e-sports competitions, adventure activities, and thrilling rides. Attendees were particularly drawn to a horror house and a Jack Sparrow-inspired theme park, which added excitement to the vibrant celebration.

Cultural performances enhanced the festive at-



Unwind-2024 equips the next generation with critical thinking, innovation, and leadership skills, fulfilling the visionary goals of founder Bijaya Kumar Sahoo

KRUSHNA CHANDRA MAHAPATRA | HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

mosphere, while engaging attractions like Nerf gun challenges and maze games entertained visitors of all ages. Informative lounges dedicated to the 100 Library Project, Cambridge-IGCSE, IBCP, and SAI International

Residential School further enriched the event, building strong rapport with parents and other attendees.

A key highlight of the festival was its philanthropic outreach. The festival team organised a special day out

for children from Aadruta Children's Home, a shelter supporting underprivileged children. They were treated to games, rides, and cultural performances, and also received books donated as part of the 100 library project, fostering a love for reading and holistic development.

Reflecting on the event's success, Sahoo expressed pride in the students' efforts, calling the festival a testament to SAI International's mission to nurture critical thinkers and innovative entrepreneurs. "Unwind-2024 exemplifies our vision of shaping the future of India and the world," she said.

The festival's unique combination of entertainment, learning, and social impact underscored its commitment to holistic education, leaving attendees inspired and energised.

Cong leader urges PM to fortify ECoR instead of delinking Waltair division

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: Former union minister and Congress leader Srikant Jena Sunday wrote to PM Narendra Modi, opposing the Central government's move to merge the Waltair division of ECoR with the new South Coast Railway (SCoR) zone.

He also urged the PM to take steps to fortify the East Coast Railway (ECoR), instead of dismantling its structure.

The BJD also opposed the Centre's move to delink the Waltair division of ECoR and merge it with the new railway zone, while the ruling BJP in Odisha claimed that the state would continue to have three divisions as earlier.

"I earnestly request your intervention to reconsider this decision and take steps to fortify ECoR rather than dismantle its core structure. I also appeal to you to ensure equitable treatment for Odisha by granting a more comprehensive railway zone in line with the demand of the people of Odisha," Jena wrote to the prime Minister.

Expressing deep concern over the plan to delink the Waltair division, Jena said this move has serious "implications on the operational and financial viability of ECoR".

The East Coast Railway has three divisions - Khurda Road, Sambalpur and Waltair. However, the authorities have planned to merge the Waltair division with the South Coast Railway (SCoR). The Congress leader said since its establishment in 1996, the ECoR has consistently ranked among the highest revenue contributors to Indian Railways.

The removal of the Waltair division will significantly "weaken ECoR, potentially jeopardising its operations and its critical role in Odisha's development", he alleged.

Jena also advocated merger of Sundargarh, Balasore, and Mayurbhanj districts into the East Coast Railway (ECoR) by establishing a new railway division in northern Odisha.

| WEATHER | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| | BBSR | CTC |
| Max Temp | 29.3° | 28.0° |
| Min Temp | 20.4° | 18.5° |
| Humidity | 59% | 69% |
| Rainfall | Nil | Nil |
| FORECAST Generally cloudy sky with light rain | | |

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

21 foreign sailors plead for freedom

MV Debi detained at Paradip port for over a year



immediate solution in sight, the fate of the vessel and the crew members remain shrouded in uncertainty.

For reference, MV Debi docked at the private berth operated by Paradip International Cargo Terminal (PICT) at Paradip Port November 30, 2023. Following routine Customs inspections and clearance, the loading of cargo onto the vessel commenced.

During the process, a crane malfunctioned, prompting the deployment of a mechanic for repairs. While the mechanic was working on the crane, 220 packets of cocaine, valued at an estimated ₹220 crore, was allegedly found. The discovery was immediately reported to Customs authorities. Since then, the ship has been detained at Paradip Port under the supervision of Customs department as the investigation into the drug bust continues.

The 21 Vietnamese crew members of the ship, anchored 5 kilometers off the coast in the designated anchorage area, continue to remain onboard the ship. The vessel periodically returns to the berth for essential supplies.

Sources said the prolonged year-long detention has taken a toll on the crew's mental health. In June this year, one of the crew members allegedly attempted suicide by jumping into the sea.

Meanwhile, PICT has approached the Odisha High Court, seeking relief regarding berth occupancy. The court has directed the ship's seizure as part of ongoing investigations. The vessel remains under Customs' jurisdiction while the case unfolds.

A representative from Vietnam visited Paradip to take stock of the crew members November 28. However, the Customs department reportedly refused him permission to enter the ship

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, Dec 1: Twenty-one crew members of cargo ship MV Debi, which has been detained at the Paradip Port's PCIT berth since November last year following seizure of cocaine worth ₹220 crore from the vessel, have sought their release citing prolonged detention.

On November 26 afternoon, the sailors, all from Vietnam – staged a sit-in demanding their immediate release when the vessel approached the port's MPB (multipurpose berth) for essential supplies, including water, fuel, and provisions for the crew.

According to reports, the sailors, who have been confined to the ship for two years now (one year in sailing and another year in detention), have ceased all operations and remain in the vessel. A representative from Vietnam had visited Paradip to take stock of the crew members November 28. However, the Customs department reportedly refused him permission to enter the ship.

Sources said the case has become a point of contention for Paradip port authorities, immigration officials, and Customs department. With no



BUDDING TALENTS: Students explain projects to visitors during the annual science, art and handicraft fair at RSP Ispat Vidya Mandir in Rourkela

No takers for RMC vending zones

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Dec 1: Aiming to support street vendors and decongest public roads, the Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) constructed three special vending zones under the National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM).

However, despite the expenditure of ₹3 crore, the initiative has largely failed, with vendors refusing to relocate to the designated zones.

During a survey in 2017, a large number of vendors were identified by NULM and reports submitted by the agency to the RMC. Based on the survey report, these vendors were provided financial aid during the Covid-19 pandemic. Subsequently, three vending zones were constructed in the first phase: one at Jail Road, another



near Raghunathpalli Police Station, and the third one close to Municipal College in Udit Nagar. Of these, only the Udit Nagar zone has partial occupancy, while the other two remain unused at present.

During the 2017 survey, the vendors were identified from areas such as Hanuman Vatika, Hockey Chowk, Birsa Munda Athletic Stadium, RMC

office and Ambedkar Chowk as beneficiaries. Following a public announcement March 28, 2023, RMC allocated spaces via a lottery.

Apart from the vegetable and fruit sellers, those selling fish got accommodated at Jail Road vending zone where there are 20 platforms allotted for them. Later on, RSP also constructed 21 platforms at Basanti Fish vend-

ing zone to clear the congestion on Ring Road near the busy DAV School Chowk.

Despite these efforts, most vendors have not moved to the designated zones, leading to the underutilization of these facilities.

The vending zones at Raghunathpalli and Jail Road were constructed at a cost of ₹3 crore. The Jail Road vending zone has 67 shops, 36 platforms and 30 open spaces. At Raghunathpalli vending zone there are 26 shops, 12 platforms and 8 open spaces.

Meanwhile, when contacted, RMC Commissioner and ADM Rourkela Ashutosh Kulkarni said, "The balance vacant shops are being put for tender. Enforcement is also made active to ensure allotted shop owners don't again sit on streets. It is a continuous process."

Dhenkanal, a haven for the gentle giants

With over 374 elephants distributed across its forest ranges, the district boasts of the largest population of these majestic animals in state, according to the recent census data

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Dec 1: The Dhenkanal Forest Division is a thriving sanctuary for elephants in the state, boasting the largest population of these majestic gentle giants, as confirmed by recent census data.

With over 374 elephants distributed across its forest ranges, the district has been referred to as the 'Home of Elephants'. Notably, the Hindol forest range alone is home to more than 200 elephants, showcasing a harmonious coexistence between humans and wildlife. The peaceful relationship is attributed to the community's non-aggressive stance towards elephants, and the district's increasing forest cover which provides a favourable habitat.

Elephants are found in significant numbers in Hindol, Sadar, Kapilas, Kamakhyanagar, Mahabirod, Sadangi, and the western and eastern (forest) ranges of the district. One critical area, the Sadar range, includes a designated 'Elephant Corridor' between the Meramandali-Dhenkanal railway stations, where herds frequently cross railway tracks. To mitigate risks, the Forest department has established coordination with the East Coast Railway's Khurda Road Division to restrict speed of passing trains to 30 km/h between 6pm and 6am.

To protect crops and address human-elephant conflict, the Forest department has employed innovative measures, such as deploying 'Airavat', a specialised vehicle equipped with tools to scare elephants away from human settlements. Moreover, Forest personnel remain vigilant, particularly for



'pakhala' (fermented rice) in households, and during the paddy harvest seasons, when the aroma of rice draws elephants closer to human settlements.

However, despite these efforts, incidents of human-elephant conflict persist. Over the past five years, 85 elephants and 120 people in the district have lost their lives in such encounters. Conservationists argue that the rise in elephant numbers will contribute to healthier forests and the creation of green belts, aligning with the Government of India's recognition of elephants as the national heritage animal.

In 2010, an elephant rescue

centre was set up on 25 hectares of land at the Kapilas Wildlife Sanctuary. The facility serves as a haven for elephants rescued from various districts across the state, including orphaned calves and adults injured or displaced in different incidents. Aggressive elephants are tranquilised and brought to the centre, where they are housed in two specially designed wooden enclosures, known as 'Kraals', to rectify their behaviour.

The centre employs a trained veterinary doctor and four mahouts dedicated to the care and rehabilitation of these elephants. In 2022, elephant 'Rajesh', responsible for 12 hu-

man deaths in Talcher, was relocated to a separate enclosure in Kapilas. Additionally, the centre is home to three young elephants, an injured female elephant rescued from Meramandali in the district, and a killer tusker relocated from Baripada.

Previously, three calves housed at the centre were transferred to the Chandaka Kumara Vasta facility for specialised training to other elephants. Efforts are underway to create individual profiles for tuskers in the region, as announced by Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Sumit Kumar Kar.

To raise awareness about elephant conservation, the Forest department and local voluntary outfits working for elephant protection have launched campaigns in villages with slogans like "elephants are our companions" and "save elephants to save forests". Schools are also participating through essay writing, art competitions, and debates, emphasising the importance of protecting India's national heritage animal.

Historic old Nabarangpur jail lies in neglect, oblivion

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, Dec 1: The historic old jail within the premises of the Nabarangpur Sub-Treasury and the Tehsil office that stands as a silent witness to the sacrifices made by scores of valiant fighters towards the country's freedom struggle now lies in a neglected and dilapidated condition.

Cracks have long appeared on the stone walls that once housed the heroes, while the ceilings have collapsed at many places. In fact, the entire structure is at risk of crumbling at any point of time due to lack of maintenance.

This historic jail, which once fell under undivided Koraput district, housed numerous freedom fighters who endured incarceration that lasted from months to years while wishing



to see an Indian free from the imperial British yoke.

Even today, the prison's walls echo with the stories of patriots like Dr Sadashiv Tripathy, revolutionary Sonu

Majhi, martyr Baga Pujari, Mohammad Baji, Jagannath Tripathy, and Miru Harijan. Their bravery and sacrifices remain etched in the jail's locked chambers.

Cracks have long appeared on the stone walls that once housed freedom fighters, while the ceilings have collapsed at many places

Records reveal that the jail was established in 1932 by the then British government. From 1936 onwards, it became a regular site of incarceration for freedom fighters, with its premises soaked in the blood and spirit of revolution.

In 1942, the jail housed over 250 freedom fighters. Significantly, these fighters were confined to just 14 small cells, a testament to their unputdownable spirit and resilience. After tri-

al, they were often transferred to Koraput or Berhampur jails.

