



### Aneet’s confession

Actor Aneet Padda admits she sent cold emails to 50-70 production houses during the Covid-19 pandemic

LEISURE | P2



### Everest blizzard

One hiker was killed while 137 others, stranded after a blizzard on the Tibetan slopes of Mt Everest, were rescued Monday

INTERNATIONAL | P10



### Gold price soars

Gold price skyrockets by ₹9,700 to scale a fresh peak of ₹1,30,300, amid safe heaven purchase in overseas markets

BUSINESS | P11



### Triple gold for Pramod

Pramod Bhagat continues his outstanding form at the 1st Abia Para Badminton International 2025, securing three gold medals

SPORTS | P12

## Eight arrested for Cuttack violence

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Oct 6:** Eight people were arrested Monday in connection with the violence in Cuttack, where a 12-hour bandh was held amid heavy security deployment with prohibitory orders in place, officials said.

Speaking to reporters, Commissioner of Police S Dev Datta Singh said three cases were registered and eight people were arrested in connection with Sunday’s attack on police by VHP activists.

“The situation is under control,” he said.

Senior police officer Amarenda Panda and Cuttack DCP Khilari Rishikesh Dnyandeo were among the 25 people injured in the attack. Panda was admitted to the ICU of the SCB Medical College and Hospital, officials said.

Police said raids were continuing in different parts of the city after some of the “mis-chief mongers” were identified through CCTV footage.

Clashes broke out in the early hours of Saturday near Haathi Pokhari in the Daragh-abazar area as locals objected to loud music being played in immersion processions. What started as an argument soon escalated, leading to the hurling of stones and glass bottles. Six people, including Dnyandeo, were injured in the clashes.

Meanwhile, the suspension of internet services has been extended till 7pm October 7, according to a notification issued by the Home department Monday. The suspension will be effective in areas under the Cuttack Municipal Corporation, CDA area, and the 42 Mouza region.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



### SHORT TAKES

#### Bengal BJP MP, MLA hurt in mob attack

**Nagrakata:** West Bengal’s BJP MP Khagen Murmu and MLA Sankar Ghosh were injured in an attack by a mob during their visit to the flood and landslide-hit Dooars region in the northern part of the state, triggering a fresh political storm. Following the confrontation that took place in Nagrakata area of Jalpaiguri district, BJP accused the ruling Trinamool Congress of orchestrating the attack to silence dissent in the region calling the incident another example of “TMC’s jungle raj”. **P9**

#### French PM steps down

**Paris:** Just a day after naming his government and after less than a month in office, France’s new Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu resigned Monday, owing to widespread criticism regarding his choice of ministers in the new Cabinet. The French presidency said in a statement that President Emmanuel Macron has accepted his resignation. Lecornu’s choice of ministers had been criticised across the political spectrum, particularly his decision to bring back former finance minister Bruno Le Maire to serve at the Defence ministry. **P10**

## PREVENTING FLARE-UP



Security personnel patrol in Dargha Bazaar area of Cuttack, Monday, after 25 people including policemen were injured in violent clashes that broke out over some disputes during Durga idol immersion

PHOTO: MANOJ KUMAR JENA

## Nuapada bypoll Nov 11

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** The Election Commission Monday announced that the bypoll to the Nuapada Assembly constituency will be held November 11.

Addressing a presser here, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) RS Gopalan said that the results of the byelection will be announced November 14.

He said a formal gazette notification for the bypoll will be issued October 13.

“Candidates can file their nominations on or before October 20, while the nomination papers will be scrutinised October 22. The entire election process will be completed by November 16,” the CEO added.

Gopalan said that the model code of conduct (MCC) will come into force with immediate effect in Nuapada district.

Candidates with criminal antecedents are required to publish information in this regard in newspapers and through television channels on three occasions during the campaign period, he said.

Similarly, political parties are also required to publish information about criminal background of its candidates thrice, the CEO said.

He said, “The constituency has an electorate of 2,48,256,

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Nuapada constituency has an electorate of 2,48,256. However, the final electoral roll will be published by October 10
- A total of 358 polling stations will be set up for the bypoll
- Electors will not be able to take their mobile phones inside the polling booths

including 1,26,132 lakh female voters. However, the final electoral roll will be published by October 10.”

There are 2,007 electors aged above 85 years and their votes will be collected from their doorstep through postal ballot, he said.

A total of 358 polling stations will be set up for the bypoll.

“The polling booths will be set up in such a manner that

no booth will have more than 1,200 voters,” he added.

The CEO said that webcasting will be conducted in all booths across Nuapada during the bypoll. Adequate number of electronic voting machines (EVMs) and VVPATs have been made available in the constituency.

Electors will not be able to take their cellphones inside the polling booths while casting their votes. Dedicated facilities will be made to store the mobile phones of the voters outside the polling booths. Only the polling officer can take a mobile phone inside the booth, he added.

The byelection to the Nuapada Assembly constituency was necessitated by the death of MLA Rajendra Dholakia September 8 due to health-related issues.

Dholakia was a four-time MLA from Nuapada seat, having been elected to the state Assembly in 2004, 2009, 2019 and 2024.

### BIHAR POLLS NOV 6, 11

**E**lections to 243-member Bihar Assembly will be held in two phases – November 6 and 11, while the counting of votes will be conducted November 14. CEC Gyanesh Kumar announced Monday. The entire election process will be completed by November 16. “Bihar elections will be held in two phases November 6 and 11. Counting of votes will be done November 14,” Kumar said at a press conference. “It is mandatory to complete counting of postal ballots before the last two rounds of counting of votes,” he added. While 121 Assembly constituencies will go to the polls in the first phase, voting will be held in 122 constituencies in the second phase. **MORE P9**

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday launched projects worth over Rs 1,100 crore for Nuapada, hours before a byelection was announced for the Assembly constituency.

He also announced upgradation of Khariar Road Notified Area Council (NAC) into a municipality, and the formation of two more NACs. The CM laid the foundation stone for projects worth about Rs 1,101 crore. A total of Rs 802 crore was announced for the development of irrigation in Nuapada and Rs 75 crore for welfare projects.

Addressing a public meeting



CM Mohan Charan Majhi during Nuapada visit

at Mini Stadium in Nuapada, he said that focus on the irrigation project indicated that the BJP government was committed to the welfare of farmers.

The CM also announced the establishment of seven new sub-registrar offices in the state, of which three are in Nuapada district. **MORE P3**

## Wangchuk detention: SC notice to Centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** The Supreme Court Monday sought response from the Centre and Union Territory of Ladakh on a plea filed by Sonam Wangchuk’s wife Gitanjali J Angmo challenging the climate activist’s detention under National Security Act (NSA), and seeking his immediate release.

However, a bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and NV Anjaria refused to pass any order on providing grounds of deten-

tion to Wangchuk’s wife and posted the matter for hearing October 14. Wangchuk is lodged in Jodhpur jail in Rajasthan.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Angmo, sought directions from the apex court that the grounds of detention should be served on her.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that the grounds of detention have been served on the detainee. Mehta stated that there is no legal requirement for the grounds of detention to be given to the wife.

## 3 share Medicine Nobel for immune discoveries

REUTERS

**Stockholm, Oct 6:** American scientists Mary Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell and Shimon Sakaguchi from Japan won the 2025 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine Monday for their discoveries in peripheral immune tolerance, creating openings for possible new autoimmune disease and cancer treatments.

This year’s prize “relates to how we keep our immune system under control so we can fight all imaginable microbes and still avoid autoimmune disease”, said Marie Wahren-Herlenius, a rheumatology professor at the Karolinska Institute.

Speaking to reporters outside his university laboratory, Sakaguchi said, “I feel it is a



Mary E. Brunkow Fred Ramsdell Shimon Sakaguchi

tremendous honour.”

The winners for medicine are selected by the Nobel Assembly of Sweden’s Karolinska Institute medical university and receive a prize sum of 11

million Swedish crowns (\$1.2 million), as well as a gold medal presented by Sweden’s king.

Brunkow is senior programme manager at the Institute for Systems Biology

in Seattle, while Ramsdell is scientific adviser at Sonoma Biotherapeutics in San Francisco, which he co-founded. Sakaguchi is a professor at Osaka University in Ja-

### IN A NUTSHELL

- Scientists’ work relates to ‘how we keep immune systems under control’
- Work spurred development of treatments in areas such as cancer, autoimmune disease
- Brunkow and Ramsdell based in the United States, Sakaguchi in Japan
- Physics Nobel to be announced Tuesday

pan. “Their discoveries have laid the foundation for a new field of research and spurred the development of new treatments, for example for cancer and autoimmune diseases,” the prize-awarding body said in a statement.

The laureates identified so-called regulatory T cells, which act as the immune system’s security guards that keep immune cells from attacking our own body, it added.

After announcing the winners, the institute’s Thomas Perlmann said he had only been able to break the news to one of the three, reaching Sakaguchi by phone at his lab.

“He sounded incredibly grateful, expressed that it was a fantastic honour and he was quite taken by the news,” added Perlmann.

## BJP leader gunned down in Berhampur

POST NEWS NETWORK

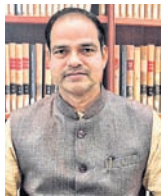
**Berhampur, Oct 6:** A senior lawyer and BJP leader Pitabas Panda was shot dead here Monday night, triggering shock and unrest in the Silk City. The incident drew strong reactions from the legal fraternity.

Police arrived at the scene and launched an investigation. Upon receiving the news, Transport Minister Bibhuti Bhushan Jena visited the MKCG Medical College and Hospital to console Panda’s family.

According to reports, around 9pm, Panda was near his residence in Baikuntha Nagar when two assailants wearing helmets arrived on a motorcycle and opened fire. He was shot in the chest and collapsed at the spot. He was rushed to MKCG Medical College and Hospital, where doctors pronounced him dead.

Panda was a member of the State Bar Council and a leader of the saffron party in Ganjam district. Earlier, he had served as a member of the Pradesh Congress and as the district president of the Labour Union.

Following his death, minister Jena, along with several BJP leaders and workers, and members of the Ganjam Lawyers’ Association, visited MKCG Medical College to pay their last respect.





# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Today people will actually drag you into altercations, so flash the peace sign if you must. You may face some sort of legal troubles from peace-loving groups. Therefore, Ganesha advises you to meditate, take a walk or just seek out the company of your near and dear ones.

**TAURUS**  
Today, you need to take hold of your emotions. Ganesha urges you to get carried away by your feelings. Instead, you should try to maintain a practical, sensible frame of mind. Women are like to feature prominently in your life during the day. Try to be magnanimous and open hearted.

**GEMINI**  
An extremely profitable and progressive day awaits you. You may come into a handsome inheritance. Your responsibilities will increase along with a possible promotion at work. However, do not let your success go to your head, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
Ganesha advises you to watch your back today. However, he wants to make it clear that you may be at the receiving end of others' actions. Anyway, your cautious and watchful approach will save you from needless discomfiture. In short, life will teach you priceless and precious lessons today, predicts Ganesha.

**LEO**  
You have to let go of your stubborn and obstinate streak. You will need to compromise according to the situation. If you do not have such an attitude, arguments and confrontations with your business partners, friends and family members are possible. You do not like delays, however you will be forced to postpone important events, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
You are quick-witted, sharp and artistic to the core, says Ganesha, so you may go ahead and enrapture people with your special abilities, perhaps at a social gathering. However, Ganesha says it would be better if you could conserve some of that enthusiasm in order to focus your attention on issues of greater importance.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says you will be able to show your love and appreciation for your beloved. Small issues will crop up and keep you tensed and uncomfortable today. Just remember good days and old memories and life will seem good again. It is essential to have confidence in yourself if you want to go ahead in life and be happy.

**SCORPIO**  
According to Ganesha, it's a good day for long term and real estate investments. It may lead to benefits and profits in long run. Sit back, relax and enjoy the pleasures of life before you miss out on them. Welcome all the opportunities with open arms.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
The wheel of fortune turns towards you today, says Ganesha. Make a wish and it's bound to come true. However don't be over-confident when it comes to decision-making. In case of disappointments, 'this too shall pass' would be the best remedy.

**CAPRICORN**  
Overcome with feelings, you may take decisions that may stand in the way of success. Don't let your sentiments ruin your future prospects because the damage done will be beyond repair, warns Ganesha. Today, there are also chances that your down-to-earth nature and amiable approach will win the hearts of many.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will be on a spending spree today. But, make sure that your desire to enjoy life doesn't burn a hole in your pocket. Watch your words and steps, as people are observing your every move. You have put all of your eggs in one basket, so make sure that you don't mess up and lose everything that you have, advises Ganesha.

**PISCES**  
Today your professional and love life will cause worry. You will want to be emotionally balanced but you may not find the time to sort things out. Long sightedness and open discussions will help resolve matters easily.



## HOLLYWOOD STILL DOMINATED BY MEN, FEELS JULIA ROBERTS

Oscar-winning actress Julia Roberts feels Hollywood is a male-dominated environment after all her years in the film industry. Roberts said that she can relate to her character Alma Imhoff in the new movie *After the Hunt*, who claims she had to be successful in a "deeply misogynist" world to become a professor at Yale University.

## TAYLOR SWIFT WON'T TRAVEL TO SPACE

Space travel may seem to be the next big step in mainstream tourism but, pop icon Taylor Swift is not really excited about the idea of going into space. The singer insists there is no reason why she should travel to space as she finds it so 'scary', reports *Female First UK*.



## Shraddha leaves fans speculating

**Mumbai:** Shraddha Kapoor recently turned heads on social media by sharing a set of radiant, sun-drenched pictures accompanied by a cheeky message that left fans speculating about the identity of the person behind the lens.

Posting her weekend snapshots on Instagram, Shraddha captioned them, "*Kuch zyada lucky nahi ho gaya photo kheenchne vaala*," followed by a laughing emoji. The gesture didn't go unnoticed as many took the caption and her affectionate tone as a playful nod toward someone close.

Rumours linking Shraddha to Rahul Mody have circulated for months. While neither of them has officially confirmed their relationship, fans have often noticed Shraddha sharing posts with cryptic captions and even spotted her wearing an "R" pendant, which many believe hints at her rumoured beau.

On the professional front, Shraddha is slated to collaborate with director Laxman Utekar on a period drama produced by Dinesh Vijan's team, expected to commence filming by November. Additionally, she has inked a multi-film deal with Ekta Kapoor and is attached to a drama project with Rahi Anil Barve, known for his work on *Tumbbad*.

As fans gush over her latest sunlit pics and cryptic caption, all eyes remain on whether the "lucky" photographer will be revealed—or whether the mystery will continue to spark speculation.

AGENCIES

## Aneet on her cold emails

**Mumbai:** *Saiyaara* fame Aneet Padda's journey into acting was never just a hobby—it was a calling. Yet, the path to pursuing her passion was anything but straightforward. Adolescence brought self-doubt, compounded by a lack of encouragement from friends and even her father, who had once dreamed of acting himself. "For the longest time, I told myself 'you are so silly for even wanting to do anything about this'. I stopped dreaming for a while," Padda admits, reflecting on the moments she nearly let go of her aspirations.

