



Sam’s stance

Samantha Ruth Prabhu talks about growing importance of authenticity in an era driven by image and perfection

LEISURE | P2



Pak-Af ceasefire

Pakistan and Afghanistan agree to extend their 48-hour ceasefire until the conclusion of talks in Doha, Qatar

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Gold reserves soar

India’s gold reserves surpass \$100 billion for the first time, boosted by global price rally despite slower central bank purchases

BUSINESS | P11



Trailblazer Tanvi

Tanvi Sharma becomes the first Indian to secure a BWF World Junior Championships medal in 17 years as she reaches semifinals

SPORTS | P12

BOY SUFFERS BURNS WHILE PERFORMING STUNT WITH PETROL

PNN & AGENCIES

Puri, Oct 17: A Class IX student of a government high school in Puri district Friday received burn injuries while performing a stunt using petrol, police said. The incident took place at Balukeshwar Government High School at Khajuria, the police said.

The injured boy was first admitted at the local hospital and then rushed to the District Headquarters Hospital in Puri and later rushed to the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, they said.

According to some students of the school, the boy was attempting to show a stunt by putting petrol in his mouth and later blowing it into fire. The incident took place during lunchtime, a student said.

Gold jumps ₹3,200 to hit record ₹1,34,800

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 17: Gold prices surged by ₹3,200 to touch a new lifetime high of ₹1,34,800 per 10 grams in the national capital Friday, buoyed by strong festive buying by jewellers and retailers ahead of Dhanteras, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had ended at ₹1,31,600 per 10 grams in the previous session. In tandem, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also jumped by ₹3,200 to scale an all-time high of ₹1,34,200 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes), up from Thursday’s close of ₹1,31,000 per 10 grams.

Traders said buying activity picked up sharply as stockists built fresh positions on expectations of higher sales during the festive season. Dhanteras, considered an auspicious day in Hindu tradition for buying precious metals, will be celebrated Saturday, followed by Diwali Monday.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Gold prices are so high, even King Midas is checking EMI options

Faroe Islands, where James Bond ‘died’, see tourism spike

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kalsoy Island, Oct 17: The Faroe Islands, a rugged and windswept archipelago in the North Atlantic, have long held a certain mystique for travellers in search of the untamed. Now, as global temperatures rise and the allure of “coolcations” intensifies, these self-governing Danish islands are witnessing a surge in adventurous visitors. The tiny islands could be a poor choice for travellers with vertigo, seasickness or a fear of enclosed spaces. There are crumbling cliffs, sudden gale-force winds and hillsides so steep that even the sheep can tumble.

Three tourists disappeared over two days in September. Police told the media their last locations were near a well-known waterfall that drops in-



POLLUTION ALERT: People cross a foot-over bridge amid low visibility as air quality deteriorates across Delhi-NCR, Friday

PTI PHOTO

SC flags rise in digital arrests

In India, incidents of fraudulent digital arrests have surged in recent years where cybercriminals posing as police officers, government officials or bank representatives extort money from unsuspecting individuals. The scammers often fabricate arrest warrants or even judicial orders by forging the signature of judges to trap their victims, especially senior citizens. Such cases highlight the growing sophistication of cybercrime in India and the urgent need for stronger digital literacy, public awareness and swift law enforcement to curb these incidents.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 17: Rising incidents of online frauds in the country, especially digital arrests to dupe citizens by fabricating judicial orders, have come under the scanner of the Supreme Court which Friday sought responses of the Centre and the CBI saying such offences strike at the “very foundation” of public trust in the system.

The top court took cognisance of a glaring case of digital arrest of a senior citizen couple in Haryana’s Ambala on the basis of forged orders of the court and probe agencies by fraudsters to extort ₹1.05 crore.

A bench of justices Surya



7 HELD IN BIGGEST DIGITAL ARREST CASE

Mumbai: The Maharashtra police, investigating the country’s biggest ‘digital arrest’ case involving the siphoning of ₹58 crore, have arrested seven persons linked to the scam, officials said Friday. Maharashtra Cyber, the nodal agency for combating cybercrime in the state, has uncovered that those behind the digital arrest used more than 6,500 mule accounts distributed across 13 layers, opened in the names of shell companies, to launder the looted money, an official said. A case was registered by the Maharashtra Cyber recently after a 72-year-old businessman from Mumbai approached them with a complaint about being digitally arrested and losing money. Digital arrest is a growing form of cybercrime in which fraudsters pose as law enforcement officials or personnel of government agencies and intimidate victims through audio/video calls. They hold the victims hostage and put pressure on them to pay money. In the septuagenarian’s case, the fraudsters orchestrated fake court proceedings and police interrogations over video calls, tricking him into transferring ₹58.13 crore over 40 days, wiping out his life savings, he said.

Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said it is no ordinary crime where it could have asked the police to expedite the probe and take the case to its logical conclusion but a matter where coordinated efforts between the central and state police are required to unearth the full extent of the criminal enterprise.

It flagged the rising number

of digital arrest cases across the country and sought the response of the Centre and CBI in the case registered as suo motu after the 73-year-old woman wrote to Chief Justice of India BR Gavai September 21 informing about the incident of defrauding them using court orders.

The bench said forging apex court, high court orders, sig-

natures of judges to digitally arrest innocent people, including senior citizens, strikes at the bottom of trust and faith of people in judicial institutions.

“The fabrication of judicial orders bearing forged signatures of judges strikes at the very foundation of the public trust in the judicial system besides the rule of law. Such action constituted direct assault on the dignity of the institution,” the top court said.

It said the forgery of documents and the criminal misuse of the name, seal and judicial orders of this court or high court is a matter of grave concern and such a grave criminal act cannot be treated as an ordinary or solitary offence of cheating or cyber crime.

“We are also inclined to take judicial notice of the fact that the instance case is not the sole instance. It has been largely reported many times in the media that such crimes have taken place in different parts of the country. We are, therefore, of the view that action and coordinated efforts between the central and state police are required to unearth the full extent of the criminal enterprise involving forging judicial documents, extortion/robbery of innocent people most importantly the senior citizens,” the bench said.



certs inside a sea cave or puffin-watching.

Winters are fierce — a ferryman said a storm two years ago ripped the roof from an old house next to the AP’s seaside rental cottage in Sydradalur — but interest in the islands is starting to extend the peak tourist season into October.

Villages, especially in the wilder northern region, can have just a handful of residents. There are few tourist-focused businesses outside the capital, Torshavn, but the village of Gjogv has a welcoming guesthouse and cafe, and the village of Fuglafjordur has a charming main street and visitors’ center. English is widely

Odia woman raped, murdered in Hyd: Kin

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: Family members of an Odisha-based woman have lodged a police complaint alleging that she was raped and murdered in Hyderabad’s Kompally area. They have also appealed to the Khurda District Collector for an impartial investigation into the case and swift justice.

The victim, a native of Bharatpur area in Bhubaneswar, had been living in Hyderabad with her husband and four-year-old son for the past six months in the quarters of a private construction company in Kompally under the Pet-Basheerabad police limits. Her husband, who worked in the company’s electronic maintenance division, was in Bhubaneswar with their son to correct a passport error before moving to Dubai for a new job.

On the night of October 15, he received a call from a company official claiming his wife was unwell. When he returned to Hyderabad the next morning, he found her dead.

The woman’s mother told the media that a drunk man had allegedly hidden under the bed while her daughter went to the community toi-



let and later raped and killed her. “She spoke to me around 10 pm, and the incident happened soon after,” the victim’s mother said, accusing the company officials of attempting a cover-up and urging the government to help the family reach Hyderabad.

The Pet-Basheerabad police have filed a case and initiated a thorough investigation. Forensic teams have gathered evidence from the scene, and the body has been sent for a post-mortem examination. Authorities stated that all possible aspects, including sexual assault and murder, are being thoroughly examined.

The incident comes close on the heels of the alleged gangrape of a medical student from Odisha in West Bengal’s Durgapur last week.

₹ falls 6 paise to close at 88.02 against \$

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 17: The rupee pared initial gains and settled for the day lower by 6 paise at 88.02 against the US dollar Friday, weighed down by trade tensions and global uncertainties. Forex traders said renewed foreign fund inflows and lower crude oil prices boosted investor sentiment further and restricted the downfall.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened below the 88-mark at 87.91 against the greenback, and touched an intraday high of 87.75. The domestic unit also touched the intra-day low of 88.09 before ending at 88.02 against the dollar, registering a fall of 6 paise from its previous close.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
If you have children, it's likely you'll spoil them today. After all, it's for days like these that you work hard, says Ganesha. You will also complete pending assignments and it's a productive day for those in medical professions and public services.

TAURUS
You may feel frustrated and stranded in family matters today, says Ganesha. Shower your warmth and care to make up for past mistakes. Your spouse will be supportive and lend you a helping hand to regain your mental composure. Reciprocate with intimacy and go with the flow, suggests Ganesha.

GEMINI
A favourable day to put an end to all the doubts surrounding your ability to do well, especially in the field of communication. People around you will find you incredibly charming and enchanting. You will win hearts with your verve and panache. You may want to spruce up your surroundings at work and at home.

CANCER
It is quite possible that your personal life will take precedence over your professional life. You will not be able to repress or ignore your feelings, and you should not either, says Ganesha. But you should be careful about how you express yourself in public.

LEO
No matter how far you go, there is always a horizon that you desire to reach. And what holds true for all outer projections of life most certainly holds true for one's inner self as well, reminds Ganesha. Bear this in mind as you strive to improve yourself in as many ways as possible.

VIRGO
Financial doldrums are headed your way today. In order to seek what you desire, expect shelling out a hefty price. You might just net those short-term goals in the evening. Ganesha foretells large and important business deals will end the day on a high note.

LIBRA
Today will be fabulous for you, especially if you are in the world of business. Long-term deals seem to be on the cards for you. If you happen to be a government officer, luck favours you today. Keep your ears and eyes open, there may be news of a possible promotion.

SCORPIO
Ganesha feels that your intuitive feelings will rule your actions today. You will need to break past your stress threshold and tackle work with zeal and zest. Follow your instincts and relax to some good music when the burden of work is overwhelming. At the end of the day, it is not the thought that matters but how that thought was implemented into action.

SAGITTARIUS
Ganesha sees a spectacular day in store for you, especially if you are an artist. Radio jockeys will be heard and cheered for. Television anchors will receive thundering applause and golden opportunities. Go ahead — seize the day!

CAPRICORN
Your extraordinary skills, passion for perfection, and an overpowering personality will inspire and motivate those around you, says Ganesha. Many will, in fact, emulate your actions, so much so that you could most likely have a fan following.

AQUARIUS
Spirituality is your new passion and Calvin Klein matters less today! Mysticism attracts you, says Ganesha. This may lead you to seek solace in holy books and religious places. It's going to take some time for you to understand that spiritual attainment can be had in the flesh-and-blood world as well.

PISCES
You are ceaselessly driven to find room for improvement. A part-time course to enhance your skills or to increase your efficiency is what you will likely be pursuing today, says Ganesha.



BRITNEY SPEARS HITS BACK AT EX KEVIN FEDERLINE

Britney Spears responded to ex-husband Kevin Federline's upcoming memoir *You Thought You Knew*, accusing him of exploiting her pain and portraying her unfairly. In an emotional X post, she denied his claims, questioned his motives, and said his anger and accusations against her were far more serious than people realise.

TOM CRUISE, ANA DE ARMAS PART WAYS

Hollywood stars Tom Cruise and Ana de Armas have reportedly ended their less than nine-month relationship amicably, with a source stating the spark had gone and they are better off as friends. Despite the breakup, they are expected to continue collaborating professionally on upcoming film projects.



Samantha

on importance of authenticity

Mumbai: Actor and entrepreneur Samantha Ruth Prabhu recently delivered an inspiring talk about the growing importance of authenticity in an era driven by image and perfection. The *Kushi* actress reflected on the pressures of maintaining a flawless public persona, admitting that the pursuit of perfection often alienates rather than connects. "Authenticity is need of the hour," she said. "We tried the route of perfection, but it distances people. Everyone wears the same clothes, says the same things. I'm not perfect; I might make mistakes, but I'm trying to do better."

Samantha also opened up about her personal challenges, acknowledging how her separation and health issues have played out under public scrutiny. "You are constantly judged for being vulnerable," she noted, adding that embracing imperfection is a step toward self-acceptance and genuine connection.

On ambition, Samantha emphasised that it must be guided by purpose and integrity. "I'm very ambitious, but ambition should come with purpose," she remarked. She urged young people to choose mentors wisely, crediting her own mentors for transforming her journey. Her message resonated deeply—reminding everyone that in a world obsessed with appearances, being real, grounded, and responsible can be the truest form of fame.

AGENCIES

THEATRE TREAT



Artistes of Udbhaba Nata Mandali of Sunabeda presented Odia play *Manduka Upakhyaana* at Bhanjakala Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Friday. Written by Ramesh Prasad Panigrahi, the play was directed by Dolgovind Rath, an alumnus of National School of Drama, New Delhi. Apart from Ministry of Culture, three other theatre troupes – Rangabhoomi, Ame Banchichhu and Rangadhara - collaborated for the event. The drama will have repeat shows Saturday and Sunday.

PIK: BIKASH NAYAK

Kritika for slice of life movies



Mumbai: Actress Kritika Kamra, who will next be seen in a film directed by Anusha Rizvi, said that a story doesn't always need "explosions or twists" to move you as sometimes, "all it takes is honesty."

The yet-untitled project by Rizvi is set in Delhi and tells the story of an ordinary family navigating generational gaps, belonging, and sisterhood with gentle humour and emotional honesty. Speaking about the film and the need for such stories, Kritika told this news agency: "Somewhere in the noise of spectacle and scale, we've forgotten the quiet charm of ordinary stories — the ones that reflect our everyday lives, our families, our small joys and disappointments."

"This film with Anusha brings that back for me. It's rooted in simplicity and emotion, and that's what makes it special. You don't need explosions or twists for a story to move you, sometimes, all it takes is honesty."

Kritika truly believes there's still a "huge audience craving that comfort and connection."

The actress said that Hindi cinema has always been at its most powerful when it looks inward, especially when it celebrates human relationships, humour in the mundane, and warmth in imperfection.

"These are the films that stay with you long after the credits roll. I miss that texture in our movies today. So doing something that feels both familiar and refreshing at once and that's what drew me in."

