



Game changer

Actor Kriti Kharbada shares how Shaadi Mein Zaroor Aana helped her landing a major role in Housefull 4

LEISURE | P2



ED raids Baghel's son

The ED conducts raids linked to Chaitanya Baghel, son of Bhupesh Baghel, in connection with the state's alleged liquor scam

NATIONAL | P9



AI talent crunch

A study by Bain & Company reveals that India's AI sector could face a shortfall of over a million skilled professionals by 2027

BUSINESS | P11



No intoxicant ads

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare asks IPL officials to ban all forms of tobacco and alcohol advertisements in this season

SPORTS | P12

Canada's next PM Carney wants to 'rebuild' India ties

AGENCIES

Ottawa, March 10: Mark Carney, a leading economist and former Governor of the Bank of Canada who has been chosen by Canada's Liberal Party as Justin Trudeau's replacement, had pledged to "rebuild" the strained ties with India during his recent election campaign.

Carney will become Canada's next prime minister after he secured a landslide win with 85.9 per cent votes in his favour and was elected as the leader of the governing Liberal Party Sunday. This comes at a time when the North American country deals with US President Donald Trump's trade war and annexation threat, and a federal election looms.



He will stay in power till the scheduled General Election in October, in all probability facing Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre in the ultimate battle.

India-Canada ties had nosedived last year as Trudeau made "ludicrous statements" repeatedly, further damaging the already strained ties.

However, while pitching himself as the frontrunner to replace Trudeau, Carney has given signals to mend the relationship.

"What Canada will be looking to do is to diversify our trading relationships with like-minded countries, and there are opportunities to rebuild the relationship with India," said Carney during an interaction in Calgary recently.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Yes, I know we're No. 1 in fake news. But, this is real—we are No.1 in cricket too!



LIFELESS LIFELINE: Women try to catch fish in the dry Indravati river in Bastar district in Chhattisgarh, Monday evening. Locals used to do farming with the water of this river, but this year it dried up before time

NEP ROW SNOWBALLS: PRADHAN ACCUSES TN GOVT OF 'U-TURN', DMK PROTESTS

Sad 'state' of affairs

The ongoing standoff between the Tamil Nadu government and the Centre over the PM SHRI scheme and fund allocation highlights the delicate balance of power within India's federal structure. Under the Constitution, both the Centre and states have defined areas of authority, with states having the right to determine educational policies that best suit their regional needs. The Centre, however, is increasingly leveraging fund allocation to ensure state compliance with its directives, such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Tamil Nadu's rejection of NEP, particularly its opposition to the three-language formula, underscores the state's autonomy in deciding its educational framework, shaped by local linguistic and cultural aspirations. The Centre's decision to withhold crucial funding until compliance with the NEP reflects a growing trend of centralisation, raising concerns over the erosion of state rights

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Monday slammed the Tamil Nadu government for its stand on three-language policy, accusing it of being "dis-



honest" and doing a U-turn on implementation of the new National Education Policy (NEP), drawing a sharp retort from Chief Minister MK Stalin, who asked him to control his tongue. After protests and brief adjournment in the Lok Sabha, Pradhan withdrew certain words he had used for Tamil Nadu MPs and urged the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government to rise above political interests for the benefit of students.

The BJP stepped up its attack on the DMK, accusing it of opposing the NEP and delimitation out of fear of losing Assembly elections due next year.

The Centre and the DMK government have been engaged in a heated exchange over these issues, with the DMK alleging that the BJP was imposing Hindi on the southern state through the NEP.



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin lashed out at Pradhan, saying his remarks reflected arrogance. "You are insulting the people of Tamil Nadu. Does PM Narendra Modi accept this?" he said.

The DMK said it had clearly told the minister "we cannot accept" the NEP "in full" and the three-language formula "is not acceptable to Tamil Nadu".

Earlier, replying to a question on the PM SHRI scheme in the Lok Sabha, Pradhan said the DMK-led Tamil Nadu government has changed its stand on implementing the Centrally-sponsored scheme which envisaged strengthening the schools managed by Centre, state or local bodies.

The state concerned has to sign an MoU with the Central government that it would implement the National Educa-

tion Policy (NEP) 2020 and in return, the Central government provides the funds.

Taking exception to the minister's remarks, the DMK members raised slogans against the Central government.

Speaker Om Birla asked the agitating members to return to their seats and allow the House to function normally but the DMK members ignored his pleas and continued their protests. After some time, Birla adjourned the House till 12noon.

When the House reassembled at noon, DMK member Kanimozhi told the House that she was "very pained and hurt" by a particular word used by the minister.

Responding to Kanimozhi, Pradhan said, "My esteemed colleague, one of my dearest sisters and senior member honourable Kanimozhi has raised two points." "At one point she said that I have used a word which I should not have used for the members from Tamil Nadu, Tamil Nadu government and people of Tamil Nadu."

"Let's not mix it. Let me withdraw it. I withdraw my word if it has hurt anyone. I have no issues on that," he said. After Pradhan's comments, the Speaker said the word would be expunged from the records.

Adjournments, all-party meet over House ruckus

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 10: Opposition BJD and Congress legislators created a ruckus in the Assembly Monday over a controversial remark of a BJP MLA and alleged rising crimes against women in the state, prompting the Speaker to adjourn the House several times.

BJD members demanded a statement from Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi over BJP legislator Jayanarayan Mishra's remark referring to the merger of Koshal with Odisha in 1936, while the Congress MLAs agitated over the alleged increase in the crimes against women in the state.

Addressing an official function in Sambalpur March 8, Mishra, also a former minister, courted controversy with his remark that people of the western region, earlier known as Koshal, were neglected as the coastal districts (Utkal area) enjoyed benefits.

Mishra had said that Odisha was formed with the merger of Utkal, Kalinga and Koshal regions in 1936. He also said it was a "historical mistake" to get Koshal merged with Odisha.

The House witnessed uproarious scenes after the assembly paid homage to former minister Ananta Charan Das, who died

Massive cyberattack on X, says Musk as service goes down

ASSOCIATED PRESS

San Francisco, March 10: Hours after a series of outages Monday that left X unavailable to thousands of users, Elon Musk claimed that the social media platform was being targeted in a "massive cyberattack".

"We get attacked every day, but this was done with a lot of resources," Musk claimed in a post. "Either a large, coordinated group and/or a country is involved. Tracing ..."

Complaints about outages spiked Monday at 6am Eastern and again at 10am, with more than 40,000 users reporting no access to the platform, according to the tracking website Downdetector.com.

A sustained outage that lasted at least an hour began at noon, with the heaviest disruptions occurring along the US coasts.

Downdetector.com said that 56 per cent of problems were reported for the X app, while 33 per cent were reported for the website.

Gulmarg fashion show sparks outrage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu/New Delhi, March 10: Outrage over a fashion show in Gulmarg found wide echo in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly Monday with Chief Minister Omar Abdullah saying his government had no role in the event organised at a private hotel and would not have given its permission even if it was not Ramzan.

At the centre of the controversy over the show, which Kashmir's chief priest Mirwaiz Umar Farooq dubbed obscene, were designer duo Shivan & Narresh. As the issue over the March 7 fashion walk through the snow meadows in Gulmarg escalated, they expressed deep regret.

The Delhi-based designers, whose full names are Shivan Bhatiya and Narresh Kukreja, had showcased their skiwear collection to mark the 15th anniversary of their label.



"Our sole intention was to celebrate creativity and the ski & apres-ski lifestyle, without any desire to offend anyone or any religious sentiments. Respect for all cultures and traditions is at our heart, and we acknowledge the concerns raised. We sincerely apologise for any unintended discomfort and appreciate the feedback from our community. We remain committed to being more

mindful and respectful," the designers said in a statement Sunday night. The apology did little to assuage the anger.

A day after Abdullah asked for a report on the matter, he said in the Assembly that those who organised the fashion show had not applied their mind, shown disregard to public sentiment and paid no attention to where it was happening and its timing.

Clogged toilets: Flight returned to Chicago

POLYTHENE BAGS, RAGS FLUSHED DOWN: AIR INDIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: Days after its Delhi-bound aircraft returned to Chicago due to unserviceable lavatories, Air India Monday said its probe found that polythene bags, rags, and clothes had been flushed down and were stuck in the plumbing.

AI126 from Chicago to Delhi returned to the US city March 6 after being airborne for more than 10 hours and on that day, the airline said the air return was due to a technical issue. The same day, a source aware of the development told PTI that the aircraft had to return, as many of the lavatories were clogged.

In a detailed statement on the air return of AI126, Air India Monday said that about an hour and forty-five minutes into the flight, the crew reported some of the lavatories in Business and Economy Class to be unserviceable.

Subsequently, eight of the 12 lavatories in the aircraft became unserviceable, causing discomfort to all on board, the statement said.

By this time, the aircraft was overflying the Atlantic, leaving points in Europe as potential cities to divert to. However,



due to restrictions on night operations at most of the European airports, it was decided to divert back to Chicago, Air India said and added that the decision to divert was taken entirely in the interest of passenger comfort and safety.

"We are aware of some social media posts about the unserviceable lavatories on AI126 operating from Chicago to Delhi on 05 March 2025 that caused the flight's diversion back to its origin, Chicago O'Hare International Airport. We would like to confirm that as part of our investigation into the incident, our teams found polythene bags, rags, and clothes that had been flushed down and stuck in the plumbing. This led the lavatories to become unserviceable," the statement said.

Air India also urged passengers to use lavatories only for the purposes that they are meant for and mentioned that previously, its teams had found objects like blankets, underwear, and diapers, among other waste, having been flushed down the toilets on other flights.

According to information available on the flight tracking website flightradar24.com, the flight was operated with a Boeing 777-337 ER aircraft and returned to Chicago airport after being airborne for over ten hours March 6.

leisure

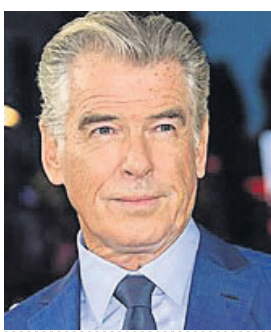


CHRISTINA RICCI WILL NEVER PLAY A MOTHER ON SCREEN

Actress Christina Ricci has said that she never wants to play a mother on screen. Ricci, who has a son and a daughter, said that her feelings about being a real life mom are too 'personal and precious' to share with the world.

PIERCE BROSNAN SAYS NEXT BOND MUST BE BRITISH

Hollywood star Pierce Brosnan said it is a given that the next James Bond should be British. His comments come after the concerns that the franchise will not be British anymore in the wake of Amazon MGM Studios, reports *mirror.co.uk*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Today will be an industrious day. The stars foretell that you may visit a historical place, or perhaps a museum. However, Ganesha says, you may need to pay a little attention to your health. If such is the case, it would be better to take the evening off for yourself.

TAURUS
Today, Ganesha sees your mind shifting from your professional affairs and drifting, time and again, towards your home and family. You are likely to return home early and get happily engrossed in discussing pressing domestic issues with your family members. This will possibly be followed by a festive evening filled with fun and laughter.

GEMINI
There is a possibility of conflicts brewing at your home today. The demands made by your family members will increase and you may struggle to cope to meet them. This could make you ill-tempered. You will encounter large expenses in meeting these demands. You need to cut down on your expenses and increase your savings, says Ganesha.

CANCER
You can improve your finances with your mental capabilities. Ganesha says that you will get success in both private life and career. You will be entrusted many tasks and responsibilities. Yet by evening, you will spend time in your pursuits.

LEO
You may have arguments with your family members today. You need to adopt an accommodating attitude today, since it is not a very promising day for you. Otherwise nothing may go in your favour. You will have to work harder than usual in the office, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Ganesha predicts that your writing skills will possibly help you vent your feelings without offending others. You will successfully complete your pending assignments. Great success will knock at your door in anything and everything you undertake today, predicts Ganesha.

LIBRA
Ganesha says you will spend time with your family members by putting them above other commitments. There may be plans made to go out for dinner or for a short excursion with them. Ganesha says that the health of a close relative maybe a cause of concern for you today.

SCORPIO
You nearly emerge as a superhero today, as you have the knack of balancing home and work just perfectly. Intellectual discussions and brainstorming with peers would provide food for thought today. You may look forward to merry-making and soiree with family and friends in the evening.

SAGITTARIUS
You are in a mood to spend money of home décor, paintings or artefacts. Go ahead, and decorate your home. Ganesha foresees success on your cards today. Workplace has never been such an interesting place before. Planning and implementation will make your day easier.

CAPRICORN
You will have heard of many emotional fools who let sentiments rule their lives. Try not to be one of them, and if it's too difficult a task, at least pretend not to be one of them, for Ganesha says going by your feelings can leave you at a low ebb. In other words, your feelings can come in the way of your success. A solution to this problem is to remain dispassionate and let the opportunist think you are a hard nut to crack.

AQUARIUS
If you are an astrologer, doctor or a spiritual leader, today is a favourable day for you. Those who may want to challenge you must reconsider the thought of testing your strengths, says Ganesha. Doing charity work, helping the needy, and working for humanitarian causes give you a feeling of contentment. Today, it will be one of those extremely fulfilling days.

PISCES
Today will be a hectic day for you. Most of your time will be spent in making your relationships on the business as well as the personal front more meaningful. You will likely find yourself attending social events. There is also the possibility that you will attend some religious ritual today.



Tejasswi speaks out against industry inequality

Mumbai: Tejasswi Prakash, a well-known name in the entertainment industry, has been on a remarkable rise since winning *Bigg Boss 15*. In a recent interview, she reflected on her early career struggles, sharing how she was "treated differently" by senior actors. She revealed that while senior actors received better facilities and amenities, she wasn't given the same. However, with time, she recognized her own worth.

Speaking to an entertainment portal, Tejasswi Prakash recalled, "Initially, when I worked with senior actors who were more known than I was, I would be treated very differently. They would be given better rooms, better vanity vans and even better food to eat. At the initial phase of my career, I have faced such issues."

Tejasswi further shared that by her second show, she recognized her worth and refused to accept unfair treatment. She said, "I realised that I wasn't being paid well, and then I asked for more. I realised people want to see me more; then why should I get less money?"

Tejasswi started her career in 2015 with the show 2612. She later appeared in several series, including *Sanskaar - Dharohar Apnon Ki*, *Suaagini - Jodein Rishton Ke Sur*, *Pehredaar Piya Ki*, *Karn Sangini*, and *Khatron Ke Khiladi 10*. However, she gained immense popularity after showcasing her unfiltered personality in *Bigg Boss 15*.

Nitanshi on cloud nine

The 17-year-old beat the likes of Alia Bhatt, Katrina Kaif, Yami Gautam, and Shraddha Kapoor to bag her first major acting award



Mumbai: The field in the Best Actress in a Leading Role (Female) category at IIFA Awards 2025 was stacked. There were three of the most popular female stars of their generation, alongside a powerhouse performer known for critically-acclaimed performances. Yet, all of them were beaten by a 17-year-old newcomer.

At the prestigious IIFA Awards 2025, actor Nitanshi Goel's journey from debutant to 'best actress' was nothing short of extraordinary.

The actor, who made her debut in Kiran Rao's acclaimed film *Laapataa Ladies*, found herself overwhelmed with emotions as she accepted the award for her portrayal of Phool Kumari in the film.

It was her heartfelt acceptance truly moved the audience. Overcome while thanking the film's team and family, she beat Alia Bhatt (*Jigra*), Katrina (*Merry Christmas*), Yami Gautam (*370*), and Shraddha Kapoor (*Stree 2*) to first major acting award. While speaking about the win, she said, "I wasn't expecting this," adding, "I was hoping *Laapataa Ladies* would be big, but I didn't think I would myself. The other nominees were incredible, and I'm a huge fan of all of them."

The movie bagged most major IIFA awards including direction, story, music supporting actor and supporting actress categories.



Mumbai: Bollywood actress Kriti Kharbanda, whose movie *Shaadi Mein Zaroor Aana* has re-released in theatres, has shared that the film played a huge role in her being offered the comedy franchise *Housefull 4*.

Shaadi Mein Zaroor Aana, which first released in 2017, became a sleeper hit and has since gained a loyal following.

Talking about her work in the film, she said, "This is one film where I didn't care about what anyone else thought. I watched myself and said, 'Damn, Kriti, you nailed it! I'm so proud of you!' she shared. "For the first time people spoke about my performance, not just about how I looked. They appreciated the depth I brought to the role, and that, for me, was the biggest win".

Sharing what led to her casting in *Housefull 4*, the actress said, "Sajid Nadiadwala sir watched *Shaadi Mein Zaroor Aana*, and that's how I landed *Housefull 4*", Kriti revealed. Even the legendary David Dhawan was so impressed that he called producer Vinod Bachchan and said, "kahan se laya tu iss ladki ko?".

Kriti's journey is nothing short of inspiring. In an industry where connections often matter more than talent, she has fought her way up, proving she deserves every career with hard work, resilience, and an undeniable ability to win hearts.