At 17, however, she resolved to take control. With a mixture of determination and humour, Aneet began practising lines with friends—though she soon realised she had the strongest creative chemistry with herself. Her persistence led her down the often confusing rabbit hole of online auditions. "I ended up on shady websites that were basically scams," she laughs, recalling the early days of her pursuit. During the pandemic, Padda sent cold emails to 50–70 production houses, often attaching "horrible biodata and Snapchat filter pictures." Through trial and error, she learned the crucial role casting agencies play in negotiating opportunities for aspiring actors.

Speaking of the professional front, the young actress is reportedly headlining the next instalment of Maddock's horror-comedy universe, *Shakti Shalini*, replacing Kiara Advani.

AGENCIES



## Sharvari teams up with Ahaan

**Mumbai:** Actress Sharvari has signed the dotted lines to star opposite Ahaan Panday in filmmaker Ali Abbas Zafar's upcoming yet-untitled action romance.

A source close to the agency confirmed the news: "With *Saiyaara* creating history at the box office, Ahaan Panday is today, the biggest Gen Z male actor of our country. Sharvari was also a part of a Rs. 100 crore blockbuster *Munhya*."

The source added: "You have two fantastic actors who have proved that sheer acting talent can pull people to theatres."

As per the source: "This excites big film-makers like Ali Abbas Zafar to make a young film that has romance at its core but is also an

The source said that it is fresh, it is new and it is really exciting to see youngsters on screen today.

"Ali has two of the best actors with him now for his vision to create a young action romance that is rooted in its emotions."

The yet untitled film will be the fifth collaboration of Aditya Chopra and Ali Abbas Zafar after *Mere Brother Ki Dulhan*, *Gunday*, *Sultan*, and *Tiger Zinda Hai*.

AGENCIES



action entertainer. After decades, you have debutants and young actors with box office credibility."

## Saif gets candid

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan addressed his experiences of working alongside intimate partners and explained why he believes such collaborations often do not go smoothly. In a recent conversation with *Esquire India*, Saif, who shared the screen with his wife Kareena Kapoor Khan in a number of films, said that collaborating with "wives and girlfriends" is rarely a good creative formula.

Over time, Saif said he realized his working style thrives on "healthy competition, riffing off his co-stars."

"That's why working with wives and girlfriends is not a good idea," he noted.

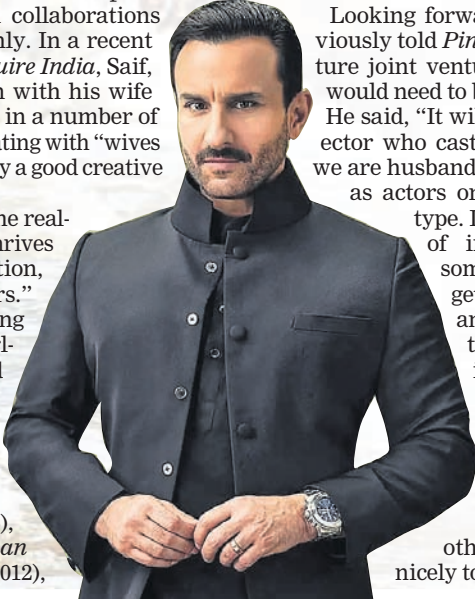
Though Saif has acted with Kareena in films such as *LOC Kargil* (2003), *Omkaara* (2006), *Tashan* (2008), *Kurbaan* (2009), *Agent Vinod* (2012),

and *Roadside Romeo* (voiceover, 2008), he points out that he never shared a project with his ex-wife Amrita Singh.

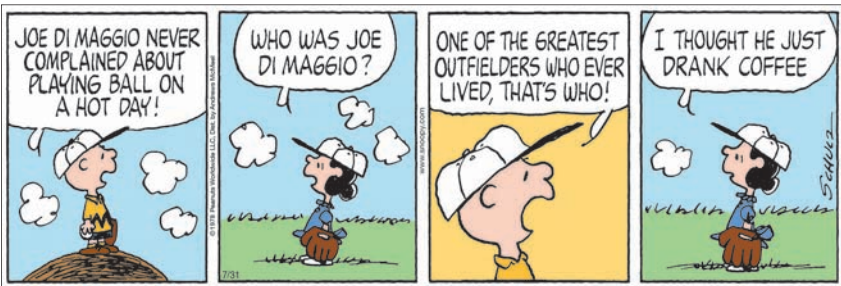
Looking forward, Saif had previously told *Pinkvilla* that any future joint venture with Kareena would need to be director-driven. He said, "It will have to be a director who casts us, not because we are husband and wife, but just as actors or casts us against

type. It will require a lot of imagination from somebody – they must get it absolutely right and also think out of the box for it to be interesting for both of us. Kareena and I are both working people, and I think to keep life interesting, it is nice to work with other people and live nicely together."

AGENCIES



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS



## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



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### Across

- Northern seabirds
- Mystiques
- Restricted
- Come out on top
- Video store section (3-2)
- Trap
- Require
- Fellow
- Tell tales
- Anzio locale

- Yoga class item
- Roam
- Valuable fur
- Is generous

### Down

- Treasure map distances
- Cone bearer
- Picture
- Noble metal
- Peruvian peaks
- Like sushi

- Earnest
- Word with ear or peace
- Top dog
- Go-getters
- Port-au-Prince native
- Cured
- Quarrel
- Abominable snowmen
- Spa spot
- Aardvark's tidbit

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

## 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.

6					3			
8	9					1	4	
		1				8	6	
		8			5			7
			7	8				
	2			4				
	7				9	6		1
				7		4		
		6	2				8	

## SOLUTIONS

### CROSSWORD

B	R	A	W	L	E	D		D	E	P	O	T
R	M	E	O		I	E	A					
E	M	O	T	I	O	N		V	I	R	A	L
W	U		K	O		I	A	L				
S	H	R	E	W		E	A	T	A	W	A	Y
			I	Y								
D	E	L	E	T	E		G	U	N	G	H	O
E	A		S		S							
E	R	R	A	T	I	C		E	A	V	E	S
P	C		I	R		I	C					
F	I	E	N	D		I	M	P	R	O	V	E
R	N	E	B		I	L	N					
Y	O	Y	O	S		E	L	E	G	A	N	T

### SUDOKU

1	6	2	8	5	7	3	9	4
3	9	5	4	6	1	2	8	7
7	4	8	2	3	9	1	6	5
9	3	1	5	8	2	4	7	6
8	5	7	1	4	6	9	2	3
6	2	4	7	9	3	8	5	1
2	7	3	6	1	8	5	4	9
5	8	9	3	7	4	6	1	2
4	1	6	9	2	5	7	3	8



# downtown

## CM FOR BALANCED DEVPT OF ALL REGIONS

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Monday reaffirmed his government's commitment to ensuring balanced development across all regions of the state.

"The Odisha government is equally focused on the progress of both remote and developed areas," Majhi said while addressing a public meeting in western Odisha's Nuapada, where he announced 957 projects worth over Rs 1,100 crore.

"For years, people in backward and remote areas have complained of regional disparity. Our government is ensuring that every region receives equal attention," he said.

Majhi said Western Odisha Development Council has been strengthened with enhanced funding and separate development councils for northern and southern Odisha will also be established soon.

The CM also said that industrial development in every district was being prioritised to ensure balanced growth across the state.

Responding to a longstanding local demand, Majhi announced that Khariar Road has been declared a municipality, while Komna block has been granted NAC (Notified Area Council) status.

Similarly, Sinapali NAC has been formed by merging Sinapali and Godal gram panchayats.



It was Majhi's third visit to Nuapada. Earlier, he had attended the Maraguda Mahotsav in April and inaugurated projects worth Rs 320 crore. With Monday's announcement, he has launched projects worth Rs 1,420 crore for the district.

Reiterating his government's concern for kendu leaf pluckers, the CM said he personally attended the recent GST Council meeting and proposed a reduction in GST on kendu leaves. "Acting on this, the Central government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reduced the GST rate from

18 per cent to 5 per cent, benefiting millions of kendu leaf workers across the country," Majhi said.

The CM also announced that sub-registrar offices will be opened in all tehsils across the state. Of the 317 tehsils, 210 already have such offices, while the remaining 107 will soon be covered. In the first phase, new sub-registrar offices have been opened in seven tehsils—three in Nuapada and four in Malkangiri.

Highlighting the district's performance in welfare programmes, the chief minister

said 1.55 lakh women have benefited from the Subhadra Yojana, and 2,548 families are receiving houses under the Antyodaya scheme. Nuapada has also been declared a single-use plastic-free district, and under the 'plant a tree for a girl child' initiative, newborn girls and their parents are being honoured.

He added that Nuapada ranks first in the state by employing over 60,000 workers daily under MGNREGA.

The public grievance redressal programme, Majhi said, has also been extended to the pan-

chayat level.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling, School and Mass Education and ST & SC Development Minister Nityananda Gond, and Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Minister Rabi Narayan Naik also addressed the gathering.

Opposition BJD, meanwhile, strongly criticised the chief minister's visit to Nuapada and announcement of development projects just a few hours before the implementation of the Model Code of Conduct.

"The CM is busy in the election campaign at Nuapada even as heavy rainfall has affected other parts of the state," BJD vice president Sanjay Das Burma told reporters here.

BJD women wing president Snehangini Chhuria claimed that former CM Naveen Patnaik had earlier declared Sinapali as NAC.

"There is a smell of politics in deleting Sinapali's name in the first phase of the list of NACs and adding it now," she said, adding that Nuapada was made a district in 1993 by Biju Patnaik.

BJD leaders from Bhubaneswar have been camping in Nuapada and state Congress president Bhakta Charan Das also addressed a 'Nyay Samavesh' there Monday.

No political party, however, has so far announced the names of candidates for the upcoming bypoll.

### WELCOMING GODDESS OF FORTUNE

Laxmi puja begins at Saheed Nagar in Bhubaneswar, Monday



## BJD demands CBI probe into SI recruitment scam

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Monday staged a protest in Bhubaneswar demanding a CBI probe into alleged irregularities in the recruitment of police sub-inspectors (SIs) in Odisha.

The written examination for recruitment of SIs was postponed by the Odisha Police Recruitment Board (OPRB) after Berhampur police arrested several people, including 114 aspirants, from Odisha-Andhra Pradesh border September 30.

Police said the candidates were allegedly on their way to an undisclosed location in the neighbouring state for 'special coaching' ahead of the exam scheduled for October 5-6.

According to police sources, each candidate had allegedly agreed to pay Rs 25 lakh for one SI post, with Rs 10 lakh paid in advance and the remaining Rs 15 lakh to be paid after appointment.

Holding banners, posters and placards and raising slogans against the BJP government in the state, hundreds of BJD members took out a protest march from Master Canteen to Lower PMG demanding a CBI probe into the alleged recruitment scam.

When the BJD members tried to break barricades, police prevented them from moving forward leading to a scuffle among the protestors and the security personnel.

Several BJD leaders and workers have been detained, a

police officer said.

Alleging that the state government was playing with the future of youths, BJD leader Pritiranjan Gharai demanded that the government hand over the case to the Central agency to give justice to students and youths.

"The BJP government has asked the Crime Branch (CB) to investigate the case so as to protect the big names involved in the scam," he alleged.

Alleging that many senior government officials are involved in the scam, BJD women wing president Snehangini Chhuria claimed that each SI post was 'sold for Rs 25 lakh'.

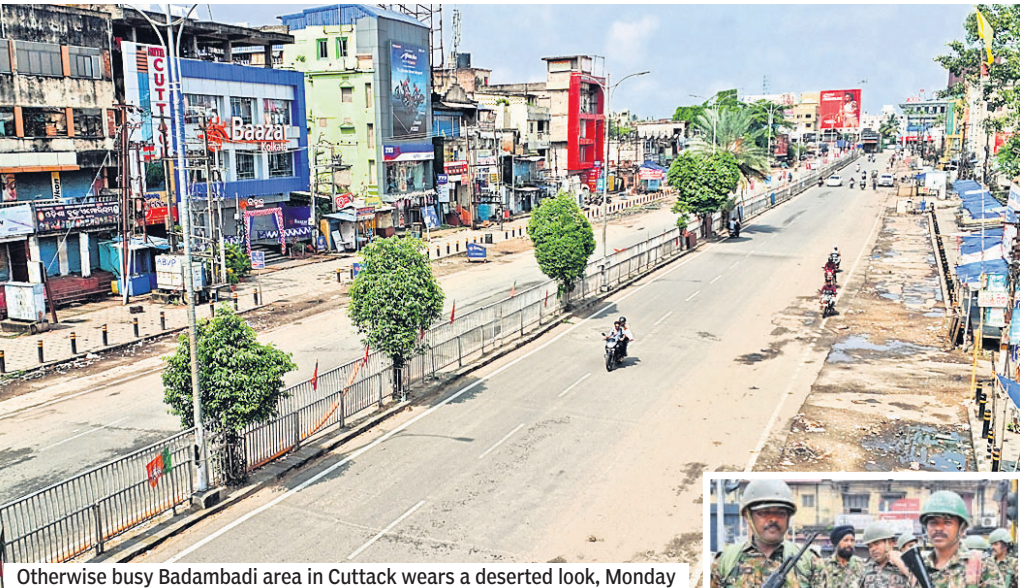
"Not just SI posts, all job recruitments during the BJP regime were sold. It has now become a 'cash-for-job' situation in Odisha, which is unfortunate and condemnable," she alleged.

BJD youth wing president Chinmaya Sahu said, "It was an organised recruitment scam. Even the police department is involved in it. Only a CBI probe can expose the whole scam."

Responding to the allegations, BJP Yuva Morcha president Abhilash Panda referred to a 2022 job fraud case in Balasore during the BJD government's tenure. "Three years ago, Balasore police had detained several job aspirants along with the middlemen. However, all the candidates were allowed to go. But, this time, police arrested all candidates involved in the irregularities of SI recruitment," he said.

### CUTTACK VIOLENCE

## 8 held; internet suspension extended



PNN & AGENCIES

**Cuttack, Oct 6:** Eight people were arrested Monday in connection with the violence in Cuttack, where a 12-hour bandh was underway amid heavy security deployment with prohibitory orders in place, officials said.

Speaking to reporters, Commissioner of Police S Dev Datta Singh said three cases were registered and eight people were arrested in connection with Sunday's attack on police by Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) activists.

"The situation is under control," he said.

Senior police officer Amaranda Panda and Cuttack DCP Khilari Rishikesh Dnyandeo were among the 25 people injured in the attack. Panda was admitted to the ICU of the SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH), officials said.

Police said raids were continuing in different parts of the Millennium City after some of the 'mischievous mongers' were identified through CCTV footage.

Clashes broke out in the early hours of Saturday near Haathi Pokhari in Dargha Bazar area as locals objected to loud music being played in immersion processions. What started as an argument soon escalated, leading to the hurling of stones and glass bottles.

Six people, including Dnyandeo, were injured in the clashes.