IANIS



AGENCIES

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

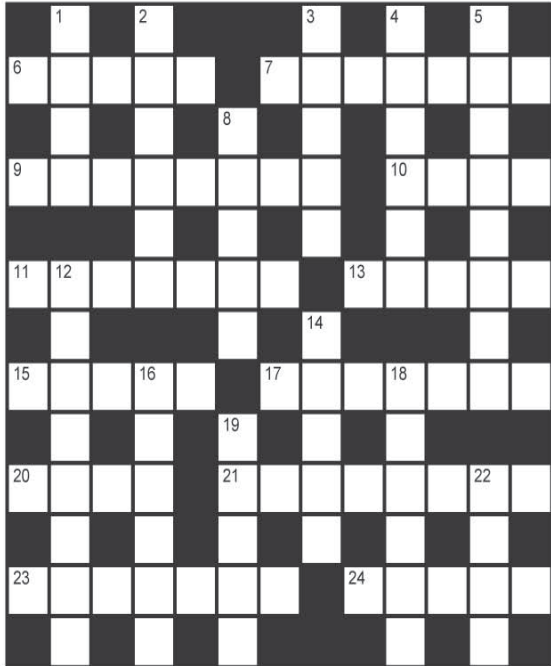


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Copyright ©2022 PuzzleJunction.com

- Across**
- 6 Before time or rib
 - 7 Short and snappy
 - 9 Conflict
 - 10 Jessica of *Sin City*
 - 11 Driveway type
 - 13 Full-grown
 - 15 Garlicky mayonnaise
 - 17 Mountain sheep
 - 20 Aquatic bird
 - 21 Brasseries
 - 23 Rhythmic pattern
 - 24 Son of Zeus and Europa
 - 3 Stream
 - 4 Majorca, e.g.
 - 5 Petty objections raiser
 - 8 Twinkle-toed
 - 12 Bikini
 - 14 Panorama
 - 16 Dawdle
 - 18 Lone wolf
 - 19 Sailing ship
 - 22 Deep black
- Down**
- 1 Race pace
 - 2 Waylay

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

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

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Create fear in minds of criminals: Guv to police

RESOLVE PLAINTS QUICKLY: CEO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) RS Gopalan Friday directed poll officials to immediately redress complaints, including those received through the C-Vigil app, related to the Nuapada Assembly byelection.

Gopalan issued the instruction in Nuapada while reviewing administrative preparedness, law and order, and other arrangements for the November 11 bypoll there.

The CEO was accompanied by Additional DGP and State Police Nodal Officer (SPNO) Sanjay Kumar and senior Election Commission of India (ECI) officials.

Chief Electoral Officer RS Gopalan emphasised close coordination between civil and police authorities to ensure a free, fair, and peaceful byelection

The CEO emphasised close coordination between civil and police authorities to ensure a free, fair, and peaceful byelection.

“Officials were instructed to maintain a 24x7 control room and help desk for immediate redressal of complaints, including those received via C-Vigil,” a senior official said.

Gopalan urged all officers, staff, and police personnel

to perform their duty with impartiality, integrity, and dedication. He also instructed strict vigilance against attempts to influence voters through cash, liquor, sarees, or other inducements.

Collector and District Election Officer Madhusudan Dash presented a detailed report on administrative arrangements, while superintendent of police (SP) Amritpal Singh outlined law and order measures through a PowerPoint presentation.

The CEO and the Central officials reviewed the detailed preparations and advised both the Collector and the SP to ensure that the byelection is conducted in a flawless manner,

setting an exemplary benchmark.

It was also noted that no transfer of officials in the district will be permitted during the period. The CEO, accompanied by Central officials and the district Collector, visited the training centre for presiding officers and first polling officers and interacted with them.

He later convened a meeting with heads of various election committees, reviewing preparations and stressing meticulous execution of assigned duties.

Gopalan also directed the district administration to ensure uninterrupted power supply, proper sanitation, safe drinking water, ramps, and all essential amenities at every polling station.

₹60L brown sugar recovered; 3 held

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: The Commissionerate Police arrested three persons, including a notorious woman drug dealer, after recovering brown sugar worth Rs 60 lakh from their possession, a senior officer said Friday.

Acting on a tip-off, the special crime unit of police intercepted the accused near Harirajpur Chhak under Jatni police limits Thursday and recovered 555 gram of brown sugar from them, said Commissioner of Police S Dev Datta Singh.

The arrested were identified as Anita Paramguru, 41, Rajendra Kumar Sahu, 32, and Shiba Prasad Dash, 28, he said.

Apart from brown sugar, police have also recovered two SUVs, Rs 5.10 lakh in cash, five mobile phones and gold ornaments from their possession, Singh said, adding that the estimated value of the total recovered items will be about Rs 1 crore.

The successful operation highlights the twin city police's steadfast commitment to eliminating business activities of unlawful narcotics substances in its jurisdiction, the Singh said.



Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Friday said law enforcement agencies need to create “fear” in the minds of criminals by taking swift action and ensuring strict punishment against them in crimes against women, particularly rape cases.

Kambhampati said this during an interaction with journalists at Raj Bhavan here.

“The incidents that took place in Durgapur of West Bengal, Balasore and Gopalpur in Odisha were very unfortunate. The state governments, police and public, all together, have responsibilities to deal with such incidents,” the Governor told journalists.

He said, “The law enforcement agency, the police, has a major role to play by creating a ‘fear’ in the minds of criminals by ensuring prompt actions and stringent punishments for the culprits.”

Replying to a question on whether Raj Bhavan has any plans to set up a dedicated cell for receiving complaints of sexual harassment from women students, particularly from foreign countries studying in Odisha, the Governor said, “All the institutions have their own internal complaint committees to deal with such situations. However, if any complaint is received from any student, we are open to receive it.”

About better governance in rural areas, the Governor said the state government should consider increasing the number of gram panchayats (GPs) as it would help

ensure better administration at grassroots level.

About the BJP government's performance in the state, the Governor said it is working to the best of its abilities. However, he stressed on completion of pending projects such as those under Jal Jeevan Mission.

Asked about implementation of Panchayat Extension to the Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, 1996 in Odisha, he said, “The act was passed in 1996, but the rules are yet to be framed. I hope that rules would be made soon. The draft rules are now in circulation.”

During the interaction, Kambhampati encouraged mediapersons to actively promote the welfare schemes of both the Union and state governments on their platforms, helping more people become aware of the benefits.

He highlighted key schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Surak-

sha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Atal Pension Yojana, and Sukanya Samridhi Yojana. “Many citizens are still unaware of these schemes. If the media highlights them, it can significantly expand public awareness and help more people access these benefits,” he said.

The Governor also discussed a range of state issues with media professionals, including tribal development, education, especially school dropouts and vacancies in universities, Mahanadi water dispute, rural development, migration, security of journalists and other key matters.

Kambhampati expressed confidence in Odisha's potential to achieve developed-state status by 2036. He also highlighted the significance of skill development in addressing migration challenges.

Reliance

STORES OPEN FROM
9 AM - MIDNIGHT

GET **GST** BENEFIT OF **₹2,000*** TO **₹100,000*** ON TVs

T&C APPLY

Haier LG SAMSUNG SONY TCL TOSHIBA

BIG

SCREEN DEALS

UNLOCK LIMITLESS VIEWING

(85) (98) (100) (115)
216 CM 249 CM 254 CM 292 CM

BIG

SCREEN

Range starting from
₹119990*

EMI
Starting from
₹8999*

SAMSUNG

QLED | OLED | NEO QLED

20%+ 10% EXTRA CASHBACK ON SAMSUNG A&S BANK CREDIT CARDS 3 YEAR WARRANTY* LIMITED PERIOD OFFER

TCL

190 CM (75) 75P6K

OLD PRICE **₹69990**

NEW PRICE **₹59990***

Google TV ULTRA HD

TOSHIBA No.1 in 2024

QLED 165 CM (65) M450RP

OLD PRICE **₹52990**

NEW PRICE **₹45990***

Dolby Vision HDR 1000 4K 120Hz

BPL

139 CM (55) 55UF2340

OLD PRICE **₹32249**

NEW PRICE **₹27999***

4K ULTRA HD

FESTIVAL OF ELECTRONICS

GST-REDUCED PRICES* ON APPLICABLE PRODUCTS

Happy Dhanteras

UP TO **₹20000** INSTANT DISCOUNT*

AMERICAN EXPRESS AU SMALL FINANCE BANK BOBCARD HDFC BANK HSBC ICICI Bank IDBI BANK IDFC FIRST Bank IndusInd Bank kotak RBL BANK YES BANK

UP TO **₹30000** CASHBACK* ON CONSUMER DURABLE LOANS

HDB FINANCIAL SERVICES IDFC FIRST BANK kotak REMAINING OPPORTUNITIES CONSUMER DURABLE LOAN CONSUMER DURABLE LOAN

Reliance digital

PERSONALISING TECHNOLOGY

www.reliancedigital.in

LOWEST PRICES EVER

Built for Apple Intelligence.

iPhone 15 128 GB

₹43990*

EMIs of ₹3916*

iPhone 16 Plus 128 GB | 6.7 Inch Screen

₹59990*

EMIs of ₹5333*

MacBook Air Powered by M4 Chip

EMI of ₹2185*

₹20999 Starting from **₹18999***

₹26999 Starting from **₹24999***

₹4999 at **₹1***

5% OFF

₹22999*

₹29999*

₹3999 at **₹1***

SIDE BY SIDE

BPL Starting from **₹44990***

HAIR Starting from **₹54990***

LG Starting from **₹68990***

SAMSUNG Starting from **₹69990***

IRON WORTH UP TO **₹2100***

AIR FRYER WORTH **₹7490***

DOUBLE DOOR

BPL 233L **₹18990***

HAIR 240L **₹19990***

LG 322L **₹32990***

SAMSUNG 350L **₹467L**

WHIRLPOOL 350L **₹46990***

TOP LOAD

SAMSUNG 9 Kg **₹20490***

LG 8 Kg **₹20990***

WHIRLPOOL 10 Kg **₹23990***

FRONT LOAD

SAMSUNG 9 Kg **₹32990***

LG 10 Kg **₹34990***

IFB 9 Kg **₹37990***

1T INVERTER ACs Starting from **₹17990***

1.5T INVERTER ACs Starting from **₹18990***

PHILIPS AIR FRYERS UP TO **30% OFF**

HAVELLS HEXO 1100W 4 Jar Mixer Grinder **₹13695**

ULTIMATE LAPTOP DEAL Buy Lenovo IdeaPad 5 Next Gen AI Laptop

GET FREE! 140 CM (55) SMART TV WORTH **₹32249**

Advanced by AMD Ryzen™ AI R5 330 **₹79999***

SCAN TO VISIT WEBSITE OR STORE

FREE DELIVERY & FASTEST INSTALLATION*

14-DAY EASY RETURNS

EXPERT ADVICE*

EXTENDED WARRANTY*

EASY EMIS

ALSO SHOP AT: MY JIO STORE Jio DIGITAL LIFE

OPRB scam: 4 more held; mastermind still at large

AGENCIES

Cuttack, Oct 17: The police arrested four more people in connection with the alleged irregularities in the Odisha Police Recruitment Board (OPRB) examination in Odisha, officials said.

Those arrested were identified as Munna Mohanty, Abhimanyu Dora, Srikanth Maharana and Soumya Priyadarshini Samant. They were arrested from the Daspalla area in Nayagarh district, police said. While Munna and Srikanth were arrested Thursday, the other two were nabbed Friday.

Notably, the examination for the recruitment of sub-inspectors (SI) was scheduled to be held October 5 and 6, but it was postponed after the alleged irregularities were detected. The irregularities were detected after 114 candidates and three suspected brokers were nabbed on the night of September 29 at bordering areas of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh when they were going to a "special coaching" centre in Vijayanagaram from Bhubaneswar. Later, another two suspected brokers, including one Arabinda Das,



were arrested.

These candidates had reportedly paid ₹10 lakh each to the racket, and were supposed to pay another ₹25 lakh after securing the job, police said.

With the latest arrests, the total number of people who have been nabbed rose to 123, they said.

DGP (Crime Branch) Vinaytosh Mishra said, "Munna Mohanty and Arabinda Das were close associates of Shankar Prusty, the mastermind who is yet to be arrested. Both Munna and Arabinda were directly reporting to Prusty, who was running the racket from Delhi."

"Another 110 candidates were supposed to get similar 'coaching' in West Bengal's Digha. A total of 110 hotel rooms were booked in Digha for the can-

didates. They were supposed to gather there September 30. However, due to the police action in Berhampur, the program was cancelled," he said.

Mishra revealed that Munna was looking after the Vijayanagaram module, while Arabinda was making arrangements for the Digha module.

"Munna had arranged a bus for the candidate to travel to Vijayanagaram. He transported some of the candidates in his car to the bus. The car and the two buses have been seized," Mishra said.

"On the other hand, another accused, Soumya Priyadarshini was in touch with the candidates and their parents. Similarly, Abhimanyu Dora, a native of the Daspalla area, helped the accused persons in hiding and destroying evidence against them," he said.

The officer said efforts are being made to arrest the others involved in the crime.

"A total of 110 mobile phones have been seized, and forensic examinations of the phones will be conducted to gather more details about the racket. It will take two to three months to recover the data," he stated.

Nuapada byelection: Naveen among BJD's star campaigners

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: With political temperature rising ahead of the crucial by-election in Nuapada Assembly constituency, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Friday released the list of star campaigners to woo voters ahead of the November 11 bypoll.

The BJD, led by its president and former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Friday unveiled a list of 40 star campaigners, which includes several senior and veteran leaders including the party supreme himself. Among others are Prasanna Acharya, Debi Prasad Mishra, Ranendra Pratap Swain, Pranab Prakash Das, and Arun Sahoo.

As part of its strategy, the regional party has mobilised over 50 senior leaders to oversee poll management across the constituency.

SAI's 'Mission 100 Libraries' empowers 15,000 students

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: SAI International School's 'Mission 100 Libraries', a transformative initiative launched in 2015, has established over 100 mini libraries in government and private schools across Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, and surrounding areas, impacting more than 15,000 students to date.

Under the initiative, each school receives an almira and essential furniture, along with training to teachers for effective library management. Around 500 books in Odia, English, and Hindi languages are being donated under the initiative.

The project aims to add four new libraries annually, with an aim to reach an additional 2,000 children every year.

Beyond books, SAI students



engage with peers in these schools through sessions on reading, internet safety, food security, and career guidance, while wellness programmes like 'Healthy Minds, Happy Hearts' at these places promote emotional well-being.

