

Vaani's hope

After Diwali, actor Vaani Kapoor expresses concern over Delhi's worsening air, and hopes for cleaner celebrations next year

LEISURE | P2



Sarkozy in prison

Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy arrives at a prison to serve a 5-year sentence for a criminal conspiracy

INTERNATIONAL | P10



India-China EV clash

Alleging that India's PLI scheme violates global trade rules, China has filed a complaint at the WTO

BUSINESS | P11



Naqvi's stubbornness

Asia Cup trophy deadlock continues as ACC chief Mohsin Nagvi refuses to hand it to India despite BCCI, SL, Afghanistan push

SPORTS | P12

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BHUBANESWAR | WEDNESDAY | OCTOBER 22, 2025

H-1B fee: US issues fresh guidelines

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, Oct 21: The USD 100,000 fee imposed by the Trump administration on new H-1B visa petitions will not apply to applicants seeking a "change of status" or "extension of stay", according to fresh guidelines.

Issued by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Monday, the guidelines clarified the exemptions to President Donald Trump's September 19 proclamation, 'Restriction on entry of certain nonimmigrant workers,' which will raise the fee for new H1-B visas to a steep USD 100,000 (approx INR 88 lakhs).

The Proclamation does not apply to any previously issued and currently valid H-1B visas, or any petitions submitted prior to 12:01 a.m. eastern daylight time on September 21, 2025," the USCIS said. It added that the proclamation also does not prevent any current H1-B holder from travelling in and out of the US.

The USCIS clarified that the fee does not apply to "change of status" cases where individuals switch categories without leaving the country, such as moving from F-1 student status to H-1B status.

"It says the fee only applies to cases filed for people outside the United States, so they can come in," Dan Berger of Green & Spiegel told Forbes in an interview. "Employers were nervous about doing change of status because the \$100k might apply if they travel," he added.

The proclamation does not apply to a petition filed at or after "12:01 a.m. eastern day-2025, that is requesting an amendment, change of status, or extension of stay for an alien inside the US where the alien is granted such amendment, change, or extension.



Burst as many crackers as you want ... don't worry about pollution, it's a matter of

religious freedom

more hospitable for insects.

month one of the only plac-

es in the world that did not

have a mosquito population. The other is Antarctica.

for some time that mosqui-

Scientists have predicted

The country was until this



RAIN HIT: A worker makes her way through a flooded agricultural field after a nearby lake overflowed following rainfall, near Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka, Tuesday

Rehab centre inmate strangled'; 4 detained

Cuttack, Oct 21: A 37-yearold man was found dead under mysterious circumstances at a private de-addiction centre at Uttamapur under Sadar police limits here Tuesday morning.

The deceased was identified as Soumyaranjan Das, a resident of Jatni. An engineering graduate, he was working in Mumbai and had returned home due to depression following which was admitted to the centre about three months ago.

According to sources, Das was allegedly murdered by some inmates on Diwali

night after an altercation, investigation to ascertain which broke out between them as the former raised an alarm when they were trying to flee the rehab centre taking advantage of the festivities and lack of vigilance. Infuriated over foiled escape bid, they allegedly pinned him down and strangled him to death.

The centre staff found Das lying unconscious with a towel wrapped around his neck in the morning and rushed him to the hospital. where doctors declared him dead. Police have detained four inmates for question-

the circumstances leading to his death. Family have questioned the non-func tional CCTVs at the centre. Last month, a 28-year

old youth admitted at a de-addiction centre under Bharatpur police limits in Bhubaneswar died under mysterious circumstances.

The deceased, Surjyakanta Mohapatra of Singhan athpur village in Cuttack district, was undergoing treatment at the centre since August 29. Mohapa tra's uncle, however, lodged a police complaint alleging ing in connection with the he was murdered by the staff incident and launched an at the facility.

Hazardous smog blankets twin cities Back-to-back Lopar to bring heavy rains

tions, the Air Quality Index burst crackers between 7 (AQI) in Odisha's capital city Bhubaneswar soared to hazardous levels leaving hehind even New Delhi, considered one of the most polluted cities in the world. While the national capital had an AQI of 612 Monday evening, Bhubaneswar clocked 657. a level considered by the World Health Organization dangerous to breath

MANOJ KUMAR JENA, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack woke up to a thick layer of smog following the Diwali celebrations as many people threw the guidelines issued by Odis-

Following Diwali celebra- OSPCB asked people to pm and 9 pm.

According to reports, the

Air Quality Index (AQI) of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack was 657 and 582 respectively Monday evening, which is considered as hazardous. The visibility in both cities was significantly reduced in many areas, according to residents as they faced inconvenience while commuting. Krishnakanth Sahoo.

a Bhubaneswar resident, said "Every morning I go for a walk to get some fresh air. However, today, I only saw fog and this is very concerning.

Similarly, Subrat Ojha, a resident of Cuttack, nar-



A smoke-engulfed stretch in Bhubaneswar Monday night

poor here (Cuttack) after the celebration. Bursting crackers is fine but the rising pollution level also needs to be taken care of."

Diwali was celebrated with pomp and gaiety across the state. However, the timelimit set by OSPCB to burst crackers was ignored which people also burst crackers, Tuesday, raising more concern for the environment.

Asked about the sudden surge in pollution level, Manish Kumar, environmental scientist at Council of Scientific and Industrial have adverse effects on the Research (CSIR)-Institute environment. However. a of Minerals and Materi- good amount of rainfall can ha State Pollution Control rating his woes, said, "The resulted in the rise of air als Technology (IMMT) drop the pollution level, he light time on September 21, Board (OSPCB) to the wind. visibility was extremely pollution. Reportedly, some said "People went beyond stated.

the permissive time limit during celebration by bursting crackers till midnight while the cloud cover in the skies didn't help the cause either. The movement of air was restricted. The smoke generated from the crackers got stuck in the atmosphere, resulting in rise in AQI."

Kumar also said that this year the pollution is reported to be high in the lower strata where animals, humans and others reside. Even the moisture level in the atmosphere was very high and the harmful gases from the crackers which contains sulfur will mix in the droplets, which might MORE P8

DHARITRI

YOUTH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The state government Tuesday put all districts on alert and directed Collectors to remain fully prepared to handle any situation in the wake of a low-pressure area (Lopar) over the Bay of Bengal intensifying into a wellmarked system and taking the shape of a depression in

the next 24 hours. In a letter to district Collectors, the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) said there should be foolproof preparations to tackle the ensuing calamity as forecast by the India Meterological Department (IMD).

high alert, with back-to- severe situation, including back low-pressure systems the possibility of a cyclone.

expected over the Bay of Bengal in October, traditionally a "cyclone month" for the state.

In the last four decades most of the devastating cyclones have hit the Odisha coast in October, mostly after the withdrawal of the southwest monsoon from the state, an official at the revenue department claimed.

"We have asked all Col lectors to stay alert in view of forecasts of heavy rain due to the low pressure systems over the bay." Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said. Pujari added that while the IMD has forecast rainfall, some international weath The government is on er models predict a more

Comic legend Asrani passes away at 85 MUMBAI: Actor Gov-

ardhan Asrani, popularly known as Asrani, known for his comic timings, died Mum-

day after a prolonged illness. His last rites were performed at Santacruz Crematorium.

A versatile actor, who also had directorial stints, Asrani was admitted to Bharatiya Arogya Nidhi Hospital four days ago. He was originally a resident of Jaipur. His family, according to last wishes of the ter his funeral was held at the

Lokpal in soup over tender for 7 BMWs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Anti-graft ombudsman Lokpal has floated a tender to procure seven luxurious BMW cars, collectively worth around ₹5 crore, drawing condemnation from opposition parties and anti-corruption activists who questioned the institution's priorities and performance record.

According to the tender and the manufacturer's website, the long-wheelbase sedan, with an on-road price of approximately ₹ 69.5 lakh per unit in Delactor, shared the news only afhi, is described as the longest and most spacious car Santacruz Crematorium. **P2** in the segment designed for provide a vehicle for each



outstanding comfort in an extremely luxurious cabin.

"The Lokpal of India invites open tenders from reputed agencies for supply of seven BMW 3 series 330Li cars to the Lokpal of India," read the tender floated October 16 which specifically mentioned procurement of the 'M Sport' model with "long wheelbase" and in white colour.

The procurement aims to

of the institution's current members, including Chairman Justice A M Khanwilkar (retd) and six other members. The sanctioned strength of the Lokpal is eight.

The Lokpal's tender mandates that the selected vendor must conduct a comprehensive seven-day practical and theoretical training programme for the anti-graft ombudsman's drivers and designated staff for which the cost will be borne exclusively by the vendor.

Congress leaders and wellknown activists have condemned the move, branding it as a display of extravagance that undermines the very mission of the institution.

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31ST OCTOBER 2025

WINNERS WILL BE AWARDED AT THE DHARITRI YOUTH CONCLAVE **IN NOVEMBER 2025, BHUBANESWAR**

JOIN A NETWORK OF YOUTH AND CLIMATE EXPERTS

Mosquitoes discovered in Iceland for 1st time Reykjavík, Oct 21: In a females and one male. They shocking development, moswere all collected from wine quitoes have been found in Nordic island nation Iceland for the first time as global heating makes the country

toes could establish themselves in Iceland as there are ing and fish from warmer, aegypti) were found this entomologist at the Natural plentiful breeding habitats such as marshes and ponds. southern climes such as Many species will be unable mackerel have been found

to survive the harsh climate, in the country's waters. As the planet warms, But Iceland is warming, at more species of mosquito four times the rate of the rest have been found across the of the northern hemisphere. globe. In the UK, eggs of the Glaciers have been collaps- Egyptian mosquito (Aedes

year, and the Asian tiger mosquito (Aedes albopictus) has been discovered in Kent. He identified the insects him-These are invasive species that can spread tropical diseases such as dengue, chikungunya and Zika virus.

Science Institute of Iceland. confirmed the findings there. self after they were sent to him by a citizen scientist. He said: "Three specimens

of Culiseta annulata were Matthías Alfreðsson, an found in Kiðafell, Kjós, two

ropes during wine roping aimed at attracting moths. The species is cold-resisant and can survive Icelandic conditions by shel-

tering through winter in basements and barns. Björn Hjaltason found

the mosquitoes and posted about it on the Facebook group Insects in Iceland. "At dusk on October 16, I caught sight of a strange fly on a red wine ribbon," Björn said, referring to the trap he uses to attract insects. "I immediately suspected what was going on and quickly collected the fly. It was a female.'

He caught two more and sent them to the science institute where they were identified.

eisure



Vishal shares

'mantra' for

success

Mumbai: Actor Vishal Jethwa,

who successfully transitioned

from the small screen to cinema,

said the journey comes with its

own set of challenges, but deter-

mination and a positive mindset

movies, you face difficulties,"

Vishal, who started his acting

career in 2013 by landing the lead

role of Akbar in the show Bharat

Ka Veer Putra - Maharana Pratap,

the will to do something good,

then you do it. I did the same. I

welcomed every opportunity

with love and gave my best

in everything.I think this

has been my Guru mantra.

Then things happen. Some

things we don't do, God

makes us do them," he said.

Now that he has a flour-

ishing career in Hindi cin-

ema, which demands extra

hours of work, how does

Vishal make time for his

"You are very close to your

family. How do you manage?

I am always connected on the

phone. Even if I go out, I am al-

ways connected to my family on

the phone. Otherwise, I don't even

feel that I am away from my family

because we are very close," he

"But still, I feel that if you have

"When you come from TV to

make all the difference.

told this news agency.

Joe Jonas firmly denied rumours of drug use after a viral video showed him fidgeting with his nose during a performance. The Only Human singer

clarified, "I've never touched cocaine in my life. But if I did, I think I'd be a little slicker about it than doing it onstage."

KIM'S NEW MASK SPARKS SPECULATION

Kim Kardashian's look at the fifth annual Academy Museum Gala in Los Angeles has gone viral on social media. Kim wore a nude-colored mask that covered her entire face and hair, prompting many on social media to wonder whether she is hiding another plastic surgery.



accuracy • reliability • trust

You will be up and about today. Your actions will lead to progress, and progress to success. But later in the day, you may want to be alone. Honour your current mood - soften the lights and snuggle into your favourite corner. It's normal, says Ganesha, to talk to your dog about your problems.

TAURUS

It is a day of dreaming and ideas will click at work and help you shine through today. You will impress the boss with elegance and spend the evening with champagne and your love struck beloved.

GEMINI

There are strong indications that today will be an action-packed day for you, says Ganesha. Though you will be burdened with a lot of responsibilities, you will be able to show your family members how much you care for them. New relationships will also develop in the evening.

CANCER

This is a favourable day for you. Ganesha sees the chance of a gain from womenfolk. Surprisingly, your work will be finished without any pre-planning. Ties with bosses and colleagues will be steady without any ups and downs. Some of your dreams may be realised.

Champagne, anyone? Well, Ganesha seems to favour a good celebration today as you give a major boost to your reputation in your chosen field. You will bring success and glory to all your associates. Do not be misled by the initial stress of your workplace, as it shall fade away with the passage of day. Let love and affection of vour loved ones be the highlight of your

VIRGO

You don't need to be one of the Mafia to realise the importance of family, says Ganesha. Your better half will try spicing up the relationship in the afternoon sometime. So keep fuelling the fires of love - a wildfire

Ganesha says today you need to be careful about taking up any new ventures, agreements or deals in business today. You may have to bear the ire of higher ups in your office today but after the afternoon your work ability remove any doubts that they had in you earlier. Since you will be spending more time at work today people in your family will get angry at feeling neglected

SCORPIO

You enjoy being a social butterfly today, says Ganesha. Evening will be spent wining and dining in the company of pleasant and like-minded people. During the day you keep planning for the evening. And perhaps, that's the reason that you are not in the mood to work today.

SAGITTARIUS

Business tycoons, be ready to scale new heights today! Ganesha sees a fantastic day of massive business growth. In the afternoon, your professionalism will be held in high esteem by friends and foe alike. You may also take your first step in exploring new territories by launching new products in the market, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

You will be brimming over with power and energy, so much so that you may go head first into a new business venture, some thing that can match your ability and bring you the desired satisfaction. Pending work will be done away with, leaving you more time for recreation, says Ganesha.

AQUARIUS

Today is a day for creative expression! Sing away to glory, for you may discover you have a wonderful voice. Focus and precision are your best tools today, says Ganesha. But some event may cast a shadow over your clarity in the evening.

PISCES

You might as well drive into a brick wall and hope it is spongy, as expect to achieve a lot of success today. However, this does not mean that you ought to give up. Indeed, it is the Herculean efforts that you put in today that will bring you many laurels and much appreciation, as well as stupendous success in the near future, says Ganesha.

Vaani's concern

JOE SHUTS DOWN

DRUG RUMOURS

currently in the national capital, has voiced concern over New Delhi's ity, and hopes next year, there's a way worsening air qualto celebrate "without dimming the air we breathe."

Vaani took to Instagram, where she shared that she woke up to the alarming AQI touching 447 in New Delhi. AQI touchthe world a way to we Earlier in OTTthe on in the fic-Pradesh, it

She wrote: "Woke up to Delhi's ing 447, one of the highest in today. Maybe next year, we find celebrate without dimming the breathe." this year, Vaani made her debut

with Mandala Murders, based novel The Butcher of Benares. Set tional town of Charandaspur, Uttar blends mystery, supernatural horpsychological thriller elements. The series follows detectives Rea Thomas and Vikram Singh as they inves-

tigate ritualistic murders linked to a secret

cult, the Aayastis, and a mythical entity called Yast. It explores themes of faith vs science and love vs sacrifice, combining modern police procedural with occult practi-

The series also stars Vaibhav Raj Gupta, Surveen Chawla, Raghubir Yadav, and Shriya Pilgaonkar in key roles. She will next be seen in

Badtameez Gill directed by Navjot Gulati. The film also stars Aparshakti Khurana, Paresh Rawal. Sheeba Chaddha, Richard Bhakti Klein, and Monica

The quiet legend behind the laughter

New Delhi: He was more than just the comedian, a staple brought into the plot to invoke laughs. Govardhan Kumar Asrani was also the quiet character actor who was so much a part of the middle of the road movies that now epitomise a golden era in Hindi

Asrani, 84, died on Diwali afternoon and was cremated quietly Monday evening, without any fanfare He will always be remembered as

the jailor from Sholay whose loud, exaggerated persona evoked laughter and whose dialogue "Hum Angrezon ke zamane ke jailor hain" is quoted almost as if on loop 50 vears later. Asrani acted in more than

300 films over six decades. It was a lifetime of making movies, many roles forgettable and many that will stay on. The films from the 1970s, con-

sidered to be a decade of Hindi movies greats, included Asrani as a lost-in-hisown world musician in Bawarchi, the friend who has no comic lines but moves the humour plotline in the classic comedy Chupke Chupke and the heroine's brother in *Namak* Haram.

Asrani was an ac

tor who adapted through the times. As the tone grew louder and more slapstick in the 1980s and 1990s, so did Asrani. He was part of a remarkable com-

ic tradition that included Mehmood Johnny Walker and Keshto Mukheriee. He brought his own brand of everyman humour to the screen.

In the last phase of his acting career, Asrani's most significant collaborator was Priyadarshan who gave him roles in Hera Pheri, Chup Chup Ke, Garam Masala and Bhool Bhulaiya.

Born in 1941 into a middle-class Sindhi family that migrated from Pakistan after Partition, Asrani grew up in Jaipur with four sisters and three brothers. His acting career began in the early 1960s, with small parts in Gujarati films be-

> His first Hindi film appearance was in *Hare Kaanch Ki* Choodiyan, but it was Hrishikesh herjee's Satyakam and Guddi that gave him visibil-

fore he moved to Mumbai.

Asrani was the rare actor who spoke his mind, be it politics or

the industry

Thamma: A massy, Maddock-style firecracker

hamma is big-screen fun at its purest — a daring mix of folklore. family, fantasy, and fanfare

of a full-blown franchise. With this new movie in the Maddock horror-verse, director Aditya Sarpotdar taking Indian genre cinema to a whole new level. It's all sorts of strange, clever, and wild-

ly creative yet, very relatable.

The story revolves around the forest of myths where the past is still alive and the ancient guardians are awakening. Not Thamma by any means, but it still manages to conjure up a bizarre fantasy universe complete with its own laws, curses, and consequences. One of the main charac-

ters is journalist protagonist Khurrana from

FILM REVIEW

Director

Aditya Sarpotdar

Ayushmann Khurrana,

Rashmika Mandanna,

Nawazuddin Siddigui.

Paresh Rawal

a small town. His incidental supernatural experience leads to a series of events that is not in his capacity to grasp the enormity of it. In the first half, he is simply lovable and relatable

but later on he becomes quite intense. Mandanna delivers an emotional performance that is also very down-to-earth.

The continuing part is just an explosive work of art — it features fight, change of characters, and a breathtaking fight between Alok and Bhedi-



ya (Varun Dhawan). Special effects are of great quality and the confrontation between these two forces is signaling their underlying relationship which will definitely influence this cinematic universe storyline in the future.

On the subject of universe-building, the movie is full of Easter eggs and a few character recalls, but one highlights: the comeback of Sar Kata, the frightening character from Stree, who ominously appears, signaling the massive danger that lies ahead for the Maddock horror-verse. The acting, in general, is great, Paresh Rawal offers a great comic relief performance as the sarcastic and sharp-witted father while Nawazuddin Siddiqui dominates the movie with his

SUDOKU

3

1

5

4

2

8

2

5 1

6

SOLUTIONS

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a

manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains

2

6 9

8

5 9

4

the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

intense and dark presence.