Alleging that the police failed to stop the attack on the proces-

sions, the VHP called a 12-hour bandh Monday.

On Sunday, a motorcycle rally by VHP activists in support of the bandh was stopped by the police when they reached the trouble-torn area, leading to a fresh bout of violence. The VHP activists hurled stones at the police, who used lathi charge, tear gas shells and rubber bullets to bring the situation under control.

Several shops in the Gourishankar Park area were allegedly set on fire during the violence.

The bandh, which began at 6am, evoked a mixed response but remained incident-free.

Government offices and educational institutions were functioning with thin attendance. Markets and petrol pumps remained open, and public trans-



port was available on the road, but less than usual due to the slew of restrictions imposed by the police.

ACP Narasingha Bhol said 1,800 personnel of Odisha Police have been deployed along with around 800 personnel of the Central Armed Police Forces, and Odisha Swift Action Force in the Silver City.

Police patrols are continuing in sensitive areas, he said, adding that restrictions have also been imposed on entry into the city.

"People from outside are not allowed entry into Cuttack city, except those working here and patients travelling to SCBMCH. Passenger buses are being stopped at the entry points. All the entry points of the city have been blocked to keep a check on the movement of anti-social elements," he said.

ADG (Law and Order) Sanjay Kumar said that there was no report of any untoward incident, with all agencies on high alert.

He said senior officers are monitoring the situation on the field, and directions have been issued for taking prompt action against anyone found taking the law into their hands.

The prohibitory orders were imposed for 36 hours till 10am Tuesday in 13 of the 20 police station areas of the city, officials said. Internet services were initially suspended for 24 hours from 7pm Sunday and later till 7pm Tuesday to prevent any flare-up, they said.

In a statement, the Odisha Police urged the people to verify information before sharing it on social media and to refrain from posting false and inflammatory content.

"Some individuals are creating an atmosphere of unrest in society by spreading fake news. Strict action will be taken against those who are spreading and circulating false or misleading information," it said.



Commuters being questioned as they travel amid curfew

### HAD CAUTIONED ADMIN: MAHTAB



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** As Cuttack remained tense due to two consecutive clashes during and after goddess Durga idol immersion procession, senior BJP leader and local MP Bhartruhari Mahtab Monday said he had earlier cautioned the administration about potential trouble in the city.

Mahtab, a seven-time MP who was re-elected on a BJP ticket, said he had flagged concerns about the release of certain people from jail with a record of 'disturbance-creating habits'.

"Some people have a habit of creating disturbances. They should have been identified. I had cautioned the administration earlier that such persons had been released from jail, and some others were provoking them. I shared the information with the administration I received," Mahtab told a local television channel.

Two incidents of violence were reported in Cuttack's Dargha Bazar area between Friday and Sunday, leaving at least 31 people injured, including 10 police personnel. The first clash occurred on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday during the idol immersion procession, leaving six injured.

The second incident took place Sunday evening when police stopped a VHP bike rally from passing through the sensitive area, resulting in stone-pelting. At least 25 people, including eight policemen, were injured in the second incident.

Cuttack DCP Khilari Rishikesh Dnyandeo was injured on both occasions while trying to control the situation.

Mahtab said he believed the Odisha government was taking steps to restore peace.

"The government is taking utmost care to maintain peace, and most enlightened citizens have also appealed to both communities," he said.

Meanwhile, Odisha Pradesh

Congress Committee (OPCC) president Bhakta Charan Das, in a post on X, accused the VHP of organising a rally without police permission and inciting violence.

"Cuttack Police Commissioner S Deb Dutta Singh has shared crucial details: Rumours were deliberately spread claiming a death during the violence, which was completely untrue," Das said.

He added, "The VHP organised a bike rally without police permission and when stopped, its members pelted stones at the police. Several officers were seriously injured. Around 25 people were hurt. @DGPOdisha must investigate those planning to create communal tensions in our peaceful state."

"Why were our brave police officers and innocent people attacked by RSS and VHP goons in Cuttack? Why do they want to create unrest in our peaceful state? We will not let Odisha become Gujarat or Uttar Pradesh," he alleged. Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan said prohibitory orders, including a 36-hour-long curfew, were imposed to bring the situation under control.

"We will not let Cuttack's natural lifestyle be disturbed. Such incidents will not be repeated. The situation will return to normal soon," he told reporters.

Cuttack Mayor Subhash Singh said the law-and-order situation was under control and urged people to cooperate with the administration.

"False propaganda is being spread on social media. I appeal to all residents to help maintain peace," he said. Congress MLA from Barabati-Cuttack, Sofia Firdous, condemned the violence and demanded strict action.

"The administration must identify the troublemakers and ensure justice. Cuttack's tradition of 'Bhaichara' (brotherhood) must be preserved," she said.

## JAIPUR HOSPITAL BLAZE: NAVEEN CONDOLES DEATHS

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik Monday condoled the death of six people in a blaze at a hospital in Jaipur.

At least six patients died in a massive fire at an ICU of state-run Sawai Man Singh (SMS) Hospital in the Rajasthan capital, officials said Monday.

Patnaik, the Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly, said in a post on X, "Deeply saddened to know about the loss of precious lives in a fire accident at Sawai Man Singh Hospital in #Jaipur, Rajasthan. My thoughts and prayers are with the grieving families during this difficult time. Praying for the swift recovery of those who have sustained injuries."

## Odisha disposes of 8,832 cases

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** Odisha successfully disposed of 8,832 cases out of 13,527 referred by taluka courts, district courts, and the HC during a 90-day mediation drive, officials said Monday.

According to the Orissa HC, of the 8,832 cases disposed of, 890 were successfully settled. The drive aimed to reduce pending cases across all taluka courts, district courts, and the HC.

The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), in association with the Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee (MCPC) of the Supreme Court, launched the special campaign titled 'Mediation for the nation' from July 1 to September 30.

During this campaign, 15 categories of cases were identified for mediation, including matrimonial disputes, accident claims, domestic violence, cheque bounce, commercial disputes, service matters, criminal compoundable cases, consumer disputes, debt recovery, partition, land acquisition, arbitration, labour cases, and other civil cases.

These were referred to all 30 district court mediation centres and the HC mediation centre in the state.



# CITU stages protest against 10-hour workday extension



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** The Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) Khurda district committee Monday staged a protest rally and demonstration at Master Canteen Square, opposing the state government's recent move to extend labourers' daily working hours from eight to ten. Leaders including Suresh Panigrahi, Pradeepta Nayak, Pushpa Das, Ramesh Jena, Satyananda Behera, and Shailesh Baliyarsingh took part in the protest.

The state government's decision to amend the Factories Act, 1948, and the Odisha Shops & Commercial Establishments Act, 1956, permitting women to work night shifts, has faced strong criticism from trade unions, which called it a violation of labour rights and international conventions.

Hundreds of workers from different sectors joined the protest, alongside representa-

■ Trade unions, including CITU, opposed the state government's move to allow women night shifts, calling it a violation of labour rights and international conventions

■ Hundreds of workers and union representatives protested and submitted a memorandum to the State Labour Commissioner and Principal Secretary (Labour)

■ CITU announced plans for intensified state-wide agitation, including strikes and demonstrations, if demands are not met

tives of central trade unions and labour organisations. A memorandum demanding the immediate withdrawal of the decision was submitted to the State Labour Commissioner and the Principal Secretary (Labour).

Addressing the gathering, CITU state president Janardan Pati and general secretary Bishnu Mohanty criticised the

government's anti-worker, pro-corporate policies. They alleged that the move prioritised industrialists and corporate interests over workers' welfare.

"The government has taken this undemocratic step to appease corporate houses and boost their profits. If the decision is not reversed, a massive state-wide agitation will follow," the leaders warned.

They also criticised the government for bypassing discussion in the recently concluded state Assembly session, noting that the decision was approved in a Cabinet meeting held shortly after the Prime Minister's visit to Odisha.

CITU leaders pointed out that the ILO Convention of 1919 sets the global standard of an eight-hour workday and a 48-hour workweek, designed to safeguard workers from exploitation and overwork. They emphasised that extending daily working hours undermines these internationally recognised protections and threatens the health, safety, and well-being of labourers.

The union announced plans to intensify the agitation across all districts and industrial hubs in the state, mobilising workers from both organised and unorganised sectors, including women, construction labourers, and MSME employees. Protesters also warned of continuous strikes and larger state-wide demonstrations if their demands were not addressed.



**CAPTIVATING PERFORMANCE:** Artistes perform at the 22nd Kumar Utsav organised by Utkal Dance and Research Academy at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Monday.

PICT: BIKASH NAYAK

## Gambusia fish in IG Park for mosquito control

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** Amid rising dengue cases in the Capital, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has introduced about 500 Gambusia fish into two water fountains at IG Park. These fish, which feed on mosquito larvae, are being used as a natural measure to curb mosquito breeding in stagnant water.

"Earlier, Gambusia fish were released in the drains of Laxmi Sagar Chintamanishwar, behind Ramadevi Women's University, Saheed Nagar,



and Satsang Bihar," an official said.

This initiative is part of a larger anti-dengue drive launched by the BMC amid growing concerns over rising infections. Since January 2025,

Bhubaneswar has reported more than 200 dengue cases, with areas like Patia, Prasanti Vihar, Salia Sahi, Sikharchandi, and Nayapalli declared as dengue hotspots.

Despite the increase, officials note that this year's numbers are still lower than those reported during the same period last year.

Encouragingly, the dengue test positivity rate has dropped by almost half.

To intensify containment, BMC is carrying out multiple efforts — spraying anti-larval oils, conducting regular

fogging, cutting overgrown vegetation, destroying mosquito breeding sources like discarded tyres, containers, and coconut shells, and launching public awareness campaigns.

The introduction of Gambusia fish adds a sustainable, eco-friendly layer to the campaign. Officials urge citizens to support the drive by maintaining hygiene and eliminating stagnant water around their homes, especially during the post-monsoon season when mosquito breeding is at its peak.

## Anu Garg reviews progress of 3 key irrigation projects



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg reviewed the progress of Kanupur, Subarnarekha, and Anandpur irrigation projects at a meeting held in the conference hall of Water Resources department Monday.

During the review, it was revealed that the head works of the Kanupur irrigation project are nearing completion, with only the depletion sluice and erection of certain gates pending due to the early onset of monsoon. The main canal has achieved 94 per cent completion, while the distribution system has reached 75 per cent progress. The project is expect-

ed to provide Rabi irrigation for 12,000 hectares in the upcoming season. The Subarnarekha irrigation project has also shown substantial advancement, with Phase-I fully completed and Phase-II progressing steadily.

Similarly, the Anandpur irrigation project is advancing well. The link canal has been completed, while the Baitarani right bank canal and Salandi left main canal are on the verge of completion. An ayacut of 12,000 hectares has already been developed, with the remaining distribution systems under active execution.

Senior officials from Water Resources department attended the meeting and presented detailed progress reports on each project.

## Irrigation boost for 33,968 ha in Tatiguda area of Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** In a major stride towards improving rural infrastructure and agricultural sustainability, the Odisha Water Resources department has successfully provided irrigation facilities to 33,968 hectares of land in the Tatiguda area of Malkangiri block under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF).

This achievement was made possible through the construction of field canals under the Sevanchal (Command Area) Division-7 for the 2-R-outlet of the left bank canal. The development includes 15 hydraulic structures and a 600-meter RCC lined field canal system, significantly reducing water losses and ensuring efficient water delivery to farmlands.

The project, implemented with the cooperation of the



Nila Gagan Pani Panchayat, has not only enabled timely irrigation for paddy in the Kharif season but also facilitated multiple cropping. Farmers can now grow vegetables, Chinese almonds, maize, and watermelons in both Kharif and Rabi seasons, resulting in increased crop diversification and improved household incomes.

Local farmer Chitta Biswas shared his success story,

stating that earlier, lack of irrigation prevented cultivation beyond one season. With the new system, he now cultivates maize on 3 acres and anticipates higher profits compared to traditional paddy farming.

Over 18 families have directly benefited from the project, while many others are reaping indirect benefits. The initiative stands as a model for sustainable water resource management and rural development in Odisha.

The Water Resources department continues its mission to bring irrigation to all cultivable lands across the state, working in coordination with the Agriculture, Horticulture, Fisheries, and Livestock Departments. Through integrated efforts, the department aims to strengthen the rural economy and promote climate-resilient agriculture.

## Birds share a common call against brood parasites

Language enables humans to connect, share ideas, and coordinate complex tasks. The ability to communicate abstract concepts through learned sounds is often seen as a defining human trait. While most animal calls are instinctive, recent studies have revealed that species such as birds, chimpanzees, dolphins, and elephants can also associate specific sounds with particular meanings.

A new study published in Nature Ecology and Evolution offers fresh insight into how such communication systems may have evolved. Researchers describe the first known animal vocalisation that combines both instinctive and learned features — something Charles Darwin predicted over 150 years ago as a possible step



toward the development of language-like communication.

**A unique call to a unique threat**  
Among birds, brood parasites such as cuckoos pose a special kind of danger. These birds lay their eggs in the nests of other species, leaving the unsuspecting hosts to incubate and raise their young. The cost is high, as

the newly-hatched cuckoo often ejects the host's chicks from the nest to monopolise care.

In Australia, researchers studying the superb fairy-wren discovered that the species has evolved a distinctive alarm call whenever it spots a cuckoo. Other fairy-wrens, upon hearing the call, rush to mob and drive away the intruder.

Surprisingly, scientists also noticed that several unrelated bird species — and even those in faraway countries like China, India, and Sweden — were making a remarkably similar call aimed only at cuckoos.

**A global pattern of communication**  
To test whether this phenomenon was widespread, scientists examined online wildlife recordings and identified 21 bird species that produce this same type of call towards their brood parasites. Some were closely related, while others had diverged from a common ancestor more than 50 million years ago and now live on different continents.  
The findings suggest this call doesn't just alert members of a single species but helps coordi-

nate defence across species that share the same enemy. When played recordings of the call, birds in both Australia and China reacted the same way, even when the sound came from an unfamiliar species.

**Linking instinct and learning**  
Interestingly, birds that have never encountered a cuckoo do not produce the call, but they begin to do so after observing others using it during a cuckoo encounter. The response is instinctive, but the act of producing the call is learned.  
This rare mix of innate reaction and learned behaviour may represent an evolutionary bridge between simple animal communication and the complex language systems humans use today.  
(THE CONVERSATION)

## Cong condemns attack on CJI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee president Bhakta Charan Das strongly condemned the attack on Chief Justice of India BR Gavai during court proceedings Monday. In a shocking breach of decorum, a 71-year-old lawyer allegedly tried to hurl a shoe at the CJI during court proceedings, but was stopped by alert security personnel.

In a post on X, Das said, "Words fall short to condemn this vile attempt to attack and intimidate CJI Justice BR Gavai. This marks a dark chapter in India's history."

"I stand firmly with Hon'ble

Justice Gavai who rose from a humble Dalit background to the highest authority of our nation's judiciary," he wrote.

