



LEISURE | P2



INTERNATIONAL | P10



BUSINESS | P11

SPORTS | **P12**

RACE AGAINST TIME: Fire fighters dousing a blaze that gutted around 30 shops at the Unit-1 vegetable market in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday **(Report P3)**

PNN & AGENCIES

Over the past two weeks, investigators questioned more than 80 people and reviewed over 500 CCTV camera clips, the SP said, adding that police have produced Bikram and others at the Berhampur court under heavy security.



Senior BJP leader and Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari, on the other hand, alleged that the BJD was protecting the criminals

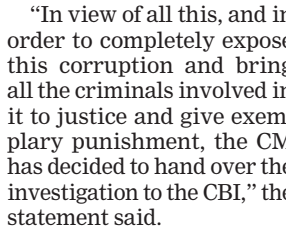
New Delhi: In a bid to curb user harm from AI-generated deepfakes and synthetically produced content, the IT Ministry has proposed draft amendments to IT rules that mandate labelling and prominent markers to ensure users can distinguish synthetic and authentic content, and mooted greater accountability for major social media platforms. **P3**

New Delhi: India has climbed to the ninth spot globally in total forest area and retained its third rank in annual forest area gain, according to a new report released by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). India follows Australia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Indonesia, placing it among the world's top 10 forest-rich nations.



PNN & AGENCIES

Authorities also suspect the involvement of interstate organised criminal syndicates, raising concerns over the depth and scale of the examination scam.



Meanwhile, the state government is also considering the establishment of a permanent commission for recruitment to the police and other uniformed services to ensure transparency and accountability in future selection processes.

REUTERS

India's Ministry of Com-

Modi also said the two leaders had talked, but gave no details about what was discussed. "Thank you,

As part of negotiations with Washington, India may allow increased imports of non-genetically modified US corn and soymeal, Mint reportedly cited the sources.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sources said, the couple's rented house was closed since last Sunday. The landlord became suspicious and informed the police. Upon being alerted by a call, the

Inquiries with the neighbours revealed that Patra was an alcoholic and the couple engaged in a quarrel Sunday. The events that followed are currently unknown. "Further details will be known after we establish contact with their relatives in Odisha," the police said.

required, the statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said.

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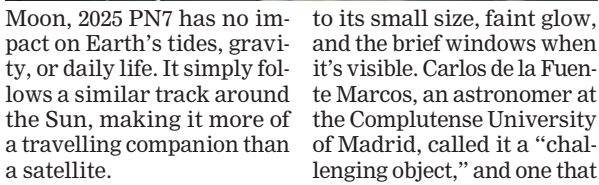
A cartoon illustration of two men in traditional Indian attire running towards the right. The man in the foreground is wearing an orange kurta and yellow dhoti, holding a white document. The man behind him is wearing a red kurta and yellow dhoti. They are running on a path with green bushes in the background. The cartoon is signed 'CHANDU' in the bottom left corner.

I think Lokpal deserves BMWs, sir—11 years and not a single corruption charge against us

the web of corruption may extend beyond Odisha, possibly involving operatives in Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and other states.

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manent commission for recruitment to the police and other uniformed services, to ensure transparency and accountability in future selection processes.



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For now, 2025 PN7 remains a fascinating reminder that Earth's journey through space is far from solitary — even if its companions are only temporary.

AGENCIES

DHARITRI YOUTH CONCLAVE 2025

ENVIRONMENTAL FILM COMPETITION

CALLING ALL YOUNG FILMMAKERS!

SUSHANT MISRA

FILMMAKER

Acclaimed filmmaker & FTII alumnus, he is known for Indradhanura Chhail and Bliswaprakash, the latter winning the 2000 National Award. Co-founder of BYOFF, he has been championing independent cinema platforms.

His recent film Josef – Born in Grace (2019) earned international acclaim winning the Silver Remi Award at Houston's WorldFest.

SHEHASIS DAS

FILMMAKER

Award-winning Odia filmmaker and founder of The Naked Eye Films, his film kokoli : Fish Out of Water (2021) won Best Director & Best Feature at Mexico International Film Festival.

With 30+ documentaries and 20 short films, his work showcases social and environment concerns.

LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION

31ST OCTOBER, 2025

SCAN TO SUBMIT

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
If you get a chance to display your presentation skills, don't lose it, says Ganesha. Your eloquence may receive wide acclaim. Your children too may give you reason to be proud. Do remember to take time out for the elderly in your family.

TAURUS
You may feel that you woke up on the wrong side of the bed today, says Ganesha. The day is filled with a fair share of jittery moments and lingering worry. Stand firm and remember that every night has a dawn. The law of averages will make your evening more enjoyable. You may discuss certain intimate issues with your sweetheart for the betterment of your relationship.

GEMINI
Your day will be spent indulging in activities that appeal to you. You may go out shopping with your family members, or go out to dinner with friends. A leisurely, entertainment filled, fun day awaits you, says Ganesha.

CANCER
You may face unwanted events and circumstances. As a result you will feel sad, yet you will wriggle out of it with your efficiency. Put in efforts in studies, says Ganesha. remember that in success destiny is one per cent and effort 99 per cent.

LEO
One way to assure success is by believing in oneself and one's abilities. Let this confidence and your high spirits take you to newer heights today, says Ganesha. Remain cheerful all day long, and you will see your hardships disappear as you tackle them with consummate skill. But more importantly, Ganesha foresees the day leading you to a fulfilling evening.

VIRGO
A medley of good and bad awaits you today. Emotional people will find you immature and inconsistent. But your bag o' jokes is never empty, and you remain the jester as always. Ganesha advises you to meditate and engage in spiritually rich activities to channel and focus all your talents.

LIBRA
There is no end to work, so buckle up, as it is highly probable that work pressure will take up most of your time today. This leaves precious little for your family, but as always, they fully understand. Ganesha expects you to be both hard-working and conscientious today. You may also launch a new business scheme, especially if you are self-employed.

SCORPIO
The spectre of financial instability will keep haunting you. But there can be a brighter side to life too, says Ganesha. Long overdue payments might get encashed today. And those blind bluffs you call sometimes in business might pay handsome rewards, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
You may have women swooning over you today; such is your charm and way with them, says Ganesha. But friends are highly valuable to you, and you shall spend much time with them cherishing their company and reliving amazing times spent together.

CAPRICORN
It may seem to be an unusual combination, but you will experience pain and pleasure in equal measure today, says Ganesha. The errands you may have to run for at home will leave you exhausted, so conserve some energy for the rest of the day. Your wit can get you whatever you want, but it's important that you use it in the right way and not just to meet your selfish interests.

AQUARIUS
Good news may hit home today. Promotion, profit, scholarship, anything you've been working for will probably materialise. You are ingenious, and will crack the toughest of problems with consummate ease. Ganesha sees money lenders and brokers doing well.

PISCES
Being a friend in need is what today will be about, says Ganesha. Making new acquaintances and associations is also on the cards. Try not to let jealousy mar your better judgement while you are at it.



DAKOTA JOHNSON'S DARING STYLE CHOICES

Hollywood actress Dakota Johnson has talked about her daring choice of wearing see-through dresses and said that she feels beautiful in them, hence she wears them. The actress opened up to *Vogue Germany* about her daring style choices and why she plans to continue rocking designs similar to her buzziest looks.

OLSEN'S CONDITION FOR STUDIO MOVIES

Hollywood actress Elizabeth Olsen is putting her foot down. The actress has said that she is no longer signing on to Hollywood studio movies that don't have a guaranteed theatrical release.



Gates' cameo in *Kyunki...*

Mumbai: Star Plus' iconic daily soap *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* (KSBKBT) has once again taken over television screens with its all-new season. In what could be one of the most unexpected and never-seen-before moments in Indian television history, *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* is all set to host a cameo that has stunned fans and industry insiders alike. The newly released promo shows Tulsi engaging in a video call with someone on her laptop, clearly thrilled about meeting him. While only a voice is heard, the suspense around the identity of this global guest has sparked wild speculation. But if inside sources are to be believed, the mystery guest might actually be none other than tech titan and philanthropist Bill Gates. Ever since the speculations have been out through the promo, fans were seen flooding to the comment section in expressing their excitement and thrill. If this pans out, this would mark Bill Gates' second-ever appearance on a television show, the first being his legendary cameo on *The Big Bang Theory*. For Indian television, this would be a groundbreaking moment, a global icon appearing in a domestic daily soap.



Rashmika's journey of heart, grit, bruises

Mumbai: Rashmika Mandanna starrer horror comedy, *Takma* has finally reached the movie buffs Tuesday, and taking a moment from the promotions, the *Animal* actress decided to look back at her incredible journey of making this movie. Rashmika took to social media and wrote, "Thamma... Ahh... where do I even begin... From the very first call-sheet to the final cut, this film has been more than just work.. it's been a journey of heart, of grit, of laughter and bruises and mornings we didn't want to wake up for and nights we didn't want to end (sic)." Thanking filmmaker Aditya Sarpotdar for trusting her, she shared, "To our incredible director, @aditya_a_sarpotdar sir my heart is full of respect for you.. You trusted me, you pushed me.. You saw what the film could be and you helped us get there.." Expressing her delight at sharing screen space with Ayushmann Khurrana, Nawazuddin Siddiqui, and Paresh Rawal, Rashmika penned, "@ayushmannk, @pareshrawalofficial sir, @nawazuddin_siddiqui sir doing scenes with you is so effortless and natural.. sooo happy we got to work on this one together.." Acknowledging all the efforts made by the crew during the shoot, Rashmika added, "To our crew.. the ones who came early, stayed late, carried equipment up hills, chased light and rain and every weather mood, patched up wounds.. Because of you, we stood on those locations, we captured those frames, we created those memories.." IANS

Palak redefining stardom



Mumbai: Actress Palak Tiwari made her mark with the hit music video *Bijlee Bijlee* opposite a top artist in 2021, immediately gaining widespread attention. Her unique look, confidence and presence in the video opened doors and prompted casting in the 2023 major film with a leading actor, signalling her transition into mainstream cinema. Born in Mumbai to a well-known television actress Shweta Tiwari and actor father Raja Choudhury, Palak grew up witnessing the film industry's workings and learnt early how to balance privilege with hard work. She studied psychology at college and consciously chose acting, modelling and brand ventures to craft her own identity, forging a path distinct from her family's legacy. Palak's fashion choices and social media presence reflect a modern blend of glamour and relatability. In 2023 Palak landed a prominent role in the big-budget film *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan* where she appeared opposite superstar Salman Khan, marking a significant step into major releases. Although the film's commercial performance received mixed reviews, critics noted her on-screen ease and the promise of growth, making her one of the most watched newcomers in Hindi cinema. Beyond acting and style, Palak speaks openly about industry pressures including beauty standards, celebrity scrutiny and personal growth. Her candid interviews reveal a thoughtful young performer aware of her influence and committed to evolving both craft and character.



First Indian actress to outearn her male co-stars

MUMBAI: According to Indian Express, at a time when male actors dominated the industry in both prominence and earnings, Suraiya broke all norms by commanding a fee of ₹1 to ₹2 lakh per film, more than her celebrated co-stars like Dilip Kumar, Dev Anand, and Ashok Kumar. This unprecedented pay made her India's highest-paid actress of the 1940s and early 1950s, reflecting not only her popularity but also her formidable box office pull. Suraiya's journey into films began at just 12 years old when she accompanied her maternal

uncle to film sets. She got her first acting role as the young Mumtaz Mahal in *Taj Mahal*. Her natural singing talent was discovered by composer Naushad while she was performing for All India Radio, leading to her playback debut in *Sharda* (1942). She went on to sing 338 songs, a rare feat for an actress-singer of her era. Suraiya and Dev Anand's love story captivated the nation. They starred together in seven films and were in a relationship from 1948 to 1951. Dev Anand famously borrowed money from friends to buy her a 3,000 diamond ring, a gesture of his deep affection.

