

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
Flow with the tide today. This is Ganesha's tip pertaining to your relationships. You are assertive as a general rule but you can save it for later. Today is the day to be generous and accede to the wishes of your beloved. You may even propose to him/her.

TAURUS
This day appears to be earmarked for a long shopping spree. Ganesha sees you doing the rounds of malls, markets, dollar stores and bargain counters. You are likely to be happily busy in haggling over prices, trying to get the best deals for your purchases. Before you are done you would have bought tons of stuff.

GEMINI
You are desirous of perfection in everything that you do, and you practice this philosophy in every aspect of your life. You make sure that all of your energies are concentrated on taking forward your efforts in the right direction. You need to replenish your energies and increase your awareness today, to be able to continue your efforts, says Ganesha.

CANCER
It is about time that you cultivated healthy eating habits. Today, you will be prone to doing everything in excess. You may overeat or get swept away by emotions. You must keep a check on your emotions, or it may lead to unwanted complications. Eat vegetables or salad for a healthy lifestyle, suggests Ganesha.

LEO
You will be seized by a desire to do something new for a change today. Your mood will be bright throughout the day. You will be able to achieve success owing to your energy and enthusiasm. The planets are in your favour, hence you can accept the challenges coming your way and prevail over them, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
It is more than likely that you will reap financial profits from foreign contacts, predicts Ganesha. You will excel in all the activities that you undertake today. Your dream of establishing a mammoth business enterprise in a foreign country will take flight today.

LIBRA
Ganesha says that today will be a lucky day for you. You may receive some financial gain. There will be some good news about your children's progress. This is the right time to invest in business. For financial investors and share brokers this period is beneficial, so make the most of it.

SCORPIO
In all probability, your mood is extremely hawkish today. Your belligerence may even put off Lady Luck for the time being. Ganesha advises you to stay away from confrontations and troubles of any kind. The evening, however, promises to be relaxing.

SAGITTARIUS
Those around you will be impressed by the leader in you. You are the general and others will rally at your call to arms. And all the while, you swing your sword and make your way to the top, defying all odds. Do not forget to let people have their own time and space. This will not only help you progress, but will boost their morale too.

CAPRICORN
Patience is tested when one is in trouble; your patience could be tried today. The trick is in keeping your composure, says Ganesha. Avoid getting into an argument or scuffle with those around you, as luck may not be on your side.

AQUARIUS
You will not need a reason to party today. Be it the news of a friend getting married or you buying a new car, you are in a mood to celebrate life like anything! Apart from this, you will have a smooth sailing through out the day, foresees Ganesha.

PISCES
Looking at your planetary positions for today, there is a likelihood that you will suffer from reversals in fortunes financially. Hence be wary when it comes to financial dealings.



JLO, AFFLECK'S NEW BALANCE

According to a source close to the former couple, Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck are said to have found a new balance in their relationship since finalising their divorce earlier this year. A source has now told Page Six that the pair have a better dynamic now that they are no longer married.

KIDMAN RETURNS TO SOCIAL MEDIA

Just after her separation from husband Keith Urban emerged, actress Nicole Kidman has made her return to social media to mark Paris Fashion Week. The *Moulin Rouge!* star posted a series of images on Instagram Wednesday, showing her attending the Chanel presentation alongside filmmaker Baz Luhrmann and French singer Vanessa Paradis.



Court blocks Shilpa's international travel

Mumbai: The troubles seem to be mounting for Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty Kundra. The legal proceedings are now leaking into her personal life as she and her husband Raj Kundra have been denied permission for international travel by the Bombay High Court.

The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) had issued LOC against Shilpa Shetty and Raj Kundra, due to which both of them can not go abroad without the permission of the investigating agency or the court. The actress' lawyer told the court that Shilpa has to go to Colombo for a YouTube event. The event is set to be held from October 25 to October 29.

When the court asked the lawyer that she has any invitation, Shilpa's lawyer said that till the time she is not allowed to travel, the invitation will not be received. On this, the court said that first she has to give Rs 60 crore for the allegation of fraud and then it will be considered. The next hearing in the case has been scheduled for October 14, 2025.

For the unversed, businessman Deepak Kothari has alleged that Shilpa and Raj conspired to cheat him of more than 60 crores. He claimed that the money given in the of business expansion between 2015 and 2023 was actually squandered on personal expenses.



Lauren's strong love for India

Mumbai: Lauren Gottlieb has had a colourful innings in entertainment in USA (her home country) and India. She played a leading role in *ABCD: Any Body Can Dance* in 2013 and became runner-up in the sixth season of the popular dance

show *Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa*.

Lauren has performed with Rihanna, Mariah Carey, Britney Spears, Shakira, Enrique Iglesias and others and has worked with Tom Cruise, Katie Holmes and the likes. She has done dance in television shows and in movies abroad.

Her latest is her music video *Sajri* with Indian actor and singer Gurdeep Mehndi.

Despite her international fame, Lauren is hunting for more work in India, which feels like home, she says.

While her roots are in USA, what made India her home? To this she says, "Earlier this year, I did a US tour, and when I came back to India, I felt so much at home."

Lauren carried on, "Like I went to my hometown of Arizona on that tour and it didn't feel like home and then I went to California where I lived for many years and that also didn't feel like home. In London, my husband feels like home, but London doesn't feel like home to me and when I stepped foot in India, I went, "I'm home!"

The actress went on to add, "I just connect with the people here in India. When you're abroad, people really stick to themselves. But here, everyone's saying 'Hi!'. Everyone is connected."

AGENCIES

Hyderabad: Rashmika Madanna is one of the biggest actresses in Indian cinema, who began her career in the Sandalwood industry. However, she is often discussed on social media as being banned from Kannada films. The actress recently spoke that much of what people assume about her is far from the truth. Responding to speculations about her being banned, the actress, expressing that there's often more to the story than what's visible, said, "See, the world doesn't know what is happening on the inside. Inside, god knows we can't always put a camera on our personal lives. Also, we aren't those people who share our messages online."

She al-

so made it clear that professional criticism is welcome, but personal assumptions are misplaced. "What people say about a person's life doesn't matter. Now, what they say about our professional life we'll consider it and work on it," she explained.

When directly asked if she has been banned by Kannada producers, Rashmika dismissed the rumours, saying, "So far, I have not been banned. So, yeah..."

AGENCIES

Rashmika dismisses Kannada ban rumour



When SRK said he is the last of stars

Mumbai: Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan recently entered the billionaire club, and is now the richest actor in the world. The megastar has dared to go beyond where anyone else in cinema hasn't been, and a huge part of it comes from the level of confidence that he has.

A recently resurfaced video of SRK from *The Anupam Kher Show* is the perfect exhibit of his grit and confidence. The clip shows Anupam Kher asking the actor, "Do you

ever think that one day your fame will be in someone else's name? Someone else will be more successful than you, someone else's name will be on the charts. Do you ever think about this?"

Responding to the same, SRK said, "It won't happen. I am modest, as I have told you. But, this won't happen. I am telling you honestly. Should I say it? I am the last of the stars".

Earlier, the actor officially became a billionaire with an estimated wealth of \$1.4 billion. As per the M3M Hurun India Rich List 2025, the milestone places him among the wealthiest entertainers globally. Notably, his wealth surpasses that of several international celebrities, including Taylor Swift (\$1.3 billion),

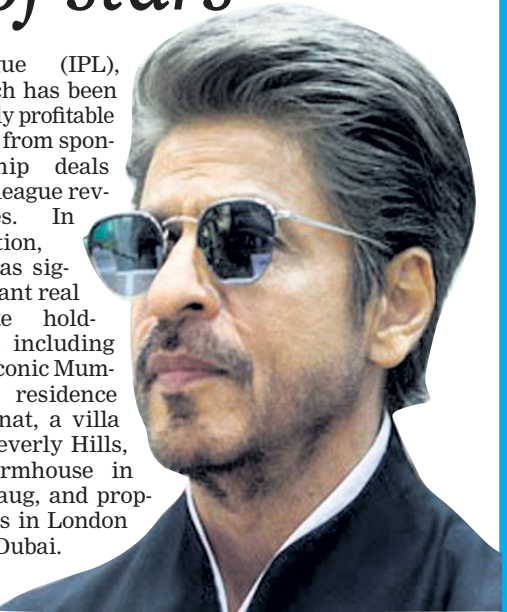
Arnold Schwarzenegger (\$1.2 billion), Jerry Seinfeld (\$1.2 billion), and Selena Gomez (\$720 million).

SRK's wealth extends beyond his film career, and is anchored in a diversified portfolio of businesses and investments. His flagship enterprise is Red Chillies Entertainment, founded in 2002, which has produced numerous blockbuster films such as Chennai Express, Raees, and Pathaan. The company not only produces films but also manages visual effects, distribution, and content rights, making it a major player in Indian entertainment.

He also co-owns the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), a franchise in the Indian Premier

League (IPL), which has been highly profitable both from sponsorship deals and league revenues. In addition, he has significant real estate holdings, including his iconic Mumbai residence Mannat, a villa in Beverly Hills, a farmhouse in Alibaug, and properties in London and Dubai.

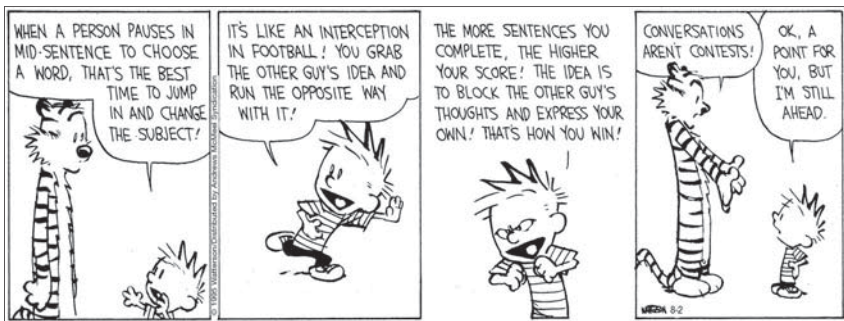
IANS



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

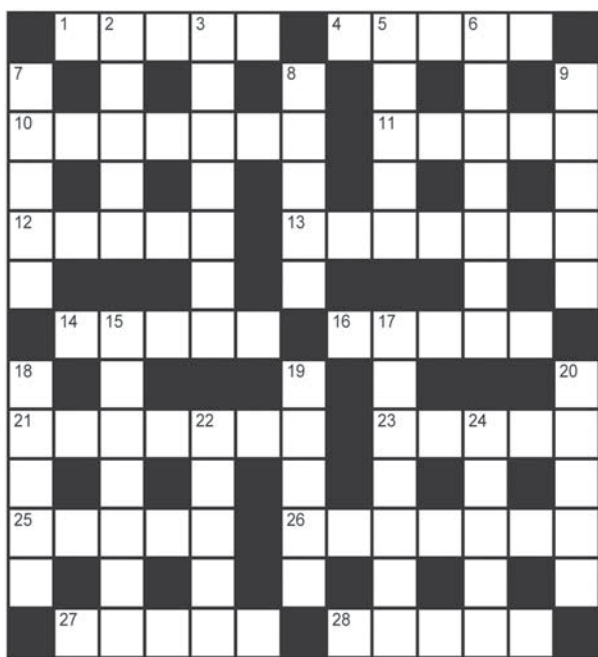


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- 1 Take a powder
- 4 Garbage
- 10 Height
- 11 Court mallet
- 12 Bonus
- 13 Séance holders
- 14 Kind of limit or skater
- 16 Hesitation
- 21 My car for yours? (5-2)
- 23 Forbidden