Historical accounts state that seven great fighters succumbed to hunger strikes on the jail premises, further solidifying its place in India's freedom struggle. Even today, locals claim to hear chants of "Bande Mataram" and cries of pain and sufferings emanating from the jail in the dead of night.

The symbol of resistance and triumph of human spirit on the face of adversaries now stands abandoned and forgotten.

Local residents and activists have repeatedly demanded its restoration and preservation as a national monument. Such a move would honour the memory of the sacrifices made here and ensure the legacy of the freedom struggle lives on for future generations.

AIDS awareness rally at Chhatrapur

CHHATRAPUR: An AIDS awareness rally was organised by students and Rotary Club members to mark the World AIDS Day, Sunday. The rally was jointly taken out by the students of Government Girl's Higher Secondary School, Chhatrapur and the members of the Rotary Club of Chhatrapur, Ganjam. The purpose of the rally was to create awareness among the locals about the deadly disease and to stay safe as a measure of its prevention. For the unversed, AIDS (Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome) is a chronic disease that is caused by human immunodeficiency virus, also known as HIV, that damages the immune system in human body to fight against infections and diseases, hence, potentially causing a person's death. President of Rotary Club Bimal Prasad Sahu along with other members of the Club, principal of the Girl's Higher Secondary School Samanta Samantaroy and the staff members of the school also participated in the rally.

'Fit India Week' at FMU from today

BALASORE: A series of programmes has been scheduled at the Fakir Mohan University (FMU) to commemorate the 6th Fit India Week from December 2 to 7 which will be kicked off by Vice-Chancellor Prof Santosh Kumar Tripathy Monday. The initiative, which is pursuant to the instructions from the University Grants Commission (UGC), is aimed at promoting physical and mental well-being among students, faculty, and the wider community. A release by the FMU said that the week-long celebrations will include several fitness and wellness events designed to promote a healthy and active lifestyle among students, faculty, and staff. Participants can join in yoga sessions, fitness challenges, awareness initiatives, and engaging games. Arun Kumar Naik, Assistant Professor in the Department of Geology, has been designated as the nodal officer for organising the event. Meanwhile, Vice-Chancellor Prof Tripathy has called upon everyone to chip in the initiative to prioritise health and well-being and make the Fit India Week celebration a grand success.

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, KESINGA
No.3204/NAC(K) Dated : 30.11.2024
1st Corrigendum Notice to Bid Identification No.3093 dt.18.11.2024 & Tender Reference No. KSNNG-NAC-04/2024-25 No.C-1155 : Point No.1 of page No.1 regarding invitation for competitive bidding, the EMD as mentioned in the table, which shall be paid electronically is exempted for local MSEs as defined in MSE Procurement Policy mentioned vide Office Memorandum No. 13681/F, dated 19.04.2018 of Govt. in Finance Department, Odisha.
All other terms and conditions are remain unaltered.
Sd./- Executive Officer, NAC, Kesinga
OIPR-13109/11/0014/2425

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, JHARSUGUDA
'e' Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. SE MID JSD 05/2024-25
E-mail : seemiharsuguda@gmail.com
No.2516// MID // dt.26.11.2024
No.A-632 : The Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Jharsuguda on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids through e-procurement to be received in online mode only for the works as detailed in the table below.

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | Name of the works | Civil Construction work |
| 2 | Total No. of works | 07 (Seven) Nos. |
| 3 | Estimated Cost (Detail list work annexed) | Rs.8.47 Lakh to Rs.25.18 Lakh |
| 4 | Class of Contractor | As mentioned against work |
| 5 | Period of completion | As mentioned against work |
| 6 | Date & time of Availability of Bid Document in the Portal | 02.12.2024 to 11.12.2024 during office hours |
| 7 | Last date/Time for receipt of Bid in the Portal | 11.12.2024 during office hours |
| 8 | Date/Time of Opening of Technical Bid | 12.12.2024 at 10.00 A.M. at Office of the S.E., MI Divn., Jharsuguda |
| 9 | Name & Address of the Officer Inviting the Bid | Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Jharsuguda |
| 10 | Mode of Payment of Bid Cost & Bid Security | Online |

Sd./- Superintending Engineer M.I. Division, Jharsuguda
OIPR-32291/11/0006/2425

FOCUS TRANSPARENCY

TECH TO END CORRUPTION



Corruption disproportionately affects the poorest and most marginalised communities, making it an economic and social tragedy as much as a political issue

At the end of October, the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) held its annual meeting in Vienna. Representatives from 81 member states assessed progress on the organisation's mission to fight corruption through education, capacity-building programmes, and research.

Corruption disproportionately affects the poorest and most marginalised communities, making it an economic and social tragedy as much as a political issue. According to the World Economic Forum, corruption costs the world economy an estimated \$2.6 trillion annually, or about 5 per cent of global GDP, leaving fewer resources for essential services in many developing countries.

Digital tools can and should play an important role in the effort to eradicate corruption. Governments can use them to increase transparency, promote accountability, and empower citizens. But, as the IACA assembly concluded, technology alone cannot guarantee success. Policymakers must also commit to anti-corruption measures, deliver leadership and vision, and uphold the rule of law.

For starters, technology can aid the fight against corruption by enabling the digitalisation of government services. Cumbersome bureaucratic processes all too often become breeding grounds for graft and bribery. Digital platforms that streamline and automate such services would minimise face-to-face interactions and thus reduce opportunities for wrongdoing. For example, Estonia, a pioneer in e-government, has digitalised nearly all of its public services, from tax payments to business registration, providing greater transparency and making it harder for corrupt officials to demand kickbacks.

Governments could also use blockchain technology and artificial intelligence to identify and prevent corruption. Blockchain-based public-procurement systems would create a transparent and immutable record of tender processes. Moreover, governments have begun using AI and data analytics to track illicit financial flows that often cost billions of dollars in lost tax and customs revenue. AI also could detect patterns and anomalies that might indicate corruption, such as suspicious financial transactions or inconsistencies in procurement data. Such tools enable early intervention, which can stop corruption from growing unchecked.

Some of the world's largest

corruption scandals have been exposed by whistleblowers. To facilitate reporting of wrongdoing, policymakers should introduce encrypted systems that allow individuals to report incidents of corruption and bribery anonymously. These platforms, coupled with social media, enable citizens to speak up quickly and without fear of retaliation, putting pressure on governments and businesses to act.

Despite the advances in digital tools for uncovering corruption, however, technology cannot prevent bad actors from finding workarounds. Moreover, the digital divide between rich and poor countries means that citizens and officials in the developing world often lack access to anti-corruption tools, despite having the greatest need. This problem is especially pronounced in rural areas, where corruption tends to be more widespread and people may not have the digital literacy or resources to use e-gov-

ernment services or online whistleblowing platforms.

For digital tools to be effective in combating corruption, the people in power must have the skills to spot wrongdoing and be aware of best practices. To that end, the IACA has focused its efforts on education and training programmes. Ethics and moral reasoning must be integrated into school curricula starting from a young age. And public officials, business leaders, and law-enforcement officers should receive regular training on the most effective and efficient anti-corruption measures.

Likewise, governments should uphold the rule of law by vigorously enforcing anti-corruption legislation and closing legal gaps. Convicting corrupt actors requires strong legal frameworks, an independent judiciary, and empowered law-enforcement agencies, without which even the best technology will fail to have any real impact.

Rooting out corruption is one of the defining struggles of our time, and we now have a new set of powerful digital tools at our disposal. But while technology can help detect and prevent wrongdoing, anti-corruption laws and the authorities tasked with enforcing them must be granted the authority to finish the job.

The writer, a minister in the Malaysian Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reform), is President of the International Anti-Corruption Academy in 2024.



Azalina Othman Said

DIGITAL TOOLS CAN AND SHOULD PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE EFFORT TO ERADICATE CORRUPTION

For starters, technology can aid the fight against corruption by enabling the digitalisation of government services. Cumbersome bureaucratic processes all too often become breeding grounds for graft and bribery. Digital platforms that streamline and automate such services would minimise face-to-face interactions and thus reduce opportunities for wrongdoing. For



A smile acts upon the difficulties as the sun upon the clouds - it disperses them.

THE MOTHER

Cycle of Violence

After almost eight years of calm, Aleppo, one of the world's oldest continually inhabited cities and considered one of the cradles of civilization, saw a return of violence on 30 November. In an unexpected offensive that seems to have significantly altered the power dynamics in Syria, Islamist insurgents have captured territory throughout the north western region and have swept into Aleppo, bringing the bloody civil war back into spotlight. The militants took control of the ancient city with surprising ease as they encountered minimal resistance from the government forces, a stark contrast to the intense street battles that raged for every block 12 years ago. Aleppo has a history that dates back to the third millennium BC, while archaeological evidence establishes that the region was the first to start cereal cultivation in the world.

Militants from the Islamist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) rapidly took control of much of the city in a surprising defeat of the Syrian army. Video footage captured the moment when the rebels pulled down a statue of Bassel al-Assad, the brother of the Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, accompanied by celebratory gunfire. The HTS-led forces also captured a significant military base to the south and gained control of Saraqib, a crucial point along the highway to the capital, Damascus. This unexpected insurgent success in Aleppo posed an unforeseen challenge to President Assad, who had long been perceived as having quelled the uprising against him. Assad's previously stable grip on Syria seemed secure enough that former regional adversaries, particularly Saudi Arabia, had started to re-establish diplomatic ties with Damascus. Since the ceasefire agreement in 2020, the conflict had mostly died down, characterised by minor skirmishes between the rebels and Assad's regime.

However, the stunning reversal of circumstances presents the most significant challenge to Assad's regime in eight years. Assad had re-established control over Aleppo in 2016 after driving out the insurgents and thousands of civilians from its eastern districts, following a protracted military campaign supported by Russia, Iran, and their allied groups. Since that time, Aleppo has not faced attacks from the opposition forces. The 2016 conflict for Aleppo had marked a crucial moment in the civil war, which erupted after protests against Assad's regime in 2011 escalated into a full-scale conflict.

The latest events are also significant as they unfold at a time when Assad's allies—Iran and its affiliated groups, as well as Russia—are preoccupied with their own conflicts. Russia is engaged in a war with Ukraine for more than one thousand days. Likewise, Iran-backed Hezbollah, which has supported the Syrian government forces since 2015, was fighting against Israel for the last two months. Hezbollah and Israel entered into a ceasefire just last week. During those two months, Israel has also intensified its strikes against Hezbollah and Iranian-linked targets in Syria.

Meanwhile, the Syrian military Sunday deployed reinforcements to prevent insurgents from advancing further following their capture of Aleppo and other key strategic areas, while Russian airstrikes hit the country's north-western parts targeting rebel camps.

The resurgence of the conflict in Syria, which has already resulted in over 300,000 deaths and displaced nearly six million civilians from the country since 2011, has significant ramifications for the region. There appears to be no let-up to the cycle of violence in the Middle East.

WISDOM CORNER

You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals. To that end, each of us must work for his own improvement and, at the same time, share a general responsibility for all humanity, our particular duty being to aid those to whom we think we can be most useful.

MARIE CURIE

Who are we? We find that we live on an insignificant planet of a humdrum star lost in a galaxy tucked away in some forgotten corner of a universe in which there are far more galaxies than people.

CARL SAGAN

You do not need to leave your room. Remain sitting at your table and listen. Do not even listen, simply wait, be quiet still and solitary. The world will freely offer itself to you to be unmasked, it has no choice, it will roll in ecstasy at your feet.