2

4 8

8

5

3

PEANUTS

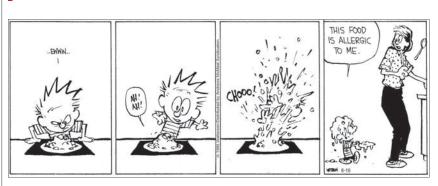








CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



POST **CROSSWORD**

24 Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com

Acr	OSS
7	Chest of
	drawers

- 8 Souped-up car (3,3)
- 9 Blackthorn
- fruit 10 Harbours

- 11 Grazing land
- 13 Jeans material
- Down 1 Kittiwake

2 Echo

17 Nudged 20 Kind of guitar

15 Corpulent

- 21 London district 23 Desk item
 - 12 Small tuna
- 24 Kicks out
- 14 Ice mass 16 Court game
 - 18 Pearl maker 19 Baby bird?
 - 22 Despise

3 Baby's room

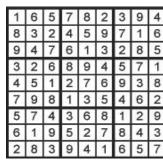
4 Chintzy

5 Flunky

6 Land turtle

SUDOKU

CHIANTIOSLO



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

owntown

ANNUAL DAY

Dignitaries unveil a book to mark the annual day celebration of Labour and ESI department's cultura wing at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



19 file papers for Nuapada bypoll

Nuapada/Bhubaneswar.

Oct 21: With the Nuapada bypoll fast approaching, political atmosphere in the Assembly segment is fully charged up, even as 19 candidates have filed nomination papers, said sources. According to a statement issued by the Chief Electoral Office (CEO) recently, out of the 19 candidates, eight are from various political parties while 11 are contesting as Independents for the November

11 byelection. Candidates who have filed nomination papers from various parties are Snehangini Chhuria (Biju Janata Dal), Jay Dholakia (Bharatiya Janata Party), Ghasiram Majhi (Congress), Ramakant Hati (Samajwadi Party), Hemant Thandi (Bahujan Mukti Party), Raja Ram Sahu (Bahujan Samaj Party), Shukadhar Dandasena (Odisha Janata Dal) and Sitaram Behera (Rashtriya Parivartan Dal).

The 11 Independents are: Ashrva Mahanand, Engineer Chakrant Jena, Purushottam Behera, Kamal Kumar Chhatria, Bhubanlal Sahu, Lochan Majhi, Bhujbal Adbong, Kishore Kumar Baga, Bhakta

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The

ruling BJP Tuesday demanded

that the Election Commission

(EC) take action against Con-



Bandhu Dharua, Neeta Baga and Laxmi Kant Tandi.

The last date for withdrawal of nominations is October 24

(Friday). BJD's Chhuria was the last among the major parties to file

her nomination Monday. Accompanied by senior party leaders and MLAs, including Pramila Mallik, the Opposition chief whip in the Assembly, Chhuria submitted her documents to the sub-collector's office in Nuapada district.

Before filing the nomination papers, she offered prayers at the Lord Shiva temple in Telipada of Nuapada.

The bypoll was necessitated following the death of BJD MLA Rajendra Dholakia in September.

filed along with the nomination

papers for Nuapada by election.

vice-president Jatin Mohanty

submitted a petition to Chief

Electoral Officer, stating that

A BJP delegation led by state

BJP seeks rejection of Congress nominee's papers

BJP violated model code: BJD

Bhubaneswar: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Tuesday lodged a complaint with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) against School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond and others, alleging violation of model code of conduct (MCC) in the ensuing Nuapada bypoll.

In its complaint, the party has also mentioned BJP's Nuapada byelection candidate Jay Dholakia and the authority of an educational institution in the district.

Briefing the media after meeting the CEO, senior BJD leader Lenin Mohanty said that Minister Gond had visited an educational institution in Nuapada and participated in a programme organised under the banner of Gond Samaj October 20, where he allegedly made political commitments and campaign-related remarks.

The party alleged that during this event, Gond actively campaigned for Dholakia. "Though the meeting was

reportedly organised under the The BJD reposed faith in Chhuria, a former minister and

two-time MLA from Attabira in

them in the affidavit filed along

with the nomination papers.

However, Majhi was not avail-

The BJP said, "Majhi had

mentioned two complaints

able for comments.

political, aimed at influencing voters in favour of the BJP candidate," he alleged. The senior BJD leader called

banner of Gond Samaj, its con-

tent and purpose were overtly

this a clear violation of the MCC by the minister.

"As per Election Commission's rules, no educational institution can be used for political purposes once the election process begins. Despite the model code of conduct being in force, the minister attended the event and made promises, which is a clear violation of election guidelines," Mohanty

As per reports, the BJD delegation demanded a detailed enquiry and strict action against all those involved, including Gond, Jay Dholakia, and the concerned institution.

According to BJD sources, the CEO has assured the delegation that an enquiry will be conducted and appropriate action will be taken as per election norms.

neighbouring Bargarh district, after late Rajendra Dholakia's son Jay joined the BJP.

These cases are still pending in

the SDJM court. But in the affi-

davit submitted for the Nuapada

byelection, Congress candidate

Ghasiram Majhi has deliber-

ately avoided mentioning these

two cases." The BJP demand-

ed rejection of the nomination

papers of Majhi.



DISPELLING DARKNESS: People lighting sky lanterns in Rasulgarh area of Bhubaneswar on Diwali

Diwali: 2 killed, several hurt

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: At least two persons died and several sustained burn injuries during Kali Puja and Diwali celebrations across the state, police said Tuesday.

Two devotees, a man and a woman, allegedly died of electrocution after coming into contact with a live wire near Maa Dakhina Kali temple in Biragovindpur village under Satyabadi block of Puri district Monday night.

The duo was taken to Sakhigopal Community Health Centre, where they were declared

dead on arrival, officials said. Police have sent the bodies for post-mortem examination,

while efforts to identify the deceased were on.

In another incident, two youths were injured in a firecracker explosion in Cuttack city. They were identified as Ramachandra Padhi, 21, and Sampad Parida, 30.

According to police, the duo, carrying firecrackers, was moving on a scooter. Suddenebration accidentally fell on the scooter, igniting the firecrackers stored in the vehicle and triggering an explosion near Aparnanagar under Chauliagani police limits. Both victims sustained 30 to

ly, a firework from nearby cel

were taken to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack for treatment, they said. In another incident, three

40 per cent burn injuries and

houses were gutted in a mishap due to firecrackers at Ambaga dia village in Keonjhar district

In Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, more than 70 people sustained burn injuries during the celebrations and were ad mitted to medical facilities officials added.

(146/2022 and 10/2018) in the 2024 gress candidate Ghasiram Mathere were two cases against jhi for allegedly concealing his Majhi at Nuapada police stageneral elections. He was also a criminal records in the affidavit tion, but he did not mention candidate in the 2024 elections. Guv, CM recall valour of police



personnel to uphold rule of law

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Maihi Tuesday recalled the valour and tireless efforts of police personnel to uphold the rule of law and ensure the security of people.

On the Police Commemoration Day, they also paid tributes to those who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty. "Their (police personnel) valour,

selfless service, and unwavering commitment to the nation embody the highest ideals of courage and devotion. We bow in deep respect to the martyrs who laid down their lives to ensure our safety and peace," the Governor said in a post on X.

Majhi, on the social media platform, saluted the unwavering dedication of the police personnel.

"Your valour and tireless work uphold the rule of law, ensuring citizen security. We express the nation's profound gratitude for your essential service," the CM said.

At the state police headquarters in Cuttack, Director General of Police (DGP) Yogesh Bahadur Khurania paid tributes to the police personnel killed in action and expressed his condolenc-

The state police presented a ceremonial salute to the brave men and observed a two-minute silence.

es to their families.

"Our police officers and jawans are fighting bravely in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, North Eastern states and Naxal-affected areas. Due to the bravery of our police personnel, we have been able to establish peace and security in Maoist-affected areas, and we will continue to do so in the coming days," the DGP said.

Speaking to mediapersons, Khurania said Odisha Police is always ready to serve the people.

The Odisha Police has been able to minimise Maoist activities in the state and several security personnel have sacrificed their lives to achieve

"It is due to their supreme sacrifice that today we are able to live peacefully in society," he added.

Police Commemoration Day is observed every year October 21 to honour the memory of police personnel who lost their lives in the line

The day traces back to 1959, when 10 Indian police personnel lost their lives at hot springs in Ladakh while defending the nation's borders.

2 Bihar youths held for ganja peddling

AGENCIES

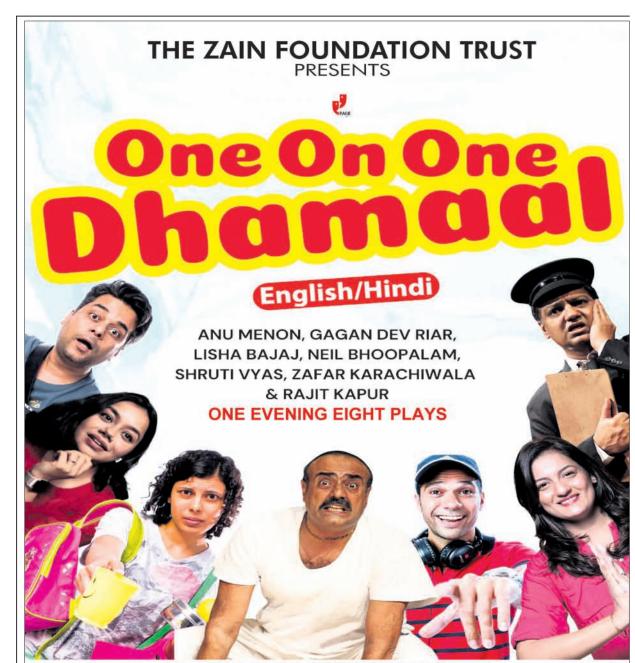
Puri. Oct 21: Government Railway Police (GRP), Puri has busted an interstate ganja peddlers' racket that was operating between Puri and Delhi using train bathrooms to conceal and supply the contraband.

Chhotu Kumar, 20, of Sikandra (Dhanwa) under Barh police station and Niranjan Kumar of Nimi village under Dhaniyana police station, both in Patna district of Bihar were arrested. Around 14kg ganja, a screwdriver, and other tools were recovered from their possession, said the GRP sources.

The duo had been residing in a rented house at Sarvodaya Nagar in Puri. A GRP team was patrolling the Railway Parcel compound Monday when they noticed two suspicious youths attempting to flee. They were caught and brought to GRP station for questioning.

During interrogation, the accused revealed how they used to pack cannabis in cotton bags, open the ceiling panel of a New Delhi-bound train's bathroom using a screwdriver, conceal the packets, and then reseal the opening. They would then send photos of the bogie and bathroom to their Delhi-based associates, who retrieved the consignment before the train reached the New Delhi station.

Ramu Rai, also from Bihar, was the key supplier who sourced the ganja from Kandhamal district. He handed over the contraband to the accused at Unit-1 Market in Bhubaneswar. The duo transported it to Puri on a scooter and stored it in their rented accommodation.



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BIHAR

Congress-led Mahagathbandhan in Bihar over the internal rift, saying the alliance has "miserably failed" to act as a credible Opposition both at the Centre and in the state.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Speaking on the ongoing "political crisis" in Bihar, Pujari said, 'There should be a strong government in every state as well as at the Centre, but at the same time, there

should also be a strong and responsible Opposition. The Opposition plays a pivotal role in ensuring good governance. The absence of a strong opposition is not a good sign for a healthy democracy."

Mahagathbandhan miserably failed: Pujari

He alleged that the Congress-led coalition has repeatedly failed in

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS performing this role. "In Bihar and across the country, the Con-

gress and its allies have failed miserably in the last three terms to be a potentially viable and responsive Opposition," the minister said.

Referring to growing friction within Mahagathbandhan, the senior BJP leader said, "There is visible disunity in their alliance. Their partners are fielding candidates against each other, which clearly shows confusion and a lack of coordination. They are not only fighting the NDA but also fighting among themselves.'

Pujari said the ongoing internal rift within Mahagathbandhan indicates the alliance's inevitable defeat. Interestingly, the allies in Mahagathbandhan are set to clash on 11 seats during Bihar polls.











'Godman' held for sexually assaulting 7-year-old girl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, Oct 21: A self-styled godman was arrested in Cuttack district for allegedly sexually assaulting a seven-year-old girl, police said Monday.

The incident happened in Kendupatna area when the girl was going to a shop near her house to buy some essentials,

The accused, a 50-year-old man, took her to a nearby mutt and sexually assaulted her.

A case was registered under various sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act at Nandankanan police station, police said. The accused was arrested immediately, they said.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I Himansu Ranjan Jena, S/o.- Ramesh Chandra Jena, resident of At/P.O.- Viruda, P.S.-Tigiria, Dist.- Cuttack, PIN- 754030 declare by this affidavit No.40, dated- 19.10.2025 that now onwards I shall be known as **Himanshu Ranjan Jena** for all future purpose.

LOST

By Affidavit No.- 4279/2025 Dated-14.10.2025 before The Notary, Bari and Bari-Ramachandrapur PS, I Ramesh Chandra Shyanti, S/o.- Sharat Chandra Shyanti, Vill: Ratnagiri, P.S.: Bari-Ramachandrapur, Dist.: Jajpur ROR (ORIGINAL) of Mouza: Aliabad having Khata No.-673 & 1st RSD (ORIGINAL) No.- 10801400111, Dtd.-31.01.2014, 2nd RSD (ORIGINAL) No.- 10801801148, Dtd.- 16.11.2018, lost somewhere while travelling through my bike. If anyone

find please Contact:

9777205170.

This is to inform the public that the original +3 Pass Certificate of Sri Sanjeeb Kumar Mohanty, Son of Bipini Bihari Mohanty, resident of Adharjodi, Kendrapara, Odisha-754211, has been lost/damaged beyond recovery due to termite infestation. The certificate was issued by Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology and Science (Enrollment Number: G-1105300170, Batch: Autumn-2010, Exam. held in June 2013). Sri Sanjeeb Kumar Mohanty requests the concerned authority to issue a duplicate certificate for necessary purposes. If anyone finds any information regarding the lost certificate, please contact: Sri Sanjeeb Kumar Mohanty, Adharjodi, Kendrapara, Odisha-754211.

HC seeks report on Cuttack college student facilities

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Taking note of the glaring lack of basic facilities for differently-abled girl students at Shailabala Women's Autonomous College, Cuttack, the Orissa High Court has directed college authorities to submit a detailed report on the measures being taken to address the issue.

The college, currently enrolling over 2,000 students, was established through the vision of two of Odisha's pioneering figures— Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das and his adopted daughter, Miss Shailabala Das.

Situated near the holy shrine of Goddess Katak Chandi, the majestic college building stands on mission road in Cuttack city. The plight of lack of basic facility for 35 differently-abled girl students in Shailabala Women's Autonomous College, Cuttack is taken on record.

It is stated that the class rooms, library, hostel and other facilities are not conducive for the differently-abled. There is no wheelchair and even using

the washroom is an ordeal, the Court said in an order.

Differently-abled girl students often lack basic facilities like accessible ramps, elevators, and separate, safe washrooms.

Taking note of the situation, the Orissa High Court directed the Additional District Magistrate (ADM) of Cuttack, who serves as the nodal officer for the district administration, to visit the college after informing the Principal.

The ADM has been asked to assess the ground situation, take immediate corrective measures to address urgent issues, and submit before the Court a comprehensive action plan to resolve the matter on a permanent basis, the order stated.

The Commissioner-cum-Secretary of the Higher Education department and the Commissioner-cum- Secretary of the Social Security & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities department shall be intimated to remain present in the next sitting October 23 either virtually or in person, the order concluded.



IOMAGE TO ANCESTORS: A large number of devotees thronged near the Srimandir Monday to perform 'Paya Shraddha', a ritual honouring ancestors

Thousands offer 'Paya Shraddha' near Srimandir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, Oct 21: Thousands of devotees gathered near the Srimandir here Monday to perform 'Paya Shraddha', a ritual to honour ancestors on 'Diwali'.

Rituals were held outside the Lion's Gate of the 12th Century-shrine, with devotees lighting up 'Kaunria Kathis' (jute sticks) RITUALS WERE HELD OUTSIDE THE LION'S GATE OF THE 12TH CENTURY-SHRINE, WITH DEVOTEES LIGHTING UP 'KAUNRIA KATHIS' (JUTE STICKS)

CHANTS OF "BADA BADUA HO, ANDHARA RE ASITHILA, ALUA RE JAO HO' — INVOKING FOREFATHERS TO RETURN ALONG THE LIGHTED PATH — ECHOED IN THE AIR

Chants of 'bada badua ho, andhara re asithila, alua re jao ho' that roughly translates to 'Oh forefathers you came in darkness, go back along the lighted path', were heard.

"Performing 'Paya Shraddha' ritual at Puri helps ancestors' souls attain peace, absolving them of karmic sin," said Surya Narayan Rath Sharma, a researcher of Jagannath culture.

were made to ensure the safety of devotees and the smooth conduct of rituals, officials said.

Around 28 platoons of police were deployed across the Holy city, along with four Additional SPs, 15 DSPs and 14 inspectors, they said.

Traffic restrictions were imposed from 4am to 10pm, they added.

OES to honour achievers on 44th Foundation Day



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The

Orissa Environmental Society

(OES) will celebrate its 44th

foundation day October 25 and

present prestigious awards to

distinguished individuals from

the state for their exceptional

contributions to environmental

protection and conservation, OES

working president Jayakrushna

The executive committee, in

a meeting chaired by president

Sundara Narayana Patro, decid-

ed to confer the Lifetime Contri-

bution Award on former dean of

Panigrahi said Tuesday





the College of Engineering and

Technology (now OUTR), B See-

taram Patro, in recognition of

Former IMD Bhubaneswar

director and current SOA Uni-

versity director Sarat Chandra

Sahu will receive the Excel-

lence in Environment Award,

while Regional Science Centre

senior education officer and

science writer Nikunia Bihari

Sahu will be honoured with the

Environment and Science Com-

Similarly, Prameya editor

Gopalkrishna Mohapatra will

receive the Excellence in En-

munication Award.

his overall contributions.





vironmental Reporting Award, while Utkal Ranjan Mohanty, technical adviser of INSAF, Jagatsinghpur, will be hon-

oured with the Nature Conser-

vation Award.

Additionally, select individuals will be conferred with the titles of OES Fellow and OES Patron, while five senior life members will also be felicitated on the occasion. Former Odisha DGP and OPSC chairman Satyajit Mohanty will grace the event as chief guest, and UNDP Odisha head Abha Mishra will deliver the Prasanna Kumar Dash Memorial Lecture as the keynote speaker.

Govt sets up mechanism to monitor key projects

BHUBANESWAR: The Odisha monitoring and review of major industrial and infrastructure projects across the state, official sources said Tuesday. All departments and District Collectors have been instructed to ensure consistent supervision and timely evaluation of ongoing projects. "They have also been directed to upload detailed data, including issues encountered and steps taken for resolution, and the latest implementation status, on the Project Monitoring Group (PMG) portal," they said. At a highlevel Third Task Force Committee meeting, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, who reviewed the progress of projects listed on the PMG portal, issued directives to exp delayed construction works and strengthen the overall monitoring framework. To enhance project monitoring, it was decided that district-level review meetings will be

CM celebrates Diwali in native village villagers in dance and songs.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Oct 21: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi arrived in Keonjhar district on a three-day visit and reached his native Raikala village under Sadar block Monday afternoon where he celebrated Diwali with relatives, friends and family. He received a grand welcome from both the villagers and local administration.