Another senior Congress leader, Niranjan Patnaik, also condemned the incident and said no power or ideology should ever be allowed to undermine the dignity of institutions of the country. "I could never have imagined India would come to this. The politics of hatred has reached such depths that a shoe is hurled, and an attempt is made to intimidate Hon'ble Chief Justice BR Gavai, an act that strikes at the very foundation of our republic. The judiciary must remain fearless and independent for democracy to survive," Patnaik wrote on X.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	88.90 ▲ 0.02	SENSEX	81790.12 ▲ 582.95	GOLD	₹120,215 ▲ ₹210
EURO	103.95 ▼ 0.54	NIFTY	25077.65 ▲ 183.40	SILVER	₹147,622 ▲ ₹187

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.9°	31.4°	Light to moderate rain very likely
Min Temp	25.4°	24.6°	
Humidity	90%	87%	
Rainfall	3.0mm	Nil	

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## No. O-903





## Chinese H-1B

When US President Donald Trump’s administration in a new fiat made the coveted H-1B visa available to foreigners at a prohibitive cost, it virtually spelt doom for hi-tech professionals and scientists from India as also a few other countries who desired it most for high paying jobs in America. In fact, 70 per cent of the visas were obtained by Indian professionals. There was speculation then that Europe could be the alternative destination, even though the rising intolerance towards migrants in many of these countries may dampen job-seekers’ enthusiasm. Japan and China looked like probable destinations. But what appeared to be a possibility China seems determined to make it a certainty by officially launching its K Visas for work in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields. When the new visa was first announced in August, it hardly attracted global attention. Days after Trump’s mad rush to stop Indian professionals from getting jobs in the US, the K Visa has shot into limelight.

Much of the scope of that visa is still unclear as it remains hazy whether it will actually allow foreigners to work in China or whether it just allows them easier access into the country. But it has already generated interest in India and also adverse reactions from tens of thousands of users on Chinese social media who have openly criticised the programme. Students in China who aspire after careers in STEM fields fear whether benefits extended to foreigners would trigger tough competition in a sluggish job market. It may be because China has traditionally not been a major immigration destination for foreign professionals. Netizens in China have started crying foul against the new visa with pleas that China has innumerable bachelor’s degree holders, apart from a sizable number of master’s and doctoral degree holders for which there is already a surplus of domestic talent. In such a situation, they angrily ask why the authorities are now trying to bring in foreign college graduates and professionals with work experience in the US and Europe. They have also questioned whether the authorities would be able to bring in higher standard of talent by issuing this new visa. At the same time to put off foreign jobseekers, they are wondering whether foreigners would be able to adapt to life on the mainland, citing language barriers and China’s tightly controlled political system. What is even worse is that many of the comments had xenophobic and racist implications targeted specifically at Indian nationals.

The backlash has been so intense that state media outlets have come out to assuage the fears. The Global Times in a recent article supported the new scheme terming it as an opportunity “for the world to see a more open and confident China in its new era.” The People’s Daily went even further and issued a veiled warning to the Chinese public stating “misrepresenting the K Visa will only mislead the public.” Sounding optimistic, it said as China steps onto the global stage, it is hungrier for talent than ever before.

However, there are many unanswered questions for foreign professionals themselves. For example, there is no clarity as yet on whether they will find that space for creativity and innovation in China as was offered in the US. Creativity and innovation flourish in an open and liberal climate as is seen in the West, especially the US and European nations. Given China’s track record, this is unlikely to be experienced in that country.

Language would certainly be a stumbling block. Many researchers and academics who have left the US for China in recent years are ethnic Chinese and fluent in Mandarin. Hence, they did not have to face the language or racism problem. However for foreign talent, especially Indians, communication with Chinese colleagues may prove to be a great hurdle. The Chinese are a cold and non cooperative bunch of people who may just refuse to talk to foreign immigrants that do not speak their language. This is a concern that both employers and employees will need to address.

The bigger issue is whether foreign science and tech professionals can adjust themselves to China’s tightly controlled political environment. Casual behaviour and talk may not seem that casually acceptable in China.

Whatever the future may show, China seems to be enjoying its position as a new global messiah taking advantage of Trump’s insular doctrine. Whether China would truly be a benefactor or whether it is having a sadistic pleasure at India’s plight at the hands of Trump is a million dollar question.

### WISDOM CORNER

However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at.

STEPHEN HAWKING

An intellectual says a simple thing in a hard way. An artist says a hard thing in a simple way.

CHARLES BUKOWSKI

The simple act of paying attention can take you a long way

KEANU REEVES

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1571:** Allied Christian forces defeated the Ottoman Turks during a naval engagement at the Battle of Lepanto.
- **1849:** Short-story writer, poet, and critic Edgar Allan Poe died in Baltimore, Maryland.
- **1952:** Vladimir Putin, president of Russia from 1999 to 2008 and again from 2012, was born in Leningrad, Russia.
- **1959:** People on Earth get the first glimpse of the dark side of the Moon. Soviet spacecraft Luna 3 took pictures of the far side of the Moon. The images sent by the probe covered about 70% of the far side of Earth’s natural satellite and they were instrumental in helping astronomers make the first atlas of the dark side of the Moon. The far or dark side of the Moon is the side of the Moon that cannot be seen from Earth because of the way the Moon orbits around the Earth and rotate on its own axis. Due to lunar libration, people on Earth can see about 59% of the Moon over time.
- **1971:** The American crime thriller The French Connection, directed by William Friedkin and starring Gene Hackman, had its world premieres in New York City and Los Angeles. It won the Academy Award for best picture.
- **1985:** Four members of the Palestine Liberation Front, a faction within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), hijacked the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro, taking 97 passengers hostage and later killing one.
- **1996:** Fox News broadcasts for the first time. The 24-hour news channel with the slogan Fair and Balanced was created by Australian-American businessman and media tycoon, Rupert Murdoch. Today, it is one of the most watched news channels in the United States.
- **2001:** Triggered by the September 11 attacks, the Afghanistan War began when U.S. and British warplanes started bombing Taliban targets.

# power post

#### FOCUS EMPLOYMENT

## WHITHER LABOUR RIGHTS



**Forced exits in the IT sector and forced work in smaller shops and factories are two worlds that make one story of India’s growth trajectory**



Jagdish Rattanani

**THIS ANTIMARKET SENTIMENT LIMITS TRUST IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND SETS POLITICAL LIMITS TO THE AGENDA OF PRIVATISATION AND LIBERALISATION**

India’s IT services sector has been a star performer. It has turned raw engineers into seasoned professionals and seized contracts and opportunities across the globe. On the other hand, India’s small and medium enterprises (SME) sector is the silent backbone of the economy. If IT is about a fewer number of firms with millions of employees, the SME sector is all about millions of firms each with a smaller number of workers. Together, they offer two lenses on India’s growth story. Both contribute to making India the fourth largest economy in the world – a point of fact that has been fashioned into a matter of pride.

But this happy story has a twist to it. Seen through the lens of layoffs that are now in the news, the big and the small both offer a picture that is less pretty, and in part maybe downright ugly.

In the IT services sector, where the workforce is being trimmed, regulators can no longer ignore the allegations of forced resignations, downright threats and abuse of due process. Not all that is being alleged is true, but equally the complaints are not without substance. Protests and social turmoil have come faster than expected.

If this is one side of an India story that takes a stand against layoffs, there is a lesser-known story of workers who want to be laid off and freed of their horrible work burdens but are not allowed to go home.

Last week, 13 migrant workers from Jharkhand’s East Singhbhum district, harassed by their employers, were allowed to leave for home only after an intervention from the state government. PTI reported that a company in Morbi district of Gujarat denied them food and other facilities and refused salaries when they wanted to leave. The 13 had to be “rescued” after the Jharkhand

government’s labour department intervened, not only to let them return home but also to get their dues – a total of Rs 68,000 for the 13 workers. The company is now reported to be under investigation in Gujarat.

Yet, this is not the first time that migrant workers, notably tribals seeking employment away from home, are forced to work virtually as bonded labour. News reports abound of how companies in small units have brought in labour and exploited them for work at low wages and with little regard for their health, working conditions or even the willingness to serve.

Forced exits in the IT sector and forced work in smaller shops and factories are two worlds that make one story of India’s growth trajectory. Both contribute to growth but also raise questions on work standards and serve to reinforce the traditional Indian suspicion of the private sector. This is what the Economic Survey of India of 2017 cited as “distinctly antimarket beliefs” in India, even when compared to other countries with similar low per capita GDP.

This antimarket sentiment limits trust in the private sector and sets political limits to the agenda of privatisation and liber-

alisation. Crony capitalism and the rise of a favoured few place further burdens on the trust capital, eroding the faith of the large mass of people in the capacity of the private sector to do good for people and society while doing well for shareholders.

When companies see they can get away with violation of labour laws or erode the dignity of workers or do worse with regard to their workforce, more violations of the kind will follow. The only antidote is to put down illegality with an iron hand, to impose exemplary costs on businesses that have little regard for people and to send the message that violations will be met with firm and swift action. This can be the most pro-market reform that India needs. Such a resolve will help the citizenry see that while the private sector is all powerful given its resources, it will be held to the same standards of law as ordinary workers.

If a sacking is masked as a resignation, as is being alleged in the case of IT layoffs, then this is a serious violation of the laws of the land. If people are brought from remote areas through brokers and worked as slave labour, as alleged in the case of a manufacturing unit in Gujarat, the hirers ought

to be put out of business for life and sent to jail. Yet, the slide to today has come from a slippery slope where labour rights have been eroded bit by bit in the name of liberalisation, and worker contractisation has reached a new level. A paper in the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations noted: “Firms appear to be using contract workers to their strategic advantage against unionized directly hired workers to keep their bargaining power and wage demand in check.”

In the IT services sector for example, it is not uncommon to make software engineers work for more than eight hours a day while paying them only for eight. This is brutal and illegal but has been normalised. Just as working time less than the required is recorded and accounted, time more than usual needs to be recorded and paid for. But such is the state of affairs that this simple point of morality has been ignored by companies that file their accounts in compliance with International Financial Reporting Standards, or IFRS.

The trouble is not with removing people – it is with a work culture that in India has led to a top-down approach of a commander-in-chief in the role of a CEO and a rigid hierarchy at a time worker unions have been robbed of their clout. Managements work without meaningful oversight that comes from the shop floor.

Unions were seen as stumbling blocks to growth and vibrancy. Regulation is seen as limiting business. But without active and vibrant unions, and with a pliant officialdom ready to please business, business may be less vibrant and secure than ever.

*The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR.*  
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#### SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

## Scramble for the Sahel

As Western governments lament their waning influence across the Sahel – France handed over its last base in Chad in January, effectively ending its military presence in the region – they cling to an outdated narrative. The Sahel is no longer a chessboard on which the struggles between the West and Russia play out. More importantly, it is now the site of a contest between Algeria and Morocco, two North African powers vying for strategic dominance.

While the world watches Russia’s Africa Corps, the Wagner Group’s successor, expand its footprint in the Sahel, it overlooks the more permanent and transformative presence of Algeria and Morocco. For these economies, with a combined GDP of over \$418 billion, the region is not a distant frontier for proxy battles; rather, it is an important trade corridor and key source of minerals, making it critical to their national and economic security.

For decades, the Sahel’s orientation was a foregone conclusion, shaped by its postcolonial ties to France and the security architecture of the US-led global war on terror. But that era is over. The widespread frustration with Western intervention has resulted in eight military coups across

West and Central Africa since 2020. Algeria and Morocco have stepped into the resulting power vacuum, each with a distinct vision for bringing the region into its economic orbit.

The most visible battle concerns trade. In 2023, Morocco launched its Atlantic Initiative, which will offer landlocked Sahel countries a secure and efficient gateway to global markets through the planned deep-water port of Dakhla in the disputed Western Sahara.

Algeria, for its part, has almost completed the Trans-Saharan Highway, which will stretch nearly 5,000 km from Algiers to Lagos, Nigeria, passing through Niger. The road has been decades in the making, as part of a larger strategy to connect Algeria with West Africa, boost its non-oil exports, and make it the region’s preeminent power broker. It will also establish Algeria as the main gateway between Europe and the massive West African market and give landlocked African countries a direct route to the sea.

The rivalry between Algeria and Morocco is not just about asphalt and shipping lanes. It is also a race to secure the Sahel’s vast mineral wealth, which will be critical for both economic diversification and decarbon-

ization. For example, Niger is the world’s seventh-largest producer of uranium, Mali is Africa’s third-largest producer of gold, and Burkina Faso has large deposits of manganese. For Morocco, which has a large mining sector and holds 70% of the world’s phosphate reserves, securing access to these minerals is a top strategic priority.

Both countries are also hoping to play a central role in the emerging clean-energy economy by developing green hydrogen. By 2030, Morocco aims to generate 52% of its electricity from renewables, supporting its green-hydrogen plans. Algeria, with vast solar potential estimated at 180 terawatt-hours per year, is pursuing a strategy to meet up to 10% of Europe’s green-hydrogen demand by 2040. The country plans to export it through the “South2 Corridor” pipeline project, which will connect Algeria and Tunisia to Italy, Austria, and Germany. Whoever controls the Sahel – which also holds huge untapped solar potential – could gain significant leverage over Europe’s green transition.

To be sure, Algeria and Morocco are not the only countries competing for economic and security influence in the Sahel. The UAE, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf

countries are also investing in ports, agriculture, and telecommunications across the region. Their involvement may be driven more by a desire to project global power than by the immediate strategic interests that motivate their North African counterparts, but it will nonetheless shape the region’s future.

Where does that leave Europe and the US? For too long, both have viewed the Sahel as a region beset by terrorism and at risk of capture by other great powers, leading to major policy blunders that have alienated local populations and created the very instability that their interventions were meant to prevent. To remain relevant, Western governments must shift their focus: The Sahel’s future stability and alignment will be determined not by the number of foreign troops on the ground, but by the success of the economic visions offered by its North African neighbours. Only by engaging with the complexities of this new reality can the West forge a sustainable and effective policy for one of the world’s most critical regions.