Chairperson Silpi Sahoo emphasised that the mission is a living tribute to its Founder, late Bijaya Kumar Sahoo, which continues to uphold his legacy. "A library is more than books—it's a portal to opportunity and imagination," she added.

City AIIMS VRDL honoured for excellence in viral diagnostics



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: The Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (VRDL) at AIIMS Bhubaneswar has been awarded the prestigious Silver Award by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for its exemplary contributions in viral diagnostics, research, and quality services.

The award was presented during the VRDL Conclave, organised by the department of Health Research (DHR) at the

Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi, which recognised top-performing laboratories and reviewed the progress of the national VRDL network.

Department of Microbiology head Baijayantimala Mishra and Associate Dean Research and Professor of Paediatrics Bhagirathi Dwivedi received the award on behalf of the institution.

Congratulating the VRDL team, AIIMS Bhubaneswar executive director and CEO Ashutosh Biswas expressed

pride in their achievement and pledged continued institutional support for advancements in patient care, diagnostics, and research.

Since its inception, the VRDL has provided free diagnostic services to over 20,000 patients, covering more than 50 types of viral infections.

The laboratory has been instrumental in timely diagnostics during outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics, handling infections including COVID-19, Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease, Measles, Herpes Simplex Virus, Japanese Encephalitis, and other respiratory viruses.

Accredited by NABL, the lab has published several high-impact studies in international journals and also serves as a training hub for doctors, lab personnel, and biomedical students, strengthening viral disease management in the region.

The VRDL network, established by the DHR, MoHFW, spans 165 laboratories across India at regional, state, and medical college levels, forming a crucial backbone of the country's viral disease surveillance and response system.

Gadjata Gandhi's birth anniv celebration in City

RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: Odisha Sahitya Akademi (OSA), in association with Gadjata Gandhi Sarangadhar Das Foundation (GGSDF) jointly organised a state-level programme to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sarangadhar Das — the noted Indian nationalist revolutionary, freedom fighter, and politician here at Sanskruti Bhawan Friday.

The event was graced by several distinguished personalities, including Padma awardee and eminent sculptor Adwaita Charan Gadanayak, who attended as eminent guest, OSA former secretary Sangram Jena as chief speaker and Fire and Emergency Services DG Sudhanshu Sarangi, while OSA secretary Chandra Sekhar Hota presided over the programme. Among others, writer and researcher Uddhab Charan Nay-



ak, GGSDF chairman Krushnachandra Ich and litterateur Sanatan Malick were present.

On the occasion, 'Sangrami Sarangadhar', a book authored by Sangram Jena which chronicles the life and struggle of Sarangadhar Das, was released.

In his address, Malick reflected on Das's extraordinary journey — from his early life in Dhenkanal to his higher education at Ravenshaw University and further studies in Tokyo — and his relentless fight against

feudal oppression in Odisha.

Speaking on the occasion, Gadanayak expressed admiration and humility for Das and said, "Today, I felt like a student listening to everyone speaks about Sarangadhar Das. I wasn't even aware that such a great personality was born in the same region as I was. It's truly enlightening to know about his contributions."

"It's unfortunate that we no longer have leaders or thinkers like him today. The younger generation must learn about

such revolutionaries and visionaries. Programmes like these remind us of the values and courage the revolutionaries stood for," he added.

Sarangadhar Das (1886-1957) remains a towering figure in Odisha's political history. A nationalist revolutionary and member of India's Constituent Assembly, he played a key role in fighting feudal exploitation and later emerged as a prominent leader of the Socialist Party after independence.

NUAPADA BYPOLL

Chhuria pooh poohs Majhi's 'outsider' remark

Says Jay Dholakia's family hails from Gujarat's Surat district and settled in Nuapada for business

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 17: BJD's Nuapada candidate Snehangini Chhuria Friday dismissed Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's claim that she is an "outsider", saying she belongs to western Odisha and has strong family roots in the district.

Reacting to Majhi's remarks at a public meeting in Nuapada Thursday, Chhuria said, "I feel pity over the CM's comments. How come I am an outsider? My mother was born under Komna block in Nuapada district, and I was born in Padampur, just 57 km away. Nuapada is my mother's birthplace, and I have relatives across the district."

Majhi had called Chhuria an "outsider" and claimed that the BJD imported her from Attabira in Baragarh district.

Chhuria, a former minister and two-time MLA from Attabira in neighbouring Bargarh district, countered the CM's comments by questioning the origins of the BJP candidate.

Nuapada bypoll is scheduled November 11 and counting will take place November 14.

"Let the Chief Minister explain to the people of Nuapada the origin of BJP candidate Dholakia. His family hails from Gujarat's Surat district and settled in Nuapada for business. Since Jay's late father Rajendra Dholakia was involved in social service, BJD president Naveen Patnaik helped him in politics, got him elected to Assembly and also made him a Cabinet minister from 2022

to 2024. We in BJD have never considered Rajendra Babu as an outsider," Chhuria said. She said the people will decide who is an outsider. "The people will decide who is an outsider. I bear the surname Chhuria, which is common in Nuapada. Can the CM find another Dholakia family in the district?" she asked.

She added: "I am an Odia who can identify self with the people of Nuapada. I stand on my soil, drink my water and inhale my air in Nuapada. Those having roots in other states are eyeing to loot my (Nuapada's) mines, minerals and resources. I will make people aware of the BJP's plan," she said.

Chhuria, who is also the president of Biju Mahila Janata Dal (BMJD), and a prominent woman leader of the state, alleged that the BJP has made Rajen-

dra Dholakia's son Jay a candidate. "Jay is a betrayer. This is because he betrayed the trust of the party (BJD) by switching over to BJP before bypolls. He has betrayed the voters of Nuapada as they had elected a BJD candidate (Rajendra Dholakia) in 2024. The people had placed the BJD candidate (in 2024 elections) in

third position," Chhuria said. Jay explained that he joined the BJP in order to fulfill dreams of his late father. "I realised that my father's unfinished development work cannot be complete if I remain in BJD. For the sake of Nuapada's development, I joined the BJP to ensure that the double-engine government takes up the unfinished work of my father," Jay told reporters.

Congress candidate Ghasiram Majhi also accused Jay Dholakia of being "sold out" to BJP for business interests.



MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.97 ▲ 0.15	SENSEX	83952.19 ▲ 484.53	GOLD	₹127,750 ▼ ₹2102
EURO	102.72 ▼ 0.08	NIFTY	25709.85 ▲ 124.55	SILVER	₹157,724 ▼ ₹7939

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	33.6°	31.6°	Fog or Mist in the morning and Partly cloudy sky later.
Min Temp	22.0°	21.4°	
Humidity	75%	81%	
Rainfall	NIL	NIL	

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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

18 held after clash over land dispute in 2 villages

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, Oct 17: Police Friday arrested 18 people for their alleged involvement in the clash between two neighbouring villages in Ganjam district over a land dispute.

The villagers of Singipur and Ratnamanipur, under the Patapur police station limits in Ganjam district, were engaged in a clash over ownership claim on a parcel of land Thursday. At least three people were injured in the clash, police said.

Following the clash, prohibitory order was imposed on the patch of land by the district administration Thursday, which will be extended for two months to maintain the law and order situation, said Berhampur Sub-Collector Avinash Kumar. Ganjam SP Subhendu Patra



said 10 people from Singipur and eight from Ratnamanipur were arrested. Police are also searching for some other persons who were involved in the clash, he said.

Four platoons of forces were deployed to maintain law and order in the area, the SP said.

Aska Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Santosh Jena was monitoring the situation as tension continued to prevail in the area.

The clash started when the villagers of Ratnamanipur started preparing for a yajna by constructing boundary walls on the disputed land measuring around one acre. They also wanted to use the land to make a park.

The villagers of Singipur, however, wanted to set up a bus stand on the patch of land along with a community toilet.

“Our first priority is to maintain peace in the area and prohibit the entry of anyone into the disputed site. After peace prevails, we will plan for utilisation of the stretch of land in a proper manner, consulting with the villagers of both villages,” the sub-collector said.



FESTIVE FERVOUR: Some women potters display earthen diyas for sale ahead of Diwali at the daily market in Balimela town of Malkangiri district, Friday

2 students drown in waterfall during picnic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Oct 17: Two students drowned while visiting Gagri Ghat waterfall near Kalunga Fandi in Rourkela's Brahmanitarang police limits Friday, officials said.

The deceased were identified as Om Suna, 16, of Sector-15 Havildar Quarters, and Anurag Das, 16, of Sector-1. Both were Class X students at IEMS School in Sector-20, Rourkela.



According to reports, Om and Anurag went on a picnic with four other students – Abhijit Hobo, 16, of Sector-20 D Block; Sumit Seth, 16, of Sector-6 C Block; Abhishek Sahu, 16, of Sector-2 J Block; and Pritam Hansda, 16, of Sector-3 A Block. They travelled from Rourkela to Gagri Ghat on two bikes.

While returning from the picnic, Om and Anurag reportedly went to bathe in the waterfall along with others and were swept away by the current. Local residents and school teachers reached the site and informed the fire service.

The fire department recovered the students' bodies around 4pm Friday. Police have seized the bodies and sent them to RGH for post-mortem. No formal police case had been registered at the time of reporting.

Odia scientist patents process to get chitosan from shrimp waste

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Oct 17: Siddhartha Pati, a scientist from Balasore, has earned a patent for developing an eco-friendly process to extract chitosan — a biodegradable compound used in pharmaceutical industry— from discarded shrimp shells, turning marine waste into valuable bioproducts.



Pati's startup, aligned with the government's Circular Economy and Waste to Wealth missions, focuses on converting marine waste into raw materials for pharmaceutical, agricultural and industrial use.

The patented technology enables the production of biopolymers such as chitin, chitosan and biostimulants from shrimp shells, which have wide applications in medicine, cosmetics and water purification.

“What was once dumped into landfills or the sea, causing serious pollution, is now being turned into a resource of immense value,” Pati said.

Calling the patent “the beginning of a series of breakthroughs”, Pati said his team aims to make India a global hub for sustainable bioproducts and bio-based materials.

Gahirmatha faces ecological crisis

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Oct 17: The Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary in Kendrapara district, known globally as the largest nesting ground for Olive Ridley sea turtles, faces mounting ecological threats despite annual protection measures. The sanctuary, which attracts nearly 4-5 lakh turtles each year for nesting, is now grappling with severe pollution, illegal trawling, habitat loss, and administrative shortcomings.



Experts fear these issues could undermine decades of conservation work for the Olive Ridley — a species listed as “vulnerable” in the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red Data Book. Only one out of 1,000 hatchlings survives to adulthood, according to IUCN data, underscoring the species' fragile future.

Plastic waste and toxic effluents from nearby industrial belts and prawn farms are polluting the sea, damaging seaweed habitats that support marine life. Environmentalists say wastewater from shrimp

aquaculture is contaminating coastal waters, destroying seaweed gardens and allowing jellyfish populations to rise alarmingly.

“The unchecked dumping of plastic and waste from aquaculture and industries has upset the marine ecosystem. Seaweed beds are dying, fish populations are shrinking, and the entire food chain is being disrupted,” said environmentalist Hemant Kumar Raut.

The loss of natural breeding grounds due to coastal erosion has worsened the problem. Agarnasi Island has already disappeared beneath the sea, while other nesting areas such as Nasi, Babubali, and Ekakula have shrunk significantly. However, the formation of a new beach near Satabhaya this year has sparked hope among conservationists and local intellectuals that it may offer a fresh

nesting site for the endangered turtles.

The Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, carved out of Bhitarkanika National Park September 27, 1997, covers 1,435 sq km, of which only 27 sq km is land. The terrestrial area, however, is steadily eroding.

Forest patrol boats remain non-functional, marine police stations face staff shortages, and coordination with the Coast Guard is inconsistent. These lapses allow unauthorised trawlers to enter restricted waters, trapping turtles in banned gill nets. Every year, hundreds of turtles die due to illegal fishing.

Experts and locals also point to the lack of high-powered patrol vessels, making it difficult to intercept trespassing boats in time.

To safeguard nesting turtles, a seasonal fishing ban will be enforced from November 1 to May 31 along the Gahirmatha coast. During this period, fishing activities will be prohibited within the sanctuary's marine zone. Intellectuals including Ganesh Chandra Samal, Jagannath Das, Dolagobinda

Jena, Hemant Kumar Raut, and Ashok Kumar Swain have urged the government to strengthen surveillance and raise awareness among coastal communities.

Despite the sanctuary's global significance, conservationists warn that rising marine pollution, expanding shrimp farms, and weak enforcement threaten to push Olive Ridleys closer to extinction. With more than 1,000 turtle deaths reported annually in restricted waters, experts stress the need for stronger coastal protection and pollution control.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Bharadraja Gaonkar said extensive measures are being taken to safeguard the species. “The Forest department has intensified patrolling and monitoring through field camps to prevent illegal fishing during the restriction period,” Gaonkar said. “During last year's ban, several unauthorised trawlers were seized, and more than 235 cases were registered against violators. We are committed to ensuring stronger protection for the Olive Ridleys this season.”

Snakebite kills man, grandson

Sheragada: A man and his grandson died after being bitten by a venomous snake in Kamuda village of Sheragada block under Ganjam district, late Thursday night, authorities said. Panchanan Nayak, 50, of Shabarpalli village in Koradakana panchayat, was resting at home after dinner with his 10-year-old grandson, Roshan Paik. Around 11pm, a venomous snake bit both of them. Family members rushed the victims to Sheragada Hospital, where they received initial treatment. As their condition did not improve, both were transferred to MKCG Medical College and Hospital at Berhampur, where they died.

2 kids among 7 killed in separate road accidents

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh/Dhenkanal/Chhatrapur, Oct 17: In a tragic series of road accidents across Odisha, seven people including two children were killed and three others critically injured in the last 24 hours, highlighting the growing concern over road safety in the state.

In Dhenkanal district, a horrific accident occurred near the Malpura overbridge on NH-53 under Kamakhyanagar police limits when a speeding truck rammed into a motorcycle carrying a family of four. The father and his two daughters died on the spot, while the mother sustained critical injuries and was rushed to Kamakhyanagar hospital. Eyewitnesses said the truck dragged the bike nearly 150 metres before



fleeing. Police are examining CCTV footage and searching for the vehicle.