Majhi celebrated Diwali in Raikala by playing traditional drums (madala) and joining He performed puja, lit clay lamps, and extended greetings, expressing his happiness at being with his family and community. "The rich culture, traditions, and closeness of this land always inspire and strengthen me," he said. Following local customs, he described the celebration as a unique experience, adding that Diwali is not only a festival of lights but also a symbol of Odisha's rich culture, identity, and devotion to

"On this auspicious day, I pray to Maa Kali and Maa Lakshmi that the light of happiness, peace, prosperity, and harmony fills the lives of the people of Odisha. I firmly believe that we must all work together and uphold our culture and traditions to build a new, developed, and prosperous Odisha," he said.

Not possible to hold Rath Yatra on one date: ISKCON

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) has told the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee (SJTMC) chairperson that it would 'not be possible' for it to conduct the Rath Yatra on one specific date across the globe.

The SJTMC chairperson, Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, the titular king of Puri, had earlier written to ISKCON in September to celebrate Shree Jagannath's 'Snana yatra' and Rath Yatra across the globe only on specific 'tithi' prescribed by sacred scriptures and tradition.

ISKCON has agreed to celebrate 'Snana yatra' on the prescribed tithi (Jyestha purnima) in all its temples in India and abroad, but did not agree with the decision of SJTMC to celebrate Rath Yatra in countries outside India on the tithi prescribed by scriptures.

"ISKCON GBC chairman Go-

vardhan Das, in his letter dated October 19, has informed Deb that while ISKCON has agreed to celebrate Snana-yatra on the prescribed tithi (namely, Jyestha-poornima) in all its temples within India and abroad, it is unable to agree with the decision of SJTMC to celebrate Rath Yatra in countries outside India on the tithi prescribed by scriptures and tradition...," an official release issued by the Gajapati's office said.

ISKCON said, "As far as the dates of international Rath Yatras aligning to the Puri tithi are concerned, we are faced with a number of insurmountable challenges that make it impossible to follow a similar protocol."

It said that in most countries outside India, the worship of Lord Jagannath is followed by a small minority of the population, and they are unable to obtain permission for the Rath Yatra freely.

"Most government authorities in the West will only allow

processions on weekends to avoid disruption to the commercial functioning of cities," the letter said.

"Even in the event that such permissions were granted on the desired days, majority of volunteers who facilitate the Rath Yatra and participants would be unable to participate as they have professional commitments during the week," the ISKCON said, adding that most of the temples in the western countries also do not have their own chariots, so the same chariot often travels from city to city in the region to facilitate the festival.

The ISKCON also said that due to the variation of climates, some cities of the world are in the middle of cold winters during the months in which the Yatra tithi falls.

"If Rath Yatras all over the world were somehow to be held on the same tithi, it would also deprive many devotees from attending the sacred festival in Sri Dham Jagannath Puri," the ISKCON said.

Meanwhile, the SJTMC chairperson Tuesday expressed concern over ISKCON holding Rath Yatra on different dates and again requested it to reconsider the decision.

Deb, in a letter to Das, said, "I sincerely urge you to reconsider your decision and advise ISKCON temples to celebrate Rath Yatra around the world only during the nine-day auspicious period commencing on Asadha Shukla-paksha Dvitiya Tithi in accordance with the sacred scriptures and ancient well-established tradition."

He also said that even in other major world religions, holy festivals are celebrated according to lunar calendar/dates sanctioned by sacred scriptures and tradition, whether it be Christmas or Eid-al Fitr, Wesak (Buddha Day) or Paryushan Mahaparva (Jainism), Yom Kippur celebrated by Jews or Vaisakhi celebrated by the Sikh community.



WEATHER				
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST	
/lax Temp	33.5°	31.2°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of rain or	
/lin Temp	24.1°	21.6°		
lumidity	80%	94%	thundershowers.	
≀ainfall	TRACE	39.8mm		

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Juang tribals launch efforts to reduce man-elephant conflict

Keonjhar, Oct 21: Elephant incursions into human habitats have become a daily concern across several blocks of Keon-

Herds are entering villages, damaging houses and destroying crops. Although the Forest department provides compensation, villagers say it does not cover the real losses, leading to growing friction between people and elephants.

However, in a praise-worthy initiative, members of the Juang community at Kansa village in Kodipasa panchayat under Bansapani block have mobilised and launched efforts to reduce human-elephant conflict and ensure adequate food sources for elephants.

They have started planting saplings and building small check dams on nearby hills with help from a voluntary outfit to protect themselves and the environment.

Residents of Talakansa village under Kodipasa panchayat have set an example of coexistence between humans and elephants.

Talakansa is part of Kansa village though separated by a hill. Surrounded by forests, Talakansa is home to around 31 impoverished families of Juang community. Benefits of government schemes still elude the villagers. Even the poverty alleviation scheme under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has not

Huge cache of

POST NEWS NETWORK

firecrackers seized

in month-long drive

Chhatrapur, Oct 21: Ganjam

police conducted raids across

the district and seized a mas-

sive haul of illegal firecrack-

ers possessed by the vendors

legal firecrackers worth more

than ₹91 lakh have been seized

by the cops during the oper-

ations carried out from 15th

September till 20th of this

month. A total of 138 cases

have been registered and the

same number of accused have

been served notice while two

persons have been arrested

Among all the police sta-

tions that took part in the

operation, Chhatrapur PS

reportedly seized a whopping

₹37 lakhs worth of crackers

from just five cases, arresting

Similarly, Aska police

Rest of the police stations

in the district seized an

amount of ₹33 lakhs worth

firecrackers collectively. All

the seized firecrackers have

heen destroyed adhering to

the guidelines in accordance

with the law, the police said.

that Odisha Director General

of Police (DGP) Y B Khura-

nia had issued orders to act

against illegal possession of

firecrackers and explosives

under "Operation Agni".

Worth mentioning here

2 persons.

firecrackers.

According to the reports. il-

without a valid license.



reached them.

For decades, the villagers have lived in darkness and abject poverty. Natural disasters and conflicts with wildlife are a constant. During the monsoon, rainwater rushes down three hills and floods the village, washing away houses, roads

Water sources on the hills, when dried up, force both people and wildlife to compete for water. Elephants and other wild animals often enter the village in search of water, frequently damaging houses and crops.

To address the problem, villagers recently came together and decided to build an earthen dam on top of a hill. For technical guidance, resources and environmental safeguards, they reached out to the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES), a nonprofit outfit.

With FES providing the design and support and villagers contributing labour, they built the dam at the hilltop to hold

Berhampur, Oct 21: Police

Monday detained another poli-

tician from the city in connec-

tion with the murder of advocate

of two corporators who were

earlier summoned in the case.

While one of them has been

released, the other remains in

According to sources, police

are said to have reached the

final link in the case and may

unravel the full mystery with-

in a day or two. South Range

This comes after questioning

POST NEWS NETWORK

back runoff, slow down the flow and reduce the force of floodwa

Driven by persistence, the villagers successfully completed the work. For the past five vears, despite continuous rains. the dam has protected Talakansa village from flooding. Homes, crops and infrastructure have remained safe. The water stored in the dam has also become a reliable source for elephants.

As a result, elephant incursions in the village have declined along with the flood risk, said Damodar Juang, president of the village devel opment committee. Swastik Tripathy, district team leader for FES, said the dam has dramatically reduced human-elephant conflict, protecting both people and wildlife.

Beyond the immediate environmental and safety benefits, the project has strengthened community bonds and instilled a sense of collective action among the villagers.

PITABAS PANDA MURDER

Police detain another politician

Inspector General Niti Shekhar

said the investigation is nearing

completion and that Berhampur

SP will soon brief the media on

Meanwhile, suspense con-

tinues to surround the killing,

which initially led police to

explore angles related to land

dealings, sand mining, and

business rivalries. However, the

focus shifted after investigators

reportedly uncovered evidence

of political enmity behind the

murder. Since then, police have

been interrogating one political

New fish species discovered in Bahuda estuary UTP dies in Bargarh Jail;

It is believed that the two men

figure after another.

who killed Panda and why.

Paradip port to sign MOUs worth ₹1.5 lakh crore

Bhubaneswar Oct Bringing more investments to Odisha and particularly to the port and logistics sector, Paradip Port is going to sign Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) worth ₹1.5 lakh crore at the upcoming India Maritime Week scheduled to be held in Mumbai from 27 to 31 October, port officials said.

The investments include shipbuilding, ship repair, port modernization, smart port initiatives, business development, and Green Hydrogen

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways is set to host India Maritime Week in Mumbai and the event, the largest maritime conclave in the world, will bring together over 100 maritime nations, 200

international experts, and 500 leading maritime industries, making it a premier platform for knowledge sharing, investment opportunities, and technology exchange in the maritime sector. Recently, Paradip Port was

notified as a Green Hydrogen Hub, becoming one of only three ports in India to receive this distinction, alongside Tuticorin and Kandla.

The Odisha Government will

also participate in India Maritime Week, with a dedicated session on the state's maritime development, sources said.

Odisha has already signed MoUs with Paradip Port Authority for strategic projects including the Bahuda port development and a shipbuilding centre in Kendrapara district, expected to generate significant employment and economic growth.

In addition, Odisha will

sign an MoU for the develop ment of a cruise terminal in Puri during IMW 2025, aimed at promoting maritime tourism. The first phase will fo cus on Puri, with the second phase extending the cruise terminal to Paradip within the next 2–3 years.

To create public awareness Paradip Port has launched initiatives including sand art at Paradip Beach, along with advertisements, hoardings podcasts, and social media campaigns, timed with the Diwali festivities. These ini tiatives reflect the joint commitment of the Government of Odisha, Paradip Port, and the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways to drive eco nomic development, creating employment, and promoting maritime awareness in Odis

Man loses palm in firecracker blast

Soro, Oct 21: A 36-year-old man lost his palm, and more than a dozen others, including six minors, were injured in separate firecracker explosions during Diwali celebrations in Soro of Balasore district Monday evening.

The critically injured man, identified as Babu Mohanty of Gobindapur village under Soro police limits, was lighting a firecracker when it suddenly exploded in his right palm. The powerful blast tore off his palm. leaving him grievously injured.

Local residents rushed Mohanty to the Soro community health centre. As his condition deteriorated, doctors referred

who shot Panda dead were from

the Digapahandi police limits

and not from outside the state.

The killing is described as a me-

ticulously planned operation,

allegedly involving several in-

dividuals with long-standing

political, business, and criminal

had been planning Panda's elim-

ination for the past two months.

On the night of Kumar Purnima,

October 6, locally hired killers

shot him from close range. An

influential person now in police

custody is believed to be the

mastermind behind the crime.

family alleges foul play

Bargarh: An under-trial prisoner (UTP) lodged in Bargarh District Jail died under

mysterious circumstances late Monday night. The deceased was identified as

village under Attabira police limits. Jail

38-year-old Giridhari Rohidas of Jahnanada

Sources said the conspirators

backgrounds.

him to the Balasore district headquarters hospital for advanced treatment.

The same evening, several others sustained burn injuries while lighting fireworks. The injured were identified as Muktikanta Nayak (40), Anima Raut (38), Saubhagya Jena (14),

Palai (12), Shubhrajeet S (14), Bishnuprasad Sahu (13), and Sai Rout (5).

All of them were admitted to different local hospitals for treatment. Police said most injuries resulted from mishandling or defective Chinese firecrackers.

भारतीय खेल प्राधिकरण **SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA** भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

खेल विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS (An Autonomous Body under Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports) (युवा कार्यक्रम और खेल मंत्रालय के तहत एक स्वायत्त निकाय) (Human Resources Division - II) HEAD OFFICE, GATE NO.10 (EAST GATE).

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU STADIUM, LODHI ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110003 F. No.01-04001(01)/6/2021-HO-Personnel Division

SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR THE POST OF ASSISTANT PROFESSOR (PHYSICAL **EDUCATION) ON REGULAR BASIS FOR SAI LAKSHMIBAI** NATIONAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION, KARIAVATTOM, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

SPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA (SAI) invites applications for the post of Assistant Professor (Physical Education) on a regular basis at SAI Lakshmibai National College of Physical Education, Kariavattom, Thiruvanathapuram, There are 06 posts (4 - Unreserved, 1 - OBC, 1 - EWS). Eligible Indian citizens may apply online only, submitting self-attested certificates/ documents and a passport-size photograph. The online aplication process will start on 09.10.2025 (10:00 AM) and close on 08.11.2025 (05:00 PM). The number of posts is indicative and appointments will be made based on actual workload. Qualifications will be as per UGC Regulations, 2018. SAI reserves the right to withdraw this advertisement without assigning any reason. For detailed information, eligibility criteria and online application, please visit: www.sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: MANUFACTURE AND SUPPLY OF ONE METER LONG FISH PLATES FOR 60 KG RAILS ender Value : ₹ 2,29,28,480.88, EMD @

Tender Closing Date & Time : At 1500

E-Tender is not transferrable and the same s to be submitted with DSC by the pre authorized personnel of the tenderer who are already registered in the website. The Railway deserves the Right to cance he tender or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason therefore. without assigning any reason thereof.

(1) Tender No. 40256065A

AND COMMISSIONING O AUTOMATIC TRAIN EXAMINATION Tender Value : ₹ 59,00,000.00, EMD @

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: SUPPLY AND COMMISSIONING OF THE MIN HYDRAULIC RE-RAILING EQUIPMENT SET FOR SALVAGE SPECIAL OF SAMBALPUR COACHING DEPOT AS PER ANNEXURE-I. MAKE - BEMCO OR SIMILAR.

At 1100 hrs. of 17.11.2025 (for Tend

Sr. Divisional Materials Manager

यूनियन बैंक (🎧 Union Bank

Regional Office: Sambalpur 1st Floor, Balaji Midtown, Budharaja, Sambalpur- 768004, Dist.: Sambalpur, Odisha

GOLD AUCTION

This is to inform the public that inspite of repeated reminders the following gold loan borrowers have not repaid their loans. If they do not repay their outstanding debts before the auction, their gold ornaments we hold as collateral will be auctioned to the premises of our Concerned Branch on 29.10.2025 at 11.00 A.M. The Bank will not be liable for any inconvenience or loss to the borrowers and the Bank will take legal action against them if the Bank loses where necessary. Borrowers car

take their Jewellery by repaying the outstanding debts before the auction take place. Outstanding Amount | Net Weight Name & Address of Borrowers / A/c. No. + interest thereon (in Gram) AMBAGAON BRANCH (45560)

026ROU, Ambagaon Branch, D-63, 1st Floor, Koel Nagar, Rourkela, Dist.: Sundergarh-769014, Mob No.: 6287381836 Sunil Navak, H No.: PVM 66, Jagda, Jhirpani, Rourkela 42, Dist. **DUNGURIPALI BRANCH (28711** At/PO: Dunguripali, Dist.: Subarnapur, Odisha-767023, Mob No.: 9861018140 Pratap Keshari Barik, S/o: Girija Prasad Barik, At: Gadhapali, ₹1.45.138/-PO: Tamamura, Dunguripali, Sonepur, Odisha - 767023 /

SUNDARGARH BRANCH (71780) Megha Mallahar Building, Hospital Road, (Mission Road), Sundargarh - 770001, Mob No.: 6396700439/7064310666 Rebati Behera, At: Gailo, PO: Ranpur, PS: Jalsar, Sundargarh

Odisha - 770014 / 717806540000129 Md. Wasim, Dengibhad, Rajgangpur, Odisha - 770001 2. 717806540000065

Near Income Tax Office, Opp. Vishal Mega Mart, Dist.: Jharsuguda- 768201, Mob: 9584210718

Sunita Prajapati, W/o: Kailash Prajapati, Malipada, Ward No.: 4, ₹1,09,472/-Dist.: Jharsuguda-768201 / 354006540000169 Ujagar Seth, S/o: Sri Bichana Seth, At/PO: Sahaspur, PS: Laikera. ₹7,307.60 1.97 ist.: Jharsuguda - 768215 / 354006540000118 interest thereon Arati Nayak, D/o: Late Ugresan Naik, At: Khontamal, PO: Sudung 2.25 PS: Laikera, Dist.: Jharsuguda-768215 / 354006540000121

IG MARKET BRANCH (551)

Daily Market, Main Road, Burla, Odisha - 768017, Mob: 7018507342

Mana Chhatria, S/o: Biswanath Chhatria, Dindayal Nagar ₹35.937/-Dhipapada, Burla - 768017 / 005516540001267 + interest thereo Ranjit Singh, S/o: Surenderjit Singh, At: Contractors Colony, Burla PO/PS: Burla - 768017 / 005516540001026 - interest thereo

Person willing to participate in the auction should obey the following rules:

Person willing to participate in the auction must deposit Rs.1,000/- in the form of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) two hours before the scheduled auction time. After depositing the EMD, person who willing to participate in the auction can inspect the ornaments

The person who make the highest offer shall have to deposit 25% of the said offer immediately in the Bank. After making the highest offer, if the person unable to deposit the 25% of the said offer, then his EMD will be forfeited and that person will not be allowed to participate in the

auction process further. Auction for another account will begin only after the auction and amount deposit of one

account have been completed. The Bank is not completed to accept any auction calls. The Bank may cancel the auction

without assigning any reason therefor.

The person whose highest bid will be accepted by the Branch Office of the Union Bank of India will be compelled to deposit the remaining 75% of the auction amount within 3 days of receiving the notice of confirmation of the auction. Otherwise 25% of the deposited amount

and the EMD deposit will be forfeited. If Union Bank of India, Branch Office cancel/postpone any higher Bid, then the 25% deposited amount, EMD amount will refunded to the depositor without any interest.

Union Bank of India will not held responsible in any manner for the quality, wieght and purity

of the ornaments pledged for auction.

Bank will forfeit the EMD Deposit Amount if any person does not obey the above rules Place: Sambalpur, Date: 21.10.2025 Authorised Officer, Union Bank of India

seized ₹14 lakhs worth of firecrackers from 9 cases. fish species in the Bahuda estuary in Ganjam district, a Bhanjanagar PS apprehended more than ₹7 lakhs worth of

Berhampur, Oct 21: A team of researchers from the Estuarine Biology Regional Centre of the Zoological Survey of India have discovered a new report said. The newly identified spe-

POST NEWS NETWORK

cies has been named 'Pseudorhombus bahudaensis'. It bears close resemblance to 'Pseudorhombus arsius', commonly known as the Gangetic largetooth flounder. According to Dr Anil Mo-

hapatra, the discovery was confirmed through advanced DNA barcoding and phylogenetic analysis. He said 'Pseudorhombus arsius' and 'Pseudorhombus bahudaensis' diverged around 17 million years ago but appear almost identi-



cal in external morphology. Researcher, Suvendu Sekhar Mishra said, the species was first found in the Bahuda estuary along the Odisha-Andhra border and later observed in Penthakata in Puri district. Scientists believe the species may be widespread across the

Indo-Pacific region.

The research team included Smrutirekha Acharya, Rajesh Kumar Behera, Swarup Ranjan Mohanty, Dipanjan Ray, Seshadev Patra, Suvendu Sekhar Mishra and Anil Mo-

officials claimed Rohidas died by suicide. According to Jail Superintendent Salman Kujur, he was lodged in Cell No. 8 and was found unconscious around midnight. The jail doctor declared him dead. Kujur said CCTV footage showed Rohidas biting an

inverter wire while holding an iron bar, sug-gesting electrocution and apparent suicide. "The cause of death will be clear after the post-mortem report," he said. Bargarh Town police registered an unnatural death case and sent the body for autopsy. Rohidas, arrested in a POCSO case, had been in jail since August 20. His next hearing was due October 30. His lawyer, Sitaram Meher, demanded a judicial inquiry, saying only a detailed probe could reveal the truth. However, Rohidas' wife dismissed suicide claims. She said he was "completely normal" during her visit Friday and was to be released next month. "He was not someone who would end his life. I only want justice," she said tearfully. Police said the investigation would continue after receiving

Sex racket busted in Keonjhar; 6 held

Keonjhar, Oct 21: The district police here Monday busted a sex racket operating from a three-storied building at Gobindpur village under Town police limits as it arrested six persons including a woman and rescued five other women.