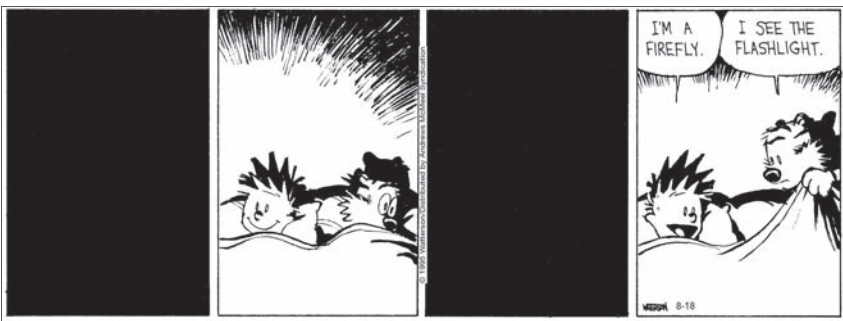
However, their relationship faced staunch opposition from Suraiya's conservative Muslim family, primarily because of their religious differences. When Suraiya's grandmother discovered the diamond ring, she removed it from Suraiya's finger and forbade any further contact with Dev Anand. Heartbroken, Dev Anand reportedly threw the ring into the Arabian Sea. Though he proposed to her again years later, Suraiya declined, unwilling to defy her family. She remained unmarried for the rest of her life, and many believe her personal heartbreak also cast a shadow

over her later career. After her split with Dev Anand, Suraiya's career faced a downturn, with several of her 1950s films failing at the box office. Yet she achieved a triumphant comeback with *Mirza Ghalib* (1954), which was both a critical and commercial success. India's then-Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru praised her moving performance, remarking, "You brought Mirza Ghalib's soul back to life." Today, Suraiya is remembered as one of Indian cinema's most talented actresses and a true singing star who left an indelible mark on film history.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

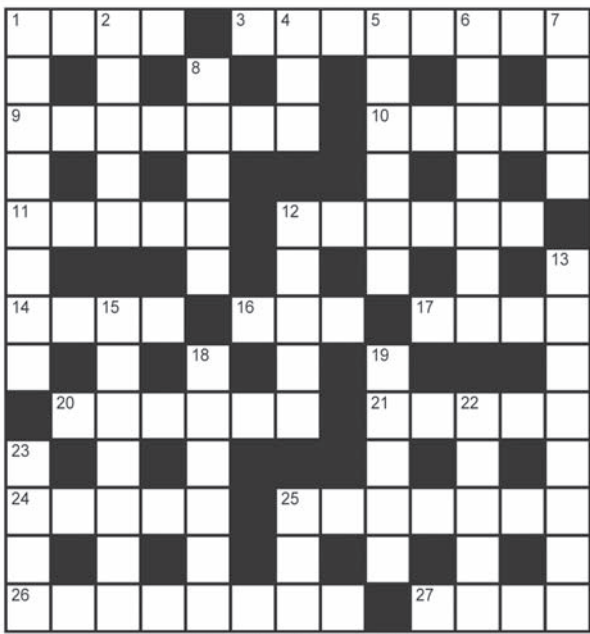


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- Short run
 - And so forth (2,6)
 - Martinique neighbour (2,5)
 - Similar
 - Cut of beef
 - Theatre ad
 - Wagers
 - Busy airport
 - Paper purchase
 - Pond sounds
 - Laud
 - Venomous snake
 - Get a divorce (5,2)
 - Circus performers
 - Twist
 - Sharp as a tack
 - Broods
 - Highly contagious viral disease
 - Storm warning?
 - Sacred beetle of ancient Egypt
 - Water sources
 - Demolish
 - Hot rock
 - Congel
- Down**
- Identify
 - Chip dip
 - Oolong, for one
 - Pass, as time
 - Curse (4,3)
 - Bailiwick

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

G	R	N	C	S	T
B	U	R	E	A	U
L	O	P	R	E	O
S	L	O	E	S	E
P	A	E	P	G	O
P	A	S	T	U	R
L	Y	G	D	E	N
O	B	E	S	E	L
A	Q	S	A	Y	
A	C	O	S	T	I
O	A	O	I	T	A
E	R	A	S	E	R
E	H	K	R	R	E

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

DURGAPUR SHAME

Accused sent to judicial custody; TI parade Oct 24



AGENCIES

Kolkata, Oct 22: A Durgapur court Wednesday rejected the bail pleas of four accused in the alleged gangrape of a second-year medical student and remanded them to judicial custody. The court also directed that a Test Identification (TI) parade for all the accused be conducted October 24.

Of the six persons arrested in connection with the case, four were produced before the court Wednesday afternoon, and the judge ordered five days of judicial custody for them.

Tuesday, two other accused in the same case were produced before the court, which had similarly rejected their bail pleas and remanded them to judicial custody. The court has also ordered the Test Identification (TI) parade of all the accused October 24. All six accused will be produced before the court again October 27, when their judicial custody ends.

On the other hand, the court Wednesday examined the WhatsApp chats between the victim and her classmate. Public Prosecutor Bibhas Chatterjee said, “There is no more confusion in this case. Those who are

truly involved will be punished. The court heard the statements of two persons Tuesday, while the bail applications of the remaining four were heard today. However, the government opposed their bail pleas.”

He further stated that the victim’s classmate, who has been arrested, claimed he had no involvement in the crime. “However, we have submitted substantial information to the court. We hope the case will be decided soon,” Chatterjee said.

Sources said the police have invoked additional sections against two of the six accused in the case.

Earlier, a case had been registered against the six arrested persons under sections related to gangrape, criminal conspiracy, common intention, and extortion by force of money, property, or benefit through intimidation. According to police sources, in addition to these, sections pertaining to extortion, wrongful confinement, and outraging the modesty of a woman have now been added against two of the accused.

October 10, a second-year medical student from Odisha was allegedly gangraped by five persons in a forested area

Victim in relationship with classmate: lawyer

Kolkata: In a surprising claim, the lawyer of an arrested individual—victim’s classmate in the Durgapur gang-rape case—told a Durgapur court Wednesday that the accused and the victim are in a relationship.

The statement was made as the classmate was presented before the court along with three other accused. Wednesday, the arrested classmate’s lawyer, Pragyadipto Roy, filed a bail application in court.

He argued that the victim had gone out of the private medical college and hospital with his client of her own free will, as indicated in her first statement. The lawyer also claimed that his client is in a romantic relationship with the victim and pleaded for bail, stating there is no rape charge against him.

Opposing the bail of the victim’s classmate, public prosecutor Bibhas Chatterjee said the victim had given a separate statement, claiming that her classmate took her out to eat ‘puchka’ (pani puri) and had also molested her.

near a private medical college and hospital in Durgapur, West Burdwan district.

Based on the victim’s complaint, the police had earlier arrested all five accused in the case. Authorities stated that only one person was directly involved in the physical sexual assault of the medical student. Later, the victim’s male friend was also arrested after investigators found inconsistencies in his statements during interrogation.

CEO conference kicks off for SIR preparedness



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: A two-day conference of Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs), organised by

the Election Commission of India (ECI), began Wednesday at the India International Institute of Democracy and Electoral Management

Follow IMD advisory: Padhee to farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: The farmers should follow the instructions issued by the Indian Meteorological department (IMD), advised Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment Principal Secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee, while chairing a preparatory meeting on impending rainfall here Wednesday.

The meeting was also attended by Agriculture Director Shubham Saxena, IMD Director Manorama Mohapatra and OUAT Dean Prasanjit Mishra.

According to the IMD, there is no confirmed information on formation of cyclone till now. “However, due to the withdrawal of the south-west monsoon, there is a possibility of scattered rainfall at some places in the state. And especially, there is a possibility of thunderstorms and lightning in coastal Odisha,” Mohapatra said.

This year, the state has received 100 per cent normal rainfall and due to this, a good crop yield is expected. The department has advised the farmers not to panic after hearing any misleading information. In case of need, farmers can contact 155333 or contact the nearest Regional Agricultural Research Centre or Agriculture Officer.

(IIIDEM), New Delhi.

Odisha’s Chief Electoral Officer RS Gopalan, along with Additional CEO Sushant Mishra and Deputy CEO Laxmi Prasad Sahu, attended the event.

The conference, inaugurated under Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, was also attended by Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi.

The Election Commission reviewed the preparedness of CEO offices across all states and Union Territories (UTs) for the upcoming nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise.

The conference follows a preparatory meeting for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR)

held September 10.

During the session, detailed presentations were made on voter numbers from the previous SIR, the qualifying date of the last SIR, and the overall voter list status in each state and UTs.

The Commission also assessed the progress made by CEOs in mapping current voters against the previous voter base in their respective states and UTs.

Additionally, it reviewed the status of appointment and training of District Election Officers (DEOs), Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), Assistant EROs (AEROs), Booth Level Officers (BLOs), and Booth Level Agents (BLAs).

Police officer arrested for exploiting colleague on pretext of marriage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: A police inspector was arrested here Wednesday for allegedly having sexual relations with a woman sub-inspector by promising to marry her.

Mahila Police arrested Yashobant Acharya, who is a native of Kandhamal district.

He was arrested on the basis of a case registered at Mahila police station here Tuesday after the victim lodged a complaint.

A case was registered against the police officer under Section 69 of BNS and he was forwarded to the court

According to the police, the accused inspector had allegedly established a physical relationship with the woman police officer on the pretext of marriage but later married someone else.

Speaking to PTI, Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena said, “We have arrested the police inspector (armed) and registered a case under Section 69 of BNS (sexual intercourse by employing deceitful means) and forwarded him to the court.”

Preparatory meet for Shree Anna 2025 Symposium held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: Ahead of the International Symposium on Shree Anna 2025 scheduled for November 10–11, the monitoring committee of the Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment department held a preparatory meeting.

The meeting, chaired by Principal Secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee, was attended by Agriculture Director Shubham Saxena, OUAT Dean Prasannajit Mishra, additional directors, and senior officers, who shared details regarding the organisation of the upcoming International Symposium.

This year’s theme is “International Symposium on Shree Anna & Women’s Participation



in Agricultural Heritage.” A special session will focus on women farmers, highlighting their equal contribution to agriculture alongside men.

The International Symposium on Shree Anna will be inaugurated by the Chief Minister, while the Governor will grace the valedictory ceremony. The event will see participation from agriculturists, scientists, women agripreneurs, NGOs, FPOs, and international organisations such as FAO, MS-SRF, IFPRI, and SEWA.

Olive Ridley surveillance hit

AGENCIES

Kendrapara, Oct 22: Sea surveillance during the upcoming Olive Ridley turtle nesting season at the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary is likely to be severely affected as most of the interceptor vessels remain defunct and unrepared, wildlife activists have alleged.

The eco-friendly interceptor vessels Gahirmatha-I and Gahirmatha-II equipped with advanced safety and monitoring systems, were procured from Mumbai-based Mahindra Marine Limited to protect endangered Olive Ridley turtles and curb illegal trawling during the

nesting season.

In 2016, the state government had provided two high-speed, technology-based interceptor vessels to the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary.

However, both Gahirmatha-I and Gahirmatha-II have since developed technical snags and are lying idle. Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary in-charge Ranger Kalipendra Pradhan said the engines of both vessels were manufactured in Japan, and spare parts are not available locally or in other states.

“A three-member team from IIT-Kharagpur visited last year to repair the engines but failed to restore them,” he added.

Motorcyclist rescues woman from kidnappers in Jajpur dist

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, Oct 22: In a movie-like turn of events, a 20-year-old woman was rescued from her kidnappers after a motorcyclist, hearing her cries for help, intercepted their car and alerted passersby, police said Wednesday.

The dramatic incident happened in Jajpur district Tuesday night, they said.

The woman was returning home in Muraripur on her scooter, along with a friend, from her workplace in the Jaraka Bazar area. On the Kantamalia-Thannual Road, a motorcycle sped from the rear and blocked the road, stopping them, according to the police complaint.

Soon, three men arrived at the spot in a car and forced the woman into the vehicle, it said.

While returning home from work on her scooter with a friend, the woman was blocked on Kantamalia-Thannual Road by a motorcycle, after which three men arrived in a car and forcibly took her

As the car sped, a motorcyclist coming from the opposite direction suspected something amiss, hearing the woman’s cries for help, police said. He chased the car and man-

aged to intercept it. A few passersby also gathered at the spot, following which a fight broke out with the kidnappers, who fled as the crowd started swelling and the police were alerted.

2ND JAYANTA MAHAPATRA MEMORIAL LECTURE

KFT celebrates poet’s enduring legacy



RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: The second edition of Jayanta Mahapatra Memorial Lecture (JMML), organised by Ketaki Foundation Trust (KFT) was held at Gita Govinda Sadan here Wednesday.

The evening brought together eminent writers, poets, scholars, and poetry enthusiasts, who celebrated the remarkable contribution to Indian poetry and literary legacy of Jayanta Mahapatra—one of country’s foremost poets.

The event featured readings of Mahapatra’s poems in Odia and English by Subhashree Lenka, Saqti Mohanty, Swapna Mishra, Suman Das and Bharadwaj Mishra, each adding their unique interpretation to his work.

The session was graced by eminent Israeli poet and editor Diti Ronen as speaker, renowned poet and critic Soubhagyakumar Misra as chief guest and KFT trustee Rabin-dra K Swain who presided over the event.

Two publications – Chan-

drabh g, a magazine of Indian writings edited by Swain, and ‘Asurakhita Chera’, a poetry collection by Diti Ronen, translated into Odia by Basudev Sunani – were also released on the occasion.

Delivering the lecture, Ronen said that she is honoured to be invited as the speaker and recited Mahapatra’s poems, noting, “Mahapatra was deeply rooted in his soil.”

Speaking on war, peace, and Hebrew poetry, she added, “The history of Hebrew poetry reflects the Jewish struggle for survival,” mentioning poets Paul Celan, Primo Levi, and Nelly Sachs. Appreciating the organisers, she said, “Instituting the lecture series is a beautiful tribute to Mahapatra’s legacy.” Speaking on the occasion, Misra said, “Jayanta babu’s life and writings have profoundly influenced generations of poets and readers.”