In Bargarh, three youths lost their lives late Thursday night after their car hit a road divider near the Bargarh-Bhatli four-lane overbridge. The deceased were identified as Saurabh Agrawal (26) of Bargarh, Lucenery Dishri (26) of Sonpur district, and Gyanaranjan Sahu (27) of Bhubaneswar. Another passenger,

Rijita Sethi (25), survived and is under treatment. The group had travelled from Sambalpur for work.

Meanwhile, in Berhampur, one person was killed and another critically injured when a truck hit their scooter at Pukidibandha Junction on NH-16. The deceased was identified as Hari Patra of Berhampur. Local MLAs Siddhanta Mahapatra and Krushna Chandra Nayak, who happened to be passing by, arranged emergency medical aid. Police have detained the truck and launched an investigation.

With multiple fatalities reported in a single day, public demand for improved road infrastructure and stricter enforcement of traffic rules has intensified.

Koraput Coffee outlet in the pipeline for Gopalpur: RDC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Oct 17: In a significant push to promote Koraput Coffee, Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC) of the Southern Division, Sangram Keshari Mohapatra, Thursday announced plans to set up an exclusive Koraput Coffee outlet in Gopalpur, one of the state's leading coastal tourist destinations. The initiative aims to boost the visibility and marketability of the region's famed organic coffee brand.

As part of his visit to Koraput, Mohapatra reviewed key developmental activities and explored avenues to strengthen the district's economic potential. He began the day by offering prayers at Sabar Shree Kshetra before heading to the Coffee Board office, where he interacted with senior officials

and stakeholders involved in the coffee sector.

Impressed by the quality of cultivation and nursery practices, the RDC lauded the efforts of tribal farmers and officials. “Koraput has a unique identity because of its coffee. The quality, aroma, and organic nature of this coffee have already made it a recognised brand,” he said.

He stressed the importance of value addition, better branding, and expanded marketing for Koraput Coffee, noting that the planned outlet in Gopalpur would serve as a strategic step in that direction. “We are planning to collaborate with Ganjam Collector and former Koraput Collector, B Keerthi Vasan, to explore possibilities for opening an exclusive Koraput Coffee outlet in Gopalpur soon,” he added.

Court awards 20 years RI to 23-yr-old man for rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Oct 17: A special POC SO court in Mayurbhanj district Friday sentenced a man to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping a 12-year-old girl four years ago.

Special POC SO Court Judge Pratima Patra held 23-year-old Balam Munda guilty of the crime and also imposed a penalty of ₹50,000 on him. Special Public Prosecutor Abhinna Kumar Pattnaik said. He said the court also directed Mayurbhanj District Legal Services Authority to pay ₹7 lakh to the survivor as compensation.

According to prosecution, the incident took place November 23, 2021, when the girl was returning home after shopping. Munda forcibly abducted and raped her in a secluded area under Jamada police station limits.

Following the incident, the girl's father lodged a complaint at Jamda police station and a case was registered under Section 6(1) of POC SO Act, 376(AB), 294 IPC and the accused was arrested.

Co-op bank board suspended despite HC's 'no action' order

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar/Hatadihi, Oct 17: The chairperson and all members of the Keonjhar Central Cooperative Bank Management Committee have been suspended by the Odisha Cooperative Societies Registrar despite a High Court order directing that no action be taken until November 15, 2025.

The suspension order, issued by Registrar Siddharth Das October 15, 2025, follows allegations of irregularities in the bank. The move came a day after the Orissa High Court had instructed that no coercive action should be taken against

the petitioners involved in challenging an investigation report.

The matter traces back to September 16, 2025, when an investigation report on alleged irregularities was submitted to the Cooperative department. The management committee was later served a notice September 22, 2025, to submit a response.

Registrar Siddharth Das said the suspension was issued following the court's directive, but he added he was unable to comment further as he was out of state on election duty.

The suspension, despite the High Court order, has sparked controversy in Keonjhar.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
ADDENDUM TO E-AUCTION PROGRAMME OF OCTOBER-2025 FOR WALTAIR & KHURDA ROAD DIVISIONS
The additional schedule of e-Auction for the month of October-2025 is as under:

Month / Year	DIVISION	Date
OCTOBER-2025	KHURDA ROAD	24.10.2025
OCTOBER-2025	WALTAIR	27.10.2025

Condemned rolling stocks (Loco, Coach, Wagon), Scrap rail, Miscellaneous PWay fittings (switches, crossings, fish plates, sleepers, fish bolt etc.), miscellaneous workshop scrap (drums, bogie frame, buffer casing, buffer plunger, turning and boring etc), Miscellaneous ferrous, Non-ferrous, Non-metallic scrap, condemned machinery and plants, condemned vehicles, condemned office equipments of Khurda Road and Waltair divisions and scrap materials of Railway Electrifications are expected to be offered on "AS IS WHERE IS" basis. Railway administration shall be at liberty to include other items too in the e-auction and the complete details of materials and terms and conditions will be as per Auction Catalogue, which shall be available with the respective auction conducting authority of East Coast Railway or from our website www.irops.gov.in within 07 (seven) days prior to the date of auction.

PR-694/Q/25-26Principal Chief Materials Manager, Bhubaneswar

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University
(Central University)
B-4, Qutub Institutional Area, New Delhi-110016
Tele No. 011-46060501, Website : www.slbsrsv.ac.in
Advt. No. 03/2025
Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for recruitment of one Associate Professor (Sarva Darshan), one Assistant Professor (Education), one Assistant Professor (Dharmashastra) & Librarian post(s) through online mode. For viewing the eligibility criteria, application fees, last date of applications, along with detailed terms and conditions of recruitment, candidates are required to go through the University website www.slbsrsv.ac.in and Chayan Portal of UGC (<https://curec.samarth.ac.in/index.php/search/site/index>). Last date of Online application is 17.11.2025.
cbc 21371/12/0010/2526 Sd./- REGISTRAR (I/C)

CENTRE FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES AND TRAINING (CCRT)
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Plot No. 15-A, Sector-7, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075
AWARD OF SENIOR/JUNIOR FELLOWSHIPS TO OUTSTANDING PERSONS IN THE FIELDS OF CULTURE FOR THE YEAR 2025-26
Offline Applications are invited by CCRT, Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India for the award of Junior and Senior Fellowship for undertaking research oriented projects in the field of Performing, Literary, Plastic Arts and New Areas related to Culture.
Applications are invited for the year 2025-26 with effect from dated **18th October, 2025**. The number of Junior & Senior Fellowship to be awarded for this year is 200 each. Details of the schemes, instructions for applicant, eligibility conditions/criteria and Application form are available on the following websites of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and CCRT.
www.indiaculture.gov.in
www.ccrtindia.gov.in
ONLY OFFLINE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED
The last date for submitting the completely filled application form by post or by-hand etc. to the above mentioned address of CCRT, New Delhi is **01st December, 2025**.
cbc 09127/12/0003/2526

SUPPLY CHAIN CRISIS



The fashion industry is one of many that is feeling the weight of tariffs – disruptions that come at a time when it is struggling to make progress toward previously stated climate and sustainability goals

sourcing strategies to manage risks associated with the tariffs. Tools like supply-chain finance are increasingly being used not just for liquidity, but as buffers against volatility. Such trends reflect a growing consensus: resilient, transparent, and values-aligned supply chains are key to avoiding major disruptions and maintaining competitiveness.

Unfortunately, the fashion sector is a laggard in this regard, scoring just 66 out of 100 in Cascale's Better Buying 2025 Garment Industry Scorecard, with year-on-year declines in key areas of responsible purchasing, including cost negotiation, payment terms, and product development. This is concerning, given that upstream effects can spread when tariffs or other external shocks hit. Production costs often need to be renegotiated, and without strong supplier relationships, shifts in production can increase delays, labor risks, and reputational exposure.

The trend is also concerning for its climate implications. The fashion industry, with its complex global supply chains, is particularly vulnerable to such ripple effects. The US tariffs that went into effect on August 7 directly affect sourcing hubs with an outsized influence on the industry's carbon footprint. Cascale

finds that just 1,800 factories in nine countries account for over 80% of measured carbon emissions from the apparel, textile, and footwear industries. Of these, six countries – China, Bangladesh, Vietnam, India, Turkey, and Pakistan – have been directly affected by the new tariffs.

Shifting sourcing away from these hubs might avoid short-term tariff costs. But it could also disrupt ongoing efforts to reduce emissions from these major sources. We saw this in 2018, when tariffs against China drove a production surge in Vietnam.

Though fashion is a \$3 trillion industry, it is expected to have only a minimal formal presence at this year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30). As in previous years, travel budgets are being cut, and many teams are being downsized, as the industry slims down in the face of market volatility. Unlike climate-focused gatherings like Climate Week NYC or London Climate Action Week, COP30 will focus more on adaptation finance, carbon pricing, and nature-based strategies than on redrawing trade or sourcing lines.

Nonetheless, those in the industry should pay close attention to get a sense of the global appetite for sustainable finance and investment. Brazil is using its COP30 presidency

to promote major initiatives like the \$125 billion Tropical Forests Forever Facility, a blended-finance tool designed to help close the \$1.3 trillion annual climate-finance gap by 2035.

In short, COP30 will not offer any direct relief on tariffs, but it could shape the long-term rules of the game, linking sustainability targets, sourcing practices, and competitiveness factors through policy levers that lie beyond the fashion industry's immediate control.

As trade-related costs persist, industry leaders must shift their mindset. Their businesses' resilience will not come from diplomacy or a presidential handshake, but from trust-based relationships, fair purchasing practices, and innovations to drive sustainability. Brands and retailers should view tariffs not only as cost burdens but as stress tests for their supplier partnerships. Companies that default to price-driven strategies risk eroding their ability to deliver quality, speed, and innovation to today's conscientious consumer.

By contrast, companies that lean into transparency and collaboration – sharing forecasts to ensure continuity, smoothing demand through level loading, and offering fairer payment terms – are more likely to avoid spikes in labor violations and preserve the market signals needed to sustain decarbonization investments.

At a time when tariffs and climate-related shifts can alter sourcing strategies overnight, resilient partnerships are more than operational tools. They are strategic differentiators, signaling accountability, stability, and ethical leadership to a growing list of stakeholders who are thinking about the long term.

The writer is Senior Director of Brand and Retailer Membership at Cascale.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

COMPANIES THAT DEFAULT TO PRICE-DRIVEN STRATEGIES RISK ERODING THEIR ABILITY TO DELIVER QUALITY, SPEED, AND INNOVATION TO TODAY'S CONSCIENTIOUS CONSUMER



Joleen Ong

Recent geopolitical developments have underscored the fragility of global supply chains, reminding businesses in constantly-evolving sectors like consumer goods and fashion that the strength of supplier relationships is one of the few persistent sources of resilience. Maintaining such relationships through responsible purchasing (based on environmental and social considerations, not just cost and quality) is not only ethical, but strategically necessary.

The fashion industry is one of many that is feeling the weight of tariffs – disruptions that come at a time when it is struggling to make progress toward previously stated climate and sustainability goals. According to a 2025 benchmarking survey by the US Fashion Industry Association, 100% of 25 leading apparel brands and retailers identified the current administration's protectionist stance and volatile trade relationships as a top challenge, and more than half flagged policy uncertainty, especially retaliatory tariffs, as their primary concern.

Rather than responding with short-term cost-cutting, though, major consumer-goods companies are making strategic investments to build resilience. For example, retailers like Walmart and Target have front-loaded inventory to absorb tariff shocks ahead of the holiday season; and Apple chartered cargo flights to transport 1.5 million iPhones from India, an option made possible by increasing production with a key supplier.

These are not just logistical moves; they are evidence of why trust-based, responsive supply-chain relationships matter. Responsible purchasing practices are the glue that holds supply chains together in uncertain times. Gartner reports that nearly half of large enterprises have renegotiated supplier contracts or shifted

Brits on campus: Opportunity or elitist overreach?

Eight more British universities are set to begin operations in India in the near future, following the University of Southampton's opening of a Gurgaon campus in July, which is good news. Some Indian academics have expressed concerns this development may lead to reduced funding for Indian public universities. They also underlined that these foreign institutions may charge higher fees and could be permitted to generate profits and might transfer those profits abroad.

Five campuses in Bengaluru and Mumbai will operate under the University Grants Commission regulations for foreign institutions, which make research a mandatory activity of British universities in India. This emphasis on research is no doubt very crucial as experts and academicians believe that R&D is rather neglected in the country, both by the government and the private sector.

This opening of foreign varsities has generated some controversy as these high-pro-

file institutions will obviously not cater to the general mass of students. Academics for Action & Development Teachers' Association (AAD-TA) member, Seema Das opposed the UGC regulations to set up such institutions in the country. According to her, these educational institutions would be converted into commercial enterprises, elitist enclaves and distant from Indian socio-economic cultural problems. Many other organisations have opposed such entry of foreign varsities not just for the cost factor in studying in these institutions but also their hiring policies of faculty with high salaries.

Currently, there are 40 million students at universities in India, but 70 million seats are needed by 2035. At the same time, it needs to be noted that most Indian students cannot afford education in private or foreign universities and, as such, the setting of these foreign institutions will only cater to a small segment of society. What is needed is setting up more centres of higher

education at affordable costs by both the Central and state governments. What is preventing them from setting up at least one university in each sub-division of the country with funds, say in the ratio of 60:40 percent of the Centre and the states?

In India, the relation between the first and the second is not well-entrenched. Hence, India's higher education and research lack a participatory dimension. Most of the public universities are lapsing into irrelevance while the best are struggling to hold their fort against the top private universities, modelled on the Western style.

Experts have for long emphasised the need to have stronger and more intimate coordination between industry and education, which is manifest in most Western and other advanced countries of the world. This, unfortunately, is absent here. As a result, quality products are somewhat lacking in some sectors in a large country like India.

Art from the resource

crunch, or should we say severe resource crunch, of universities, college departments are closing alarmingly for a nation intent on doubling the enrolment in 10 years. Private institutions might be absorbing part of the exodus. But the sheer cost of these institutions shut out the majority with little prospect of compensating employment thereafter. A major section of the youth is giving up higher education due to the cost factor.

While the thrust on moving towards a knowledge economy is needed at this juncture with expectations that foreign varsities would give a renewed thrust to R&D welcome, it is also necessary to build higher education from below so that many deserving students, who come from poor and marginalised families, can get the right opportunities to rise to the top. Some system should be evolved whereby meritorious students are picked up from colleges and given financial support till they finish their postgraduate and doctoral degrees. **INFA**



Dhurjati Mukherjee

A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY RELIES ON THE CONJUNCTION OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH WITH INDUSTRY AND FINANCE

WISDOM CORNER

It is better to be violent, if there is violence in our hearts, than to put on the cloak of nonviolence to cover impotence.