The accused have been identified as Banarani Barik, Firoz Ahmed and Manoj Behera of Joda. Abhishek Behera of Naranpur village, Pankaj Nayak and Narayan Mohapatra of Turumunga area. Out of the six, one was the house owner, two were pimps and other three were customers, the police said.

During raid, a woman from Jharkhand, two women from



Baripada and one each from Balasore and Jagatsinghpur districts were also rescued by the police. Two bikes, and various objectionable materials were seized from the house too.

Police recorded the statements of the rescued women and conducted a medical exam-

ination on them as well as on the accused persons after registration of a case. Later, the accused were produced in the court and remanded to judicial custody after the magistrate rejected their bail pleas, Town police IIC Srikant Sahu said.

Police said that the break-

through came after a tip off alerted them about a sex racket operating from the three storied building at Gobindpur village under Town police limits.

Police revealed that Banarani was the queen bee and was arrested a few years ago on the same charge from a rented house in Keonjhar town. Later, she constructed a three storied building at Gobindpur village and continued bringing women from outside and engage them in sex work.

Residents have demanded police to intensify its raids as such illegal activities are being reported from residential houses and hotels in the town. Further investigations are underway, the IIC said.



Our life should be governed by the love for the Truth and the thirst for Light





Behold Gen Z

new wave of political movements without any so-called ideological underpinning except for deafeningly noisy demands for basic citizen's needs and livelihoods is sweeping across the world from the Andes to the Himalayas. After Nepal, the Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Kenya, Peru and Morocco, it is the turn of the Gen Z of Madagascar to erupt in protest against corruption and nepotism by the ruling regime, forcing its President Andry Rajoelina to flee the country. The political contagion is spreading fast, engulfing one country after another from Asia to Africa. Gen Z, which is the first generation to have grown up in the age of the internet, is at the forefront of anti-government protests in several countries in the Global South. They appear to be part of a broad movement throwing conventional politics out of gear from Nepal in early September. The latest manifestation of this form of social unrest is in the African island country of Madagascar. These movements are driven by tech savvy youngsters who are rebelling against inequality, corruption at high offices, nepotism and criminal neglect of bread and butter issues of the common man.

Madagascar's protest movement began on social media under the banner "Gen Z Madagascar." This is an informal group composed mainly of young people and students who claim to be peaceful and civic-minded. Though young people represent the overwhelming majority of the country's population, two-thirds were under 30 in 2023 – Gen Z has never before taken such an active part in the political protest movement there. This is unprecedented and marked by its spontaneous and decentralized nature. While past mobilisations were led or co-opted by political parties, unions or charismatic figures, this one stems from collective outrage, mainly in digital spaces and grows without a single leader. This is its speciality-giving it a new symbolic power because it does not aim to seize power, but is propelled by the demand for a livable future. The movement has overthrown two regimes - in Nepal and Madagascar. Perhaps it is no coincidence, but an inevitable consequence of eruption of the wrath of the youth that both the Prime Minister of Nepal KP Sharma Oli and Madagascar President Rajoelina have had to flee their respective countries to escape the fury of youth.

The most telling example cited by the protesters of Madagascar in their online pages is the image of the eldest member of the Rajoelina family, who graduated from a Swiss hotel school costing 150,000 per year, while two-thirds of Madagascar's population live on less than two dollars a day. Wasteful public spending is a common theme motivating the young protesters in all the countries witnessing the novel phenomenon. In Madagascar, the costly Antananarivo cable car – one of the government's key infrastructure projects deemed completely unsuited to the needs of the population - has triggered the movement of the youth.

In Morocco, protesters are focusing on the huge sums spent on renovating several football stadiums for the Africa Cup of Nations and the 2030 World Cup. The Gen Z of the country argues the huge funds could have gone to public services such as education and healthcare.

Gen Z may not yet have a formalised political agenda. But it has already changed political discourse. The central theme of the new political debate is no longer on the question of surviving in a failing system, but of radically transforming it. This does not appear to be a passing revolt, but a profound generational change. The young Gen Z protesters do not seem to care for any "ism" that falls into disuse after some time. They are bringing up issues of basic needs and services such as food, shelter, clothing, education and health services while fighting against corruption and systemic rot. Any attempt by established political parties to capture power by promising to cater to those needs only to amass wealth for themselves, their kith and kin and cronies is being resisted with force that sometimes

Politicians across the globe are put on notice now by Gen Z which has turned the world into a village with their digital reach. Perform or perish – a mantra of the exploitative corporate world - is emerging as a slogan for this brand of youth politics. The absence of a leader or political organization and a fixed agenda could be its main strength and not weakness.

WISDOM CORNER

Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it

CHARLES R. SWINDOLL

The best revenge is massive success

FRANK SINATRA

If we're growing, we're always going to be out of our comfort zone

JOHN C. MAXWEL

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1797: André-Jacques Garnerin, an inspector in the French army who encouraged the use of balloons for military purposes, made a balloon ascent in order to give his first exhibition of parachuting, when he jumped from a height of about 3,200 feet.
- 1879: Thomas Edison successfully tests an incandescent light bulb. After about a year of research on creating a working incandescent lamp, Edison was finally able to run a lamp continuously for over 13 hours. The lamp used a carbon filament, for which he was granted a patent in 1880.
- 1884: International Meridian Conference Adopts Greenwich, England as initial longitudinal meridian. 26 countries participated in the conference which was held in Washington, D.C. In addition to making the meridian passing through the Observatory of Greenwich as the initial meridian for longitude or 0 degree longitude, the conference also defined a universal day which would "begin for all the world at the moment of mean midnight at the initial meridian, coinciding with the beginning of the civil day and date of that meridian; and is to be counted from zero up to twenty-four hours".
- 1962: On this day in 1962, President John F. Kennedy alerted Americans to the Cuban missile crisis, declaring a naval blockade to prevent further missile shipments to the island country 90 miles (145 km) off the coast of the U.S.
- 1964: French philosopher and writer Jean-Paul Sartre was announced the winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature; however, he became the first person to decline the award.

FOCUS ENERGY

POWERING THE AI RACE

global AI race will be decided not by algorithms or chips, but by electricity – and that puts China at a distinct advantage. While Western tech giants are emphasising closed, capital-intensive models that demand enormous computing power, China is embracing open-source AI and massively expanding its renewableand nuclear-energy capacity, thereby positioning itself to deploy powerful AI technologies at scale without breaking the bank.

These differences reflect a more fundamental split. Whereas the United States and its allies have treated AI as a proprietary technology, China has approached it as public infrastructure, building an open AI ecosystem that reflects the same philosophy it applied to manufacturing: broad adoption, fast iteration, and relentless cost reduction. Chinese open-source models like Deep-Seek, Qwen, and Kimi are not just scientific achievements; they are strategic instruments designed for participation, and they are transforming the economics of AI.

Jeffrey Wu

THE SAME

DYNAMIC THAT

ONCE POWERED

THE COAL AGE

NOW DRIVES

THE DIGITAL

DeepSeek's latest version reportedly matches the capabilities of frontier systems, like those being developed by US companies, at a fraction of their compute cost. Qwen and Kimi's API prices have fallen by orders of magnitude. In purely economic terms, the marginal cost of "thought" is collapsing. The inference costs of some Chinese models are a tenth or less of those incurred by OpenAI's GPT-4.

The cheaper AI becomes, however, the more of it the world consumes, with each token saved inviting a thousand more to be generated. The same dynamic that once powered the coal age now drives the digital one. In China, this is by design: low inference costs, together with the open weights of Chinese models, are intended to invite experimentation across universities,



Two centuries ago, the steam engine converted heat into motion – and remade the global economy. Today, AI is transforming electricity into cognition, and whoever masters both will again rewrite the rules of progress

startups, and local governments. But all that activity requires energy: the International Energy Agency expects global electricity consumption from data centers to double by 2030 (from 2024 levels), driven largely by AI workloads. Training GPT-4 alone likely consumed millions of kilowatt-hours – enough to power San Francisco for three days.

What once was a contest of algorithms is fast becoming a contest of kilowatts, and China is setting itself up to win. In 2024, the country added 356 gigawatts of renewable-energy capacity - more than the US. the European Union, and India combined - with 91 per cent of all new generation coming from solar, wind, and hydro. Battery storage tripled from 2021 levels, and an ultra-high-voltage grid now carries clean power thousands of miles, from deserts to data hubs.

China is also investing heavily in nuclear energy. According to the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, its nuclear research and development spending is roughly five times higher than that of the US. As its fourth-generation reactors and small modular designs advance from pilot to deployment, nuclear energy is quietly providing the baseload power that intermittent renewables cannot.

This combination of open AI

models, cheap renewables, and a stable supply of nuclear power forms what might be called an energy-compute flywheel: more clean power enables more compute, which in turn optimizes the grid. Already, machine-learning systems are predicting solar output, managing energy storage, and balancing load across China's vast power network in real time. The result is a reorganisation of industry, as the traditional boundaries between energy, semiconductors, and software vanish. Data centers are the new power plants: GPUs are the new turbines. China is not merely electrifying its industry: it is electrifying its intelligence.

Beyond strengthening its own clean-energy grid, China is exporting the building blocks of the world's new energy system. Its clean-tech exports – including solar panels, grid batteries, and electric vehicles – hit a record \$20 billion this past August, overtaking its consumer-electronics shipments from a decade earlier. Even if the West exports chips and software, it is China that is producing the electrons that make them useful.

Meanwhile, the West's energy constraints – aging grids, slow permitting processes, and high prices – are creating digital bottlenecks. In the US and elsewhere, data-center expansion is increasingly limited by

access to a reliable supply of electricity. Some jurisdictions – such as Virginia and Dublin – face moratoria on new data centers

Industrial revolutions have always favoured the societies that could convert energy into productivity most efficiently. In the 19th century, coal was the key to empire. In the 20th, oil was king. And in the 21st, it will be clean power paired with compute. Whoever commands the cheapest electrons will command the cheapest intelligence – and enjoy growing abundance on both fronts.

China is currently positioning itself to occupy this coveted position, thanks to a systemic alignment of investment and incentives that democracies would find difficult to replicate quickly. But it is not the only country that stands to gain from its success. For emerging economies that have long been priced out of high-performance computing, open-weight models and falling energy costs could make AI accessible and even essential, much like electricity or broadband.

But abundance does not guarantee stability. Without sufficient investment in clean-energy generation and storage, surging energy demand for AI could strain grids and undermine progress on decarbonisation. Like in the industrial age, efficiency could lead to excess, and progress could be accompanied by growing imbalances. Managing the tension between abundance and restraint will determine whether AI becomes a tool of empowerment

Two centuries ago, the steam engine converted heat into motion – and remade the global economy. Today, AI is transforming electricity into cognition, and whoever masters both will again rewrite the rules of progress.

or a new driver of inequality.

The writer is Director at Mind Works Capital.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Better be in good shape for some jobs



Melvin Durai

WHETHER
YOU LIVE IN
AMERICA, INDIA
OR ANY OTHER
COUNTRY, BEING
'ATHLETICALLY
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PROBABLY
DISQUALIFY YOU
FROM MOST JOBS
IN THE MILITARY,
POLICE FORCE OR
BORDER PATROL

s you may have heard, US President Donald Trump wants to double the number of people working for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), hoping to deport millions of undocumented immigrants. But this plan is running into a snag: many of the job seekers interested in working for ICE and rounding up immigrants aren't in good enough shape. They've been deemed "athletically allergic."

Whether you live in America, India or any other country, being "athletically allergic" will probably disqualify you from most jobs in the military, police force or border patrol. The Indian Army, for example, requires young male recruits to run 1.6 km (or one mile) in under 5 minutes 45 seconds

under 5 minutes 45 seconds.

The fastest I've ever run a mile is 6 minutes and 40 seconds. I was in my twenties then and if I had applied to join the Indian Army, the recruitment officer would have

laughed in my face.

Officer: "Please keep training. Don't give up."
Me: "So you think I have a

chance in the future?"
Officer: "Yes, there is a chance, during a time of war,

that we might allow slow people to join."
Running 1.6 km is not the only physical requirement for the Indian Army Agniveer

for the Indian Army Agniveer physical test. Recruits must also be able to do a minimum of six pull-ups, jump across a nine-foot ditch and complete a zig-zag balance test. The ditch test itself would cause me to ditch my army aspirations.

The physical requirements

The physical requirements for ICE do not seem quite as rigorous, yet they're proving to be a stumbling block. More than a third of new recruits at ICE's training academy in Georgia have failed the personal-fitness test, according to a report by Nick Miroff in The Atlantic magazine.

To pass the test, recruits must do 15 push-ups and 32

sit-ups, and run 1.5 miles in 14 minutes.

I can do the run in 14 minutes, but doing all those pushups and sit-ups would probably give me a heart attack.

According to Miroff, an email from ICE headquarters to the agency's top officials on 5 October complained that "a considerable amount of athletically allergic candidates" had been turning up to the training academy. These candidates had "misrepresented" their fitness level on application forms. You might say that they lied, but it's easy to assume that you can do something -- until vou're actually asked to do it. That's not lying -- that's believing too much in yourself.

Imagine that you're a fivefoot-six man who weighs 90kg. Applying for an ICE job, you respond "yes" when asked if you can do 15 push-ups and 32 sit-ups, and run 1.5 miles in 14 minutes. You don't think of it as lying, because you tell yourself that you'll go on a diet and begin training tomorrow. Never mind that you haven't done a single push-up or sit-up in your life. And the only time you've done any running is when the neighbor's dog was loose.

The email from ICE headquarters told officials to give recruits preliminary fitness exams at agency offices, screening them to ensure that those who show up at the academy do not look like they just left China Buffet.

New hires are expected to wear sneakers (or trainers) on their first day, allowing them to do sit-ups and push-ups in the often-crowded offices. Timing them as they run 1.5 miles is more of a challenge, an ICE official told Miroff.

Those who pass the preliminary fitness test get to try the real test at the training academy. Those who fail may be offered an administrative position in an office, perhaps a position that involves administering a preliminary fitness exam to new hires.

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, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate,
Bhubaneswar-751010

Pending cases

Sir, There are about 18 lakh pending criminals cases in the High Courts (HCs). In January, the Supreme Court (SC) had permitted HCs to appoint ad hoc judges not exceeding 10 per cent of the respective HC's sanctioned strength. It had also mandated that ad hoc judges could not be appointed if the particular HC was already working with 80 per cent of its strength. Recently, the top court relaxed the 80 per cent rule because none of the country's 25 HCs have reportedly sent names for ad hoc judges. Retired judges would bring experience and talent. Moreover, Article 224A of the Constitution of India is unambiguous over the issue. The Centre and the SC should hasten the procedure for appointment of ad hoc judges keeping in mind the interests of harrowed litigants.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Dismal show

Sir, India ranks near the bottom of the global list of systems that ensure a minimum income after retirement. India has been ranked D on the Global Pension Index-2025, which was created by US institutions Mercer and CFA Institute and includes countries such as the Philippines and Thailand. In contrast, the Netherlands, Iceland, Singapore, Denmark, and other countries have topped the list. The index was intended to assess the pension system's adequacy, sustainability, and creditworthiness. India scored 43.8 out of a possible 100 points. According to reports, pension-related benefits are insufficient to meet individual demands in this country. The Indian system has likewise been deemed inadequate in terms of sustainability. Due to the population increase the current pension system will put further burden on the treasury in the future. In terms of credibility, the Indian system has fared slightly better. However, when compared to the greatest systems in the world for pension system operation, transparency, and regulation, India's image suffers. According to the survey, the number of elderly individuals in India's is increasing. The conditions in India are unacceptable in terms of providing significant financial aid to those folks. In today's world, an adequate and convenient pension system is essential for the elderly to live a dignified life. *Abhijit Roy*, JAMSHEDPUR



TWO STATES





Paddy harvest resumes in Meghalaya

In a display of solidarity, villagers from Lakaroi, predominantly Karbis, came forward Tuesday to assist the Pnar villagers of Lapangap in harvesting paddy, which had been stalled since violence erupted October 9

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lapangap, Oct 21: The standoff over paddy harvesting at Lapangap village along the Assam-Meghalaya border in West Jaintia Hills district has been resolved, with farmers resuming work Tuesday under tight security, officials said.

breakthrough achieved under the joint initiative of Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma, the Chief Executive Member (CEM) of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council (KAAC), and traditional leaders, who intervened to defuse tensions between the two communities, they said.

In a display of solidarity, villagers from Lakaroi, predominantly Karbis, came forward Tuesday to assist the Pnar villagers of Lapangap in har-



vesting paddy, which had been stalled since violence erupted

Over 60 families have paddy fields between Lapangap and Tapat, the officials said.

"The situation has returned to normal. Harvesting will begin in the major portions from tomorrow under adequate security arrangements from both states," a senior official

told PTI. Tensions escalated October 9 when residents of neighbouring Tapat village in Assam's Karbi Anglong district allegedly stopped Lapangap farmers from harvesting paddy in a disputed field located between the two villages.

Violence during the protest led to the death of one person from Tapat. A night curfew from 6 pm to 10 am, which was imposed in Lapangap village following the unrest October 9, is still in force, the official said.

Authorities said the halt in paddy harvest affected the livelihoods of farmers, and welcomed the cooperation shown by both communities.

According to senior Home Department officials, security personnel remain deployed in and around the agricultural fields in the area to prevent any untoward incident.

EMPOWERING GIRLS VIA FOOTBALL

Inspiring journey of Granny Laibi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Oct 21: Nirmala Phanjoubam, who is part of the Indian women's football team that would engage in a friendly match with Iran marking the commencement of Tri-Nation Cup in Shillong Tuesday, thanked her mentor 'Ebo' (grandmother) Laibi for supporting her and other girls in playing the beautiful game.

Despite having no prior experience in managing a football club, Laibi Phanjoubam dedicated her life for the last 30 vears to training local women from the Loi Scheduled Caste community in Andro, around an hour's drive from Imphal, in the game to wean them away from insurgency. She established Andro Mahila Mandal Association Football Club (AMMA FC) in 1993.

Standing barely four-feettall, Laibi, now 65 years old, said that her efforts have not only managed to prevent women from joining militancy in Andro, which was a hotbed in the early nineties, but also produced professional players who went on to represent the state and the country, like Nirmala.

Speaking to PTI, Nirmala said, "I have fond memories of 'Ebo' (grandmother) Laibi... We used to stay at her residence as well as the club during my time in the club from 2015 to 2020. She is more than a mentor... we could share all our personal issues with her.'

Nirmala, who plays in a Tamil Nadu-based club, was also recently part of Manipur state team that won the 30th senior women's football championship in Chhattisgarh.

Laibi has been pouring her energy, money and time to run AMMA FC, giving women a chance to play the game outside the boundaries of Andro, a village of 1,000 people (as per Census 2011).

Speaking to PTI, Laibi said 'During the 90s, there was widespread political unrest in our village and many of our youth were tempted to join the insurgency movement. The club was raised to veer the young girls into sports, make them healthy, self-reliant and successful in the field.'

"The biggest challenge in running the club has been lack of financial support. In the be ginning, we used to hold charity shows and local programmes to raise funds. Now, we are to trying to keep afloat the club by contributing in whatever per sonal capacity we can. Andro Mahila Mandal has also tak en up equal responsibility to run the club," Laibi, a retired school teacher, said.