WEATHER

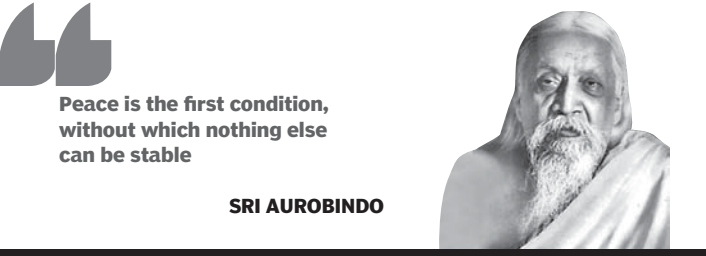
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	33.5°	31.2°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thundershowers
Min Temp	23.4°	21.6°	
Humidity	79%	89%	
Rainfall	TRACE	2.4mm	

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No safe route: 11 girl students drop out over wild animal fears





Xi's Purges

During his 13 years in power, Xi Jinping has steadily tightened his grip on all levers of authority in China – the Communist Party of China (CPC), the state apparatus, and the military – while expanding surveillance into virtually every aspect of society. Yet his recent purge of nine top-ranking generals, like those before it, shows that he still sees enemies everywhere.

After taking power in 2012, Xi launched a crackdown on corruption within the CPC and the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The campaign was initially popular, because China's one-party system is rife with graft and abuse of power. But it soon became clear that enforcement was highly selective – a tool not for building a more transparent or effective system, but for consolidating power in Xi's hands. In Xi's China, advancement depends less on competence or integrity than on earning the leader's personal trust.

But even after more than a decade of promoting only loyalists, Xi continues to dismiss officials regularly, including top military commanders. According to the US Office of the Director of National Intelligence, nearly five million officials at all levels of government have been indicted for corruption under Xi. And this is to say nothing of those who simply disappear without explanation.

True to form, Xi's regime claims that the military leaders swept up by his latest purge – including General He Weidong, a member of the Politburo, Vice Chair of the Central Military Commission, and the third-highest-ranking figure in China's military hierarchy – committed "disciplinary violations" and "duty-related crimes." But a more plausible explanation is that Xi is playing an interminable game of Whac-a-Rival, desperately trying to preserve his grip on power.

Xi's fears are not entirely misplaced: each new purge deepens mistrust among China's elite and risks turning former loyalists into enemies. From Mao Zedong to Joseph Stalin, there is ample evidence that one-man rule breeds paranoia. By now, Xi may well have lost the ability to distinguish allies from foes. At 72, Xi remains so insecure in his position that, unlike even Mao, he has refused to designate a successor, fearing that a visible heir could hasten his own downfall.

None of this bodes well for China. By refusing to lay the groundwork for an eventual leadership transition, Xi sharply increases the risk that the end of his rule – however that comes – will usher in political instability. In the meantime, Xi's emphasis on personal fealty over ideological conformity is weakening institutional cohesion in a system once grounded in collective leadership. Coupled with his arbitrary firings and prosecutions, Chinese governance is now increasingly defined by sycophancy and anxiety, rather than competence and consistency.

China's military is paying a particularly steep price for Xi's insecurity. In recent years, the PLA has undergone sweeping structural reforms aimed at transforming it into a modern fighting force capable of "winning informationized wars." But Xi's purges risk undermining this effort by disrupting military planning and leadership. For example, his abrupt removal in 2023 of the leaders of the PLA's Rocket Force, which oversees China's arsenal of nuclear and conventional missiles, may have jeopardized China's strategic deterrent.

Replacing experienced commanders with untested loyalists might ensure Xi's political survival – and Chinese leaders have often used the military to safeguard their own power – but it does nothing for national security. And when generals are preoccupied primarily with political survival, both morale and operational readiness suffer. Can the PLA fight and win a war against a major adversary like the United States or India while operating under the political constraints Xi has imposed on it?

So far, Xi has advanced his expansionist agenda through stealth and coercion rather than open warfare. But a paranoid leader surrounded by sycophants unwilling or unable to challenge him is always at risk of strategic miscalculation. Recall that Stalin decimated the Red Army's leadership on the eve of the Nazi invasion – with disastrous results. In Xi's case, it might be China that does the invading, if he orders an amphibious assault on Taiwan.

For all the pomp surrounding China's rise, the country is beset by structural problems, including a slowing economy, rising youth unemployment, and an aging and declining population. Popular discontent may well be growing, but it is masked by repression, just as any potential challenge to Xi's leadership is preempted by purges and prosecutions. Ultimately, Xi seems able to rule only through fear.

But fear is not a foundation for long-term stability. A leader consumed by fear of disloyalty may command obedience but not genuine fidelity. Obedience is not merely a poor substitute for strength; it can become a source of fragility, as it leaves little room for creativity, competency, or collaboration. The great irony of Xi's approach is that the more he seeks to consolidate power in his own hands, the more vulnerable his rule becomes.

Mao's purges culminated in chaos and national trauma. Xi's methods are more sophisticated, but the underlying logic is the same – as



Brahma Chellaney

Mao's purges culminated in chaos and national trauma. Xi's methods are more sophisticated, but the underlying logic is the same – as could be the results



Bhabani Shankar Nayak

THE INDIA-UK FTA PRIMARILY CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR BRITISH CORPORATIONS OPERATING IN INDIA, OFFERING LITTLE BENEFIT TO THE WORKING PEOPLE OF EITHER COUNTRY

The government of India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the British government led by Prime Minister Keir Starmer have claimed that the India-UK Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, also known as the India-UK Free Trade Agreement will usher in a new era of mutually beneficial partnership.

However, Starmer's two-day trade mission to Mumbai on 8 and 9 October followed by 10 Downing Street's press release on 9 October reveals that cooking fish in its own oil is the British trade strategy in India. The neocolonial trade strategy is more about plundering wealth from the people of India and transferring it to British capitalist corporates to sustain their crumbling economy. The UK-India joint statement reveals nothing but the Downing Street's press release claims that there are 29 investment proposals in India worth over £3.6 billion. The dissection of these investments reveals how this trade deal benefits British corporations more than India and the investment figures can be questioned as well. The UK is using HSBC India, which has committed \$1 billion to launch its innovation bank and invest in India by lending to startups at various stages of their operations. As part of this non-dilutive debt capital financing, HSBC India's initiative allows Britain to retain ownership without spending a penny from the British Treasury. While Indian capital flows freely into Britain, Indian workers are not afforded the same freedom. The British Prime Minister has stated that the UK will not relax visa rules for Indian workers. The so-called "cultural ties" between the two nations appear to revolve more around business interests than genuine people-to-people connections. Similarly, Graphcore, in partnership with the Japanese investment firm SoftBank Group, plans to invest up to £1 billion in India's semiconduc-



The much-celebrated idea of 'cultural exchange' is largely a façade; business interests remain the real driving force, consistent with Britain's historical image as a nation of shopkeepers

tor industry. This investment includes establishing a new AI engineering campus in Bangalore. Once again, Britain is not contributing any funds from its treasury toward this initiative.

Tide, the UK's digital-only financial platform, has pledged to invest £500 million over five years starting in 2026 to expand its operations in India. However, it offers little in terms of new technology transfer or operational expertise that does not already exist in the Indian market. Instead, its entry may dilute market share and weaken existing Indian financial and banking platforms through increased competition. Similarly, the investment plans of Revolut, Paysecure, and Prudential are no different from Tide's strategy, as all seek to enter the Indian market under similar terms and objectives.

GEDU Global Education plans to invest £200 million in India. However, the goal is not to expand access to education but rather to further deepen the privatisation of the education sector—from schools to universities—by creating a platform for British educational institutions to enter the Indian market and pursue education as a business for profit. Similarly, the National Open College Network and the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) of

fer little of genuine educational value beyond selling qualifications and certificates, primarily to generate substantial profits from India's education sector.

Acron Aviation, Rapiscan UK, and ICF Projects are investing in the Indian aviation market in ways that primarily benefit British manufacturing and service sectors. However, these ventures neither involve significant technology transfer nor establish production facilities in India that could generate local employment. Acron Aviation expects to earn £68 million, while Rapiscan UK projects £60 million in revenue over five years from the Indian aviation market. ICF Projects anticipates generating £4.2 million in revenue from India within three years.

Clinisupplies plans to invest £36 million to enter the Indian market under the pretext of establishing a new medical device plant and a Global Capability Centre in Madhya Pradesh. Consultancy firms such as Mace, Croftz, and Lloyd's Register are also investing in India, but they are expected to recover their investments primarily through management consultancy fees, without contributing meaningful value to the Indian market in terms of knowledge and skills. Similarly, FIDO AI and Microbira's AI platforms are entering the Indian market solely to generate

profits, offering little in terms of new skills, knowledge, or technological innovation.

Allenwest, Snorkel, Arup, and Rail Vision UK could make meaningful contributions if they were to share technology, skills, and knowledge while developing genuine partnerships with their Indian counterparts. However, these companies are making only minimal investments while aiming to generate substantial profits from the Indian market.

Turntide Technologies and Oxford Nanopore Technologies are investing in India but offer little that is new to the Indian market in terms of technology or services already available locally. Similarly, Sintali Limited and Wavesight Limited appear to view the Indian market solely as a source of profit, with no meaningful contribution in innovation or capability building. Such companies risk undermining the Government of India's Make in India initiative by prioritising profit extraction over genuine partnership and development. Likewise, Frugalpac, ITC, Rhea Distilleries, Rutland Square Spirits Forecast, and A.G. Barr PLC are expected to weaken India's domestic distillery and brewery industries through their market entry and competitive practices.

The rent-seeking nature of British trade and investment strategies reveals that the majority of UK investments in India are concentrated in the service sector, whereas most of India's 64 investments in Britain—worth approximately £1.3 billion—focus on infrastructure development. The India-UK FTA primarily creates opportunities for British corporations operating in India, offering little benefit to the working people of either country. The much-celebrated idea of "cultural exchange" is largely a façade; business interests remain the real driving force, consistent with Britain's historical image as a nation of shopkeepers.

The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University.

SPECTRUM

SUSTAINABILITY

Creative destruction for growth

Human history is crammed with evidence of what economists call creative destruction—the process of innovation that propels economic growth. The Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences 2025 has been awarded to Joel Mokyr, a professor at Northwestern University in the US; French economist Philippe Aghion of Collège de France, and Peter Howitt of Brown University for explaining how innovation leads to sustained economic growth and the process of "creative destruction"—a concept widely regarded by economists as a central feature of capitalist economies.

According to The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the Prize was split, with half going to Mokyr for explaining the role of technological innovation and the other half to Aghion and Howitt for identifying technology as a crucial driver of long-term economic growth and developing the mathematical model of creative destruction. The word "creative" refers to the new innovations brought to market and "destruction" to the fate of those antiquated products and processes that are replaced by the new innovation. Creative destruction always produces

winners and losers – where new innovations make older ones obsolete. For example, smartphones have displaced landlines and payphones (as well as alarm clocks and cameras). The evolution of transportation itself, from the use of animals to the invention of the wheel, railways, and finally the aeroplane, has been a long process of inventing newer, more efficient ways of travelling, often dismantling outmoded ones.

In Indian mythology, "creative destruction" refers to the cosmological realm occupied by the King of Dancers, Shiva-Nataraj, whose continuous dance of creation and destruction governs the universe. While German economist and sociologist Werner Sombart introduced the term creative destruction, it was first coined by Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter in 1942. Sombart first used creative destruction in 1913 to describe how destruction fuels creation, using the example of how wood scarcity forced the invention of substitutes and new heating methods.

Both Karl Marx and Joseph Schumpeter used the idea of "creative destruction" to describe capitalism's inherent instability, but they differed in their conclu-

sions. In Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy (1942), Schumpeter described the process where new innovations replace outdated systems and technologies. This was in contrast with Marx who argued that the creative-destructive forces unleashed by capitalism would eventually lead to its ultimate collapse as a system.

Mokyr, Aghion, and Howitt's work reminds us that real progress includes qualitative improvements, new medicines, safer transport, cleaner energy, better food, and faster communication, all of which enhance human well-being. But it is widely recognised that many countries, including India, have historically prioritised GDP growth as the primary metric of national progress, often without giving equal weight to qualitative improvements in citizens' lives.

It is important to note here that sustained growth is not synonymous with sustainable growth. Sustained growth that focuses on a consistent increase in metrics like GDP can have significant negative side effects such as higher pollution, increasing inequality, and the unsustainable use of natural resources. Mokyr believes technology can some-

times help solve these issues, but only when guided by strong well-designed public policies.