Kriti talks about her biggest win

8TH ASIM UTSAV - DAY II

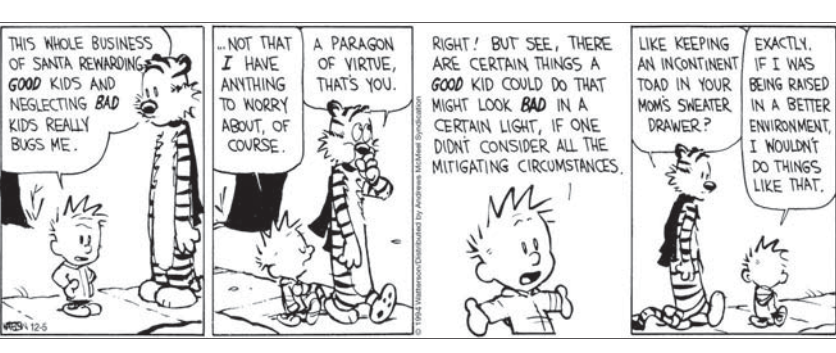


Bhubaneswar-based Vagdevi Literature Trust performed Odia play *Bidroha Nija Biruddhare* on the second day of the event at Bhanjakala Mandap, Monday. Written by Gadadhara Nanda, the play was directed by Pabitra Mohanty. The event is being jointly organised by Govt of India, Odia Literature, Language and Culture Department, Govt. Of Odisha and Asim Basu Foundation.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

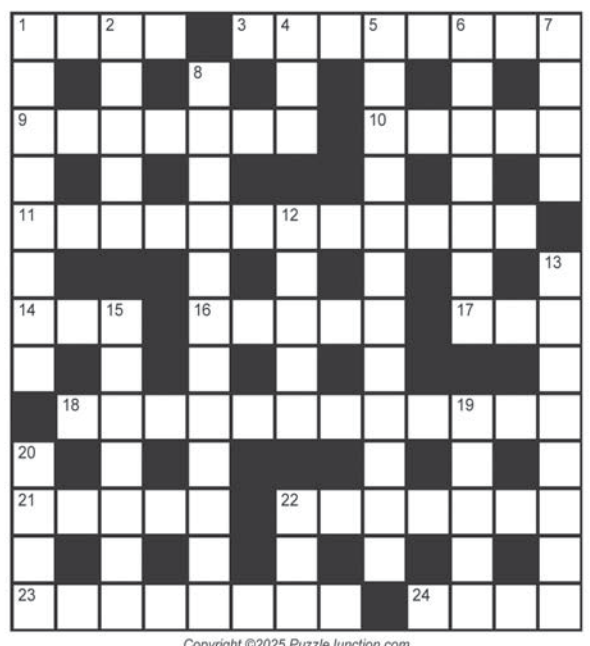


BREVITY



FUN POST

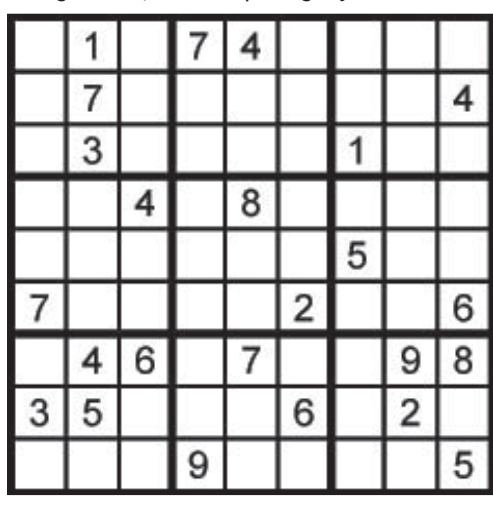
CROSSWORD



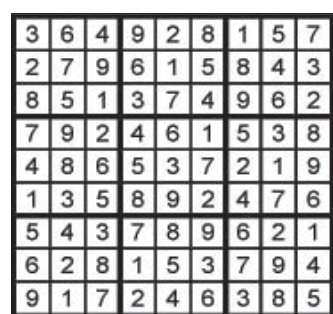
- Across**
- 1 Beef or pork
 - 3 Digitalis plant
 - 9 Fissure
 - 10 Wine measure
 - 11 Undercover work
 - 14 Camel hair fabric
 - 16 Sea monster?
 - 17 Sign of the zodiac
 - 18 Colourful window (7,5)
 - 21 Like Siberian winters
 - 22 Thin
 - 23 Paragon's place?
 - 24 Steadfast
 - 6 Kind of illusion
 - 7 Land west of Nod
 - 8 Bedroom-wrecking kids' games (6-6)
 - 12 Breathing fire
 - 13 Economise
 - 15 Clad
 - 19 Tree with catkins
 - 20 China problem
 - 22 Health club

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

Artistes perform during an event organised by 'Mokshya' at Sookhana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Monday



downtown

BJP in a fix over Jayanarayan's 'Koshala' remarks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 10: The ruling BJP, which found itself in a tight spot over the comment of its senior MLA Jayanarayan Mishra who said it was a historical mistake for erstwhile 'Koshala' to become part of Odisha, Monday authorised one of its two Deputy CMs to handle the matter.

Mishra, the MLA of Sambalpur, stoked a row Friday by stating that erstwhile 'Koshala', comprising the western region of the state, has been neglected over the years, and it was a 'historical mistake' for it to join Odisha when the state was formed in 1936.

The state BJP has maintained a stoic silence on the issue amid a barrage of attacks from the BJD and Congress.

Following a meeting of the top brass of the party, state BJP president Manmohan Samal told reporters, "The party has authorised a deputy CM to give a statement on this issue."

The BJD has been attacking BJP, alleging that the party wants to divide the state.

"Though two days have passed since Mishra's remarks, neither the CM nor the state BJP president has given any clarification. If it is Mishra's personal opinion, the party should take action against him immediately," BJD MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo said.

Eight-time BJD MLA RP Swain said, "The BJP came to



Police personnel remove BJD workers protesting outside the residence of Sambalpur MLA (BJP) Jayanarayan Mishra in Bhubaneswar, Monday, condemning his recent remarks that merger of 'Koshala' during the formation of Odisha was a 'historical' mistake

power with the slogan of Odia 'asmita'. Is this the pride they were talking about?"

BJD MLAs also raised the matter in the Assembly, disrupting the proceedings. Its students' wing demonstrated outside Mishra's residence.

The state Congress also sought an answer from the CM.

"Is this BJP's idea of Odia

'asmita' -- to belittle our history and question the very foundation of Odisha? The CM must answer. Does he endorse this disgraceful remark?" senior Congress leader Niranjan Patnaik asked.

BJP MLA Babu Singh, meanwhile, claimed that it "could" be Mishra's personal opinion.

The state BJP meeting was

attended by the party's national general secretary Tarun Chugh, the Chief Minister, the state president, state party in-charge Vijay Pal Singh Tomar, and former state president Samir Mohanty, among others.

Tomar said the name of the new BJP state president will be announced by the end of this month.

"BJP's national returning of-

ficer K Laxman will take the final call. Sanjay Jaiswal has been entrusted with the task of holding the election for the state president," he said.

Appointments to different state boards and corporations will also be completed by the end of this month, Revenue Minister Suresh Pujari, who was also present in the meeting, said.

Bharatpur: Judicial panel submits report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 10: The judicial commission, probing the alleged torture of an Army officer and sexual harassment of his female friend at Bharatpur police station here last year, submitted its report to the state government Monday.

The state government had September 22, 2024 set up the commission, headed by retired High Court Justice Chittaranjan Dash, in the wake of a nationwide hue and cry over the alleged custodial torture of the two persons.

The commission's secretary Subhendu Mohanty met Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Satyabrata Sahu and handed him the 282-page document during the day. "We have submitted the final report to the state government," Mohanty told reporters here.

The panel prepared the report after examining as many as 525 affidavits and questioning several people during the inquiry that began October 1 last year, he said.

The alleged incident took place September 15 night when the Army officer, along with his female friend, was returning home. They were intercepted by around 12 people travelling in three cars. The officer and the woman reached Bharatpur police

The panel prepared the report after examining as many as 525 affidavits and questioning several people during the inquiry that began October 1 last year, commission's secretary Subhendu Mohanty said

station at around 2am and urged the cops to depute a police control room (PCR) van to nab the miscreants who harassed them. It was alleged that the police subjected them to torture instead of acting on their complaint. It was also alleged that the police officials sexually assaulted the woman in custody.

The woman was arrested on the charge of biting a police-woman and misbehaving with other personnel at the police station. She is now out on bail.

Following a nationwide hue and cry, the state government suspended five personnel, including the inspector in-charge of Bharatpur police station, and ordered a judicial probe into the matter. The government also ordered a Crime Branch probe.

118 Reds slain in 10 yrs: CM

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 10: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday informed the Assembly that 118 Maoists were killed in action by security forces in the state over the last 10 years.

Responding to a question from BJP legislator Kanhai Charan Danga, the CM, in a written reply, said, "In the past 10 years from 2015 to January 25, 2025, 118 CPI (Maoist) cadres were killed in action by security forces in Odisha." Besides, the Odisha Police, in a joint anti-Maoist operation with Chhattisgarh Police, successfully neutralised 17 Maoists, including a central committee member in January, he said. "During the 10 years, a total of 315 Maoists and persons involved in Maoist activities have been arrested and 238 Maoists/militias have surrendered in the state," he added.

The CM said various steps are being taken to make Odisha free from Maoist menace by 2026.

To counter Maoist activities and movements, Majhi said, "72 companies of central armed forces, 32 special security battalions, 35 Special Operation Group (SOG) teams, about 600 District Volunteer Force (DVF) jawans, 75 platoons of India Reserve Battalion, and more than 350 Odisha Special Striking Force personnel have been deployed in the Maoist-hit areas."

He added, "On the basis of intelligence inputs, security forces are continuing area domination operations in the Maoist-affected areas." Regarding technological advancements, the CM said, "Modern equipment like drones, unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) interceptors, modern weapons, and communication equipment,



36 drug samples tested spurious

The state government has declared 36 drug samples as spurious through random sample testing in past three financial years from 2022-23 to 2024-25, Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling told the Assembly Monday. A total of 13,787 drug samples were collected through random samplings for quality testing of which reports of 8,827 samples had been received, Mahaling said in a written statement. He said 8,536 drug samples were declared as standard quality based on analysis, and there were 256 samples which were declared as not of standard quality. Also, 36 drug samples were identified as spurious and 30 were declared as misbranded, he stated.

along with anti-terrorism training are being provided to security forces deployed for anti-Maoist operations."

He added, "Company operational bases of security forces have been set up in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) areas."

Discussing the state's 'Surrender and Rehabilitation Policy,' Majhi added, "Under the policy, different benefits, including marriage assistance, stipend for study, homestead land and housing aid have been extended to surrendered Maoist cadres as per the eligibility criteria."

He further explained, "The state also provides vocational training to surrendered CPI (Maoist) cadres at the rate of

₹6,595 crore tax collected from 'gutka', pan masala

The state government has collected ₹6,595.55 crore tax from the sale of tobacco products and pan masala over a period of 11 years, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi told the Assembly Monday.

In response to a question by BJP legislator Tankadhar Tripathy, Majhi said the state had collected a revenue of ₹174.71 crore from tobacco and pan masala during 2014-15 financial year, which rose to ₹1,047.82 crore in the first 11 months of the current financial year of 2024-25.

As per the statement of the CM, the tax collection from the two items has steadily increased over the years.

Revenue collection from

₹6,000 per month for a maximum period of 36 months." Majhi highlighted financial incentives, saying, "The government has announced a reward of up to ₹25 lakh for the capture or arrest of wanted Maoists."

The CM said, "To give moral support to the police force engaged in anti-Maoist operations, the state government provides compensation of up to ₹30 lakh to the family members of martyred police personnel, along with proper treatment for injured security officials."

Regarding civilian casualties, he added, "In case of death of a civilian in such an operation, the state government provides ₹4 lakh ex gratia, while the Central government distributes another ₹5 lakh to the family members of

tobacco products and pan masala was ₹147.04 crore in 2015-16, ₹264.51 crore in 2016-17, and ₹381.02 crore in the next financial year.

Similarly, the tax collection increased to ₹480.71 crore during 2018-19 fiscal and subsequently, to ₹609.90 crore, ₹711.23 crore, ₹876.63 crore, ₹889.42 crore, and ₹1,012.56 crore in each passing financial year.

The CM also revealed that pan masala and tobacco products are being imported to Odisha from 16 states.

Notably, the Odisha government had imposed a statewide ban on manufacture, sale and use of 'gutka' and chewing tobacco containing nicotine in 2013.

the deceased."

Majhi also announced the formation of a new specialised force, stating, "To strengthen the state police for anti-Maoist operations, the government has approved the formation of three battalions of the new Odisha Special Striking Force (OSSF) with 3,000 retired Army personnel."

72 student suicides since 2020: Majhi

A total of 72 student suicide cases have been reported in government and private schools and colleges across the state from 2020 to February 2025, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said in a written reply to a query by Congress MLA Sofia Firdous, Monday.

The Chief Minister said a number of reasons were behind these incidents, including mental pressure, harassment by the accused, denial of phone usage in hostels, academic stress and misunderstanding with friends, domestic conflict, issues arising out of love affairs and depression.

Majhi also said information regarding measures taken or the ones proposed to conduct mental health awareness programmes for students, and train teaching staff to identify and support those showing signs of distress, is being collected.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: The BJD has joined the Opposition parties in demanding a discussion on duplicate voter ID numbers, with party leader Sasmit Patra submitting a notice in the Rajya Sabha for a debate on the issue.

Patra has given a notice under Rule 267, which allows members to move for the suspension of rules to discuss urgent matters, and said duplications should be urgently removed, according to a source.

BJD leaders, who had earlier raised concern over 'unusual' variances in the votes cast in the 2024 Parliamentary and the Assembly elections in Odisha, will also submit a follow-up memorandum on the issue to the Election Commission (EC) Tuesday.

In its memorandum to the poll panel last December, the BJD had said serious discrepancies were found between the Form 17-C filled by presiding

officers and the Form-20 filled by returning officers.

Discrepancies were also found in the number of votes polled in Assembly segments and corresponding Parliamentary constituencies across all 21 Lok Sabha seats. The variations ranged from 4,056 votes in Dhenkanal to 3,521 votes in Kandhamal, and 2,701 votes in Bolangir, it had said.

Elections to the Assembly and the Lok Sabha were held concurrently in Odisha in 2024. The BJD also claimed in its memorandum that Odisha had the 'highest difference' between votes polled and counted, ranging from 2 per cent to 30 per cent.

Several MPs from Opposition INDIA bloc parties Monday submitted notices in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, demanding a discussion on duplicate voter ID numbers.

The BJD, which has seven members in the Upper House, is not a constituent of the INDIA bloc.

Cong demo over 'rise in crimes against women'

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 10: Congress workers held demonstrations across the state Monday to protest an alleged rise in crimes against women, particularly the gang-rape incidents.

Holding placards and banners, and raising anti-BJP slogans, Congress leaders and activists staged sit-ins near the district Collectors' offices across the state.

"We have held peaceful demonstrations across the state and demanded justice for women who are not at all safe in the state," Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Bhakta Charan Das told reporters here.

He also participated in a protest in front of the additional district magistrate's office here. Party MLAs also joined the Congress activists and staged demonstrations after raising the issue in the Assembly.

They alleged that more than 1,600 cases related to crimes against women have been registered in a span of only eight months in the state. These include 54 gang-rape cases, Das claimed. Former OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik alleged that Odisha tops the list of states in terms of violence against women.

41 Bangladeshis booked in 10 yrs

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi informed the Assembly Monday that Odisha Police has registered criminal cases against 41 Bangladeshis in the state during the last 10 years.

In a written reply to a query by BJP legislator from Balasore Manas Kumar Dutta, the Chief Minister said a total of 3,738 Bangladeshi infiltrators have been identified in the state.

The highest of 1,649 illegal Bangladeshi immigrants were found in Kendrapara, followed

by 1,112 in Jagatsinghpur, 655 in Malkangiri, 199 in Bhadrak, 106 in Nabarangpur and 17 in Bhubaneswar, he said.

The state government has asked all the District Collectors and superintendents of police (SPs) to form teams of officials of tehsil, block and police to identify Bangladeshi infiltrators in various parts of the state and send them back to their own country, Majhi said.

He also informed the House that no illegal Bangladeshi immigrant has been identified in

Balasore district so far.

However, several criminal cases have been filed against five Bangladesh nationals in the district and the cases are under sub-judice, the CM stated.

Notably, the Odisha Police's Special Task Force (STF) Sunday apprehended 10 Bangladeshi nationals who entered India illegally without visas or passports.

Six men, three women and a 14-year-old minor were apprehended from near Bhubaneswar railway station.



DEFT HANDS: An artisan prepares traditional 'Kela-Keluni' and 'Aswa' masks ahead of 'Panchu Dola' and 'Dola Biman Melan' at Kathagada Sahi in Cuttack, Monday

Deputy CM takes stock of pumped storage projects

Odisha committed to use and production of green energy, says KV Singh Deo

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 10: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, who also holds the Energy department portfolio, Monday, said that Odisha is committed to production and use of green energy.



serve basis."

Underscoring the importance of PPPs in generation of renewable energy, the Deputy CM said the government is tapping its rich natural resources for the purpose.

The review meeting discussed the progress of the 1,000MW PSP for which an agreement was signed between Odisha government and Telangana's Sangamam Power Project Company during the Utarkarsh Odisha - Make in Odisha Conclave held in Bhubaneswar recently.

of a PSP at Sunki in Koraput district. This project will generate electricity for six hours a day in peak hours with the use of reverse turbine.

"Inspired by the advice of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on use of clean fuel and green energy, the state government is also committed to the production and use of green energy," Singh Deo said.

PVTG farmers' inclusion pushed by Deputy CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 10: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo Monday emphasised the inclusion of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) farmers under welfare schemes like CM-KISAN and PM-KISAN on a priority basis.

During a review meeting, he highlighted that Odisha has 78,869 PVTG farmers, and efforts are being made to ensure their seamless integration into these schemes.

Similarly, 35 lakh farmers have benefited under PM-KISAN Yojana. Beneficiaries of CM-KISAN have been advised to update their e-KYC through VAW and BAO officers, with March 24 set as the deadline.

Principal Secretary Arabinda Padhee warned that officers failing to complete the verification process may face disciplinary action, including salary suspension in severe cases.

Singh Deo also reviewed the procurement of Shri Anna (millets), stating that 5.51 lakh quintals have been collected so far at a rate of ₹4,500 per quintal.

Talcher & Phulbani med colleges await NMC nod

Govt pushes for early approval to start MBBS admissions and enhance healthcare services

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 10: The state government is awaiting the Letter of Permission (LOP) from the National Medical Commission (NMC) to commence academic sessions at the newly-established medical colleges in Talcher and Phulbani for the 2025-26 academic year.

Once the LOP is granted, both medical colleges will begin admitting 100 MBBS students each, alongside the establishment of 100-bed medical services. This initiative marks a crucial step in strengthening medical education and healthcare facilities in Odisha.

Additionally, the government plans new recruitments across all state medical colleges to enhance faculty and services under the leadership of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

The two institutions—Pabitra Mohan Pradhan Medical College and Hospital in Talcher, Angul, and Government Medical College and Hospital in Phulbani, Kandhamal—are expected to improve access to quality medical education and provide better healthcare ser-



VICES to underserved communities.

In a recent virtual meeting, Health & Family Welfare Secretary Aswathy S reviewed the progress of these colleges, focusing on infrastructure readiness, medical equipment, and compliance with NMC norms.

By accelerating the operationalisation of these medical colleges, the government aims to bridge the healthcare gap in remote areas and strengthen Odisha's medical infrastructure, benefiting both students and the local population.

Railways spending ₹1.14L-cr per yr on safety: Vaishnav

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 10: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav Monday said the government is giving top-most priority to safety in railways, having committed an outlay of over ₹1 lakh crore per year for upgrading various mechanisms.

Replying to the discussion on the Railways (Amendment) Bill 2024 in the Rajya Sabha, the minister said that due to various interventions, the annual railway accident rate has come down to 30 from 171 incidents earlier.

He said various initiatives are being taken for technology upgradation and asserted that the Modi government has achieved more in upgrading the Railways infrastructure

In Odisha, the allocation has gone up to ₹10,000 crore as compared with ₹800 crore in the UPA regime

in 11 years than in 60 years of Congress rule. The Railways (Amendment) Bill 2024 was passed in the Upper House with a voice vote.