FRANZ KAFKA

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1804:** Napoleon is crowned Emperor of France. Napoleon Bonaparte had risen through the ranks of the French army during the French revolution and became one of the most influential political figures of his era. His self-coronation as Napoleon I took place in Notre Dame in Paris, France.
- 1823:** The Monroe Doctrine, which declared that the U.S. would not interfere in European affairs but that its sphere of interest included the entire Western Hemisphere, was enunciated by President James Monroe this day in 1823.
- 1971:** The United Arab Emirates was formed by the union of six small emirates on the Arabian Peninsula; a seventh emirate joined in February 1972.
- 1983:** The groundbreaking music video for Michael Jackson's song Thriller aired on MTV. The "Thriller" music video, directed by John Landis, depicts Jackson turning into a zombie and dancing with a horde of them. It has been named the greatest music video of all time by various publications and readers' polls, and doubled sales of Thriller, helping it become the best-selling album in history.

SPECTRUM INFRASTRUCTURE

Bullet train hits speed bump



Shivaji Sarkar

THE PROJECT'S COST HAS SURGED BY ₹15,000 CRORE, A STEEP CLIMB FOR AN ECONOMY GRAPPLING WITH A SEVEN-QUARTER GDP SLOWDOWN TO 5.4%

The ambitious Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project, once a symbol of India's leap into advanced infrastructure, is now mired in delays, cost overruns, and environmental controversies. Japan, a key investor through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), has grown wary of the project's trajectory due to escalating costs and inadequate environmental safeguards.

Approved in December 2015, the ₹1.08 lakh crore high-speed rail project was initially aimed for a 2023 launch. However, land acquisition hurdles, especially in Maharashtra, and financial constraints have pushed deadlines repeatedly, with only a partial launch from Surat to Bilimora now targeted for 2026. The project's cost has surged by ₹15,000 crore, a steep climb for an economy grappling with a seven-quarter GDP slowdown to 5.4%.

Despite Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw's efforts, including a visit to Japan in September, progress remains sluggish. Japan's reluctance to commit to revised timelines has prompted India to explore European alternatives for suppliers and technology. This shift, coupled with internal directives to float global tenders, underscores India's urgency to salvage the project.

The project's compliance with environmental and so-

cial norms remains under scrutiny. Environmentalists have criticised the absence of comprehensive environmental impact assessments and advisory committees mandated by JICA for "Category A" projects, which involve significant societal and ecological disruptions. Reports highlight violations, including inadequate public consultations and the bypassing of legal requirements for social and environmental evaluations.

Gujarat's 2016 amendments to land acquisition laws and the Supreme Court's relaxation of environmental clearance norms have further exacerbated concerns. Activists argue these changes undermine safeguards meant to protect displaced communities and fragile ecosystems.

The central government is keen to showcase progress before the Gujarat Assembly elections in 2027. However, delays in resolving critical issues threaten this timeline. Critics speculate that the project, if completed, might end up being a costlier version of the existing Vande Bharat trains rather than a transformative leap in Indian rail infrastructure.

Studies have found that expensive trains have poor ridership. Vande Bharat and similar trains often go half empty. The Railways is considering having indigenous coaches of Vande Bharat type

to replace the Japanese high-tech Shinkansen coaches.

With an annual outgoing EMI of ₹6,802 crore but a lower estimated revenue, the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project is set to become a big liability to the exchequer. The JICA loan is given in Japanese Yen (JPY) and has to be paid back in JPY. If the Yen appreciates the loan amount will increase significantly in rupees, and if the rupee appreciates, the loan amount will decrease significantly.

The analysis also factors in the total number of passengers which will travel along the entire Mumbai to Ahmedabad route, as well as Surat to Mumbai or Surat to Ahmedabad route, which could be double of 17,900 passengers, considering passengers travel to and fro. The proposed fare for one side travel was ₹3,000, which is 1.5 times the rate of a first class train ticket.

In a best-case scenario where all passengers are travelling from Mumbai to Ahmedabad and back, the bullet train will generate annual revenue of ₹3,920 crore, but the yearly loan liability is ₹6,802 crore, so there will be a shortfall of ₹2,882 crore. Conservative estimates peg revenue at ₹2,499 crore per year, revenue shortfall ₹5,103 crore in the first year itself.

The estimated cost of operations was ₹412 crore per year

in 2014, but by 2028 it will become more than double, at over ₹800 crore. The Indian Railways with all 13000 passenger trains including First Class, 2AC, 3AC, Rajdhani, Shatabdi, and Vande Bharat could only earn ₹63,300 crore in the last year. Delhi metro with a daily ridership of 46 lakh people clocked revenue of ₹3,088 crore last year.

If we look at bookings of last summer, most cheaper trains are fully booked, and Vande Bharat and Tejas Express have lots of seats available. Already, 33 trains are running on the route. Moreover, a ticket price of ₹3,000 was determined when cost of construction was ₹1.1 lakh crore.

There are problems. The new plan is to produce coaches and have signalling systems of Indian Railways instead of Shinkansen. There are still three years. There are international commitments to JICA and diplomatic issues with Japan. The project could get a bit more delayed, but the Indian Railways expects that most of the original plans would be on track with some modifications. The project may be completed beyond 2027 and may be on time for 2029 Lok Sabha elections. The operation cost is likely to go up and the railways have to reconfigure the fares to be charged to make it more affordable and sustainable.

LOL

THE SALESMAN

A golfer, playing a round by himself, is about to tee off, and a greasy little salesman runs up to him, and yells, "Wait! Before you tee off, I have something really amazing to show you!"

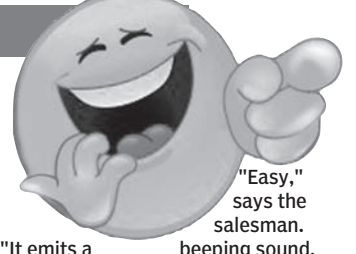
The golfer, annoyed, says, "What is it?"

"It's a special golf ball," says the salesman. "You can never lose it!"

"Whattaya mean," scoffs the golfer, "you can never lose it? What if you hit it into the water?"

"No problem," says the salesman. "It floats, and it detects where the shore is, and spins towards it."

"Well, what if you hit it into the woods?"



"Easy," says the salesman.

"It emits a beeping sound, and you can find it with your eyes closed."

"Okay," says the golfer, impressed. "But what if your round goes late and it gets dark?"

"No problem, sir, this golf ball glows in the dark! I'm telling you, you can never lose this golf ball!"

The golfer buys it at once. "Just one question," he says to the salesman. "Where did you get it?"

"I found it."

Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 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



Modern-day slaves

Sir, "I freed a thousand slaves. I could have freed more if only they knew they were slaves." One need not look beyond these thought-provoking words of American abolitionist Harriet Tubman to decipher the evils of slavery. Human trafficking, bonded labour and forced marriages, domestic work, construction activities, manufacturing units, agricultural activities, and sexual exploitation fall into the domain of forced labour. Nothing can exemplify modern slavery better than child labour. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has identified about twenty five million men and women as victims of modern slavery. The ILO has specially targeted migrant workers who are easily lured because of their poor understanding of local language and tradition. Compensation, rehabilitation and education have also been extensively discussed by the ILO. The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery is observed on December 2.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Striking innovations

Sir, Test cricket is all about traditions – from donning the standard whites to the customary lunch and tea breaks. But over the years the longest format of the game has evolved in many ways, and the introduction of the pink ball is one such thing. Day-night Test matches are now a regular part of the game, and the pink ball plays a central role. With India and Australia set to clash at Adelaide with pink ball in play for the second time, the debate revolves around if India can take revenge on Australia for its ignominious loss four years ago at the same venue. Meanwhile, the pink ball comes out for day-night matches for the simple reason that the ball is easier to spot under the flood lights. Once the sun sets and the flood lights flicker into life, the pink ball is far more striking. Thanks to the International Cricket Council (ICC), its innovations in the Test cricket format have started bearing fruits. These innovations are also reviving the popularity of the best format of this beautiful game.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

ONCE SHUNNED, NOW IN DEMAND AFTER FOUR DECADES

Bhopal gas tragedy site sees realty boom

5,479 persons were killed and over five lakh were maimed after highly toxic methyl isocyanate gas leaked 40 years ago



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Dec 1: Union Carbide factory, the site of the deadly gas leak 40 years ago which was once located on Bhopal's outskirts, is no longer ostracised with its neighbourhood now dotted with residential and commercial establishments.

The real estate in the city grew, though slowly and haphazardly, in the past four decades, though the catastrophe slowed down the development of Bhopal compared to other state capitals.

A prominent shopping mall-cum-entertainment centre is now located just 4 km away and hundreds of residential colonies have cropped up on the then vacant land near the disaster site, overlooking pollution that the tragedy created - be it groundwater or soil contamination.

The highly toxic methyl isocyanate gas leaked from the Union Carbide India Limited (UCL) plant here on the in-

tervening night of December 2 and 3, 1984, killing 5,479 persons and maiming more than five lakh others.

The Union Carbide factory was part of the Kali Parade industrial campus and it was on the outskirts of the present-day old city, Vishnu Rathore, a former corporator who had represented the adjoining areas, told PTL.

"Now, we can say it is in the middle of the city as hundreds of residential colonies and shopping outlets catering to the people's needs have come up," he said.

Rathore, who was 16 years' old at the time of the disaster, said the area is still under-developed but the real estate business has been thriving in the neighbourhood of the abandoned factory site.

Since the tragedy, the city has seen a significant popula-

tion growth and urban development, including in areas surrounding the Union Carbide plant campus, Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI) Bhopal unit chief Manoj Singh Meek said.

"The area in the vicinity of Union Carbide, located in northern part of the city, must have added around 100 residential colonies and a population of three lakh during the past four decades," he said.

But, the industrial disaster severely dented Bhopal's development and economic growth, Meek said.

At the time of the gas tragedy, Bhopal's population was around 8.5 lakh. Nearly 5.2 lakh persons, including 2 lakh children and about 3,000 pregnant women, were then residing in the 36 wards which were later

designated as "gas-affected," he said.

The immediate aftermath of the disaster saw a significant number of people leaving the city due to health concerns and fear of lingering contamination, Meek said.

But over the time, the population stabilised and began to grow, influenced by factors like urbanisation and economic opportunities, he said.

By 1991, the population grew, indicating a gradual return and influx of residents, Meek said.

He said development in the immediate vicinity of the gas leak site has been "cautious" due to lingering contamination concerns.

But, the urban expansion and population pressure in peripheral areas have spurred development in neighbourhoods further from the plant, he said.

Former chairman of the Institute of Town Planners India (ITPI), MP Chapter, Shubhashis Banerjee said most of the residential development adjacent to Union Carbide has

been illegal.

"The compensation disbursed in the years after the tragedy gave a boost to the local economy, resulting in small-ticket size illegal real estate development in surrounding areas," he said.

The gas leak site was not dealt with properly, unlike Hiroshima in Japan, which faced an atomic bomb attack, he opined.

"We didn't handle the catastrophe site properly. The project for the memorial was prepared but could not be implemented. A world class memorial should have been developed there," he said. Banerjee said the tragedy alerted the government to strengthen the environmental rules and safety measures for the hazardous industry across the country.

"This slowed the pace of industrialisation," he said. In 2010, it was decided to shift the settlements adjacent to the Union Carbide factory campus and the Centre had sanctioned ₹40 crore, but the proposal was shelved and situation became grimmer later on.

Due to this disaster, Bhopal lagged behind in the race of development of state capitals. No new industrial and big business development took place in Bhopal, resulting in slow pace of the city's growth

MANOJ SINGH MEEK | CHIEF, CREDAI BHOPAL UNIT

Bengal potato traders threaten to go on stir



The state recently re-imposed curbs on selling potatoes to neighbouring states in an effort to control the prices in the local markets, hurting Odisha, Jharkhand the most

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Dec 1: Potato traders of West Bengal threatened to go on strike Tuesday if the state government does not lift restrictions on selling to other states.