The Nobel laureates' work shows that we must be aware of, and thwart threats to continued growth. These threats may come from a few companies being allowed to dominate the market, restrictions on academic freedom, expanding knowledge at regional rather than global levels, and obstructions from potentially disadvantaged groups. If we fail to respond to these threats, the machine that has given us sustained growth, creative destruction, may cease working – and we would once again need to become accustomed to stagnation. Through his research in economic history, Mokyr has demonstrated that a continual flow of useful knowledge is necessary.

There is a growing global movement to move beyond a narrow focus on economic output toward a more holistic view of well-being. It is imperative to have sustainable growth that integrates economic viability with environmental protection and social equity.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

CREATIVE DESTRUCTION ALWAYS PRODUCES WINNERS AND LOSERS -- WHERE NEW INNOVATIONS MAKE OLDER ONES OBSOLETE

WISDOM CORNER

The snow goose need not bathe to make itself white. Neither need you do anything but be yourself

LAO TZU

All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little

EDMUND BURKE

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1956:** The International Atomic Energy Agency was created with the purpose of increasing the contribution of atomic energy to world peace.
- 1956:** The Hungarian Revolution began with a massive demonstration in Budapest.
- 1983:** Beirut barracks bombing took place. Two bombs exploded in front of American and French barracks during the Lebanese Civil War, killing about 300 French and American military personnel. Islamic Jihad took responsibility for the bombings.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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



Major reprieve

Sir, This refers to "H-1B fee: US issues fresh guidelines," *Orissa POST*, Oct 22. In a major reprieve for Indian professionals and students in the United States, the Trump administration has decided to withdraw the proposed \$100,000 H-1B visa application fee, which had stirred widespread anxiety across the global technology and education communities. The move comes as a relief for thousands of Indian engineers, IT specialists, and students pursuing higher education on F-1 visas, who feared the exorbitant cost would block their access to opportunities in the US. The proposal faced fierce opposition both within America and internationally. US business groups, educational institutions, and legal experts argued that such a steep fee would discourage global talent, harm innovation, and weaken the country's competitive edge. The decision to exempt the fee reflects Washington's recognition of the vital contribution Indian professionals make to the American technology and research ecosystem. It also underscores the influence of trade diplomacy and economic pragmatism in shaping immigration policy. By reversing the measure, the US signals a renewed commitment to openness, global collaboration, and fair access, reinforcing the strength of Indo-US relations and the shared goal of nurturing innovation-driven growth in an increasingly interconnected world..
N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Pragmatic neutrality

Sir, Over 460 prominent Jewish figures, including former Israeli officials, authors, and Oscar winners, have urged the United Nations and world leaders to impose sanctions on Israel for alleged genocide in Gaza, calling silence a betrayal of Jewish ethics and global justice. They demand halting arms transfers, enforcing international court rulings, and ensuring humanitarian aid. Their appeal reflects mounting outrage over the civilian suffering in Gaza. India, however, maintains a cautious stance—balancing deep defense ties with Israel and strong relations with Arab nations. While advocating restraint, dialogue, and adherence to international law, New Delhi avoids direct condemnation to protect strategic and economic interests. This pragmatic neutrality, though diplomatically sound, has drawn criticism for ignoring moral accountability amid escalating humanitarian distress in Gaza.

RS Narula, PATIALA

Homebound reaches Oscars, skips hometown screening



While the film has received critical-acclaim in international festivals, residents of Devari say they are yet to see the movie

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Basti (UP), Oct 22: Neeraj Ghaywan's *Homebound* has brought Mohammad Sayyub and Amrit Kumar's heart-breaking story to the global stage but the people of the village in Uttar Pradesh's Basti district are still waiting for a screening of the film.

The movie, which had its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in May and has been chosen as India's official selection for the 2026 Academy Awards, is inspired by journalist Basharat Peer's The New York Times article "Taking Amrit Home" (A Friendship, a Pandemic and a Death Beside the Highway). It was released in theatres last month.

The article narrated the true story of Amrit Kumar, a migrant worker from Devari village in Basti's Bankati block, who collapsed from heat stroke on a highway while returning home from Surat during the Covid-19 pandemic, and his friend Mohammad Saiyub refused to leave his side.

While the film has received critical-acclaim in international festivals, residents of Devari say they are yet to see the movie.

The nearest cinema hall is about 25 kilometres away, a distance few villagers can afford to

travel. It is also not known if the movie, produced by Karan Johar's Dharma Productions, is playing in the theatre.

Mohammad Yunus, Sayyub's father, said he hopes the makers arrange a screening of the film in the village.

The story is based on our son's life. The filmmakers should arrange for a screening here and ensure that our family receives a share of what this success brings, he said.

Pintu, a local resident who helped with photography during the film's shoot, agreed with Yunus, saying, We are proud that a film based on Sayyub and Amrit's friendship has reached the Oscars. But we hope some part of the money earned from this film goes to Amrit's family and for the development of our village.

Village representative Surendra Patel said the people of Devari were proud that the story of their sons had taken the village's name to the world.

The film's earnings should help Amrit's family and support our village's growth. There should also be a centre here that promotes literature and stories that inspire humanity, like this one, he added.

Amrit's family, including his parents Ramcharan and Subhawati, younger brother

Shivam, and sisters Suman and Shivani are happy with the recognition but hoped the film's success would help fund the children's education and future.

Earlier this month, there were reports claiming that the team of "*Homebound*" paid Rs 10,000 to the family of Amrit for the story rights.

Ghaywan dismissed these reports, saying the sum cited was merely a small token he personally gave to Amrit's father Ram Charan during his initial research as a parting gesture.

Some of you have expressed concerns about reports claiming that the family whose life inspired *Homebound* was compensated with mere Rs 10,000-a shamefully low amount.

"I want to clarify that this sum was a small token I personally gave to Ram Charan ji (Amrit's father) many years ago during my initial research, simply as a parting gesture. Please do not mistake this for the full extent of the compensation provided," he wrote on X earlier this month.

Ghaywan added that the family had expressed their happiness regarding the support they received. "Neither I, nor the producers would ever reduce such a deeply personal story to such a pittance. The families' contributions are invaluable and deeply meaningful to me.

"We have honoured their trust and stories with sincere respect and significant support... I personally don't want to mention the number because that would disrespect the bond I share with Amrit and Saiyub-the original heroes of '*Homebound*,'" the filmmaker said in the same post.

Starring Ishaan Khatter, Vishal Jethwa and Janhvi Kapoor in the lead roles, "*Homebound*" had its world premiere at the 78th Cannes Film Festival as part of the Un Certain Regard segment.

The official synopsis of the film reads "Two childhood friends -- Shoaib and Chandan -- from a small North Indian village chase a police job that promises them the dignity they've long been denied. But as they inch closer to their dream, mounting desperation threatens the bond that holds them together."

Homebound is executive produced by Hollywood great Martin Scorsese.



'Nihang Sikh' warriors ride horses as they show skills during the 'Fateh Diwas', Victory Day, celebration a day after 'Bandi Chhor Divas', in Amritsar, Punjab, Wednesday

HELPING HAND

UP sends wheat seeds for flood-hit Punjab

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Oct 22: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath flagged off the dispatch of 1,000 quintals of wheat seeds to flood-hit Punjab to ensure that foodgrain production in that state does not dip drastically due to the natural calamity.

Speaking at an event in the state capital, he said, "In this time of crisis, we stand with the farmers of Punjab. With this commitment, the Uttar Pradesh government, through the Agriculture Department and the Uttar Pradesh Seed Development Corporation, is dispatching 2,500 bags, equivalent to 1,000 quintals of wheat seeds, for Punjab.

He said due to heavy rainfall in Punjab this year, all aspects of public life were severely affected. "Even the seeds stored there were damaged by the flood. It is feared that this may impact the agriculture in the region and affect the yields of hardworking farmers," he said, showing solidarity with flood-hit peasants in Punjab.

In a post on X, CM Adityanath said, "Participated in a



programme organised today in Lucknow for the flag-off of vehicles for seed assistance to flood-affected farmers of Punjab by the Uttar Pradesh government. In the adverse situation arising from excessive rainfall and floods, the Uttar Pradesh government stands in solidarity with farmer brothers of Punjab."

Earlier, addressing a gathering on the occasion of Police Commemoration Day, the Chief Minister cautioned citizens to guard against cybercrimes.

"In the current environment, the digital revolution has made our lives easier, while challenges like cybercrime have also emerged before us. The police force has taken concrete steps for effective action against cybercrime," said CM Adityanath.

Diwali smog: AQI in Punjab drops

Chandigarh: After Diwali, the air quality in most parts of Punjab and Haryana dropped to the 'severe' and 'hazardous' categories Tuesday. According to AQI.in, a platform monitoring air quality index (AQI), Chandigarh recorded poor air quality at 146. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', 401 and 450 'severe' and above 450 'severe plus'. In Punjab, the AQI was registered at 209 in Ludhiana, 225 in Amritsar, 198 in Jalandhar, 242 in Bathinda and 233 in Patiala. In another agrarian state, the AQI in Faridabad was 247 and 343 in Sonapat, 201 in Karnal, 328 in Bhiwani, 247 in Jind and 279 in Charkhi Dadri. Both Punjab and Haryana have been blamed for the rise in air pollution levels owing to farm fires. However, this year both Punjab and Haryana recorded much fewer farm fires compared to the previous years. Punjab reported 45 incidents of stubble burning Monday, a slight decrease from the record 67 farm fires reported on October 19, the highest so far this season. Tarn Taran and Amritsar districts accounted for the majority of such cases, according to the Punjab Pollution Control Board data. Stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana is often blamed for the rise in air pollution in Delhi-NCR. A pollution expert blamed the spike in AQI in Chandigarh to winds circulating over Punjab and Haryana, carrying pollution from nearby areas, that passed through Chandigarh.



Nature's pause lowers Punjab fires

The state saw 415 farm fires from Sept 15 to Oct 21, down from 1,510 YoY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patiala, Oct 22: Punjab recorded 415 farm fire incidents between September 15 and October 21 this year, down from 1,510 incidents during the same period last year, data showed.

The number of farm fires recorded in 2023 during this period stood at 1,764, Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) data showed.

The sharp drop comes amid delayed paddy harvest as rains lashed the state until the first week of October. Damage caused by the floods in Punjab also delayed crop harvest at some places.

Officials say stricter field monitoring and awareness campaigns telling farmers about the ill effects of stubble burning have also had an impact.

According to the PPCB data, the total area under paddy cultivation in Punjab this year is 31.72 lakh hectares. Till October 21, 32.84 per cent of this had been harvested.



GRADUAL DECLINE	
YEAR	FARM FIRES
2024	10,909
2023	36,663
2022	49,922
2021	71,304
2020	76,590

In Tarn Taran district, 67.95 per cent of the area under paddy cultivation has been harvested. In Amritsar, the figure stands at 70 per cent. These two districts have reported the majority of the farm fires.

In Barnala, 8.10 per cent of the area under paddy cultivation has

been harvested, followed by 8 per cent in Moga and 17 per cent in Sangrur.

Of the total farm fires, Tarn Taran reported 136, Amritsar 120, Ferozepur 41, Patiala 27, Gurdaspur 16 and Sangrur 14, according to the data.

The number of stubble burning incidents in the state stood at 116 October 11 and went up to 415 over the last 12 days.

As crop harvest picks up pace in most districts and farmers get their fields ready for sowing wheat in the days to come, it remains to be seen if this number will increase further.

According to the PPCB, fines worth Rs 9.40 lakh in the form of environmental compensation have been imposed in 189 cases of stubble burning so far. Of the total amount, Rs 6.25 lakh has been recovered.

Additionally, 170 FIRs, including 61 in Tarn Taran and 50 in Amritsar, have been registered over stubble burning incidents.

Diwali bonus dispute makes road toll free

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Agra (UP), Oct 22: Toll employees at the Fatehabad plaza on the Agra-Lucknow Expressway went on strike over a Diwali bonus dispute, allowing thousands of vehicles to pass without paying the required fee, officials said Wednesday.

According to officials, the protest erupted late October 19 when the staff ex-

pressed anger over receiving a lower-than-expected festive bonus. The agitated employees removed the toll barriers, allowing around 3,000 vehicles to pass from night to morning.

Toll Manager Krishna Jurel said that while vehicles crossed without barriers, the company did not suffer significant financial losses.

"According to records, the loss amounts to only

around Rs 20,000. All vehicle FASTag scanners were active, and toll charges have been deducted automatically," he said. Around 90 employees work at the toll plaza. They were given a 10 per cent Diwali bonus, but they had demanded 50 per cent. After discussions, the protest ended, and management assured the workers of a 7 per cent salary hike to address their concerns, said Jurel.