The club has been affiliated to All Manipur Football Associ ation since 1999 and currently trains junior girls.

Kerala CM backs new market amid protests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kozhikode (Kerala), Oct 21: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Tuesday said that the 'new Palayam market' at Kalluthan Kadavu here will take the commercial sector in Kozhikode to new heights, even as a large group of traders and labourers protested against it.

Vijavan made the statement after inaugurating the new market.

Ahead of the inauguration, hundreds of traders and labourers protested at the site of the 'old Palavam market' against it being shifted to the new lo-

In his inaugural address, the CM questioned why such a good project was being rejected by a certain group of people.

Terming the new market as a "dream project", Vijayan said it was spread over an area of three-and-a-half lakh square feet with ample facilities for vehicle parking and hundreds

He said that it was implemented as a PPP model at a cost of about Rs 100 crore

His office also put up a post about it on social media platform 'X', saying, "a new chapter begins in Kozhikode's commercial growth with the opening of the new Palayam market complex at Kalluthan Kadavu."

"CM @pinaravivijavan inaugurated the Rs 100 crore project. developed under the PPP model with modern facilities and space for hundreds of shops.'

While the protestors claimed that the size of shops are small at the new complex and it is located away from bus transport facilities, CPI(M) affiliated traders organisations supported the shifting of the market to the new location. The CPI(M) affiliated traders

carried out a rally to the new location -- at Kalluthankadavu here -- which they termed as modern and spacious with a lot of facilities.

They have also claimed that the shifting to the new location would also help address the traffic congestion problems at the Palayam market, which is in the heart of Kozhikode city.

The Left-backed traders further said that there are over 300 shops available at the new location, while only half of those were there at Palayam.

Kerala orders unified shift system for private hospital employees



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 21: The Kerala government has issued an order to implement a unified shift system for all categories of employees, including nurses, in private hospitals in the state, irrespective of the number of beds.

The order, issued by the Department of Employment and Skills, is expected to be a solace to hundreds of workers in the private health sector.

The order, dated October 18, was issued amending a previous order allowing the implementation of the 3-shift system for employees of private hospitals with more than 100 beds in

A copy of the order was shared with the media Tuesday.

Based on the recommendation of the Veerakamar Committee and the recommendation and suggestions of the Private Hospital Industry Liaison Committee, an order was issued in 2021 making all categories of employees in private hospitals with more than 100 beds in the state entitled to a three-shift system (6/6/12 hours).

As per the order, they are also entitled to an overtime allowance for work exceeding eight hours per day, 48 hours per week, or 208 hours per month.

The order also emphasised providing restroom facilities at the hospital for employees who lack transport to reach home.

In response to opinions from sector representatives, the government has issued a fresh order expanding the scope of the rule. It now applies to "all categories of employees in private hospitals in the state," rather than only to those in hospitals



CPI leader Pannian Ravindran speaks during a meeting organised by members of the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) pensioners organisation, amid their protest over delayed pension payments, in Thiruvananthapuram, Tuesday

NE witnesses loss of forest cover rapidly

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 21: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has been urged to take a "holistic" approach to tackle the alarming loss of forest cover in the northeast region.

In a report filed before the green tribunal, Amicus Curiae Dhruv Tamta suggested the formation of a joint committee of the Ministry of Environment. Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&:CC), the Survey of India, and state forest departments to address inter-state border encroachments.

Advocate Tamta added that "protecting and expanding our forests isn't just a policy goal; it's about securing our future".

He called for using "satellites and AI to monitor forest health in real time" and empowering local communities through joint forest management (JFM) and eco-tourism initiatives.

The report proposed the development of a policy frame-

work that partners with local councils to effectively manage unclassed state forests (USF),

ensuring that local insights drive decision-making In addition, the introduction of Ecological Impact Assessments (EIA) for largescale monoculture plantations will help safeguard biodiversity and promote

responsible land use Further, it suggested strong audit mechanisms for compensatory afforestation projects focusing on "survival rates, native species, and ecological functionality" and promotion of agroforestry models that blend "smarter farming with healthier forests"

The Amicus Curiae concluded that conservation must be "a community effort rooted in empowerment and technology", aligning with India's National Forest Policy target of achieving 33 per cent forest cover nationwide and 66 per cent in hilly regions.

The suo motu proceedings emanated from a news report titled "Assam's forests shrink by 83.92 sq. km in just two years" citing the 2023 India State of Forest Report (ISFR) report, which showed that the northeastern region collectively lost 327.30 sq. km of forest cover, with Assam contributing 83.92 sq. km of that loss.

In its affidavit, the Assam government acknowledged the ISFR finding but argued that the loss was overstated, citing a decadal gain of 748.65 sg. km in forest cover since 2013. It attributed recent declines to jhum cultivation in unclassed state forests, where the Forest Department has "no administrative control", as well as to inter-state encroachment from Mizoram.

The Assam government concluded that since over 10,000 hectares of forest area cleared of encroachment are yet to regenerate, the "actual forest loss is very minimal or non-existent"

Similarly, Mizoram stated that between 2001 and 2023, its forest cover had increased from 17,494 sq. km (82.98 per cent of its geographical area) to 17,990.46 sq. km (85.34 per cent). It credited the increase to the Green Mizoram Programme, CAMPA, and the National Afforestation Programme, emphasising that forest areas lost due to development were being offset by compensatory

Red alert in tive districts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 21: Heavy rains, triggered by the northeast monsoon, continued to batter the high ranges of Kerala Tuesday, flooding

low-lying areas across the state. Most districts experienced overcast skies and intermittent rainfall throughout the day. The high ranges of Thiruvananthapuram, Kannur, Kozhikode, and the hill district of Idukki received widespread

downpours The Indian Meteorological Department issued an 'orange alert', forecasting very heavy rainfall in Idukki, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, and Malap

puram for the day. Authorities declared a holiday for educational institutions in Idukki, Palakkad, and Malappuram on Wednesday, ahead of a 'red alert' predicting "extremely heavy rainfall" in

these districts The holiday applies to madrassas, anganwadis, and tuition centres in Malappuram. In Palakkad, residential schools colleges, and Navodaya institutions are exempted, officials said. In view of the 'red alert' all water-based recreational activities in Idukki, including boating, kayaking, and rafting as well as tourism initiatives in disaster-prone areas, have been suspended. Trekking and oth er adventure activities in hilly regions prone to landslides or mudslides must also remain suspended until the alert is lifted, authorities added.

District collector Dinesan Cheruvat further banned all quarrying and soil excavation activities, except those related to disaster management opera tions, a statement said.

Urkhul district awaits NSCN(IM) chief homecoming after 50 years PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ly to stay in Somdal village for Muivah will head to his native The Naga leader had attempt-

Ukhrul/Imphal, Oct 21: People of Somdal village in Manito welcome NSCN(IM) supremo Th Muivah as he is scheduled to visit his birthplace October 22 after a gap of 50 years, officials

said Tuesday. Locals have put up posters in the village to welcome the 91-year-old Naga leader, who left the place more than five decades ago to join the insurgency, they said.

The Naga leader, who is the principal negotiator in the Naga peace talks with the Centre. since the NSCN (IM) entered into a ceasefire in 1997, is likea week before departing for Dimapur, an official said

His proposed visit comes at a time when Manipur is battered by ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo groups since May 2023. More than 260 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in the strife.

Authorities in the Tangkhul Naga-majority village, student bodies, civil society organisations, as well as the church, are making coordinated efforts to make Muivah's visit a success, he said.

Several hoardings have been put up in the Ukhrul district headquarters and Tangkhul Naga-majority Somdal village



to welcome the Naga leader. Tangkhul Naga is the largest Naga tribe in Manipur.

'Muivah is scheduled to arrive at Ukhrul district headquarters on Wednesday by a

helicopter from Nagaland's Dimapur and will be welcomed by Tangkhul Naga people in traditional attire," the official said.

After the programme at the Ukhrul district headquarters, village by road, he said.

The Naga people are excited and looking forward to the historic homecoming of Muivah, according to a local official.

'Unlike in 2010 when Muivah's planned visit to Ukhrul district was strongly objected to by the Manipur government and sections of communities, there is no objection this time. Various organisations from non-Naga communities have welcomed his proposed visit,' a Naga civil society leader said.

Local volunteers are also working in close coordination to ensure that no untoward incident occurs during Muivah's proposed visit.

ed to visit his native village in 2010. However, the then Congress government in Manipur, headed by Okram Ibobi Singh, prevented him from entering the state, leading to protests by Nagas.

Police forces were deployed along the Manipur-Nagaland inter-state boundary to prevent Muivah from entering the state. Born in 1934. Muivah's name is synonymous with the contemporary Naga political movement, and he is one of the most influential Naga leaders.

Several organisations from Kuki. Zomi and Meitei communities in Manipur have welcomed Muivah's proposed visit.

national



I was speaking to officials, including **Chief Commissioner of the Greater Bengaluru Authority Maheshwar Rao and Addi**tional Chief Secretary to the **Government, Urban Development Department Tushar** Girinath. Within a week, potholes should be filled

SIDDARAMAIAH KARNATAKA CM

BENGAL: AIR QUALITY 'POOR' IN KOLKATA AFTER KALI PUJA

The air quality in Kolkata remained 'poor' Tuesday due to the bursting of firecrackers on Kali Puja the previous night. Environmentalists alleged that particulate matters hung in the air after firecrackers were burst beyond the permissible hours of 8 pm to 10 pm till midnight across the metropolis, flouting guidelines issued by the West Bengal Pollution Control Board (WBPCB) and police



to adopt modern technology to deal with those involved in spreading a fabricated narrative. Through new innovations and by using smart technologies, we can make police more capable

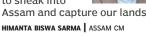
MANOJ SINHA | J&K LT GOVERNOF

Encouraged to learn that Japanese universities are increasingly offering **English-medium** courses and that the education



and the 8th wonder is illegal infiltrators trying to sneak into





sector in Japan is opening up for greater global collaboration

SHORT **TAKES**

Speeding bus hits bike; 3 riders killed

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP): Three men died after their motorcycle was hit by a speeding bus near Mohammadpur Tajpur village in Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri, police said Tuesday. The incident occurred Monday evening, they said. Shahjahanpur district residents Guddu (45), Sant Ram (50) and Harpal (30) from Lakhimpur Kheri were going somewhere on a motorcycle when a speeding bus hit the twowheeler near Mohammadpur Tajpur, a village bordering Shahjahanpur district. The bus was on its way to Shahjahanpur from Mohammadi town.

School staff booked for beating student

Bangalore: Police said they have registered a case against a private school here after a beaten and confined in a room by school authorities. According to police, the incident took place at a school in Sunkadakatte, Magadi Road, October 14. The boy's mother alleged that principal Rakesh Kumar and teacher Chandrika assaulted her son with a PVC pipe and locked him in a room until late evening.

Farmer suicide: Cong, **BJP stage agitation**

Palakkad (Kerala): Congress and BJP workers Tuesday staged protests in front of the mini civil station at Agali here over the death of a farmer, who died by suicide on his agricultural land in north Kerala. The protesters alleged that procedural lapses and delays by revenue officials in providing the thandaper (land record number) for his farmland, despite repeated visits to the village office, forced Krishnaswamv, the farmer, to take the extreme step.

Bihar elections: Cash, liquor seized

New Delhi: Enforcement agencies have seized cash, drugs, liquor and precious metals worth over Rs 71 crore in Bihar since the announcement of the assembly polls, the Election Commission said Tuesday. Bihar has been a dry state since 2016, when alcohol was banned. The EC said that as on October 21 (today), over Rs 71.32 crore worth of cash, liquor, drugs, precious metals and other freebies have been seized through a coordinated approach involving multienforcement agencies across different states and Union territories.

Former Punjab DGP, wife booked over son's death; SIT formed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh/Patiala, Oct 21: Punjab's former director general of police Mohammad Mustafa and his wife Razia Sultana, a former state minister, have been booked in connection with the death of their 35-year-old son in Panchkula, the Haryana Police said Tuesday.

Aqil Akhter, an advocate, was found dead at his residence in Haryana's Panchkula October 16. Also booked in the case are Akhter's wife and sister. The FIR was registered October 20 under Sections 103 (1) and 61 that deal with murder and criminal conspiracy charges, after a man named Shamshuddin filed a complaint and alleged foul play in the death, saying Akhter died under "suspicious circumstances", the police said. They have been booked based on the Shamshuddin's complaint which alleged that Akhter had recorded a video levelling serious allegations against his family, officials said, adding a Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been constituted to look into the case. Shamshuddin, a resident of Punjab's



Malerkotla, has told the police that he knows the family quite well, they said.

According to Panchkula DCP Srishti Gupta, October Akhter, a resident of Sector 4, MDC, Panchkula, was found dead at his residence. The family intimated the police and said that when they opened the room, he was found dead, Gupta said. The complainant in the case has given an account of the purported video recorded by Akhter in August, in which he has levelled serious allegations against his father and other family members

Mustafa, a retired 1985-batch IPS officer, served as Punjab DGP (human rights), while his wife was a minister in the previous Congress government in the state. Akhter, while referring to the matters pertaining to the family, said in the purported video that he had been going through a lot of stress and mental trauma because of this. "I feel they will frame me in

a false case... Their plan is to have me falsely imprisoned or even killed, but they are unable to have their way," he said in the video. "They are trying to establish a false narrative," he alleged. Reacting to the registration of the FIR, former Punjab Cabinet minister Razia Sultana said that some individuals with "dirty political motives and negative mindset" are trying to exploit her family tragedy by filing "false" complaints. She expressed complete faith in the law and said the truth will pre vail. The Mustafa family said that Akhter was undergoing treatment at a hospital in Panchkula as he had become "psychot ic" and was not in sound mental health. In a statement, Mustafa said, "...It is the duty of police to register an FIR upon receiving a written complaint. The Panch kula police have only fulfilled that duty, and I welcome it. FIR registration does not mean anyone is guilty,? it only marks the beginning of the investigation. The truth will come out soon and everything will become crystal clear."

Rajnath Singh warns of rising 'ideological wars'

New Delhi, Oct 21: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Tuesday emphasised the shifting landscape of country's security challenges, noting that while the nation grapples with border instability, society faces a new surge in sophisticated crimes, terrorism and "ideological wars".

"Areas that were once known as the red corridor have now transformed into growth corridors," the defence minister said, highlighting the significant progress made against the Naxal problem, long a major internal security challenge, and credited the concerted and organised efforts of the police, CRPF, BSF and local administration in preventing the problem from escalating.

Police Commemoration Day is observed annually to honour the memory of 10 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) person-

nel who were

killed in an occasion of Police ambush by **Commemoration Day,** Chinese troops **Singh underscored** the critical need to balance Ladakh's Hot external and internal security Spring arto achieve the ea on this

day in 1959. Addressby 2047 ing an event at the National Police Memorial. Singh asserted that despite functioning on different platforms, the military and police share the singular mission of

national protection. The Defence Minister cautioned that while there is instability on the borders, new types of crimes, terrorism and ideological wars are emerging within society, as he detailed the complex nature of modern internal threats.

Exuding confidence, the Minister asserted that the Naxal menace is "on the verge of becoming history," echoing the commitment of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who has declared that the threat will end by March 2026.

"Several top Naxalites have



been eliminated this year.. Areas that were once Naxalite hubs are now becoming educational hubs. Areas that were once known as the red corridor have now transformed into growth corridors," Singh said and acknowledged the significant contribution of security forces to this success.

A joint parade **Speaking** of the Central on the lice Forces (CAPFs) and Delhi Police was held on occasion. Prime

Minister vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, chief ministers and governors paid tributes to the police personnel for their

> curity challenges and assured support to their families. In a post on X, PM Modi said, "On Police Commemoration Day, we salute the courage of

role in thwarting internal se-

our police personnel and recall the supreme sacrifice by them in the line of duty. Their steadfast dedication keeps our nation and people safe." Home Minister Shah conveyed his "warm greetings", recognising the police as first responders who have "scripted glory by thwarting crimes and threats to inter-

nal security, and by protecting

citizens' rights with exemplary

courage and commitment".

Delhi records worst air quality since 2021

New Delhi, Oct 21: Delhi recorded its worst post-Diwali air quality in the last four years Tuesday, with pollution levels spiking sharply the previous night as PM 2.5 concentrations peaked at 675, while the BJP government attributed it to stubble burning in the AAP-ruled Puniab rather than firecrackers.

Delhi found itself enveloped in a thick grey haze and its air quality entered the "red zone" a day after Diwali, which saw cracker-bursting well beyond the two-hour limit (8 pm to 10 pm) set by the Supreme Court.

The city's 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) on Diwali (Monday), reported at 4 pm, was in the "very poor" category at 345, compared to 330 in 2024, 218 in 2023, 312 in 2022 and 382 in 2021, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Hourly readings showed sustained high pollution throughout the night and into Tuesday morning, with the AQI at 344 at 10 pm, rising slightly to 349 at midnight and remaining above 350 from 7 am to 12 noon Tuesday, reflecting the worst PM2.5 levels in the last four years.

The PM2.5 levels peaked at 675 micrograms per cubic metre late Monday night. The concentration of PM2.5 -- fine particles that easily penetrate the respiratory system and pose serious health risks, especially for chil-



Over 350 get burn wounds

New Delhi: More than 250 people reported burn wounds in Delhi, and over 100 in Jaipur, while properties worth crores were gutted in Shimla Diwali night. A building near Gate 31 of the Rashtrapati Bhavan caught fire Tuesday afternoon, prompting authorities to rush five fire tenders. Seven people were rescued after a fire broke out in a four-storey residential building in west Delhi's Mohan Garden area on Diwali night, while a massive blaze hit two adjacent buildings in Sanjay Gandh Transport Nagar in the early hours of Tuesday.

dren, the elderly and those with pre-existing respiratory conditions -- also exceeded the safe limits. However, Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said despite the lifting of the ban on green firecrackers this year, Delhi's AQI rose only marginally, from 345 before Diwali to 356 the next morning, an increase of "just 11 points".

Sirsa said every religion has the right to celebrate its festivals, indicating that bursting crackers is an indispensable way of celebrating Diwali.

On its part, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) slammed the BJP government in the capital, alleging that it has failed to conduct artificial rain and take measures to ensure the implementation of the apex court's order to allow the bursting of firecrackers. Police have registered more than 100 cases across Delhi over alleged violations of the court's guidelines on bursting firecrackers and over 50 cases on charges of illegal sale during Diwali celebrations, officials said. The top court had allowed the bursting of green firecrackers between 8 pm and 10 pm on the festival day, but the celebrations continued well past the allotted time.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta however, said the "radiance and brilliance" of Diwali this year were "unique" and assert ed that her government is se rious about tackling pollution and taking effective measures to curb it. She thanked the Supreme Court for allowing the "limited use" of green fire crackers, balancing tradition with environmental concerns.

Delhi Home Minister Ashish Sood said those who burst firecrackers beyond 10 pm on Di wali behaved "irresponsibly"

The minister, however, em phasised that bursting firecrackers was not the sole reason behind the spike in pollution levels in the capital.

Addressing a press conference here, Sirsa blamed the AAP government in Punjab for the toxic haze over Delhi, alleging that the state forced farmers to burn a record amount of paddy stubble on Diwali night. He accused the AAP of indulging in politics over "religion". Firecracker sales saw a sharp rise this Diwali, with traders reporting brisk business and the overall sales estimated at

Police personnel take part in a parade to pay homage to the police personnel who laid down their lives in the line

of duty on the Police Commemoration Day in Srinagar

but we will definitely root for

Ravindra Kumar Singh, who

hails from Kaimur district, is

that status for our university.'