Following the decision of the state government, police have intensified surveillance at inter-state borders to prevent the transportation of potatoes out of the state. This has led to several trucks being stranded at border crossings.

"We will go on strike from Tuesday if the government does not lift the restrictions," Progressive Potato Traders' Association secretary Lalu Mukherjee told PTL.

He criticised the government's decision, stating, "Such abrupt measures disrupt our business and cause huge losses as we fail to fulfil commitments."

Traders and cold storage associations blamed the state government for failing to control prices in the local markets, attributing it to profiteering by intermediaries. Potatoes are retailing at ₹35-40 per kg in the local markets.

"Despite the wholesale price of potatoes in Kolkata being ₹27 per kg, how is it retailing at ₹35-40?" a trader questioned.

Neighbouring states such as Odisha and Jharkhand rely heavily on West Bengal for their potato supply. After the restrictions were imposed, prices in these states have also gone up.

Odisha's Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra Saturday alleged that the Mamata Banerjee government was playing politics over the supply of potatoes.

"West Bengal also depends on other states for fish and other items. If desired, Odisha can also stop the goods vehicles at its border. But, we are not going to do so," he said.

"We have made arrangements for the supply of adequate potatoes to consumers in the state. Potatoes have started arriving in the state from Uttar Pradesh. Besides, the tuber can also be brought from Punjab," he added.

In Jharkhand, the price of potato has shot up by ₹5 per kg, an official said.

Jharkhand BJP president Babul Marandi urged Chief Minister Hemant Soren to hold talks with the West Bengal government to deal with the situation, as people of the state are suffering because of rising potato prices.

Meanwhile, the West Bengal Agricultural Marketing Board extended the storage period for potatoes in cold storage by one month, till the end of the year.

According to cold storage officials, about 6.5 lakh tonne of potatoes remain unsold in their stock out of the total 63.5 lakh tonne loaded this year.

TUBER TROUBLE

BSF South Bengal Frontier on strict vigil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Dec 1: The BSF South Bengal Frontier has seized gold and silver worth nearly ₹120 crore and arrested 86 Indian and 32 Bangladeshi smugglers in 2024 till November-end, an official said here Sunday.

This year, the BSF arrested 51 Indian and 10 Bangladeshi allegedly involved in drug smuggling racket, the official said.

From January till November-end of 2024, BSF South Bengal Frontier seized 170.48 kg of gold worth ₹118.63 crore and 159 kg of silver worth ₹1.15 crore, the BSF official said.

A total of 105 gold smuggling cases were busted, resulting in the arrest of 86 Indian and 32 Bangladeshi smugglers, he said.



Students perform with torch lights (Mashal) on the eve of 'World Aids Day', in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

Madhav National Park designated MP's eighth tiger reserve

Madhya Pradesh has 785 tigers, the highest in the country

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Dec 1: The technical committee of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) Sunday approved the proposal to notify Madhav National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Shivpuri district as a tiger reserve, an official said.

This will be the eighth tiger reserve of Madhya Pradesh, he said. Kanha, Satpura, Bandhavgarh, Panch, Sanjay Dubri, Panna and Veerangana Durgavati

are the existing tiger reserves in MP.

"The NTCA technical committee has approved the proposal to notify Madhav National Park as a tiger reserve. It will have total area of 1751 square kilometres, comprising core area of 375 square kilometres and buffer area of 1276 square kilometres. The committee also approved the release of a tiger and a tigress into the park," L Krishnamoorthy, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of



Kanha, Satpura, Bandhavgarh, Panch, Sanjay Dubri, Panna and Veerangana Durgavati are the existing tiger reserves in MP

Forests (APCCF), Wildlife, told PTL. The proposal was prepared following directives from Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, he said.

"This conservation initiative by the Madhya Pradesh government will strengthen wildlife management in Madhav Nation-

al Park and Kuno National Park. It will bring about ecotourism benefits to local communities and development of the region," Krishnamoorthy said.

The Kuno National Park is the only abode of the cheetahs in the country. It is situated in Sheopur district and is close to Madhav National Park.

As per the 'Status of Tigers: Co-predators & Prey in India-2022' report released by National Tiger Conservation Authority and Wildlife Institute of India, Madhya Pradesh has 785 tigers, the highest in the country. The state is followed by Karnataka (563) and Uttarakhand (560).

Flights to Kolkata from B'desh dwindling due to ongoing crisis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Dec 1: The number of flights to Kolkata from Bangladesh has dwindled over the last few months with a falling passenger count, amid the ongoing crisis in the neighbouring country, officials at the NSCBI airport here said Sunday.

One airline from India has also scrapped its plan to begin flight services between Kolkata and Dhaka for the time being, they said.

Flights arriving in Kolkata, operated by US-Bangla Airlines, a private carrier of the neighbouring country, were 84 in July and the number came down to 24 in November, the officials said.

According to officials at the Kolkata airport, the airline carried 7,391 passengers to Kolkata



in July, which came down to 1,646 in November.

The number of departures from Kolkata to Bangladesh simultaneously shows the same trend.

Similarly, the national carrier of the neighbouring country Biman Bangladesh had operated 59 flights to Kolkata in July and the number fell to 28 in November, the officials said.

Indian low-cost carrier IndiGo's flight arrival figure from Bangladesh has also come down from 62 to 44, sources at the airport said.

Crimes by youngsters rise in Madhya Pradesh

Police officials say these crimes often involve first-time offenders, making probes difficult

AGENCIES

Bhopal, Dec 1: Youngsters in the age cohort 20-30 in Madhya Pradesh's major cities are increasingly committing heinous crimes to sustain relationship and maintain a high-end lifestyle, shows data

Over the past three years, police records and court documents have revealed a significant surge in such cases, primarily in urban centers like Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur, and Gwalior. According to Bhopal district court data, the major-

ity of offenders in murder and rape cases belong to the 20-30 age group.

For example, take the case of 27-year-old Sheetal Kaushal and her boyfriend Vinod, an MBA student. On May 15, 2024, a vacation to Manali turned tragic when Vinod allegedly killed Sheetal in their hotel room following an argument over lifestyle expenses.

Another grim incident unfolded on Valentine's Day in 2023 when 20-year-old Raunak from Bhopal allegedly killed his mother for refusing to give him money to buy an expensive gift for his girlfriend and to attend a party.

Similarly, Neeraj Bhavnani, 30, was caught in Bhopal's New Market while shopping with his girlfriend using stolen money. He had reportedly committed multiple thefts, including chain snatching, to fund his partners



shopping sprees.

Speaking about the trend, Bhopal Police Commissioner, Harinarayan Chari Mishra, said, "Most offenders are from other cities, drawn to urban areas by the lure of a better lifestyle. They fall into bad company or give in to pressures, leading to serious crimes. Families and educational institutions need to monitor such behavior closely."

Advocate Rajendra Upadhyay, a district prosecution officer, said, "Many engineer-

ALARMING SURGE

In 2022: 44 convicted for murder, 11 for rape

In 2023: 46 convicted for murder, 18 for rape

Till June 2024: 24 convicted for murder, 8 for rape

ing and medical students are committing crimes to sustain relationships or maintain a luxurious lifestyle. This age group, 18-30, is particularly vulnerable."

Psychologists, too, are sounding the alarm. "Social media's influence and the pressure to project a lavish image are harming today's youth. Financial literacy and emotional intelligence are critical lessons that parents and schools must impart," Dr Vinay Mishra noted.

national



When everyone gets an equal opportunity to move forward, only then will the wheel of our economy move forward

KOLKATA TO PORT BLAIR FLIGHTS

Air India Express Sunday launched daily flights from Kolkata to Sri Vijaya Puram (Port Blair) as a part of its network expansion in the region.



of the day quote

We have to remain united at all costs. Modiji is not leaving any stone unturned to harm this unity and trying to divide the society and even castes



Our history has been manipulated and doctored, created a monopoly of few that they gained us independence



I think the situation in Manipur will definitely have some impact on Assam. That is why we have deployed additional police forces in Barak Valley to see that nothing spills over to Assam



Fadnavis' name finalised for CM post: BJP leader

Earlier in the day, outgoing Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said he would support the BJP's decision to pick the new Chief Minister



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 1: The name of Devendra Fadnavis has been finalised as the new Chief Minister of Maharashtra who will be elected as the legislature party leader in a meeting to be held either December 2 or 3, a senior BJP leader said Sunday night.

Earlier in the day, outgoing Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said he would support the BJP's decision to pick the new Chief Minister. "The name of Devendra Fadnavis has been finalised as the new Chief Minister of Maharashtra. The meeting to elect the new BJP legislature party meeting will be held on either December 2 or 3," a senior BJP leader told PTI.

yet to be sworn in. The oath-taking ceremony of the new Mahayuti government is scheduled for December 5 evening at the Azad Maidan in south Mumbai and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend it.

The BJP is moving cautiously as aspirations of its allies, especially Shiv Sena, grew after the massive poll victory. Despite Shinde's insistence on Mahayuti unity, some leaders of allies spoke in different voices. Former Union minister and BJP leader Raosaheb Danve said if the undivided Sena and BJP had contested the elections together, they would have won more seats.

MAHA ELECTIONS



Labourers thresh paddy in a field, near India-Pakistan border, on the outskirts of Jammu

WAYANAD REHABILITATION

Will write to Kerala CM, pressure govt: Priyanka

Priyanka, who was on a two-day visit to the hill constituency after being elected, highlighted the issues of the massive landslide that hit here July 30 along with launching a scathing attack against the BJP-led Centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wayanad, Dec 1: Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Sunday said she will write to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and put as much as pressure on the Centre to provide the rehabilitation of Wayanad landslide victims.

"I will be writing to the Chief Minister of Kerala and trying to put as much as pressure possible on the Centre as well to provide the rehabilitation that they deserved," she said while addressing a meeting at Kalpetta here.

Due to what happened in the landslide and the amount of publicity across India many people still believe that it is unsafe to come here but they don't realise the nature's fury concentrated in a very small geographical area and the rest is beautiful place and is abso-



lutely safe to visit, she pointed out. "We must make a special effort now to invite more tourists to show them that it is safe, it is beautiful and this is the best place to come," she urged.

Addressing a meeting in Mananthavady here, she said, "We are fighting against a force that is doing everything in its power to destroy the institutions upon which our country was built." She further said the fight was for the power and resources of this country to belong rightfully to its people.

my hobby is helping those who was suffering. He is brave but he has a heart of gold and he is compassionate," she said, adding the symbol of true values that India stands for lies here in Wayanad.

"I want each one of you to know that you are my responsibility. That I take your love with complete seriousness and it is my duty to fight for you to give you a better future in the next five years and ahead," she said adding that she came two days here to thank them all for the love and affection they have given to her.

ED summons Raj Kundra for questioning

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 1: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned businessman Raj Kundra, the husband of actor Shilpa Shetty, for questioning in a money laundering case linked to the alleged illegal distribution of pornographic movies, official sources said Sunday.

They said Kundra has been asked to depose before the investigating officer of the case December 2 or any other day of the week in case he is not able to appear Monday. Some others involved in the case, including a businessman from Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh, have also been summoned during the week, the sources added.

The central agency raided the premises of Kundra in Mumbai and those of other persons located in some cities of Uttar Pradesh December 29. Kundra said Saturday that he was "fully complying" with the ongoing investigation that has been unfolding for the last four years.