CHILIKA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Plot No. 493(P), Palaspalli, Pokhariput Road, Bhubaneswar - 751020, Odisha
Phone: 91-674-2591544, Fax: 91-674-2590485
Email: chilika@chilika.com
No. CAD-2074

e-PROCUREMENT
Re-Tender Call Notice No. 1524/CDA/2025 Dtd.18.10.2025

01.	Name of the Work	Repairing of Self Propelled Barge (M.V. Kalijugeswar)
02.	Estimated Cost	Rs.24.89 Lakhs (Excluding GST)
03.	Period of Completion	3 (Three) Calendar Months
04.	Date & time of availability of Bid document in the portal	23.10.2025 at 11.00 A.M. to 07.11.2025 upto 5 P.M.
05.	Last date/time for submission of Bids in the portal	07.11.2025 upto 5.00 P.M.
06.	Date & time of opening of Bids	On 10.11.2025 at 11.30 A.M. in the O/o. the Chief Executive, Chilika Development Authority, Plot No. 493(P), Palaspalli, Bhubaneswar - 751020
07.	Name and address of the Officer Inviting Tender (O.I.T.)	Add. Chief Executive Chilika Development Authority, Odisha, Bhubaneswar, Plot No. 493(P), Palaspalli, Pokhariput Road, Bhubaneswar - 751020

Further information and other details are available for downloading from the e-procurement portal "<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>". Addendum/Corrigendum if required will be available only in the website e-procurement portal "<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>".

Sd./- Addl. Chief Executive
Chilika Development Authority

OIPR-08138/11/0008/2526

DHARANIDHAR UNIVERSITY, KEONJHAR
Mail Id- registrar@dduniversity.ac.in
EMPLOYMENT NOTICE
No.3117/ Dt.18.10.2025

No.CAD-2077: Online applications on the prescribed format invited from the eligible candidates as per UGC Regulation 18th July, 2018 for engagement of Assistant Professor (Guest faculties) and retired Professor(s)/retired Associate Professor(s) to fill up the vacant post purely on temporary basis apropos of notification of Govt. of Odisha HE-UE-POLICY-2020-2023/4477/HE Dt.01.02.2024. Candidates are advised to visit the website of the University <https://dduniversity.ac.in> for details. The last date for receiving online application is 20th November 2025 and print copy of the submitted online application through Speed Post/ Registered Post by 25th November, 2025 (5.00 PM) to the Registrar, Dharanidhar University, Keonjhar. The online application will be opened from 23rd October 2025 (4.00 PM). The authority reserves the right to cancel the advertisement at any time without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./- Registrar
OIPR-11126/11/0024/2526 Dharanidhar University, Keonjhar

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, BEGUNIA
"e" Procurement Notice
No.i-349

1. Name of the Work : 1.Construction of Additional Class Room at Govt. Up School, Sarua. 2. Construction of Multipurpose Community-cum-Cultural Centre at Begunia GP.

2. Total Number of Works: 02 No.

3. Estimated Cost: Rs.14,26,461.00 & Rs.21,24,056.67

4. Class of Contractor : D & C Equivalent

5. Period of Completion: 6 Month Each

6. Availability of Tender Online for bidding: Dt.22.10.2025 at 11.00 AM to Dt. 03.11.2025 at 5.00 P.M.

7. Last date & time of seeking Tender Clarification: Dt.29.10.2025 at 5.00 P.M.

8. Date & Time of Opening of Tender: Dt.04.11.2025 at 11 AM

Further details can be seen from the website www.tenderodisha.gov.in.

Sd./- Block Development Officer
Begunia

OIPR-19302/11/0015/2526

ଝରଣୀ ଯୋରପଡ଼ିଶବ୍ଦ, ଝରଣୀ
OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL : JATANI
ଘ୍ରାମ - ଝରଣୀ, ଜିଲ୍ଲା - ଖୋର୍ଦ୍ଧା, ୭୫୭୦୫୦
A/IPS - Jatani, Dist. - Khordha (Odisha), Pin - 752050
E-mail : municipalityjatani@gmail.com, Phone No. 0674-2490826
No.5664 Dtd - 17.10.2025

"E" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. : EO/JMC/085/2025-2026

1. Name of the work for which tender invited - Supply of Sanitation workers and drivers for Sweeping of roads, cleaning of drains & Bush Cutting in both sides of roads, Door to Door Collection of Waste in a segregated manner (Wet & Dry Waste) and transportation of Municipal Solid waste separately Wet & Dry Waste including other waste to the identify Micro Composting Centre(MCC)/MRFC located at Sandhapur,Jatani including cost of supervisor and sanitation equipment like Bamboo basket, Coconut broom, Crowbar, Knife, Shovel, Spade, Gloves, shoes, Uniform and Helmet for the Ward No- 2, 3, 4,5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19(Part), 20(Part),21,22 & 23 for the year 2025-2026 & 2026-2027

2. Approximately Monthly cost-Rs.57,630/-

4. Eligible class of Bidder --- Company registered under Companies Act, Partnership Firms, LLP/Proprietorship Firm registered with the State Government/ Centre Government those are experienced in similar nature of work at least Three years and other criteria given in the D.T.C.N.

5. The Bid documents will be available in the website as mentioned below from 10.30AM of Dt. 18.10.2025 to 17.11.2025 upto 5.30 P.M. for online bidding.

6. Last date & time of receipt of Bid through online, date 17.11.2025 upto 5.30 P.M.

7. Opening of Bid documents Date 18.11.2025 at 11.00A.M.

8. The Authority reserves the right to cancel any or all the Bids without assigning any reason thereof.

9. The bidder has to participate in online bidding only.
Further details are available in the website - <https://tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app>

Sd./- Executive Officer
Jatni Municipality

OIPR-13041/11/0055/2526

of the day quote

As far as I know my party....Delhi is still far away. I will continue as Maharashtra CM till 2029



DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA CM

Heartfelt New Year wishes to all Gujarati brothers and sisters. I pray to God that this new year brings long life, good health, and boundless happiness and prosperity for all of you



AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

In the coming session of Assam Assembly, we will introduce some important and historic bills on issues like 'love jihad', polygamy, preservation of Satras (Vaishnavite monastery) and land rights to tea tribes



HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

SHORT TAKES

Heavy rain batters TN; schools, colleges shut

Chennai: Rain continued to batter Tamil Nadu causing a sharp rise in the water levels of the reservoirs and in Chennai, tree branches fell due to overnight downpour. The Mettur Dam, the largest reservoir in the state, reached its Full Reservoir Level (FRL). The widespread rain forced the administration in several districts to declare a holiday for schools and colleges Wednesday. Apart from the intermittent spells of heavy rain in Chennai, widespread showers thrashed the coastal districts.

Car plunges into gorge; two dead

Shimla: Two people died on the spot when the Maruti vehicle they were in fell into a gorge in the Sainj area of Kullu district, police said Wednesday. The accident took place near Sharan village, with the car plunging into a 150-200 feet gorge. The deceased were identified as Teja Singh and Rajkumar, aged 38 and 25, and natives of Matla and Kartha villages of Ropa in Kullu. Police retrieved their bodies and handed them over to their families after the post-mortem.

Fresh snowfall in higher reaches of HP

Shimla: The higher reaches of Lahaul and Spiti district and Manali in Himachal Pradesh received fresh snowfall, leading to a dip in the minimum temperature, officials said Wednesday. Koksar in Lahaul and Spiti received 11.4 cm of snow. The snowfall has brought smiles to tourism stakeholders in Manali and Lahaul and Spiti as they are expecting an increase in the tourist footfall.

Andhra CM Naidu begins UAE visit

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu Wednesday began the first day of his UAE visit with one-on-one meetings with several industry leaders to promote the state, attract investments, and invite industrialists to the CII Partnership Summit in November. Naidu first met Sobha Group founder PNC Menon and briefed him on the development of the greenfield capital city, Amaravati. "Naidu participated in one-to-one meetings with several industry giants on the first day of his three-day UAE tour to promote investments in Andhra Pradesh," a release said. The group expressed interest in partnering in a shipbuilding unit at Dugarajapatnam Port.



For many years, permission was not granted to perform Chhath Puja on the Yamuna banks. But this time, the government has allowed it and made preparations for the same. What could not be done in the last 25 years has been achieved within six months of our government

REKHA GUPTA | DELHI CM

Modi will buy less Russian oil, spoke to him: Trump

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Washington, Oct 22: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump discussed trade issues during a phone conversation amid efforts by the two sides to repair bilateral ties that remain under strain after Washington slapped a whopping 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods.

In his remarks following the call Tuesday, Trump described the India-US relationship as "great" and said, without elaborating, that the two sides are working on some "great deals". "I spoke to Prime Minister Modi.... We just have a very good relationship, and he's not gonna buy much oil from Russia. He wants to see that war end as much as I do," Trump said.

In a social media post, Prime Minister Modi thanked Trump for the phone call and his Diwali greetings and hoped that both India and the US would continue to "illuminate" the world with hope and stand united against terrorism.

"He wants to see the war end with Russia-Ukraine and, as you know, they're not going to be buying too much oil. So they've cut it way back and they're continuing to cut it way back," Trump said.

Trump told reporters at the White House that he and Modi discussed trade, and repeated his claim that India will not buy "much oil from Russia".

It was the third publicly known phone call between Modi and Trump since September 16.

An Indian readout said Modi emphasised the enduring strength of the India-US partnership and reiterated India's unwavering commitment to combating terrorism and fostering international cooperation.



TRUMP TOLD REPORTERS AT THE WHITE HOUSE THAT HE AND MODI DISCUSSED TRADE, AND REPEATED HIS CLAIM THAT INDIA WILL NOT BUY "MUCH OIL FROM RUSSIA"

It said the prime minister expressed his "heartfelt appreciation" to Trump for "his warm Diwali greetings and a personal phone call marking the occasion of the festival of lights".

"We talked about trade, we talked about a lot of things, but mostly the world of trade. He's very interested in that. Although we did talk a little while ago about let's have no wars with Pakistan," Trump told reporters.

"I think the fact that trade was involved, I was able to talk about it then, and we have no war with Pakistan and India and that was a very, very good thing but he's a great person and he's become a great friend of mine over the years," he said. Official sources in New Delhi said Pakistan was not discussed during the phone conversation Tuesday.

The US president also repeated his claim that India will stop procuring Russian crude oil.

There was no immediate reaction from New Delhi on Trump's remarks on India's

purchase of Russian crude oil.

Last week, Trump claimed that PM Modi told him that India would stop buying Russian crude oil. Following Trump's comments, India suggested that there was no such conversation between the two leaders.

On Tuesday night, Trump hosted a Diwali celebration that was attended by Indian ambassador to the US Vinay Kwatra and several prominent Indian-origin business leaders.

The relations between New Delhi and Washington have been reeling under severe strain after Trump imposed 50 per cent tariffs on India, including an additional 25 per cent levies for its procurement of Russian crude oil.

India described the US action as "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable".

Two weeks back, US Ambassador-designate Sergio Gor met PM Modi in New Delhi. Following the meeting, Gor said the US "values" its relationship with India.

The Ambassador-designate also held talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri before meeting PM Modi.

Sabarimala helipad sinks as Prez's helicopter lands



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pathanamthitta (Kerala), Oct 22: The wheels of the helicopter carrying President Droupadi Murmu for her Sabarimala visit got stuck in a depression on the newly concreted helipad at the Rajiv Gandhi Indoor Stadium in Pramadam when it landed Wednesday morning.

After the President left for Pamba by road, visuals on TV channels showed several policemen and fire personnel pushing the helicopter's wheels out of the small depressions created when it landed on the concrete.

Pathanamthitta District

Collector Prem Krishnan said that there were no security concerns regarding the helipad, as otherwise the President's cavalcade would have returned to Thiruvananthapuram by road.

He said that the helicopter had landed a few feet back from the 'H' on the helipad, but admitted that where the wheels touched the concrete there was a slight -- half-an-inch -- of "sinking". "We cannot even term it as a depression," he added. The incident led to the Congress and BJP alleging lapses on the part of the state government in the security arrangements. Former Union minister of state V Muralaeeharan termed it a "security lapse" and demanded action against those responsible. He also claimed that it showed the Kerala government's "carelessness" in handling the President's security.



Naga people wave flags during a public reception of NSCN (IM) supremo Th Muivah upon his arrival, in Ukhrul, Manipur. Muivah Wednesday arrived in Manipur to visit his native village Somdal after more than 50 years, officials said

PTI PHOTO

India rises to 9th spot globally in forest area: Report

THE ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY SAID THIS REFLECTS THE SUCCESS OF INDIA'S LARGE-SCALE AFFORESTATION AND COMMUNITY-LED FOREST PROTECTION EFFORTS UNDER PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S LEADERSHIP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, Oct 22: India has climbed to the ninth spot globally in total forest area and retained its third rank in annual forest area gain, according to a new report released by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

The Environment Ministry said this reflects the success of India's large-scale afforestation and community-led forest protection efforts under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said India's rise from the 10th to the ninth position marks a "major achievement" in sustainable forest management and ecological conservation.

The minister said that growing public participation

in tree plantation campaigns, particularly under the 'Ek Ped Ma Ke Naam' initiative, and large-scale state government drives have contributed to this progress.