Jobs, better education top students' expectations

They also expressed frustration over irregular government job postings, often marred by paper leaks and delayed exam schedules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Oct 21: College students in poll-bound Bihar, many of whom are first-time voters, rue the lack of job opportunities that has been forcing several of their seniors to leave the state in search of work, and want a government that can strengthen the education system and generate employment.

As the state goes to assembly polls in two phases November 6 and 11, around 14 lakh youth are expected to vote for the first time, according to the data released by the Election Commission. Voters in the age group 18-29, totalling 1.63 crore, reportedly constitute an estimated 22-25 per cent of the state's electorate.

"Our hopes from the present government have faded completely," said Abhinav Kumar

Shukla, a postgraduate student in the Hindi Department of Patna University, while he was busy solving practice sets for his STET exams in a corridor that connects the English Department with its French-style administrative block. Shukla, who hails from

Bhabhua town in Kaimur district, believes that there is a need for "widespread employment generation within the state". Santosh Kumar, a visually challenged student of Patna College who hails from Jamui district, said, "Patna University's present must match its past. Its alumni are par excellence but its present state is below par." A constituent of Patna University, Patna College, once called 'Oxford of the East', now appears to be sparsely occupied, with untrimmed grasses

on the ground and near-empty corridors. Patna University had been a hotbed of political activism, producing renowned intellectuals, thinkers and litterateurs, among others. It has produced political leaders from Lalu Prasad Yadav and Nitish Kumar to J P Nadda. The political sharpness still runs in the

of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, is not being implemented on the ground in Bihar. I will vote for a party that will prioritise education. The likelihood of better implementation of the Act under its rule will be more. veins of the students studying in the university. On the question of central university status for Patna University, Santosh said, "The condition of central universities is no better,

Ravindra highlighted the lack of audio labs and other facilities important for specially-abled students in Bihar's universities. Prashant Kishor's claim that "Bihar's youth won't have to go outside the state for work" if his party is voted to power seems to have struck a chord with some students.

a student of Shakuntala Mis-

ra National Rehabilitation

University (SMNRU) in Luc-

know, but currently stays in

a hostel dedicated to visually

impaired students in Patna

University. He said, "Rights

TN: Weather system intensifies; red alert issued in 8 districts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

around Rs 500 crore.

Chennai, Oct 21: As the Northeast monsoon intensified across Tamil Nadu, the regional weather office Tuesday issued heavy rainfall alert to a number of districts, while Chief Minister M K Stalin reviewed the situation with officials and directed that precautionary measures be put in place in view of the downpour.

He also directed deputing IAS officers as Monitoring Officers to districts that have been issued heavy rain alerts B Amudha, Director of Region al Meteorological Centre (RMC) Chennai said a low pressure ar ea that formed over the Bay of Bengal intensified into a well marked low pressure area and is located approximately 400 km from Chennai.

This could intensify into a potential cyclone, added RMC Director while briefing the media Tuesday. "By noon tomorrow, there is a possibility that the system will strengthen into a Depression. This is expected to occur off the coasts of north Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and south Andhra Pradesh," said Amudha. Depression is the stage following a low-pressure system.

According to her, while intensification up to the deep depression stage is forecast, the possibility of it developing into a cyclone or storm can only be stated with some certainty after it has become a depression.

"Right now, the system that was a Deep Low-Pressure Area over the southeast Arabian Sea October 20, is persisting with the same intensity," she add ed. According to Amudha, a red alert was issued for 8 districts and an orange alert for Chennai for Tuesday.

national



Warm congratulations, Mr Rodrigo Paz Pereira, on your election as the **President of Bolivia**

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

BAKSA JAIL VIOLENCE: ASSAM GOVT EXTENDS FINANCIAL AID

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Tuesdav extended financial assistance to families of two persons injured in police firing in Baksa, when five accused in singer Zubeen Garg's death case were being taken to a jail in that district





1959 is still deeply etched in Hot Springs area of Ladakh, 10 of our

brave police personnel sacrificed their lives while protecting the MOHAN YADAV | MP CHIEF MINISTER

On Police Commemora tion Day, we bow in gratitude to the brave officers

who laid down their lives in the line of duty. Their sacrifice contin ues to inspire us to uphold courage and integrity

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA CM

You should ask them (the opposition parties) who is Narakasur and who are Gods. The

opposition is under a wrong impression that they are Gods and we are Narkasurs. People know BJP's contribution for Goa and they will ultimately decide (who are Narkasurs)

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM





People investing People shorting the AI bubble= 0 In this day and age: everyone has

opinions. But, very few back it up with their

Most importantly: negative people rarely put money behind their opinions. And, do actionable

@Akshat_World

SHORT **TAKES**

Dalit man forced to drink urine: 3 held

Bhind: A 25-year-old Dalit man forced to drink urine twice in Bhind district of Madhya Pradesh, leading to the arrest of three individuals, police said Tuesday. Prima facie, the main accused targeted the man after he quit working as his driver, an official said, adding that further investigation is underway. According to the complainant, three persons abducted him from Gwalior Monday and brought him to Bhind in a vehicle, where he was beaten and forced to drink urine, said Additional Superintendent of Police Sanjeev Pathak.

President in Kerala for four-day visit

Thiruvananthapuram: President Droupadi Murmu arrived in Thiruvananthapuram Tuesday for a four-day official visit to the southern state. She was welcomed at the international airport by Kerala Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, other people's representatives, and senior officials, officials said. Elaborate security arrangements have been made in the state capital ahead of

Girl raped in Delhi; neighbour detained

the President's arrival.

New Delhi: A 43-year-old man was arrested Monday for allegedly raping an 11-vear-old girl at her residence in east Delhi's Patparganj area, police said. The accused, identified as Md Ishtkhar, is the victim's neighbour, they said. The girl's mother contacted the police through a PCR call, reporting that her daughter was sexually assaulted by their neighbour while she was alone at home, a senior police officer said.

Possible attack averted as Punjab Police nabs two terror operatives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Oct 21: The Punjab Police Tuesday said it has nabbed two terror operatives and seized a rocket-propelled grenade along with the launcher, which was intended for a "targeted" attack.

"In an intelligence-based operation, Amritsar Rural Police, in close coordination with central agencies, apprehends two terror operatives Mehakdeep Singh @ Mehak and Aditya @ Adhi from #Amritsar and recovers one Rocket Propelled Grenade (#RPG)," Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said in a post on X. "Preliminary investigation

reveals that the accused were in contact with #Pakistan's ISI operative who had sent the weapon, and with Harpreet Singh @ Vicky, currently lodged in #Ferozepur Jail," he said. The DGP further said the

RPG was intended for a "targeted terror attack".

Meanwhile, a police statement said Mehakdeep Singh alias Mehak is a resident of Wadali in Amritsar and Aditya alias Adhi is a resident of Bhaga Chhina village in Amritsar. Police have also impounded a motorcycle that they were riding.

The statement quoted the DGP as saying that a preliminary probe has revealed that the accused were in contact with an operative of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), who had sent the consignment from across the border via drone. The DGP said further investigations are underway to establish forward and backward linkages in the case to unearth the entire network.

Sharing operational details, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Amritsar Rural, Maninder Singh, said acting on intelligence inputs about the retrieval of an RPG-22 Netto anti-tank rocket launcher by Mehakdeep and Aditya on the directions of Harpreet alias Vicky, police teams arrested both the suspects when they were on their way to deliver the consignment.



An artiste dressed as Goddess Kali takes part in a religious procession during the Kali Puja celebrations in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

'BJP forced 3 candidates to withdraw from Bihar polls'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Oct 21: Poll strategist-turned-politician Prashant Kishor Tuesday alleged that three candidates of his Jan Suraaj Party were forced to withdraw from the Bihar elections under "pressure" from the BJP.

Addressing a press conference, Kishor alleged that the ruling NDA was so scared of losing the elections that it was threatening Opposition candidates to withdraw from

"Democracy is being murdered. There has been no such precedent in the country," he alleged, urging the Election Commission to ensure the security of the candidates.

The candidates who were forced to withdraw were fielded in the Danapur, Brahampur, and Gopalganj seats, he said.

Kishor said Jan Suraai's Brahampur candidate Satyaprakash Tiwari, who runs a clinic in Patna, was actively campaigning till Sunday, but surprisingly withdrew his nomination Monday morning.

Showing a photo Tiwari with Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who is the BJP electionin-charge for Bihar, he claimed that it was taken a day before the deadline for withdrawal of nomination papers.

"Pradhan went to Tiwari's home to put pressure on him to withdraw... and the very

he alleged.

next day he withdrew his candidature," he alleged. Kishor claimed the BJP is trying to ensure the victory of the NDA candidate, LJP (RV)'s Hulas Pandey in Brahampur, who is a local strongman.

"The BJP is afraid of candidates who are doctors, educators, activists and social workers, filed by Jan Suraaj Party,"

Kishor said his party had fielded Shashi Shekhar Sinha in the Gopalgani seat.

"The candidate told me that BJP leaders were putting pressure on him. A BJP MLC, along with his supporters, met our candidate and ensured that the Jan Suraaj nominee withdrew his nominations... and he did it." he claimed.

Kishor said Jan Suraaj had fielded Akhilesh Shah alias Mutur Shah in Danapur.

ing re-election in the seat. BJP leaders spread a rumour that Shah was missing on the day of filing of his nomination papers, and Yadav was involved in his disappearance,'

Showing a photo of the Jan Suraaj candidate with Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Pradhan, he alleged, He was forced to withdraw from the race and not allowed to file his nomination papers. He was under political and economic pressure from the BJP's leadership"

Kishor claimed the BJP spread a rumour that the RJD candidate abducted the Jan Suraai nominee, while in fact, he was with the central ministers. He said the Election Commission must intervene to prevent such incidents, otherwise, the trust of the people in it will weaken. "If you are not able to protect the candidates, how will you protect voters?' he said, targeting the EC.

"The BJP is trying to replicate the Surat model, in which their candidate got elected unopposed, as all other nominees were coerced to pull out. The BJP does not realise that voters had punished it across the country, and it won just 240 seats, though it had bragged that the tally would be 400-plus in last year's Lok Sabha polls," he added. Kishor's party had announced candidates for all 243 Assembly seats in Bihar.

India upgrades technical mission in Kabul to embassy PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: India Tuesday announced upgrading its technical mission in Kabul to the status of an embassy as part of broader efforts to deepen its bilateral engagement with Kabul. The announcement came

over a week-and-a-half after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said during his meeting with Afghan counterpart Amir Khan Muttaqi that India will upgrade its diplomatic presence in Kabul.

India had withdrawn its officials from its embassy in Kabul after the Taliban seized power in August 2021. In June 2022, India re-established its diplomatic presence in the Afghan capital by deploying a "technical team" The Ministry of External

Affairs (MEA) said the Indian embassy in Kabul will further augment India's contribution to Afghanistan's comprehensive development, humanitarian assistance, and capacity-building initiatives.

'In keeping with the decision announced during the recent visit of the Afghan foreign minister to India, the government is restoring the status of the technical mission of India in Kabul to that of the Embassy of India in Afghanistan with immediate effect," it said.

"The Embassy of India in Kabul will further augment India's contribution to Afghanistan's comprehensive development, humanitarian assistance, and capacity-building initiatives, in keeping with the priorities and aspirations of Afghan society," it said in a statement.

SABARIMALA GOLD LOSS

Kerala High Court expands SIT probe

The SIT, constituted by the court earlier this month, is probing the alleged pilferage of gold from the gold-clad dwarapalakas (guardian deity idols) and the side frames of the sreekovil (sanctum sanctorum)



Kochi, Oct 21: The Kerala High Court expanded the scope of the SIT probe into the loss of gold from the Sabarimala temple, directing investigators to examine a possible wider conspiracy and the role of Travancore Devaswom Board officials.

The order, issued by a Bench of Justices Raia Vijavaraghavan V and K V Jayakumar, came after the Special Investigation Team submitted its first report in a sealed cover Tuesday during in-camera proceedings held in the absence of lawyers. The SIT, constituted by the court earlier this month, is probing the alleged pilferage of gold from the gold-clad dwarapalakas (guardian deity idols) and the side frames of the sreekovil (sanctum sanctorum).

The court noted that "serious irregularities" had been found in the handling of the dwarapalaka idols and their gold plating. The judges observed that the court had undertaken the mon itoring of the case "not to direct or dictate the mode or manner of investigation, but to ensure that it proceeds in a proper, ef fective, and lawful course.'

The objective, they said, was to "sustain and reinforce public confidence in the impartiality and integrity of the inquiry.

According to the SIT report two cases—crime nos 3700 and 3701 of 2025—have been registered for offences including criminal breach of trust and forgery under Sections 403 406, 409, 466 and 467 of the Indian Penal Code.

The first case concerns the alleged irregular entrustment of the gold-clad dwarapalakas and peedam to Bengaluru-based sponsor Unnikrishnan Potty in July 2019.

The second case relates to the retention of 409 grams of gold extracted from the side frames, which Potty reported ly kept with the knowledge of Devaswom officials.

The court noted an email from Potty to the TDB seeking permission to use part of the gold "for the marriage of a gir known to him." The bench said such conduct showed "willful silence and concealment" on

the part of responsible officials.

Train parting, hot axles risk; investigation needed: Rlys

ACCORDING TO THE MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE CIRCULATED AMONG SENIOR OFFICIALS RECENTLY BY THE RAILWAY BOARD, A HOT AXLE IN ROLLING STOCK CAN CAUSE BLOCKAGE OF RAILWAY LINES, DETACHMENT OF COACHES AND OTHER ISSUES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Rising cases of train parting and overheating of axle bearing leading to wheel jamming and derailments have serious safety implications and require detailed investigation as well as corrective measures, railway mechanical engineers have said. Principal chief mechanical

engineers (PCMEs) expressed concern over the issues while discussing operational safety in a conference held recently in Puri, Odisha.

According to the minutes of the conference circulated among senior officials recently by the Railway Board, a hot axle in rolling stock can cause blockage of railway lines, detachment of coaches and other

The document said that these issues need to be investigated in details along with corrective



pects on priority. "Hot axles and train partings

should be addressed through a detailed review of both global practices and case-specific data, enabling identification of root causes and adoption of best practices," it said.

It added that the Indian Railways is experiencing an average three hot axle cases per day and train partings are also on the higher side. "Objective and time bound

action should be taken to eliminate team failures. Conditional monitoring of rolling stock using the latest technologies such as AI and related tools was emphasized. It was also decided that Hot Axle Box Detectors will be procured centrally, with Northern Railway designated as the nodal agency for this pro-

curement," the document said. The Indian Railways has

installed Hot Box Detectors (HBDs) at various trackside locations across the rail network. When trains cross over the device, it can detect overheated wheel bearings and alert the train crew in real time.

"Each HBD unit should be capable of communicating with one another to ensure proper detection of faulty bearings well in advance, thereby preventing the occurrence of hot axle cases. RDSO (Research Designs & Standards Organisation) will develop the required protocol to enable this," it added.

Mechanical experts were concerned about unusual hot axle cases at the Dedicated Freight Corridor as, according to them, up to July 2025, 49 per cent of hot axle cases are reported over DFC which is not commensurate to traffic.

"Overall, 55 per cent of

failures are reported by DFC alone. Failure reporting on DFC should be critically reviewed and a meeting should be planned with the officials of DFCCIL to sort out the reporting in online ICMS (Integrated Coaching Management System) unusual cases," the minutes of the meeting said

"There have been cases of train parting in freight as well as coaching stock. This has operational and safety implications. Action to be taken for bringing it down to zero," the document said. When approached for re-

sponse on the rise of hot axle as well as train parting cases. Sudhanshu Mani, leader of Vande Bharat project, outlined three important issues. According to Mani, a major

contract awarded to Wabtec, a global rolling stock manufacturing company, for the said purpose was cancelled by the Railways.

Four killed in Navi Mumbai building fire

MUMBAI: Four persons

were killed and 10 others injured after a fire broke out in a multi-storey residential building in neighbouring Navi Mumbai shortly after midnight Tuesday, police said. Among those who died in the tragedy in the wee hours of Diwali were a six-year-old girl and an 84-year-old bed-ridden woman, officials said. A short circuit was suspected to be the cause but an investigation was underway, they said. The fire started at around 12.30 am on the 10th floor of Raheja Residency, MGM Complex in sector 14 of Vashi area. Flames soon spread to the 11th and 12th floors, said a fire brigade official. As many as 40 fire brigade personnel with eight fire tenders and police rushed to the spot and the blaze was put out by 4 am, he said. Among the deceased were Vedika Sunder Balkrishnan (6) and her parents Sundar Balakrishnan (44) and mother Puja Rajan (39) who lived in flat 1205. Kamala Hiralal Jain (84), another deceased, lived on the 11th floor. She was bedridden and could not move after the fire broke out, the official said.

international



I think we're going to end up having a fantastic deal with China. It's going to be a great trade deal. It's going to be fantastic for both countries, and it's going to be fantastic

DONALD TRUMP

22,000 AFGHAN NATIONALS **DEPORTED FROM PAK**

Pakistan's Punjab government this month deported around 22,000 Afghan nationals residing in the province illegally besides closing down the last Afghan refugee camp, a Punjab police spokesperson said Tuesday.



President Trump's positive outlook if it leads to the end



China has made clear more than once its position



on nuclear submarines and other cutting-edge military technologies **GUO JIAKUN**





WORLD BANK MIDDLE EAST DIRECTOR

SHORT **TAKES**

Vance in Israel to shore up ceasefire

Tel Aviv: US Vice President JD Vance arrived in Israel Tuesday to shore up the fragile US-brokered ceasefire in Gaza that has teetered over the past few days following a burst of deadly violence and questions over how to move forward with the plan for cementing a long-term peace. Also Tuesday, Israel said it has identified the body of a hostage that was released by Palestinian militants overnight, while the chief Hamas negotiator said the group remains determined to implement the ceasefire agreement to end the twovear war. Vance, whose visit comes after the arrival of two top White House envoys, is expected to be in the region until Thursday. Accompanied by his wife Usha Vance, the vice president will meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He is to hold a news conference Jerusalem and is also expected to meet with families of hostages whose bodies are still being held in Gaza and the living hostages released by the militants last week.

Af-Pak border

crossing reopens Karachi: The Chaman border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan has partially reopened following a ceasefire between the two countries, after days of violent clashes along the border left several people dead on both sides. Several Afghan families started crossing the southwestern border in Balochistan province on Monday, while multiple Afghan-bound containers were also moved. The Chaman border was sealed when the Pakistan and Afghanistan conflict started, leaving nearly 400 containers carrying goods from the Karachi port stranded at the border. A similar situation was witnessed at the Spin Boldak border crossing in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where containers coming into Pakistan were stranded. The Chaman Chamber of Commerce and **Industry President Nafees** Jan Achakzai said since a ceasefire agreement was finalised between both countries in Doha, the border had been partially reopened since Monday evening. "During this some 400 containers coming from Karachi have slowly started crossing into Afghanistan while some 550 families of around 3,400 individuals

have also crossed over,"

he said.

Ukraine braces for winter of power cuts Sanae Takaichi

Shostka, Oct 21: As the lights went out in her hometown, 40-year-old Zinaida Kot could not help but think about her next dialysis treatment for kidney disease. Without electricity, the machine that keeps her alive stops working.

Kot is among millions of Ukrainians who are bracing for another winter of power cuts and possibly blackouts as Russia renewed its campaign of attacks on the country's energy grid.

In some regions — mostly those closer to the front line in the east — the season of buzzing generators has started, as well as long hours of darkness with no power or water.

The attacks have grown more effective as Russia launches hundreds of drones, some equipped with cameras that improve targeting, overwhelming air defences - especially in regions where protection is weaker.

The consequences are already reshaping daily life especially for those whose survival depends on electricity. For Zinaida Kot, who has been on dialysis for seven years, this is far worse than mere discomfort.