"In the UPA regime, investment to enhance safety used to be in the range of ₹8,000-10,000 crore. Today we are investing a sum of over ₹1.14 lakh crore every year on enhancing safety," Vaishnav said.



COURTESY VISIT: Head of Corporate Affairs at Paradeep Phosphates Limited (PPL) Sudhi Ranjan Mishra meets Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati at Raj Bhavan in Bhubaneswar, Monday

CISF CYCLOTHON HITS CHANDIPUR



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 10: The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) Coastal Cyclothon, an initiative to promote coastal security and environmental awareness, reached Chandipur in Balasore, Sunday before proceeding towards Kaithkhola in Bhadrak district Monday.

The 6,553 km expedition covers India's coastline, with the East Coast team cycling 2,778 km through West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu.

The journey, which began March 7, will conclude at the Swami Vivekananda Memorial in Kanyakumari March 31. Along the way, cyclists are engaging with fishermen, youth, and industry representatives, spreading awareness about national security and disaster preparedness.

In Chandipur, known for its receding sea waters and defense testing site, the team was warmly received by locals and dignitaries. A cultural event showcased Odisha's heritage.

The CISF Coastal Cyclothon aims to strengthen coastal vigilance and highlight the force's role in safeguarding India's maritime infrastructure. As the journey continues across 11 states, the message remains: "Surakshit Tat, Samridh Bharat"—a secure coast ensures a prosperous India.

Sri Sri University hosts cultural fest 'Orion-25'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, March 10: The campus of Sri Sri University came alive with energy and creativity as 'Orion-25,' the university's much-anticipated annual fest, concluded on a high note.

Themed around youthful enthusiasm, creativity, and transformation, the festival was structured into three segments—"Umang" (cultural events), "Takshak" (business events), and "Conclusion" (technical events).

The festival kicked off on International Women's Day with stand-up comedians Sahil Dutt and Siddharth Gupta, who set an upbeat tone for the celebra-



tions. Renowned Odia comedian Varsha joined as a jury member for the inter-college stand-up comedy competition, adding a regional essence to the event.

A high-energy rock band performance in the evening built excitement for the festival's grand finale—an electrifying concert by Bollywood singer and composer Tushar Joshi. His performance, which began at 9:30pm, had the audience of over 10,000 spectators en-

thrilled well past midnight.

With a total footfall of nearly 15,000 attendees over two days, 'Orion-25' was hailed as one of the most successful cultural fests of the year.

University president Rajita Kulkarni, vice-chancellor Tej Pratap, and director, Operations Swami Satyachaitanya extended their gratitude to participants, academicians, and media for contributing to the event's resounding success.



UP IN ARMS: Members of Odisha Madhyanha Bhojana Pachaka Pachika Mahasanga stage a demonstration at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Monday, seeking fulfillment of their 8-point charter of demands

Seminar on tribal culture & devpt held in Koraput

Experts and scholars discuss challenges and strategies for preserving tribal culture while promoting sustainable development and inclusive growth

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, March 10: A two-day national seminar on "Tribal Development through Preservation of their Culture: Contemporary Issues and Discourses" was held recently at the Council of Analytical Tribal Studies (COATS) campus in Koraput.

The event was jointly organised by the Central University of Odisha (CUO) and COATS under the guidance of CUO vice-chancellor Chakradhar Tripathi and COATS director PC Mohapatra. The seminar was inaugurated in the presence of Koraput MLA Raghuram Machha, CUO dean of the School of Languages NC Panda, Koraput District Col-

lector V Keerthi Vasan, CUO associate professor and head of the Sociology department Kapila Khemundu, former Koraput Collector Sanjeev Kumar Hota, and COATS associate professor Ashok Kumar Nanda.

MLA Machha highlighted the importance of preserving tribal culture and suggested involving community leaders in academic discussions. Chief speaker Vasan emphasised the need for inculcating socio-cultural values among the younger generation, who are increasingly influenced by modernity and economic changes.

Keynote speaker Virginius Xaxa, in his address on "Tribal Development Situation in



Post-Reform India," pointed out the uneven impact of economic reforms on tribal communities.

Guest speaker Hota reflected on socio-economic issues affecting tribal development, while CUO dean NC Panda discussed the traditional knowledge systems of indigenous tribes. Mohapatra, in his welcome address, stressed the institute's commitment to preserving tribal culture through research and documentation.

The inaugural session began with a Desia song by Ranjan Mahuria, followed by guest in-

troductions by Kapila Khemundu and a formal vote of thanks by Ashok Kumar Nanda.

Around 85 research scholars from different parts of the country presented papers in various technical sessions. Students from CUO's Sociology, Anthropology, and Economics departments, along with COATS faculty, actively participated.

The seminar stressed the need for distinct government policies on tribal welfare programmes, including health, education, and livelihood. It was suggest-

ed that affected families should be identified before initiating any displacement projects. The valedictory session featured discussions by former SBCNR dean SK Palita, COATS academician Jagabandhu Samal, CISLS JNU chairperson Minaketan Behera, and COATS visiting professor Rabi Narayan Patra.

They deliberated on how tribal development can be achieved through cultural preservation. Retired Sambalpur University Professor Satya Narayan Rath argued that the term "tribe" should be replaced with "indigenous people". The seminar was attended by distinguished academicians, social workers, and faculty members from CUO and COATS. The event successfully provided a platform for meaningful discussions on tribal development, cultural preservation, and policy recommendations for inclusive growth.

WEATHER table with columns for BBSR, CTC, Max Temp, Min Temp, Humidity, Rainfall, and FORECAST.

MARKET WATCH table with columns for INDEX, VARIATION, SENSEX, NIFTY, DOLLAR, EURO, GOLD, SILVER.

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.

GPS-tagged turtles reappear at Gahirmatha nesting ground



AGENCIES

Kendrapara, March 10: At least 10 endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles, which were earlier tagged with GPS to study their migration behaviour, have reappeared for mass nesting on Gahirmatha beach in Kendrapara district, officials said Monday. "On Saturday night, at least 10 female turtles were spotted at Nasi-1 and Nasi-2 nesting grounds with metallic tags fitted on their flippers," an official said. The state Forest department, in collaboration with the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun, fitted tags on the flippers of Olive Ridley turtles between 1998 and 2010. Additionally, in 2021, the department, with assistance from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), tagged sea turtles to gather information about their nesting behaviour, migration patterns, and reproductive biology as part of long-term conservation efforts. The reappearance of GPS-tagged turtles at Gahirmatha bears testimony to the fact that female turtles often come to the same beach to lay eggs, another official said.

Tagging of turtles is conducted to obtain information on reproductive biology, movements and growth rates. It helps researchers study turtles' migratory routes and areas of foraging, the officials said. The tagged sea turtles also reappeared for mass nesting on the Rushikulya river nesting ground in the past years, the official added. During the ongoing turtle nesting season, a total of 5.49 lakh endangered female Olive Ridley sea turtles have laid eggs at Nasi-2 and Ekakula Nasi beaches of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary over the past four days (from March 5 to March 8). Of these, 2,96,436 nested at Nasi-2 Beach, while 2,53,426 turtles laid eggs at Ekakula Nasi Beach in the past four days. Notably, the turtles have returned to Ekakula Nasi Beach for mass nesting after a gap of 33 years, the official said.



GRACEFUL : Artistes from Khurda performing Odissi at Prativa Mahotsav at Khaira in Balasore district. The event concluded Sunday

OP PHOTO

Mystery shrouds death of siblings

PNN & AGENCIES

Nayagarh, March 10: Mystery shrouds the death of two minor brothers whose bodies were recovered from a closed room in Nayagarh district Monday, police said.

The incident took place at Dhanchengada village under Fatehgarh police station limits.

While one deceased boy Akash Mohanty was 14 years old, his younger brother Aditya Mohanty was 9. They were studying in Class IX and IV, respectively.

Police said the boys were in good health and had no known ailments.

However, their maternal uncle, Anantaryami Mohanty, has alleged that the children were murdered by their family members because they opposed their father's remarriage.

The boys' mother had passed away three years ago, and their father, Prakash Mohanty, had been making arrangements to marry again, sources alleged.

The children were strongly against the remarriage, police said, citing a complaint filed by the deceased children's maternal grandmother.

Meanwhile, the boys' grandfather, Achyuta Mohanty, acknowledged that the children were indeed opposed to their father's remarriage, but they took their own lives.

The police have detained the boys' father and launched an investigation. "We have initiated a probe into the incident," a police officer confirmed.

KANUPUR DAM PROJECT

2-month extension sought from NCST to complete rehab process



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, March 10: The Kanupur Dam Project authorities in Keonjhar have requested the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) to grant an additional two months to complete the rehabilitation process of displaced people and submit a detailed report in that connection.

The request was made in a letter (numbered 88), dispatched Feb 24, 2025.

The move comes in response to a petition filed with the NCST by advocate and human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy regarding the displacement and subsequent rehabilitation of those affected by the project on the Baitarani River. The earlier report submitted in response to this petition was found to be

lacking in clarity and completeness, sources said.

Following a thorough inquiry and verification of official records - as well as an assessment of submerged villages - a detailed action-taken report related to a petition filed in the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has already been submitted to the Keonjhar Collector.

The dam authorities noted that housing assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) scheme could not be provided, as there is no provision for allocating rural housing to displaced families who have received full rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) package.

Additionally, 300 displaced families have petitioned for agricultural land as per pol-

icy provisions. However, due to a shortage of government land, the state is unable to provide the stipulated land—five acres of non-irrigated land for Scheduled Tribe displaced families, and four acres for non-Scheduled Tribe displaced families.

Sources said, the requests of these 300 families have not been fully addressed. Authorities have issued notices in R&R colonies and nearby villages inviting applications for those who may have been left out. Once the enumeration of such cases is finalised, the necessary R&R assistance will be provided.

On November 25, 2021, Tripathy filed 2,621 petitions with the NHRC seeking relief for displaced and homeless people in Keonjhar and Koraput dis-

tricts. Of these, more than 400 cases pertained to Keonjhar. In response, the NHRC Jan 31, 2022 issued notices, directing the Chief Secretary of Odisha to investigate and submit an action-taken report within six weeks.

Sources said that the state authorities responded saying rehabilitation efforts were proceeding in accordance with the law, and the left-out cases were being addressed. They maintained that displaced individuals were being properly resettled.

The compliance with NHRC directives has been ongoing since March 28, 2022. Seven IAS officers, including then-Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra and then-Keonjhar Collector Ashish Thakre, appeared before the NHRC via video conference.

Earlier, in response to a 2015 petition filed by Tripathy, the NHRC conducted an investigation through its Special Rapporteur July 15, 2018. The case was closed following assurances from the state that NHRC recommendations would be implemented.

However, as compliance was not fulfilled, the NHRC issued another notice to the Chief Secretary Sept. 25, 2021, citing forceful displacement of poor Scheduled Tribe villagers without proper rehabilitation.

Priyanka in Semiliguda for Rajamouli's SSMB 29

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sunabeda/Semiliguda, March 10: Hindi film actress Priyanka Chopra arrived at the shooting set of noted filmmaker SS Rajamouli-directed 'SSMB 29' on Talamali hills in Semiliguda block of Koraput district, Monday afternoon.

The shooting for the upcoming film is currently underway at the picturesque location in Koraput district.

Filming for the upcoming movie began last Thursday with Telugu superstar Mahesh Babu. Reports said that an action sequence is being shot in the Talamali Hills. Priyanka Chopra is playing a lead role



in the film and is set to join the shoot from Tuesday.

Over 500 actors, co-actors, and crew members have gathered at Semiliguda for the production. Mahesh Babu and director Rajamouli are reportedly staying in a cottage near the Deomali Hills. Upon her arrival, Priyanka took a brief tour of Talamali before beginning her schedule.

EAST COAST RAILWAY ENGAGEMENT OF MEDICAL CONSULTANTS AT CENTRAL HOSPITAL, BHUBANESWAR

Notice No. ECoR/IBBS/MD/CH/IBBS/Case To Case Consultants Engagement-2025-26/160, Dtd.: 04.03.2025

Empanelment of Consultants for East Coast Railway, Central Hospital, Mancheswar, Bhubaneswar-17 on case to case basis shall be made for providing professional service. In this context consultants will be engaged in the following disciplines:

Specialist - (1) MD (Pediatric) with exposure to new born care, (2) Orthopaedic Surgery, (3) MD (Obst. & Gynec.) with surgical endoscopic experience, (4) Ophthalmology, (5) Anesthesiology, (6) Chest and TB Physician, (7) Psychiatrist, (8) Dermatologist, (9) Medical Oncologist.
Super Specialist - (1) Onco Surgery, (2) Plastic Surgery, (3) G I Surgery, (4) Urology, (5) Neurology, (6) Cardiology, (7) Gastroenterology, (8) Nephrology.

Consultants will be called to attend or to operate the patients as and when required by the Hospital authority.

Interested Doctors can submit their BIODATA along with their professional work experience and contact details addressed to **Medical Director, Central Hospital, East Coast Railway, Mancheswar, Bhubaneswar-751017** within 15 days of the publication of the advertisement.

NB : For details, Eligibility, Qualification, Age, Remuneration and other terms & conditions, please refer to website www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in Recruitment Info Walk-in-Interview / Notifications.

PR-1061/P/24-25 Medical Director/Central Hospital, Mancheswar

Forest dept readies water bodies for animals as summer approaches



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, March 10: Keeping in mind the exigencies arising out of summer season when traditional watering holes dry up, creating severe scarcity, the Bonai Forest Division (BFD) in Sundargarh has undertaken extensive measures to ensure that wild animals do not suffer from dehydration. The forest department has created and renovated several water bodies deep inside the forest to provide adequate drinking water for wildlife.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Bonai, Lalit Patra said to counter the water scarcity issues, the Forest department has strategically developed 143 water bodies across forests in the region. Those have been located strategically based on the movement patterns of animals to ensure easy accessibility. "We have studied the movement of wildlife, which helped us identify suitable locations for creating water sources. These have been developed in both reserved and proposed reserved forests," Patra said.

Larger water bodies have been specifically dug in dense forest areas to minimise evaporation and allow for natural replenishment. Additionally, meticulous attention has been

given to renovating existing water sources. "We have also constructed approach paths to ensure that animals, especially elephants, can reach the water without difficulty. In the past, incidents have occurred where baby elephants or even larger ones got trapped in muddy areas due to inconvenient access routes," Patra explained.

The Forest department move was necessitated in view of the fact that BFD is one of the largest and most densely forested areas, and home to a variety of wild animals, including large elephant herds. Moreover, a number of herds from neighbouring Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh also regularly visit the forests. With the rising temperatures and prolonged dry spells, a significant portion of the division experiences acute water shortage. Although several natural streams exist, their water levels often dwindle during peak summer months.

Sources said as summer intensifies, the Forest department initiatives are expected to play a crucial role in safeguarding wildlife from the harsh effects of water scarcity, reinforcing the department's commitment to conservation and ecological balance

Close shave for 8 after train hits ambulance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, March 10: Eight persons including seven eye patients had a close shave as a goods train struck an ambulance when it was crossing tracks in Rayagada district Monday, and dragged it for about 100 metres before coming to a halt, officials said.

The incident occurred between Shikarpai and Bhalumaska railway stations under Kalyansinghpur block in the district when the ambulance was crossing the railway line through an unauthorised passage.

The occupants of the vehicle jumped out of the vehicle to save their lives on seeing the train approaching towards them. The mishap is stated to have occurred due to negligence and recklessness of the driver. As the train was plying at 60-65 kmph, a major disaster was averted and the ambulance had minimal damage, officials said. The ambulance, belonging to the private Ananta Eye hospital, was transporting patients from several villages including Kanjamjodi village of Shikarpai panchayat for surgeries.

Rayagada DRM Amitabh Singhal said, "There is a proper underground passage available, but some locals have been using the unauthorised crossing, which led to this unfortunate incident. Thankfully, no one was injured."



ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD. (A Gold Rated State PSU)

O/o Sr. GENERAL MANAGER, Rengali Hydro Electric Project, Rengali

P.O: RENGALI DAM SITE, DIST. ANGUL (ODISHA) INDIA, PIN: 759105

TEL: 06760-277214, FAX: 06760-277324, Email: sgml500@gmail.com, CIN: U40101OR1995SGC00396

No.RHEP/TW/PUR-III-240/1713 / Date: 07.03.25

NOTICE INVITING TENDER NO.RHEP-49/2024-25

No.CAD-2774: Sealed Tenders are invited in two part i.e. (i) Techno Commercial bid & (ii) Price bid in separate sealed envelopes from registered vendor of M/s. BHEL having similar works experience for the work as mentioned below.

Sl. No.	Description of services	Cost of Tender Paper (non-refundable) in Rs.	EMD in shape of DD only (Refundable) in Rs.	Period of availability of tender at OHPC website	Last date & time of receipt of tender	Date & Time of opening of Techno Commercial bid
1	Rehabilitating of old and used Thrust Bearing Pads (09 nos.), Lower Guide Bearing Pads (09 nos.) and Upper Guide Bearing Pads (09 nos.) for 50 MW Hydro Generator of RHEP, Rengali	Rs. 11,800/- (Rs.10,000/- + GST @ 18%)	Rs. 50,700/-	From dt: 11.03.2025 to dt: 10.04.2025 upto 03.30 PM	Dt: 10.04.2025 upto 04.00 P.M.	Dt: 10.04.2025 at 04.30 PM

For details and further correspondence/ corrigendum, please visit our website www.ohpcitd.com

OIPR-04022/11/0060/2425 **Sd./- C & P Head, RHEP, Rengali**

ओड़िशा केन्द्रीय विश्वविद्यालय, कोरापुट

(केन्द्रीय विश्वविद्यालय अधिनियम 2009 के अंतर्गत स्थापित)

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF ODISHA, KORAPUT

(Established Under the Central Universities Act, 2009)

Dept. of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India

NAD, Sunabeda, Dist. - Koraput, Odisha, PIN - 763004

Website : www.cuo.ac.in

Employment Notification for Non-Teaching Positions

Advertisement No. 01/2025 Date : 18/02/2025

The Central University of Odisha invites applications from eligible Indian citizens for the Statutory Positions on direct recruitment / deputation basis.