"Here is a reason to rejoice for all Indians. We have

achieved 9th rank in terms of forest area at the global level as compared to 10th spot in the previous assessment. We have also maintained our 3rd position globally in terms of annual gain. Global Forest Resource Assessment (GFRA) 2025

INDIA DONATES 81 SCHOOL BUSES TO VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN NEPAL

India has donated 81 school buses to various educational institutions in Nepal, including in disaster-affected districts of Koshi province, an official statement said Wednesday. The donations were part of the "long-standing development partnership and friendship" between India and Nepal, the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu said in a statement



DELHI POLLUTION

Air quality sparks blame game between AAP, BJP



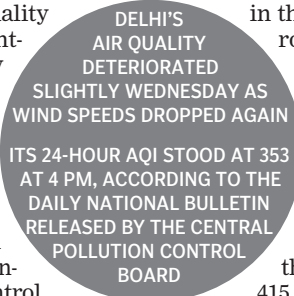
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: Two days after Diwali, the national capital remained blanketed by haze Wednesday with air quality in the "very poor" category, which has sparked a war of words between AAP and the ruling BJP over who to blame for the situation.

Delhi's air quality deteriorated slightly Wednesday as wind speeds dropped again. Its 24-hour AQI stood at 353 at 4 pm, according to the daily national bulletin released by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

This marks the highest AQI recorded so far this season, up from 351 Tuesday and 345 Monday.

A visible haze shrouded the city during the day, with winds failing to exceed 7 kmph. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) warned that suitable dispersion of pollutants is unlikely in the coming days. Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta asserted that data on air pollution before and after Diwali showed



improvement as compared to last year. "The pre- and post-Diwali gap (between average AQI) this year is less compared to the previous year, even though firecrackers were allowed this time," Gupta said at a press conference. On the other hand, AAP leaders accused the BJP government in Delhi of shutting down

pollution monitoring stations in the city, while Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa blamed stubble burning in Punjab for deteriorating air quality. Punjab Pollution Control Board data showed the state recording

415 farm fire incidents between September 15 and October 21 this year, down from 1,510 during the same period last year. The sharp drop comes amid a delayed paddy harvest as rains lashed the state until the first week of October.

AAP's Delhi unit president Saurabh Bharadwaj, in a statement, alleged that the BJP government "committed data theft at a government level" by showing AQI readings of around 350 when actual levels had crossed 1700, an official statement said.

Belgian court rules Choksi faces no risk of unfair trial in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: A Belgian court has ruled that fugitive diamantaire Mehul Choksi, main accused in a Rs 13,000 crore PNB scam, faces "no risk" of being denied a fair trial or subjected to ill-treatment if he is extradited to India.

A four-member indictment chamber at the Court of Appeals in Antwerp has found no infirmity in the orders issued by the pre-trial chamber of the Antwerp district court on November 29, 2024, which had termed the arrest warrants issued by a Mumbai special court in May 2018 and June 2021 as "enforceable", allowing Choksi's extradition.

Dismissing the appeal filed by Choksi against the district court, the Court of Appeals held that the 66-year-old businessman, wanted in connection with the Punjab National Bank (PNB) scam, failed to provide "concretely plausible" evidence of a "genuine risk" of torture or denial of justice.

The order has come as a strong validation for India's case seeking his extradition, with Choksi having the option of appealing against the decision in Belgium's Supreme Court, officials said.

The Court of Appeals has held that the documents Choksi submitted do not substantiate his claims that he is the subject of a political trial. It said that it is up to the subject to provide evidence demonstrating substantial grounds to believe that there is a genuine risk of ill-treatment upon extradition.

Rejecting the arguments put forth by Choksi that he may not get a fair trial if extradited to India, the Belgian court held that the documentation provided by him is insufficient to make it "concretely plausible" that he personally faces a real, present and serious risk of being subjected to flagrant denial of justice, torture or inhuman and degrading treatment in India.

of the day

quote

The coastal state has taken pioneering steps in integrative oncology by combining the strengths of Ayurveda, yoga and modern medicine

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

It is Diwali. On this auspicious occasion, this is the best gift to meritorious students to bring ease in their education and studies. As we talk about ease of business and ease of living, this is about ease of education and preparation for competitive examinations. These girls are from far-flung areas

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

The BJP-led government wants to improve the socio-economic condition of the tribal people because the party knows the state's growth will not be possible unless the welfare of the indigenous people is ensured

MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

X

POST

OF THE DAY

The bond between Rahul Gandhi and Tejashwi Yadav is stronger than ever. Both have understood that unity is the only way to defeat NDA. The small differences on seat sharing are being resolved smoothly. Both parties now agree on a common goal to save Bihar and bring a government that truly cares for people. Rahul Gandhi has built deep trust among youth and the poor through his Voter Adhikar Yatra. Tejashwi Yadav has earned massive respect as a young and energetic leader. People still remember his tenure as Deputy CM when thousands got jobs and Bihar saw hope again. He will become the next Chief Minister. No one can stop this wave now.

@Politicx2029

SHORT TAKES

3 killed as bike hits unmarked divider

New Delhi: Three men, including two cousins, were killed after their motorcycle rammed into an unmarked jersey barrier on the Libaspur flyover on the GT Road while they were returning from Haryana's Murthal after dinner, an official said Wednesday. Police said they received information about the accident in Outer North Delhi at around 1.33 AM.

Post Diwali, over 390 held in Kolkata

Kolkata: The Kolkata Police arrested over 390 people for various legal violations, including disorderly conduct and bursting banned fireworks, during post-Diwali celebrations, an officer said Wednesday. Over 180 kg of banned fireworks and more than 30 litres of illicit liquor were also seized during raids conducted Tuesday, he said.

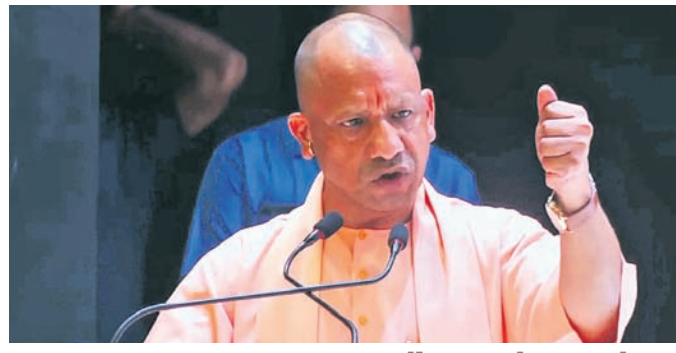
T'gana govt scraps transport check posts

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy Wednesday ordered officials to close all transport check posts across the state with immediate effect. Following the chief minister's instructions, the state transport department issued orders to implement the decision. Officials were asked to submit a detailed report on the closure by 5 pm, an official release said. The state transport department directed that all check-post activities be immediately stopped.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is a staunchly patriotic and nationalist organisation. The RSS always steps forward to help when the country is in crisis

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHA DY CM

Row erupts over UP CM's 'halal certification' remarks



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Adityanath Tuesday said that his government had banned halal-certified items in Uttar Pradesh as the profits from such sales were being used for conversion, love jihad and terrorism

matters?" Rai told PTI. "We demand that the government release data on the investments that have come to UP since 2017 and the kind of employment generated. Instead of addressing these, the CM prefers to talk about halal certification," he added.

Meanwhile, All India Muslim Jamaat president Maulana Shahabuddin Razvi Bareilvi backed CM Adityanath's remarks, saying that the practice of issuing halal certificates "is completely wrong in the light of Sharia." "Religion is being used as a cover to make money," he said. However, Razvi added that he did not agree with the suggestion that the funds collected through halal certification were

being used to finance terrorism. Hari Shankar, Joint Commissioner, FSDA (Food Safety and Drug Administration), told PTI, "In November 2023, the UP government had made it clear that there is one authorised certification agency for food products, and that is FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India). The same certification was being used for clothing, etc. So to ensure streamlining of this food certification, the government took some steps."

The official, however, added that the matter was currently in court.

Halal certification on an item means that the product has been manufactured in accordance with Islamic laws.

The recent CM's remarks have reignited debate over the state's decision to prohibit halal-certified food products.

On November 18, 2023, the Office of the Commissioner, Food Safety and Drug Administration, Uttar Pradesh, issued a notification "prohibiting the manufacturing, storage, sale, and distribution of food products with halal certification within the State of Uttar Pradesh," while allowing an exception for export products.

The notification, issued under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, led to several petitions being filed in the Supreme Court challenging the order. In January this year, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the Supreme Court that halal certification was being extended to non-meat products like cement, iron bars, wheat and 'besan' or gram flour, questioning why non-believers should bear higher costs for such products.

IndiGo plane makes emergency landing after 'fuel leak' scare

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: An IndiGo plane enroute to Srinagar from Kolkata landed at the Varanasi airport Wednesday evening following a reported fuel leak, officials said.

Sources said malfunctioning of a sensor in the aircraft led to a false alarm of fuel leakage, following which the plane landed in Varanasi. However, according to the Gomti Zone Police, the IndiGo flight 6E-6961 was diverted to Varanasi after the pilot detected a fuel leakage mid-air.

Assessing the gravity of the situation, the pilot immediately contacted Air Traffic Control (ATC) at Varanasi and sought permission for an emergency landing, they said.

The aircraft safely landed the Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport at 4.10 pm, police said. All 166 passengers on board were reported to be safe and were escorted to the arrival hall soon after landing, they said. A technical team is inspecting the aircraft to identify and fix the fault.

Authorities said the situation is "completely normal and under control."

Voter list revision likely to begin in phases: EC

There is a view in EC that mapping of current electors with those in the last SIR will ensure that more than half the electorate in most states may not give any documents in SIR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: Ramping up its preparations for special intensive revision of voter lists across India, the Election Commission top brass Wednesday assessed the progress made on mapping the current electors with the voters as per the last SIR in different states.

The exercise will help state poll machinery find out the number of electors who were in the electoral roll after the last intensive revision and continue to be in the latest voter list. As was the case in Bihar, the voters will not have to submit any documents but only semi-filled enumeration forms.

There is a view in EC that mapping of current electors



with those in the last SIR will ensure that more than half the electorate in most states may not give any documents in SIR.

The commission, a statement said, also reviewed the status of appointment and training of district election officers, electoral registration officers, and booth-level officers, and booth-level agents who are appointed by a political party.

The two-day meet is the second since September to decide on the massive exercise. Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners S S Sandhu and Vivek Joshi met all state chief electoral officers here to review preparedness. One strong opinion within the top EC brass is to hold SIR in phases, beginning with the states going for assembly elections next year. More states may be included in the first phase. At

the same time, it will not hold the electoral roll cleanup exercise in states where local body elections are taking place or are due, as the grassroots poll machinery is busy with it and may not be able to focus on SIR, officials said. Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are due in 2026. Besides these five states, SIR could be held in a few other states in the first phase. A voter list cleanup exercise has concluded in Bihar, where the final list with nearly 7.42 crore names was published September 30.

The CEC had earlier this month said work is in progress to launch the SIR of electoral rolls in all states, and a final decision on its rollout will be taken by the Election Commission. Earlier, responding to a question at a press conference

GEHLOT MEETS LALU

Senior Congress leader Ashok Gehlot Wednesday met RJD president Lalu Prasad, apparently with the mandate to defuse tensions with the ally, which has plunged the INDIA bloc into turmoil in poll-bound Bihar



Camel traders ahead of the 'Pushkar Camel Fair', at Pushkar, in Ajmer district of Rajasthan. The Pushkar Fair in 2025 is scheduled to take place from October 30 to November 5

PTI PHOTO

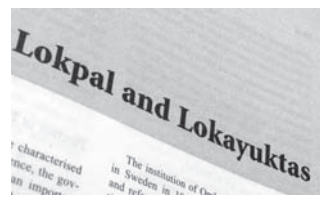
Opposition slams Lokpal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: Top anti-corruption ombudsman Lokpal drew sharp criticism from the opposition Wednesday after floating a tender to procure seven luxurious BMW cars, with leaders accusing the "guardians of integrity" of "chasing luxury over legitimacy".

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh took a sharp dig at the Lokpal, saying the institution is now a "Shauq pal", a play on the Urdu word that loosely translates to pursuing personal interests or indulgences.

Ramesh also questioned the Lokpal's investigative track record, asking what significant arrests or probes it has accomplished. Speaking with PTI, the Congress leader said a false narrative was created



against the Manmohan Singh government with Anna Hazare, Arvind Kejriwal, "India Against Corruption" and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) indulging in propaganda, and added that now, the reality of the Lokpal is before the people of the country.

It needs to be asked what investigations has the Lokpal carried out and whose arrests it has succeeded in, Ramesh said.

He said the Lokpal is now more of a "shock pal", "shok (mourn) pal" and "shauq (indulgence) pal". Senior Congress leader and former home minister P Chidambaram wondered that when Supreme Court judges are given modest sedans, why do the chairman and six members of the Lokpal require BMW cars.

"Why spend public money to acquire these cars? I hope that at least one or two members of the Lokpal have refused, or will refuse, to accept these cars," Chidambaram said in a post on X. Senior Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi also criticised the move and took a swipe at the Lokpal.