Down

- 25 Hot coal
- 26 Cork's palce
- 27 Marble material
- 28 Line to the audience
- 2 Navigational aid
- 3 Put on a pedestal
- 5 Unbending
- 6 Enjoys fully

- 7 Theatre worker
- 8 ___ fatale
- 9 Bored
- 15 Quagmire (4,3)
- 17 Moose toppers
- 18 Catchall category
- 19 Symbol of slowness
- 20 Dutch cheese
- 22 White heron
- 24 Stigmatise

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

| | | | | | |
|-----|-----|---|----|-----|---|
| T | C | Y | A | S | G |
| ORN | ATE | | DE | PAR | T |
| A | N | | A | A | R |
| AM | I | D | RE | PLI | C |
| A | D | | N | T | T |
| AD | H | E | R | E | S |
| I | | D | H | | P |
| S | A | G | A | S | |
| M | M | | D | L | A |
| GER | A | N | I | U | M |
| T | Z | A | E | I | E |
| VE | L | O | U | R | |
| R | N | Y | S | I | M |

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Nalco to offer skill training

BHUBANESWAR: National Aluminium Company Limited (Nalco) has signed a MoU to implement a skill development programme for youth from the peripheral villages surrounding its operational units in Damanjodi and Angul in the state.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Junagarh, No.- 436, date 8.10.25, I, Pratima Rout, D/o- Kshirasindhu Rout, R/o. Village- Kulihariguda, P.O.- Dhamanpur, P.S.- Golamunda, Dist.- Kalahandi, Odisha declare that I have changed my name from Kalyani Rout to Pratima Rout. Henceforth, I shall be known as Pratima Rout for all purposes. Pratima Rout

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Loisingha, No. 142 date 6.10.25, I, Rohit Kumbhar, R/o. At/P.O.: Jharanipali, P.S.: Ahalpur, Dist.: Balangir, PIN - 767061 declare that I have changed my son's name from Bijay Kumbhar to Bijaya Kumbhar. Henceforth he shall be known as Bijaya Kumbhar for all purposes. Rohit Kumbhar

LEGAL NOTICE

राजस्व मण्डल छत्तीसगढ़,
बिलासपुर
नोटिस
क्रमांक ६४ /राचक / अ. / रा.मं. / 2025
बिलासपुर, दिनांक 23/09/2025
पुनरीक्षण प्रकरण क्रमांक आर. एन.
/ 13 / आर / अ-06 /90/2023
पेशी दिनांक 15/10/2025
राजेश शुक्ला -पुनरीक्षणकर्ता
विरुद्ध
अशोक शुक्ला दगैरुह - अनावेदकगण
प्रति,
अशोक शुक्ला आ० ख०
आनंदी सहाय शुक्ला
हाल मुकाम झण्डा
झाससुगुड़ा (उड़िसा)
पुनरीक्षणकर्ता राजेश
शुक्ला आ० ख० आनंदी सहाय
शुक्ला निवासी रामलीला मैदान
म्यूनिस्यल स्कूल के सामने
राचगढ़ तहसील व जिला राचगढ़
(छ.ग.) के द्वारा आयुक्त,
बिलासपुर संभाग बिलासपुर के
प्रकरण क्रमांक 12 / अ-06/2019-
20 में पारित आदेश दिनांक
05/05/2022 के विरुद्ध छग०
भू-राजस्व संहिता 1959 की
धारा 50 के तहत इस न्यायालय
में पुनरीक्षण याचिका प्रस्तुत की
है। जिसकी सुनवाई दिनांक
15/10/2025 को दिन 11.00 बजे
इस न्यायालय में निश्चित है। अतः
इस नोटिस के द्वारा आपको
सूचित किया जाता है कि आप
स्वयं अथवा किसी अधिवक्ता,
जो मामले की पूर्ण जानकारी
रखते हों, के माध्यम से पेशी
तारीख 15/10/2025 दिन के 11.00
बजे इस न्यायालय में उपस्थित
होकर अपना पक्ष रख सकते हैं,
अन्यथा आपकी अनुपस्थिति
में प्रकरण में आपके विरुद्ध
एकपक्षीय कार्यवाही की जाकर
प्रकरण का निराकरण किया
जावेगा।
चदि उक्त दिनांक को
अवकाश घोषित होता है, तो
अगले कार्य दिवस पर इस
न्यायालय में उपस्थित होंवें।
दिनांक :- 23.09.2025
(माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय
द्वारा आदेशित)
अवर सचिव
राजस्व मण्डल छत्तीसगढ़
बिलासपुर

Torrential rains
paralyse Capital

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: The Capital city came to a standstill Wednesday afternoon as torrential rains lashed Bhubaneswar, inundating roads, crippling traffic, and displacing thousands of residents. The sudden downpour, which began in the afternoon, caused widespread chaos across major thoroughfares and low-lying areas, once again highlighting the City's vulnerable drainage infrastructure.

According to weather officials, the downpour between 12:30 pm and 2:00 pm led to widespread waterlogging across major routes, including Janpath, NH-16, Vani Vihar, Acharya Vihar, Rasulgah, Nayapalli, and Saheed Nagar. Commuters were left stranded for hours as traffic crawled through flooded streets, with several vehicles breaking down in submerged stretches. Knee-deep water was reported in both residential and commercial areas, adding to the chaos. "The entire City collapsed. Traffic on every major road came to a standstill for hours," said a local resident. "Even 15 minutes of heavy rain floods prime areas. The drainage system is just not working," another added.

The rain exposed significant flaws in the City's drainage infrastructure. Residents reported that water levels rose alarmingly fast in several neighborhoods due to blocked



drains and inadequate storm-water management. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has come under criticism for poor urban planning and delayed maintenance work.

Multiple educational institutions suspended classes due to unsafe conditions, and some areas witnessed power outages due to water entering transformers.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow alert for Bhubaneswar and surrounding districts, predicting more showers in the coming days. Officials warn of possible flash floods, particularly in low-lying and riverside areas.

According to IMD forecasts, rainfall is expected to continue throughout the week, with isolated heavy to very heavy spells likely. People are advised to avoid non-essential travel, keep emergency kits ready, and follow updates from authorities closely.

OUTR FOUNDATION DAY

Guv calls on students to drive innovation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Wednesday urged students to channel their education toward meaningful innovations and sustainable solutions that strengthen India's self-reliance. Speaking at the fourth Foundation Day of Odisha University of Technology and Research (OUTR), he said the country must strive not only to "Make in India," but also to "Design in India" and "Innovate for the World."

"Education is not merely about acquiring knowledge," the Governor said. "It is about nurturing intellect, integrity, and imagination." He added that true education shapes responsible and compassionate citizens.

Kambhampati lauded OUTR for embodying this vision through its multidisciplinary



approach encompassing engineering, planning, architecture, management, and research, reflecting the university's commitment to holistic education.

He congratulated the university's leadership, faculty, staff, and students for transforming OUTR into a vibrant hub of knowledge and innovation within just four years. "In a short span, OUTR has emerged as a centre of creativity and

excellence, nurturing young minds to become innovators and nation-builders," he said.

Highlighting the university's forward-looking initiatives, he noted the introduction of new courses in Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, Quantum Computing, and Semiconductor Technology, underscoring OUTR's commitment to cutting-edge education. He also commended the university for aligning with the National Ed-

ucation Policy 2020, which emphasises interdisciplinary and technology-driven learning.

Referring to recent announcements by the Prime Minister, the Governor highlighted Odisha's emerging role in India's semiconductor revolution, with the country's first commercial compound semiconductor fabrication facility and advanced packaging unit slated to be established in the state. He lauded both the Central and state governments for their efforts to position Odisha as a hub of technological growth under the Semiconductor Manufacturing and Fabless Policy.

Urging students to actively participate in this transformation, he said, "The future of semiconductor technology and artificial intelligence lies in your capable hands."

Dr Chahal's 'Whispers of the Soul' released

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: Dr Namrita Chahal's debut book 'Whispers of the Soul' was released here Wednesday. The event served as a meaningful prelude to World Mental Health Day (October 10), highlighting the book's strong focus on emotional and mental well-being.

Dr Chahal, who holds a Doctorate in Metaphysics, is a Quantum Healer, Life Coach, Reiki Grandmaster, and a seasoned wellness practitioner with over two decades of experience.

Her book serves as a simple yet profound wellness com-



panion. Through short, heartfelt reflections inspired by her own experiences, Dr Chahal encourages readers of all ages to cultivate mindfulness and embrace inner peace.

Attending the event as chief guest, noted author, playwright, and activist Gourahari Das said the book would serve as "a friend, a mirror, and a fountain of wisdom to rely upon in difficult moments of life."

POSH Act training held to sensitise officers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: A training programme on the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013—commonly known as the POSH Act—was held Wednesday at Lok Seva Bhavan conference hall here, organised by the Women and Child Development (W&CD) department.

As per the directions of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, the main objective of the training programme was to inform and sensitise deputy and assistant deputy officers of Lok Seva Bhavan about the legal provi-



sions and procedures under the POSH Act.

Acting on the advice of Deputy Chief Minister and W&CD Minister Pravati Parida, the second phase of the training covered around 1,100 depart-

mental officers through two sessions. Eminent advocate Manasi Padhi provided a detailed presentation on the Act, while in the second session Sushmita Das further explained its key provisions to the participants.

Puri Wildlife Division
observes wildlife week

PURI: The Puri Wildlife Division marked the 71st Wildlife Week with active participation from students, nature enthusiasts, and conservationists. The celebration commenced with awarding the prestigious Chief Minister's Wildlife Conservation Award (sub-divisional level), followed by the district-level drawing competition awards, honouring young artists for their creative depictions of nature and wildlife. A key highlight of the event was the release of the book 'Living Landscapes', along with the premiere screening of the documentary 'Deep Inside Balukhand-Konark Wildlife Sanctuary', offering a breathtaking glimpse into the sanctuary's rich biodiversity and hidden natural treasures.

Wheelchair Rugby team to champion road safety

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 8: The Odisha Wheelchair Rugby team, which clinched the 7th National Wheelchair Rugby Championship 2025, bringing immense pride to the state, will now serve as brand ambassadors for the road safety movement.

The team successfully retained their national title with unmatched passion, discipline, and teamwork, qualities that have now made them the face of the 'Come Home Safe' campaign.

At a felicitation ceremony here, Commerce and Transport department principal secretary Usha Padhee and Transport Commissioner Amitabh Thakur congratulated the players for their remarkable achievement and hailed them as symbols of courage, inclusion and compassion.

Also present at the event were Sports Director Yedula Vijay, representatives from the department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEP), and IIT-Madras, the knowledge partner for the campaign.

Speaking on the occasion, Padhee said, "These champions on wheels redefine strength and spirit. Their victory is not just



about sport, it's about resilience, perseverance, teamwork, and empathy. They embody the very essence of our Come Home Safe movement, reminding every citizen that safety, dignity, and care belong on every road."