Mobile internet ban extended till Dec 3 in 9 districts of Manipur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Dec 1: The Manipur government Sunday extended the suspension of mobile internet for two days in nine districts of the state till December 3. An order issued by the Home Department said the suspension was extended in Imphal West, Imphal East, Kakching, Bishnupur, Thoubal, Churachandpur, Kangpokpi, Pherzawl and Jiribam.

"The state government after reviewing the prevailing law and order situation and its correlation with the general operation of internet services has decided to continue suspension of mobile internet and mobile data services including VSATs and VPN services in the territorial jurisdiction of Imphal West, Imphal East, Kakching, Bishnupur, Thoubal, Churachandpur and Kangpokpi, Pherzawl and Jiribam of Manipur till 5.15 pm of December 3, in public interest," the order said.

Parl panel seeks details of unauthorised properties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: The parliamentary committee scrutinising the Waqf (Amendment) Bill has sought details from various state governments about the veracity and updated details of Waqf properties which, according to the Sachar committee, they had occupied in an unauthorised manner, sources said.

The parliamentary committee, whose tenure has been extended by Lok Sabha till the last day of the next Budget Session, has also sought from the states details of the properties claimed by Waqf boards exercising Section 40 of the Waqf Act.

Section 40, an amendment effected during the Congress-led

UPA government's tenure in 2013, is one of the most hotly contested features of the existing law as it has given Waqf boards the power to decide if any property belongs to the Waqf or not.

The proposed law, which has faced flack from opposition parties and various Muslim groups for its alleged attempts to interfere in religious matters, has sought to curb this power while making a slew of other changes in the existing Act.

WINTERS OF DESPAIR How Delhi's pollution curbs affect construction workers

Most of Delhi-NCR's estimated 13 lakh construction workers consists of migrants from Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: "When they stop our work, we don't just lose the wages. It's the food on our plates and the little we try to save for our children's future," says Raju Singh, a mason from Bihar.

More such bans are likely to follow throughout the winter. While that is good news for the city's residents, the story is different for these construction workers. "Even though working in the polluted air makes it hard for us to breathe, I would rather work than sit idle," Raju Singh says, describing the crushing blow the restrictions have on

his finances. These trysts with work stoppages have become an annual affair for him, and hundreds of others like him. The Commission for Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) -- a statutory body responsible for formulating strategies to combat pollution in the region -- implements anti-pollution measures under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP).



Under GRAP-III (AQI 401-450), all non-essential construction and entry of vehicles into the city are banned. GRAP-IV (AQI above 450) halts all construction, bans non-essential trucks and BS-IV diesel vehicles, and advises work-from-home.

banEmissions.Info, shared a study in which he reviewed Delhi's air pollution from 1990-2022 and found that construction-related work plays a significant part in the dust category, accounting for 10-30 per cent of the pollution. Construction activities were banned for 20 days in 2021 and 35 days in 2022. Last year, non-essential construction work was banned for 26 days, and the outlook for this year appears similarly grim.

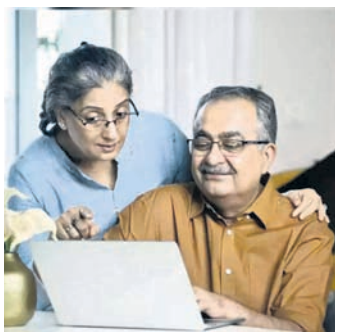
table shop, earning less than a third of his usual income. An unskilled labourer, Rina Devi (40) shares a similar story. She switched to stitching clothes for neighbours on an old sewing machine, earning a fraction of her regular wages. Sujit, a labourer from West Bengal describes how such consecutive bans trap them in a vicious debt cycle. Sujit moved to Delhi to escape climate change-induced flooding in his village, only to run into a form of crisis caused by the activities responsible for the climate change he was escaping from -- construction and industry.



Presidential rule? Shouldn't it have been in place by now? Wouldn't it have been, had the Opposition had the numbers, with a decision pending? AADIYA THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

1.3 CR PENSIONERS GENERATE DIGITAL LIFE CERTIFICATES

A whopping 1.3 crore digital life certificates were generated during a month-long special campaign by the government to further simplify the process for pensioners across the country. The Department of Pensions and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) successfully concluded the digital life certificate (DLC) campaign 3.0 November 30, a statement issued by the Personnel Ministry said



of the day quote

Ninety-five percent of the patients in the country should know that they are infected with HIV, 95 percent of the patients should get treatment and the "viral load" of 95 percent of the patients should be lessened by antiretroviral therapy medicines

We will provide a government that people want. Our responsibility has now grown because of the massive mandate given by people as reciprocation of our work in the last two-and-a-half years

Decreasing population is a matter of concern because the Loksankhya Shastra says that if we go below 2.1, then that society perishes, no one will destroy it, it will perish by itself

Judicial panel visits Sambhal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sambhal (UP), Dec 1: Amid tight security, members of a judicial commission Sunday visited the Shahi Jama Masjid here and other areas that witnessed violence over a court-ordered survey of the Mughal-era mosque.

Panel head retired Allahabad High Court judge Devendra Kumar Arora and retired IPS officer Arvind Kumar Jain were the two members of the three-member commission who visited the areas that witnessed violence November 24.

The panel's third member, ex-IAS officer Amit Mohan Prasad, was not present during Sunday's visit. The commission members did not respond to any media queries during the visit in the morning. They were accompanied by Moradabad Divisional Commissioner Aunjaneya Kumar Singh, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Muniraj G, Sambhal District Magistrate Rajendra Pensiya and Superintendent of Police Krishan Kumar.

Later, speaking to reporters, Moradabad Divisional Commissioner Singh said, "Today the chairperson of the inquiry commission and one other member visited the site. Their



primary purpose was to inspect the location. They visited the areas where the disturbance occurred, examined the site and the structure, and spoke to some of the people present there."

The team will visit again and a complete schedule for its visit will be announced, he said. "The situation here is gradually returning to normal and it is being closely monitored. Conditions are stabilising rapidly. As of now, the district magistrate's orders remain in effect until

December 10 and after that, there will be no restrictions on anyone. We are in the process of collecting evidence and have so far identified 400 individuals involved (in the violence)," he said. Singh was referring to an order that prohibits the entry of outsiders, including politicians, social organisations or public representatives, in the violence-hit Sambhal till December 10 without permission from the competent authority in order

'Ghosh helped cartels procure hosp contracts'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: Former principal of Kolkata's RG Kar College and Hospital Sandip Ghosh allegedly helped two cartels in procuring hospital contracts, the agency has said in its recently filed chargesheet.

The Special court has taken the chargesheet on record but it is yet to take its cognisance because the West Bengal government has not provided sanction to prosecute Ghosh and other accused. Ghosh had resigned as the principal of the state-run institute August 12 in the aftermath of the rape and murder of a trainee doctor on its premises.

The CBI has named Ghosh, former House Staff of the medical college Ashish Kumar Pandey, and businessmen Biplab Singha of Maa Tara Traders, Suman Hazra of Hazra Medical and Afsar Ali Khan of Eshan Cafe, in the chargesheet. "This case was registered in compliance with the directions of Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta relating to financial irregularities in RG Kar Medical College & Hospital at Kolkata," the CBI Spokesperson said.

The CBI has alleged that Ghosh and Pandey appointed several doctors as house staff in violation of the rules, they said. Ghosh helped two cartels -- one run by Singha and Hazra and the other by Khan -- in procuring several contracts of the hospital, the CBI has alleged in its chargesheet filed before a Special CBI court in Alipore.

"On careful perusal, it manifested that sanction order of the competent authority not yet received. Accordingly, cognisance is not taken sans sanction. Let it be kept with the record," the Special Judge said. The Hospital hogged media attention when a trainee doctor was found dead in the chest department auditorium August 10. It surfaced that she was allegedly raped and killed by a civic volunteer Sanjay Roy in the intervening night of August

9-10. Ghosh was also under scanner in the case for alleged delay in the probe. In between, the Calcutta High Court ordered a probe into alleged financial irregularities in hospital

during his tenure. The High Court order came on a petition by the former deputy superintendent of the facility, Akhtar Ali, who prayed for a probe by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) into multiple counts of alleged financial misconduct at the institute during Gosh's tenure as its principal. Ghosh served as principal of RG Kar Medical College from February 2021 to September 2023. He was transferred from RG Kar in October last year but inexplicably returned to that position within a month.

GHOSH HAD RESIGNED AS THE PRINCIPAL OF THE STATE-RUN INSTITUTE AUGUST 12 IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE RAPE AND MURDER OF A TRAINEE DOCTOR ON ITS PREMISES

POST OF THE DAY

Massive EVM MANIPULATION in Maharashtra election. Kannada Vidhan Sabha Total voters in Talner village - 396 Polling done - 312 Shiv Sena (UBT) - 194 Shiv Sena (Shinde) - 326 Independent (Harshvardhan Jadhav) - 104 194+326+104 = 624 >>312 @SurrbhiM

CYCLONE FENGAL

Unprecedented rainfall paralyses life in Pondicherry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pondicherry /Chennai, Dec 1: After making landfall near Pondicherry November 30, Cyclone Fengal weakened Sunday, but torrential downpour under its influence paralysed the union territory, with the Army stepping in to evacuate stranded persons in inundated streets. Old-timers recalled such a fury of nature was not witnessed in this tiny UT for the last three decades.

Villupuram in neighbouring Tamil Nadu also suffered following heavy rains and inundation, with Chief Minister M K Stalin terming the rainfall in the district as 'unprecedented.' Operations at the Chennai airport, which had been suspended Saturday, officials said.

"The Cyclonic Storm FEN-GAL (pronounced as FEINJAL) over north coastal Tamil Nadu & Puducherry remained practically stationary during past 12 hours, weakened into a deep depression and lay centered at 11.30 hours IST of today, the 1st December 2024 over the same region near latitude 12.0°N and longitude 79.8°E, close to Puducherry, about 30 km north of Cuddalore, 40 km east of Villupuram and 120 km south-southwest of Chennai," the weather office said in a post on 'X.'



People play volleyball at Marina Beach in Chennai, Tamil Nadu

KEJRIWAL RULES OUT AAP TIE-UP WITH CONGRESS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal Sunday ruled out the possibility of an alliance between his party and the Congress for the Delhi Assembly elections, setting the stage for a triangular contest in the polls due in February.

This comes a day after Delhi Congress president Devendra Yadav said the party would go it alone in the Assembly elections. "There will be no alliance in Delhi," Kejriwal said at a press conference here. AAP and Congress are part of the Opposition INDIA bloc and fought the Lok Sabha elections in Delhi together earlier this year. Both parties drew a blank, with the BJP



winning all seven seats. Over a week ago, AAP released its first list of 11 candidates, including six leaders who switched from BJP and

AAP convener slams Centre

NEW DELHI: AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal Sunday targeted the BJP-led central government over alleged inaction on law and order issues here, claiming that instead of taking action against criminals, an attack was orchestrated on him during his November 30 padyatra in the city. The BJP is yet to respond to the allegations. Speaking at a press conference, Kejriwal said, "The liquid thrown on me was harmless, but it could have been dangerous. This is the third attack on me in the last 35 days."

Congress recently, for the Delhi polls. Reacting to Kejriwal's announcement, Yadav said the Congress is "very clear" that it will not have any alliance with

AAP and will contest all the 70 assembly seats in Delhi on its own. The alliance with AAP did "great harm" to Congress in the Lok Sabha elections, he claimed.

"The Congress has a democratic process of taking decisions and they are arrived at after careful deliberations and not in a totalitarian and dictatorial manner like Kejriwal," Yadav said.

AAP and Congress failed to reach a seat-sharing agreement ahead of the Haryana Assembly polls in October despite several rounds of talks.