In a post on X, Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP Saket Gokhale said, "Lokpal's luxury. Annual budget of India's Lokpal is ₹44.32 crore. Now, Lokpal is purchasing 7 luxury BMW cars at approx ₹5 crore for all members. This equals 10 per cent of the entire annual budget."

Meeting between MHA representatives, Ladakh leaders begins

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: In the first sign of a thaw, leaders of Ladakh, where four people died in police firing during the recent pro-statehood protests, met with Home Ministry representatives here Wednesday for sub-committee level talks.

During the meeting, the Ladakh representatives demanded an immediate release of all arrested leaders, including climate activist Sonam Wangchuck, the widely recognised face of the agitation.

The Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) said that the next of kin of those killed should be given adequate compensation.

Talks between the Centre, LAB and KDA had broken down after four protesters were killed and several were injured during widespread violence in Leh September 24.

Both the Ladakh organisations stayed away from the dialogue with the high-powered committee of the MHA slated for October 6.

The invitation for the talks had been made by the Centre September 20.

Sidda's son names successor amid K'taka CM row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Belagavi (Karnataka), Oct 22: Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's son Yathindra Siddaramaiah's statement Wednesday that his father was at the fag end of his political life and Minister Satish Jarkiholi is a leader with similar progressive ideological thinking, has led to speculation, amid talks about leadership change.

However, later speaking to reporters, the Congress MLC said he ruled out any talks about leadership change.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, who is seen as the prime contender

for CM post, in case of change of guard, not wanting to comment on Yathindra's statement, said he is committed to his earlier statement that he and Siddaramaiah will work together, abiding by the party's direction.

There have been speculation about the CM change in the state when the Congress government reaches the halfway mark of its five-year term in November, which is being referred to by some as "November revolution".

"He (Siddaramaiah) is at the fag end of his political life. At such a time, a leader is needed to guide and lead those who have progressive thinking, ideologically," Yathindra said.



Addressing a gathering at Chikkodi here, he expressed hope that Jarkiholi will take over such a responsibility, and

will be a role model to all those politicians and young leaders who believe in Congress party's ideology, and lead them.

This statement by Yathindra, had led to speculation in the media, whether he and the Siddaramaiah camp were trying to project Jarkiholi, a senior leader from the ST community, as a possible contender for the CM post, in case of leadership change.

Later speaking to reporters, Yathindra said the leadership change issue has not come up for discussion.

AICC general secretary in-charge of Karnataka Randeep Singh Surjewala too has clarified on this. "Remaining everything is speculation."

He did not wish to comment on a question on the Cabinet reshuf

fle. Responding to a question on Yathindra's comments, Shivakumar, who was on a visit to Raghavendra Swamy math in Andhra Pradesh's Mantralaya, speaking to reporters in Raichur, said, "You (media) ask him (Yathindra) about what he has said. What can I say, if you ask me."

On talks about the CM change involving his name, he said, "I don't want anyone to discuss me. What Siddaramaiah and I have said - we will abide by the party direction and work together. I'm committed to it." Amid talks about CM change, Siddaramaiah has constantly reiterated that he will complete a full five years term.

international

of the day quote

We are responsible for addressing the legitimate voices of Gen Z in line with the Constitution. The government will create an environment where Nepalis can vote without fear, strengthening democracy, advancing prosperity, and safeguarding citizens' rights

SUSHILA KARKI | PRIME MINISTER, NEPAL

We are firmly preparing for President Trump's visit. I hope Trump's first meeting with Takaichi during his Oct 27-29 visit will serve as an opportunity for the two leaders to discuss further strengthening of the Japan-US alliance while fostering their personal relationship of trust

TOSHIMITSU MOTEGI | FOREIGN MINISTER, JAPAN

With respect to the parents, to those parents who chose this way to protest, I ask them to consider whether they are giving some unscrupulous politicians the opportunity to appropriate their grief

KYRIAKOS MITSOTAKIS | PRIME MINISTER, GREECE

SHORT TAKES

Imprisoned scribes win EU human rights award

Brussels: Two journalists, one imprisoned in Belarus and the other in Georgia, have won the European Union's top human rights honour, the Sakharov Prize, European Parliament President Roberta Metsola announced Wednesday. Andrzej Poczobut is a correspondent for the influential Polish newspaper Gazeta Wyborcza. He was convicted of "harming Belarus' national security" and sentenced to eight years, which he is serving in the Novopolotsk penal colony. Mzia Amaghlobeli, a prominent journalist who founded two of Georgia's independent media outlets, was in August convicted of slapping a police chief during an anti-government protest. She was sentenced to two years in prison in a case that was condemned by rights groups as an attempt to curb media freedom.

15 army officers sent to jail in Bangladesh

Dhaka: Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD) Wednesday sent 15 serving army officers to jail after their court appearances from military custody to face trial on charges of enforced disappearances, murders and custodial tortures during the deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government. The Bangladesh Army Oct 11 took into custody the 15 officers after the special tribunal ordered their arrest to stand trial for alleged crimes against humanity. "The tribunal has ordered the 15 army officers produced today in connection with the enforced disappearances and murders, and tortures in custody to be sent to jail," ICT-BD Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam told reporters after the proceedings.

Guatemala passes anti-gang law

Guatemala City: Guatemala passed a new anti-gang law Tuesday aimed at giving the government more resources to fight the groups, which are now considered terrorist organisations. The law designates the Barrio 18 and Mara Salvatrucha gangs as terrorist groups, increases prison sentences for gang members convicted of crimes, and orders the construction of a new prison for gang members. The legislation, which had been in limbo for years, gained momentum following the escape of 20 members of Barrio 18 from a prison earlier this month.

Russia holds nuclear drills

Ukraine seeks Swedish fighter jets

REUTERS

Moscow/Kyiv/Linköping, Sweden, Oct 22: Russia said Wednesday it had carried out a major training exercise involving nuclear weapons, a day after the United States announced a delay in plans for a second summit between presidents Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump on the Ukraine war.

The Kremlin released video showing General Valery Gerasimov, head of the General Staff, reporting to Putin on the drills. Russia said it fired missiles from ground launchers, submarines and aircraft, including intercontinental ballistic weapons that are capable of striking the United States.

At key moments in the war in Ukraine, Putin has issued reminders of Russia's nuclear might as a warning signal to Kyiv and its allies in the West. NATO has also been conducting nuclear deterrence exercises this month.

In a separate development, Sweden said it had signed a letter of intent to export Gripen



fighter jets to Ukraine, as European governments move to boost Kyiv's defences in a war that has ground on for three years and eight months, and shows no sign of ending soon.

Ukrainian pilots have been in Sweden to test the Gripen, a rugged and relatively low-cost option compared to aircraft such as the US F-35.

"We have started the work to obtain Gripens and expect the future contract to allow us to acquire no less than 100 such jets," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said during a visit to Swedish defence manufacturer Saab. Kyiv aims to receive and start using them next year, he said.

TRUMP DOESN'T WANT WASTED MEETING

Russia and Ukraine pounded each other with heavy overnight missile attacks as renewed uncertainty surrounded the US-led peace effort.

After months of stalled diplomacy, Putin and Trump spoke last week and unexpectedly announced they would hold a summit in Hungary that the Kremlin said could take place within a couple of weeks.

But following a phone call Monday between the two countries' top diplomats, the White House said the next day that Trump had no plans to meet Putin "in the immediate future". Trump said he did not want to have a wasted meeting - some-

■ Russia says it held exercise with strategic nuclear weapons

■ Ukraine's Zelenskyy plans to buy Gripen fighter jets from Sweden

■ Russia and Ukraine carry out heavy attacks overnight

■ US says Putin-Trump summit plans on hold

■ Russia says summit takes time to prepare

thing the Kremlin said Putin also wanted to avoid.

Russian officials said, however, that preparations continued for a summit.

"The dates haven't been set yet, but thorough preparation is needed before then, and that takes time," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told reporters. A US official said the summit had not been cancelled, but the US side was focusing for now on Trump's upcoming visit to Asia.

The delay came after Russia reiterated to the US its previous terms for reaching a peace deal, including that Ukraine cede control of the whole of the southeastern Donbas region, three sources told Reuters.

Peru declares 30-day state of emergency to tackle rising crime

REUTERS

Lima, Oct 22: Peru's President Jose Jeri declared Tuesday a 30-day state of emergency in the capital Lima and the neighboring province of Callao, saying the move was to battle rising crime.

The announcement follows protests last week that left one person dead and more than 100 injured. Jeri said the measure, starting just after midnight and approved by the Council of Ministers, authorizes the deployment of the armed forces alongside the police to maintain public order. He did not provide further details.

"We are moving from defense to offense in the fight against crime, a fight that will allow us to regain peace, tranquility, and the trust of millions of Peruvians," he said in a televised address.

Jeri was sworn in earlier this month following the ouster of former President Dina Boluarte. He unveiled a new cabinet last week, vowing to make tackling crime a top priority.

The president also faced his first major protest called by civil society groups and young people from the so-called Generation Z demanding measures against rising crime.

This is not the first time Peru has enacted a state of emergency to address security concerns. Although former President Boluarte imposed the same 30-day measure in March, analysts and security experts say repeated emergency declarations have done little to reduce crime.

Netanyahu opposes Turkish forces in Gaza



With a fragile ceasefire in place for 12 days, focus has switched to the second phase of Trump's Gaza plan

REUTERS

Jerusalem/Cairo, Oct 22: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu hinted Wednesday at his opposition to any role for Turkish security forces in the Gaza Strip as part of a mission to monitor a US-backed ceasefire with the Palestinian militant group Hamas.

Speaking in Jerusalem alongside visiting US Vice President JD Vance, Netanyahu said they had discussed the "day-after" for Gaza, including who could provide security in the territory shattered by two years of war.

Vance, who said Tuesday US President Donald Trump's ceasefire plan was going better than expected, reiterated his optimism. "I never said it was easy. But what I am optimistic

that the ceasefire is going to hold and that we can actually build a better future in the entire Middle East," he said.

With a fragile ceasefire in place for 12 days, focus has switched to the second phase of Trump's Gaza plan.

This requires Hamas to disarm and foresees the establishment of an internationally-supervised Palestinian committee to run Gaza with an international force supporting vetted Palestinian police.

NETANYAHU HAS 'STRONG OPINIONS' ON TURKISH ROLE IN GAZA

Responding to a question about the idea of Turkish security forces in Gaza, Netanyahu said, "I have very strong opinions about that. Want to guess what they are?"

Turkey's Foreign Ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment, while

the Defence Ministry declined to comment on the issue.

Vance said Tuesday there would be a "constructive role" for Turkey to play but that Washington wouldn't force anything on Israel when it came to foreign troops "on their soil".

Once warm relations between NATO member Turkey and Israel hit new lows during the Gaza war, with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan sharply criticising Israel's attacks on the enclave and elsewhere in the region, and Syria - which borders both states - emerging as an arena of intensifying rivalry.

Turkey, which helped persuade Hamas to accept Trump's plan, has said it would take part in the international task force

to monitor the ceasefire implementation, and that its armed forces could serve in a military or civilian capacity as needed.

Hamas has resisted pressure to disarm, saying that it is ready to hand its weapons to a future Palestinian state.

Vance said, "We have a very, very tough task ahead of us, which is to disarm Hamas, but rebuild Gaza to make life better for the people of Gaza, but also to ensure that Hamas is no longer a threat to our friends in Israel."

Gazan authorities buried the bodies of 54 unidentified people handed over by Israel, the Gaza government media office said. Medics said 30 more bodies arrived at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis after being released by Israel.

Israeli authorities have said the 54 bodies belong to militants who invaded Israel in the October 7 attacks or were killed in battle with Israeli forces in Gaza during the war.

Hamas has released the bodies of 15 out of 28 deceased hostages seized in 2023. Vance Tuesday said some of the remaining bodies were buried deep under rubble, saying it would take "a little bit of time" to recover them and urged patience.

North Korea fires ballistic missiles



REUTERS

Seoul, Oct 22: North Korea fired what appeared to be multiple short-range ballistic missiles Wednesday, South Korea's military said, a week before a key Asia-Pacific leaders' meeting in South Korea.

It was the first launch of ballistic missiles since May by Pyongyang, which has defied a United Nations Security Council ban on the weapons.

It was also the first such launch since Lee Jae Myung was elected president in South Korea, with a platform of engagement with North Korea.

Lee and US President Donald Trump are expected to meet in South Korea next week at a summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. Trump is also expected to meet Chinese President Xi Jinping.

South Korea detected several projectiles believed to be short-range ballistic missiles fired from an area near North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, in a northeasterly direction early

Wednesday, its Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

In a separate statement, the Pentagon said the launches did not pose an immediate threat to US personnel.

"The United States condemns these actions and calls on the DPRK to refrain from further unlawful and destabilizing acts," the Pentagon said.