Transport commissioner Amitabh Thakur praised the team's discipline and collective strength, stating that their commitment mirrors the department's mission to promote responsible road behaviour and ensure that every journey ends in safety.

The Odisha Wheelchair Rugby team includes Bikramaditya Jena, Prasanta Nayak, Sujit Kumar Nanda, Akash Banchhor, Litan Sahoo, Sudhir Malik, Murali Benia, Madhuri Benia, Sitarani Nayak, and Goutam Singh.

Many of the players from the team are survivors of major road accidents, yet their indomitable spirit has turned adversity into triumph. Guided by their dedicated coach Surendra Jena, the team continues to dominate the national arena.

Odisha Para Sports Association secretary Kamalakanta Rath was also present on the occasion, and lauded for his continuous efforts to uplift para-sports in the state and empower athletes to inspire society through their achievements.

The Come Home Safe campaign, spearheaded by the Commerce and Transport department, is state's flagship road safety initiative that envisions a future where every journey

concludes in safety, dignity and togetherness.

The campaign promotes empathy-driven awareness, community participation, and behavioural change through activities such as Zero Accident Day (ZAD) and Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) initiatives, implemented in partnership with IIT-Madras.

By associating the victorious Odisha Wheelchair Rugby team as brand ambassadors of care, the campaign gains a profoundly human and emotional dimension, blending sporting excellence with social responsibility.

Their journey from conquering the court to championing safe roads truly reflects Odisha's unstoppable spirit.

| MARKET WATCH | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|---------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| CURRENCY | | BOURSES | | COMMODITIES | |
| INDEX | VARIATION | INDEX | VARIATION | INDEX | VARIATION |
| DOLLAR | 88.84 ▼ 0.03 | SENSEX | 81773.66 ▼ 153.09 | GOLD | ₹123,000 ▲ ₹1,889 |
| EURO | 103.44 ▼ 0.38 | NIFTY | 25046.15 ▼ 62.15 | SILVER | ₹149,529 ▲ ₹3,737 |

WEATHER

| | | | |
|----------|-------|-------|--|
| | BBSR | CTC | FORECAST |
| Max Temp | 33.6° | 30.8° | Generally cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thunderstorm. |
| Min Temp | 24.1° | 22.6° | |
| Humidity | 82% | 90% | |
| Rainfall | 2.0mm | Nil | |

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TRUMP’S GAME



Having assembled a cabinet of blind loyalists he is eager to leave a lasting impact in American history as the man who waded into conflict zones and brokered several ceasefires as he claims with an eye on the Nobel Peace Prize

toral as well as popular votes he has no opposition now and is out to wreak havoc on the system eliminating all those he has felt threatened. Having assembled a cabinet of blind loyalists he is eager to leave a lasting impact in American history as the man who waded into conflict zones and brokered several ceasefires as he claims with an eye on the Nobel Peace Prize, though he had emphatically stated during his election campaign that he would not let America into war again.

India in this effort has scurried out of his favour following the PM’s denial of US involvement in ending the four-day conflict with Pakistan in May denying him also the Nobel nomination. Result, India has been at the humiliating end of his diatribes and unbearable tariff and visa tantrums causing severe harassment to Indian people and businesses. On the other hand, India’s sworn adversary has got privileged access to the President’s court. Deals have been cut while Pakistan has sold away its cryptocurrency, rare earth minerals and oil exploitation rights and become a close partner in USA’s

West and South Asian strategy. The appointment of Sergio Gora as US Ambassador to India and special envoy to South and Central Asia has made Pakistan the lynchpin of Washington’s new regional strategy.

The 80th UNGA saw the customary verbal clashes between the two sub-continental neighbours over terrorism. But then, before the UN meeting Islamabad had signed the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement, a NATO-type agreement, with Riyadh signaling the crystallization of a 60-year-old defence support system. Though the agreement was apparently signed keeping Washington informed and was on the face of it targeted at both Israel and Iran, Riyadh may have taken a grave risk by antagonizing Delhi with which it has worked out a steady strategic and comprehensive relationship taking into account energy, trade and investment, technology and Diaspora factors. In a recent move a Saudi shipload was refused permission to enter signaling India’s intent that it did not take kindly to such overtures.

This then is the new India and its newly evolved strategic

autonomy in the age of multi-alignment as a riposte to Trump’s muscular unilateralism; a policy paradoxically tilted towards Washington without reciprocal approbation. On the contrary, this could ignite concerns on the part of its powerful Eastern neighbour who has been busy arming its junior partner in a dangerous game to sabotage New Delhi’s rise as an emerging power.

New Delhi is caught between the cajoling of the West that it still holds importance as a counter to Beijing’s expansionism in the Indo-Pacific and the endearments of the Global South clearly led by China. The full-throated support of the Indian PM to the 20-point Gaza Peace Plan even before ink was dry on the agreement has dug New Delhi further into Washington’s embrace.

While it is difficult to situate New Delhi’s current posturing, it is amply clear where the American President stands in his inestimable lunacy and mercurial unpredictability. His address at the UNGA last month, castigating the institution which had given the world a semblance of stability despite steady encroachments on its chartered goals, and very recently to an assembly of US Armed Forces Generals and Admirals summoned from all around the world to listen to a delusional President and his delinquent Secretary of War on how to dress, walk and shave beard, quite clearly showed the fatal instincts of a power-hungry megalomaniac. In pitting much of the world against himself and his ideas, wrecking economies, global supply chains and mobility of professionals in the process, Trump may have revealed himself as the ultimate “mad man” in America’s history.

The writer is a retired diplomat and foreign policy analyst.



Malay Mishra

THE APPOINTMENT OF SERGIO GORAS US AMBASSADOR TO INDIA AND SPECIAL ENVOY TO SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA HAS MADE PAKISTAN THE LYNCHPIN OF WASHINGTON’S NEW REGIONAL STRATEGY

What would be the game like of a real estate dealer turned power broker turned part time actor who grew up on the mean streets of New York in the nasty and brutish sixties and seventies, I had always wondered, until I saw the man in a docu movie of his early days some time back and understood how pompous and arrogant his mindset has been from his excessive dalliance with wealth. He has carried that to his mature days when even rolling in luxury, he has mastered that mean and vindictive mindset. This he perfected by jumping on to the political bandwagon, buying off a Republican nomination and manipulating his way into the highest seat of the land in 2016. Surrounded by a battery of lawyers and moving between the costliest law offices of America, he has hired attorneys quick to take up his cases on financial embezzlement, sedition and sexual exploitation with felicity for which he has kept aside enormous funds. How then does one account for a man, twice impeached and held up for multiple cases of embezzlement and battery, incited mass violence in the highest seat of legislation, make a spectacular comeback to the same office four years later.

In 2017 a group of 27 leading psychiatrists and psychologists of USA had diagnosed him as delusional, mentally unstable and vindictive with a streak of lunacy, showing poor judgment and memory loss and thus unfit to hold the highest office of the land (reinforcing the ‘madman theory’). Fast forward to the present times, and the man rides to his second term in office bamboozling members of his party, branding a Far-Right ultra nationalist propaganda campaign, the MAGA blitz. Elected as the 47th US President with a majority of both elec-

The chimera of self-reliance

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has repeatedly outlined a Swadeshi path to developed India and urged Indian manufacturers and entrepreneurs to cut dependence on foreign markets and anchor their business models in ‘Make in India’ and ‘Atma Nirbhar Bharat’. But critics are of the opinion that ‘Atma Nirbhar Bharat’ is a political propaganda and seems to be a chimera as foreign goods are widely used by Indians. Self-reliance is a wide-ranging, long-term national strategy focused on reducing dependence on external sources by addressing vital challenges rather than relying solely on market-driven growth. It requires promoting policies that involve fostering domestic production and exports, augmenting technological capabilities through investment in R&D and education, and promoting inclusive, sustainable economic policies that benefit the entire population and build resilience against global shocks.

One of the objectives of self-reliance is to have a trade surplus. But India is currently running a trade deficit where the value of its imports exceeds its value of exports.

India’s trade deficit for FY25 was \$282.83 billion, compared to \$241.14 billion in the previous year. This widening gap is mainly due to higher merchandise imports (\$720.24 billion) and lower merchandise exports (\$437.42 billion).

After a ferocious scuffle between Indian and Chinese forces in the Galwan River valley, there were many demands to boycott Chinese products. Despite the Make in India initiative, India’s imports from China are rising because Indian industries, including electronics, pharmaceuticals, and solar energy heavily rely on Chinese components, raw materials, and technology, which often offer competitive prices and a wide range of availability.

Over the past 15 years, the share of Chinese manufactured goods in India’s total imports has increased from 21% to 30%, with imports growing 2.3 times faster than India’s total exports. India’s imports from China have increased significantly since 2020. Total imports increased from \$70.3 billion in 2018-19 to \$113.5 billion in 2024-25. With exports just about \$14.25 billion, the trade deficit with China has reached a record \$99.2 billion in 2024-25.

The Make in India initiative was launched on 25 September, 2014, to promote manufacturing, innovation and entrepreneurship in India. The main objective was to raise the share of manufacturing in GDP from 14-15% to 25% by 2025 and create six crore additional jobs in the industrial sector to boost economic growth, employment and global competitiveness.

The manufacturing sector that contributed 17.3% to India’s GDP in 2013-14, a year before the Make in India initiative was launched, increased to a little over 18% in the next few years, reaching 18.5% in 2021-22. Since then, the sector’s share in GDP has declined for two consecutive years. It was 17.7% in 2022-23 and 17.3% in 2023-24.

Prime Minister Modi recently said that India’s biggest challenge is its dependence on other countries, as he called for indigenous production of goods in various sectors, from chips to ships. This requires higher investment in R&D. But Indian companies have shown very little interest in R&D, an important edifice for building a self-reliant economy. Without a determined effort in innovation, Indian firms will forever

be dependent on global players for technology.

India spends very little on R&D compared to major global economies, with its gross expenditure on R&D varying from 0.6 to 0.7% of its GDP. This figure is significantly lower than the global average of 1.22% and countries like Israel (5.4%), South Korea (4.2%), Japan (3.4%), Germany (3.2%), the US (2.9%), China (2.4%), and Switzerland (2.83%).

Many people think that a key element of Atma Nirbhar Bharat is to reduce imports and increase exports. However, the theory of comparative advantage, developed by David Ricardo, suggests that countries should specialize in producing and exporting goods where they have a lower relative opportunity cost, even though they have an absolute advantage in all goods. This specialization brings benefits from trade for all countries involved, as they focus on their areas of comparative advantage and produce more efficiently and at lower cost.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

Forbidden Jokes

Not all political leaders hate being lampooned by cartoons. Some even proudly display them in their offices. But these tend to be democratic politicians, not authoritarian leaders whose power depends on a cult of personality.

US President Donald Trump, a democratically elected leader with strong authoritarian leanings, can’t stand to be ridiculed. It is said that his decision to run for president was the result of then-President Barack Obama making fun of him at the White House Correspondents’ Dinner in 2011. There was nothing Trump could do about it back then. But now, as president himself, he can try to silence the mockers.