Sl. No	Name of the post	No. of post & Category	Pay Level in the pay Matrix as per 7th CPC	Pay Band & Grade pay as per 6th CPC
1	REGISTRAR GROUP - A	01(UR)	Level - 14	PB:4: Rs. 37400-67000 GP Rs. 10,000/-
2	CONTROLLER OF EXAMINATIONS GROUP - A	01(UR)	Level - 14	PB:4 : Rs. 37400-67000 GP Rs. 10,000/-

For details see the University website (www.cuo.ac.in). The University reserves the right to withdraw partial or full advertisement without assigning any reason. The last date for receipt of applications is within 30 days from the date of publication of this advertisement in the 'Employment News'.

CBC 21317/12/0004/2425 **Sd./- Registrar I/c**



It is not God who made man wicked. It is man who makes himself wicked by separating himself from God

THE MOTHER

Gerrymandering

The north-south divide in India has got a fresh lease of life due to the rekindling of the issue of delimitation by the BJP led Central government. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has taken the lead on behalf of the southern states to oppose the Centre's proposed delimitation exercise using post-2026 census to redraw the Lok Sabha constituencies on the basis of population. Though Stalin has his own electoral calculations with the coming Assembly polls in Tamil Nadu, the Centre's move does cause concern for fair parliamentary election process. The Tamil Nadu CM decided on 9 March to send senior functionaries of his party - DMK - to meet Chief Ministers and senior politicians from seven states, including Orissa and West Bengal, to rally support for his campaign against the Centre's planned delimitation exercise. Similar delegations will be sent to AAP-governed Punjab and Congress-run Telangana and Karnataka.



Jagdish Rattanani

THE DESIRE TO BRING ORDER DOWN THE LINE CANNOT TRANSLATE INTO ACTION WHEN THERE IS NO DESIRE TO KEEP CLEAN UP THE LINE

Stalin had last week written to the CMs and other key politicians of these seven states, explaining the TN govt's position against population-based delimitation. Calling it "an unfair exercise," he had stated the Centre's plan was a "blatant assault on federalism, punishing states that ensured population control and good governance by stripping away our rightful voice in Parliament."

The concern is that the proposed delimitation will reshape the country's power map, reducing the political might of southern states at the Centre. The concern is not simply restricted to Tamil Nadu and other southern states. It will affect states like Orissa too. There are speculations that most of these states may not see decrease in the number of Lok Sabha seats existing in their respective states. Their number of Lok Sabha seats may remain static. What is expected is that the new Census will be tampered to show a phenomenal rise in population in the states where the BJP feels comfortable with Hindi and Hindutva. That could mean a big rise in the number of Lok Sabha seats in those states. In turn this could imply that the southern states will be politically marginalized and under privileged and can be safely neglected.

When the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won a narrow majority in the 2024 Lok Sabha election, it was tell-tale evidence of its waning popularity after a decade in power. This seems to have infused fear into the BJP that a victory in 2029 may elude it. In its desperation to hold on to power, the government's push to redraw parliamentary constituencies using post-2026 census data is being interpreted as an attempt to tilt the electoral field in its favour. The process ensures each Member of Parliament represents an equal number of voters. Since 1976, however, it has been frozen to avoid penalising Indian states that curbed population growth. If delimitation proceeds, the BJP's populous northern strongholds will gain seats, weakening the political power of the country's economically dynamic and culturally distinct southern states governed by different regional parties. The southern states have accused the Modi government of bias in federal funding and project approvals.

The six largest northern states have over 60 crore people - twice the south's population - but lag far behind in education, health, industry and economic development. Tamil Nadu thrives on industry, education and social mobility, with only 6 per cent in poverty compared with 23 per cent in Bihar. A child in Kerala has better survival chances than any other state. UP's record on this score is among the worst in the country. On the other hand, UP alone receives more federal tax revenue than all five southern states put together. In this sense for southern India delimitation represents both economic and political marginalisation - being taxed more, represented less and sidelined in national policymaking.

A recent paper by Paris' Institut Montaigne think-tank highlights how India's north-south divide is deepening due to economic, demographic and political disparities causing concern for the southern states. It compares the situation to the EU's Greek debt crisis, where wealthier northern countries expressed their fury over subsidising the poorer southern ones. The report considers Modi's home state of Gujarat - a wealthy but highly unequal western state with slow population growth - but warns that the Hindi speaking north's larger populace and lack of socioeconomic progress will deepen tensions and drag the country down.

The Indian economist Jean Drèze has opined if seats were redistributed by population while maintaining state-wise party shares, the BJP alliance would have won 309 MPs, not 294, in the 2024 LS polls. The Centre's push for delimitation appears to be geared to that objective for the 2029 LS polls, when rising discontent could further ruin the prospect of the BJP retaining power.

This type of delimitation exercise resorted to by ruling political parties is known as gerrymandering. The term, rooted in US politics, describes the practice of redrawing electoral district boundaries to provide one political party with an unfair advantage over its competitors (known as political or partisan gerrymandering) or to weaken the voting power of ethnic or linguistic minority groups (referred to as racial gerrymandering). The term originates from Governor Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, whose administration implemented a law in 1812 that established new state senatorial districts.

The irony is, as experts point out, such gerrymandering exercise does have chances to backfire. But, the risk is seen by ruling parties as being worth taking. There lies the rub which could weaken and damage India for a long time to come.

WISDOM CORNER

- "We should consider every day lost on which we have not danced at least once. And we should call every truth false which was not accompanied by at least one laugh"**
FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE
- "There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow men. True nobility lies in being superior to your former self"**
ERNEST HEMINGWAY
- "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away"**
HENRY DAVID THOREAU

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1811:** In Arnold, Nottingham, textile workers staged the first major Luddite riot in England, breaking the machinery that was causing their displacement; the protest launched a movement that spread throughout the country.
- 1888:** A winter storm began on the Atlantic coast of the United States, ultimately blanketing New York City with 22 inches (550 mm) of snow and other areas with up to 50 inches (1,250 mm); the Great Blizzard of 1888, as it became known, killed more than 400 people and caused widespread property damage.
- 1942:** During World War II, Allied forces in the Southwest Pacific Theatre came under the command of U.S. General Douglas MacArthur following his tour on the Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines.

FOCUS REGULATION

CALLING FOR A CLEAN UP



It will take a long time for SEBI to recover. The best way to shorten this time span is to order a judicial inquiry into all that has just gone by

The decision to allow Madhabi Puri Buch to exit SEBI as the chairperson at the end of her three-year term is to be welcomed. Tenures at the three-year point can be extended, and often are, but the situation in this case was such that a decent goodbye was the easiest way to put a lid on what remains a can of worms. It is another matter that the exit itself was embroiled in another controversy on alleged inaction and collusion in a share listing that dates to the time before Buch took charge. Without being distracted by that non-event, it can be said the first woman head of India's securities market police retired under a cloud, invited flak from within SEBI, and left with a lot of questions on the credibility and reputation of the institution she led. SEBI can work only if it is seen as working with independence and integrity, without which its efforts to police the hot and often volatile space of India's securities markets cannot carry conviction.

When the blowout over the Hindenburg allegations first hit SEBI and Buch, she and her husband Dhaval Buch, also caught in the storm, issued a formal clarification that began by flaunting their educational pedigree. She is an alumna of IIM Ahmedabad; he a graduate of IIT Delhi. How do the public read this priceless nugget, its ode to elite education, and its relevance if any to the allegations that caused the clarification to be issued?

Many tend to drink the Kool Aid in an India where narratives are gift-wrapped and sold across the by-lanes of WhatsApp. The market for these wares has been expanded in recent years - from the story that the economy is

roaring manufactured at the top of the political order to many colours and flavours and versions sold by minions who trade in some similar stuff down the line. None of this is to pass judgement on Buch, but to observe that there appears to be an ingrained belief that it's all about attractive wrappers for the masses to buy, even to celebrate.

Some pointers stand out in this not-so-complex case. The first is that the low road of technical compliance is different from the high road of integrity in public life. Even if Buch's defence of her case is to be regarded as valid, forgetting the unmissable Buch-Adani entanglements, her defence at best has been all about how technical compliance was achieved, and suitable boxes were ticked. We will need a new set of investigations to get at the truth.

The second is the argument offered sometimes that private sector players who have lived their lives on high salaries, ESOPs and bonuses, will necessarily be high net worth individuals, and their investments and holdings and lifestyle will necessarily reflect their super-rich status. This is true, and while

some allowance must be made, it is equally true that power and connections throw up new opportunities that work well with wilful blindness. Further, a democratic nation must also ask what specific qualifications or regulatory experience does such a background bring? The question will have to be weighed against an increasing tendency seen in India to hand over the levers of power to the ultra-wealthy and the connected, almost forming a controlling club where birds of a feather flock together. This is a plutocracy rather than a meritocracy at work in the new India.

The third is the point, quite fair, that no SEBI Chair can talk let alone act against a power centre like Adani in the reality of the India of today. That is indeed the political bind of the day, and its toll is being paid in the degrading of institutions across the board. But here, it was the Chair being accused of playing the game, too. Rather than high marks for professionalism, this is seeking high marks for connections and cover-ups. The distance between the regulator and the regulated stands erased for the select few. The

question that pops up is simple: who really makes these appointments, and how do they strengthen the institution? Do note that some concerns on investments and questions on disclosures dated from the time Buch was a whole-time director of SEBI, before becoming Chairperson.

All of the above normalises big ticket misgovernance, which feeds into misgovernance of a million other kinds that the government may not bother about today, but which, small and the big together, eats into the vitals of the institution and hollows it out from the inside. All of this is the unseen drama while stories are sold about the nuts and bolts being tightened, a focus on the trivial while the substantive issues are ignored, and the nation is taken for a ride. The desire to bring order down the line cannot translate into action when there is no desire to keep clean up the line. The tensions that follow can be institution killers. They tear apart the fabric of governance. Some part of the tensions that led SEBI staffers to stage a protest against the high handedness of Buch may be traced to this.

It will take a long time for SEBI to recover. The best way to shorten this time span is to order a judicial inquiry into all that has just gone by. That would be the best way to showcase a "robust regulatory framework that not only aligns with best global practices but also ensures protection of investors," to quote a SEBI statement issued to counter the Hindenburg allegations against Buch.

The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Views are personal.
©THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

What it takes to save marine ecosystems



Dadang Mujiono

AS SPECIES DISAPPEAR, MARINE ECOSYSTEMS BECOME INCREASINGLY UNSTABLE, JEOPARDIZING LIVELIHOODS THAT ARE CLOSELY TIED TO OCEAN HEALTH

In the turquoise waters of Indonesia's Derawan Archipelago, a deafening dynamite blast shatters the morning calm, trumpeting the ongoing destruction of one of the world's most biodiverse marine ecosystems. Located within Southeast Asia's Coral Triangle, Derawan - often called the "Amazon of the Seas" for the richness of its biodiversity - teems with marine life, from hammerhead and whale sharks to green and hawksbill turtles, all thriving among coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangroves. Beyond its ecological significance, the archipelago sustains local communities across the Sulawesi Sea and acts as a vital buffer against the effects of climate change.

But despite its status as a marine protected area (MPA), Derawan is increasingly threatened by poaching syndicates harvesting turtle eggs with impunity, illegal fishers plundering its underwater riches, and plastic waste - carried by ocean currents - choking marine life and defiling its once-pristine beaches. The 30x30 initiative, which aims to protect 30% of the ocean by 2030, offers hope for global conservation efforts. But the growing threats to Derawan and other marine ecosystems highlight a stark disconnect between ambitious international targets and reality on the ground.

Although the 285,000-hectare

Berau MPA, home to Derawan, is officially designated as a protected area, available resources limit its effective management. For example, a single three-day boat patrol costs 30 million rupiahs (\$1,841). The Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, the authority responsible for managing and protecting this MPA from illegal activities, typically allocates only about 200 million rupiahs annually. Consequently, the MPA is not monitored consistently, leaving gaps in surveillance.

This underscores a simple truth: ambitious goals mean little without the resources needed to advance them. Derawan's designation as an MPA was a major political milestone, but its ecosystems will continue to deteriorate without adequate monitoring and enforcement.

Regrettably, MPAs around the world face similar challenges. The 30x30 campaign has raised global awareness, but the decline of the Derawan Archipelago illustrates the limits of broad conservation targets. In reality, the responsibility for stopping poachers falls on underfunded local rangers who lack the means to combat environmental degradation effectively. Some, struggling to make ends meet, are lured into illegal activities like poaching turtle eggs.

Derawan should serve as both a cautionary tale and a call to action - a powerful reminder of

what's at stake and what must be done to protect our oceans. Most importantly, genuine protection means more than drawing lines on a map. It requires sustained funding for ranger teams, marine patrols, and local partnerships. Investment in drones, radar systems, and communication equipment is critical to bolstering enforcement, while education and sustainable fishing initiatives can address the root causes of poaching, bomb fishing, and other illegal activities. The costs of inaction are enormous. Coral reefs that take centuries to grow can be wiped out in seconds by bomb fishing. As species disappear, marine ecosystems become increasingly unstable, jeopardizing livelihoods that are closely tied to ocean health.

Global Conservation, where I work, directly funds marine parks around the world, helping them establish rigorous monitoring and enforcement protocols to ensure they are not protected only on paper. But while NGOs can provide resources and expertise, they cannot tackle this daunting challenge alone. Governments must commit to funding and implementing the necessary measures to make MPAs truly effective.

If there is one lesson to be learned from Derawan, it is the need for active government involvement. Without national commitment, MPAs will re-

main vulnerable to unchecked exploitation. Indonesia is a case in point. The absence of a strong official commitment is the single biggest factor behind Derawan's ongoing decline. Grassroots initiatives, often supported by NGOs, have laid the groundwork for effective protection policies. But despite widespread support for action among local communities - including fishers - the Indonesian government has yet to act.

Policymakers worldwide must recognize that signing pledges at international summits is not enough; fulfilling them demands robust policies backed by substantial funding for conservation and enforcement efforts, especially in remote areas rich in biodiversity. Meanwhile, scientists, NGOs, and international bodies like the United Nations must go beyond awareness campaigns and contribute directly to maritime-protection projects.

Although many MPAs exist only on paper, there is still time to change course. Derawan is a prime example of policy failure and growing vulnerability. But with coordinated global action, it could become a model for building resilience in the face of a rapidly changing climate.

The writer is Indonesia Director at Global Conservation.
©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Double delight

Sir, Saturday and Sunday last week turned out to be red letter days for India. Music maestro Ilayaraja created history at midnight on Saturday by becoming the first Asian musician to present his first ever full length Western Classical symphony titled, Valiant, at London's Eventim Apollo Theatre. Ilayaraja mesmerised the audience comprising not only music lovers but also world-renowned music composers, with his Valiant and in return the audience gave the maestro a standing ovation. With his great feat, Ilayaraja has got his name etched in gold in the hall of fame of music along with those of Beethoven, Bach, Mozart and Haydn, pioneer - composers of Western Classical symphony. And on Sunday, the Indian cricket team brought home glory by winning the ICC Champions Trophy defeating the formidable New Zealand by four wickets and an over on hand, in a nail-biting final. With this most desired and cherished victory, India has avenged its defeat to the Kiwis in 2000. Skipper Rohit Sharma and his team deserve accolades for their consistent progress right from the start to the finish of the tournament.

Tharcus S. Fernando, CHENNAI

Social media misuse

Sir, Although YouTube has had a tremendous impact on society it also serves as a conduit for misinformation and disinformation. It is distressing that India has again topped the global list of YouTube video takedowns. Of the 9.4 million videos that the company removed last year, around 30% were from India. This brings to the fore how unscrupulously social media platforms are misused in India. Even though YouTube has drawn up guidelines for the suitability of content to be posted, a great deal of harmful and objectionable content is posted by miscreants. It is misused for pornography, incitement to violence, harassment, cyber bullying, hate speech and so on. Although it is a medium for entertainment and imparting valuable information, a large number of people purposely degrade it by misusing it to settle scores with their rivals and tarnish their image. The government must take necessary steps to deter miscreants from misusing YouTube.

Venu GS, KOLLAM (KERALA)

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

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



DELHI MULLS FORMING YAMUNA TASK FORCE

The specialised task force will be dedicated to protect the Yamuna floodplains, prevent encroachments, stop illegal dumping of debris and waste, and ensuring strict enforcement of environmental regulations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: The Delhi government is mulling over formation of a Yamuna task force in collaboration with the Territorial Army to prevent encroachments on flood plains of the river, dumping of debris and waste and other illegal activities. PWD and Water Minister Parvesh Verma said he discussed the issue with the Territorial Army.



for regular patrolling, preventing unauthorised construction, and ensuring that waste and construction debris are not dumped along the riverbanks.

With the BJP's double-engine government -- the Centre and the Delhi government -- working in sync, the Yamuna task force will be a game-changer in restoring the river's ecological balance, preventing pollution, and ensuring sustainable land use, he said.

In 2023, a Territorial Army company was deployed to ensure ground-level enforcement and monitoring of all untrapped drains and sub-drains that pollute the Yamuna river. It was, however, withdrawn later.

The BJP in its 'Viksit Delhi Sankalp Patra' manifesto

for the Assembly elections in February promised to clean and rejuvenate the Yamuna. The manifesto said a 'Yamuna Kosh' will be set up to revitalise the river to undertake full treatment of wastewater from drains falling into it.

The manifesto also said the BJP government will collaborate with the central government to develop Yamuna riverfront on the lines of the Sabarmati Riverfront, promote bio-diversity along the river banks by creating green corridors, wetlands and riverbank buffer zones.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, after BJP's victory in the Assembly polls, promised to make every effort to clean the Yamuna river.

Assam to seek stricter NEET security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, March 10: The Assam government will urge the Centre to increase the security at NEET centres, including checking the biometrics of candidates at the gate, as it has been found that despite scoring high numbers in the medical entrance exam, the knowledge of many students is limited, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said Sunday.



commissioners and superintendents of police, the CM said.

"The third request will be to have a biometric testing of the candidates before they enter the exam halls. If these steps are taken, I believe the medical examination process will be transparent," he said.

Sarma said the government has authorised the chief secretary to contact the NTA director general and Union education secretary to inform them of the cabinet decisions.

The CM said he would personally discuss the matter with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

The state Cabinet also approved the revocation of the quota for Char areas (riverine vegetative islands) of the Assam MBBS/BDS Rules 2017 from the 2025-26 session onwards.

They will also have to follow secularism and there should not be any direct or indirect involvement with conversion,

Many professors told us that many students' practical or academic knowledge is very limited despite scoring high numbers in such a big examination. We had asked the Special Branch to probe the matter around one-and-half-year back

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | CHIEF MINISTER, ASSAM

Cabinet has approved the establishment of Accredited Driver Training Centres with automated driving testing tracks in each of the 126 constituencies.

He also said that the Cabinet has approved a proposal to make efforts regarding Majuli and Sivasagar so that they get the status of UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Besides, Sarma announced that the Assam government will confer the highest state civilian award 'Assam Baibhav' on former Eastern Army Commander Lt Gen (retd) Rana Pratap Kalita.