MAHATMA GANDHI

Be sure you put your feet in the right place, then stand firm.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.

NELSON MANDELA

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1854:** The Ostend Manifesto was declared, by which three U.S. diplomats communicating to Secretary of State William L. Marcy advocated US seizure of Cuba from Spain.
- 1867:** After much opposition, a deal negotiated by US Secretary of State William Seward for the US purchase of the Russian colony of Alaska was approved, and the US flag was flown over the capital, Sitka.
- 1922:** The British Broadcasting Company, Ltd., was established, to be replaced by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 1927.
- 1931:** American inventor Thomas Edison, who was especially known for his critical role in introducing the modern age of electricity, died in West Orange, New Jersey.
- 1961:** The acclaimed musical film West Side Story, an adaptation of a Broadway play, was released in American theatres; it won 10 Academy Awards, including that for best picture.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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



Impact of TV shows

Sir, Today's TV serials are full of black magic, rivalry, occult practices and family disputes. One opens TV for entertainment and delight. But unnecessarily it is drawn into horror, witch practices, black art and senseless violence. Entertainment leads into mental health issues and paranoia. In yesterday's serials taught us togetherness, fraternity, family bonding and empathy. But, now a day they are doing just the opposite. Family disputes rule the roost in today's serials. There is no lesson to be learnt and no realism to be discovered. Entertainment does not mean horrific violence and vulgarity. These days serials are far off from reality and humanism. Spectators should not be taken for granted. They should be honoured and their issues should be dealt with a realistic approach. Serials should create family bonding and not antagonism and dispute. Let TV serials strengthen human relationships touched with realism and truth.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Trump's rhetoric

Sir, Apropos, "Trump: Modi assured to stop buying Russian oil," **Orissa POST**, October 17. US President Donald Trump's claim that Prime Minister Narendra Modi assured him over the phone that India would stop buying Russian oil holds no credibility. India's Ministry of External Affairs has categorically denied any such conversation, exposing the allegation as baseless. Trump, notorious for false claims, unpredictability, and disregard for diplomatic norms, appears motivated by frustration. India's refusal to yield to his administration's coercive trade tactics has clearly unsettled him. Trump's statements, therefore, must not be taken at face value. Over the years, he has repeatedly undermined facts, including calling India a 'dead economy,' despite IMF, World Bank, and other international agencies confirming India as one of the fastest-growing major economies globally. His remarks reflect desperation rather than truth. Equally reprehensible is the response from certain Indian opposition leaders, particularly Rahul Gandhi, who have endorsed Trump's statements, thereby insulting India's credibility on the global stage. Such endorsements are shameful, misrepresent India's achievements, and diminish the nation's stature internationally. It is imperative to view Trump's remarks as politically driven rhetoric with no factual basis, unworthy of serious consideration.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Care not for time and success.
Act out thy part, whether it be
to fail or to prosper

SRI AUROBINDO

Market Power

The power corridors are abuzz again, but not over taxes or budgets this time. Eyeballs are fixed on who'll get to wield the next big regulatory stick. The government's hunt for new full-time members of SEBI, the capital markets watchdog, has thrown up two clear frontrunners, according to sources: VS Sundaresan, a SEBI insider and former Executive Director, and Sandeep Pradhan, an Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer with a taste for enforcement.

What's interesting is the sheer number of IRS officers who've thrown their hats in the ring, showing just how irresistible the lure of regulatory power is. Sundaresan represents the old-school SEBI DNA — steady, experienced, and predictable. He knows the rulebook and how to wield it. In a system jittery about credibility, that's comforting. But comfort can also breed complacency. Regulators risk turning inward, mistaking process for progress.

Pradhan, on the other hand, brings the enforcement reflex of the tax service — decisive, sometimes draconian, often disruptive. That might sound refreshing to investors tired of mild wrist-slaps. But if the revenue mindset dominates, we could end up with a market that fears its regulator more than it trusts it.

The deeper question is whether SEBI is becoming just another babu playground. Its early years drew professionals from markets and academia. Today, the generalist babu seems to be winning. This subtly shifts the regulator's temperament from entrepreneurial to administrative.

If the government wants SEBI to keep pace with AI-led trading, complex derivatives, and global capital flows, it needs more than hierarchy-hardened mandarins. Whoever gets the job should be chosen not for seniority or service background, but for agility, domain knowledge, and the courage to stay independent — from both babus and brokers.



BABUDOM BYTES
Dilip Cherian

A litigant without a Bench

If irony needed a case study, it would look a lot like Sanjiv Chaturvedi's. Sixteen judges have recused themselves from hearing the Indian Forest Service (IoFS) officer's case. What began as a legal proceeding has evolved into a kind of judicial relay race, with the baton being passed endlessly and never received.

The latest to step aside was Justice Alok Verma of the Uttarakhand High Court, who recused himself from hearing Chaturvedi's contempt petition. No reason given, just a quiet "list before another bench." It's hard not to wonder what makes this case so radioactive. After all, Chaturvedi isn't just another babu. He's one of India's best-known whistleblowers, whose exposés, from corruption in Haryana's forestry projects to irregularities at AIIMS, earned him admiration and enemies in equal measure. He's paid the price in transfers, inquiries, and now, apparently, in judicial limbo.

Those who take on entrenched systems often end up isolated, and Chaturvedi's case captures that perfectly. To be fair, judges have every right to recuse if they see a conflict or risk of bias. But public trust would be better served if reasons were stated, even briefly. Transparency protects both the litigant and the institution.

For all our lip service to "protecting whistleblowers," India's record shows a preference for celebrating them from afar, not standing with them when it counts. Chaturvedi's long fight is more than a personal battle—it's a test of whether the system still has space for honesty that makes it squirm.

He deserves, at the very least, his day in court.

Administrative invisibility

In other countries, every human life matters, regardless of the person's nationality. When Portugal's health minister resigned after the death of an Indian tourist, it wasn't just a political gesture, but a statement of accountability. Hard to imagine that happening here. In India, dozens died recently from toxic cough syrups exported under official watch, and not a single babu's chair even creaks, let alone a minister.

Our babus, after all, have perfected the ancient art of administrative invisibility. When things go right, they're the "unsung heroes". When things go wrong, they're "still investigating". The cough syrup deaths didn't just kill children; they exposed a regulatory system run on paperwork and plausible deniability. And yet, not one resignation. Not one face of responsibility. The minister stays, the regulators stay, and the files stay exactly where they were, probably gathering dust beside a few expired drug samples.

In Portugal, a minister steps down over a single death. Here, we have a body count, and yet, nobody blinks. Maybe that's what real immunity looks like: not from disease, but from consequences.

Share a babu experience! Follow [@dilipthecherian](https://twitter.com/dilipthecherian) on twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect



RAEBARELI
LYNCHING
CASE

Rahul meets victim’s family

Hours ahead of the Leader of Opposition’s visit, the victim’s brother Shivam Valmiki allegedly released a video in with the family purportedly stated that Gandhi should not use the visit for political purpose, but the Congress party claimed that the video was an attempt by the BJP to create pressure and manipulate the situation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur (UP), Oct 17: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Friday said the brutal murder of Dalit villager Hariom Valmiki in Raebareli has “shaken the conscience” of the entire nation, and accused the administration of trying to intimidate the victim’s family.

Gandhi, who met with the family of the deceased in Fatehpur district, also charged that authorities tried to stop the family of Valmiki from meeting him.

In a post on X in Hindi, Gandhi said, “The brutal murder of Hariom Valmiki has shaken the conscience of the entire nation. There was a question in his family’s eyes along with pain: Is being a Dalit still a deadly crime in this country?”

“The administration in Uttar Pradesh is busy intimidating the victim’s family. They even tried to prevent the family from meeting me. This is the same failure of the system --? which, every time, shields the perpetrators and puts the victim in the dock,” Gandhi charged.

Maintaining that “justice cannot be put under house arrest”, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said the BJP government must end the pressure on the victim’s family and ensure the harshest punishment for the culprits.

“I stand firmly with Hariom Valmiki’s family and every exploited, deprived, and vulnerable citizen of the country. This fight is not just for Hariom -it is for every voice that refuses to bow to injustice,” he said on X. Gandhi spent about 25 min-



utes with the family during which he spoke with Hariom’s father Gangadeen, brother Shivam, and sister Kusum, and offered condolences.

Later speaking to reporters, Gandhi charged that, “Dalit oppression is at its peak under this government.”

He also cited the latest National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) figures, which shows that Uttar Pradesh leads the country in cases of Dalit persecution.

Sharing details of the meeting, the Congress in a post on X in Hindi, said, “Leader of the Opposition Shri@RahulGandhi met with the family of Shri Hariom Valmiki in Fatehpur and shared their grief. A few days ago, Hariom, a Dalit, was brutally beaten to death. His family is in immense pain and is waiting for justice.”

“What happened to Hariom Valmiki is a grave offence against the Constitution of this country. Such a shallow ideology is a blot on society. We will continue to fight against this injustice and oppression. This

country will be governed by Babasaheb’s Constitution, not by ‘Manuvaad,’” the party said.

The Congress also posted photographs of the meeting.

In a post on X in Hindi, the Uttar Pradesh Congress said, “Rahul Gandhi -- the name of hope and support (‘ummeed aur bharose kaa naam -- Rahul Gandhi’).”

Hours ahead of the Leader of Opposition’s visit, the victim’s brother Shivam Valmiki allegedly released a video in with the family purportedly stated that Gandhi should not use the visit for political purposes.

“We are satisfied with the government and do not need politics here,” Shivam was seen saying in a video.

The Congress party claimed that the video was an attempt by the BJP to create pressure and manipulate the situation.

Tight security arrangements were in place ahead for his visit, with the lane leading to Valmiki’s house barricaded.

Valmiki (40) was allegedly lynched by villagers who mistook him for a thief during a

night vigil at about 1 am October 2 amid rumours that a gang was using drones for surveillance to mark houses for robberies.

The lynching incident had sparked widespread outrage, with Opposition parties, including the Congress and the Samajwadi Party, accusing the BJP government of failing to protect Dalits and curb mob violence.

Following the attack, police registered a case, and have so far arrested 14 people, including the main accused who was held after an encounter October 10. Five policemen, including two sub-inspectors, were suspended for alleged lapses in handling the case.

The Congress leader landed at Chakeri airport and travelled about 80 km by road to Fatehpur, where he met the family members of the deceased.

Ahead of his visit, the government issued an offer letter to Hariom’s sister, Kusum, for a contractual post as a staff nurse at the Fatehpur Medical College.

Valmiki’s wife Sangeeta Valmiki along with her family members had met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow October 11.

During the meeting, Adityanath had assured the family of justice and government support, including housing under the CM’s Housing Scheme, a permanent job for Sangeeta Valmiki, and coverage under welfare schemes.

Adityanath had said the accused were arrested within 24 hours and that ensuring the safety and dignity of Dalits and deprived sections remained the government’s top priority.

TMC to launch anti-SIR campaign

KOLKATA RALLY IN NOV LIKELY TO BE ADDRESSED BY MAMATA, ABHISHEK



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 17: The ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal is planning a mega rally in Kolkata next month to oppose the proposed Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state, party sources said Friday.

The rally, likely to be held in the first or second week of November, is expected to be addressed by TMC supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the party’s national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, the sources said.

“A massive rally is being planned in Kolkata after the festive season, once Kali Puja and Bhai Dooj are over. The venue is likely to be Shahid Minar ground, but if it’s unavailable due to prior bookings, we may shift it to the second week of November,” a senior TMC leader told PTI.

The move marks the beginning of the party’s full-fledged agitation against what Banerjee has repeatedly termed as a “BJP-backed ploy to bring NRC through the

backdoor” under the guise of the SIR exercise.

The TMC’s offensive comes amidst preparations by the Election Commission (EC) to begin the proposed Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections.

In September, an EC team led by Deputy Election Commissioner Gyanesh Bharti visited the state to review readiness and conduct training for district election officers.

The ruling party has also questioned how senior BJP leaders, including Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari and Union Minister of State Shantanu Thakur, could “predict” the number of voters whose names would allegedly be deleted, even before the poll panel issued a formal notification for the exercise.

“Before any notification has come out, how come BJP leaders are claiming that lakhs of names will be removed? Are they writing the script of the SIR from Delhi?” asked another TMC functionary.

TMC leaders have declared

that the party will make this issue one of its main political planks in the coming months, accusing the BJP of trying to manipulate the voter list ahead of the state elections.

Several ministers and legislators have warned that “West Bengal will be on the boil” if the name of even a single genuine voter is deleted during the revision process.

The BJP, however, hit back, saying the TMC’s opposition stems from fear that the exercise will expose “fake voters and infiltrators” allegedly enrolled under the ruling party’s watch.

“The chief minister is opposing a routine electoral rolls revision because she wants to protect Bangladeshi and Rohingya infiltrators who have found a place in the voter list,” said a state BJP spokesperson Keya Ghosh.

With the political temperature in Bengal rising fast, the TMC’s proposed November rally is expected to set the tone for an intense pre-election confrontation between the state’s ruling party and the BJP-led Centre.

UP’s resilient agriculture model global example for small farmers

The World Bank chief highlighted the use of heat-tolerant seeds, soil-matched fertilisers, regenerative practices, efficient irrigation, and robust insurance and financing systems that ensure a single bad season does not devastate a farmer’s life



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Oct 17: World Bank Group President Ajay Banga has praised Uttar Pradesh’s efforts to integrate technology with agriculture, describing the state’s “resilient farming model” as a global example for small and marginal farmers.

Speaking at the AgriConnect Flagship event during the 2025 Annual Meetings of the World Bank, Banga showcased the Uttar Pradesh model, having visited the state and seen things for himself in May, said UP director of information, Vishal Singh.

“The World Bank also posted its chief’s speech on X, where he described what he witnessed in Uttar Pradesh,” he said.

The Uttar Pradesh government also put out a statement stating how Banga commended the Yogi Adityanath government for developing an agricultural ecosystem that is resilient by design, stressing that climate adaptability was built into the system from the

start rather than added later.

“The way Uttar Pradesh is addressing climate challenges through its farmers is remarkable,” Banga said in his speech that was shared by the UP government.

According to the statement, the World Bank chief highlighted the use of heat-tolerant seeds, soil-matched fertilisers, regenerative practices, efficient irrigation, and robust insurance and financing systems that ensure a single bad season does not devastate a farmer’s life.