Last month, Disney’s ABC Television network pulled late-night comedian Jimmy Kimmel – a frequent critic of Trump – off the air, after pressure from the chair of the Federal Communications Commission. Trump applauded the move as “Great News for America.” This prompted so much protest, with 1.7 million people reportedly canceling their Disney+, Hulu, and ESPN subscriptions, that Kimmel was reinstated a week later. Still, Trump has threatened to revoke the broadcasting licenses of networks that feature comedians who make jokes about him.

Trump is not wrong to recognize the power of humor. The French philosopher Voltaire, one of the all-time great satirists, once said: “I have never made but one prayer to God, a very short one: ‘O Lord, make my enemies ridiculous.’” Ridicule punctures hypocrisy, hyperbole, mendacity, and self-importance – the standard tricks of the authoritarian leader’s trade.

In the past, monarchs and powerful noblemen understood that mockery could be a necessary corrective to the flattery of courtiers. That was the role of court jesters, who were able to make fun of their bosses with impunity – up to a point. But that was because they could be treated as fools who posed no threat to power.

Since ancient Rome, satirists and comedians have had two main targets. The first is ideas – secular as well as religious articles of faith. This was Voltaire’s favoured terrain. He loved to mock the Catholic Church, which he saw as a corrupt institution that oppressed people by spreading superstitious beliefs. “Religion,” he said, “began when the first scoundrel met the first fool.”

Given that satirists, from Voltaire to Kimmel, often ridicule established authority, one might assume that this kind of humor is usually “progressive,” or even left-wing. In fact, conservatives have been some of the sharpest satirists. Jonathan Swift, for example, was a staunch defender of the Anglican Church. There is no juicier target for a conservative comic to puncture than the earnest pretensions of idealists, whose zeal for change is often incompatible with a sense of humor. Comedy is more suited to skepticism and doubt than to a passion for great causes.

The other kind of satire is aimed at the personalities of people in power. These are the brave comedians who dare to point out that the emperor has no clothes. As Bob Dylan once wrote: “Even the president of the United States sometimes must have to stand naked.”

This kind of ridicule is seldom deadly for ordinary politicians. But the authority of monarchs and authoritarians depends on their aura. People obey them because they believe kings, queens, and dictators are invincible. The grand theater of power is as important to the ruler as the threat of violence to dissenters. When comics poke fun at it and, in the process, reveal these leaders as ridiculous blowhards, they challenge the very source of absolute power.

Hitler was furious about Charlie Chaplin’s 1940 comic masterpiece The Great Dictator. Chaplin didn’t have to expose the murderous crimes of fascism. All he needed to do was to show Hitler and Mussolini as buffoons. Nothing is more damaging to the demagogue than being laughed at.

In liberal societies, like the US, the United Kingdom, and France, leaders – including kings and queens – have had to put up with a certain amount of mockery. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cartoonists were often merciless. Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827) portrayed the Prince of Wales as a drunken lout. Honoré Daumier (1808-1879) depicted King Louis-Philippe as an obscene glutton.

Like the scandal sheets and yellow press, this type of derision was the price to pay for freedom of expression. This is very much the case in America, where the First Amendment of the US Constitution offers broad protections – more than in any other country – for speech. Public figures can be criticized, parodied, lampooned, and even libeled, unless “actual malice” can be proven.

The late Czech film director Miloš Forman, who immigrated to the US in 1968, made a 1996 film titled The People vs. Larry Flynt. It documented the legal battle between Flynt, the owner of the pornographic magazine Hustler, and Jerry Falwell, the television evangelist who sued Flynt for emotional distress after Hustler published a parody ad in which Falwell reminisced about having sex with his mother. In 1988, the US Supreme Court ruled unanimously that emotional distress was not sufficient reason to deny the First Amendment right to express critical views of public officials and figures.

Forman, who escaped from communist Czechoslovakia, was a grateful admirer of America’s First Amendment, which allowed a sleazy pornographer to mock a famous religious leader. If Trump succeeds in silencing the people who laugh at him in public, the country where Forman, who died in 2018, and millions of others once found freedom will cease to exist.

The writer is the author of numerous books, including Year Zero: A History of 1945, The Collaborators: Three Stories of Deception and Survival in World War II, and, most recently, Spinoza: Freedom’s Messiah.

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MARK TWAIN

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PAULO COELHO



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

WITHOUT A DETERMINED EFFORT IN INNOVATION, INDIAN FIRMS WILL FOREVER BE DEPENDENT ON GLOBAL PLAYERS FOR TECHNOLOGY

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

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Sensational commentary

Sir, This refers to the editorial “Military Rhetoric,” **Orissa POST**, October 8. The military’s recent rhetorical statements regarding Pakistan and Operation Sindoor were unwarranted and strategically counterproductive. While the operation itself showcased India’s precise military planning and operational capability, public declarations bordering on provocations risk undermining both diplomacy and national security. By making such statements, the armed forces inadvertently politicize a sensitive military success, shifting attention from strategic achievement to sensational commentary. In a region already tense with historical hostilities, rhetoric can be misinterpreted, emboldening adversaries and complicating ongoing diplomatic engagements. Credibility of the armed forces relies not only on battlefield competence but also on disciplined, measured communication. Strategic restraint in public discourse, particularly concerning Pakistan, is essential to balance deterrence with responsibility. While demonstrating resolve is necessary, operational achievements speak louder than words; provocative statements, however well-intentioned, risk undermining India’s calculated security posture and its image as a responsible regional power, turning a tactical victory into a potential diplomatic liability

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Arbitrary action


Sir, This refers to the news report “Furnish details of 3.66L excluded voters: SC to EC,” **Orissa POST**, October 8. I would like to comment that the Election Commission of India (ECI) has allegedly kept the Bihar electorate in complete dark about the exclusion or inclusion of names in the voters’ list. It seems the entire process has been carried out surreptitiously and the apex court is smelling rat. The ECI has reportedly refused to give a patient hearing to those voters whose names have been deleted. It appears strange to the Supreme Court that while 3.66 lakh voters who were deleted in the final list in addition to the 65 lakh deleted in the draft list had not been given individual notices which speaks volume of the arbitrary action on the part of the ECI intending to thwart open the democratic process.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

of the day

quote

All this is a game played by Amit Shah. He is behaving like he is the acting Prime Minister of this country. But the PM is aware of everything, I am sorry to say




MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

Despite Chief Minister Omar Abdullah repeatedly promising to protect people's land rights, no concrete policy or legal stand has yet been adopted to safeguard them in courts



MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

Infra-structure upgradation is being done at a massive scale. The entire system will be modern. In the next summer, there will be no power cuts in Punjab



ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP NATIONAL CONVENER

SHORT TAKES

Karur stampede: TVK moves SC

New Delhi: Tamil actor Vijay's political party Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam has moved the Supreme Court challenging the Madras High Court order constituting a SIT to probe the Karur stampede that killed 41 people. The apex court agreed to hear the plea Friday. A bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran took note of the submissions of a lawyer that the plea, filed through TVK's secretary Aadhav Arjuna, be listed for hearing. On Tuesday, the bench agreed to hear October 10 BJP leader Uma Anandan's plea challenging the high court order refusing a CBI probe into the September 27 stampede.

2 soldiers go missing during combing op

Srinagar: Security forces launched a massive search operation in the forests of Kokernag area in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag to locate two missing soldiers after losing contact with them during a combing exercise in the area to track down terrorists, officials said Wednesday. The combing operation was launched two days ago in the Ahlan Gadole area of Kokernag as following inputs that a group to terrorists was hiding there, they said.

Sukanta demands Mamata's resignation

Kolkata: Senior BJP leader Sukanta Majumdar Wednesday claimed that the October 6 attack on his party leaders in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district was a "pre-planned murder attempt" and demanded the resignation of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for allegedly failing to maintain law and order. Majumdar, who is the Union minister of state for education, also sought a CBI probe into the incident at Nagrakata, where MP Khagen Murmu and MLA Sankar Ghosh were attacked by a mob during a visit to the flood-hit area.

Punjabi singer Rajvir Jawanda dies

Chandigarh: Punjabi actor-singer Rajvir Jawanda died here Wednesday, 11 days after he was seriously injured in a road accident. The 35-year-old was declared dead at 10.55 am Wednesday, hospital authorities said. Jawanda, a big, emerging name in the Punjabi showbiz industry, had been on life support ever since he was brought to the Fortis Hospital in Mohali in an extremely critical condition.



Our message is clear: Ecology and economy can grow together. And India is showing the way

BHUPENDER YADAV | ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

SC TO HEAR FIRECRACKER BAN ISSUE TOMORROW

The Supreme Court Wednesday deferred to October 10 the hearing on issues related to manufacturing and sale of 'green' crackers' in Delhi and the national capital region

KERALA LUXURY CAR SMUGGLING CASE

ED raids properties of actors Dulquer Salmaan, Prithviraj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, Oct 8: The ED Wednesday raided premises linked to actors Prithviraj Sukumaran, Dulquer Salmaan, Amit Chakkalackal and some other persons in Kerala and Tamil Nadu as part of a probe into a Customs case related to alleged smuggling of luxury vehicles from Bhutan to India, official sources said.

The agency also questioned and recorded the statement of 42-year-old Salmaan, son of superstar Mammootty, at his home during the searches, a source told PTI.

The Enforcement Directorate also covered the premises of certain vehicle owners, auto workshops, and traders in Ernakulam, Thrissur, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Kottayam and Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu).

A total of 17 premises were covered, including one in Chennai linked to Mammootty.

The location linked to Mammootty is being searched in connection with the action against his son, the sources said. The action is being taken under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) in a recent case unearthed by the preventive department of Customs related to alleged smuggling of luxury vehicles and unauthorised foreign exchange dealings, they said.

The ED will also soon file a criminal case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to probe the allegations, the sources said.

The searches are based on inputs about a "syndicate" engaged in "illegal" import and registration of high-end cars such as Land Cruiser, Defender, and Maserati through the India-Bhutan and India-Nepal routes.

Preliminary findings, according to officials, point to



THE AGENCY ALSO QUESTIONED AND RECORDED THE STATEMENT OF 42-YEAR-OLD SALMAAN, SON OF SUPERSTAR MAMMOOTTY, AT HIS HOME DURING THE SEARCHES

THE ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE ALSO COVERED THE PREMISES OF CERTAIN VEHICLE OWNERS, AUTO WORKSHOPS, AND TRADERS IN ERNAKULAM, THRISSUR, KOZHIKODE, MALAPPURAM, KOTTAYAM AND COIMBATORE (TAMIL NADU)

A TOTAL OF 17 PREMISES WERE COVERED, INCLUDING ONE IN CHENNAI LINKED TO MAMMOOTTY

a Coimbatore-based network that used "forged" documents (purporting to be from Indian Army, US Embassy, and MEA) and fraudulent RTO registrations in Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and some other states.

The vehicles were later sold to high-net worth (HNI) individuals, including film personalities, at undervalued prices, they alleged.

The ED suspects that the case bears prima facie violations of sections 3, 4, and 8 of FEMA that involves unauthorised foreign exchange transactions and cross-border payments through hawala channels.