*The writer is Director of the Conflict and Security Program.*  
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## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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



### Fatal prescription

Sir, This refers to the editorial “Toxic Syrup,” Orissa Post, October 6. The death of 12 children in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan from a deadly toxin in cough syrups has exposed the alarming gaps in India’s drug regulation. In Madhya Pradesh, the syrup Coldrif contained 48% diethylene glycol (DEG) — 480 times the permissible limit. This comes after WHO alerts in 2023 linked Indian-made syrups to child deaths in Gambia and Uzbekistan. Instead of acknowledging systemic lapses, authorities then blamed foreign storage conditions. The current tragedy proves the rot lies within. Regulatory and communication failures worsened the crisis. Even as biopsies pointed to DEG poisoning, officials prematurely claimed no toxins were found in samples — based on incomplete tests — misleading parents and delaying action. Only after Tamil Nadu’s testing confirmed DEG did states act to ban the syrup. The fact that Sresan Pharma, Coldrif’s maker, operated for two decades without detection raises grave questions about inspection frequency and accountability. A toxin level this high isn’t accidental contamination — it’s industrial negligence. .  
**N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE**

### Britain’s shame

Sir, On Yom Kippur, Jews were butchered in Manchester. Jihad al-Shamie, a Syrian-born British citizen out on bail for rape, rammed his car into a synagogue and slashed worshippers with a knife. Two men—Melvin Cravitz and Adrian Daulby—are dead, three more fight for their lives. His methods were straight from the Palestinian terror playbook: car-ramming, knives, and the slogan now echoing in Britain’s streets—“globalize the intifada.” For the first time since the medieval pogroms and expulsions, Jews in England have been killed simply for being Jewish. This was no random crime. It was the direct result of years of incitement, cowardice, and appeasement. Britain’s Jews know where this road ends, because France already traveled it. Ilan Halimi was kidnapped, tortured, and murdered by French Muslims in 2006. More savage attacks followed, and French leaders responded with empty speeches. The result? A mass Jewish exodus. Today, Britain is replaying the same script.  
**Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH**







of the day


quote

The country will not develop unless all the sections of the society progress together



REKHA GUPTA | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

Sanatan Dharma alone can ensure peace, harmony, and the welfare of all, urging citizens to embrace it. To preserve Sanatan Dharma, Sanskrit must once again become a living medium of expression



YOGI ADITYANATH | CHIEF MINISTER, UTTAR PRADESH

Held a fruitful meeting with Mr. Miyaji Takuma, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan. We discussed opportunities to further deepen economic and cultural ties between Haryana and Japan



NAYAB SINGH SAINI | CHIEF MINISTER, HARYANA

SHORT TAKES

Nitish inaugurates Patna Metro corridor

**Patna:** Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar inaugurated a section of the Patna Metro Monday, hours ahead of the announcement of the Assembly elections in the state. A 3.45-km-long elevated corridor, covering three stations -- Patliputra Bus Terminal, Zero Mile, and Bhoothnath, was opened as part of the "priority corridor". Kumar also laid the foundation stones for six underground metro stations, including Patna Junction, and a 9.35-km-long tunnel connecting them, as part of corridor 1. Deputy CMs Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Singh, along with cabinet colleagues and senior bureaucrats, took a ride on the metro after the inauguration.


Police seize 1,200 kg of banned firecrackers

**New Delhi:** Ahead of the festive season, the Delhi Police has seized more than 1,200 kilograms of banned firecrackers in multiple operations conducted across the city and arrested six people in the case, an official said Monday. According to the police, separate raids carried out by the Shahdara district led to the seizure of 746 kg of firecrackers, over 124 kgs were recovered in a raid in Ashok Nagar while 394 kg were recovered by the crime branch. "A total of six persons have been apprehended in connection with the seizures," the officer said. The Delhi Police has intensified the enforcement drive against the illegal sale, storage and transportation of banned firecrackers, which pose serious risks to public safety and violate pollution control measures.

Kisan Mazdoor Morcha holds protest

**Chandigarh:** Farmers' body Kisan Mazdoor Morcha Monday held protests at many places in Punjab to demand immediate compensation for flood-hit farmers. They also lashed out at the state government for taking action against farmers for stubble burning, and burnt effigies of the union government and the Punjab government as part of their protest. Kisan Mazdoor Morcha leader Sarwan Singh Pandher said farmers are demanding compensation for extensive losses suffered during the recent floods in the state. He demanded that the government pay at least ₹70,000 per acre to farmers for the damage of paddy crop during the deluge.

Now new scientific evidence has been reported that future projected Arctic sea-ice loss will increase the frequency of high and intense rainfall days over South Asia



JAIRAM RAMESH | FORMER ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

6 killed as fire ravages ICU of Jaipur's hospital

*Anguished relatives held a brief protest and alleged that authorities were negligent, ignoring warnings and fleeing instead of rescuing the ailing and sick*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, Oct 6:** A massive fire blazed through the neuro ICU of Jaipur's state-run Sawai Man Singh (SMS) Hospital in the dead of the night, killing six patients on critical care support, officials said Monday.

Eleven patients were being treated in the ICU at the time. The fire, which erupted in the storage area around midnight, is suspected to have been caused by a short circuit. The flames spread fast and rescuers could pull out only five patients.

According to a hospital official, six people, two women and four men, died, and five are undergoing treatment. Fourteen other patients were admitted to a different ICU. They all were rescued in time. The government announced ₹10 lakh in compensation to the next of the kin of the deceased.

It also removed SMS hospital superintendent Dr Sushil Bhati and Trauma Centre in-charge Dr Anurag Dhakad from their posts. The two were replaced by Dr Mrinal Joshi and Dr BL Yadav.

The tender of the fire safety agency was cancelled, and legal proceedings were underway against the company, an official said.

Walls blackened with smoke and soot, equipment twisted out of shape in the heat, and shattered glass told the tale of the horrors that unfolded



when the fire broke out. Expressing grief over the tragedy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in an X post in Hindi, "The loss of lives due to a fire tragedy at a hospital in Jaipur, Rajasthan, is deeply saddening. Condolences to those who have lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah termed the incident tragic. "The local administration is taking every possible step for the safety of patients, their treatment, and the care of those affected," he said on X. The state government has formed a high-level committee to probe the incident.

SMS Hospital is Rajasthan's biggest government health facility, treating patients from across the state and elsewhere.

Anguished relatives held a brief protest and alleged that authorities were negligent, ignoring warnings and fleeing instead of rescuing the ailing and sick.

Among them was Rukmini's son Joginder.

"My mother was recovering and was supposed to be fine. But this disaster happened. When the smoke started, there were 15 to 16 people in the

ward. People were trying to evacuate their own patients," he said.

"No one helped my mother. My elder brother grabbed a torch from the hospital staff, found our mother, and brought her out. No one went to help her. I could not save her and could not do anything," he told reporters.

The trauma centre building is in front of the main hospital building on busy Tonk Road.

Hospital staff and attendants evacuated patients with some wheeling beds outside the building. Firefighters brought the fire under control in around two hours, an official said.

Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Jogaram Patel, and Minister of State for Home Jawahar Singh Bedham were among those who visited the trauma centre to take stock of the situation.

When Patel and Bedham reached the spot, relatives of some patients told them that the staff had ignored early warning and fled when the fire erupted.

They also claimed that the hospital staff could not provide updates on the patients' condition.

HIMACHAL HC GETS 2 MORE JUDGES

Two senior advocates, Jiya Lal Bhardwaj and Romesh Verma, were sworn in as judges of the Himachal Pradesh High Court Monday. Chief Justice G S Sandhawalia administered the oath of office at the the High Court here



COUGH SYRUP DEATHS

Several states intensify health safety measures

*The tragic deaths triggered a national health alert, leading to suspensions of officials in Madhya Pradesh, arrests, nationwide stock confiscations, and immediate, stringent changes to drug prescription guidelines in states like Kerala and Karnataka*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal/Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 6:** Several states ramped up actions Monday to halt the consumption and supply of Coldrif cough syrup following 14 fatalities of children linked to the medicine in Madhya Pradesh, where the government suspended three officials and transferred the drug controller.

These deaths due to suspected renal failure were reported from Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh in a month.

The cough syrup, manufactured in Tamil Nadu, was found to be dangerously adulterated with the highly poisonous substance Diethylene Glycol (DEG).

The tragic deaths triggered a national health alert, leading to suspensions of officials in Madhya Pradesh, arrests, nationwide stock confiscations, and immediate, stringent changes to drug prescription guidelines in states like Kerala and Karnataka.

The Kerala Health Department, under Minister Veena George, ordered that no medicines should be given to children under 12 without a doctor's prescription.

The Karnataka Health Department issued an advisory to healthcare institutions not to prescribe or dispense cough and cold syrups to children be-

low the age of two.

According to medical experts, DEG is a highly toxic industrial chemical and is used as a cheaper, yet highly toxic, substitute for legitimate pharmaceutical solvents like propylene glycol (PG) or glycerin (also called glycerol). Manufacturers fraudulently or accidentally substitute the safe ingredient for the toxic one to cut costs, especially in cough syrups.

Officials confirmed that samples of the medicine, manufactured by Sresan Pharmaceutical, Kancheepuram (Tamil Nadu), contained over 48 per cent of DEG. Following the tragedy, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav ordered a major overhaul of the state's drug administration and suspended two drug inspectors, Gaurav Sharma and Sharad Kumar Jain, and Deputy Director, Shobhit Costa, of the food and drug administration. The state Drug Controller, Dinesh Maurya, was transferred after police registered an FIR and arrested Dr Praveen Soni of Chhindwara for alleged negligence. A case was also registered against the Tamil Nadu-based Coldrif syrup manufacturing company.

The sale of the syrup has been banned statewide, with the chief minister directing a massive campaign to confiscate all remaining stocks from shops and recover the medicine from families in Chhindwara and surrounding districts.

Yadav also stressed that combination drugs must not be prescribed to children under four years of age, citing a legal provision, and ordered prosecution for doctors who violate this.

Mistaken for thief, Dalit man lynched in Raebareli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Raebareli (UP), Oct 6:** A 40-year-old Dalit man was allegedly lynched by villagers who mistook him for a thief during a night vigil amid rumours that a gang was using drones for surveillance to mark houses for robberies, police said Monday.

Five people have been arrested in the case and three police personnel have been suspended for alleged negligence, they said, adding the accused come from different social backgrounds, including Dalits and other backward castes. Police appealed to residents not to spread any caste-related rumours about the incident. The deceased was identified as Hariom, a resident of neighbouring Fatehpur district. Uttar Pradesh Congress president Ajay Rai Monday visited Hariom's family and claimed that the victim was beaten up

when he took Rahul Gandhi's name. He alleged that "jungle raj" was prevailing in the state. Gandhi spoke to the victim's brother on phone and assured him of all support. According to police, residents in several villages in the Unchahar police station area have been keeping night vigils following rumours that drone surveillance was being done to orchestrate thefts. Hariom was walking to his in-laws' house in the New Basti area of Unchahar town to meet his wife Pinky Wednesday night, and his daughter Anyanya when some villagers became suspicious of his

India sends two parliamentary delegations to UNGA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** Two multi-party delegations of parliamentarians headed by BJP MPs PP Chaudhary and Daggubati Purandeswari will be representing India at the 80th United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The first group, headed by Chaudhary, will be in New York between October 8 and October 14, while the other group will be there from October 27.

An MP said these are "non-official" delegations as they do not strictly represent the State and are more of representatives of the Indian democracy and its united stand on a host of issues.

The delegation led by Chaudhary includes Anil Baluni, Nishikant Dubey and Ujjwal Nikam of the BJP, Vivek Tankha and Kumari Selja of the Congress, Samajwadi Party's Rajeev Rai and RSP's NK Premchandran, among others. It has a total of 15 MPs, officials said.

The other delegation includes VD Sharma, Dilip Saikia, Rekha Sharma of the BJP, RJD's Manoj Kumar Jha, DMK's P Wilson, TMC(M)'s GK Vasan and AAP's Sandeep Kumar Pathak, among others.

Purandeswari said, "The UNGA is a vital platform where member nations come together to discuss key global issues, from peace and security to human rights, development, and international cooperation. I look forward to representing our nation and contributing to these important deliberations on the world stage."

EC UNROLLS 17 NEW INITIATIVES IN BIHAR

For the first time, counters will be available outside all polling stations for the voters to deposit their mobile phones

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** The Election Commission (EC) Monday announced 17 new initiatives that will be unrolled during the Bihar Assembly polls, including compulsory webcasting and mobile phone-deposit facilities at all polling stations.

At a press conference here, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar announced the "Bihar First Initiatives", which will be unrolled at all stages -- from preparing for the polls to the counting of the votes. These initiatives will be launched in all states during subsequent elections, he said.

For the first time, counters will be available outside all polling stations for the voters to deposit their mobile phones. The number of electors per polling station has also been limited

to 1,200 to avoid crowding.

The poll panel will issue voter-information slips with serial and part numbers (details of the polling station) displayed prominently for easier verification of voters.

A one-stop digital platform -- ECINet -- will provide real-time voter-turnout updates and the

presiding officers will upload the turnout data on the app every two hours on the polling day to reduce the time lag.

There will be 100 per cent webcasting at all polling stations and candidate booths will be allowed just outside 100 metres of the polling stations.

The EC has also revised the

guidelines to make EVM ballot papers more readable and the electronic voting machines will have colour photographs of the candidates for the first time.

The counting of VVPAT (voter-verifiable paper audit trail) slips will be mandatory in case of a mismatch between the form 17C and the EVM data, and wherever the mock poll data was not erased erroneously.

The penultimate round of EVM/VVPAT counting will be taken up only after the counting of the postal ballots, the CEC said.

A technology-driven system

to promote accessibility of election-related data at the constituency level for all stakeholders will also be available, with the EC introducing digital index cards and reports.

In the preparatory stage, the poll panel held training for the booth-level agents (BLAs) appointed by political parties. They were trained in various aspects of supporting the process of preparing the electoral rolls, including the use of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

More than 7,000 booth-level

officers (BLOs) and BLO supervisors from across the country, including Bihar, were trained at the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM), New Delhi. Besides, special sessions were conducted for the Bihar Police for preparedness during the election.

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR), which was undertaken in the state for the "purification" of the electoral rolls, was listed among the "Bihar First Initiatives". The poll panel also mentioned the remunerations for officials -- BLOs, supervisors and polling and counting staff, the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), monitoring teams and micro-observers. Honorarium will be provided for the EROs and AEROs for the first time, and the provisions for refreshments have also been enhanced.



of the day **note**

Mumbai is not just the financial capital but also the entertainment and startup hub of India. Owing to continuous infrastructure expansion and reforms, Maharashtra has truly become the investment magnet of the country

**DEVENDRA FADNAVIS** | CHIEF MINISTER, MAHARASHTRA

Himachal Pradesh has reaffirmed its role as one of India's greenest and environmentally progressive states, registering a major increase in both forest and tree cover over the past two decades

**SUKHINDER SINGH SUKHU** | CHIEF MINISTER, HIMACHAL PRADESH

The IAF has been present in Jamnagar and Bhuj in Gujarat since its inception, and the SWAC plays a vital role in the security of the state and the country

**BHUPENDRA PATEL** | CHIEF MINISTER, GUJARAT

**X POST OF THE DAY**

> Chalk powder in atta  
> Brick powder in chili  
> Detergent in milk  
> Sand in pulses  
> Poisonous Diethylene glycol in kids cough syrup  
the fact that some people are doing this fully knowing it can kill others shows how far we've fallen as a society  
A profound decay of humanity!  
@talk2anuradha

**SHORT TAKES**

**ED attaches ₹40-cr assets in MUDA case**  
**New Delhi:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Monday said it has attached fresh assets worth Rs 40 crore in connection with the Karnataka MUDA-linked money laundering investigation. A provisional order for attaching 34 immovable assets, including some MUDA (Mysuru Urban Development Authority) Sites, was issued October 4 under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), they said. The market value of these assets is Rs 40.08 crore, the federal probe agency said in a statement.