"He is the first Assamese to reach this position in Indian armed forces. No one from the state had ever attained such a post earlier," he added.

Sarma also announced the recipients' names for the second highest civilian award 'Assam Saurav' and 'Assam Gaurav', which will be given at a function March 30 by the Assam Governor.

Assam presents ₹2.63L-cr budget

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, March 10: The Assam government Monday presented a Rs 2.63 lakh crore budget for the 2025-26 fiscal, offering sops to jobless graduates and tea garden workers while suggesting to exempt professional tax on a section of the salaried class in the state where Assembly polls are due next year.

With a deficit of Rs 620.27 crore, this is the last full Budget of the Himanta Biswa Sarma-led second BJP government.

Finance Minister Ajanta Neog tabled a Rs 2.63 lakh crore Budget for the next financial year that proposed no new tax for the general public but gave additional relief to nearly 1.5 lakh salaried people.

Neog announced extending tax holiday for green tea leaves for two more years to alleviate the challenges faced by the industry, while offering a one-time cash benefit of Rs 5,000 to 6.8 lakh garden workers.

Assembly elections in Assam are likely to take place during March-April next year.

Neog announced a flagship scheme 'Chief Minister's Jibon Prerana' to financially support the graduates for one year during their job search period.

Delhi Anganwadi centres to provide free creche facilities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The creches will provide cradles, nutritious food, and toys for children aged six months and above



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: Anganwadi centres in Delhi will soon provide free creche services, with the city government's women and child development department working to upgrade these facilities with essential amenities, an official said Monday.

"There are 140 functional Anganwadi centres in Delhi. Sixty more centres will come up by next month. Within the next three months, we aim to complete all necessary arrangements to establish fully operational creche facilities at these centres," the official told PTI.

The creches will provide cradles, nutritious food, and toys for children aged six months and above. The official said a special diet chart was being pre-

pared for the children enrolled in the creches. The department's nutritionists are designing a food plan rich in fibres, proteins and essential nutrients to support the healthy growth of the children, he added.

The daycare centres will also provide early education to those children aged three and above, the official said.

He told PTI, "We will ensure that children receive complete care, proper nourishment, and high-quality food and education." The facilities will be open to children from all backgrounds. To ensure proper care, the department will also recruit additional women members of staff, he added.

"The women members of staff already working at the Anganwadi centres, as well as the new recruits, will be thoroughly trained to provide proper child care. They will receive detailed guidance on feeding schedules, nutritional requirements, and overall child care," the official said.

The existing services provided at the Anganwadi centres -- including support for pregnant women, children's education, and meal programmes -- will continue as before, even with the addition of the new creche facilities.

TALKS WITH ISRO ON Assam to have its own satellite

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, March 10: The Assam government announced Monday that it would have its own satellite, which will help collect data for the implementation of critical socio-economic projects, besides keeping surveillance on its border.

The announcement was made by Finance Minister Ajanta Neog while presenting the state budget for 2025-26.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma later claimed that Assam will be the first state in the country to have its own satellite.

"In collaboration with IN-SPaCe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre) of the Department of Space, Government of India, we would like to set up our own satellite, ASSAMSAT, to ensure a continuous, reliable flow of data for the implementation of critical socio-economic projects," Neog said in her budget speech.

The satellite will also help in providing dedicated services for agriculture, disaster management, infrastructure development and border security management and police operations, she said.

It will ignite the imagination of students of the states, who will be involved in building experimental satellites with the support of INSPaCe and ISRO, she added.

Addressing a press conference later, the chief minister said, "If we have our own satellite, it can tell us if any foreigner tries to enter illegally, give prior information on impending floods, help with weather reports that will benefit our farmers."

Delhi zoo to get smooth-coated otters after 2 decades

Along with the otters, the Delhi zoo will also receive 10 star tortoises from the Surat zoo, in exchange, it will send five sangai deer, two blue-and-yellow macaws, and four green-cheeked conures

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: Smooth-coated otters will return to the Delhi zoo after a two-decade gap as part of an exchange programme with the Surat zoo.

The zoo had last housed the animal in 2004. Officials said Sunday the otters are expected to arrive by the end of this month.

Along with the otters, the Delhi zoo (officially called the National Zoological Park) will also receive 10 star tortoises from the Surat zoo. In exchange, it will send five sangai deer, two blue-and-yellow macaws, and four green-cheeked conures.

Delhi zoo director Sanjeet Kumar said another exchange programme with the Lucknow zoo has been finalised, under which Delhi will receive swamp deer in return for chinkara.

"A team of officials, including a keeper, is travelling to the Surat zoo Monday to assess the otters and gain insights into their housing and maintenance. The



exchange is expected to be completed in the last week of March. Necessary preparations are underway at both the zoos," Kumar said.

This addition will bring the total species count at Delhi zoo to 96. "We have housed smooth-coated otters in the past, but the last one died in 2004, and we haven't had the species since then," Kumar added.

The Delhi Zoo has recently witnessed multiple animal deaths, prompting efforts to introduce new species, including leopards,

lions, and a Himalayan black bear. "The lions are likely to be brought from the Indore Zoo, with discussions expected to conclude next week. Talks for a Himalayan black bear from the Jammu Zoo are also in the final stages. Even before the recent death of a leopard, we were already in discussions to bring more leopards, as two of our current ones are fairly old. Talks are ongoing with two zoos in the country," Kumar said.

The zoo's last casualty was a

15-year-old female leopard, Babi, who died February 26 due to age-related complications. The zoo now has two male and one female leopards left.

Her death followed two other fatalities in February: a 22-year-old jaguar and a 15-year-old nilgai, both of whom were under prolonged treatment for age-related ailments. Earlier, January 25, a female sangai deer died after a fight with a male sangai deer, while another nilgai sustained injuries in a similar incident.

Additionally, January 2, a one-horned rhinoceros named Dharmendra, brought from the Assam zoo as part of an exchange programme, died under mysterious circumstances. In December last year, a nine-month-old white tiger cub succumbed to "traumatic shock and acute pneumonia," according to zoo officials.

Established in November 1959, the Delhi zoo currently houses 95 species of animals and birds and serves as a model zoo for the country.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, JHARSUGUDA. Email: eerw_jharsuguda@yahoo.co.in, Mob: 94372 55310. 1st Corrigendum to tender call notice No.-Online-SEJSG 22 of 2024-25.

UCO Bank Zonal Office, UCO Bank Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751009. GOLD AUCTION NOTICE. The following persons, who have availed loans against pledge of gold ornaments, from CONCERNED BRANCHES of UCO Bank, have not repaid the amount in spite of our demand notice.



OMAR ABDULLAH | J&K CM

IIT MADRAS INTRODUCES SPECIAL SEATS FOR OLYMPIAD WINNERS

Indian Institute Technology (IIT), Madras will create two supernumerary seats in each undergraduate course for students who have excelled in national and international olympiads, Director V Kamakoti announced Monday. The seats will be offered from 2025-26 academic session and one of the seats will be exclusively for girls



of the day note

It is truly the beauty of democracy when an elected representative works at the grassroots level with such sincerity and commitment. This is what strengthens democracy

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

The BJP-led government has given a bank guarantee of Rs 1,100 crore to sugar mills close to the ruling dispensation, while the pending dues of Rs 16,000 crore of the BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation) have been kept pending. What is the reason behind it?

UDDHAV THACKERAY | SENA (UBT) PRESIDENT

At the all-India level, West Bengal shares the maximum percentage of 'Manufacturing' enterprises (16.02 per cent) and 'Other Service' enterprises (13.09 per cent). The state boasts the highest percentage (36.4 per cent) of female-headed establishments in India

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM



Devouts take part in a procession on 'Rangbhari Ekadashi', ahead of the Holi festival in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

KANNADA ACTOR'S GOLD SMUGGLING CASE

Political slugfest erupts

Bangalore, March 10: Kannada actress Ranya Rao's alleged involvement in the gold smuggling case has triggered a political slugfest in Karnataka with the ruling Congress and the Opposition BJP trading charges of favouritism and cover-up.

Harshavardhini Ranya alias Ranya Rao was arrested a week ago for allegedly smuggling gold worth Rs 12 crore from Dubai. While the BJP has alleged the involvement of an influential minister in shielding her, the Congress countered the charge by accusing the saffron party of allotting 12 acres to her to set up a TMT steel bar factory.

Karnataka Minister M B Patil clarified later that the allotment of 12 acres of land did not happen as Rao's company failed to make the prescribed payment.

In a post on 'X', BJP Karnataka president B Y Vijayendra



said, "Media reports about the involvement of a prominent minister in @siddaramaiah's government in one of the biggest gold heists in recent times come as no surprise—especially given this government's track record of churning out scandals in increasingly 'innovative' ways!"

The MLA said that the blatant violation of government protocols that allegedly enabled Ranya Rao to smuggle gold over Rs 12 crore could not have happened without the direct support of influential figures within the government.

The BJP state chief further said if these reports were true, then it raised serious concerns about the extent of the alleged nexus.

VOTER LIST DISCREPANCIES

Oppn demands discussion in Parl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: Opposition parties led by the Congress Monday demanded a detailed discussion in Parliament on the doubts that have arisen on the integrity of the electoral process after alleged discrepancies in voter lists, with Rahul Gandhi raising the issue in the Lok Sabha.

Speaking during Zero Hour in the lower house, Gandhi said that the voter lists "are being questioned across the country" and the entire opposition has been demanding a discussion on the matter. "Questions have been raised by the Opposition in one voice in every state, including Maharashtra," he said. The Samajwadi Party, Aam Aadmi Party and the RJD also said that it is an extremely serious matter and Parliament needs to take it up.

Congress president and the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge sought to raise the issue during Zero Hour but was not allowed after which the Opposition walked out in protest.

"The abrupt and unwarranted deletion of voters, the presence of duplicate EPIC numbers, and other such crucial issues affecting the integrity of our electoral process require urgent attention and discussion in Parliament," Kharge said in a post on X. "Given the serious threat these large-scale irregularities pose to the free and fair conduct of elections in our country, it is imperative for the Modi government to allow a comprehensive discussion on the matter in Parliament," he also said.

The Opposition MPs raised slogans after Rajya Sabha deputy chairman of the House,



The abrupt and unwarranted deletion of voters, the presence of duplicate EPIC numbers, and other such crucial issues affecting the integrity of our electoral process require urgent attention and discussion in Parliament

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE

Harivansh, said a dozen notices under Rule 267, which calls for setting aside the business of the day to take up discussions on urgent matters, have been rejected.

Citing the rejection, Harivansh did not allow Kharge to make his submission. Highlighting the issue of alleged "faulty" voter lists in the Lok Sabha, Trinamool Congress member Kalyan Banerjee demanded action against the Election Commission and said that the poll body had "failed" to conduct fair and transparent elections over the past few years.

Speaking during Zero Hour, he said West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had first flagged the issue of numerous instances of "duplicate" voter cards and the explanation given by the Election Commission was a clear breach of the Conduct of Election Rules itself. The "faulty" voter lists were

a matter of serious concern and amounted to a breach of Rule 20 of the Conduct of Elections Rule, the TMC member said.

Trinamool Congress member Saugata Roy demanded a thorough revision of the voter lists, particularly ahead of the Assembly elections in West Bengal and Assam scheduled next year.

The Trinamool Congress has been raising the issue of duplicate Electoral Photo Identity Card (EPIC) numbers, following which the Election Commission declared that it would take corrective measures within the next three months.

The Election Commission had rejected the Trinamool Congress claim that the voter lists were manipulated to allow voters from other states to exercise their franchise in West Bengal.

The poll body also made it clear that while the EPIC numbers of some voters "may be identical", other details such as demographic information, Assembly constituency and polling booth are different. He said the Election Commission, as per its press release dated 2 March 2025, "itself admitted discrepancies" in the country's electoral records.

T'GANA TUNNEL TRAGEDY

Intense efforts on to trace 7 missing men

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagarkurnool (Telangana), March 10: Search operations continued Monday at the partially collapsed SLBC tunnel here with teams from NDRF, state-run miner Singareni Collieries, rat miners and others working at specific spots indicated by cadaver dogs and radar survey to locate the seven persons who remain trapped since February 22.

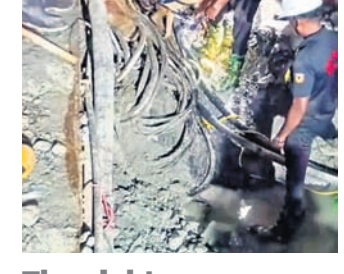
The mortal remains of Gurpreet Singh, which were recovered Sunday, have been sent to his native place in Punjab in a hearse van.

Rescue personnel guided by the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) surveys conducted by the scientists of National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) in Hyderabad are focusing efforts at suspected locations. The search was further aided by Human Remains Detection Dogs (HRDD) of Kerala police, a senior official told PTI.

The dogs have been deployed twice inside the tunnel so far and might be sent in again March 11, he said. A robot along with all other surveillance material, including camera, modules and tools, shall be operational by March 11 and another one should be in place by March 14, he added.

All three excavators functioning inside the tunnel have cleared most of the metal debris and are about 100 metres away from the tail end of the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM), he said.

State Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar, who has been supervising the search opera-



The eight persons -- engineers and labourers -- got trapped in the Srisailem Left Bank Canal project tunnel after a portion of it collapsed February 22

tion, held a meeting with officials of different organisations. Kumar lauded the rescue personnel for successfully retrieving the body of Gurpreet Singh.

Meanwhile, the cheque for Rs 25 lakh ex-gratia announced by the state government for the family of Gurpreet Singh was handed over to the concerned team to hand it to the family.

This is over and above the insurance amount (50 times the salary) provided by the Robbins Company involved in tunnel works, according to the official. All arrangements have been made for the teams to carry out the search operation smoothly, an official release said. Gurpreet Singh, who worked as a Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) operator for Robbins Co, was among the eight men trapped inside the tunnel after its partial collapse February 22.

Violence in Mhow, Gandhinagar amid cricket celebrations

Police arrested 13 individuals after a celebratory rally descended into chaos

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mhow/Gandhinagar, March 10: Tensions flared in Madhya Pradesh's Mhow town and Gandhinagar district of Gujarat amid celebrations of the Indian cricket team's victory in the ICC Champions Trophy, resulting in unrest and multiple arrests across the two states.

In Mhow, located in Indore district, police arrested 13 individuals after a celebratory rally descended into chaos with incidents of stone-pelting Sunday night, injuring four persons. Authorities responded promptly, intervening to restore law and order.

Meanwhile, in Gandhinagar, police detained 11 individuals after a late-night motorcycle rally celebrating the Indian team's victory over New Zealand turned violent.

The violence reportedly began near a mosque when two groups, initially celebrating together, became embroiled in a dispute that escalated after firecrackers were set off. This led to accusations and confrontations, ultimately resulting in the stone-pelting incidents.

Mhow police station in-charge Rahul Sharma confirmed that the clashes were concentrated in specific areas, including Taal Mohalla, Sewa Marg, Patti Bazar, Manek Chowk, and close to the Jama Masjid. Police are currently reviewing CCTV footage and mobile recordings to identify those responsible for the violence. In Gandhinagar, violence erupted in Dehgam town following a motorcycle rally around 10:30 PM. The rally passed near a mosque in a minority-dominated area, where bikers revved their engines and honked, causing disturbances for people gathered for Ramadan prayers.

SHORT TAKES

2 engineers held for killing auto driver

Gurugram: Two engineers have been arrested for allegedly beating to death a 21-year-old auto rickshaw driver in DLF Phase 3 area after an argument, police said Monday. The accused have been identified as Jaideep and Mani Shankar, they said. On Saturday, the two men were going to Jaideep's apartment after having dinner.

3 kids among 5 charred to death

Garhwa: At least five persons, including three children, were charred to death after a fire broke out at a firecracker shop in Jharkhand's Garhwa Monday, a police officer said. The incident occurred at Godarmana Bazar in Ranka police station area. "Five persons were killed after a blaze erupted at a firecracker shop here. Of these, three are children. We are investigating the incident," Garhwa SP Deepak Pandey told PTI. Ranka SDPO Rohit Ranjan Singh said the fire broke out around 12.30 pm, while crackers were being sold on a wooden platform in the shop. "We took the injured to a nearby hospital in neighbouring Chhattisgarh, where doctors declared them dead," Singh said.

Bus crashes after driver collapses

Kottayam (Kerala): A private passenger bus lost control and crashed into a coconut tree after the driver collapsed while driving Monday. The driver, Rajesh (43), died, and around 20 passengers were injured, police said. The accident happened in the Edamattom area near Pala. When the driver collapsed, the bus veered off course and hit the tree. Three seriously injured passengers have been admitted to Kottayam Medical College Hospital.

BTech student stabbed to death

Agra (UP): A 24-year-old BTech student was stabbed to death by unidentified assailants while watching a cricket match with his friends, police said Monday. Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Hariparvat, Aditya, said that the victim, Siddhant Govindam, was watching the India-New Zealand match on his mobile phone along with three friends—Shubham, Shashank, and Siddharth—at JCB Ground.

Slums install 'cool roofs' to combat extreme heat

REUTERS

Ahmedabad, March 10: Hundreds of roofs in the informal settlements of Gujarat have been painted in a reflective, white coating over the last two months to try to keep their occupants cooler as the hottest time of year approaches.

The effort, which involves 400 households in Ahmedabad, is part of a global scientific trial to study how indoor heat impacts people's health and economic outcomes in developing countries - and how "cool roofs" might help.

"Traditionally, home is where people have come to find shelter and respite against external elements," said Aditi Bunker, an epidemiologist at the University of Heidelberg in Germany who is leading the



project, supported by the UK-based Wellcome Trust. "Now, we're in this position where people are living in precarious housing conditions, where the thing that was supposed to be protecting them

is actually increasing their exposure to heat." As climate change has made India's summers more extreme, Ahmedabad has suffered temperatures in excess of 46 C (115 F) in recent years.

As climate change has made India's summers more extreme, Ahmedabad has suffered temperatures in excess of 46 C (115 F) in recent years

In the Vanzara Vas slum in the Narol area of the city, which has more than 2,000 dwellings, most of them airless, one-room homes, residents that are part of the project, such as Nehal Vijaybhai Bhil, say they have already noticed a difference. "My refrigerator doesn't heat up any more and the house feels cooler. I sleep so much better

and my electricity bill is down," said Bhil, whose roof was painted in January.

Across the world, heatwaves that, prior to the industrial revolution, had a one-in-10 chance of occurring in any given year are nearly three times as likely, according to a 2022 study in the journal Environmental Research Letters.