Banga emphasised that digital technology is the glue holding the entire system together.

Simple AI tools and mobile phones now help farmers diagnose crop diseases, guide fertiliser use, issue weather alerts, and ensure secure digital payments, the UP government quoted Banga as saying in the statement.

Recalling his earlier visit to the state, Banga noted that Uttar Pradesh has demonstrated how resilience, cooperatives, and digital tools can combine to form a vibrant and scalable ecosystem. “This model works. It is proof of concept,” the UP government said, quoting Banga’s speech.

The model’s success depends on alignment among governments, businesses, and development partners, according to the statement.

The World Bank and the Uttar Pradesh government have recently launched the ‘UP AGREES’ (UP Agriculture Growth and Rural Enterprise) project aimed at strengthening the state’s agricultural systems through technology and finance.

The initiative is expected to directly benefit nearly one million small and marginal farmers. The state has also put forth a digital agriculture ecosystem framework to provide real-time information on weather, seeds, markets, and insurance.

Banga, who had visited Uttar Pradesh in May, was also quoted in the government release as saying that the state is emerging as a model of smart agricultural transformation, and the world should adopt such integrative frameworks to ensure sustainable livelihoods for small farmers worldwide.



A woman paints the visage of demons, used to decorate venues for the ‘Kali Puja’ festival, in Nadia, West Bengal, friday

PTI PHOTO

GANGA-JAMUNI TEHZEEB

Muslim women craft cow dung lamps for Dev Deepawali

One of the key highlights of this year would be 1 lakh eco-friendly diyas that will light up Kashi’s crescent-shaped ghats November 5

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Varanasi, Oct 17: Preparations are in full swing for the world-famous Dev Deepawali in Uttar Pradesh’s Varanasi. This year, the banks of the Ganges will be illuminated with approximately one million lamps on the ghats of Varanasi. In a beautiful example of Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb, Muslim women of Varanasi are playing an important role in this sacred festival.

These women are preparing one lakh lamps from cow dung, which will be lit on the ghats during Dev Deepawali. For the past 15 days, around 300 women have been working in different

groups to make these lamps. They say they feel proud to contribute to the illumination of Varanasi with their hand-made creations. This initiative stands as a unique symbol of Varanasi’s culture of unity and harmony.

Huma Bano, BJP leader, said, “We will also make one lakh diyas and distribute them among the people.”

Khursheda Bano, a social worker, added, “We have been making these diyas for the past 15 days using cow dung. Through this, I want to send a message of unity between Hindus and Muslims.”

Keeping up its tradition of organising magnificent Dev Deepawali in Varanasi, the Uttar Pradesh administration is gearing up to celebrate the occasion in a more grandiose manner.

One of the key highlights of this year would be 1 lakh eco-friendly diyas that will light up Kashi’s cres-



cent-shaped ghats November 5. The state government is looking at another record-setting number of 10 lakh diyas, which will set the river Ganga aglow in Kashi on the occasion and dazzle the world with divine illumination.

Among them, 1 lakh eco-friendly lamps crafted from cow dung will add both a traditional and sustainable touch to the divine spectacle.

This year’s celebration promises to be historic—an enchant-

ing union of faith, festivity, and environmental consciousness.

Lakhs of devotees and tourists from across India and abroad are expected to converge in Varanasi to witness this once-in-a-lifetime sight.

With over 10.10 lakh lamps—designer diyas, eco-friendly creations, and glowing rows across ponds and pools—the city will shine brighter than ever.

To heighten the splendour, the ghats are being adorned with facade lighting, decora-

tive illuminations, and special cleanliness drives, ensuring that Kashi offers an unforgettable blend of divinity and grandeur.

Ahead of Dev Deepawali, a four-day cultural extravaganza - Ganga Mahotsav will be organised at Rajghat from November 1 to 4, showcasing the talent of local artists. To further enrich the experience, a laser show at Chet Singh Ghat will narrate mythological tales of Kashi.

At the same time, pollution-free green fireworks across the Ganga sands will spread the message of environmental conservation.

Every year, the Dev Deepawali transforms Kashi into a radiant canvas of faith, culture, and tradition. With hotels, guest houses, boats, cruises, and barges booked to capacity, the city gears up to welcome devotees and tourists eager to witness this divine spectacle in all its grandeur.

international

of the day quote

Another chief of staff in the line of terror chiefs who aimed to harm us was eliminated. We will reach all of them

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | PRIME MINISTER, ISRAEL

US Embassy is threatening to take visas, such actions are not coherent with the good relationship I aspire to maintain with the United States

JOSÉ RAÚL MULINO | PRESIDENT, PANAMA

My responsibility is to maintain the stability of the country; that is my responsibility and my commitment

JOSÉ JERÍ | NEW PRESIDENT, PERU

SHORT TAKES

Pakistan's Naval chief visits US

Islamabad: Pakistan's Naval chief Admiral Naveed Ashraf visited the US and held talks with military leaders to enhance defence ties between the two countries, the army said Friday. According to a statement, the visit by the Chief of the Naval Staff was part of ongoing efforts to further strengthen bilateral maritime cooperation and defence engagements. During the visit, the Naval Chief called on US Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Vice Admiral Yvette Davids, and Acting Vice Commandant of the US Coast Guard, Vice Admiral Thomas G. Allan Jr. Matters of professional interest, regional security dynamics, and avenues for professional training and maritime cooperation were discussed during these meetings, it said.

Former Japanese PM Murayama dies at 101

Tokyo: Japan's former Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama, who was known for his 1995 "Murayama statement" apologising to Asian victims of his country's aggression, died Friday. He was 101. Murayama died at a hospital in his hometown, Oita, southwestern Japan, according to a statement by Mizuho Fukushima, the head of Japan's Social Democratic Party. As head of what was then known as the Japan Socialist Party, Murayama led a coalition government from June 1994 to January 1996. He is best remembered for the "Murayama statement," an apology he issued on the 50th anniversary of Japan's unconditional surrender ending World War II Aug 15, 1995. It's seen as Japan's main expression of remorse for its wartime and colonial past.

Stampede at Odinga funeral kills two

Nairobi: Two people were killed and almost 200 people were injured in a stampede at a stadium in Kenya's capital Nairobi where a state funeral for former opposition leader and prime minister Raila Odinga was underway Friday, Doctors Without Borders said in a statement. Odinga, a major figure for decades in Kenyan politics who was once a political prisoner and ran unsuccessfully for president five times, died Wednesday, aged 80 in India, where he had been receiving medical treatment.

Prince Andrew to give up Duke of York title

London: Prince Andrew said Friday he is giving up his royal title of the Duke of York after his friendship with sex offender Jeffrey Epstein returned to the headlines. The younger brother of King Charles III said he and the royal family had decided "the continued accusations about me distract from the work of His Majesty and the royal family," Prince Andrew said in a statement released by Buckingham Palace.



The only aim of this non-political caretaker government is to conduct the House of Representatives elections within the stipulated time of March 5, 2026, in a free, fair and fearless environment

SUSHILA KARKI | PRIME MINISTER, NEPAL



MADAGASCAR'S COUP LEADER SWORN IN AS PREZ

An Army colonel who seized power in a military coup has been sworn in as Madagascar's new leader Friday in a lightning-fast power grab that ousted the President and sent him fleeing from the country into hiding. Col. Michael Randrianirina took the oath of office to become the new President at a ceremony in the main chamber of the nation's High Constitutional Court



Pak, Afghanistan extend ceasefire

REUTERS

Peshawar, Pakistan/Kabul, Oct 17: Pakistan and Afghanistan agreed Friday to extend their 48-hour ceasefire until the conclusion of talks in Doha, according to three Pakistani security officials and one Afghan Taliban source.

A Pakistani delegation had already arrived in Doha while an Afghan delegation was expected to reach the Qatari capital Saturday, said the sources, who did not want to be named as they were not authorised to speak to the media.

Kabul has instructed its forces to maintain a ceasefire as long as Pakistan refrained from any attack, Afghan Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid told Ariana News, a Pashto language local television news channel.

DOZENS KILLED IN DAYS OF FIERCE FIGHTING

A temporary truce between the South Asian neighbours Wednesday paused days of fierce fighting that killed dozens and wounded hundreds.

Pakistan's military and foreign ministry and the Afghan defence ministry did not respond to requests for comment on the ceasefire and the talks in Doha.

Once allies, Islamabad and Kabul engaged in fierce



Truce extended until Doha talks conclude | Pakistan demands Kabul curb militants operating from Afghan havens

TALIBAN DENIES ACCUSATIONS, BLAMES PAKISTAN FOR MISINFORMATION AND TENSIONS

ground fighting, and Pakistan also launched airstrikes across their contested frontier before they reached a 48-hour ceasefire that ended at 6:00 pm Friday.

Militant violence in Pakistan has been a major irritant in its relationship with the Afghan Taliban, which returned to power in Kabul after the departure of US-led forces in 2021.

The latest conflict between the two countries was triggered after Islamabad demanded that Kabul rein in militants who had stepped up attacks in Pakistan, saying they operated from

havens in Afghanistan. SEVEN PAKISTANI SOLDIERS KILLED IN SUICIDE ATTACK

Seven Pakistani soldiers were killed in a suicide attack near the Afghanistan border Friday, Pakistani security officials said.

The soldiers came under attack in a Pakistani military camp in North Waziristan district in northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, and 13 were also wounded, five security officials said.

While one militant rammed

an explosive-laden vehicle into the boundary wall of a fort that served as a military camp, two others tried to get into the facility and were shot dead, they said.

Six militants were killed in the suicide attack, the office of Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said in a statement, without providing details on the number of soldiers killed.

Pakistan's army did not respond to a request for comment.

The identity of the attackers was not known and no group has claimed responsibility.

PAKISTAN ACTED AFTER LOSING PATIENCE WITH KABUL, SHARIF SAYS

Sharif said Thursday that Pakistan "retaliated" after losing patience with Afghanistan following a series of militant attacks, but was ready to hold talks to resolve the conflict.

The Taliban denies giving haven to militants to attack Pakistan and accuses the Pakistani military of spreading misinformation about Afghanistan, provoking border tensions and sheltering ISIS-linked militants to undermine its stability and sovereignty.

Islamabad denies the accusations. The Pakistan Red Crescent said Afghanistan had handed over to it the bodies of seven Pakistanis - two security personnel and five civilians - who were killed during clashes earlier in the week.

Powerful blast at apartment building kills 3, hurts at least 13

Bucharest: A powerful explosion tore through two stories of an apartment building in Romania's capital Friday, killing three people and injuring at least 13 others, authorities said. The explosion affected the fifth and sixth floors of the eight-story building, according to the capital's Inspectorate for Emergency Situations. More than a dozen emergency vehicles, including 11 fire engines and four mobile intensive care units, were dispatched to the scene of the blast on Calea Rahovei in Bucharest's Sector 5. The cause of the fatal blast was not immediately clear, but authorities said the gas supply had been shut off in the area as a safety precaution. Romania's Ministry of Health said victims had been reported with polytrauma and burns.

ZELENSKY TO SEEK WEAPONS FROM TRUMP



REUTERS

Washington, Oct 17: Volodymyr Zelenskyy will ask Donald Trump for Tomahawk missiles Friday but the surprise announcement that the US President will meet with Vladimir Putin in Budapest appeared to dim the Ukrainian president's chance of securing the long-range weapons.

Trump announced the summit after a more than two-hour phone conversation with Putin about Russia's war in Ukraine Thursday, which he said was productive.

It was unclear what Putin had told Trump that prompted him to agree to the meeting, as their August summit in Alaska ended early with no major breakthrough.

"My whole life, I've made deals," Trump told reporters at the White House. "I think we're going to have this one

Trump had expressed frustration with Putin

New summit plan appears to change that dynamic

ZELENSKY SAYS PUTIN IS PLAYING FOR TIME

done, hopefully soon."

The Kremlin said much needed to be decided and that the summit might take place "a little later" than within the two-week period mentioned by Trump.

Friday's meeting with Zelenskyy was scheduled to be a relatively low-key lunch in a cabinet meeting room as opposed to a public gathering in the Oval Office.

Trump's conciliatory tone after the call with Putin raised questions over the near-term likelihood of assistance to Ukraine and reignited European fears of a deal that suits

Moscow. A spokesperson for the European Union said it welcomed the talks if they could help bring peace to Ukraine.

WAR HAS INTENSIFIED

The US president, who has campaigned for the Nobel Peace Prize, is eager to add to the list of conflicts he says he has been instrumental in ending.

More than three and a half years after its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia has ground out some territorial gains this year, but Ukraine's top military commander Oleksandr Syrskyi said Thursday that the Russian offensive had failed.

Putin earlier this month said his forces had taken almost 5,000 square kilometres (1,930 square miles) of land in Ukraine in 2025 - equivalent to adding 1% of Ukraine's territory to the nearly 20% already held.

Both sides have also escalated attacks on each other's energy systems and Russian drones and jets have strayed into NATO countries.

The White House had seemed in recent days to be increasingly frustrated with Putin and leaning toward granting Zelenskyy fresh support, including the Tomahawk missiles that Ukrainians say would help them inflict more damage to Russia's war machine.

"We need them, too," Trump said of the missiles Thursday in his remarks to reporters after his call with Putin.

UN faces roadblocks in delivering aid to famine-hit north Gaza

REUTERS

Geneva, Oct 17: The UN said Friday aid convoys were struggling to reach famine-hit areas of north Gaza due to war-damaged roads and the continued closure of key routes into the enclave's north despite a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas militants.

Around 560 metric tons of food had entered the Gaza Strip per day on average since the US-brokered halt to two years of devastating war but this was still well below the scale of need, according to the UN World Food Programme.

With famine conditions in the Gaza City region, UN humanitarian affairs chief Tom Fletcher said this week thousands of aid vehicles would have to enter weekly to tack-

le widespread malnutrition, homelessness and a collapse of infrastructure.

"We're still below what we need, but we're getting there... The ceasefire has opened a narrow window of opportunity, and WFP is moving very quickly and swiftly to scale up food assistance," WFP spokesperson Abeer Etefa told a news briefing in Geneva.

But the WFP said it had not begun distributions in Gaza City, pointing to the continued closure of two border crossings, Zikim and Erez, with Israel in the north of the enclave where the humanitarian debacle is most acute.