**Namchik-Namphuk coal block inaugurated**  
**Itanagar:** The Namchik-Namphuk coal block in Arunachal Pradesh was inaugurated Monday, marking the beginning of the northeastern state's first-ever commercial coal mining operation, officials said. Union Minister of Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy and Chief Minister Pema Khandu also performed the 'Bhoomi Poojan' of the Namchik-Namphuk Central Coal Block at Longtom under Kharsang Sub-Division. The coal block, with estimated reserves of 1.5 crore tonnes, was first allocated in 2003.

**Delhi Police busts cybercrime syndicate**  
**New Delhi:** The Delhi Police has busted a cybercrime syndicate with the arrest of five people allegedly involved in defrauding more than Rs 4 crore through fake investment schemes, officials said Monday. Police said the gang was operating a large-scale investment fraud racket, promising high returns through stock and IPO investments. So far, investigators have traced Rs 4.25 crore in fraudulent transactions through these channels.



**We are promise-bound to transform Ladakh into a top winter tourism and adventure sports hub**  
**KAVINDER GUPTA** | LT GOVERNOR, LADAKH

**345 BSF RECRUITS JOIN PASSING OUT PARADE**

A total of 345 recruits of the Border Security Force (BSF) Monday participated in their passing out parade in Jharkhand's Hazaribag district, an official said. The passing out parade was organised at the Rani Jhansi Parade Ground at the BSF Training Centre and School in Meru



**Bihar polls Nov 6, 11**

**Announcing the schedule, Kumar said elections will be held in 121 seats of the 243-member Assembly November 6, while the remaining 122 constituencies will go to polls November 11**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** Bihar will go to polls in two phases November 6 and 11 and votes will be counted November 14 to decide the fate of the ruling NDA government led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and the challenge posed by the Opposition INDIA bloc comprising RJD and Congress among others.

The election in the politically important state this time has a third force in the form of Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraa Party, while a special intensive revision (SIR), which Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar repeatedly described as "shuddhikaran" (purification), of the voter list has already charged up the electoral process.

Announcing the schedule, Kumar said elections will be held in 121 seats of the 243-member Assembly November 6, while the remaining 122 constituencies will go to polls November 11. The counting of votes will be held November 14. The model code of conduct



(MCC) has come into effect in Bihar with the announcement of the Assembly elections.

In the outgoing Assembly, the ruling NDA has 138 members, while the opposition alliance has 103 members in the 243-member Assembly.

As many as 7.42 crore voters will be eligible to exercise their franchise across 90,712 polling stations, all of which have web-cast facilities to ensure transparent elections.

Bihar has 3.92 crore male voters and 3.5 crore female voters. Nearly 14,000 voters are more than 100 years old, while 14 lakh will exercise their right to vote for the first time.

Kumar said nearly 69 lakh names have been deleted since the start of the SIR of electoral rolls, but refused to answer specific questions on how many deletions happened due to non-citizenship.

"A breakup cannot be given

in a decentralised set-up. The ERO (Electoral Registration Officer) makes the voter lists, it can be appealed at the level of district magistrate and the CEO.

"This has to be followed by everyone as it is mentioned in the Representation of People Act. When elections are held, the process is conducted under the supervision of the returning officer and there is a provision for election petition," Kumar said.

He said the main reasons for the deletion of names were deaths, unproven citizenship or permanent migration to other states and this data had been shared with the political parties.

After demand from several political parties, Kumar said it has now been made mandatory to complete the counting of postal ballots before the last two rounds of counting of votes.

Terming the Bihar elections as "mother of all elections", the CEC said the Commission will roll out 17 new initiatives, which could be implemented across the country later.

**VP Radhakrishnan to hold first meeting with leaders of parties today**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** Vice President and Rajya Sabha Chairman CP Radhakrishnan will hold his first meeting with leaders of various parties Tuesday in Parliament complex.

The meeting aims to provide an opportunity for exchange of views on how to facilitate smooth functioning of the House and structured discussions without disruptions — thereby optimising both the time and the quality of debates, his office said in a statement.

This will be the maiden meeting of the vice president with the leaders of the parties after he assumed charge as Rajya Sabha Chairman, it said.

"The Chairman, Rajya Sabha CP Radhakrishnan will hold a meeting with the leaders of all the parties in Rajya Sabha at 4 pm 7 October, 2025," the statement said. Health Minister and Leader of the House JP Nadda, Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge, and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Minister of Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju will be attending the meeting.

Besides, Law and Justice Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal and Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L Murugan have also been invited for the maiden meeting called by Radhakrishnan.

Former prime minister and Rajya Sabha member HD Devogowda has also been invited for the meeting, the statement said, adding that almost all the leaders of parties have confirmed their participation for the meeting.



Artists make eco-friendly lanterns using paper and natural colours ahead of Diwali, in Thane, Maharashtra, Monday

PTI PHOTO

**Assault on judiciary, Constitution: Oppn parties on attack on CJI**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** Leaders of Opposition parties condemned an attack on Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai Monday and said it is an assault on the Constitution and it shows how hate and fanaticism have engulfed the society.

The Congress, CPI, CPI(M), NCP-SP, Shiv Sena (UBT), DMK and other parties were unanimous in condemning the attack on the CJI.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Justice Gavai and said the attack on him has angered every Indian. "There is no place for such reprehensible acts in our society. It is utterly condemnable," Modi said, appreciating the calm displayed

by the CJI.

The Congress, however, slammed the prime minister earlier, questioning his silence hours after the incident, which it said was shameful.

The Opposition party also termed the incident a shocking breach of decorum and a dangerous new low in India's democratic history, claiming it to be an assault on the judiciary and the Constitution.

In a shocking breach of decorum, a 71-year-old lawyer allegedly tried to hurl a shoe at the CJI during court proceedings, but was stopped by alert security personnel.

Police sources said a note, containing the slogan "Sanatan dharma ka apmaan nahi sahega Hindustan" (India

will not tolerate insults to Sanatan Dharma), was found from the lawyer's possession. The Bar Council of India has suspended his licence with immediate effect.

Despite the disconcerting act, the CJI remained unfazed and continued with the hearings. "Don't get distracted by all this. We are not distracted. These things do not affect me," he said.

The Congress said the incident marked a "shocking and dangerous new low in India's democratic history".

Terming it an open assault on the very foundation of justice and the rule of law, the party said this is not merely an attack on one individual.

"It is the outcome of a sus-

tained campaign to undermine institutions, intimidate voices of integrity, and erode public faith in the judiciary," it said in a post on X.

The Congress said the attack reflected a "culture of impunity and hatred that has been encouraged by those in power". In a statement, Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson Sonia Gandhi said it was not just an attack on the CJI but on the Constitution.

"No words are adequate to condemn the attack on the Honourable Chief Justice of India in the Supreme Court itself. It is an assault not just on him but on our Constitution as well. Chief Justice Gavai has been very gracious but the nation must stand in solidarity

with him unitedly with a deep sense of anguish and outrage," she said.

In a post on X, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the attack was an assault on the dignity of the judiciary and the spirit of the Constitution.

"Such hatred has no place in our nation and must be condemned," the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge said an attempt to attack the CJI is unprecedented, shameful and abhorrent. It is an attack on the dignity of the country's judiciary and the rule of law, he said.

"Such a mindless act shows how hate, fanaticism and bigotry has engulfed our society in the past decade," Kharge said.

Bhunter, Kangra, Palampur, and Shimla, while gusty winds with speeds ranging between 41 and 57 kmph swept Hamirpur, Narkanda, Kufri, Bajaura, Reckong Peo, Tabo, and Kotkhai.

Shimla MeT Office Director Kuldeep Srivastav said a strong active western disturbance would impact the state for the next two days, with the possibility of heavy rains in Kangra and Chamba districts and snow in Lahaul and Spiti districts.

Meanwhile, rainfall provided relief to Delhi-NCR from the hot and humid conditions that had persisted over the last several days in the region. The city recorded a minimum temperature of 20.6 degrees Celsius, two notches below the season's average.

In Punjab, places like Mohali, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Pathankot, Ferozepur, Phagwara, Kapurthala, Jalandhar, Bathinda, Rupnagar, and Ludhiana re-

ceived rain, while Haryana's Panchkula, Hisar, Fatehabad, Ambala, Rohtak, and Kurukshetra were lashed by rain.

The local meteorological office said that due to a western disturbance affecting northwest India, light to moderate rain is likely at most places in Punjab and Haryana October 6 and 7.

In Rajasthan, heavy rainfall was witnessed in parts of Bikaner, Kota, and Udaipur divisions due to the western disturbance, according to the Jaipur Meteorological Centre.

Heavy rain and hailstorms are expected in isolated areas of Jaipur, Bikaner, Ajmer, and Bharatpur divisions.

However, the rain activity is expected to subside in Jodhpur and Bikaner divisions on Tuesday, while it will continue in parts of Jaipur, Bharatpur, Ajmer, Kota, and Udaipur divisions, the MeT centre said.

**Showers drench north India, fresh snowfall in J&K**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** Rain lashed parts of Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, and Rajasthan, while fresh snowfall was reported in the higher reaches of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, causing the mercury to drop in several northern states Monday.

In West Bengal, the death toll in Darjeeling landslides rose to 28 Monday with six people still missing, as rescue teams battled rising waters across the hills. The disaster has also ignited a fierce political confrontation between the ruling TMC and the Opposition BJP.

With over 300 mm of rain in 12 hours, the landslides ravaged Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Kalimpong districts, leaving thousands of tourists stranded and hundreds homeless as several hill slopes caved in.

A yellow alert was issued for parts of Maharashtra's Vidarbha region, signalling light to moderate showers with thunderstorms and lightning.

In Jammu and Kashmir, light to moderate rainfall was witnessed in the plains of Kashmir and snowfall was reported from Sinthan Top in Anantnag district, Affarwat in Gulmarg, Zojila Pass, Bangus in Kupwara, Razdan Pass in Gurez valley, and other higher-altitude areas, officials said.

The day temperature in the valley dipped by nearly 10 degrees Celsius, with Srinagar recording a maximum of around 11 degrees Celsius Monday, compared to 22.6 degrees recorded a day earlier. The meteorological office has forecast continued wet weather for the next 24 hours in the valley.

Similarly, in Himachal Pradesh, the minimum and



maximum temperatures witnessed a significant drop as the state received snowfall for the second day in a row. Keylong in tribal Lahaul and Spiti recorded a low of 0.1 degree Celsius.

Intermittent showers lashed parts of the state, with Guler receiving 42 mm of rain since Sunday evening, according to officials. Thunderstorms were witnessed in Jot, Sundernagar,



of the day

quote

The time has come to launch the export of our Ukrainian weapons — those types of weapons that we have in surplus, so that there is funding for those types of weapons that are especially needed for defence

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT

Too often, journalists are put in harm's way while fulfilling their vital role of delivering accurate news to the public. It is only right that they feel supported and protected so they can focus on carrying out their jobs to the highest standard

IAN MURRAY | UK MEDIA MINISTER

For years, they threatened military action and used the snapback mechanism, but just as war was not a solution, snapback also proved ineffective. The three European countries thought they held leverage with snapback, but its use resolved nothing

SEYYED ABBAS ARAGHCI | IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

4 Indians killed in Italy road accident

**London:** Four Indian nationals were killed in a road accident in southern Italy's Matera city, according to the Indian Embassy in Rome. The victims were in a seven-seater Renault Scenic with six other people, which collided with a truck in the municipality of Scanzano Jonico in Matera city on the Agri Valley on Saturday, Italian news agency ANSA reported on Sunday. It identified the victims as Kumar Manoj, 34, Singh Surjit, 33, Singh Harwinder, 31, and Singh Jaskaran, 20. "The Embassy of India deeply condoles the tragic death of four Indian nationals in a road accident in Matera in southern Italy," the Indian embassy posted on social media.

Incumbent to remain ISI DG

**Islamabad:** Pakistan's incumbent spy chief Lieutenant General Muhammad Asim Malik will continue as the Director General of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the country's premier intelligence agency, according to a media report Monday. "Lt Gen Asim Malik is continuing his services in his present appointment," security sources told The Express Tribune newspaper. Lt Gen Malik, who also serves as the national security advisor (NSA), was earlier due to retire later this year, reported the paper. However, the exact date of his retirement was not given. It also did not specify if his army service would be extended, which the government can do, or he would continue in the present role after formal retirement. He was appointed the head of the ISI in September 2024, replacing Lt Gen Nadeem Anjum.

Egypt: Pharaonic painting vanishes

**Cairo:** Egyptian antiquities officials on Sunday said a Pharaonic painting has disappeared from the famed Saqqara necropolis just outside of Cairo, becoming the latest artifact to disappear in a country known for its rich history. Mohamed Ismail, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, said the limestone painting was in the tomb of Khentika in the Saqqara necropolis. The mastaba tomb, which housed the painting, was found in the 1950s, and hasn't opened since 2019, he said in a statement. It dates back to the sixth dynasty of the ancient Old Kingdom — a period spanning roughly from around 2700 BC to 2200 BC.

French govt collapses in 14 hrs

Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu's administration becomes the shortest-lived in modern French history

REUTERS

**Paris, Oct 6:** France's new Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu and his government resigned Monday, hours after Lecornu announced his cabinet line-up, making it the shortest-lived administration in modern French history and deepening the country's political crisis.

The unexpected resignation came after allies and foes alike threatened to topple the new government, with Lecornu saying that meant he could not do his job. The announcement drove stocks and the euro sharply lower.

Opposition parties immediately urged President Emmanuel Macron to resign, or call a snap parliamentary election, saying there was no other way out of the crisis.

Lecornu, who was Macron's fifth prime minister in two years, stayed in the job for only 27 days. His government lasted just 14 hours, highlighting divisions in the French parliament as the euro zone's second-largest economy struggles to put its finances in order.

French politics has been increasingly unstable since Ma-



cron's re-election in 2022 for want of any party or grouping holding a parliamentary majority. Macron's decision to call a snap parliamentary election last year deepened the crisis by producing an even more fragmented parliament.

The centrist president could now call new snap elections, resign or try to appoint yet another prime minister - who could be a politician or a technocrat. In past months, Macron, whose mandate runs until May 2027, has repeatedly ruled out stepping down or calling elections. He is yet to react publicly to Lecornu's resignation.

BFM TV showed footage of Macron walking by the Seine, cutting a lonely figure.

In the opposition, many rushed to ask for Macron to call new snap parliamentary elections or quit.



Please remember I wrote about Osama bin Laden exactly one year before he blew up the World Trade Centre

DONALD TRUMP | US PRESIDENT

UN TO PROBE AFGHAN ABUSES

The United Nations Human Rights Council is to investigate abuses in Afghanistan, which could eventually enable criminal investigations into suspected violations by both the Taliban and foreign troops, including those from the United States.



1 killed, 137 rescued after blizzard in Everest



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, Oct 6:** One hiker was killed while 137 others, stranded after a blizzard on the Tibetan slopes of Mt Everest, were rescued, local Chinese officials said Monday. They said the search is on for missing climbers.

A 41-year-old male hiker died from hypothermia and acute altitude sickness, state-run Xinhua news agency reported, quoting local officials.