By painting roofs with a white coating that contains highly reflective pigments such as titanium dioxide, Bunker and her team are sending more of the sun's radiation back to the atmosphere and preventing it from being absorbed.

Before joining Bunker's experiment, Arti Chunara said she would cover her roof with plastic sheets and spread grass over them. Some days, she and her fam-

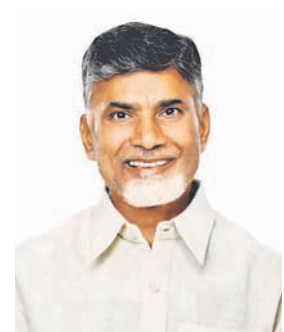
ily sat outside for most of the day, going into the house only for two to three hours when the heat was bearable.

The trial in Ahmedabad will run for one year, and scientists will collect health and indoor environment data from residents living under a cool roof - and from those who do not.

Other study sites are in Burkina Faso, Mexico and the island of Niue in the South Pacific, spanning a variety of building materials and climates.

Early results from the Burkina Faso trial, Bunker said, show that cool roofs reduced indoor temperature by between 1.2 C in tin- and mud-roofed homes, and 1.7 C in tin-roofed homes over two years, which subsequently lowered residents' heart rates.

national



Government services to people should come with 100 per cent quality and the beneficiaries should experience complete satisfaction

GOVT: GANGA WATER WAS FIT FOR BATHING DURING MAHAKUMBH

The central government Monday cited a new report from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in Parliament and said the water in the Ganga at Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj was fit for bathing during the recently concluded Mahakumbh



of the day note

When the two AAP candidates won the 2022 elections, there were rumours that they would not survive in the party even for two months. But they are still with the party because they have not come to make money from politics

The country is run by the principles laid down in the Constitution and not according to the dictates of babas. Of course, all have the freedom to express their views in a democracy

When elections come, political parties present budgets that are beneficiary-driven. We are continuing with our efforts to empower the poor and middle class, but at the same time we have not deviated from our commitment to make Assam among the front-ranking states

SHORT TAKES

Maoist gunned down in MP

Mandla (MP): Madhya Pradesh police's anti-Naxal Hawk Force gunned down a Maoist and captured two of his accomplices after an encounter in tribal-dominated Mandla district of the state, an official said Monday. Around 205 rounds were fired during the gun-battle -- 125 from the Naxals and 80 by the Hawk Force - which took place in a thickly forested area Sunday, he informed.

TN govt to hold meet with fishers

Chennai: The Tamil Nadu Environment Department will hold consultative meetings with representatives of various fishermen associations across the state to discuss the final draft of the Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP). The National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) revised the CZMP on behalf of the Tamil Nadu State Coastal Zone Management Authority (TNSCZMA) after widespread opposition from fishermen. The fisherfolk had raised concerns that the draft plan released in 2022 excluded key ecological areas such as salt pans, water bodies, backwaters, and other sensitive zones.

Haldia MLA Tapasi Mondal joins TMC

Kolkata: BJP's Haldia MLA Tapasi Mondal, a close associate of Leader of the Opposition Suwendu Adhikari, joined the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) Monday. Mondal's defection dealt a strong blow to the BJP in Purba Medinipur, Adhikari's stronghold where the port town of Haldia is located. She joined the TMC at its headquarters in Kolkata in the presence of state Power Minister Aroop Biswas.

Arunachal govt presents budget

Itanagar: Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein Monday presented in the assembly a budget with a total expenditure of over ₹39,842 crore for the 2025-26 fiscal and emphasised on social and economic empowerment of people. Describing the budget as a "transformative step" in the state's development trajectory, Mein reaffirmed the government's commitment to fostering a skilled and dynamic workforce while promoting technological advancements, research, and entrepreneurship.

CH'GARH LIQUOR 'SCAM'

ED raids Baghel's son, others

PM to embark on 2-day visit to Mauritius today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, March 10: The Enforcement Directorate Monday raided the premises of former Chhattisgarh chief minister and senior Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel as part of a money laundering investigation against his son in the alleged liquor scam case and seized about ₹30 lakh apart from some documents, official sources said.

The agency searched 14 locations in Durg district, including the Bhilai premises of Bhupesh Baghel's son Chaitanya Baghel, his alleged close associate Laxmi Narayan Bansal alias Pappu Bansal and others under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The raids began around 7 am and the ED search party was accompanied by a security team of the CRPF, the sources said. Chaitanya Baghel shares the Bhilai accommodation with his father and hence the premises are being covered. He (Chaitanya Baghel) is suspected to be the "recipient" of the proceeds of crime of the liquor scam, they said.

About ₹30 lakh in cash was seized before the eight-hour-long search ended in the evening, the sources said, adding the ED also brought a cash counting machine the former chief minister's residence. The senior Baghel later told reporters that the ED officials "took with them about ₹33 lakh in cash but no gold or jewellery



Conspiracy to manage headlines: Congress

NEW DELHI: The Congress Monday charged that the ED raids on the premises of former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel were a "conspiracy to manage headlines" on a day when Parliament's Budget session reconvened and the government faces questions from the opposition on multiple issues.

was seized". The former chief minister said he asked the ED officials about the ECIR (Enforcement Case Information Report, the ED's equivalent of a police FIR) number of the case but they said "there was no ECIR number." "Then what is the investigation about? This makes it clear that asking questions in the legislative assembly is criminal now. Kawai Lakhma (Congress MLA) asked questions and he was arrested (by the ED earlier)...," Bhupesh Baghel said. A total of 14 premises in the Durg district were raided, official sources said.

The Congress said the raids against the Baghels were a "conspiracy" to "manage headlines" on a day when Parliament's Budget session reconvened and the government faced questions from the opposition on multiple issues. Soon after the searches, a number of Congress leaders and workers gathered outside Baghel's house in Bhilai. They staged a protest outside the House against the ED and claimed it to be a conspiracy by the Centre. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) earlier said the Chhattisgarh liquor "scam" resulted in "massive loss" to the

state exchequer and filled the pockets of the beneficiaries of a liquor syndicate with more than ₹2,100 crore of proceeds of crime.

The ED had arrested former minister and Congress leader Kawai Lakhma in this case in January apart from Anwar Dhebar, the elder brother of Raipur Mayor and Congress leader Aijaz Dhebar, former IAS officer Anil Tuteja, Indian Telecom Service (ITS) officer Arunpati Tripathi and some others as part of this investigation.

The alleged liquor scam in the central Indian state, as per the ED, was orchestrated between 2019 and 2022 when Chhattisgarh was ruled by a Congress government led by

CM Baghel. Assets worth about ₹205 crore of various accused have been attached by the agency as part of this investigation till now. The Supreme Court last year quashed the ED's first ECIR (FIR) in this case that was based on an Income Tax Department complaint. The ED later filed a fresh case after it asked the Chhattisgarh EOW/ACB to file a fresh FIR against the accused on the basis of material shared by the anti-money laundering agency.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: As he embarks on a two-day trip to Mauritius, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday said the visit will open a "new and bright" chapter in the ties between the two nations.

Modi is visiting Mauritius March 11 and 12 at the invitation of Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam primarily to grace the island nation's national day celebrations.

In his departure statement, the prime minister said he was looking forward to engaging with the leadership of Mauritius to elevate "our partnership in all its facets and strengthen our enduring friendship for the progress and prosperity of our peoples".

A contingent of Indian armed forces will participate in the celebrations along with a warship of the Indian Navy and the Akash Ganga skydiving team of the Indian Air Force. "Mauritius is a close maritime neighbour, a key partner in the Indian Ocean, and a gateway to the African Continent. We are connected by history, geography and culture," Modi said.

"Deep mutual trust, a shared belief in the values of democracy, and celebration of our diversity are our strengths," he said. The prime minister said the close and historical



INDIA IS AMONGST THE LARGEST TRADING PARTNERS OF MAURITIUS MAURITIUS WAS THE SECOND LARGEST SOURCE OF FDI INTO INDIA FOR 2023-24, AFTER SINGAPORE

people-to-people connection between the two sides is a source of shared pride. "I am confident that this visit will build on the foundations of the past and open a new and bright chapter in the India and Mauritius relationship," he said. The prime minister noted that "significant strides" have been made in the past 10 years between the two sides with people centric initiatives.

New York-bound AI flight returns after bomb threat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 10: A New York-bound Air India flight, carrying 303 passengers, returned to the city Monday morning after being airborne for nearly nine hours following a bomb threat, according to officials.

A passenger spotted a note with the message 'There is a bomb in the flight' written on it inside one of the lavatories and alerted the crew, a Sahar police official here said and added that the aircraft made an emergency landing. The Boeing 777-300 ER aircraft landed safely at the Mumbai airport at 10.25 am. "Nothing suspicious has been found (so far) and we are conducting the investigation," the official said. Further, the official said they were in the process of registering an FIR against an unidentified person in connection with the matter. There were 322 persons, including 19 crew members, in

the Boeing 777-300 ER aircraft, a source said.

In a statement in the morning, Air India said, "A potential security threat was detected mid-flight on AII19 operating Mumbai-New York (JFK) on Monday. After following the necessary protocols, the flight air-returned to Mumbai, in the interest of the safety and security of all on board".

The aircraft is undergoing mandatory checks by security agencies, and Air India is extending its full cooperation to the authorities, the airline said. The flight has been rescheduled to operate at 5 am Tuesday, and all passengers have been offered hotel accommodation, meals, and other assistance until then, it said. "Our colleagues on the ground are making sure to minimise the inconvenience caused to our passengers by this disruption. As always, Air India accords the highest priority to the safety of passengers and crew," it added.



Members of All India Mahila Samskritik Sanghatan (AIMSS) participate in a protest rally against alleged torture of female students by the police in West Midnapore, Sealdah station in Kolkata

If you can't dazzle them with brilliance, baffle them with bull

Does a red rag provoke a bull? No, it does not, for bulls are colour blind. It is the movement of the cloth that irritates them, causing them to charge. The idiom, however, lends itself to political adaptation. When individuals and entities concern themselves with surface political conflicts, they make the mistake of the bull in the ring of charging the cloth and hasten their own decimation. Headed for a 30 year long rule in Gujarat and half that time in the country, the BJP finds itself in precisely such a predicament in relation to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi who is also the leader of the Opposition. The worst in language has been used to denigrate a political opponent. The comments range from the fanciful to the farcical and distasteful to derogatory-morkhon ka sardar - mahagyani - pappu to fused tubelight and even hybrid calf- it is a never ending litany that speaks a tale of moral degradation in public life.

Donald Trump. Such is the paranoia in relation to the leader of the Opposition, Gandhi that a twitch of his eye-brows in public is enough to invite a stomach churn in the ruling elite. What may follow thereafter may- at most be judicial intervention or at least a ridiculing reponse - all for perceived rebuke to his own party men!

A recent example would best illustrate the point. Gandhi was in Gujarat for two days. He used the opportunity to school his party men on some home truths. Addressing Congress workers in Ahmedabad March 8, he admitted that the Congress has been unable to fulfill the expectations of the people of the state due to a section of Congress leaders conniving with the BJP from within. "People in Gujarat want an Opposition, not a 'B' team of the BJP and it is our responsibility to show such people the door" he added. The statement was met with a tumultuous round of applause. It was a candid admission of a fact that most media persons based in Gujarat have known for a long time. Many hurt and sidelined but loyal Congressmen have spilt their cup of woes to reporters with whom they have shared decades old relationships. Many are also well aware of the intricate web spun in the past not only inter-party but within the BJP as well, the wires stretching all the way from the state capital of Gandhinagar to the then party top brass in Delhi.



As if on cue, waded in BJP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi in mock mourning. "The most unsuccessful leader of the Congress in its 140 year history is teaching his party workers the mantra of success. His statements definitely point to the internal misery of the Congress and his deteriorating mental state." Chimed in spokesperson buddy Shehzad Poonawala very concerned for the Congress rank and file "brother have some realisation and own up to your own failures for a change," he added. Words like 'deteriorating mental state' is nothing but verbal diarrhoea coming from someone who should know responsible language use! One is at a loss trying to understand whom the two worthies would like to blame for the BJP loss in Karnataka where the Prime Minister had extensively campaigned as well as in Telangana. Again, the ruling BJP had wagered it's all in a high-pitched and shrill Lok Sabha elections 2024 on the war cry 'charsau ke par iss bar' (over the 400 seats threshold this time).

The result was a setback as it saw them losing their singular majority, down to 240 seats, from 303 in the 2019 polls. The BJP led NDA overall secured 293 seats with the INDIA coalition bagging 234 seats, 99 of which were won by the Congress.

As the ruling party hobbles around on the crutches of Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam Party (16 MPs) in Andhra Pradesh and Nithi Kumar led-Janata Dal(United), 12 MPs in Bihar, the two BJP spokespersons may like to pin accountability for this debacle within their own set up. After all, what's good for the goose, is good for the gander!

Rahul Gandhi's blunt talk has not come a day too soon. Of the 68 municipalities that went to polls recently in Gujarat, the BJP managed to come to power in 65 of them, Samajwadi Party in two Porbandar district municipalities with the Congress bringing up the rear with a solitary win Devbhumi Dwarka, down from 12 it had won previously. It is this and many such related factors that is responsible for the Congress leadership decision to take the bull by the horns and hold the AICC session in the state next month even as it undertakes a cleansing operation. It will be the first AICC session to be held in the state after 64 years.

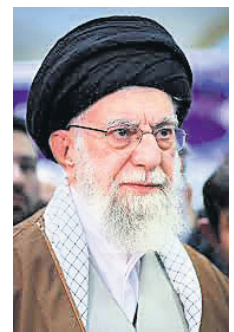
Is it just plain coincidence that with the Congress focussing on Gujarat, and Rahul Gandhi spending two days in the state, Prime Minister Modi took

time out to spend the better part of the week in his home state? He had a busy schedule chalked out, arriving in Jamnagar March 1 and taking part in several events over the next two days including chairing a meeting of the national Board of Wildlife (NBWL) and visiting Vantara, the animal rescue, conservation and rehabilitation centre which is spread over 3000 acres of the Reliance Jamnagar refinery complex.

He also offered prayers at the Somnath temple and chaired a meeting of the Somnath Trust which manages it. He also enjoyed a jungle safari complete with bountiful photo-ops thrown in for good measure.

The Prime Minister was back in Gujarat and the neighbouring Union Territory of Dadra Nagar Haveli March 7 morning and had a slew of events in South Gujarat stretching well into the next day. Earlier, Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishaw was in Gujarat March 1 visiting Anand to announce an allocation of ₹17,155 crore for railway modernisation in Gujarat this year besides revamp of 87 railway stations in the state and a halt for the Vande Bharat Express at Anand. Union Home Minister Amit Shah was also in his home state performing inaugurations and laying the foundation stone for assorted project in Junagadh March 8. If you can't dazzle them with brilliance, baffle them with bull, goes an old saying.

international



However, should the aim be the dismantlement of Iran's peaceful nuclear program to claim that what Obama failed to achieve has now been accomplished, such negotiations will never take place

ALI KHAMENEI | SUPREME LEADER, IRAN

ZELENSKY ARRIVES IN SAUDI ARABIA

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has arrived in Saudi Arabia to visit the oil-rich kingdom's crown prince ahead of his official meeting with America's top diplomat and others in Jeddah Tuesday



of the day quote

The visit reaffirmed the strong ties between India and the United Kingdom, injecting fresh momentum into the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership



JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, INDIA

Trump administration had finished its six-week purge of programmes of the six-decade-old US Agency for International Development, and I would move the 18% of aid and development programmes that survived under the State Department



MARCO RUBIO | SECRETARY OF STATE, US

At the same time, we should not forget that military finds roots in deprivation and inequity, so we must focus on the development of regions most affected by terrorism and create employment



ASIF ALI ZARDARI | PRESIDENT, PAKISTAN

Tough times for Canada's new PM

Canada's incoming PM Carney faces Trump, tariffs and looming election

REUTERS

Ottawa, March 10: Former central banker Mark Carney claimed a landslide victory Sunday to lead Canada's Liberal Party and become its next prime minister, setting him up for a clash with the Trump administration.

Liberal party members bet on Carney as the man best placed to take on US President Donald Trump, who has threatened annexation as well as launching a trade war and punishing tariffs on the long-time ally. Liberal sources say Carney will soon call for a general election.

"The Americans want our resources, our water, our land, our country if they succeed, they will destroy our way of life," Carney said in his acceptance speech late Sunday.

Carney, who supports dollar-for-dollar retaliatory tariffs in response to Trump's measures, could speak to Trump as early as Monday, Politico said.

Carney, who has no political experience, is normally more reserved than Trudeau, who often had a combative relationship with Trump.

The United States is due to slap a 25% tariff on Canadian steel and aluminum Wednesday.



MARK CARNEY WINS LIBERAL LEADERSHIP IN LANDSLIDE

FACES THREATS OF TARIFFS AND ANNEXATION ALONGSIDE ELECTION

PIVOTS AWAY FROM SOME SIGNATURE TRUDEAU POLICIES

CARNEY WILL BE FIRST CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER WITH NO ELECTORAL EXPERIENCE

day. Ottawa imposed a 25% tariff on \$30 billion worth of US imports when Trump last month announced his initial tariff plans.

"My government will keep our tariffs on until the Americans show us respect," Carney said Sunday.

Trump's move triggered an angry backlash in Canada, where provinces pulled US alcohol off the shelves and urged people to buy Canadian.

MAINTAINING MOMENTUM

Carney won with 86% of the votes cast by party members. The Governor General, the representative of Britain's King Charles in Canada, will

soon invite him to form a government and formally replace Justin Trudeau as prime minister.

The Globe and Mail newspaper said the official handover could take place Thursday or Friday.

For months the Opposition Conservatives led in the polls, often by double-digits ahead of the governing Liberals.

However, the political landscape shifted with the return of Trump to the White House, the prospect of tariffs and the threat of annexation. This coincided with a surge of support for the Liberals, who have ridden a wave of renewed national unity to

come neck-and-neck with the Opposition party, according to the latest polls.

Now the challenge will be to maintain that momentum and convince Canadians to give a party that spent a decade in power under Trudeau another go - while fighting a trade war on multiple fronts.

Carney will be the first person to become Canada's prime minister with no prior experience in electoral politics. The former governor of the Bank of Canada and Bank of England shot to the front of the Liberal leadership race, ahead of two women who held seats in Trudeau's cabinet.

Carney has promised to scrap an unpopular consumer tax on carbon, stop a planned increase in the capital gains tax and pledged to remove barriers to trade within Canada. He vowed to double the pace of new housing construction over 10 years and cap immigration levels, a shift in policy started by Trudeau in response to a backlash over a housing shortage and high prices.

liberals sought to compare Conservative leader Pierre Poilievre to Trump in a recent advertisement. Poilievre in turn ramped up attacks on Carney Sunday.