Unpacking India's fuming response at COP29

As the president of this year's UN climate conference, Mukhtar Babayev, approached the centrepiece agenda item -- the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance -- India's Deputy Lead Negotiator Neelesh Sah rushed to COP29 Lead Negotiator Yalchin Rafiyev to convey that the country wants to make a statement before the adoption of the contentious decision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: In the wee hours of November 24, while most people in India were fast asleep, a drama unfolded at a sprawling conference hall of the Olympic stadium in Azerbaijan's capital Baku. Diplomats from nearly 200 countries, civil society representatives and journalists had gathered to witness a decision that could determine the fate of climate action in the Global South.

But what transpired was far from routine -- it was a moment of diplomatic brinkmanship that left many stunned and India's delegation fuming.

As the president of this year's UN climate conference, Mukhtar Babayev, approached the centrepiece agenda item -- the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance -- India's Deputy Lead Negotiator Neelesh Sah rushed



to COP29 Lead Negotiator Yalchin Rafiyev to convey that the country wants to make a statement before the adoption of the contentious decision.

Around 2:30 am, without so much as a pause for objections or comments, Babayev hammered the gavel, declaring the

USD 300 billion climate-finance package adopted. The move was so swift, it left delegates from many developing countries blinking in disbelief.

Avantika Goswami, head of the Climate Change Programme at the Centre for Science and Environment, said it

happened "quite suddenly and unceremoniously".

"We were surprised because the last-known figure on the table -- USD 300 billion -- was far below the latest G77 compromise of USD 500 billion. We also knew that India was preparing to interject in the process. The fact that it was passed before any such objections were raised came as a surprise," she said.

Journalists witnessing the drama unfold in the plenary room saw the entire Indian delegation leap to their feet, making a timeout gesture. Sah dashed over to Rafiyev, exchanged a few words and returned to his seat, panting.

Meanwhile, Babayev passed the microphone to Cuba for a statement, followed by India, Bolivia, Nigeria and Malawi, who spoke on behalf of a group of 45 least-developed countries. In total, 49 countries objected to the deal. In the UNFCCC pro-

cess, one objection is enough to block a decision.

However, India had no intention of blocking the deal and its outburst was about more than just the money. Delivering India's statement, Chandni Raina, Adviser at the Department of Economic Affairs, described the manner in which the deal was adopted as "unfair" and "stage-managed".

She labelled the sum "abysmally poor", "paltry" and an "optical illusion" -- a far cry from the \$1 trillion developing countries need every year to cope with the warming world. Raina flagged three major issues for India in the deal -- paragraphs 8a, 8c and 9 of the agreement. Para 8a: This suggests that the \$300 billion will come from all sorts of sources -- public, private, bilateral, multilateral -- and not directly as public money from developed to developing countries.

ISRO to launch ESA's Proba-3 mission Dec 4

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Dec 1: ISRO's trusted workhorse Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) will blast off from Sriharikota spaceport in Andhra Pradesh December 4 carrying ESA's Proba-3 mission, the Indian space agency said Sunday.

The European Space Agency's (ESA) Proba-3 Mission is happening in collaboration with ISRO's commercial arm NewSpace India Limited (NSIL). "This mission will place ESA's PROBA-3 satellites (550kg) into a unique highly elliptical orbit, reinforcing PSLV's reliability for complex orbital deliveries," ISRO said in a post on 'X'.

According to ISRO, the satellite will take off at 4.08 pm Wednesday. The ESA said Proba-3 is the world's first precision formation flying mission. It will study the solar corona, the outermost and hottest layer of Sun's atmosphere.

international



Peace is priceless and war has no winner. We have to fight - fight together - to prevent war
LAI CHING-TE | PRESIDENT, TAIWAN

A ROYAL DILEMMA

Japan's popular Princess Aiko turned 23 Sunday, as she takes on more official duties even while her future in the imperial family remains in doubt



of the day quote

We risk a government shutdown or at best, lean government spending from January
SETH TERKPER | FORMER FINANCE MINISTER, GHANA

From day one of the war, the EU has stood by the side of Ukraine. From day one of our mandate, we are reaffirming our unwavering support to the Ukrainian people
ANTONIO COSTA | PRESIDENT, EUROPEAN COUNCIL

Oli has visited China twice as Nepal's Prime Minister and made important contributions to advancing the growth of China-Nepal relations
KP SHARMA OLI | PM, NEPAL

TRUMP PICKS KASH PATEL TO HEAD FBI

REUTERS

Washington, Dec 1: Republican President-elect Donald Trump said Saturday he wanted former National Security official and loyalist Kash Patel to lead the FBI, signaling an intent to drive out the bureau's current director, Christopher Wray.

Patel, who during Trump's first term advised both the director of national intelligence and the secretary of defense, has previously called for stripping the FBI of its intelligence-gathering role and purging its ranks of any employee who refuses to support Trump's agenda. "The biggest problem the FBI has had, has come out of its intel shops. I'd break that component out of it. I'd shut down the FBI Hoover building on day one and reopen it the next day as a museum of the deep state," Patel said in a September interview on the conservative Shawn Ryan Show.

"And I'd take the 7,000 employees that work in that building and send them across America to chase down criminals. Go be cops. You're cops. Go be cops."



Demonstrators use firecrackers against police during a rally against the government's decision to suspend negotiations on joining the European Union for four years, outside the parliament's building in Tbilisi, Georgia, early Sunday

BUDGET 2025

Putin signs off all-time high defence spending

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, Dec 1: Russian President Vladimir Putin approved budget plans, raising 2025 military spending to record levels as Moscow seeks to prevail in the war in Ukraine.

Around 32.5% of the budget posted on a government website Sunday has been allocated for national defense, amounting to 13.5 trillion rubles (over \$145 billion), up from a reported 28.3% this year. Lawmakers in both houses of the Russian parliament, the State Duma and Federation Council had already approved the plans in the past 10 days.

Russia's war on Ukraine, which started in February 2022, is Europe's biggest conflict since World War II and has drained the resources of both sides.

Kyiv has been getting billions of dollars in help from its Western allies, but Russia's forces are bigger and better equipped, and in recent months the Russian army has gradually been pushing Ukrainian troops backward in eastern areas. On the ground in Ukraine, three people died in the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson when a Russian drone struck a minibus Sunday.

SHORT TAKES

Pak sectarian clash: Death toll surges

Peshawar: The death toll from sectarian violence in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province surged to 130, with at least six people killed and eight injured Sunday, as clashes in the volatile Kurram district continued for the eleventh consecutive day. The clashes between Alizai and Bagan tribes in the district started on November 22, after an attack on a convoy of passenger vans near Parachinar in which 47 people were killed a day earlier. Police said the situation remained tense, and violence persists despite a recent ceasefire agreement between the Sunni and Shia groups. The six new deaths reported on Sunday brought the death toll to 130, while the total number of injured rose to 186 after eight fresh injuries were reported.

Remand for 156 PTI party workers

Islamabad: An anti-terrorism court in Pakistan has approved the police remand of 156 workers of former premier Imran Khan's party arrested during a protest here, according to a media report. Workers of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) were arrested during the November 24 sit-in protest at D-Chowk, and cases have been registered against them at the Secretariat Police Station, The Express Tribune newspaper reported. The party members crossed barricades and attempted to reach Islamabad, where a midnight crackdown resulted in four deaths and over 50 injuries.



With the nomination of Patel, Trump is signaling that he is preparing to carry out his threat to oust Wray, a Republican first appointed by Trump, whose 10-year term at the FBI does not expire until 2027.

Asked about Patel's nomination, which will need Senate confirmation, an FBI spokesperson said Saturday, "Every day, the men and women of the FBI continue to work to protect Americans from a growing array of threats. Director Wray's focus remains on the men and women of the FBI, the people we do the work with, and the people we do the work for."

FBI directors by law are appointed to 10-year terms as a means of insulating the bureau from politics.

Looting hampers UN aid to Gaza

Experts were already warning of famine in the territory's north, which Israeli forces have almost completely isolated since early October

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deir Al-Balah, Dec 1: The UN agency for Palestinian refugees said Sunday it is halting aid deliveries through the main cargo crossing into the war-ravaged Gaza Strip because of the threat of armed gangs who have looted recent convoys.

It blamed the breakdown of law and order in large part on Israeli policies. The decision could worsen the humanitarian crisis in Gaza as the cold, rainy winter sets in, with hundreds of thousands of Palestinians living in squalid tent camps and reliant on international food aid.

Philippe Lazzarini, the head of UNRWA, the main aid provider in Gaza, said the route leading to the Kerem Shalom crossing is too dangerous on the Gaza side. Armed men looted nearly 100 trucks travelling



on the route in mid-November, and he said gangs stole a smaller shipment on Saturday.

Kerem Shalom is the only crossing between Israel and Gaza that is designed for cargo shipments and has been the main artery for aid deliveries since the Rafah crossing with Egypt was shut down in May. Last month, nearly two-thirds

of all aid entering Gaza came through Kerem Shalom, and in previous months it accounted for an even larger amount, according to Israeli figures.

In a post on X, Lazzarini largely blamed Israel for the breakdown of humanitarian operations in Gaza, citing "political decisions to restrict the amounts of aid," lack of safety

on aid routes and Israel's targeting of the Hamas-run police force, which had previously provided public security.

Israel says it allows enough aid into Gaza and blames UNRWA and other agencies for failing to deliver it. It accuses UNRWA of having allowed Hamas to infiltrate its ranks — allegations denied by the UN agency — and passed legislation to sever ties with it last month.

ISRAELI ASSAULT

Israeli strikes in Gaza, meanwhile, killed at least six people overnight, including two young children, ages 6 and 8, in the tent where their family was sheltering, medical officials said Sunday.

The strike in the Muwasi area, a sprawling tent camp housing hundreds of thousands of displaced people, also wounded

the children's mother and their 8-month-old sister, according to nearby Nasser Hospital. An Associated Press reporter at the hospital saw the bodies.

A separate strike in the southern city of Rafah, on the border with Egypt, killed four men, according to hospital records.

The Israeli military said it was not aware of strikes in either location. Israel says it only targets militants and tries to avoid harming civilians, but its daily strikes across Gaza often kill women and children.

In a separate development, a projectile fired by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen set off air raid sirens in central Israel. The Israeli military said it intercepted the projectile before it entered Israeli territory. The Houthis said they fired a ballistic missile at the northern Israeli city of Haifa.

B'desh turns back ISKCON members from crossing into India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, Dec 1: Dozens of ISKCON members who possessed valid travel documents were turned back Sunday by Bangladesh's immigration police from Benapole border crossing when they tried to cross into India, a media report said.

"We consulted the special branch of police and received instructions from the higher authorities not to permit them

(to cross the border)," Imtiaz Ahsanul Quader Bhuiyan, officer-in-charge (OC) of the Benapole Immigration Police, was quoted as saying by The Daily Star newspaper.

The ISKCON members reportedly had valid passports and visas but "lacked specific government permission" required for their travel, Bhuiyan said.

"They cannot proceed without such approval," he said.

The 54 members, including devotees from various districts, arrived at the check post on Saturday night and Sunday morning. However, even after waiting for hours for permission, they were informed their travel was not authorised.

The latest development comes as the organisation is under scanner in Bangladesh following the arrest of Hindu leader Chinmoy Krishna Das in a sedition case.

REBEL-HELD

Russian, Syrian jets intensify bombing of Syria northwest

REUTERS

Amman, Dec 1: Russian and Syrian jets struck the rebel-held city of Idlib on Sunday in the second day of intensive bombing in northern Syria aimed at pushing back insurgents who had swept through to the city of Aleppo, Syrian army sources said.