In a related development, the Kerala High Court on Tuesday allowed Dulquer Salmaan to file an application for the provisional release of his vehicle seized by the Customs, and directed the agency to consider it within one week if such a plea is filed.

According to Salmaan, the vehicle was shipped by the International Committee of the Red Cross to the ICRC Regional Delegation in New Delhi.

The actor said he was under the bona fide belief that the vehicle had valid ownership and registration with the motor vehicles authority, and there was nothing to make him suspect its validity.

The actor claimed that Customs officials refused to examine the vehicle's documents handed over to them, and carried out the seizure in a "hasty" and "arbitrary" fashion.

Customs officials raided around 30 locations across Kerala on September 23, including the homes of Prithviraj, Salmaan and Chakkalackal, and seized 36 luxury cars.

The raids, which were part of 'Operation Numkhor', revealed that some of these vehicles were also used to allegedly smuggle gold and drugs.

Akhilesh Yadav meets Azam Khan in Rampur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rampur (UP), Oct 8: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav met senior party leader Azam Khan at his Rampur residence Wednesday and enquired about his health. The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said Khan has been subjected to "unprecedented harassment" by the state's BJP government.

The SP chief described Khan as a senior socialist leader with deep roots in the party and as an old associate of SP patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav.

This was the first meeting between the two leaders after Khan's release from the Sitapur jail last month.

"Azam Khan sahab is among our oldest leaders. Old leaders have their own distinct aura. He is like a tree for our party, the roots of which run deep. The shade of this tree has always protected us," he said in a statement.

Describing the cases lodged against Khan and his family members as "false and politically-motivated", the SP chief said, "No family has been harassed as much as Azam Khan sahab's. The BJP seems to be making a Guinness Record for filing the maximum number of fake cases against one political family."

"His wife, son Abdullah and several associates have been booked in false cases. If someone were to count, it might even enter the Guinness Book of World Records for the most number of false cases filed against one family," he added.

Expressing hope for justice, Yadav said, "We are fighting a big battle together. I wish him good health and hope he gets justice soon."

Referring to recent events, the former chief minister said, "What happened in the Supreme Court also sends a message -- that people from the PDA (backward people, Dalits and minorities) are being insulted time and again. In the Assembly too, I have said that PDA families are continuously being humiliated under this government."

Cough syrup row: Pharma co to face criminal action



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai/Kancheepuram, Oct 8: A pharma unit producing a now banned cough syrup allegedly linked to the death of children in Madhya Pradesh is in the dock with the plant being sealed by the Tamil Nadu government and a police team from MP visiting the facility as part of its probe into the fatalities.

After issuing a second show cause notice, the Tamil Nadu government Wednesday warned of initiating criminal action against the Chennai-based firm. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Madhya Pradesh Police visited the company's registered office here as well as its manufacturing unit in Kancheepuram as part of its probe into the deaths of children. On October 7, Madhya Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Rajendra Shukla had said that a total of 20 children from the state have died so far while undergoing treatment for kidney failure after consuming a contaminated cough syrup. The city-based company is accused of making the drug.

"Yes. The factory has been sealed Tuesday evening," a government official told PTI Wednesday.

The Tamil Nadu Food Safety and Drug Administration department October 4 declared that the samples of cough syrup collected from the manufacturing facility to be "adulterated" and an official had told PTI that the company has been

instructed to "halt production" immediately.

The Tamil Nadu government has banned the sales of cough syrup 'Coldrif' with effect from October 1 and ordered removal of stocks of the medicine from the market. States including Kerala and Madhya Pradesh have also banned it.

Meanwhile, the seven member SIT led by an Assistant Commissioner of Police from Madhya Pradesh formed to look into the deaths of children from allegedly consuming the cough syrup conducted probe.

The SIT later visited the company's registered address in the city and collected relevant details as part of the inspection, they said.

"We arrived here last night. We are conducting the probe. He (owner of the drug company) had left the premises three days ago. We are collecting details based on the CCTV footage (available at the registered office)," an official part of the SIT told PTI.

The team is being assisted by the Tamil Nadu police locally.

On October 5, the Madhya Pradesh police formed the SIT to probe the death of the children in Chhindwara district due to suspected renal failure, linked to the consumption of the 'toxic' cough syrup. The Chennai-based pharmaceutical company has been supplying the cough syrup 'Coldrif' to Puducherry, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, besides some other states.

UK PM Starmer visits YRF Studios in Mumbai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 8: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer Wednesday visited the Yash Raj Films (YRF) Studios in suburban Andheri and announced that major Indian production houses including the YRF will make movies across locations in the UK.

The British PM, on a two-day visit to India, was accompanied by a delegation of his country's film industry including representatives of the British Film Institute, British Film Commission, Pinewood Studios, Elstree Studios and Civic Studios.

Flying in from London earlier in the day, Starmer drove to the YRF Studios amid heavy police security. He met several Indian producers including YRF CEO Akshaye Widhwani, YRF chairperson Aditya Chopra's actor wife Rani Mukerji, Dinesh Vijan from Maddock Films, Ritesh Sidhwani of Excel Entertainment and Apoorva Mehta of Dharma Productions, among others, a source said. "Bollywood is back in Britain, and it is bringing jobs, investment and opportunity, all while showcasing the UK as a world-class destination for global filmmaking. This is exactly the kind of partnership our trade deal with India is destined to unlock -- driving growth, strengthening cultural ties and delivering for communities across the country," Starmer said in a statement.

The meeting between the British prime minister and Indian producers lasted for about 30 to 40 minutes, a source said. YRF CEO Akshaye Widhani said they were honoured to host the British PM.



A white-throated kingfisher preys on a lizard in Nadia, West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

Delhi shocker: Wife pours boiling oil on sleeping husband

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 8: As Dinesh lay asleep in his Madangir house, his wife poured boiling oil and red chilli powder on him, sending him into screams that rent the dead calm of the night.

"My wife and daughter were sleeping nearby. Around 3.15 am, I suddenly felt a sharp, burning pain across my body. I saw my wife standing and pouring boiling oil on my torso and face. Before I could get up or call for help, she sprinkled red chilli powder on my burns," he alleged in his complaint. When he protested, his wife retorted, "Agar shor machaya to aur garam tel daal doongi" (if you shout, I will pour more oil on you)."

But Dinesh could not suppress his screams. The commotion brought neighbours and

ON OCTOBER 3, A 28-YEAR-OLD PHARMACEUTICAL FIRM WORKER WAS BROUGHT TO SAFDARJUNG HOSPITAL WITH 20 PER CENT BURNS AND WAS ADMITTED TO THE ICU IN A CRITICAL CONDITION

ACCORDING TO AN FIR LODGED AT AMBEDKAR NAGAR POLICE STATION THE SAME DAY, THE MAN WAS DINESH, WHOSE WIFE POURED HOT OIL ON HIS TORSO AROUND 3 AM WHILE HE WAS SLEEPING

THE COUPLE'S EIGHT-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER WAS ALSO IN THE HOUSE AT THE TIME. DINESH TOLD POLICE THAT OCTOBER 2, HE HAD RETURNED HOME FROM WORK, ATE DINNER, AND WENT TO BED

his landlord's family, who lived on the floor below, rushing to the house. The landowner also called his brother-in-law, Ram Sagar, to the spot and the two rushed him to a hospital.

Anjali, the daughter of the



house owner, was one of the people who made a run to check on him.

"My father went upstairs to see what was happening. The door was locked. His wife had locked the door from inside. We asked them to open the door. When the door finally opened, we saw him writhing in pain and his wife hiding inside the

house," she told PTI.

Anjali said that when her father tried to intervene, the woman told them she was taking her husband to the hospital.

"But when she came out with him, she headed towards the opposite direction. We got suspicious. My father stopped her, arranged an auto, and rushed Dinesh with Ram Sagar to the

of the day quote

In the last 11 years, we have seen India transforming. The people in the previous governments used to call themselves secular

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

We are committed to resolving the pothole problem and are working in a systematic manner. Those who want to do politics may do so

DK SHIVAKUMAR | K'TAKA BY CM

The biggest sector we can work on in Delhi is to make the city an education hub. Students searching for the best place to get education should think of Delhi first. We have to make our system so strong that our children do not need to go abroad for higher studies

REKHA GUPTA | DELHI CM

POST OF THE DAY

BJP is losing Bihar badly
Nearly 60% Dalit votes are shifting to INDIA bloc.
Shoe attack on CJI
Dr BR Gavai has angered Dalits.
Tejashwi Yadav is now most popular CM face

@Politicx2029

SHORT TAKES

Doc hacked by father of deceased patient

Kozhikode (Kerala): A government doctor was seriously injured after being attacked with a machete by a man whose daughter died of amoebic meningitis recently, police said. The incident happened at the taluk hospital in Thamarassery in this district Wednesday, police said. The doctor, identified as Vipin, was struck on the head and was later hospitalised at the Baby Memorial Hospital here. His health condition is stable now, the officer said.

Two die in J'khand road accidents

Garhwa/Gumla/Simdega: Two persons died and three others sustained injuries in separate road accidents in different parts of Jharkhand Wednesday, officials said. In Garhwa district, a 28-year-old man, Babloo Soni of Ambikapur in Chhattisgarh, died when his bike collided with a truck on NH-343 under Ranka police station limits around 7.30 am while he was travelling from Garhwa to Ambikapur. "The deceased's body was sent for post-mortem examination at Sadar Hospital, Garhwa. Both vehicles have been seized," said Chetan Kumar Singh, officer-in-charge of Ranka police station.

Man gets 20-yr jail for raping 5-yr-old

Muzaffarnagar (UP): A court here Wednesday sentenced a man to 20 years imprisonment for the abduction and rape of a five-year-old girl. Special Judge Alka Bharti convicted Mehkar (26) under several sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, government counsel Vikrant Rathi said. "The court convicted Mehkar under sections 363 (abduction), 376 (rape), and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC, along with Section 6 of the POCSO Act," he said.



The BJP is doing politics... They are projecting the Congress government as anti-Hindu. I told ministers to condemn it and give a proper reply to them

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

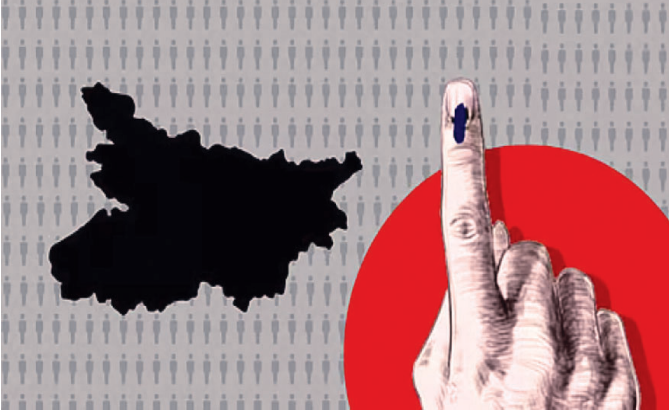
COLLEGES REOPEN IN LEH AFTER TWO WEEKS

Colleges across Leh district opened Wednesday, after remaining closed for two weeks following the September 24 violence, officials said. Ladakh Lt Governor Kavinder Gupta chaired a security review meeting and ordered lifting of other restrictions to restore complete normalcy in the Union territory, they said



BIHAR POLLS

NDA, INDIA hold talks to end seat-sharing row



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna/Bangalore/Delhi, Oct 8: The ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the Opposition INDIA bloc Wednesday held hectic parleys to iron out the differences over seat-sharing with their respective allies, who are jostling for more seats in the next month's high-stakes Bihar polls.