So far, 137 hikers, stranded due to continuous snowfall in northwest Qinghai Province, had been relocated and were in stable condition, the report said. Over 100 hiking enthusiasts headed toward the Laohugou region of Menyuan Hui Autonomous County in Haibei Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture during the current eight-day national holidays, which started on October 1.

The Laohugou region, in the Qilian Mountains, featuring an average altitude exceeding 4,000 meters and complex terrain, experienced continuous snowfall during the holiday period.

Over 300 search personnel, more than 10 teams employing horses and two medium-sized drones, have been mobilised to conduct thorough searches in seeking to ensure the safety of stranded hikers. Search and rescue efforts continue as some hikers remain missing.

Earlier, the state-run CCTV reported that 350 were rescued while 200 remained missing.

A BBC report Sunday said that over 1,000 hikers were stuck in the slopes of Mt Everest, the world's highest peak, in the Karma Valley on the Chinese side of the mountain.

A woman in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, whose husband went for a trek in the Tibetan mountains, said she got a satellite call from him asking for help. His group was stranded in heavy snow at Oga Campsite in the Karma Valley.

The woman, who preferred to be anonymous, immediately called local county police, who told her that some hikers had already contacted them and that they were sending rescue teams.

Negotiators gather for Gaza peace talks

REUTERS

**Sharm El-Sheikh, Oct 6:** Officials from Israel and Hamas were in an Egyptian resort Monday to launch talks that the US hopes will bring a halt to the war in Gaza and a release of hostages, despite contentious issues such as disarmament of the Palestinian militant group.

The negotiations on President Donald Trump's plan were set to begin on the eve of the second anniversary of the Hamas attack on Israel that triggered the war, when fighters killed 1,200 people and took 251 hostages, the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust. Israel's retaliatory military campaign has killed more than 67,000 Palestinians and left the majority of 2.2 million Gazans homeless and hungry in the rubble of the enclave destroyed by relentless bombardment.

Two Israeli sources said the Israeli negotiators had arrived in Egypt's Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh for the talks, focused on

freeing hostages, part of the U.S. president's 20-point blueprint for ending the conflict. Hamas officials had already arrived earlier in the day. "If there is a deal, then we survive. If there isn't, it is like we have been sentenced to death," said Gharam Mohammad, 20, displaced along with her family in central Gaza.

An official briefed on the negotiations, speaking on condition of anonymity, said he expected the round of talks kicking off on Monday would not be quick, lasting at least a few days. Prompt agreement is unlikely as the goal is to clinch a comprehensive deal with all details worked out before the ceasefire can begin to be implemented, the official said.

A Palestinian official close to the talks was sceptical about prospects of a breakthrough given deep mutual mistrust, saying Hamas and other Palestinian factions were worried that Israel - led by the most far-right government in its history - might ditch negotiations once it recovered the hostages.



Thai buffalo racers compete in a sprint event during an annual buffalo racing festival in Chonburi, Thailand, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Chopin devotees flock to Warsaw for piano's grandest stage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Warsaw, Oct 6:** Every five years in the autumnal month of October, people here have a jauntier spring in their step. It's when the strains of the piano are little louder, a little more evocative and carry that extra whiff of romance - left here to exist in melodic perpetuity by Warsaw's favourite son, Romantic pianist Frederic Chopin.

The 19th edition of the International Frederic Chopin Piano Competition, often considered the Olympics of piano music, began October 2. Divided by nationality and united by Chopin, piano lovers from all over the world are queuing up to imbibe the music and breathe the same air that must have evoked the many moods and tunes in the 19th century legend.

The competition this year is hosting young pianists from China, Japan, Korea, Canada, the US, and Poland among 17 countries. To support them are visitors from as many countries and more for the same reason - to listen to the best of the best Chopin players.

The next three weeks will decide the next master pianist on the global stage. The compe-



tition comprises three rounds of five days each - running till October 20. The winners will perform their solo concerts from October 21-23.

The ticket counters for the competition opened on October 1 last year for on ground sale.

Australia-based Shoji Mat-

suura's quest to attend the competition began exactly then when he came all the way to Warsaw and lined up outside the ticket counter at 2 am. He had missed out on the previous edition in 2021 due to Covid-19 and the 62-year-old Japanese teacher of languages was tak-

ing no more chances.

"It is almost impossible to get tickets on the internet, so I came to Warsaw in 2019 to buy tickets for the 2020 concert, but I had to cancel it. So I did it again last year. I came to Warsaw on the first day of ticket sales," Matsuura, also a piano

student, told PTI.

"I have been learning and playing piano and Chopin has always been my favourite composer," he said.

There were others, too, whose journey to Warsaw remained unfulfilled the last time.

The pandemic also played spoilsport for Alex Xue, a 31-year-old financial consultant from Hong Kong, who bought a ticket five years ago but could not attend the event in 2021.

However, Lady Luck favoured Xue, who moved to Dublin, Ireland, in the last five years.

"That time I was in Hong Kong. I bought a ticket for the last round but because of the pandemic I couldn't come. In the last five years I brought myself to Europe, but not for the competition. Being in Ireland just brings the competition nearer to me so I thought I must come for this," he said.

The Polish national capital gets "crazy" during the competition, according to competition spokesperson Aleksander Laskowski.

"Everyone is interested in Chopin. You talk to a taxi driver - he'll know the participants. You go to a bar-you can order a Chopin drink. You go to a

café - there's a Chopin cake. Everywhere you go, you see something connected to Chopin and the Chopin Competition," he told PTI.

The event, which was first held in 1927, hosted its first international participant in 1937 with Japanese pianists Chieko Hara and Kai Miwa. Two kimono-clad women created quite a commotion on the streets of Warsaw, according to Laskowski.

"The first edition was a very local affair, with not even 30 participants-from different countries, but not really coming from very far. The first Asian participants came for the third edition in 1937, from Japan. And they were quite a sensation, especially since at the time they were wearing traditional Japanese kimonos, which was not something very usual in the streets of Warsaw," he said.

The times have changed, so has the vibe.

The pianists may be dressed in formal tuxedos and ball gowns but carry rockstar status. A glimpse and a smile from Bruce Liu, last edition's winner, is enough to send a group of young women in sheer frenzy.



of the day

quote

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Scheme is not just about LPG connections, but about empowering women and improving the quality of life for families.

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION MINISTER, PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS

In the past 11 years, India's journey from being the world's 11th largest economy to the fourth has been powered by a decisive technological and innovation-driven push, supported by consistent political vision and leadership under Prime Minister Narendra Modi

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

As important as it is to provide telecom services, it is equally important to ensure the safety and well-being of our 1.2 billion customers

JYOTIRADITYA M SCINDIA | UNION MINISTER, COMMUNICATIONS

SHORT TAKES

Fino Payments

Bank settlement

**New Delhi:** Fino Payments Bank Monday settled a case pertaining to failure to make timely and complete disclosure regarding frauds perpetrated by its employees with markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) after paying ₹5.88 lakh. The order came after the bank filed a settlement application with SEBI proposing to settle the alleged violations "without admission or denial of findings of fact and conclusions of law", through a settlement order. In its show cause notice, SEBI alleged that Fino Payments Bank failed to make timely and complete disclosure of a material event regarding fraud perpetrated by its employees, as required under the LODR (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations. It was observed that 15 complaints were received alleging fraudulent investment schemes by employees of the bank.

EV price change

**New Delhi:** Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari Monday said the prices of electric vehicles (EVs) in India are expected to be on par with those of petrol-powered vehicles within the next four to six months. The minister said India's dependence on fossil fuels is both an economic burden, as ₹22 lakh crore is spent annually on fuel imports and an environmental hazard, making clean energy adoption crucial for the country's progress. Presently, the size of the US automobile industry is ₹78 lakh crore, followed by China (Rs 47 lakh crore) and India (Rs 22 lakh crore). Gadkari pointed out that farmers have earned an additional ₹45,000 crore by producing ethanol from corn. Highlighting the importance of higher education and skill development, the minister said that a futuristic vision for development with appropriate knowledge is the need of the hour.

BigBasket's self-audit

**New Delhi:** Tata-owned online grocer BigBasket Monday said it has completed a comprehensive self-audit of its quick commerce platform to ensure compliance with the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) guidelines and advisories issued in 2023 and 2025 to curb dark patterns. The declaration of audit completion has been formally submitted to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, the company said in a statement. Dark patterns include practices like false urgency alerts, hidden costs added at checkout, subscription traps, and disguised advertisements that manipulate consumer choices...



I do not think India should protect any sector.China is a major supplier for India as far as imports from China are concerned. If you are not able to sell more to China, then it is pointless...if you (India) are competitive, they will buy more products

BVR SUBRAHMANYAM | CEO, NITI AAYOG

OLA ELECTRIC'S FERRITE MOTOR GETS NOD

Ola Electric Monday said it has become the first two-wheeler EV manufacturer to receive government certification for its in-house developed rare-earth-free ferrite motor. This marks a breakthrough milestone that eliminates reliance on imported rare-earth motors with permanent magnets, the Bengaluru-based firm said in a statement. The certification has been granted by Global Automotive Research Centre, Tamil Nadu, after Ola Electric's ferrite motor underwent rigorous performance verification and mandatory motor power tests as per AIS 041



GOLD SHINES BRIGHT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** Gold prices skyrocketed by ₹9,700 to scale a fresh peak of ₹1,30,300 per 10 grams in the national capital Monday, lifted by safe-haven buying in the overseas markets and depreciation in the Indian rupee.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at ₹1,20,600 per 10 grams Friday.

In the local bullion market, gold of 99.5 per cent purity jumped by ₹2,700 to hit a record high of ₹1,22,700 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) Monday. It had settled at ₹1,20,000 per 10 grams in the previous market session.

Traders said the fall in the rupee against the US dollar added to the rally of the precious metal.

"Gold reached a new record high on Monday as investors still prefer bullion despite this record high price. They are anticipating further gains in bullion backed by favourable fundamentals and strong bullish momentum," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Gandhi noted that concerns about a prolonged US government shutdown potentially impacting economic performance are supporting the demand for safe-haven metal.

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Friday, as per the association.

Silver prices have soared by ₹67,700 or 75.47 per cent in the current calendar year, rallying from ₹89,700 per kg December 31, 2024.

In the international markets, spot gold rose nearly 2 per cent to touch an all-time high of \$3,949.58 per ounce, while silver went up over 1 per cent to hit a high of \$48.75 per ounce.

"Spot gold extended gains and surged above \$3,940 per ounce for the first time ever as the US government shutdown enters its sixth day, following the Senate's failure to pass funding bills on Friday," Kaynat Chainwala, AVP Commodity Research at Kotak Securities, said.

"Gold traded positively with sharp gains to hit a record ₹1,20,000 per 10 grams-mark, as Comex gold extended its rally above USD 3,900 per ounce. The ongoing festive demand and global sentiment-driven rally continue to support prices, while rupee weakness adds domestic strength," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

Silver, too, witnessed gains on the MCX. The white metal futures for December delivery bounced ₹2,233 or 1.53 per cent to record ₹1,47,977 per kilogram.

The March 2026 contract for silver futures jumped ₹2,337 or 1.59 per cent to hit a lifetime high of ₹1,49,605 per kg on the commodities bourse.

Globally, gold futures for December delivery climbed to hit a record high of \$3,973.60 per ounce. Silver futures for December delivery also hit a high of \$48.58 per ounce.

Renisha Chainani, Head of Research at Augmont, said gold prices have surged 50 per cent this year, while silver has surged 65 per cent this year in the international markets.

"2025 has been the year of uncertainties - it started with political uncertainty, then tariff uncertainty, geopolitical uncertainty, rate cut uncertainty and now US shutdown uncertainty. All these factors have supported bullion prices to rise phenomenally this year on safe-haven demand," Chainani said.

SC agrees to hear Vi plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** The Supreme Court Monday said it will hear Vodafone Idea's (Vi) plea seeking waiver of interest, penalty, and interest on penalty on its adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues demanded by the Department of Telecommunications October 13.

Vi, in its application, has sought to amend its previous petition, which sought the quashing of the Department of Telecommunications' additional AGR demand of ₹9,450 crore for FY19. The amended application now seeks a waiver of interest on the principal amount of AGR dues, penalty, and penalty interest. The telecom company said it had objected to the imposition of a penalty because the non-payment of AGR dues was genuine.

Earlier, September 26, the apex court had transferred the hearing of the Vodafone Idea AGR case to October 6 due to the government's request for more time. During the previous proceedings, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the DoT, had requested additional time to respond to Vodafone Idea's petition, and Vodafone Idea did not oppose the request.

September 19, the Centre had informed the Supreme Court that it did not oppose Vodafone Idea's petition, but insisted that a resolution was necessary because the government itself held a significant stake in the company.

After converting Vodafone Idea's interest liabilities into equity, the government became the largest shareholder with a 49 per cent stake. However, it is not classified as a promoter.

Sensex jumps 583 pts, Nifty ends above 25,000



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Oct 6:** Stock markets rallied for the third consecutive day Monday, with benchmark Sensex climbing 583 points and the Nifty reclaiming the 25,000-level following value buying in IT and financial shares.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 582.95 points or 0.72 per cent to settle at 81,790.12. During the day, it zoomed 639.25 points or 0.78 per cent to 81,846.42.

The 50-share NSE Nifty has surged by 183.40 points or 0.74 per cent to 25,077.65. Nifty has advanced 466 points or 1.89 per cent in three sessions to regain the 25,000 level on Monday on value buying by investors.

Among Sensex firms, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finance, Eternal, Infosys, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Bajaj Finserv were the major gainers.

However, Tata Steel, Adani Ports, Power Grid and Titan were among the laggards.

The BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.68 per cent, while smallcap index dipped 0.20 per cent. Among sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT surged the most by 2.21 per cent, fol-

lowed by IT (1.96 per cent), teck (1.60 per cent), bankex (1.10 per cent), healthcare (1.05 per cent) and financial services (0.93 per cent).

Commodities, FMCG, telecommunication, utilities and metal were among the laggards. "Market remained in positive territory through the session mainly aided by gains in banking, IT and healthcare stocks. Despite the upmove, it was not a broad-based rally, indicating that undertone still remains cautious with a weak bias owing to sharp selling by overseas investors," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

In Asian markets, Japan's Nikkei 225 index jumped nearly 5 per cent, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index settled lower. Markets in China and South Korea were closed for holidays.

Stock markets in Europe were trading lower. US markets ended on a mixed note Friday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.78 per cent to \$65.68 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹1,583.37 crore Friday, according to exchange data.

Eli Lilly to invest \$1 bn in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** Eli Lilly and Company Monday said it plans to invest \$1 billion in India over the next several years to scale up contract manufacturing in the country. The strategic investment will further strengthen the company's manufacturing and supply capabilities to support its evolving portfolio, the US-headquartered company said in a statement.

In addition, Lilly will establish a new hub in Hyderabad to offer advanced technical capabilities and oversight for Lilly's contract manufacturing network across India, it added.