Residents said one of the raids hit a crowded residential area in the centre of Idlib, which is the largest city in a rebel enclave near the Turkish border where around four million people live in makeshift tents and dwellings.

At least four people were killed and dozens injured, according to rescuers at the scene. The Syrian army and its ally Russia say they target the hideouts of insurgent groups and deny attacking civilians.

On Saturday, Russian and Syrian jets bombed other towns in Idlib province, which had fallen completely under rebel control in the boldest rebel assault for years in a civil war where front lines had largely been frozen since 2020.

Insurgents swept into the city of Aleppo, east of Idlib province, Friday night, forcing the army to redeploy in the biggest challenge to President Bashar al-Assad in years.



RUSSIAN JETS HIT IDLIB CITY, RESCUERS SAY FOUR PEOPLE KILLED

HEAVY FIGHTING AROUND TOWN ON KEY ROUTE INTO ALEPPO CITY

SYRIAN ARMY SAYS IT IS GAINING GROUND AFTER LOSSES

Inside Aleppo city, streets were mostly empty and many shops were closed as scared residents stayed at home

The Syrian army said dozens of its soldiers had been killed in the attack.

On Sunday, the army said it had recaptured several towns that had been overrun in recent days by rebels. The insurgents are a coalition of Turkey-backed mainstream secular armed groups along with Hyat Tahrir al Sham, an Islamist group that is the opposition's most formidable military force. Hyat Tahrir al Sham is des-

ignated a terrorist group by the US, Russia, Turkey and other states. Assad is a close ally of Moscow.

The war, which has killed hundreds of thousands of people and displaced many millions, has ground on since 2011 with no formal end. But most major fighting halted years ago after Iran and Russia helped Assad's government win control of most land and all major cities.

Belgium sex workers get landmark rights

First country globally to pass law granting sex workers maternity leave, employment benefits

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Dec 1: Starting Sunday, sex workers in Belgium will be able to sign formal employment contracts and gain labour rights on par with those in other professions in a legal breakthrough some call a "revolution".

The new law also establishes fundamental rights for sex workers including the right to refuse clients, choose their practices, and stop an act at any moment.

Under the new regulations, sex workers will have access to health insurance, paid leave, maternity benefits, unemployment support and pensions. The legislation also establishes rules on working hours, pay and safety measures, addressing a long-standing gap in legal protections for those in the in-



dustry. "This is an incredible step forward," said Isabelle Jaramillo, coordinator of Espace P, an advocacy group involved in drafting the legislation. "It means their profession can

be recognised as legitimate by the Belgian state."

"From the employer's perspective, this will also be a revolution. They'll have to apply for a state authorisation to hire sex

The move follows the country's 2022 decision to decriminalise sex work

workers," Jaramillo said.

"Under the previous legislation, hiring someone for sex work automatically made you a pimp, even if the arrangement was consensual," said Jaramillo. "Now, they'll have to apply for state authorisation to hire employees."

Employers must now obtain authorisation, adhere to strict safety protocols, and meet background requirements, including no prior convictions for sexual assault or human trafficking. They must provide clean linens, condoms, and hygiene products, and install emergency buttons in workspaces.



“Coffee is a huge opportunity in India. India is an under-penetrated country in coffee and when you look at global trends, coffee is a faster-growing category than tea”
SUNIL D'SOUZA | TATA CONSUMER PRODUCTS MD & CEO

COAL PRODUCTION RISES 7.2% IN NOV

India's overall coal production rose by 7.2 per cent to 90.62 million tonnes (MT) in November compared to 84.52 MT in the same month of last year, the coal ministry said in a statement Sunday. The coal output in the April-November period of the current fiscal rose by 6.21 per cent to 628.03 MT over 591.32 MT in the year-ago period, according to provisional figures.



of the day quote

Trump's threat to impose 100 per cent tariffs on countries adopting a BRICS currency is unrealistic and more symbolic than practical. For India, the prudent approach is to focus on making local currency trading workable by establishing a transparent and open currency exchange



AJAY SRIVASTAVA | GTRI FOUNDER

We would first look at India, and kind of make sure we are successful here, put all our attention here. Then we want to look at western right hand drive markets, and then over a period of time, left hand drive western world markets



RAJESH JEURIKA | M&M EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO

Look at DHFL, Cafe Coffee Day, Reliance Capital, Reliance Home Finance, these are like textbook cases of corporate failure on how the auditors year after year failed to raise the red flag. If they had raised the red flag earlier, the huge amount of losses suffered by banks and shareholders could have been avoided



AJAY BHUSHAN PRASAD PANDEY | NFRA CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

Mcap of most valued firms up

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most valued firms surged ₹2,29,589.86 crore last week, with Life Insurance Corporation of India emerging as the biggest gainer, in tandem with a rally in benchmark indices. Last week, BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 685.68 points or 0.86 per cent and NSE Nifty climbed 223.85 points or 0.93 per cent. The valuation of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) jumped ₹60,656.72 crore to ₹6,23,202.02 crore, the most among the top-10 firms. HDFC Bank added ₹39,513.97 crore, taking its valuation to ₹13,73,932.11 crore.

Ola EV sees dip in registrations

New Delhi: After a blockbuster sales figure in October due to the festive season, Ola Electric vehicle registrations dropped by 33 per cent in November. According to Vahan portal data, the number of registrations of Ola Electric vehicles in November fell by 33 per cent on a month-on-month (MoM) basis to 27,746 units. In October last year, this figure was more than 40,000 units. Due to fewer registrations, the company's market share dipped to 24 per cent in November, which was 30 per cent in October. However, the company still maintains the first position in the electric two-wheeler market by sales.

Wipro Enterprises' revenue rises 10%

New Delhi: Azim Hasham Premji-led Wipro Enterprises has said its consolidated revenue from operations increased 9.8 per cent to ₹16,902 crore in the financial year ended March 2024 while its profit jumped 35 per cent to ₹1,903.1 crore according to an RoC (Registrar of Companies) filing, its total income, including other income, stood at ₹17,761.3 crore in FY24, up 11.2 per cent from FY23 figure. Wipro Enterprises Pvt Ltd had reported a revenue from operations of ₹15,387.8 crore and a profit of ₹1,410.1 crore a year before in FY23.

Wedding season, rural traction drive PV sales

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: Leading automakers Maruti Suzuki India, Tata Motors and Toyota Kirloskar Motor Sunday reported growth in their domestic passenger vehicle sales riding on ongoing wedding season demand, continued rural traction and strong offtake of SUVs.

On the other hand, newly-listed Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) registered a 2 per cent year-on-year decline in domestic sales to 48,246 units last month as against 49,451 units in the year-ago period.

Market leader Maruti Suzuki India posted domestic passenger vehicle (PV) wholesales of 1,41,312 units in November as compared with 1,34,158 units in the year-ago month, a growth of 5 per cent.

“Our November sales were driven by a variety of factors, including the ongoing wedding season demand, continued traction in the rural market, introduction of limited editions and the ongoing robust uptake for SUVs,” Maruti Suzuki India Senior Executive Officer, Marketing and Sales, Partho Banerjee told PTI.

The company's rural penetration increased to 48.7 per cent in November this year, which is 2.2 per cent higher than the same month last year, he added.

On the urban market, Banerjee said, “We are not seeing that sort of traction that we saw in October. Generally what happens is that the urban customers wait for December and hold back a little in November expecting better offers (in the year-end).”

In November, he said, “We could maximise contribution of SUVs (in our portfolio) which has now gone up to 29 per cent.”

MSIL's utility vehicles, consisting of Brezza, Ertiga, Grand Vitara and XL6, clocked sales of 59,003 units last month as compared to 49,016 units earlier.



er. However, sales of mini-segment cars, comprising Alto and S-Presso, were down at 9,750 units as against 9,959 units in November 2023. Sales of compact cars, including Baleno, Celerio, Dzire, Ignis, Swift, Tour S and WagonR, declined to 61,373 units as compared to 64,679 units in the year-ago month.

Another major player, Tata Motors said its domestic PV sales, including EVs were up 2 per cent at 47,063 units as against 46,068 units in November 2023.

Similarly, Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) said its total sales rose 44 per cent year-on-year to 25,586 units in November as compared to 17,818 units in the same month last year.

“Our diverse portfolio, spanning from hatchbacks to SUVs, continues to offer tailored mobility solutions that resonate with varying lifestyles,” TKM Vice President, Sales-Service-Used Car Business Sabari Manohar said in a statement.

On the other hand, Hyundai Motor India Ltd said its domestic sales declined 2 per cent year on year to 48,246 units in November as against 49,451 units in the year-ago period.

Exports declined 20 per cent year on year to 13,006 units last month.

The company said it achieved its highest-ever monthly rural contribution of 22.1 per cent in November 2024, augmenting its reach in the hinterland of India.

The company's push towards fortifying SUV supremacy continued in November with SUVs contributing 68.8 per cent of total domestic sales, Hyundai Motor India Whole-time Director and Chief Operating Officer Tarun Garg said.

JSW MG Motor India reported a 20 per cent rise in wholesales at 6,019 units in November 2024 as compared to the same month last year.

The company's electric crossover utility vehicle Windsor continues with its strong performance for the second month in a row with 3,144 wholesale units, JSW MG Motor India said in a statement.

New energy vehicles (NEVs) account for a substantial 70 per cent of the total monthly sales, it added.

“This underscores the position of NEVs as a significant contributor to the company's overall revenue,” the company said.

GST collection rises by 8.5% to ₹1.82 lakh crore in Nov

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: Gross GST collections grew 8.5 per cent to over ₹1.82 lakh crore in November on higher revenues from domestic transactions.

The Central GST collection stood at ₹34,141 crore, State GST at ₹43,047 crore, Integrated GST at ₹91,828 crore and cess at ₹13,253 crore, according to government data released on Sunday.

The total gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue grew 8.5 per cent to over ₹1.82 lakh crore in November as compared to ₹1.68 lakh crore in the same month a year ago, it said.

In October, GST collections of ₹1.87 lakh crore were the second-best GST mop-up with 9 per cent annual growth. The highest-ever collection was in April 2024 at over ₹2.10 lakh crore.

During the month under review, GST from domestic



transactions grew 9.4 per cent to ₹1.40 lakh crore, while revenues from tax on imports rose about 6 per cent to ₹42,591 crore.

Refunds worth ₹19,259 crore were issued during the month, registering 8.9 per cent decline over the year-ago period.

After adjusting refunds, net GST collection increased by 11 per cent to ₹1.63 lakh crore.

ATF, commercial LPG get costlier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: Jet fuel, or ATF, price Sunday was hiked by 1.45 per cent and rates of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants increased by ₹16.5 per 19-kg cylinder in the monthly revision done in line with international oil price trends.

The aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was increased by ₹1,318.12 per kilolitre, or 1.45 per cent, to ₹91,856.84 per kl in the national capital - home to one of the busiest airports in the country, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

This is the second straight monthly increase in jet fuel prices. Rates were increased by ₹2,941.5 per kl (3.3 per cent) on November 1. That hike came after two rounds of reduction which had taken the rates to their lowest level this year.

ATF price on October 1 was cut by 6.3 per cent (Rs 5,883 per



kl) and by ₹4,495.5 per kl, or 4.58 per cent on September 1.

The ATF price in Mumbai was increased to ₹85,861.02 per kl on Sunday from ₹84,642.91 previously.

Oil firms also increased the price of commercial LPG by ₹16.5 to ₹1818.50 per 19-kg cylinder.

This is the fifth straight monthly hike in commercial LPG price. Rates were hiked by

₹62 per 19-kg cylinder in the last revision on November 1.

In five price increases, commercial LPG rates have hiked by ₹172.5 per 19-kg cylinder. Rates are now at their highest level in one year.