While the BJP's Election Committee meeting to discuss seat-sharing arrangements among NDA constituents was held in Patna, the Congress brass met in Delhi to discuss party candidates and is learnt to have finalised 25 of its candidates.

Union Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi, whose party is a constituent of NDA, made it clear that he is "requesting and not making a claim" that his Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) be given a respectable number of seats in the upcoming Assembly polls.

"It will be a humiliation for me and my party if we are not given at least 15 seats in the assembly polls. If we get 15 seats, we can easily win at least 8-9 seats, and we will become a recognised party. I consider it a blot (kalank) that even after 10 years of establishment, HAM remains an unrecognised party. So, I am requesting the NDA leaders (anurodh kar rahe hain) and not making a claim", Manjhi told reporters in Patna.

Manjhi indicated he would have liked his four-MLA-strong party to contest "half" of Bi-

har's 243 assembly constituencies, but was willing to "settle for 15" seats to avoid fighting against NDA partners.

The former Bihar CM came out with a post on his X handle, which seemed inspired by a famous passage in Ramdhari Singh Dinkar's war poem "Rashmirathi", wherein Lord Krishna had tried to broker peace with Duryodhana, whose obstinacy led to the epic battle of the Mahabharat.

Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, besides Vinod Tawde, met senior party leaders in Patna to discuss the seat-sharing arrangements and will submit a detailed report to the party's top leadership in Delhi. Final decision will be taken by the party's Central leadership in Delhi, sources said. According to sources in NDA, the bigger allies JD(U) and BJP are likely to contest 102 and 101 seats, respectively.

Union minister Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), which had earlier settled for around 20-22 seats, is now asking for 25 more.

Senior leaders in the LJP (RV) believe that the party should get at least 45 seats, said a party leader on condition of anonymity.

In the 2020 assembly elections, Paswan walked out of NDA and contested separately, winning just one seat but damaging the JD(U) in dozens of constituencies, resulting in its lowest tally in two decades, 43.

Commuter's backpack caused Mumbra accident: Railway

Mumbai: A probe by the Central Railway has concluded that a commuter's "protruding" backpack led to the fall of eight travellers from two trains in Thane district in June, of whom five lost their lives, officials said Wednesday. The probe team ruled out any technical fault, quarrelling among passengers, sabotage or mischief after examining CCTV footage, statements of commuters and witnesses and public responses received through social media and calls, they said. Hours after the accident near Mumbra June 9, an eyewitness and co-traveller had said that the tragedy was triggered by a bag worn by a commuter on a passing train after it brushed against those hanging on the footboard of another local.

Assam Police DSP suspended after arrest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Oct 8: Zubeen Garg's cousin and Assam Police DSP Sandipan Garg was apprehended Wednesday in connection with the singer's death in Singapore last month, taking the total number of arrests in the case to five, a senior officer said.

The DSP was remanded to seven-day police custody by the Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) of Kamrup Metropolitan district, he said. He was later in the evening suspended with immediate effect. A special investigation team under the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of the Assam Police is probing into the singer's death.

The police will also issue fresh summonses to 10 people associated with the Assam Association Singapore, as they failed to appear before the investigating agency within the deadline of October 6. Two personal security officers (PSOs) of Zubeen Garg were also suspended, after police unearthed huge financial transactions, worth over ₹1.1 crore, from their accounts, the officer said. CID Special DGP Munna Prasad Gupta told PTI, "We have arrested Sandipan Garg. We are now completing the necessary legal formalities."

The case was registered under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)



ZUBEEN DEATH

like murder, culpable homicide not amounting to murder, criminal conspiracy and causing death by negligence.

The apprehended police officer, who was working as the co-district in-charge superintendent of Boko-Chhaygaon in Kamrup, was interrogated several times in the last few days in connection with the singer's death in Singapore September 19. Sandipan Garg was allegedly present with him at the yacht when Zubeen died while swimming in the sea. An official order Wednesday evening stated that he has been suspended with immediate effect following his arrest.

During the period of suspension, the headquarters of Garg, 'if released from judicial custody, will be Assam Police Headquarters, Guwahati, subject to review, if deemed necessary', it said.

Meanwhile, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the chargesheet in the investigation into the death of singer Zubeen Garg will be

submitted within the stipulated period of three months. The Assam government will "definitely ensure justice to him", Sarma asserted. "The inquiry is proceeding on expected lines. We have made one arrest after the other, and I am sure that the Assam Police will submit the chargesheet within the stipulated time frame," he said on the sidelines of a programme in Dibrugarh. During the day, the CM's wife Riniki Bhuyan Sarma filed a criminal defamation case against Raijor Dal chief Akhil Gogoi for alleging that one of her firms had participated in the North East India Festival in Singapore. Bhuyan Sarma filed the case against the Sivasagar MLA at the Kamrup Metro Chief Judicial Magistrate's court for making 'false and unfounded allegations that the Golden Threads of Assam had participated in a fashion show organised during the festival in Singapore'.

Besides Gogoi, a case has also been filed against the director of news portal 'Pratibimba Live', her lawyer Kishore Dutta said here. Dutta said he has instructions to file a defamation case against Assam Jatiya Parishad president Lurinjyoti Gogoi, too, and it will be done Thursday. Earlier, North East India Festival chief organiser Shyamkanu Mahanta, the singer's manager Siddharth Sharma, and his two band members - Shekhar Jyoti

Wife visits Wangchuk in jail

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Jodhpur, Oct 8: Speeches and lectures delivered by climate activist Sonam Wangchuk have been quoted out of context and wrongly translated from Ladakhi to suit the "anti-national narrative" in his detention order, his wife Gitanjali J Angmo said Wednesday.

She also asserted that the charges against Wangchuk are "frivolous" and will be challenged in court. Accompanied by lawyer Ritam Khare, Angmo met Wangchuk Tuesday and received a copy of the detention order. Talking to PTI



Wednesday, she said Wangchuk appeared weak, but the jail authorities have assured her that they would take care of him. "He appeared weak.... The way they took him was inhumane. He was detained after 15 days

of fasting," she said. "The jail authorities have said they are taking good care of him and it appeared that they are," she said. Asked about the detention order, Angmo said, "The detention order appears to be very frivolous and weak, and we will challenge it in court."

The document lists the allegations against Wangchuk and the reasons for the invocation of the National Security Act (NSA) against him.

The NSA empowers the Centre and states to detain individuals to prevent them from acting in a manner "prejudicial to the defence of India".

Navi Mumbai lands on aviation map as new airport takes off

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Navi Mumbai, Oct 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday inaugurated the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA), describing it as a "glimpse of Viksit Bharat".

or developed India, that will help make the Mumbai region Asia's biggest connectivity hub.

The first phase of NMIA, also the country's largest greenfield airport, has been built at a cost of ₹19,650 crore and is set to be operational in December.

Earlier, the aircraft carrying Modi landed at the new airport, the second one in the Mumbai region, at around 2.40 pm.

Spread across 1,160 hectares, the airport will have one terminal and one runway in

the first phase with an annual passenger handling capacity of 20 million.

"The long wait of Mumbai is over as the city has now got its second airport, which will also help Maharashtra's farmers get connected with supermarkets in Europe and the US," Modi said after inaugurating the aviation project which has been in making for years and faced numerous delays.

The airport will play a significant role in making the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Asia's biggest connectivity hub, the PM declared.

NMIA, spread over 1,160 hectares, is set to significantly boost India's aviation capacity and ease the heavy traffic burden on Mumbai's existing



Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport.

"This is a project that has a glimpse of Viksit Bharat (developed India)," he told the gathering at the site. The airport will attract fresh investments and create new job opportunities, the PM noted. Modi highlighted the growth of the country's aviation sector and pointed out how it has evolved and expanded under his leadership since

Deepika's 'hijab' look in Abu Dhabi sparks debate online

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 8: Bollywood star Deepika Padukone is back at the centre of a social media storm with a tourism campaign for Abu Dhabi in which she is seen wearing wearing a hijab as she walks through the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque.

Deepika, who appears in the ad with her husband and fellow actor Ranveer Singh, is no stranger to controversy. She earlier attracted ire on social media for her appearance at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University during the anti-CAA protests and for sporting an orange bikini in the song "Besharam Rang" in "Pathaan".

Padukone now joins her husband as the brand ambassador for Experience Abu Dhabi, the destination brand of the Department of Culture and Tour-

ism-Abu Dhabi.

The campaign video titled "Mera Sukoon" shows the couple exploring Abu Dhabi and Ranveer introducing Deepika to some of his favourite spots in the city, including many cultural and architectural landmarks. In one sequence, the couple is at the Grand Mosque and Deepika is seen wearing a rust abaya and hijab. In the vigorous debate that followed, some called the 39-year-old actor a "fake feminist" for promoting conservative attire and others defended her decision and spoke up for her respect for Arab culture. Those criticising her argued that her decision to wear a hijab is in stark contrast to her appearance at the 2015 "My Choice" video, in which she advocated women's freedom to live, dress and love on their own terms.



"Remember Deepika Padukone's video 'My Choice'? 'To wear a Bindi or not, my choice'. I decide the clothes I wear'. Now Deepika Padukone has made video promoting Abu Dhabi tourism wearing Hijab. What happened to 'My Choice'?" asked an X user.

Another similar post read, "On Hindu Traditions - 'My

body, My Choice'. But no problem in Wearing 'Hijab' for money. This is the reality of Fake Feminists like Deepika Padukone. They are no feminists ..they are just 'Anti Hindus'."

"Gems of Deepika Padukone. On Bindi: My Choice. On Hijab : Paisa do kuch bhi pehan lungi. My choice is limited to money, after all she is an actress, can

Deepika, who appears in the ad with her husband and fellow actor Ranveer Singh, is no stranger to controversy

She earlier attracted fire on social media for her appearance at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University during the anti-CAA protests and for sporting an orange bikini in the song "Besharam Rang" in "Pathaan"

do anything for money, there is nothing like feminism and liberty, she can sell her soul for money," read a post. One person wondered why Deepika hasn't promoted any Indian religious site like this.

"Deepika Padukone wore Hijab to promote Abu Dhabi Mosque. But she will never promote his own dharma or a teeth sthal," the user wrote. The other

side was equally vociferous.