Recruitment will begin immediately, with openings across various roles including engineers, chemists, analytical scientists, quality control and assurance professionals, and management positions, it said.

The initiative reflects Lilly's intent to leverage India's highly-skilled talent pool to support its global manufacturing growth and deliver medicines to patients worldwide, it added.

India explores nationwide climate-linked insurance scheme

REUTERS

**Mumbai, Oct 6:** India's government has begun early-stage talks with local insurers about designing a nationwide climate-linked insurance programme aimed at simplifying the payout process after extreme weather events such as heatwaves and floods.

The scheme would adopt a parametric insurance model, where policyholders receive a pre-determined payout when specific weather thresholds such as rainfall, temperature or windspeed are breached.

Should the discussions bear fruit, India - among the nations most prone to extreme weather events - could become one of the first major economies to roll out such a programme.

The move would also help the government, which now uses funds earmarked for disasters to help states with adverse climate events, rein in costs as insurers would be taking on more risk.

Under a parametric mod-

el, payouts can be made very quickly, whereas in traditional insurance, payments are based on the loss sustained and assessments can take years. Parametric insurance can also be used to offer coverage in areas where traditional insurance is rare.

Federal government officials are backing the idea though no formal proposal has been floated yet, according to a government official. The official and a separate insurance executive, both of whom declined to be identified, also said the discussions are taking place.

The National Disaster Management Authority, the finance ministry and GIC Re and other top insurers are exploring coverage options and funding mechanisms, the official added.

The ministry, the disaster management agency and India's insurance regulator IRDAI did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment.

Interest in parametric insurance is on the rise globally. For instance, in 2023, Fiji became



the first Pacific Island nation to adopt a sovereign parametric insurance policy, securing coverage against tropical cyclones.

The use of financial instruments to mitigate climate risk is also expected to feature prominently at the COP30 summit in Brazil this November, part of United Nations Environment Programme's finance initiative.

SEEKING COVER

India ranks sixth globally in climate vulnerability, according to the Germanwatch Global Climate Risk Index 2025, which

tracked events between 1993 and 2022.

During this period, India experienced over 400 extreme weather events, resulting in at least 80,000 deaths and economic losses of around \$180 billion.

In recent years, key agricultural states such as Punjab and Assam have reported crop and livelihood losses due to flooding, while flash floods and landslides in Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir have destroyed homes, roads and bridges.

The federal government is

considering multiple financing options, including tapping existing disaster relief funds or levying small charges on utility bills to fund premiums, according to the government official.

"If it aligns with rules of urban local bodies, tiny deductions from utility bills could be considered, with a consortium of insurers entering contracts with municipal corporations," the official added.

Separate from federal-level discussions, some states have piloted such schemes and even more are in talks with insurers to secure parametric coverage, seven industry executives said.

Last year, a group of 50,000 self-employed women in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra states received \$5 payouts when temperatures exceeded 40°C

between May 18 and May 25. The tiny northeastern state of Nagaland, which gained India's first disaster risk coverage from SBI General Insurance in May 2024, received its first payout of \$119,000 in May after excessive rainfall earlier in the year.

The southern state of Kerala's co-operative milk marketing federation also introduced a scheme to protect cattle farmers against the losses suffered in the summer when higher temperatures lead to decreased milk production. "States are looking at a window for medium-term implementation. These conversations are gathering pace, and every insurance company is attentive to opportunities," a senior executive at a leading private insurer said.

INDIA COULD BE AMONG FIRST MAJOR NATIONS TO ADOPT CLIMATE PARAMETRIC INSURANCE SCHEME ..... SUCH SCHEMES GIVE SET PAYOUTS WHEN CERTAIN LEVELS OF DISASTER INTENSITIES ARE MET ..... INDIAN STATES ARE ALSO PILOTING PROGRAMMES, IN SEPARATE TALKS WITH INSURERS



# Pramod dominates with gold hat-trick

*Odisha para shuttler's triple triumph and India's medal haul at the 1st Abia Para Badminton International highlight the nation's rising dominance in para badminton, setting a confident tone for the upcoming international season*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Abia, Oct 6:** Ace Indian para shuttler Pramod Bhagat continued his outstanding form at the 1st Abia Para Badminton International 2025, securing three gold medals and reaffirming his dominance in the global para badminton circuit.

Bhagat won the men's singles SL3 title, defeating compatriot Mantu Kumar in a thrilling final by 21-7, 9-21, 21-9. Showing his trademark composure and tactical brilliance, Bhagat bounced back strongly after losing the second game to secure victory in three games.

He then teamed up with Sukant Kadam to secure another gold by winning the men's doubles, defeating Peru's Gerson Jair Vargas Lostaunaul and Diana Rojas Golac in straight

sets, 21-13, 21-17. The duo's smooth coordination and aggressive style proved too powerful for their opponents.

Bhagat's third gold came in the mixed doubles SL3-SU5 category, partnering with Arati Patil to secure another exciting final victory, further reinforcing his position as India's most decorated para badminton star.

Speaking after his triple-gold-winning performance, Bhagat said, "Every victory motivates me to push my limits further. Competing at this level and bringing glory to India is always special. I'm proud of the hard work and the sup-

**Every victory motivates me to push my limits further. Competing at this level and bringing glory to India is always special. I'm proud of the hard work and the support team behind these wins**

PRAMOD BHAGAT

port team behind these wins."

Apart from Bhagat and Kadam's outstanding performance, several Indian shuttlers impressed across various categories. Ranjit Singh secured three bronze medals — in men's singles WH1, men's doubles WH1-WH2 (with Paramjit Singh), and mixed doubles WH1-WH2 (with Shabana).

Nurul Hossain Khan won silver in men's singles WH2, while Uma Sarkar clinched silver in women's singles SL3. The duo of Arati Patil and Uma Sarkar secured bronze in women's doubles SL3-SU5. Other strong performances included bronze medals for Nilesh Gaikwad in men's SL4, Kanak Singh Jadaun in women's SL4, and a complete Indian sweep in men's singles SU5, where Karan Paneer, Rahul Vimal, and Sativada secured gold, silver, and bronze, respectively.

# Countdown begins for ITTF-ATTU 28th Asian Table Tennis Team Championships

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 6:** The countdown to the ITTF-ATTU 28th Asian Table Tennis Team Championships officially began Monday with the grand unveiling of the Championships Trophy by Suryabanshi Suraj, Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs, who graced the occasion as the chief guest.

The ceremony, hosted by the Odisha State Table Tennis Association (OSTTA) at the Athletics Centre of the Kalinga Stadium, showcased the state's readiness to host its first-ever continental table tennis championship.

The glittering trophy, symbolizing the spirit of competition and excellence, was revealed to mark the start of the championship build-up.

Following the unveiling, the minister flagged off a specially designed publicity vehicle—adorned with lights and flowers, a playing table, and young paddlers rallying balls—set to tour Bhubaneswar and nearby cities, spreading excitement



ahead of the tournament, which kicks off October 11. The finals are slated for October 15.

Notably, a trophy tour will be conducted in the coming days featuring the tournament mascot 'Olly', which will travel to cities including Puri, Cuttack, and Bhubaneswar, engaging fans and building anticipation for the championship.

The ceremony commenced

with a warm welcome to the Chief Guest by OSTTA and its organising committee members of the 28th ATTC 2025. Distinguished dignitaries present included Sachin Ramachandran Jadav (Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Sports & Youth Services Department), Dr Yeddula Vijay (Director of Sports and Youth Services Department), Rabin-dra Parida (Organising Secre-

tary, OSTTA), Jaydith Debata (Joint Organising Secretary, OSTTA), and Technical Director N Ganeshan.

The OSTTA extended its gratitude to the minister, esteemed guests, and the sports community for their unwavering support in promoting table tennis and reinforcing Odisha's standing as a powerhouse for hosting world-class sporting events.

## WORLD JUNIOR C'SHIPS

# Young shuttlers off to flying start

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Guwahati, Oct 6:** Hosts India kicked off their mixed team campaign in the Suhandinata Cup with a commanding win over neighbours Nepal, while Sri Lanka stunned the UAE in a nail-biting finish on the opening day of the BWF World Junior Championships here Monday.

India, seeded second, experimented with their line-up but still sailed through 45-18, 45-17 in their Group H opener, while Sri Lanka took advantage of the changes made by UAE to win 30-45, 45-34, 45-44.

All other top countries, including 14-time champions China, former champions Indonesia and South Korea had little problem beating their respective opponents in straight sets to get their campaign rolling.

The mixed team championships is being played under a new best of three relay-scoring format.



Each tie will be contested for the best of three sets up to 45 points, with each set comprising five matches – one each in men's singles, women's singles, men's doubles, women's doubles and mixed doubles. Teams are also allowed to change their players for each set. India took advantage of this substitution rules to give most of their players a chance to get some match experience as they played a different combination in all three doubles

and different players in singles in the two sets against Nepal.

Unnati Hooda and Asian U-19 championships bronze medalist Tanvi Sharma were clinical in their respective girls singles matches, while Suryansh Rawat and Rounak Chouhan warmed up for bigger challenges without breaking any sweat.

India will now take on Sri Lanka in their second group game Tuesday and will play UAE Wednesday.

## SHORT TAKES

### Oz-India T20I: Tickets sold out at MCG

**Melbourne:** Cricket Australia (CA) Monday announced that public ticket allocations for the men's T20I game between Australia and India at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) have been fully exhausted, more than three weeks ahead of the fixture scheduled to be held October 31. Previously, public allocations for 12 days of the five-match Ashes series between Australia and England were exhausted. CA added that the extraordinary demand for the Melbourne T20I reflects the high interest surrounding India's white-ball tour, which has now surpassed 175,000 tickets sold across eight matches. India's white-ball tour of Australia starts with the ODI series opener October 19 at Perth Stadium and is followed by matches at Adelaide Oval and Sydney Cricket Ground October 23 and 25, respectively. The last time India toured Australia for a bilateral ODI series, the visitors' lost by 2-1 margin in 2020/21 but managed to win the subsequent T20I series by the same margin on the same tour.

### Sixth edition: LPL to feature Indian players

**New Delhi:** The organisers of the Lanka Premier League (LPL) Monday announced that Indian cricketers will feature in the tournament for the first time when its sixth edition begins December 1. This T20 event will feature 24 matches in total, including 20 league fixtures and 4 knockout games, spread across three premier venues – R Premadasa International Cricket Stadium, Colombo; Pallekele International Cricket Stadium, Kandy; and Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium, Dambulla. "For the very first time, Indian cricketers are expected to join the action, their names will be revelled soon, adding a whole new level of excitement for fans across the region," a press release said.

## WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

*Marylebone Cricket Club backs third umpire's decision to adjudge Muneeba run-out*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Oct 6:** The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has issued a clarification on the unusual run-out of Pakistan opener Muneeba Ali during the 2025 Women's World Cup clash against India, saying that the third umpire was 'entirely correct' in adjudging her as run-out.

The incident happened on the last ball of the fourth over of Pakistan's chase at the R Premadasa Stadium when Muneeba initially survived an lbw appeal off Kranti Gaud, as India chose not to review despite replays later showing three reds.

But Muneeba had wandered



out of her crease, and a throw from Deepti Sharma hit the stumps. Though Muneeba did ground her bat, it was in the air when the throw from Deepti hit the stumps.

The decision sparked animated scenes, with Pakistan skipper Fatima Sana Khan saying to the fourth umpire Kim Cotton that Muneeba had grounded her bat and, with no intention

of taking a run, the dismissal should be changed.

It first touched upon the suggestion that Muneeba could have been protected by Law 30.1.2, which goes as, "a batter shall not be considered to be out of his/her ground if, in running or diving towards his/her ground and beyond, and having grounded some part of his/her person or bat beyond

# MCC breaks silence on run-out row

## Amin reprimanded for code of conduct breach

**P**akistan batter Sidra Amin has been reprimanded for a Level 1 breach of the ICC Code of Conduct for her actions during the team's recent ICC Women's Cricket World Cup match against India. The two teams faced off Sunday at the R Premadasa International Cricket Stadium in Sri Lanka. Sidra breached Article 2.2 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "abuse of cricket equipment or clothing, ground equipment or fixtures and fittings during an international match." In addition, one demerit point has been added to her disciplinary record, as it was her first offence within a 24-month period. The incident occurred when Sidra forcefully hit her bat onto the pitch after being dismissed in the 40th over.



the popping crease, there is subsequent loss of contact between the ground and any part of his/her person or bat, or between the bat and person."

"This Law, which was introduced in 2010 and is sometimes referred to as the 'bouncing bat

Law', is to protect a batter who inadvertently loses contact with the ground as they move towards the stumps, either with their bat bouncing up or just with both their feet being airborne through the natural process of running."



# Premier League: Man City star Haaland at top of his game

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, Oct 6:** Manchester City striker Erling Haaland believes he is in the best form of his career — and the statistics show he might be right.

The scoring phenom from Norway made it 18 goals from his opening 11 games of the season by netting City's winner against Brentford in the Premier League.

That prompted a question: Is he in the form of his life? "You can say so," Haaland said. "I've never felt better than I do now."

Here's a deeper look at his scoring run — and how it currently compares to other top strikers:

Is this Haaland's best goal streak? In a senior career spent at Molde in Norway, Salzburg in Austria, Borussia Dortmund in Germany and now City, Haa-

land has never scored more than 18 goals in an 11-game stretch in a single season.

He has achieved that exact same tally, though, on three previous occasions. And they came in the same season.

In the 2022-23 campaign — his first at City — Haaland had 11-game stretches from August 21-October 5 and August 27-October 8 where he scored 18 goals for club and country. Those runs included hat tricks in three consecutive home league games.

Later that season, he again netted 18 goals in an 11-game run from March 11-May 3 — a streak that included five goals in a Champions League match against Leipzig.

In his current run, Haaland also has a five-goal match — for Norway against Moldova — as well as four doubles. He has



**T**he scoring phenom from Norway made it 18 goals from his opening 11 games

**H**e has now scored in nine straight matches for club and country

nine Premier League goals so far, which is more than nine teams in the division.

What about Haaland's run of consecutive scoring games? This is where Haaland has broken his personal record.

His goal against Brentford meant he has now scored in nine straight matches for club and country, and he's never done that before.

His previous best streak was eight games in a row — from August to October in 2021 when he played for Dortmund, and from August to September in 2022 soon after joining City.

What's the Premier League record for scoring in consecutive games? The only game in which Haaland failed to score this season was at home to Tottenham in the Premier League August 23, when City lost 2-0.

He has netted in all five of

City's league games since, but has a way to go to break the record for scoring in consecutive games. That is held by Jamie Vardy, who scored in 11 straight matches in the Premier League from August to November en route to Leicester winning the title in fairytale fashion.

How does Haaland compare to the world's other top strikers this season? It hasn't just been a strong start to the season for Haaland.

Harry Kane has begun even better, scoring 19 goals in his first 11 games for Bayern Munich and England combined — starting with one in the German Super Cup. The England captain has failed to score in just one of those matches.

As for Kylian Mbappé, he has 16 goals in his opening 12 games for Real Madrid and France combined.