The increases negated the four monthly reductions prior to the current cycle that started in August. In the four rounds, prices had been cut by ₹148 per 19-kg cylinder.

Commercial LPG now costs ₹1771 per 19-kg cylinder in Mumbai, ₹1,927 in Kolkata and ₹1,980 in Chennai.

Prices of ATF and LPG differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes including VAT.

The rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at ₹803 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on the first of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate.

Prices of petrol and diesel continue to remain frozen. Rates had been cut by ₹2 per litre in mid-March ahead of the general elections. Petrol costs ₹94.72 a litre in Delhi while diesel is priced at ₹87.62.

Petrol, diesel sales rebound on festival demand in Nov

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 1: India's petrol and diesel consumption soared in November as the festive season reversed a fall in demand witnessed in previous months, preliminary data of state-owned firms showed.

While petrol sales had shown a year-on-year increase, diesel has been a laggard since monsoon and November was the first month that saw positive growth in consumption.

Petrol sales of three state-owned firms, which control 90 per cent of the fuel market, soared 8.3 per cent to 3.1 million tonnes in November compared to 2.86 million tonnes

of consumption in the same month last year.

Diesel demand was up 5.9 per cent to 7.2 million tonnes.

Petrol and diesel sales have been tepid during the monsoon months as rains reduced vehicular movement and demand for the agriculture sector. Petrol demand however soared once rains eased but diesel consumption lagged year-on-year.

Month-on-month petrol sales were up 4.7 per cent when compared to 2.96 million tonnes of consumption in October. Diesel demand was almost 11 per cent more than 6.5 million tonnes of consumption in October.



Diesel is India's most consumed fuel, accounting for

almost 40 per cent of all petroleum product consumption.

The transport sector accounts for 70 per cent of all diesel sales in the country. It is also the predominant fuel used in agriculture sectors, including in harvesters and tractors.

Consumption of petrol during November was 16.5 per cent more than in November 2022, and 33.5 per cent more than in Covid-marred November 2020.

Diesel demand was 1.8 per cent lower than November 2022, but 8.5 per cent compared to November 2020.

Jet fuel (ATF) sales rose 3.6 per cent year-on-year to 650,900 tonnes during November 2024. This was 2.3 per cent higher month-on-month when

compared with 636,100 tonnes of fuel sold in October.

Like petrol and diesel, ATF demand too is now firmly above pre-Covid levels.

ATF consumption was 11.3 per cent more than in November 2022, and 1.9 per cent more than in November 2020.

Cooking gas LPG sales were up 7.3 per cent year-on-year at 2.76 million tonnes in November 2024. LPG consumption was 6.3 per cent higher than in November 2022, and 19.9 per cent more than in November 2020.

Month-on-month, LPG demand was flat when compared to 2.76 million tonnes of LPG consumption.

Sindhu, Sen dominate show

Gill shows class in pink ball test

Indian shuttlers win women's and men's singles titles with ease at Syed Modi International tourney

Lucknow, Dec 1: Top seeded Indians PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen showcased their class and dominance to clinch the women's and men's singles titles, respectively, at the Syed Modi International badminton tournament here Sunday.

Sindhu ended her long title drought by outplaying China's World No. 119 Wu Luo Yu 21-14, 21-16 to lift the trophy for the third time, having previously triumphed in 2017 and 2022.

In the men's singles final Lakshya was at his dominant best as he demolished Singapore's Jia Heng Jason Teh 21-6, 21-7 in the title clash, displaying complete command over the match.

Indian badminton had more to celebrate on the day as the women's doubles pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand clinched their maiden Super 300 title with a convincing 21-18, 21-11 win over China's Bao Li Jing and Li Qian.

Sindhu's victory marks her return to the top of the podium after over two years, with



WINNERS TAKE IT ALL: PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen pose with their medals Sunday

PTI PHOTOS

her last title win coming at the Singapore Open in July 2022. Lakshya's win comes as a balm after a disappointing loss in the bronze-medal playoff at the Paris Olympics.

Sindhu was up 8-5 in the

opening game and despite some resistance from Wu, the Indian managed to secure a two-point lead at 11-9 at the interval. Sindhu changed gears after the break, surging to 15-10 and then kept a firm grip on the rallies to comfort-

ably close out the opening game.

Sindhu opened strongly in the second game, racing to a 3-0 lead, but Wu quickly levelled the scores and matched the Indian point-for-point till 10-10. The Chinese left-hander

troubled Sindhu with precise drops, earning a slender 11-10 lead at the break.

After resumption, Sindhu shifted gears, drawing errors from Wu and regaining control with a 14-11 lead courtesy of a sharp straight smash. A bodyline smash further extended her lead to 15-11, as Wu misjudged the length on several occasions. She sealed the title with a powerful smash, capping off a dominant performance.

Lakshya, 23, was in a hurry to wrap up the proceedings, storming to a massive 8-0 lead early in the first game. Lakshya's fast-paced game left Teh struggling, with the Singaporean committing a series of unforced errors. He then won nine of the next 10 points to wrap up the first game in quick time.

Lakshya maintained his relentless attack in the second game, racing to a commanding 10-1 lead at the mid-game interval. Teh, demoralised and unable to match Lakshya's pace then lost the game tamely.

Rohit bats at No. 4 to fuel speculation about batting order

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Canberra, Dec 1: Shubman Gill (50, 62b, 7x4, retired) dispelled all doubts about his thumb injury with a stylish knock even as skipper Rohit Sharma (3) kept cards close to his chest by coming in at No. 4 in India's curtailed pink-ball warm-up game against Prime Minister's XI here Sunday. The Indians won the match by six wickets.

It, however, remains to be seen if the Indian captain will come out to open in the second Test against Australia, starting Friday in Adelaide.

It was a 46-overs-a-side affair, which India won by chasing down an easy target of 241 in 42.5 overs, but they carried on batting till the end of the final over. For Australia, Test hopeful Sam Konstas' (107, 97b, 14x4, 1x6) century went in vain.

The Indian team management was tactical in its choic-



Shubman Gill showed he is ready for the Adelaide Test with a fine half century

as Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah decided on facing each other at the nets rather than providing data to the Aussie think-tank. However, Ravindra Jadeja played the game and got some runs.

Brief Scores

Australia PM XI 240 (Sam Konstas 107, Harshit Rana 4/44) lost to India 257 for 5 (Shubman Gill ret'd 50 n.o., Yashasvi Jaiswal 45, Nitish Kumar Reddy 42) by 5 wickets.

Odisha deaf cricketers emerge national champs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: The Odisha Deaf Cricketers' team emerged winners in the IDCA 2nd T20 U-19 National Cricket Championship recently. The tournament was held November 25 to November 28 in Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh.

In the final, Odisha scored 138 for the loss of nine wickets in 20 overs. The bowlers then worked in tandem to dismiss their opponents Haryana for a paltry score of 96 in 17.4 overs. Rajesh Sahoo of Odisha was declared the man of the match. It was a completely dominating show by the Odisha



bowlers who never allowed the opposition to get on top.

The Odisha squad were represented by Ranjan Sahu (captain), Jitan Nayak (vice-captain), Anshuman Sahu (wicket-keeper), Smrutiranjana Moharana (wicket-keeper), Smruti Ranjan Barik, Purna

Behera, Babulu Mahananda, Bharat Behera, Rudra Prasad Behera, Gyana Ranjan Panda, Nitish Behera, Rajesh Sahoo, Aditya Narayan Barad, Shanith Shetty.

A total of 15 teams representing various states across India took part in the competition.

Jay takes charge as youngest ICC chief

Dubai: Indian cricket administrator Jay Shah took charge Sunday as the chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) with an immediate goal of ending the impasse surrounding the Champions Trophy and a broader vision of making



cricket a commercially viable Olympic sport. The 36-year-old Shah, who headlined the BCCI as its secretary for the last five years, is the fifth Indian and the youngest ever to head the global cricket body. He was the unanimous choice of the ICC's board of directors and replaces New Zealand attorney Greg Barclay, who didn't wish to continue for a third consecutive term.

OFC topple table-toppers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 1: Odisha FC delivered a magnificent performance to sweep aside Bengaluru FC 4-2 in their Indian Super League (ISL) match here Sunday.

The Juggernauts truly brought their A-game to the forefront at their fortress, especially in the offensive department, as they left the Blues with little respite and secured their third consecutive win at Kalinga Stadium against Bengaluru FC in the ISL.

The home side didn't take too



much time to settle in, opting to dictate the pace of the proceedings right from the onset of the

match. They got the lead in the 10th minute courtesy their dynamic and emerging attacking duo of Isak Vanlalratfela and Jerry Mawihmingthanga.

Amid an Odisha FC offensive move, both these players made timely runs into the Bengaluru FC box, with Isak overcoming a challenge from the seasoned Rahul Bheke to lay the ball in Jerry's path.

Jerry, who was playing his 100th ISL game for the club, slotted home from the right side to break into a joyous celebration.

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(Established U/S 3 of UGC Act 1956), Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

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ALL THE ESTEEMED PLAYERS, COACHES, ARBITERS, GUESTS & PARENTS

1ST INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY CRICKET SERIES

2-5 December 2024

Organized Jointly By: &

India vs Australia

Venue : KIIT Cricket Stadium, Campus 13, Bhubaneswar

T-20 MATCH

2nd Dec. 2024

9:00 AM - 02:00 PM

T-20 MATCH

3rd Dec. 2024

9:00 AM - 02:00 PM

ONE DAY MATCH

5th Dec. 2024

8:30 AM - 04:30 PM

HIGHLIGHTS

- This is the first time in India that a bilateral cricket series is being played between Indian and Australian university teams.
- KIIT University hosted its first international cricket match during the Blind Cricket World Cup in 2017, featuring a historic game between India and New Zealand.
- Now, KIIT University is set to host its second international cricket match, the Indian University vs. Australian University Bilateral Cricket Series, further cementing its legacy in sports.

15TH KIIT INTERNATIONAL CHESS FESTIVAL - 2024

2-9 December, 2024

Organised by:

Venue : Viswanathan Anand International Chess Hall
KIIT, Bhubaneswar

CATEGORY 'A'

Open to All

2 - 9 Dec. 2024

Prize Money Total **Rs 30,00,000/-**

CATEGORY 'B'

Below 1900

2 - 5 Dec. 2024

Prize Money Total **Rs 15,00,000/-**

CATEGORY 'C'

Below 1700

6 - 9 Dec. 2024

Prize Money Total **Rs 15,00,000/-**

MATCH SCHEDULE

HIGHLIGHTS

- Total 436 number of prizes - the highest in India.
- Prize fund of ₹60 Lakhs - the second-highest in the country and double last year's prize money.
- Players from 30+ countries are participating.
- 70+ International Title Holders expected to compete.
- A single festival hosting three international chess competitions simultaneously across A, B, and C categories - **1st time in India.**
- KIIT has produced 5+ Grand masters/ International Masters and 46 International Rated players to date.
- More than 1200 Participant expected to compete.
- Best Chess Venue named after legendary Chess Player Viswanathan Anand that hosted the 55th World Junior Chess Championship 2016 at KIIT University **first time in India.**
- The youngest player, aged 7, and the oldest player, aged 91, are participating in this Chess Festival

PRIZE MONEY

₹60 Lakhs

KIIT is only 27 years old as an institute (1997 - 2024) and 21 years old as a university

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Printed and published by Adyasha Satpathy on behalf of Navajit Printers and Media Pvt. Ltd. and printed at Navajit Printers, B-15 Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar -751010, Odisha; Phone: 7894447142 (Marketing). Editor: Tathagata Satpathy, RNI No. ORIENG/2011/37159