One supporter shared her photographs on X and said, "This is Deepika Padukone when she has gone to temples. She has always been respectful toward the culture of India. In the tourism commercial, she is wearing what is appropriate for that culture. You should be proud of someone who can go to any country and be respectful." Deepika, one of the country's most prominent film stars, has frequently found herself at the centre of public and political debates. After her unexpected appearance in JNU in January 2020 when she was promoting her film "Chhapaak" came "Pathaan" in 2023 when her song "Besharam Rang" led to widespread outrage from right-wing groups, who claimed her saffron swimsuit insulted Hindu sentiments.

international

of the day quote

India has not always bought so much Russian oil. They've always had strong relationships with Russia, but it's really in the past two or three years that they started buying Russian oil at a discount, not only for consumption, but also for refining and resale xxx

JAMIESON GREER | US TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

The massive increase in cannabis imports and the practice of prescribing cannabis online without any personal medical contact require political action

NINA WARREN | HEALTH MINISTER, GERMANY

It is indefensible that Singapore continues to cruelly pursue more executions in the name of drug control

CHIARA SANGIORGIO | AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S DEATH PENALTY ADVISOR

SHORT TAKES

Hikers stranded in Mt Everest rescued

Beijing: Over 850 hikers, guides and porters who were stranded for three days in a severe blizzard on the Tibetan slopes of Mount Everest have been evacuated by hundreds of villagers and rescue teams, according to Chinese official media. All the hikers and local service personnel trapped by heavy snowfall in Dingri County at Xigaze City in southwest Tibet Autonomous Region have reached safety, the local government said late Tuesday night. A total of 580 hikers and over 300 personnel, including local guides and yak herders, have safely reached Qudeng Township and nearby areas, where officials are arranging their return journeys, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Xinhua had earlier reported Monday that one hiker was killed in the snowstorm, which caught more than 1,000 holiday trekkers off guard on the Tibetan side of Mount Everest.

Arrest warrants against Hasina

Dhaka: Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal Wednesday issued arrest warrants against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and several others on charges of crimes against humanity in alleged cases of enforced disappearances during her Awami League regime. A three-member International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) bench, led by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, took cognisance of the charges filed in two separate cases, according to media reports. The cases accuse Hasina and 29 others of overseeing the detention, torture and disappearance of political opponents at secret facilities operated by elite security agencies.

French PM scraps severance payouts

Paris: Caretaker French Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu said on Wednesday that ministers in his short-lived government would not receive severance pay, aiming to set an example of the budget belt-tightening he says the country needs. Lecornu, France's fifth prime minister in two years, resigned along with his cabinet on Monday - just hours after the government was announced Sunday - making it the shortest-lived administration in modern French history. French ministers are entitled to three months of severance pay — nearly 10,000 euros (\$11,617) per month for ministers and almost 14,000 euros for a prime minister — as they do not qualify for unemployment insurance.

Gor confirmed as US Ambassador to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, Oct 8: The US Senate has confirmed Sergio Gor as the next Ambassador to the United States to India.

Gor, 38, was among 107 nominees confirmed by the Senate in a single en bloc vote Tuesday, with 51 senators voting in favour and 47 against. The confirmations came despite the current US government shutdown.

Among the other nominees confirmed were Paul Kapur of California as Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs, and Anjani Sinha of Florida as Ambassador to the Republic of Singapore.



In August, Trump had nominated Gor, Director of Presidential Personnel, to be the next US Ambassador to India, and Special Envoy for South and Central Asian Affairs.

Describing Gor as a "great friend, who has been at my side for many years", Trump had said that "for the most populous region in the world, it is important that I have someone I can fully trust to deliver on my Agenda and help us Make America Great Again. Sergio will make an incredible Ambassador."

India's Ambassador to the US, Vinay Mohan Kwatra, had welcomed Gor's nomination, calling him one of Trump's most trusted aides.

Russia's 'gray zone' tactics alarm EU

EU chief pushes back on repeated airspace breaches by Russia and cyberattacks



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brussels, Oct 8: Russia is waging a "targeted gray zone campaign" against Europe, including airspace violations, sabotage and cyberattacks that will only escalate if the Kremlin is not challenged, the European Union's top official warned Wednesday.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that in just two weeks, fighter jets breached Estonia's airspace, while drones overflew military bases and critical infrastructure sites in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Poland and Romania.

"Europe must respond. We must investigate every incident, and we must not shy away from attributing responsibility because every square centimeter of our territory must be protected and safe," von der Leyen told EU law-

makers in Strasbourg, France. "If we hesitate to act, the gray zone will only expand," she said.

In two weeks, von der Leyen will submit a "road map" for bolstering Europe's defences by the end of the decade to the 27-nation bloc's heads of state and governments for their approval.

Von der Leyen said that it's simply not affordable for European countries to continue to scramble the latest-generation fighter jets to counter relative-

ly cheap drones, as happened when several of them entered Polish airspace a month ago.

"This is absolutely not sustainable. We need an anti-drone system that is affordable and fit for purpose. For swift detection, swift interception, and when needed, swift neutralisation," she said, adding that Europe has much to learn in this from Ukraine.

The commission believes that the best way to encourage European countries to invest

more in defence is to ensure that it creates jobs and is good for business in Europe. It insists that at least 65 per cent of any project funded with EU money should be based on the continent. In recent years, the member nations have placed about two-thirds of their orders with US defence companies.

"Most investment goes outside Europe. In other words these are jobs outside Europe.

The plan includes the development of a "drone wall" of high-tech systems linked to equipment that can detect, track and destroy drones, as well as strike their operating systems or pilots on the ground

ON WAR FOOTING

The EU is preparing a plan for Europe to be ready to confront such challenges by 2030

EU officials believe that Russia could be capable of launching an attack on another European country within three to five years

PTI removes Khyber Pakhtunkhwa CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Peshawar, Oct 8: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur was Wednesday removed from office by jailed former premier Imran Khan's party, a day after 11 military personnel were killed in an attack in the restive province's Orakzai district.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) secretary general Salman Akram Raja confirmed that Gandapur has been removed from office and he would be replaced by Muhammad Sohail Afridi as approved by the former cricketer-turned-politician. Raja made the announcement while talking to the media after meeting the 73-year-old party founder in Rawalpindi's Adaila Jail where he has been lodged since August 2023.

At least 11 military personnel, including a Lt Colonel and a Major, were killed in clashes with the Taliban militants on Tuesday night during an intelligence-based operation in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, bordering Afghanistan.

In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) - the media wing of the military - said that 19 terrorists of the 'Fitna al-Khawarij' were also killed during the operation in Orakzai district.

Gaza aid flotilla says Israeli forces intercepted its boats

The incident was the second such event in recent days, after Israel had intercepted about 40 vessels and detained more than 450 activists in an aid convoy

REUTERS

Tel Aviv, Oct 8: A group of vessels attempting to deliver aid to the war-ravaged Gaza Strip was intercepted by Israeli forces in international waters Wednesday, the coalition behind the convoy said, the second such interception in the past week.

The Freedom Flotilla Coalition (FFC) is an international network of pro-Palestinian activist groups that organises civilian maritime missions aimed at breaking Israel's blockade of Gaza to deliver humanitarian aid to Palestinians in the enclave.

The flotilla's vessels and passengers were safe, had been transferred to an Israeli port and were expected to be deported promptly, Israel's foreign ministry said in a statement on X. "Another futile attempt to breach the legal naval blockade and enter a combat zone ended in nothing," the ministry said.

The incident was the second such event in recent days, after Israel had intercepted about 40 vessels and detained more than 450 activists in an aid convoy, the Global Sumud Flotilla, that



was also attempting to deliver supplies to Gaza.

The FFC said Israeli forces "hijacked the humanitarian fleet," adding that the "ships were illegally intercepted ... Participants - humanitarians, doctors and journalists from across the world - have been taken against their will and are being held in unknown conditions." "The Israeli military has no legal jurisdiction over international waters," it said. "Our flotilla poses no harm."

The ships carried aid worth more than \$110,000 in medicines, respiratory equipment and nutritional supplies intended for Gaza's starving hospitals, it added on its Instagram account.

Britain's once-mighty Conservative Party battling extinction

The Tories are fighting not just the Labour government to their left, but Reform UK to the right

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, Oct 8: Britain's Conservatives used to boast they were the world's most successful political party. Not anymore.

The centre-right party that governed the UK for more than 60 of the last 100 years before being ousted in 2024 is embracing Donald Trump-style policies, including mass deportations and DOGE-style spending cuts, as it battles to remain a contender for power.

Nigel Farage's hard-right party has topped opinion polls for months, trounced the Conservatives in May's local elections and has welcomed a stream of defecting Tory members and officials.

"Yes, we have a mountain to climb," Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch told party members at their annual conference, which ends Wednesday in Manchester. "But we have a song in our hearts, and we are up for the fight."

A SHRUNKEN PARTY

Crowds were thin under the vast vaulted roof of the Manchester Central conference venue, a former railway station in the northwest England city, as delegates absorbed the party's diminished stature.

"It's not in a great place at the moment, we're aware of that," said Neil McCarthy, a member from northern England. "There needs to be passion, and we



need to get the message across that we've changed."

The Conservatives have undergone years of turmoil — some of it of their own making, some of it shared by incumbent parties in a world of economic and geopolitical instability.

The economic benefits of Britain's 2020 exit from the European Union, championed by those now running of the party, have been elusive. Prime Minister Boris Johnson won a huge election victory in 2019 but was ousted by the party in 2022 after

The historic trade deal struck with India this year is great news for Scotland and especially our whisky industry; but having secured the deal, our challenge and responsibility now is to put this deal into action

DOUGLAS ALEXANDER | UK SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND

CALIFORNIA DECLARES DIWALI STATE HOLIDAY

In a historic development for the Indian diaspora, California has designated Diwali as an official state holiday, becoming the third state in the US to officially recognise the Indian festival of lights as a holiday



WORLD JUNIOR C'SHIPS

Shuttlers storm ahead



India enter quarterfinals with clinical win over UAE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Oct 8: India stormed into the quarterfinals of the team event at the BWF World Junior Badminton Championships for the Suhandinata Cup with a clinical win over UAE here Wednesday.

In other ties, USA upset France while Japan got the better of top seeds Thailand to top their respective groups at the National Centre of Excellence here.

While India defeated UAE 45-37 45-34, Japan got the better of Thailand 45-42 45-34 in Group A and USA made it to the last eight stage with 45-43 45-43 win over France in Group B.

The top teams in all eight groups will compete in the quarterfinals for the coveted trophy, while the others will fight in the classification rounds. Other teams to top their respective groups include China (Group D) and Indonesia (Group F).

India, seeded second, had beaten Nepal and Sri Lanka in their earlier Group H clashes and went into the final round as the only unbeaten team in the group.

That confidence showed in the way they approached the match against UAE, who boast of having a few players who have played in the Indian domestic circuit in the past.

USA Open finalist Tanvi Sharma gave India a rousing start, defeating Prakriti Bharath of UAE 9-5. The mixed doubles combination of C Lalramsanga and Vishakha Toppo then made it 18-10 against Adithya Kiran and Sakshi Kurbkhelgi.

UAE did put up a fight in the boys singles and boys doubles with Bharath Lateesh scoring nine points against Hmar Lalthazuala and then teaming up with Riyan Malhan to score 10 points against Bhagav Ram Arigela and Viswa Tej Gobburu, but their efforts were not enough to close the gap.

In the second set, Unnati Hooda replaced Tanvi and Suryansh Rawat took the place of Hmar in the line up.

Unnati beat Prakriti 9-6 to start the proceedings and there

was no looking back for the Indian team from there on.

On the adjacent court, Japan grabbed the advantage against top seeds Thailand with Yuzuno Watanabe beating Anyapat Phichitpreechasak 9-5 in the first girls singles and the Asian Junior mixed team championships bronze medallist rode on that momentum to win the first set 45-42.