In early October, a Russian strike left the small northern town of Shostka - with a prewar population of nearly 72,000 — without electricity, water, or gas. The town lies just 50 kilometres (31 miles) from the front line in northern Sumy region. Gas service was later restored, and electricity returned for only a few hours each day.

"The situation is challenging," said Mykola Noha, the



mayor of Shostka, Electricity and water are now supplied on a schedule, available for a few hours each day. "And it really worries the residents as we can't predict power cuts. We fix something, and it gets destroyed again. This is our

Shostka hums with the low growl of generators on raindark asphalt, blanketed in yellow leaves. They power cafes, shops, residential buildings, and hospitals. Across town, so-called "invincibility points' offer residents a place to charge devices, warm up, and even rest on cots provided.

At the local hospital, where all stoves are electric, staff built a simple wood-burning oven during the early days of Russia's invasion in 2022, when the town came close to occupation. And now it helps to feed at least 180 patients, said Svitlana Zakotei, 57, a nurse who oversees the patients' meals.

The hospital has spent three weeks running on generators — a costly lifeline that burns half a ton of fuel a day, about 250,000 hryvnias (USD 5,973) a week, said the hospital's chief, Oleh Shtohryn. That's nearly as much as its usual monthly electricity bill.

Power is rationed. In the dialysis ward, lights stay dim so electricity can feed the machines that keep patients alive. One of the eight units burned out because of the blackout a costly loss the hospital could not afford to replace soon. Still, 23 patients come daily for hours-long treatment.

The crisis in Shostka reflects Russia's shifting strategy. In 2022–2023. Moscow launched waves of missiles and drones across the country to destabilise Ukraine's national grid. This year, it is striking region by region.

The recent pattern shows heavier attacks on the Chernihiv, Sumy, and Poltava regions, while Kharkiv, Odesa, Mykolaiv, and Dnipro face less frequent but still regular strikes.

Front-line regions within about 120 kilometres of combat are the most vulnerable, he said.

And for Ukrainian energy crews, that means fixing the same lines and stations again and again — from transmission towers to thermal plants — while enduring outages at home.

At a switchyard in the Chernihiv region, all seems calm — a woman tends her cabbage patch nearby — but residents are used to the explosions which intensify each year as winter nears

The switchyard looks like a museum of nearly four years of strikes. Along the main road lined with towering pylons, a crater in the asphalt marks one of the first attacks in 2022.

The latest strike, on Oct. 4, was far more precise and devastating. In the roof of the transformer building, there's one neat hole near the centre, and another in the wall - scars left by Shahed drones.

Sandbags around the building absorbed some shock waves but couldn't stop a direct hit. Inside, the station is cold and dark but still operating at half capacity. Thousands of homes across Chernihiv remain with out steady power.

Kharchenko noted that last year Russia lacked the capacity to launch 500 or 600 drones at once, and the smaller attacks it could mount were largely ineffective.

But this year, even when several air-defence points and mobile units surround a facility, the Russians simply overwhelm them — sending about six drones at each defensive position and another 10 directly

becomes Japan's first female PM

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, Oct 21: Japan's parliament elected ultraconservative Sanae Takaichi as the country's first female prime minister Tuesday, a day after her struggling party struck a coalition deal with a new partner expected to pull her governing bloc further to the right.

Takaichi replaces Shigeru Ishiba, ending a three-month political vacuum and wrangling since the Liberal Democratic Party's disastrous election loss in July.

Ishiba, who lasted only one year as prime minister, resigned with his Cabinet earlier in the day, paving the way for his successor.

Takaichi won 237 votes four more than a majority compared to 149 won by Yoshikoko Noda, head of the largest opposition party, the Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, in the lower house, which elects the prime minister. As the results were announced, Takaichi stood up and bowed deeply.

The LDP's alliance with the Osaka-based rightwing Japan Innovation Party, or Ishin no Kai, ensured her premiership because the opposition is not united. Takaichi's untested alliance is still short of a majority in both houses of parliament and will need to court other opposition groups to pass any legislation — a risk that could make her government unstable and short-lived, "Political sta bility is essential right now, Takaichi said at Monday's signing ceremony with the JIP leader and Osaka Gov. Hirofumi Yoshimura. "Without stability, we cannot push measures for a strong economy or diplomacy.

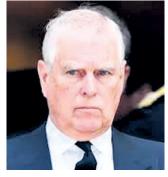
lition agreement on policies un derscoring Takaichi's hawkish and nationalistic views. Their last-minute deal came

The two parties signed a coa

after the Liberal Democrats lost its longtime partner, the Buddhist-backed Komeito, which has a more dovish and centrist stance. The breakup threatened a change of power for the LDP which has governed Japan almost uninterrupted for decades

Later in the day, Takaichi, 64, will present a Cabinet with a number of allies of LDP's most powerful kingmaker. Taro Aso. and others who backed her in the party leadership vote.

Pressure on UK royals, govt to strip Prince Andrew of his titles



ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Oct 21: He won't call himself a duke anymore, but that is not enough for many of Prince Andrew's critics.

Buckingham Palace and the British government were under pressure on Monday to formally strip Prince Andrew of his princely title and sumptuous home after new revelations about his relationship with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

After discussions with his elder brother King Charles III, Andrew agreed on Friday to ston using titles including Duke of York. It was the latest effort

to insulate the monarchy from years of tawdry headlines about Andrew's suspicious business deals, inappropriate behaviour and controversial friendships.

But he still technically holds the title of duke, bestowed by his late mother, Queen Elizabeth II. And as the son of a monarch, he remains a prince.

Andrew's statement relinquishing some of his royal titles came after emails emerged showing he had remained in contact with Epstein longer than he previously admitted, and days before publication of a posthumous memoir by Epstein accuser Virginia Roberts Giuffre, who alleged she had sex with Andrew when she was 17.

Giuffre's brother, Sky Roberts, urged the king to go further and "remove the title of prince, too.

"He shouldn't be able to call himself one," Roberts told The Times of London newspaper.

Andrew, 65, has long denied Giuffre's claims, but stepped down from royal duties after a disastrous November 2019 BBC interview in which he attempted to rebut her allegations.

Sarkozy begins 5-yr prison term



Paris, Oct 21: Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy arrived at a prison in Paris Tuesday to begin serving a 5-year sentence for a criminal conspiracy to finance his 2007 election campaign with funds from Libya. He is the first ex-leader of modern France to be imprisoned. Sarkozy, hand-in-hand with his wife Carla Bruni-Sarkozy, left home before getting into a car and travelling to the La Sante prison.

On his way to prison, Sarkozy said in a statement released on social media that 'an innocent man" was being locked up. He was convicted last month for criminal conspiracy in a scheme to finance his 2007 election campaign with funds from Libva. Sarkozv contests both the conviction and a judge's unusual decision to incarcerate him pending appeal. His journey from the presidential Elysee Palace to the notorious La Sante prison in Paris has captivated France

Minutes before entering pris-

slowly to join his children and grandchildren outside his home. He waved at a crowd of supporters gathered in the highend Paris neighbourhood where he lives, then got into his car. Hundreds of supporters ap-

plauded and chanted "Nicolas, Nicolas" and sang the French anthem. Two French flags were hung on a nearby fence, with the inscriptions: "Courage Nicolas, return soon" and "true France with Nicolas.

Sarkozy's sons and daughter - Jean, Pierre, Louis and Giulia — and his grandchildren showed up at the gathering.

Parisian resident Michelle Perie, 67, said she came in support "because there is anger, injustice." "He's not like any other defendants, he's someone who holds state secrets, he's someone who has always done his job with his head held high. We don't understand," she said.

Sarkozy's lawyers said the former president will be held in solitary confinement, where he will be kept away from all other prisoners for security reasons.

Trump-Putin summit shelved



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Oct 21: Plans are on hold for President Donald Trump to sit down with Russian leader Vladimir Putin to talk about resolving the war in Ukraine, according to a US official

The meeting had been an nounced last week. It was sup posed to take place in Budapest although a date had not been set

The decision was made fol lowing a call between US Sec retary of State Marco Rubio and Russian Foreign Minister

Sergey Lavrov. The official requested anonymity because they weren't authorised to speak publicly.

The back-and-forth over Trump's plans are the latest bout of whiplash caused by his stutter-step efforts to resolve a conflict that has persisted for nearly four years.

From Monalisa to Eugenie's crown: A history of art heists

AGENCIES

Bathurst, Oct 21: The world's largest art museum, the Louvre has approximately half a million objects in its collection, with about 30,000 on display, and sees on average 8 million visitors per year. That's big on any scale, with a lot of people and objects to keep watch over. And Sundays are particularly busy.

In a cleverly conceived operation, four men wearing fluorescent vests pulled up at the Louvre in a flat-decked truck at 9.30 Sunday morning. Quickly setting to work, they raised an extendable ladder to the second storey. Climbing it, they cut through a window. entered the Galerie d'Apollon and, brandishing power tools, helped themselves to nine ex-

quisite objects. The objects taken were France's royal jewels, formerly belonging to the Empress Eugénie, Napoleon III's wife and

This is where it gets tricky for the thieves: what can you do with these priceless objects? They can't wear them - too big and glitzy to go unnoticed - and they can't sell them legitimately, as images are all over the internet. The best-case scenario, from the thieves' perspective, is to break them down, melt the precious metals and sell the gems separately.

Empress Eugenie's crown, which the perpetrators took and subsequently dropped as they fled the scene on motor scooters, contains eight gold eagles, 1,354 brilliant-cut diamonds, 1,136 rose-cut diamonds and 56 emeralds. In short, this amounts to a sizeable stash of individual gems to try and sell.

For the Louvre, any heist is a major blow. It calls into question their security, both electronic and human. Five security staff were nearby who acted to protect visitors and the alarms did ring, but the entire heist was completed within sev-In 2019, an 18-karat gold toilet

titled America (2016), from the artist Maurizio Cattelan, was stolen from Blenheim Palace. England. It was taken in five and a half minutes. It weighed 98 kilograms and was fully functioning. In other words, the two men who took it (and were later caught and served prison sentences for their crimes) worked quickly and efficiently.

At the time of the theft, as gold bullion it was estimated to be valued at AUD 6 million.

Van Gogh's painting The Parsonage Garden at Neunen in Spring (1884) was stolen from the Singer Laren Museum, in the Netherlands, during their 2020 COVID closure. It was recovered in late 2023 after an investigation by Dutch art detective Arthur Brand.

The 2017 theft of two Gottfried Lindauer paintings from Auckland's International Art Centre took just a few min-



utes to complete. The thieves ram-raided the front window of the auction house where the paintings, valued at NZD 1 million, were displayed. The portraits were recovered five years later through an intermediary, with only minor damage. The National Gallery of

Victoria's Picasso painting Weeping Woman (1937) was famously taken by the Austra-

lian Cultural Terrorists in 1986 but only noticed as missing two days later. Recovered just over two weeks later, the painting was left for the gallery staff to collect in a locker at Spencer Street railway station. The motivation behind the theft was to highlight the lack of financial support given to Victorian artists, but the true identity of the thieves remains a mystery.

In 1986, 26 paintings of reli gious subjects were stolen from the gallery at the Benedictine Monastery at New Norcia. Western Australia.

The thieves were poor planners: they hadn't factored in that three men and the stash of paintings couldn't fit into a Ford Falcon. The paintings were cut from their frames, ostensibly butchered. One was completely destroyed The thieves were caught and charged. Recovery of objects from heists is low. It's impossi ble to put a number on but some say art recoveries globally are possibly as low as 10 per cent.

Paintings are more dif ficult to sell on - you can't change their physical appearance to the point of not being recognised.

However, with objects such as the gold toilet or jewels, the precious materials and gems can be repurposed. Time will tell if the Napoleonic jewels will be recovered.

business



In the last few months itself, investors from all over the world have announced plans to invest over Rs 50,000 crore in India's finance and banking sector PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND

RBI SOLD \$7.7 BN IN AUGUST TO CHECK RUPEE VOLATILITY

The Reserve Bank sold \$7.7 billion in August to check exchange rate volatility as well as to arrest the decline in value of the rupee against the American currency. The central bank's net sale of US dollars was at \$7.69 billion in August, nearly three times higher than in the preceding month, according to the data on sale/purchase of US dollars published in the RBI's latest bulletin. The data also showed that the Reserve Bank did not purchase US dollars in July and August





GST slab to are price-sensitive. With the timing of the GST rate cut coinciding with the festive season demand should increase as middle-class spending picks up ANUJ SETHI | SENIOR DIRECTOR, CRISIL RATINGS







productively rather than remaining on the

bench. Moving away from the traditional 'hire-and-train' model. many organisations are adopting a 'train-then-hire' approach

SHORT **TAKES**

Record sales during Diwali

New Delhi: India's Diwali sales touched a record Rs 6.05 lakh crore, comprising Rs 5.40 lakh crore in goods and Rs 65.000 crore in services buoved by the recent GST reform and strong consumer sentiment. traders' lobby CAIT said Tuesday. The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) based its findings on a nation-wide survey across 60 major distribution centres including state capitals and Tier 2 & 3 cities conducted by its research wing. Last vear, the Diwali sales stood at Rs 4.25 lakh crore. according to CAIT, Sector wise percentage of sales of prominent festive items included Grocery & FMCG 12 per cent, Gold & Jewellery 10 per cent. Flectronics & Electricals items 8 per cent, Consumer Durables 7 per cent. Ready-made Garments

Jio-BP post profit petrol, diesel sales

7 per cent.

New Delhi: Jio-BP, the fuel retailing joint venture of Reliance Industries and super major BP, clocked a 34 per cent rise in petrol and diesel sales in the September quarter as the joint venture aggressively expands its retail network. Jio-BP clocked 1.8 million sales of petrol and diesel in July-September, 34 per cent more than a year ago, according to an investor presentation made by the company after the second quarter earnings announcement. Also, helping the firm were

Rupee rises 9 paise

Mumbai: The rupee rose 9 paise to close at 87.93 against the US dollar Monday, supported by foreign fund inflows and lower crude oil prices. Positive sentiments in the domestic equity markets lent further support to the local unit, according to forex traders. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 87.94 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 87.74-87.94 during the day before settling at 87.93, higher by 9 paise against its previous close. Friday, the rupee closed at 88.02 against the US dollar. India's forex reserves have dropped by \$ 2.176 billion to \$697.784 billion during the week ended October 10, the

China questions India's PLI, EV policy sops at WTO

New Delhi, Oct 21: China has alleged that certain conditions Incentive (PLI) schemes for advanced chemistry cell battery, automobiles and the policy to promote the manufacturing of electric vehicles violate global trade rules, and has filed a complaint against these measures at the WTO

According to a communication of the Geneva-based WTO, China has sought consultations with India on these measures under WTO's dispute settlement mechanism.

Beijing has stated that measures adopted by India are contingent upon the use of domestic over imported goods and discriminate against goods of Chinese origin.

These measures appear to be inconsistent with India's obligations under the SCM (Subsidies and Countervailing Measures) Agreement, the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) 1994 and the TRIMs (Trade-Related Investment Measures) Agreement.

...as a consequence of the foregoing, the measures at issue appear to nullify or impair benefits accruing to China, directly or indirectly, under the cited agreements," the WTO's communication dated October 20 has said. China looks forward to receiving India's reply and to agreeing on a mutually convenient date for the consultations, it added.

This request concerns certain measures maintained by India that affect trade in the automotive and renewable energy technology sectors. Spe-



requirements that condition eligibility for, and the disbursement of, incentives under these programmes, it said.

In its complaint, China has mentioned three programmes Production Linked Incentive. National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage; Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Automobile and Auto Component Industry: and Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars in India.

Both India and China are members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). If a member country believes that a support measure under a policy or scheme of another member nation is harming its exports of certain goods, it can file a complaint under the dispute settle ment mechanism of the WTO.

Seeking consultation is the first step of the dispute settlement process as per WTO rules.

If the consultations requested with India do not result in a sat-

isfactory solution, the EU can

request that the WTO set up a panel in the case to rule on the issue raised.

China is the second-largest trading partner of India.

In the last fiscal, India's exports to China contracted 14.5 per cent to \$14.25 billion against \$16.66 billion in 2023-24. The imports, however, rose by 11.52 per cent in 2024-25 to \$113.45 billion against \$101.73 billion in 2023-24

India's trade deficit with China has widened to \$99.2 billion during 2024-25

China's complaint about India's reported EV subsidies comes as Beijing seeks to boost exports of its electric vehicles to India. Considering the size and scope of India's auto market, Chinese EV automakers see it as a major source to expand sales.

According to recent reports. facing overcapacity with large production of EVs and declining domestic sales and profits amid price wars, Chinese hybrid car makers like BYD are looking for overseas markets, especially in the EU and Asia.

MAHURAT TRADING

Sensex, Nifty end with modest gains

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 21: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty ended marginally higher in the special one-hour Muhurat trading session Tuesday, marking the beginning of the new Samamid firm global cues.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose 62.97 points or 0.07 per cent to close at 84,426.34. During the symbolic session, the benchmark hit a high of 84,665.44 and a low of 84,286.40.

The broader NSE Nifty went up by 25.45 points, or 0.10 per cent, to close at 25,868.60. As many as 25 Nifty stocks ended lower while 24 shares closed with gains and one remains unchanged. Stock exchanges BSE and NSE conducted a special Muhurat trading session from 1345 hrs to 1445 hrs Tuesday to mark the beginning of the new Samvat Year 2082, and the opening of new accounting books for traders and investors

In the last Samvat 2081 which ended Monday the BSE Sensex jumped 4,974.31 points or 6.26 per cent and the Nifty climbed 1.637.8 points or 6.76 per cent.

Muhurat trading is a onehour symbolic trading session conducted by stock exchanges on the occasion of Diwali, marking the start of the new Samvat year and new books of accounts by traders.

Among major Sensex gainers Bajaj Finserv rose the most by 1.42 per cent, Axis Bank gained 0.80 per cent, Infosys by 0.72 per cent, Mahindra & Mahindra by 0.60 per cent, Tata Motors by 0.55 per cent. Bajaj Finance by 0.53 per cent and Tata Steel by 0.52 per cent.

Kotak Mahindra Bank, ICICI Bank, HCL Technologies, Bharti Airtel, Maruti Suzuki India. Trent Ltd and Tata Consultan

India diversifies export mkt to counter US tariff

New Delhi, Oct 21: India has succeeded in diversifying its export market with overseas shipments recording a yearon-year growth in over 20 countries across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America which has helped to offset the adverse impact of the US tariff turmoil.

This is reflected in the 9 per cent increase in India's merchandise exports during the July-September quarter of the current financial year.

India's exports performance remains resilient despite the recent 50 per cent US tariff hike, with merchandise exports rising 6.7 per cent year-on-year in September, led by robust growth in high-value commodities such as electronics. engineering goods and marine The 24 countries which re-

corded a rise in Indian exports include Germany, Belgium, Italy, Poland, South Korea, the UAE, Oman, Iraq, Egypt, Russia, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Thailand, Vietnam and Sri Lanka,

Exports to these countries recorded positive growth in April-September 2025-26 with the turnover touching \$129.3 billion, which constitutues a 59 per cent share in India's total exports, according to figures compiled by the Com-

India's free trade agreements (FTAs) with the UK and Europe are expected to further strengthen this diversification in the country's export market

On the other hand, India's merchandise exports to the US declined by 11.93 per cent to \$5.46 billion in September due to the hike in tariffs imposed by the Donald Trump administration.

Meanwhile, India and the US are also engaged in talks to sign a bilateral trade agreement as a way out of the current impasse. The two countries have made some headway in their trade talks to resolve the tariff issue even as New Delhi has said that it will not rush into an agreement.