"Access to Gaza City and northern Gaza is extremely challenging,"



It is very important to have these openings in the north, this is where the famine took hold. To turn the tide on this famine..., it is very important to get these openings

ABER ETEFA | WFP SPOKESPERSON

Etefa said, saying the movement of convoys of wheat flour and ready-to-eat food parcels from

the south of the territory was being hampered by broken or blocked roads.

"It is very important to have these openings in the north, this is where the famine took hold. To turn the tide on this

Bangladesh parties sign reform charter



The charter seeks to reshape the country's politics and institutions and give constitutional recognition to the 2024 uprising that forced Sheikh Hasina, a long-time prime minister, to flee to India

REUTERS

Dhaka, Oct 17: Bangladesh's ambitious "July Charter" for state reform, drafted after last year's deadly student-led uprising, was backed by the majority of political parties on Friday, but a signing ceremony was marred by street violence and boycotted by a key group.

The charter seeks to reshape the country's politics and institutions and give constitutional recognition to the 2024 uprising that forced Sheikh Hasina, a long-time prime minister, to flee to India.

Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus, the head of Bangladesh's interim government, said the signing of the charter marked a major step toward restoring political order and preparing for national elections scheduled for February 2026. "It's the birth of a new Bangladesh," Yunus said at the ceremony.

BOYCOTTS AND TEAR GAS

The National Citizens Par-

ty, formed by the leaders of last year's movement and four left-leaning parties, did not attend, however. The NCP said it stayed away due to the lack of a legal framework or binding guarantee for implementing the commitments made in the charter. "The signing of the July Charter by a few political parties does not constitute national unity," NCP convener Nahid Islam said.

The day's events were earlier marred by clashes outside the venue, where families of those killed and injured during the 2024 uprising were staging a protest.

Police used batons, tear gas, and stun grenades to disperse the demonstrators, leaving several injured, witnesses said.

The National Consensus Commission announced a last-minute amendment to the charter Friday, describing it as an "urgent revision" made in response to the demands of those who took part in the 2024 uprising. The updated clause pledged justice for victims of disappearances, killings and torture during the rule of Hasina's Awami League, and also for those killed and injured during the July-August 2024 uprising.

Among those signing the document on Friday were members of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party, the Islamist Jamaat-e-Islami party and several centrist and regional groups that have expressed support for the reform process.



South Korean Air Force's Black Eagles demonstration team performs during the Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition (ADEX) 2025 at the Seoul airport in Seongnam, South Korea, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Convoys face challenges reaching north Gaza due to war damage, border road closures

Famine conditions persist in Gaza City area, massive aid influx needed, says UN

famine..., it is very important to get these openings."

Global medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) said many relief agencies had not fully returned to the north, where hospitals are barely functioning, leaving many Gaza civilians still unable to access regular care.

Jacob Granger, MSF emergency coordinator in Gaza, described the case of a Gaza City woman with a shrapnel wound suffered during the war who

was unable to get to a medical facility to change her dressings for five days earlier this month. When she managed to see an MSF nurse and her dressing was unfolded, the wound was infected with worms and maggots, Granger said.

Though small amounts of nutrition products have reached the north - the area of heaviest and most devastating fighting between Israel and Hamas - relief convoys were still unable to move significant quantities of food there.

Around 950 trucks entered south and central Gaza Thursday via the Kerem Shalom and Kissufim crossings with Israel, the UN's humanitarian coordination agency said, citing figures from Israel's military aid agency COGAT presented to mediators.

of the day

quote

HERE NOW

The Indian consumers today are more discerning, digitally empowered, and financially confident than ever before. What we are witnessing is not just a rebound in sentiment, but a recalibration of priorities. Consumers are learning to stretch value, not compromise on aspiration

ANAND RAMANATHAN | PARTNER AND CONSUMER INDUSTRY LEADER, DELOITTE SOUTH ASIA

India has become what China is to manufacturing — the undisputed GCC capital of the world. The fundamentals are irresistible: a young, English-speaking workforce delivering world-class expertise at unmatched cost efficiency

SHIVAM AGARWAL | VP STRATEGIC GROWTH, SATTVA GROUP

In India's hyper-competitive festive market, brands can't afford to leave customer experience to chance. Our survey clearly demonstrates that outsourcing is no longer just a cost-saving tool; it's a strategic imperative for delivering superior, agile, and personalised customer interactions when it matters most

GAGAN ARORA | FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, VERTEX GLOBAL SERVICES

Q2 RESULTS

Reliance net profit zooms 9.6% YoY

New Delhi: Reliance Industries Ltd Friday reported a 9.6 per cent rise in its September quarter net profit on robust consumer business supported by an uptick in cash cow oil-to-chemical unit. Consolidated net profit of ₹18,165 crore in July-September was higher than ₹16,653 crore earning in the same period last year. It however was 33 per cent lower when compared to earnings in first quarter of current fiscal (April-June).

JSW Steel profit jumps multifold

New Delhi: JSW Steel Friday posted fourfold jump in consolidated net profit to ₹1,646 crore for September quarter FY26, as improved sales led to rise in revenues. It had clocked a net profit of ₹404 crore in the second quarter of preceding 2024-25 financial year, the JSW Group entity said in an exchange filing. The consolidated capex spend during Q2 FY26 was ₹3,135 crore, and ₹6,535 crore during H1 FY26. JSW Steel said it expects to spend ₹20,000 crore during FY26.

UCO Bank profit up 2.82% at ₹620cr

New Delhi: State-owned UCO Bank Friday reported 2.82 per cent rise in net profit at ₹620 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2025. In July-September FY25, the Kolkata-based bank had logged a net profit of ₹603 crore. Total business of the bank stood at over ₹5.36 lakh crore as on September 30, registering an increase of 13.23 per cent year-on-year. Gross advances increased 16.56 per cent to ₹2.31 lakh crore and total deposits grew 10.85 per cent to ₹3.06 lakh crore.

Central Bank net profit surges 33%

New Delhi: State-owned Central Bank of India Friday reported a 33 per cent growth in net profit to ₹1,213 crore for the second quarter ended September 30. The bank had a net profit of ₹913 crore in the July-September quarter of FY25. Total business grew by 14.43 per cent to over ₹7.38 lakh crore from over ₹6.45 lakh crore.



India's logistics cost will come down to 9 per cent by December, which will help India become more competitive. I am sure that 100 per cent it is going to give benefit to our industry, our exports will be more competitive

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

SURGING BULLION PRICES

IN A FIRST, RBI'S GOLD PILE CROSSES \$100BN

Gold's share in India's foreign exchange reserves has almost doubled over the past decade — from below 7% to nearly 15% — reflecting both steady central bank accumulation and a surge in global bullion prices

REUTERS

Mumbai, Oct 17: India's gold reserves crossed the \$100 billion mark for the first time, according to the Reserve Bank of India's latest foreign exchange reserves data, buoyed by a global price rally even as the central bank's purchases slowed sharply this year.

India's gold holdings rose by \$3.595 billion to \$102.365 billion in the week through October 10, RBI data showed Friday, while overall foreign exchange reserves declined \$2.18 billion to \$697.784 billion.

The share of gold in India's total reserves climbed to 14.7%, the highest since 1996-97, according to traders.

Gold's share in India's foreign exchange reserves has almost doubled over the past decade — from below 7% to nearly 15% — reflecting both steady central bank accumulation and a surge in global bullion prices.

That's led to the \$100 billion milestone being hit despite a marked slowdown in the RBI's gold purchases this year.

The central bank bought gold in only four of the first nine months of 2025, compared with near-monthly additions in 2024, according to World Gold Council data.



The share of gold in India's foreign exchange reserves has increased significantly, largely driven by valuation gains from the rising gold price

KAVITA CHACKO | RESEARCH HEAD FOR INDIA, WORLD GOLD COUNCIL

INDIA'S GOLD HOLDINGS ROSE BY \$3.595BN TO \$102.365BN IN THE WEEK THROUGH OCT 10

SHARE OF GOLD IN INDIA'S TOTAL RESERVES CLIMBED TO 14.7%, THE HIGHEST SINCE 1996-97

THE YELLOW METAL HAS SURGED ABOUT 65% IN 2025 AMID GEOPOLITICAL UNCERTAINTIES

Cumulative buying from January to September stood at just 4 tons, sharply lower than 50 tons in the same period a year earlier.

Gold has surged about 65% in

2025, powered by a potent mix of macroeconomic, institutional and psychological drivers.

Global central banks continue to accumulate gold as part of reserve diversification away from the US dollar — a trend spurred by heightened geopolitical risks, sanctions pressures and de-dollarisation.

India is the world's second-largest consumer of gold and relies on imports to meet demand. Buying gold is deeply rooted in Indian culture, driven by tradition and its role as both an investment and a status symbol.

Hindalco MD Satish reviews CSR projects at Meenakshi Coal Mines

Bhubaneswar: Aditya Birla Group company Hindalco Industries Ltd's Managing Director, Satish Pai, visited the Meenakshi Coal Mines to review its operational performance and assess the progress of ongoing community development and CSR initiatives. As part of his visit, Pai travelled to Kiriopsisra Panchayat in Sundargarh district to interact with beneficiaries and evaluate the impact of various welfare programmes. Reaffirming Hindalco's long-standing commitment to inclusive growth and social responsibility, Pai reviewed several skill-based livelihood, education, and women empowerment initiatives being implemented in the region. He also inaugurated new projects designed to strengthen the socio-economic fabric of local communities. He was accompanied by Vanvimone Pai, Kailash Pandey, Business Head – Mines & Sambalpur Cluster; Bijesh Jha, Head – Bauxite & Coal; and Krishna

Padhi, Cluster Head – Human Resources; among other senior executives. During the visit, Pai inaugurated a Silk Fibre Handloom and Handicraft Training Centre, aimed at empowering women with sustainable income opportunities and promoting traditional craftsmanship. To enhance educational infrastructure, he distributed desk benches to nearby schools, creating better learning conditions for students. In addition, school bags were handed over to children enrolled in local Anganwadi Centres, reinforcing Hindalco's focus on early childhood education. Under the company's flagship CSR initiative, "Nikshay", food kits were distributed to families of tuberculosis (TB) patients, strengthening Hindalco's efforts in promoting community health and nutrition.

Trade first: India softens China stance amid US worries

THE GOVT CONSIDERS EASING CERTAIN CHINESE IMPORT CURBS AMID GROWING RELIANCE, SAY SOURCES

REUTERS

New Delhi, Oct 17: India's trade ministry and a government think-tank are pushing to ease certain tariff and non-tariff curbs on Chinese imports, three government officials said, acknowledging the country's growing reliance on Chinese raw materials for industrial and export growth.

They are seeking measures including allowing anti-dumping duties to lapse on certain products, while considering tariff cuts on raw materials used in sectors such as leather and engineering goods where domestic capacity remains limited, the sources said.

New Delhi is caught between balancing trade relations with Washington - which has imposed punitive tariffs on imports from India - and Beijing, which until earlier this year had slowed supplies of key goods, including fertiliser, to India.

REBUILDING RELATIONS

In August, India and China agreed to boost business links as the neighbours rebuild ties damaged by a 2020 border clash.

"A consensus is emerging within the government and the industry that, while negotiating a deal with Washington, India needs to fine-tune its trade policy, including trade relations with China," one of the government officials said.

Both the commerce ministry and the NITI Aayog - a government policy think-tank - have backed industry calls to cut import tariffs on raw materials at inter-ministerial meetings, a second official said, noting countries such as Vietnam import Chinese raw materials at zero duty, putting Indian manufacturers at a disadvantage.

However, the final decision on duty cuts rests with the finance ministry, the official said, noting cheaper Chinese raw materials have boosted exports of Apple's smartphones,



pharmaceuticals, chemicals and engineering goods.

RISE IN CHINESE IMPORTS

Responding to industry demands, the commerce ministry last month extended advance authorisations for quality-controlled inputs from 180 days to 18 months - easing critical Chinese raw material imports.

India's imports, opens new tab from China rose more than 16% to more than \$11 billion in September, with imports touch-

INDIA POST GOES EXPRESS

Union Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said India Post will roll out a guarantee-based service of mails and parcels with delivery timelines of 24 hours and 48 hours. The minister said that 24 hours and 48 hours mail delivery and next-day parcel delivery will start from January onwards. The minister said that the government aims to transform India Post from a 'cost centre' to a 'profit centre' by 2029



Bull run continues



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 17: Benchmark Sensex spurted by 484 points and Nifty closed at a 52-week high Friday, extending their winning run to the third consecutive day on buying in blue-chip banking and oil shares and foreign fund inflows.

In a volatile session, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 484.53 points or 0.58 per cent to settle at 83,952.19, a level not seen since June 27. During the day, it surged 704.58 points or 0.84 per cent to 84,172.24.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 124.55 points or 0.49 per cent to settle at a 52-week high of 25,709.85.

Among Sensex firms, Asian Paints jumped the most by 4.18 per cent. Mahindra & Mahindra, Bharti Airtel, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, ICICI Bank and Reliance Industries were also among the gainers.

However, Infosys, HCL Tech, Eternal, Tech Mahindra and

Tata Steel were among the laggards.

The BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.49 per cent and midcap index dipped 0.43 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, consumer durables climbed 1.48 per cent, FMCG (1.19 per cent), auto (0.59 per cent), healthcare (0.50 per cent), bankex (0.48 per cent), telecommunication (0.36 per cent) and financial services (0.31 per cent) were the gainers.

However, BSE Focused IT, IT, commodities, industri-

als, metal and services were among the laggards. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹997.29 crore Thursday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) also bought stocks worth ₹4,076.20 crore in the previous trade.

On Thursday, the Sensex jumped 862.23 points or 1.04 per cent to settle at 83,467.66. The Nifty surged 261.75 points or 1.03 per cent to 25,585.30.

Russian oil imports rebound in October

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 17: India's crude oil imports from Russia strengthened in the first half of October, reversing a three-month slide in arrivals seen during July-September as refineries were back on full stream to meet festive demand, according to ship tracking data.

Imports from Russia slid from over 2 million barrels per day in June to 1.6 million bpd in September.

However, tanker-tracking data for early October suggest a rebound: shipments of Urals and other Russian grades to India have picked up pace, supported by renewed discounts amid slack demand in Western markets and shipping flexibility.

Preliminary data by global trade analytics firm Kpler showed October imports tracking around 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd), an increase of around 250,000 bpd from the previous month (though the current month data is subject to revision).

The data pertains to the period prior to US President Donald Trump's October 15



statement claiming Prime Minister Narendra Modi has agreed to stop Russian crude imports. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, however, said he was not aware of such a phone conversation.