Watanabe gave her team a much bigger lead in the second set by beating Yataweemin Ketklieng 9-2 and the Japanese took the top spot in Group A with another clinical display.

But it was USA that had reasons to celebrate the most as they overcame a strong challenge from 58 seeds France.

With the matches going neck-and-neck in both sets, it was USA boys singles player Garret Tan who kept his composure to beat France's Mady Sow 9-8 in the first set and scored nine points quickly enough when under pressure in the second to help his team top Group B.

They will now face Japan in the quarterfinals while India will take on the top-placed team from Group G, which is yet to be decided.

Siraj, Jadeja achieve personal bests

The Indian stars hit career-best ICC Test Rankings after stellar Ahmedabad Test against WI. Jadeja ranks 25th in batting; Siraj climbs to 12th in bowling with 7 wickets in the match

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 8: India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja's impressive showing in the opening match of their ICC World Test Championship series against the West Indies in Ahmedabad has elevated him to a career-high 25th spot in the ICC Men's Test Batting Rankings.

The best ranking previously held by the 36-year-old, who scored an unbeaten 104 in India's only innings, was 29th, reached in July this year. He now stands at a personal best of 644 rating points.

Jadeja's four wickets in the second innings have further strengthened his position at the top of the all-rounders' rankings, increasing his lead by 125 points over Bangladesh's Mehidy Hasan.

Jadeja's teammate, fast bowler Mohammed Siraj, built on his strong performance from the England tour, taking four for 40 and three for 31. These figures moved him up three spots to a career-high 12th position and surpassed 700 points for the first time after India's victory by an innings and 140 runs.

Other players who benefited from the Indian team's performance include KL Rahul and Dhruv Jurel, both of whom advanced in the batting rankings following their centuries. Rahul has climbed four spots to 35th, while Jurel has risen 20 places to 65th after scoring his first Test century.

Meanwhile, Kuldeep Yadav, the left-arm wrist-spinner, has

ICC TEST RANKINGS



IND VS WI 2ND TEST: GOOD BATTING STRIP ON CARDS

A good batting surface is in store for the second and final Test between India and the West Indies at the Feroz Shah Kotla, with curators expecting the pitch to aid strokeplay for the first two days before offering only slow turn as the game progresses. The traditionally black-soil surface at the Kotla has a reputation for assisting batters early on before gradually breaking down to bring spinners into play. For this Test, however, a fresh centre strip has been prepared, and the early part of the contest is expected to be dominated by batters. "The centre strip has been prepared for the Test. This is a different track from the one on which Smriti Mandhana scored a 50-ball hundred," a BCCI source told PTI on condition of anonymity. According to the official, the curators have deliberately focused on ensuring even bounce and true carry in the initial stages. "If West Indies bat better, then the match won't end inside three days. The pitches would only offer turn from Day Three and that too slowish in nature," the source added.

moved up seven places to rank 21st after taking two wickets cheaply in the match.

There was little to cheer for the West Indies players, though, as no batter scored a half-century and no bowler took more than two wickets.

In the ICC Men's T20i Player Rankings, Australia captain Mitchell Marsh has

re-entered the top 10 of the batting list for the first time since February 2024, following scores of 85 in the first match and 103 not out in the third match of the series against New Zealand.

New Zealand's Tim Robinson scored an unbeaten 106 in the first match of the series at Mount Maunganui, helping

him climb 58 places to joint-22nd.

Bangladesh beat Afghanistan 3-0 in their series in the United Arab Emirates. Saif Hassan's unbeaten 64 in the third match helped him reach the top 20 batters for the first time. Tanzid Hasan moved up from 43rd to 37th, and Parvez Hossain from 71st to 53rd.

Afghanistan leg-spinning all-rounder Rashid Khan's performances of four for 18 and two for 29 in the first two matches have helped him regain the number two spot in the bowling rankings, his highest position since June last year.

The bowling rankings show improvements for Afghan players Noor Ahmad, who climbed eight places to 17th, and Mujeeb Ur Rahman, who moved up six places to 23rd.

Bangladesh players Tanzim Hasan Sakib rose nine places to 33rd, Shoriful Islam advanced 21 spots to joint-49th, and Player of the Series Nasum Ahmed jumped from 131st to 44th, all making notable progress.

ARCTIC OPEN

Lakshya exits, Mannepalli keeps Indian hopes alive

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vantaa (Finland), Oct 8: Unheralded Indian Tharun Mannepalli kept alive the country's men's singles hopes at the Arctic Open 2025, staging a thrilling comeback to upset world No. 14 Toma Junior Popov of France, even as Lakshya Sen suffered his 10th first-round exit of the year here Wednesday.

Mannepalli, ranked 46th, overcame a first-game loss to beat Popov 11-21, 21-11, 22-20 in a one-hour and eight-minute contest, saving four match



points in the decider to pull off a remarkable win in the BWF Super 500 event.

He will take on world No18 Koki Watanabe of Japan in the pre-quarterfinals.

Paris Olympics semifinalist Lakshya fell 21-15, 21-17 in 57 minutes to world No. 11 and fifth seed Kodai Naraoka of Japan.

Lakshya struggled from the start, trailing 11-6 at the first-game interval and failing to mount a serious challenge.

The second game was closer at 11-10, but Naraoka shifted gears after the break, limiting Lakshya to seven more points.

This marked Sen's sixth defeat in eight matches against Naraoka and his 10th first-round exit of the 2025 season, although he did reach the final of last month's Hong Kong Open.

Other Indians also faced early exits.

Former world No 1 Kidambi Srikanth conceded a walkover to Denmark's Rasmus Gemke, while Kiran George retired in his second game after trailing 1-4 after conceding the opener 10-21 to Watanabe.

Colts sweep Australia tour

INDIA U-19 REGISTER EMPHATIC WIN IN SECOND YOUTH TEST



AGENCIES

Mackay, Oct 8: India U-19 completed their clean sweep of Australia U-19 in the latter's backyard with a seven-wicket win in the second and final Youth Test, here Wednesday.

Resuming day two at 114 for seven, India U-19 ended with 171 all out for a 36-run first innings lead over Australia U-19.

The home team was once again poor with the bat, managing just 119 runs in their second essay to set India U-19 an 81-run target. India lost their star openers, captain Ayush Mhatre and Vaibhav Suryavanshi, early in the chase

but still managed to gun down the target in 12.2 overs.

It was, however, their over-aggressive approach on a testing pitch that led to the downfall of Suryavanshi and Mhatre. The southpaw, who is the youngest IPL centurion at 14, tried to hit the first ball he faced over the straight boundary but was unsuccessful.

In the very next ball of the following over, Mhatre perished after playing the ball on to his stumps off Kasey Barton.

The writing was on the wall for Australia U-19, who could not find a way against the Indian attack. Pacer Henil Patel

removed Simon Budge and Zed Hollick off successive balls to leave the hosts reeling at 0 for two in the second over of the second innings. It was all downhill from there for Australia U-19.

India won the red ball series 2-0 after blanking Australia in three Youth ODIs.

BRIEF SCORES

Australia U19: 135 all out and 116 all out in 40.1 overs (Alex Lee Young 38/ Henil Patel 3/23) lost to **India U19:** 171 all out in 51.4 overs and 84 for three in 12.2 overs (Vedant Trivedi 33 not out; Kasey Barton 2/32)

UFC star McGregor suspended for 18 months over missed drug tests

Washington: Former featherweight and lightweight champion Conor McGregor has accepted an 18-month sanction for a violation of anti-doping policy, the UFC announced Tuesday. In a statement on their website, the MMA promotion said that McGregor missed three attempts by Combat Sports Anti-Doping to collect biological samples from him in 2024 on June 13, September 19, and September 20, leading to so-called "whereabouts failures". "McGregor fully cooperated with CSAD's investigation, accepted responsibility, and provided detailed information that CSAD determined contributed to the missed tests," the UFC said in a statement on its website, opens new tab. "Taking McGregor's cooperation and circumstances into account, CSAD reduced the standard 24-month sanction for three whereabouts failures by six months. His period of ineligibility began on September 20, 2024 (the date of his third whereabouts failure) and will conclude on March 20, 2026." McGregor, who has not fought in the UFC since suffering a broken leg in his last fight against Dustin Poirier in July 2021, has said he wants to fight on a proposed card at the White House in June of next year.



Tennis players accused of doping or match-fixing to get support



London: Tennis players involved in doping or match-fixing investigations are now eligible for free legal help, confidential counselling or money to test products they've taken that might have led to a positive drug test, the International Tennis Integrity Agency

(ITIA) announced Wednesday. The trial program begins immediately and will be reviewed after next year. A player can receive up to \$5,000 for a lab accredited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to check a medicine or a supplement for contamination or the same amount for help identifying possible sources of contaminated meat — a frequent explanation for failed doping tests in sports. Sport Resolutions, an independent dispute resolution service that runs tribunals for anti-doping cases in tennis, is extending its free legal support in such cases to when a player first tests positive for a banned substance. Until now, this service was available only after a player was charged. And Sporting Chance, an organization that works with athletes on their mental health, will provide six sessions of well-being support for people being investigated for anti-corruption or anti-doping violations. "We recognise the process can come at both a financial and emotional cost," ITIA CEO Karen Moorhouse said. "No player picks up a tennis racket as a child with any motivation other than playing the game," she said. The ITIA was involved in two particularly high-profile doping cases in tennis that began last year and ultimately resulted short bans for players who have been ranked No 1 and won multiple Grand Slam titles, Jannik Sinner and Iga Swiatek.

Ronaldo now football's first billionaire

THE PORTUGAL GREAT'S NET WORTH STANDS AT \$1.4 BILLION

REUTERS

Lisbon, Oct 8: Cristiano Ronaldo has become the first footballer to reach billionaire status, according to the latest Bloomberg Billionaires Index, which has valued the Portugal great's net worth at an estimated \$1.4 billion.

The 40-year-old striker's financial ascent comes after he signed a new contract with Saudi side Al-Nassr in June reportedly worth more than \$400 million.

Bloomberg said that Ronaldo earned more than \$550 million in salary between 2002 and 2023, supplemented by a decade-long Nike deal worth nearly \$18 million annually, and lucrative



endorsements with Armani, Castrol and others that added more than \$175 million to his fortune.

Ronaldo's move to Al-Nassr from Manchester United in 2023 had already made him the highest-paid player in football history, with an annual salary of 177 million pounds (\$237.52 million), plus bonuses and a reported 15% share in his Saudi Arabia club.

Argentina and Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi has earned more than \$600 million in pre-tax salary during his career. Ronaldo's billionaire status places him among a rare group of athletes that includes basketball greats Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson and LeBron

James, golfer Tiger Woods and tennis player Roger Federer.

Ronaldo suggested he is not considering retirement any time soon.

"I still have a passion for this," he said at the Portugal Football Globes gala Tuesday. "My family says it's time to quit and they ask me why I want to score 1000 goals if I've already scored 900-something. But I don't think that way inside.

"I'm still producing good things, I'm helping my club and the national team. Why not continue? I am sure that when I finish I will leave full because I gave everything of myself. I know I don't have many years left to play, but the few I have left, I have to enjoy them to the fullest."