India's trade delegation, led by Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal, is reported to have held constructive meetings with US officials in Washington last week, a senior official said While the US under the

Trump administration hard ened its stand on Russian oil purchases by India, New Delhi has assured Washington that Indian companies would in crease purchases of American oil and gas. Since India is the second largest consumer of oil and gas in the world these imports would help to reduce the USA's trade deficit with In dia, an issue that Washington has flagged.



Vedanta launches pisciculture to boost farmers' income Lanjigarh: Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest aluminium producer

has launched a pisciculture initiative under its flagship watershed and livelihood programme, Project Sangam, at Lanjigarh in Kalahandi district. The initiative aims to create sustainable income opportunities for farmers and self-help group (SHG) members through scientific fish farming. Implemented in collaboration with the Fisheries and Animal Husbandry Department of Kalahandi, the project covers 32 water structures across five acres in 13 villages, directly benefiting 44 farmers and SHG members. It includes training, technical support, and access to resources, with an expected annual yield of 20 tonnes of fish, contributing to both local consumption and market supply. "At Vedanta Lanjigarh, we are committed to driving holistic community development through sustainable livelihood opportunities that align with environmental and social goals," said Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya, CEO Vedanta Alumina Business. "The pisciculture initiative under Project Sangam supports income diversification for farmers while strengthening the rural economy and aligning with the state's development vision." The initiative also complements Odisha's 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) programme by promoting fishery as a key livelihood source in Kalahandi. By leveraging existing water bodies and adopting modern fish farming practices, farmers are expected to build resilience against seasonal income fluctuations.



Diwali: Gold, silver prices cool; jewellery sales jump

Mumbai, Oct 21: Gold and silver prices fell Tuesday as investors booked profits after both metals hit record highs in the previous session, even as festive jewellery sales during Dhanteras jumped 35 to 40 per cent across India.

Silver Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs), which had delivered stellar one-year returns of around 65 to 70 per cent, also saw a sharp correction as global prices cooled following improved physical supply and easing safe-haven demand.

Silver had turned hot earlier this month when global spot prices surged past \$40 an ounce amid concerns of a physical shortage. The rally extended further, crossing \$50 in mid-October

However, by the end of last $% \left\{ 1,2,...,n\right\}$ week, prices began to retreat as easing trade tensions reduced safe-haven demand. October 17, silver prices in the US fell by over 6 per cent, and the correction soon spilled over into Indian markets.



According to the India Bullion and Jewellers Association (IBJA). silver prices in India fell 7 per cent October 20, slipping from Rs 1,71,275 per kg to Rs 1,60,100 per kg. The decline directly impacted silver ETFs, which mirror domes tic silver prices.

Data from Ace MF shows that silver ETFs logged steep single-day losses, with most funds dropping up to 7 per cent October 20.

Analysts noted that the ETFs are now trading at or below fair value, a sign that investor demand has started to cool after months of heavy inflows.

Meanwhile, in the international market, gold prices also softened after touching record highs Monday. Spot gold was down 0.3 per cent at \$4,340.29 per

ounce as of 0248 GMT, after hitting an all-time high of \$4,381.21

US gold futures for December delivery eased 0.1 per cent to \$4,356.40 per ounce, as inves tors booked profits amid expectations of further interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve. The Multi Commodity Ex-

change (MCX) will also observe special Muhurat trading today, October 21, with a pre-open session from 1:30 pm to 1:44 pm, followed by the Muhurat trading window from 1:45 pm to 2:45 pm. Despite the short-term cor-

rection, festive demand for gold and silver remains strong. The All India Gems and Jewellery Promotion Council, said that around 50 to 60 tonnes of jewellery were sold nationwide over the two days of Dhanteras, generating nearly Rs 85 crore

It added that while the sales volume was similar to last year, the overall value grew by 35 to 40 per cent due to higher prices and rising consumer interest.

surge in paper imports PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

GST reforms may trigger

New Delhi, Oct 21: Indian paper industry has raised concern over the potential surge in paper imports following the recent GST reforms, warning that the move could erode domestic competitiveness and undermine the government's flagship 'Make in India' ini tiative.

Indian Paper Manufacturers Association (IPMA) President Pawan Agarwal, in a statement, said that with the recent GST changes, India risks becoming a further dumping ground for cheaper paper from

"While domestic manufacturers are being burdened with higher input costs, imported paper used for exercise books and notebooks will now enter the country completely taxfree. This will distort market dynamics and deal a blow to In-

dian producers," Agarwal said Paper imports into India have already doubled in the last four years, growing at a CAGR of over 17 per cent in volume terms, one of the steepest among major commodities, according to

Indian economy remains resilient amid global headwinds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 21: The Indian economy has so far exhibited resilience, driven by a focus on strong and durable macroeconomic fundamentals amidst broader global uncertainty and weak external demand, a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) bulletin said Monday.

Global uncertainty has edged up, said an article on 'State of the Economy' published in the RBI's October Bulletin.

In the US, both trade and economic policy uncertainty increased in September. Global growth, however, has broadly held up. Investor sentiments dampened in October, on renewed US-China trade tensions and prolonged US government shutdown, after a phase of buoyancy.

The Indian economy displayed resilience amidst broader global uncertainty and weak external demand. High-frequency indicators point to a revival in urban demand and robust rural demand.

ticle said.

The RBI said the views expressed in the bulletin article

"While the Indian economy

is not immune to global headwinds, it has so far exhibited resilience, driven by a focus on strong and durable macroeconomic fundamentals, including low inflation, robust balance sheets of banks and corporates. adequate foreign exchange reserves and a credible monetary and fiscal framework," the ar-



are of the authors and do not represent the views of the Reserve Bank of India.

Headline consumer price index (CPI) inflation moderated sharply in September, marking

its lowest reading since June 2017, as per the bulletin.

The article also noted that high-frequency food price data for October so far (up to 17th) point towards a pick-up in ceremoderated for gram dal, tur/arhar dal and moong dal. Within edible oils, prices

firmed up for mustard oil, sunflower oil and palm oil while groundnut oil prices eased. Key vegetable (tomato, onion, and potato) prices softened, with the decline being most pronounced for tomatoes

"As noted in the Monetary Policy Committee resolution of October 1, 2025, the growth outlook remains resilient, supported by domestic drivers, despite uncertainties on the external front," it added.

The RBI's article further said domestic structural reforms are helping to somewhat offset the drag on growth from the weakening external demand conditions. The current macroeconomic

conditions and the outlook, as noted by the MPC, has opened up policy space for further supporting growth.

On the domestic currency, it said the rupee depreciated against the US dollar in September amidst elevated trade ten sions, heightened global uncer tainties, and persistent foreign portfolio investment outflows.

The depreciation in the real effective exchange rate was mainly driven by the depreciation in the nominal effective exchange rate.

Net foreign portfolio investment flows continued to remain negative for the third consecutive month in September driven by equity outflows.

RBI data released.

GOLDEN MOMENT FOR INDIAN TABLE TENNIS

an table tennis, six Indian girls

have broken into the top 100 of

Asia Cup trophy row gets uglier Syndrela-Divyanshi rise to World No 1 the world doubles rankings, un-

BCCI gets SL, Afghan support on Asia Cup trophy fiasco but Naqvi refuses to budge





New Delhi, Oct 21: The deadlock over the Asia Cup trophy, which is yet to reach champions India, continues to be unresolved as the Asian Cricket Council's Pakistani head Mohsin Naqvi has refused to part with it despite a fresh missive from the BCCI, backed by boards of Afghanistan and

A top ACC source told PTI that Nagvi has insisted that a BCCI representative collect the trophy from him at the body's headquarters in Dubai but the Indian board has rejected that stance. The BCCI has reiterated that it will raise this matter in an ICC meeting next month.

"The BCCI secretary (Devajit Saikia), BCCI's ACC representative Rajeev Shukla and representatives of other member

boards including Sri Lanka Cricket and Afghanistan had written to the ACC president last week over handing the trophy to India," the ACC source

"But his response was that someone from BCCI should come to Dubai and take the trophy from him. So, that matter has still not moved. BCCI has made its stance clear that it won't be receiving the trophy

from him. So, the matter will most likely be decided in the ICC meeting," he added.

The ICC is headed by former BCCI secretary Jay Shah.

The trophy has been at the ACC headquarters after the Indian team refused to accept it from Naqvi at the presentation ceremony, prompting him to walk away with it in an unprecedented turn of events

Naqvi is also the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board and his country's interior minister with a will-documented anti-India stance.

The Indians had refused to shake hands with their Pakistani counterparts during the entire Asia Cup as a mark of respect for the victims of Pahalgam terror attack.

On his social media account which is withheld in India, he posted videos and memes mocking India's military action after the Pahalgam attack, throughout the Asia Cup.

The two teams played each other on every Sunday of the three-week tournament.

After the presentation fiasco the two countries clashed at an ACC meeting as well where BC-CI officials chided Naqvi for not handing over the trophy.

Sources have said that Naqvi, before leaving for Pakistan, instructed the ACC staff to not hand over or move the trophy without his instructions.

In another first for the Indian table tennis, six Indian girls have broken into the top 100

of the world doubles rankings, underlining the country's steady rise in youth development

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Syndrela Das and Divyanshi Bhowmick have achieved a historic milestone by climbing to the No. 1 spot in the latest ITTF Under-19 Girls' Doubles World Rankings, released Tuesday.

The Indian duo topped the global standings with 3910 points, ahead of Chinese Taipei's Wu Jia-En and Wu Ying-Syuan (3195) and France's Leana Hochart and Nina Guo Zheng (3170).

In another first for the Indi-

derlining the country's steady rise in youth development. Syndrela and Divyanshi's

ascent to the top is the result of a string of strong performances at both domestic and international events. The pair has captured gold medals at the WTT Youth Contender in Goa and WTT Youth Star Contender in Tunis, in addition to semifinal finishes at the WTT Youth Contender in Berlin and Lima.

Among other Indians, Tanee sha Kotecha and Sayali Wani are placed 13th with 1575 points, after impressive runs at the Asian Youth Championships and WTT Youth Contender Doha.

Suhana Saini and Shriya Anand occupy the 22nd position with 875 points, following their silver medal at the South Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships. Another newly-formed pairing, Suhana Saini and Taneesha Kotecha, is

ranked 31st with 620 points after the pair's runners-up finish at the WTT Youth

Contender Jaipur.

Al Lis Gan and Stuti Kashyap are ranked 34th with 565 points. having delivered strong performances in Southeast Asian competitions, and Kheith

Cruz and Vaishna the 36th spot with same tally after consistent

SHORT **TAKES**

Pant back as **India A captain**

New Delhi: India wicket-keeper batter Rishabh Pant was Tuesday appointed captain of the national A side for a red-ball series against South Africa A after fully recovering from a foot fracture sustained during the tour of England. Pant had injured his foot while batting in the fourth Test at Manchester in July and subsequently was not part of the Asia Cup squad and more recently the two-Test home series against the West Indies. He was struck on his right toe by a Chris Woakes delivery but came out to bat heroically, scoring a half century albeit in a lost cause The selectors have named him in the India A squad for both the games, to be held in Bengaluru

Afridi named new Pak ODI captain

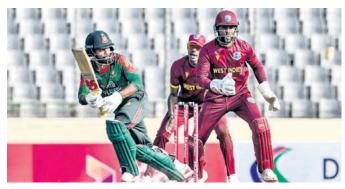
Karachi: Senior pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi will replace Muhammad Rizwan as the new ODI captain of Pakistan starting next month, the country's cricket board has announced amid speculation that the sudden change of guard was pushed by white-ball head coach Mike Hesson, The Pakistan Cricket Board announced that Shaheen will lead Pakistan in the threematch ODI series against South Africa in Faisalabad from November 4-8. The decision. the board said, was taken at a meeting in Islamabad attended by the national selectors. advisory board members, and Hesson. While the PCB has not cited any official reason for the switch, insiders believe Hesson's recommendation served as a "springboard" to make the

Lakshya bows out of French Open

Paris: India's Lakshya Sen bowed out of the French Open Super 750 badminton tournament after suffering a straight game defeat to Ireland's Nhat Nguyen in the men's singles opening round here Tuesday. Lakshya, who had reached the finals of Hong Kong Open, looked off-colour from the start to eventually go down 7-21 16-21 to the world number 29 Nhat. Last week, the 24-year-old from Almora had defeated Nhat in a three-game opener at Denmark Open but he was erratic in Paris, repeatedly hitting wide and into the net while struggling to find rhythm against his opponent's steep smashes. The Indian's deep tosses often missed the lines, and his attacking play lacked precision as he trailed 2-7 early in the opening game.

FIRST TIME IN ODI HISTORY

WI bowl 50 overs of



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dhaka, Oct 21: For the first time in the history of One-Day Internationals (ODI), a full member nation has bowled all 50 overs of spin in an innings as the West Indies deployed five spinners against the Bangladesh batters in the first innings at the Shere Bangla National Stadium here Tuesday

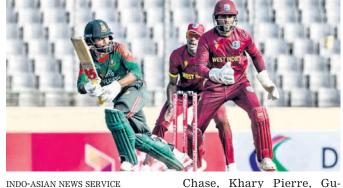
The surface resembled the one from the first game, featuring many cracks and a very dry texture. Most batters managed to get starts, but once again, Rishad Hossain's knock was the decisive factor

The West Indies bowlers kept picking wickets at regular intervals as the hosts were 163/7 at the end of 46 overs. However. Rishad's knock turned the tables over. The spin-bowling all-rounder delivered the crucial boost, adding 50 runs to the scoreboard in the last four

The West Indies couldn't chase 208 in the first match, and the visitors will need to figure out how to handle Rishad again, especially with the ball.

Akeal Hosein, Roston

spin vs Bangladesh



dakesh Motie, and Alick Athanaze bowled their quota of 10 overs as the West Indies scripted history, becoming the first full-member nation to deploy only spinners throughout a 50-over innings. Though Soumya Sarkar was the top scorer for Bangladesh, it

took him 89 deliveries to score 45 runs, Rishad, meanwhile, notched up a quick-fire 39 off 14 deliveries, and his knock was studded with three maximums and as many fours. Motie was the pick of the

bowlers for the Windies with three scalps, while Athanaze and Hosein ended with two wickets apiece. Regarding Bangladesh, every

batter except Rishad struggled to score, as none of them managed a strike rate over 100. They eventually scored 213 runs for the loss of seven wickets, setting a challenging target for the visitors on what looked like a difficult pitch to bat on.

Bangladesh won the first ODI by 74 runs, bowling out the West Indies for 133 after restricting the hosts to 207 in the first innings.

AUSSIES EYE KOHLI WITH SWING, SEAM TACTICS

Kohli, who was dismissed for a duck in the series opener in Perth, will be eager to bounce back at the Adelaide Oval, his most successful overseas venue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Adelaide, Oct 21: Australia batter Matthew Short believes his team's pacers will continue to exploit Virat Kohli's recent weakness outside off stump when India face Australia in the second ODI here Thursday.

Kohli, who was dismissed for a duck in the series opener in Perth, will be eager to bounce back at the Adelaide Oval. his most successful overseas venue with five international centuries and an average of 65 across formats.

"I'm not in the fast-bowling meetings, but that seems to be the way he has been getting out recently," Short told reporters.

"Some of the guys like 'Hoff' (Josh Hazlewood) and 'Starcy (Mitchell Starc), they have bowled a lot against him, they know what they're doing. In Perth they sort of let the conditions do all the work, a bit of swing and nip on the wicket, so I'm sure they'll do the same again."

India had overwhelming support from a 42,423-strong crowd at the Optus Stadium in the first ODI of the white-ball series, most of whom had turned up to watch Rohit and Kohli re-



turn to action after more than seven months

Having retired from the game's other formats, the former captains returned to national duty for the first time since winning the Champions Trophy March 9.

Following that triumph, they had announced retirements from Tests while sticking to the ODI format, after also quitting T20Is post India's World Cup win last year

"When Rohit or (Shubman) Gill got out the other day (in Perth), and then Kohli came on, just the cheer when he was walking on - vou'd feel pretty bad as the batter walking off It's just an amazing experience," Short added.

Both Rohit and Kohli looked rusty in their comeback game and were dismissed for 8 and 0 respectively, as Australia's stand-in skipper Mitchell Marsh led from the front with an unbeaten 46 to secure a seven-wicket win in the rain-hit

Perth ODI

India trail the series 0-1, making Thursday's match in Adelaide a must-win to stay alive as the game will possibly be the duo's final outing Down Under.

"But it's going to be a cool way for him to go out, especially with so many fans here in Australia," Short said, as he hoped to make the most of sharing the field with the Indian greats.

"It's pretty cool to share the field with such a legend of the sport," he said. "I'll definitely get the chance to have a chat to him at some stage throughout the series.' For players like Short, this

white-ball series holds significance ahead of the 2027 World Cup in South Africa.

Having made his debut against India in Mohali, the right-hander has battled injuries and fluctuating roles -from No.8 on debut to No.3 in the current series -- and is still searching for form.

results in the re-

AIFF announces \$25,000 for U17 women's team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: AIFF Tuesday announced a reward of \$25,000 for the India U17 women's team for its maiden entry into the AFC U17 Asian Cup recently.

India had defeated Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan by identical 2-1 margins last week in Bishkek to top Group G with six points and qualify for the prestigious AFC tournament in China next year, their first-ever continental qualification in this age group.

"The Āll India Football Fed eration (AIFF) is pleased to announce a reward of \$25,000 for the India U17 women's national team after its extraordinary performance that saw it secure qualification for the AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup for the first time," said the country's football governing body in a release.

India had last participated in the U17 Women's Asian Cup in 2005, but no qualifiers were held

for the tournament. AIFF said great effort was put in by the federation to en

sure success of the U17 side. "The results come after careful planning from the federation that helped the India U17 women put in commanding performances in the two matches. The Young Tigress es had, last season, played as the Indian Arrows Women

Juniors, gaining valuable ex

perience in the IWL 2 playing

against senior opponents," the

release stated. It said the federation was try ing to strengthen the sport at the grassroots level and have a more robust youth structure in women's football.

10-yr-old prodigy Atiqa pulls off stunning 25-place climb

From 33rd to 8th, **Atiqa delivers** overtaking masterclass for top-10 finish in IAME karting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 21: Indian racing sensation Atiga Mir staged a remarkable recovery drive after a sudden technical issue pushed her to back of the grid, climbing as many as 25 spots to finish a creditable eighth in round three of the IAME Karting Championship here.

The 10-year-old, who is the first Indian to be backed by Formula 1, passed a melee of karts from 33rd on the grid for a top-10 finish. Atiga's determined effort came after her memorable win in the RMC Championship

Starting the final second on the grid, the Akcel GP driver was the favourite to win again but disaster struck when her kart did not start on the formation lap due to a technical issue.

Atiqa was forced to start the race from the pit lane but that did not deter her steely spirit as she put up an overtaking



That felt like a win... I could have finished even higher but for a few unruly drivers.

I was gutted obviously when my kart didn't start on the grid but I used that energy to move forward

exhibition.

"That felt like a win... I could have finished even higher but for a few unruly drivers. I was gutted obviously when my kart didn't start on the grid but I used that energy to move forward," said Atiqa.

Atiqa finished P4 in Round 2 Saturday, narrowly missing out on the podium after setting the fastest lap in the final.

Asif Mir, Atiqa's father and India's first National Karting Champion, is a hard man to please but he too was mighty impressed with her daughter's dogged display.

"That was astonishing I couldn't believe the precision and pace she showed in overtaking making all clean moves. One of her best performances ever in the kart. It's a pity what happened with her kart on the grid but that

is motor racing," said Asif.

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