Indian refiners, too, said they have not yet been asked by the government to stop Russian oil imports.

India turned to purchasing Russian oil sold at a discount after Western countries imposed sanctions on Moscow and shunned its supplies over its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Consequently, from a mere 1.7 per cent share in total oil imports in 2019-20 (FY20), Russia's share increased to 40 per cent in 2023-24, making it the biggest oil supplier to India.

In the first half of October, Russia continued to enjoy that status. Iraq was the second biggest crude oil supplier to India at around 1.01 million bpd, followed by Saudi Arabia at 8,30,000 bpd. The US has overtaken the UAE to become India's fourth-largest supplier with 647,000 bpd. UAE supplied 394,000 bpd, according to Kpler.

on the back of a solid 2024, when 91 public issues collectively mobilised ₹1.6 lakh crore, supported by resilient retail participation, a booming economy, and strong private capital expenditure.

The fundraising momentum is expected to help companies finance capital expenditure, expansion plans, debt repayment, and other general corporate purposes.

Setalvad noted that while the IPO pipeline remains robust, not all new listings have delivered strong post-listing performance. "On average, around 42 per cent of IPOs launched in 2024 and 2025 each are loss-making," he said, adding that investors should remain focused on fundamentally strong businesses.

On the broader economy, Setalvad said India continues to demonstrate resilience even as uncertainty persists in the global economic environment.

However, India's trade remedies authority has launched new anti-dumping probes on imports such as cranes, toner cartridges and solar cells from China after local complaints.

"This is not about abandoning self-reliance policy," the official said. "It's about recognising that growth needs global inputs — and China remains too central to ignore."

GROWING DEPENDENCE

India's reliance on critical Chinese supplies has deepened in a number of categories.

Imports now account for 91% of embroidery machines, 92% of saw blades, 72% of inverters and half of UPS systems, said Ajay Srivastava, founder of Global Trade Research Initia-

tive, a Delhi-based think-tank. Nearly 90% of antibiotics, silicon wafers, flat-panel displays, and 80% of laptops are also imported from China, according to Global Trade Research Initiative.

The trade deficit hit nearly \$94 billion in 2024 and could widen to \$120-\$130 billion in two to three years, driven by rising imports of electronics components, chemical and industrial inputs, the second government source said.

New Delhi was also considering easing Chinese investment curbs case-by-case, where national security risk was minimal, said the official, a senior government adviser, referring to a foreign investment policy that tightened rules for nations sharing land borders with India, mainly China.



Tanvi ends 17-yr medal drought

Shuttler becomes first Indian female after Saina to secure world junior medal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Oct 17: Tanvi Sharma became the first Indian to secure a BWF World Junior Championships medal in 17 years when she fought back from a game down to beat Japan's Saki Matsumoto and reach the girls singles semifinals here Friday.

The 16-year-old kept her nerves under pressure and found winners with her cross-court slice hits to beat Matsumoto 13-15 15-9 15-10 in a 47-minute quarterfinal clash that kept the spectators on edge at the National Centre of Excellence.

However, eighth seed Unnati Hooda, the youngest Indian to win a Super 100 title at the 2022 Odisha Open and a member of India's 2022 Uber Cup squad, bowed out after going down 12-15 13-15 to second seed Anyapat Phichitphon of Thailand in a 32-minute quarterfinal, missing out on a medal.

India's mixed doubles pair of Bhavya Chhabra and Vishakha Toppo also ended their campaign in the last-eight stage, losing 9-15 7-15 to the Chinese Taipei duo of Hung Bing Fu and Chou Yun An.

Top-seeded Tanvi, who had

also bagged a bronze medal in the Badminton Asia Junior Championships earlier this year, began aggressively and looked like she was in control as she opened up a 10-6 lead.

But a flurry of errors allowed Matsumoto to stage a comeback as the Japanese won seven straight points to take the lead. The Indian managed to stem the run but could not avoid losing the game.

The US Open finalist was much more comfortable with her shot selection in the second game and raced to a 15-9 win.

However, errors once again pegged her back at the start of the third game and it was clear that the top seed was under pressure as the players changed ends with the Indian trailing 5-8.

Those nerves definitely settled as she clinched four straight points to take the lead at 9-8 and then used her

It is difficult to play against Matsumoto as she slows down the game. So, I knew that I had to be aggressive. I am happy that I am assured of a medal

TANVI SHARMA

flat tosses and cross smashes to outplay her opponent.

However, India's hopes of another medal in girls singles were dashed when Hooda lost. She clearly struggled with her front-court movement and though the Indian fought for every point in the 32-minute battle, she was repeatedly caught off guard by Anyapat with her quick cross drops and smashes.

In the boys' singles quarterfinals, Gnana Dattu put up a strong fight against third seed Liu Yang Ming Yu of China but his spirited effort was not enough to avoid a 15-11 15-13 loss.

The last Indian female player to win a world junior medal was Saina Nehwal, who bagged the gold medal in the 2008 edition in Pune. Saina, who had also won a silver medal in 2006, and Aparna Popat (1996 silver) are the only other Indian female players to stand on the podium in the history of the competition



Zoravar's grit finally pays off

The 48-year-old veteran shooter's bronze is India's first individual trap medal at the World Championships in 19 years

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 17: Around 31 years after he shot his first junior world championship and 27 years after he shot his first senior world title, Zoravar Singh Sandhu of India, at the ripe young age of 48, clinched the men's trap bronze at the International Shooting Sports Federation (ISSF) World Championship Shotgun 2025.

Shooting at the Malakasa Shooting Range in Athens, Greece, Friday, the Indian overcame rain, shadows, and the most unsuitable bib number to nail down 31 of the first 40 targets in the 50-shot final. He finished behind former Olympic champion and now world champion Josip Glasnovic of Croatia, who won gold with 44 hits, and junior world champion Andres Garcia of Spain, who won silver with a score of 39.

A thrilled National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) President, Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo, said after the results came through, "It is yet another historic moment for Indian shooting with Zoravar helping us win only a second individual world championship medal in trap. It shows the level of confidence of our Shooting squad that with every international outing, new barriers are being breached. Full marks to Zora-

var for his commitment and dedication, and also to Peter Wilson and the entire coaching staff, who, since coming on, have helped our Trap squad get better and better."

Zoravar's challenge began early Friday morning, with his first task being ensuring qualification, despite missing just one target out of 100, over the first four rounds of qualification spread over the past two days.

He missed the seventh target but got 21 out of the first 22 before missing the 23rd target to log a 23 for the fifth and final round. A total of 122 (24,25,25,25,23) over five rounds would turn out to be enough as overnight leader and former world champion Josip Glasnovic, equalled the world record with a perfect score of 125, to top the table.

Anton's brother Josip qualified second with 124, while American world No.2 William Hinton was sole third with 123. Zoravar went into a three-way shoot-off with Garcia and Frenchman Antonin Desert, was the first to miss, and so went into the six-man final with the highest bib number of six, a huge disadvantage, as any ties before the last 10 targets would mean he would have to bow out.

The Indian was then the first to miss in the final, missing his 2nd target, but got nine out of the first 10 to be fifth in the initial stages. Josip's first miss came on the 12th target, and Anton, after not missing over three days, had four after the first 15.

It was a great experience. It was a tough range, tough conditions to shoot but that's how it is and here we are. I would like to thank my family and my coaches and teammates for their support

ZORAVAR SINGH SANDHU

SHORT TAKES

Young Tigresses seal maiden qualification

Bishkek: The Indian football team produced a remarkable comeback to beat Uzbekistan 2-1 and secure a maiden qualification to the AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup here Friday. India came from behind after an inspired first-half substitution by head coach Joakim Alexandersson, bringing on Thandamoni Baskey in place of Bonifilia Shullai in the 40th minute. With this win, India finished top of Group G with six points, and qualified for the AFC tournament in China next year, their first-ever continental qualification at this age group. The Young Tigresses had last featured in the AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup in 2005, when 11 teams participated directly.

Satwik-Chirag enter semis, Lakshya crashes

Odense: Star Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty advanced to the semifinals, while Lakshya Sen lost his men's singles quarterfinal match in straight games at the Denmark Open Super 750 badminton tournament here Friday. The Indian doubles pair, winners of the BWF World Championships bronze medal earlier this year, beat the unseeded Indonesian duo of Muhammad Rian Ardianto and Rahmat Hidayat 21-15, 18-21, 21-16 in a hard-fought quarterfinal that lasted 65 minutes. The Indian duo will next play the winner of another quarterfinal between eight seeds Chen Bo Yang and Yi Liu of China and Japan's Takuro Hoki and Yugo Kobayashi.

RANJI TROPHY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Oct 17: Baroda tightened their hold over Odisha on Day 3 in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group A match here Friday, taking a commanding 142-run lead by stumps and positioning themselves for a strong finish in the multi-day encounter.

Resuming at 205/5, Odisha needed a solid effort to get close to Baroda's first innings total of 413/7. Rajesh Dhuper (94 off 252) and Subhranshu Senapati (79 off 203) stood tall with a dogged 120-run stand, absorbing pressure from a disciplined Baroda bowling unit. Dhuper fell agonisingly short of a deserved century, while Senapati's patient innings



ended as Rasikh Salam (3/66) and A Sheth (4/67) wrapped up the Odisha innings for 271 in 116.1 overs.

With a healthy 142-run first innings lead, Baroda chose to bat again rather than enforce the follow-on and looked to build an unassailable advance.

in 61 overs, extending their lead to 269 runs.

Earlier in the match, Baroda's first innings was headlined by centuries from Shivalik Sharma (124) and Mitesh Patel (100*), setting a solid foundation.

As Day 4 approaches, Baroda will look to accelerate and declare, leaving Odisha with a daunting chase. The hosts must strike early on Day 4 to keep their hopes alive in this key fixture.

BRIEF SCORES
Odisha 1st innings: 271 all out in 116.1 overs (Rajesh Dhuper 94; Atit Seth 4/67) vs Baroda 1st innings 413/7 in 146 overs (Shivalik 124, Mitesh Patel 100, Sukirt Pandey 71; Sumit Sharma 3/104) lead by 142 runs.



Colts enter Johor Cup final for record 8th time

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Johor Bahru (Malaysia), Oct 17: India defeated hosts Malaysia 2-1 in their last group game to progress to the final of the Sultan of Johor Cup junior men's hockey tournament here Friday.

India converted two penalty corners through Gurjot Singh (22nd minute) and Sourabh Anand Kushwaha (48th) to secure the win and set up a summit clash against Australia Saturday. Malaysia's goal was scored by Naaveenesh Panicker in the 43rd minute.

It was India's record eighth final at the Sultan of Johor Cup out of 12 appearances.

Both the teams were sloppy to start off as they found the wet conditions difficult to negotiate after the match started late due to rain. Initially, India tried to catch Malaysia off guard through long aerial balls but the play didn't pay much dividends.

With the pitch becoming better, India started the second quarter on an aggressive note and won two back-to-back penalty corners. They came close



to taking the lead on one occasion but were denied first by Malaysian goalkeeper Haziq Hairul and then by the crossbar from a Arajjeet Hundal's rebound hit. But in the 22nd

India have lifted the Sultan of Johor Cup three times in the past, while Australia, who have finished runners-up in the last three editions, are two-time winners

minute, Gurjot scored from a rebound with an easy tap-in after the initial effort from a

penalty corner was saved by the Malaysian custodian.

India went into the breather with a slender one goal lead but were also guilty of wasting plenty of chances.

They got as many as nine penalty corners in the first two quarters but converted just one.

After the change of ends, India continued to mount pressure on the Malaysian defence with the home team's goalkeeper coming to his side's rescue again in the 35th minute with another fine save.

AIFF's RFP: No franchisee fee for clubs in ISL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 17: The participating clubs in the country's top-tier football league will not pay franchisee fee from this edition onwards and the incoming commercial partner of the national federation will have to provide "video support system" during matches starting this season, according to the Request for Proposal (RFP) document.

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) Thursday issued the RFP, inviting bids to award the right to monetise the commercial rights of the top-tier league for the next 15 years. The deadline of submission of bids is November 5 while bidders can seek clarifications till October 21. The bids will be opened November 11.

Only companies with a net worth of minimum Rs 250 crore can bid for an annual minimum guarantee of Rs 37.5 crore to the AIFF. Among the salient features in the draft contract of the RFP are stopping of payment of franchisee fee by the participating clubs, responsibility of the future commercial partner of the AIFF to ensure video support system and later Video Assistant Referee (VAR), and application of promotion or relegation from 2025-26 season.

The RFP also provides for coverage of matches with minimum 11 cameras, out of which two can be unmanned. For key matches, more cameras can be added, though it's optional.

India slip to 136 in FIFA rankings, worst in nearly a decade

Once seen as a team on the rise after their 2023 triumphs in the Intercontinental Cup, SAFF Championship, and Tri-Nation Series, India's fortunes have sharply declined over the past year

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 17: Indian football's dismal run on the international stage continued as the men's senior national team slumped to 136th in the latest FIFA World Rankings — their lowest position since November 2016.

The new ranking, released Friday, compounds the Blue Tigers' woes as they find themselves out of contention for both the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2027 AFC Asian Cup.

That period of promise — which saw them climb into the top 100 of the rankings — was followed by a disastrous AFC Asian Cup campaign in Qatar earlier this year, where they exited in the group stage without scoring a single goal in three defeats.

Since then, the national setup has struggled for stability, cycling through three head coaches in less than two years. Igor Stimac was first shown the door, succeeded by Manolo Márquez, who himself made



way for Khalid Jamil earlier this year.

Despite flashes of progress under Jamil — particularly during the CAFA Nations

Cup, a friendly tournament where India showed tactical improvement — the results in competitive fixtures have remained disappointing.

The team's last victory in a competitive match came nearly a year ago, a 1-0 win over Kuwait in November 2023.

Globally, Spain retained top

spot in the FIFA men's rankings, ahead of World Cup holders Argentina and third-placed France. England, Portugal, the Netherlands, Brazil, and Belgium completed the top eight. Germany climbed two places to 10th after back-to-back qualifying wins over Luxembourg and Northern Ireland, while 2018 World Cup runners-up Croatia slipped to 11th after a draw against the Czech Republic.

The updated rankings will determine seedings for the expanded 48-team 2026 World Cup draw, to be held on December 5. The three co-hosts — the United States, Canada, and Mexico — will be joined by the nine highest-ranked direct qualifiers in the top-seed pot, ensuring Germany's likely inclusion.