Syrian govt ends ops against Assad loyalists

Clashes between Assad loyalists and the country's new Islamist rulers in the former president's coastal heartland have killed more than 1,000 people

REUTERS

Dubai, March 10: A Syrian military operation against loyalists of ousted President Bashar al-Assad has been completed, the defence ministry said Monday, after the heavily fighting since former rebels seized power three months ago.

Clashes between Assad loyalists and the country's new Islamist rulers in the former president's coastal heartland have killed more than 1,000 people, mostly civilians, according to a war monitoring group.

The violence has increased concerns about the direction of Syria, where the former rebels under Ahmed al-Sharaa and his Hayat Tahrir al-Sham group are attempting to unify a divided country while navigating the involvement of powerful neighbours.

Since Assad's overthrow, Turkish-backed groups have clashed with Kurdish forces that control much of north-eastern Syria. Israel has separately struck military sites in



Syria, and is lobbying the United States to keep Syria weak, sources have told Reuters.

Hassan Abdul Ghany, the defence ministry spokesperson, said in a statement on X that public institutions were now able to resume their work and provide services.

"We are paving the way for life to return to normal and for the consolidation of security and stability," Abdul Ghany said.

He added that plans were in place to continue combating the remnants of the former government and eliminate any future threats.

Sharaa vowed Sunday to hunt down the perpetrators of the violent clashes and said he would hold to account anyone who overstepped the new rulers' authority.

Al-Sharaa's office also said it was forming an independent committee to investigate the clashes and killings carried out by both sides.

SHORT TAKES

Russia expels 2 British diplomats

Moscow: Russia said Monday it was expelling two British diplomats based at the embassy in Moscow over spying allegations that the UK called "malicious and baseless." Russia's Federal Security Service, or FSB, said in a statement quoted by the state news agency RIA Novosti that the two diplomats had provided false personal data while seeking permission to enter the country and had engaged in alleged intelligence and subversive activities that threatened Russia's security.

Rohingya refugees protest in Sri Lanka

Colombo: A group of over 100 Myanmar Rohingya refugees Monday staged a protest opposite the UN office and demanded a permanent solution to their plight. Activist Rukii Fernando of a local group assisting them said the group, which arrived in 2022, were calling for immediate assistance, including food and housing. "This group of 123 Rohingyas have been housed with friends and well wishers at Panadura (a Colombo south suburb)," Fernando told reporters. They held placards opposite the UN office which read "Thank you Sri Lanka! You saved us from the sea, but now we are left to die on land", "We survived genocide. Will we now die from hunger and neglect?", "End our suffering. Give us a chance to build a future".

Plane with 5 people aboard crashes in US

Pennsylvania: A plane with five people on board crashed Sunday afternoon outside an airport in suburban Pennsylvania, officials said. The small aircraft went down at around 3:00 pm just outside the Lancaster Airport in Manheim Township, according to local police officials, who could not provide immediate information on the fatalities or injuries. The Federal Aviation Administration confirmed there were five people on the plane, a Beechcraft Bonanza, when it went down.

One-day strike at 13 German airports

Berlin: A one-day strike by workers at 13 German airports, including the Frankfurt and Munich hubs and all the country's other main destinations, caused the cancellation of most flights Monday. The 24-hour walkout, which started at midnight, involves public-sector employees at the airports as well as ground and security staff.

SNIPPETS

NK fires missiles as SK, US launch military drills

Seoul: North Korea fired multiple ballistic missiles Monday, hours after condemning the South Korean and US militaries for launching drills that Pyongyang called a "dangerous provocative act" that risked accidentally sparking a confrontation. South Korea's military said the missiles were fired from North Korea's western region toward the Yellow Sea. The launch was the first reported ballistic missile test since US President Donald Trump took office in January. The missiles were believed to be close range ballistic missiles, a South Korean defence ministry official said, referring to a type of weapon with a range of under 300 km (186 miles). The US military, in a statement, condemned the missile launches and called on North Korea "to refrain from further unlawful and destabilizing acts."



Luxembourg's Prince Frederik dies at 22

AGENCIES

New York, March 10: Prince Frederik of Luxembourg, son of Prince Robert of Luxembourg and Princess Julie of Nassau, passed away 1 March in Paris at the age of 22. His death followed a lifelong struggle with POLG mitochondrial disease, a rare and devastating genetic disorder. Despite his condition, Frederik spent his years raising awareness, advocating for research, and bringing light to those around him.

His family confirmed the news in an emotional statement published on the website of the POLG Foundation, the organisation Frederik himself had founded. "It is with a very heavy heart that my wife and I would like to inform you of the passing of our son, The POLG Foundation Founder and Creative Director, Frederik," wrote Prince Robert. Frederik was diagnosed with POLG mitochondrial disease at the age of 14 after years of unexplained health struggles. The disease, which affects the body's ability to produce energy, leads to progressive organ failure. There is no cure.

But Frederik refused to let his condition define him. Instead, he channelled his energy into raising awareness, participating in research efforts, and launching the POLG Foundation in 2022.

Vanuatu PM cancels Lalit Modi's passport

Port Vila: Vanuatu Prime Minister Jotham Napat Monday directed the Citizenship Commission to cancel the passport issued to former Indian Premier League (IPL) founder Lalit Modi, saying that the fugitive was attempting to avoid his extradition. Modi filed an application with the Indian high commission in London March 7, to surrender his Indian passport. He is known to have acquired citizenship of Vanuatu, a South Pacific Island nation. He left India in 2010 and is said to have been living in London. An official media release by the Republic of Vanuatu stated, "I have instructed the Citizenship Commission to cancel the Vanuatu passport issued to Lalit Modi following recent revelations in international media." "While all standard background checks, including Interpol screenings, conducted during his application showed no criminal convictions, I have been made aware in the past 24 hours that Interpol twice rejected Indian authorities' requests to issue an alert notice on Lalit Modi due to lack of substantive judicial evidence," the statement said.



Independence movement gains momentum in Greenland

AGENCIES

Canberra, Mar 10: "We don't want to be Danes or Americans", Greenland Prime Minister Mute Egede told Fox News recently. He wants his country to be independent and plans to hold a referendum.

But this is no longer the main issue for Greenlanders as the world's largest island votes in a general election March 11.

US President Donald Trump has declared it is absolutely necessary for America to take over Greenland - and he will not be deterred. He even refused to rule out using military or economic force.

The Danish territory is now the subject of international controversy. And that has altered the trajectory of the election.

GREENLAND'S TERRITORY STATUS

The name Greenland was invented by Viking Erik den Rode, who encountered the territory around 990 and wanted

to lure his compatriots to the island.

Since the 1950s, America has operated an airbase in Thule in the north of the island.

However, at present, the territory - roughly the size of Mexico but with a population of just 56,000 people - is part of Denmark. The Vikings never left.

GREENLAND TODAY

In the early 1950s, Greenland became a county of Denmark, and in 1979, it was given its own devolved parliament - with powers to make laws.

Its single-chamber parliament in Nuuk - the territory's capital - is called the Inatsartut in Greenlandic, which means "those who make the laws". Apart from defence and foreign affairs, all of these are made by the Greenlanders.

Independence from Denmark only became an issue in the early 2000s, but it was not seriously debated before 2008 when Denmark agreed to Greenland's

AS TRUMP EYES ELECTION



future status.

Part of the deal was that the money Denmark sends Greenland every year (known as a "block grant") will be reduced as mineral mining starts paying for public services. The agreement was passed in a referendum in 2008, which also

gives Greenland the right to secede at a time of its choosing.

The incumbent Egede is the leader of the left-wing Inuit Ataqatigiit party, which wants independence from Denmark. So does the centrist party Naleraq.

The two parties have have a

TANKER, CARGO SHIP COLLIDE OFF UK COAST

REUTERS

London, March 10: A tanker carrying jet fuel for the US military was struck by a container ship off northeast England Monday, igniting a blaze and multiple explosions and forcing both crews to abandon ship.

The tanker, which has the potential to carry tens of thousands of tons of jet fuel, was at anchor when the smaller container ship struck it at speed, rupturing its cargo tank and releasing fuel into the sea.

Two maritime security sources said there was no indication of any malicious activity or other actors involved in the incident. Local officials said 32 casualties had been met by ambulances but by mid afternoon only one remained in hospital. But the crash could risk environmental damage.

Martin Slater, director of operations at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, said East Yorkshire's coast was home to protected and significant colonies of seabirds including puffins and gannets, with many offshore on the sea ahead of the nesting season.

A Greenpeace spokesperson said, "The magnitude of any impact will depend on a number of factors, including the amount



Tanker carrying jet fuel struck by container ship, igniting blaze and explosions

INCIDENT OCCURRED IN BUSY WATERWAY, NO MALICIOUS ACTIVITY SUSPECTED

and type of oil carried by the tanker, the fuel carried by both ships, and how much of that, if any, has entered the water."

"Sea and weather conditions will also be important in determining how any spill behaves." **JET-A1 FUEL**

The tanker, the Stena Immac-

ulate, operated by U.S. logistics group Crowley, was carrying Jet-A1 fuel when it was struck by the Portuguese-flagged cargo ship Solong while anchored near Hull, Crowley wrote on X.

The Stena tanker is part of a US government programme designed to supply the armed forces with fuel when required. A US military spokesperson told Reuters it had been on a short term charter to the US Navy's Military Sealift Command Monday. Emergency teams sent a helicopter, fixed-wing aircraft, lifeboats and nearby vessels with firefighting capability to the incident Monday morning.

combined 16 of the 31 seats in the parliament. However, some members of other parties - including the previously unionist Siumut (which is currently part of the government) - have signalled a gradual shift. So, the actual number of members that would vote for independence is likely to be slightly higher.

Independence is opposed by the conservative Demokraatit party, the centre-left Siumut party and the centre-right Atasut party. The Demokraatit party has become more popular than the Siumut and Atasut parties. The latter two used to dominate Greenlandic politics but have struggled in the past few years.

THE ELECTION AS IT STANDS

The current government parties have lost ground. Inuit Ataqatigiit's projected vote share is down from 37 per cent to 31 per cent, and Siumut's will - according to polls - be reduced from 29 per cent to 21 per cent.

The main beneficiaries of the unpopularity of the present government are Demokraatit and Naleraq. The former stands to double its vote share to 18 per cent, 2 per cent ahead of the latter.

The overall percentage of parties that support independence has not changed.

Whatever the result of the election, neither side wants to become Americans.

The parties may not agree on whether they want to continue their 1,000-year union with Denmark, but they agree with Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen's message to Donald Trump, "Greenland is not for sale".

None of the parties have expressed sympathy for being part of the US, but all are happy to discuss future collaboration on defence. All of them, in different ways, are open to exploring the possibility of minerals exploration but sympathy in Greenland for Trump's position is non-existent.



Unethical gambling operators have been parasitically harming the nation, its exchequer, and its people. I'm delighted that the industry is collaborating on the joint code-of-ethics today
ROLAND LANDERS | CEO, AIGF

ZOMATO NAME CHANGE GETS NOD

The shareholders of Zomato have approved a special resolution to rename the firm 'Eternal', the company informed in a stock exchange filing. The brand name of the company's food delivery business Zomato will remain the same, along with the app. Eternal will comprise four major businesses (as of now) -- Zomato, Blinkit, District, and Hyperpure



of the day quote

In becoming the second largest network of urban transport...we need the cooperation of state governments
HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION MINISTER

The government is in the process of setting a special purpose vehicle for making regional transport aircraft. Necessary policies are in place for India to manufacture planes and its components.
K RAMMOHAN NAIDU | CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER

Resumption of construction and infrastructure activities, steady rural demand along with higher replacement sales stemming out of ageing fleets and government mandates are the likely driving factors to propel the said volume expansion towards the end of FY2025 and through FY2026
KINIAL SHAH | SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT & CO-GROUP HEAD, ICRA

SHORT TAKES

Anti-dumping duty on China, Japan

New Delhi: India has imposed anti-dumping duty of up to \$986 per tonne for five years on a chemical, used for water treatment, imported from China and Japan to protect the domestic industry from cheap inbound shipments, according to a finance ministry notification. The decision follows recommendations from the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), an investigation arm of the commerce ministry, to impose the duty on 'Trichloro isocyanuric acid'. In its recommendations, the directorate has stated that the domestic industry has suffered material injury due to the dumped imports in India from China and Japan.

Sebi tightens norms for SME offerings

New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi has notified a stricter regulatory framework for small and medium enterprise (SME) IPOs by introducing a profitability requirement and capping a 20 per cent limit on offer-for-sale (OFS). The reforms aim to provide SMEs with a sound track record an opportunity to raise funds from the public while protecting investor interests. This move follows a rise in SME issues, which has driven significant investor participation. With regard to profitability criteria, Sebi said SMEs planning to launch an IPO are required to have a minimum operating profits.

Massive AI talent crunch looms in India

Report predicts shortfall of over a million workers by 2027

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: India is poised to become a global AI talent hub, but a looming skill gap threatens to hinder its progress, with a new study by Bain & Company revealing that the country's AI sector could face a shortfall of over a million skilled professionals by 2027. The report highlighted the urgent need for India to reskill and upskill its workforce to meet the growing demand for

AI expertise. "India has a unique opportunity to position itself as a global AI talent hub. However, by 2027, the job openings in AI are expected to be 1.5-2x of the talent availability. The challenge -- and opportunity -- lies in reskilling and upskilling a significant portion of the existing talent base on emerging technology tools and skillsets," said Saikat Banerjee, Partner and leader in Bain & Company's AI, Insights, and Solutions practice in India. India's AI sector could surpass 2.3 million job openings by 2027 while the AI talent pool is expected to grow to around 1.2



million, presenting an opportunity to reskill more than 1 million workers, according to the report. Since 2019, AI-related job postings have exploded, increasing by 21 per cent annually, while compensation for these roles has risen by 11 per cent each year.

The AI talent shortage is a significant challenge, but not invincible. Addressing it requires a fundamental shift in how businesses attract, develop, and retain AI talent. Companies need to move beyond traditional hiring approaches, prioritise continuous upskilling, and foster an innovation-driven ecosystem

SAIKAT BANERJEE | PARTNER AND LEADER IN BAIN & COMPANY'S AI, INSIGHTS, AND SOLUTIONS

Despite this surge in demand and attractive salaries, the supply of qualified AI professionals

has not kept pace, creating a widening talent gap that risks slowing down AI adoption across industries. Globally, executives surveyed cited a lack of in-house AI expertise as a major obstacle to implementing generative AI technologies. This shortage is projected to persist through at least 2027, with varying degrees of impact across global markets. Addressing the AI talent shortage requires a multi-pronged approach -- companies must move beyond traditional hiring practices and prioritise continuous upskilling initiatives to cultivate internal talent.

₹ sinks 36 paise to close at 87.31 vs \$

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 10: The rupee depreciated by 36 paise to close at a week's low 87.31 against the US dollar Monday, due to volatile crude oil prices amid tariff uncertainties worldwide and unabated outflow of foreign funds. A weaker American currency failed to support the local unit as a sell-off in the domestic equity market hit the sentiment adversely, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened weak at 87.24 and touched the day's low of 87.36 amid intense volatility. The unit touched an intraday high of 87.16 before ending the session at 87.31 against the greenback, registering a loss of 36 paise from its previous closing level. Earlier, the domestic currency had recorded a steep single-day loss of 47 paise against the dollar February 25. On Friday, the rupee appreciated 17 paise to close at 86.95 against the US dollar.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.15 per cent at 103.65. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.28 per cent to USD 70.56 per barrel in futures trade.

On the global macroeconomic front, the US Labour Department data Friday showed increased hiring activity in February though the unemployment rate rose slightly to 4.1 per cent. Economists say the outlook remains cloudy with President Donald threatening a trade war and purging the federal workforce.

Rate cut hopes brighten



Inflation likely eased below 4% in Feb for the first time in six months, says Reuters poll

REUTERS

Bangalore, March 10: India's February consumer inflation likely eased below the Reserve Bank of India's medium-term target of 4.0% for the first time in six months on moderating food price rises, a Reuters poll showed, bolstering expectations of interest rate cuts. As fresh winter produce hit markets over the past few months, food items - which make up nearly half of the inflation basket - saw a sustained slowdown in price increases. That marked a welcome reprieve from supply disruptions last year when unpredictable monsoons and intense heat

We see a continued slowdown in vegetable price rises. The other, even more positive fact is that we are also seeing softness in pulse prices as well as cereals, which are the most sticky part of food inflation because their harvest season is not as frequent

GAURA SENGUPTA | CHIEF ECONOMIST, IDFC FIRST BANK

waves sent food prices soaring, often by double digits. A Reuters poll of 45 economists taken March 4-10 predicted inflation as measured by the annual change in the consumer price index fell to 3.98% in February from 4.31% in January. Forecasts for the data, set to be released March 12 at 1030 GMT, ranged from 3.40% to 4.65%, with nearly 70% of respondents expecting it to come in at or below the RBI's medium-term target of 4.0%. Only five predicted it would exceed January's reading. With inflation comfortably within the RBI's 2-6% target range, economists say the central bank is likely gearing up for another interest rate cut in April to support slowing economic growth, following a quarter-point reduction in February. Meanwhile, warnings from the India Meteorological Department, opens new tab that summer and heatwaves could start early have raised concerns that inflation could rise again once winter supplies start to run out. "We do expect the correction in vegetable prices to start reversing possibly as early as March, with risks from heatwaves and weather-related disruptions to crops," wrote Rahul Bajoria, India & ASEAN economist at Bank of America. His team projects headline CPI inflation at 4.8% this fiscal year but expects it to edge down to 4.1% in the next year, with risks evenly balanced from lower commodity prices and a weaker rupee. That's in line with predictions of 4.8% and 4.3% in a Reuters poll conducted last month. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile food and energy components, was expected to have inched up slightly to 3.82% year-on-year in February from January's estimated 3.70%.

Equities pare early gains to close lower



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 10: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty pared early gains to close lower in a volatile session Monday dragged by selling in industrials and oil & gas shares in the last hour. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 217.41 points or 0.29 per cent to settle at 74,115.17 with 22 of its constituents ending lower and eight with gains. The index opened higher and touched a high of 74,741.25 during the day. However, selling pressure emerged in the pre-close session pulling the index down by 310.34 points or 0.41 per cent to a low of 74,022.24. The Nifty of NSE declined by 92.20 points or 0.41 per cent to close at 22,460.30. From the 30 Sensex companies, IndusInd Bank, Zomato, Larsen & Toubro, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Reliance Industries, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Tech Mahindra and Tata Consultancy Services were among the laggards.

On the other hand, Power Grid, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys, Nestle India, Asian Paints, ITC, Sun Pharmaceuticals and ICICI Bank were the gainers. As many as 2,877 stocks declined while 1,203 advanced and 149 remained unchanged on the BSE. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms eroded by ₹4,43,269.25 crore to ₹3,93,85,818.73 crore (\$4.51 trillion). Meanwhile, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) off-loaded equities worth ₹2,035.10 crore, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) outnumbered the FIIs by acquiring equities worth ₹2,320.36 crore Friday, according to exchange data.

RBI to hold \$10bn worth forex swap March 24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 10: The Reserve Bank Monday said it will conduct a forex swap of \$10 billion later this month to inject liquidity into the banking system. The USD/INR Buy/Sell swap auction of \$10 billion for a tenor of thirty-six months will be conducted March 24, the RBI said in a statement. The swap will be in the nature of a simple buy/sell foreign exchange swap from the Reserve Bank. A bank shall

sell US dollars to the Reserve Bank and simultaneously agree to buy the same amount of US dollars at the end of the swap period. "The market participants would be required to place their bids in terms of the premium that they are willing to pay to the Reserve Bank for the tenor of the swap, expressed in paisa terms up to two decimal places," the central bank said. The auction cut-off would be based on the premium.



J&T Gems & Jewellery opens fifth showroom

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 10: J&T Gems & Jewellery has officially opened its fifth mega showroom in Patia. The showroom, covering 6,000 square feet, was inaugurated by the Mayor of Bhubaneswar, Sulochana Das, with local corporators Mihir Kumar Raut, Pritinanda Rautray, Monalisa Behera, and Amresh Jena also in attendance. Suresh Kumar Chowdhury, the Managing Director, emphasised the brand's commitment to outstanding customer service, competitive pricing, and exceptional



design. The company already operates showrooms in Jagamara, Master Canteen, Berhampur, and Balasore. The inauguration was further

graced by the presence of Director Madhusree Choudhury, Business Head Pramod Rath, and numerous customers and guests.

FESTIVE FASTS Swiggy launches 'Fasting Mode'

The feature will allow users to pause food notifications during fast

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: Swiggy Monday announced the launch of the "Fasting Mode" feature that offers users the flexibility to pause food notifications whenever they observe a fast. Starting with Ramzan and extending to other fasting periods such as Navratri, this feature does not interfere during fasting hours while keeping the platform ready for users when they need it, the company said in a statement. "Users can switch Fasting Mode on or off anytime from the Swiggy app. Once activated, food notifications will be



paused between Suhoor (pre-dawn) and 4 PM for all users observing fasting during Ramzan Notifications automatically resume after fasting hours, without users having to turn them back on," Swiggy stated. The mode shall continue to

be available throughout the year for various fasting occasions, giving users more flexibility in managing their food notifications. Earlier in February, the board of Swiggy has approved an investment of ₹1,000 crore in its wholly owned subsidiary, Scootsy Logistics Pvt, to support its business expansion. The investment will be made in one or more tranches through the subscription to a rights issue. The approved funds will be used for working capital and other capital expenditures as part of the company's business expansion plan.

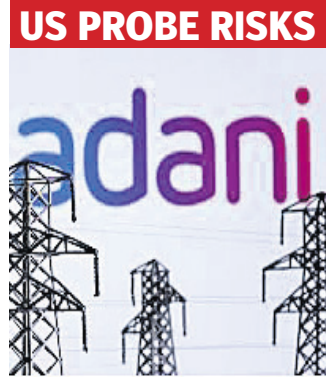
Fitch assigns negative outlook to Adani Energy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 10: Fitch Ratings has removed energy infrastructure company Adani Energy Solutions Ltd (AESL) from its 'Ratings Watch Negative' list, the first upgrade by an international ratings agency since the US indictment. Fitch affirmed AESL long-term foreign and local-currency issuer default ratings (IDRs) at 'BBB-'. "The ratings have been removed from Rating Watch Negative and assigned a Negative Outlook," it said in a statement. Fitch said it affirmed the ratings as the Adani group has demonstrated adequate funding access since the US indictment of certain board members of

another group entity, Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL), November 20, 2024. "We believe the risks associated with the group's liquidity and funding requirements have moderated," it said. "However, the outlook is negative to reflect our view that the proceedings and outcome of the US investigations could reveal that the group's corporate governance practices are weaker than we expected and lead to negative rating action in the near to medium term."

Fitch said it will monitor the investigations for any evidence of weakness in the entities' governance practices and internal controls, and the impact on AESL's financial flexibility. Since the US indictment of



and two other key executives in an alleged bribery scheme to win renewable energy supply contracts, the conglomerate has shown solid resilience with no compromise on the credit profile and business performance.

Fitch said the indictment for alleged securities and wire fraud reflects a corporate governance risk for AESL. A conviction or any indication of weaknesses in Adani group entities' governance practices and internal controls that may come to light as part of the process could put pressure on the ratings. The rating agency went on to add that AESL has demonstrated adequate funding access since the US indictment, having drawn ₹5,100 crore from onshore and offshore banking facilities. The group company, AGEL, has also raised onshore funding to refinance its \$1.1 billion construction-linked facility, which was due in March 2025.

Rohit junks retirement rumours

THE SKIPPER SAID HIS AGGRESSIVE APPROACH IN THE POWER PLAY SEGMENT WAS A DECISION TAKEN WITH A SPECIFIC AIM IN MIND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, March 10: India skipper Rohit Sharma Sunday dismissed the speculations about his career after winning the ICC Champions Trophy, saying that he is not quitting the ODI format anytime soon.

Since the tour of Australia, speculations were rife about Rohit's future in the team as well as his position as captain but a match-winning 76 in the final against New Zealand has given him a new lease of life.

"I am not going to retire from this (ODI) format. Going forward please don't spread rumours," Rohit said at the post-match press conference after India beat New Zealand by four wickets to clinch the trophy.

He was expectedly quizzed about his future plans and he said that things will remain as it is. "No future plans. Jo ho raha hain, woh chalta jayega (Whatever is happening will keep continuing)," Rohit added.

Rohit said his aggressive approach in the Power Play segment was a decision taken with a specific aim in mind.

The Mumbai man flew off the blocks in the first 10 overs making 49 before eventually getting out for a 83-ball 76.



"I haven't done anything different today as I have been doing in the last 3-4 matches. I know how important it is to make runs in Power Play because we have seen that after 10 overs, it becomes very difficult when the field spreads and spinners come."

The nature of the Dubai pitch too played its part in him adopting a quick fire approach to batting.

"It becomes tough also be-

I am not going to retire from this (ODI) format. Going forward please don't spread rumours

ROHIT SHARMA | SKIPPER, INDIA

cause the pitch is already slow. So, it is very important for you to take chances from the top.

"I pick the bowler and where I can charge him and where I can play the shot. In that, you may not see that many big runs.

Today after that 10 overs, I changed my game a bit. I had to play for a long time," he added.

However, Rohit admitted that contributing to the team's win as a batter was a very satisfying experience.

We learned from past mistakes: Kohli

Superstar Virat Kohli says lessons learned from tough defeats in past ICC knock-out games have paved the way for India's second major title in less than 12 months. India won the T20 World Cup in June last year and Sunday, they lifted the Champions Trophy for the third time. It was a total team effort from Rohit Sharma's men over the course of their campaign in the UAE.

"It's been a long time since we've had a Champions Trophy, and the format is really good. This was our aim. After a tough tour of Australia, we came here and won a big tournament, which has once again boosted our confidence as a team," Kohli told the host broadcaster. "Throughout the tournament, different players stepped up in different matches. There were moments in past tournaments where we weren't able to finish games or capitalise on crucial situations. But this time, we learned from those experiences." The experience of top orders and K L Rahul towards the end got India over the line in the final against New Zealand.

"That's why you back experienced players - they have faced these moments before, and when you apply those learnings and work hard, you get a chance to turn things around," Kohli said.

"The way KL (Rahul) finished in the last two matches is a testament to that experience. When you've been in those situations before and couldn't cross the line, there's always a desire to get another opportunity and overcome it. And that's exactly what we did."

CLOSING CEREMONY

PCB furious as ICC ignores officials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, March 10: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is set to register its protest with the ICC for ignoring its CEO and Champions Trophy tournament director Sumair Ahmed Syed during the event's closing ceremony in Dubai.

A source in the PCB said Monday that chairman Mohsin Naqvi was not satisfied with the explanation given by the ICC for not having Ahmed on stage at the presentation ceremony Sunday.

"The ICC, apparently, has said it had prepared for Mohsin Naqvi to be on stage so when he didn't show up for the final, they changed their plan," the source said.

India beat New Zealand by four wickets in the title clash.

The PCB has rejected this explanation and noted that the ICC had made a number of errors during the tournament regarding Pakistan's status as host nation.

This included changing the CT2025 logo in the live broadcasts feed of the India versus Bangladesh game and then playing the Indian national anthem in the Australia ver-

sus England match in Lahore. The ICC claimed due to a mix up with the playlist the Indian national anthem was played for a few seconds before the error was corrected.

BCCI president Roger Binny presented the white jackets to India players and the medals to match officials, while ICC chairman Jay Shah handed the trophy to skipper Rohit Sharma and gave the medals to the winners.

BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia and New Zealand Cricket's CEO Roger Twose were also present on stage.

Meanwhile, the PCB chairman has extended his gratitude to his team, law enforcement agencies, provincial governments, ICC officials and the visiting teams for the success of the tournament.

"Your commitment and collective efforts ensured the seamless execution of the prestigious tournament," he said on his social media handle.

"Pakistan takes immense pride in hosting the Champions trophy and making it a spectacle for cricket fans worldwide."



RAHUL EXCELS IN NEW ROLE

KL Rahul is delighted after successfully migrating to No 6 batting slot, and termed it as a result of his unrelenting "preparation" and improving his game constantly. Rahul, who usually bat No 5, was pushed down a position lower in the Champions Trophy, and made 140 runs in four innings here. "It's really pleasing for me. The work that I'm putting in to different roles requires a lot of preparation, work outside the cricket field, thinking about how I need to take each game and how I need to perform in different situations and watch some of the players that bat at 5, 6 and how they've been successful," said Rahul following India's Champions Trophy triumph on Sunday. Rahul said he was happy to take up that new responsibility for the team. "I've been taught from a very early age by my coaches that cricket is a team game and whatever the team requires of you, you need to be able to accept that and find a way to put in performances for the team and understand what your role is, understand what the responsibility is, understand what it takes to be successful batting in different positions," he added. True to those words, Rahul adapted well to the situation in the semifinal against Australia and in the final against New Zealand, producing small yet significant knocks.



Max bids for 5th and Hamilton aims for 8th

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, March 10: Lando Norris will have to defy plenty of history to win the Formula 1 title this year. There's his friend-turned-rival Max Verstappen's bid for a fifth title in a row. Just like the only driver to achieve that feat, Michael Schumacher, Verstappen is a hard racer who isn't afraid to bend the rules — as Norris knows from bitter experience.

Then there's Lewis Hamilton, the seven-time champion going for a record eighth title in 2025. It's his first season with Ferrari, which is itching to end a wait for a drivers' title going back to 2007.

Ever since beating Hamilton to the 2021 title in a race that's still controversial, Verstappen has been F1's man to beat.

He's long been clear he doesn't want to stay in F1 into his 40s like Hamilton or Fernando Alonso, so could motivation be a factor in the Dutch driver's bid for a fifth title Verstappen says last season — when he tested Norris to the limit and sometimes beyond — shows he's still hungry.

My motivation is there because I think already last year it was not straightforward, Verstappen said. We had of course good wins, but I guess not as many as we would have liked, but we still won the championship.

Another title for Hamilton would break a tie with Schumacher for the most in F1 history.

The British driver proclaimed himself invigorated at F1's glitzy season launch. Expectations from Ferrari's tifosi fans are so high that he could finally bring success to the Italian team that some cut down a tree to better watch Hamilton test the new SF-25 car.

I know what a winning team looks and feels like, he said last month. The passion here is like nothing you've ever seen. They've got absolutely every ingredient they need to win a world championship. And it's just about putting all the pieces together.

CWG Federation rebranded as Commonwealth Sport

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, March 10: The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) has changed its name to Commonwealth Sports under the 'More in Common' brand campaign. The announcement was made on the occasion of Commonwealth Day, an annual celebration of the Commonwealth of Nations held on the second Monday in March.

Commonwealth Day also marks the date we transition from a Sports Federation to a Sport Movement, Commonwealth Sport becoming our public name, the governing body said in a statement.

Katie Sadleir, CEO, Commonwealth Sport said, "The evolution to a Movement that is Commonwealth Sport allows us to demonstrate a stronger, more unified purpose that resonates with our audience on a deeper level."

"It will help us more clearly communicate our role of not only delivering the powerful platform of the Commonwealth Games — which allows us to share success and transform inspiration into



impact — but also championing the exceptional work that goes on across our 74 nations and territories every day.

"This transformation enables greater collaboration, more impactful messaging, and an amplified sense of belonging for those who align with our cause, she added. The Commonwealth Sport logo with its celebration mark has been in use for some time. The three coloured V shapes represent our three values, Humanity, Equality, and Destiny, rising to the six points representing our six Regions of Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, and Oceania, reflecting the rich diversity of our cultures, coming together through the power of sport," she added.

Shuttlers face tough challenge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, March 10: Grappling with injuries, health setbacks and poor form, Indian shuttlers will face one of their toughest challenges when they aim to capture the elusive All England Championships beginning here Tuesday.

Since Prakash Padukone's historic win in 1980 and Pullela Gopichand's triumph in 2001, no Indian has managed to capture the coveted All England title — one of the sport's most prestigious crowns after the Olympics and World Championships.

In the past two decades, Indian badminton has soared to new heights, with stars like PV Sindhu, Saina Nehwal, and Kidambi Srikanth claiming major titles. However, none have been able to conquer the All England Championships, despite their numerous successes on the world stage.

Saina and Lakshya Sen came close in 2015 and 2022, finishing as runners-up, while Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand reached the semifinals in consecutive editions. Every year,



the Indian contingent sets its sights on this historic title, and yet, the elusive crown continues to slip through their grasp.

This year, the challenge will be even greater as India's top shuttlers arrive in Birmingham with a host of difficulties, including injury concerns and inconsistent form.

After a disappointing Paris Olympics, the Indian shuttlers struggled to get off the mark in 2025. Sindhu faced injury woes, HS Prannoy made a slow recovery from a bout of chikungunya, Lakshya Sen has battled poor form, and Satwiksairaj

Rankireddy is coping with the loss of his father who died last month. Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medallist, is back after recovering from a hamstring injury that forced her withdrawal from last month's Asia Mixed Team Championships.

The 29-year-old, who hired Indonesian coach Irwansyah Adi Pratama in January, will face Korea's Ga Eun Kim in the opening round. A potential second-round clash against China's Han Yue awaits, with Indonesia's Gregoria Mariska Tunjung likely to challenge her in the quarterfinals.

Lakshya, who was fourth at the Paris Olympics, enjoyed a semifinal run in the previous edition of the All England but has struggled in the new season with two first-round exits and a second-round finish.

The 23-year-old, who claimed bronze at the 2021 World Championships, will open his campaign against Japan's Koki Watanabe. A victory could set up a showdown with Indonesia's Jonatan Christie in the second round.

Prannoy, who has slipped to World No 30 after a tough year, is yet to progress beyond the second round in 2025. The 32-year-old, who was hampered by chikungunya ahead of the Paris Olympics, will open his campaign against France's Toma Junior Popov.

In men's doubles, Asian Games champions Satwiksairaj and Chirag Shetty, who are seeded 7th, have been India's most consistent performers, with strong showings at Malaysia and India Opens this year. The Indian duo will open against Denmark's Daniel Lundgaard and Mads Vestergaard.

Govt asks IPL to ban promoting intoxications

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 10: The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) has asked officials at the Indian Premier League to ban all forms of tobacco and alcohol advertisements from upcoming sports events.

Notably, the letter by Atul Goel, Director General of Health Services urges Arun Singh Dhumal, Chairperson, IPL, to regulate tobacco and alcohol advertisements including surrogate advertisements and sales during the upcoming cricket season, slated to begin March 22.

The ban extends both to stadium premises as well as a live telecast on television.

The IPL being India's most viewed sports event, direct or



indirect promotion of tobacco alcohol on any platform linked to sports sends a contradictory message to the public about health and fitness," said Goel, in the letter, dated March 5.

He cited that tobacco and alcohol are significantly responsible for the rising burden of non-communicable diseases in the country. "Cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic lung disease, diabetes, hypertension,

etc. account for more than 70 per cent of deaths annually.

Tobacco and alcohol use are key risk factors for NCDs. "India ranks second in tobacco-related deaths worldwide; with nearly 14 lakh annual deaths while alcohol is the most common psychoactive substance used by Indians," the health ministry official said.

The letter, also marked to the Board of Control for Cricket in India, asked IPL officials to "strictly implement" the regulations to ban all forms of tobacco/alcohol advertising, including surrogate advertisements, "within the stadium premises where the games and related IPL games events are held as well as during telecast sessions on national television".

The sale of tobacco or alcohol products must also be regulated "in all affiliated events and sports facilities". The letter also sought to "discourage the promotion of sportspersons (including commentators) who directly or indirectly endorse products directly or indirectly linked to alcohol or tobacco".

The letter stated that "cricket players are role models for the youngsters" and that promoting tobacco or alcohol products by them can have a poor impact on youngsters' minds.

Instead, they should promote "a healthy, active lifestyle". Goel asked IPL to share a "social and moral obligation to promote public health and support health initiatives of the government".

ADVANI FIGHTS BACK TO SEAL HAT-TRICK



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 10: Star cueist Pankaj Advani pulled off a stunning comeback to complete a hat-trick of titles at the Rs 13.5 lakh CCI Snooker classic tournament with an 8-6 win over Ishpreet Chadha in the best-of-15-frame final here.

Advani, the reigning National and Asian snooker champion, triumphed 15-57, 26-101,

18-75, 100-25, 36-93, 118-0, 59-68, 45-77, 64-47, 93-72, 70-60, 75-32, 73-32, 75-47 in a hard-fought final played over three gruelling sessions late Sunday night.

In a high-octane summit clash at the CCI Club, Chadha, who is currently competing on the World Snooker Tour (WST), was in complete control right from the start. His confident potting saw him race to a 4-1 lead. Needing eight frames for victory, Chadha was already halfway there. He looked poised to claim the prestigious title.

Advani, uncharacteristically struggling to find his rhythm, faced an uphill battle. However, he slowly clawed his way back into the match.