TRUMP TO VISIT SOUTH KOREA

Lee and Trump have discussed the idea of trying to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un when the American president visits the South, but Pyongyang has not publicly responded to the idea.

US officials considered, but never confirmed, a trip to the demilitarized zone (DMZ) separating the two Koreas, according to a person familiar with the discussions.

South Korea has suspended tours of the Joint Security Area (JSA) at the inter-Korean border village of Panmunjom until early November, but has not confirmed any plans for a

Trump to visit South Korea ahead of Asia-Pacific forum

Trump floated meeting with North Korea's Kim Jong Un but nothing confirmed

meeting with Kim.

MULTIPLE MISSILES LAUNCHED

Nuclear-armed North Korea has steadily upgraded its missile capabilities over the past decade defying multiple United Nations sanctions, having test-launched long-range ballistic missiles with potential ranges to strike the US mainland if fired at a trajectory calibrated for that purpose.

South Korea's military said it had detected movements ahead of the launch, then tracked the projectiles after they were fired and flew about 350 km (217 miles), the military said.

The missiles appeared to have fallen inland, a military official separately said.

Japan's new Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said there was no impact on Japan's security from the North Korean missile launch and Tokyo was sharing real-time information with the US. North Korea last launched ballistic missiles May 8 when it fired multiple short-range missiles from its east coast.

Paris' Louvre reopens after heist, as backlash grows over security flaws

Visitors queued to enter through the Louvre's glass pyramid for the first time since Sunday's brazen robbery, in which hooded assailants broke through a second-floor window using a stolen movers' lift before making off with jewels from the royal collection

REUTERS

Paris, Oct 22: The Louvre in Paris reopened Wednesday, three days after thieves made off with historic jewellery worth an estimated 88 million euros (\$102 million) in a spectacular heist that has raised urgent questions over security lapses at the museum.

Visitors queued to enter through the Louvre's glass pyramid for the first time since Sunday's brazen robbery, in which hooded assailants broke through a second-floor window using a stolen movers' lift before making off with jewels from the royal collection.

Later Wednesday the museum's director will appear before the French Senate to answer lawmakers' questions.

The Galerie d'Apollon, the ornate gilded hall that was robbed, remains closed.

Amid rising frustration in France that no senior official has taken responsibility, French Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said there had clearly been security failures and Culture Minister Rachida Dati had launched an administrative inquiry.

"There was a burglary at the Louvre, some of the most precious jewels in France were stolen. So obviously it's a failure, there is nothing else I can say," Nunez told Europe 1 radio.

But he added that "the alarm system worked perfectly, as soon as the window was attacked, it was activated. Police were notified, and within



three minutes they were on the scene. The whole system worked, it didn't fail, but what happened has happened."

He declined to comment on the police manhunt, but said he

was confident the perpetrators would be found.

Dati came under fire after saying in parliament Tuesday there had not been any security lapses.

MUSEUM DIRECTOR TO BE HEARD IN SENATE

Louvre director Laurence des Cars will be questioned by senators later Wednesday. Des Cars warned in January that the centuries-old building was in a dire state.

President Emmanuel Macron has announced a six-year renovation of the Louvre, which will include money for security upgrades. Asked on RTL radio whether state budget cuts had led to security lapses in French museums, the head of France's national audit office Pierre Moscovici said that was not the case for the Louvre.

"It is richly endowed, there are sponsorships, really, the Louvre is not without resources."

Built in the late 12th century, the Louvre Palace used to be the official residence of the kings of France, until Louis XIV abandoned it for Versailles. It was turned into a museum for the royal art collection in 1793, four years after the French Revolution.

It is now the world's most-visited museum, with 8.7 million visitors last year. It hosts the Mona Lisa, the world's most famous painting, and the Venus de Milo statue, as well as countless old masters.

Interior minister admits security failure
Museum director to be quizzed in senate

business

of the day quote

We are addressing each and every supply chain sectorally to see where our vulnerabilities are, where we need to expand capacity, and we are willing to pay that extra buck to be able to have resilience in our supply chains

PIYUSH GOYAL |
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

India's renewable growth remains among the fastest in the world, driven by multi-pathway expansion. Over 40 GW of awarded renewable projects are presently in advanced stages of securing PPAs, PSAs, or transmission connectivity

PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION MINISTER, MNRE

The rollout of GST 2.0 and targeted tariff interventions have set the stage for renewed demand, even as OEMs and investors pivot toward cleaner, smarter mobility solutions

SAKET MEHRA |
INDUSTRY LEADER, GRANT THORNTON LLP

SHORT TAKES

Reckitt's revenue report
New Delhi: British FMCG major Reckitt Wednesday said implementation of new GST slabs in India impacted its net revenue growth in the September quarter. However, the company reported volume-led growth in its germ protection brand Dettol in markets, including India, which helped it grow by double digits in the quarter. Besides, in the Intimate Wellness category, its brand Durex continued to gain market share in India, Reckitt said in its earnings statement. However, this short-term disruption, Reckitt said, its "like-for-like (LFL) net revenue growth in India remains high single digit through 2025 YTD. Reckitt operates in the Indian market with power brands, which include Lysol, Vanish, Strepsils, Veet, Dettol, Harpic, and Durex. Leading FMCG makers in India reported disruptions in trade channels in September due to the implementation of new GST slabs, which reduced prices and had a transitory impact on their quarterly revenue, along with a moderation in their operating profits.

Infosys buyback

New Delhi: Infosys promoters and promoter group, including Nandan M Nilekani and Sudha Murty, have decided not to participate in the company's Rs 18,000 crore share buyback, according to a regulatory filing Wednesday. The promoters collectively hold 13.05 per cent of the company's equity as on the buyback announcement date. Infosys promoters include company co-founder N R Narayana Murthy's wife Sudha N Murty, daughter Akshata Murty, and son Rohan Murty. It also includes company co-founder Nandan Nilekani, his wife Rohini Nilekani, and children Nihar and Janhavi Nilekani. Other co-founders and their families are also promoters of the company.

Tobacco Board extends registration renewal

New Delhi: The Tobacco Board has directed manufacturers, exporters, processors, dealers and packers to register or renew their registration for 2026, with the last date for renewal applications being November 30. According to a notice issued by the Tobacco Board, stakeholders engaged in the tobacco business are required to register themselves annually as per Section 12 of the Tobacco Board Act, 1975.



India ranks highly against other Indeed markets. Apart from India, only Singapore has a higher share of postings mentioning artificial intelligence. It's clear that many employers across India have gone all-in on artificial intelligence

CALLAM PICKERING |
SENIOR ECONOMIST, INDEED (APAC)

ZUPEE STUDIO HITS 10MN DOWNLOADS

Zupee Studio, a short-format content platform, Wednesday said it has crossed 10 million downloads on the Google Play Store. Primarily an online gaming platform, Zupee had last month forayed into the entertainment space post the enactment of the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025, which puts a blanket ban on all forms of online money games while promoting e-sports and other online games. Zupee Studio features a range of 1-3 minute episodes spanning genres such as romance, thriller, comedy, and action, designed for vertical viewing



WEF, Centre for AI adoption

The playbooks highlight AI's potential to improve productivity, unlock finance, enhance market access, site visits, field workshops, and analysing a multitude of on-ground pilot projects with entrepreneurs, policymakers, and industry leaders



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: The World Economic Forum, in collaboration with the Government of India, Wednesday launched AI playbooks for SMEs and agriculture as well as an AI sandbox white paper to accelerate responsible AI adoption in the country.

Developed with support from professional services partner BCG X, these publications offer actionable frameworks, sectoral roadmaps, and ecosystem models to harness AI responsibly, inclusively, and at scale in India, the WEF said.

The playbooks highlight AI's potential to improve productivity, unlock finance, and enhance market access and have been designed through extensive consultations, site visits, field workshops and analysing a multitude of on-ground pilot projects with entrepreneurs, policymakers, industry leaders, technology providers, and academic institutions.

The World Economic Forum's Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR) India collaborated with the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India (PSA to GOI) and the Ministry of Electronics and Infor-

mation Technology (MeitY) for these publications under the AI for India 2030 initiative.

'Future Farming in India', the AI playbook for agriculture, provides an actionable roadmap to bridge the gap between AI's potential and real-world impact for millions of farmers.

It introduces a comprehensive strategy for scaling artificial intelligence to enhance crop yields, mitigate climate and pest risks, and improve market access.

'Transforming Small Businesses', the AI playbook for SMEs in India, provides a strategic roadmap to address key challenges of productivity, access to formal credit, and market reach by democratising AI.

It introduces a structured, cluster-based approach to adoption, featuring real-world case studies and a clear framework for implementation.

Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) form the backbone of India's economy, contributing 30 per cent to GDP, employing over 23 crore people, and accounting for nearly half of the country's exports.

The AI Sandbox White Paper presents a two-part framework – strategic and operational to be actioned through a collaborative structure of the gov-

Smartphone market rings 3% growth in July-Sept



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: India's smartphone market grew 3 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in the third quarter of the calendar year 2025, reaching 48.4 million units shipped, as per the latest research from Omdia, which cautioned that despite early momentum, gains are unlikely to sustain into a strong year-end.

The modest growth was driven by a wave of new launches in July and August, retail incentivisation and an earlier festive season that pulled forward inventory flows, Omdia said.

Vendors filled the channels with new stocks in expectation of a high-demand festive period.

India's smartphone market rose 3 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in Q3 2025, touching 48.4 million units shipped, Omdia said in a release.

Put simply, shipped units refer to devices that have left the factory premises and been sent to channel or distributors, for sale in the market.

"With limited organic demand, Q3's momentum was largely sustained through incentive-led channel push rather than pure consumer recovery," Sanyam Chaurasia, Principal Analyst at Omdia, noted.

According to Omdia, vivo (excluding iQOO) extended its lead in the market with 9.7 million units shipped (20 per cent market share), while Samsung ranked second with 6.8 million units (14 per cent market share) followed by Xiaomi in the third spot, narrowly overtaking OPPO (excluding OnePlus), with both vendors shipping 6.5 million units.

Cheap imports, dumping hurt India's steel sector: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 22: India's steel sector faced significant headwinds due to cheap imports and dumping from major global steel producers during 2023-24 and 2024-25, RBI's latest Bulletin said, as it called for policy support to boost the competitiveness of domestic steel production.

An article published in the Reserve Bank's October Bulletin noted that steel imports have seen a surge, largely driven by lower import prices. This has adversely impacted the domestic steel production.

"The dumping of cheap steel from global producers may pose a risk to the domestic steel production, which can be mitigated through suitable policy

measures. The recent initiative to impose the safeguard duty provides insulation against the import dumping," said the article titled 'Steel Under Siege: Understanding the Impact of Dumping on India'.

India imported steel products to supplement its consumption demand. The country's iron and steel imports expanded by 10.7 per cent in the first half of 2024-25 and recorded a contraction in the second half of 2024-25, mainly due to safeguard duties.

India recorded a 22 per cent growth in its steel imports in 2023-24, fuelled by softer steel prices in the international market.

India imports nearly 45 per cent of steel from the top five destinations – South Korea (import share 14.6 per cent), China



(9.8 per cent), the US (7.8 per cent), Japan (7.1 per cent) and the UK (6.2 per cent).

Steel imports increased from China, Japan, South Korea, Indonesia and Vietnam during 2024-25, the article said.

Further, it said India's steel

consumption grew by 12.9 per cent on average (average of monthly growth rates) from April 2022 to November 2024. The gap between domestic consumption and production has widened since 2022.

It also noted that steel pric-

BIZ BUZZ

Coal India, IIT Madras to establish Centre for Sustainable Energy

MADRAS: Coal India Limited (CIL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) to establish a Centre for Sustainable Energy at the institute. The agreement was inked by Achyut Ghatak, Director (Technical), CIL, and V Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, in the presence of PM Prasad, Chairman, CIL, along with senior officials from both organisations. The Centre will serve as a hub for advanced research, innovation, and capacity-building in sustainable energy technologies. Supported by CIL's funding and aligned with its diversification strategy, it aims to develop low-carbon technologies, repurpose coal mines, and explore the use of coal as a feedstock in India's clean energy transition.



Speaking on the occasion, PM Prasad said, "Coal India is evolving from being the nation's primary energy provider to a key enabler of India's clean energy transition. This collaboration with IIT Madras marks a historic step in our journey toward sustainable growth and energy security." Kamakoti highlighted that industry-academia partnerships are vital for achieving India's low-carbon goals.

Aditya Aluminium unveils ZLD Plant in Odisha



SAMBALPUR: Aditya Aluminium, a unit of Hindalco Industries Limited at Sambalpur, has achieved a significant sustainability milestone with the commissioning of a state-of-the-art 200 KLD Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) Plant featuring advanced Mechanical Vapour Recompression (MVR) technology. The facility ensures complete recycling and reuse of industrial effluents, marking a major stride toward sustainable water management and environmental stewardship. The inauguration ceremony was graced by Uma Nanduri, PCCF (Kenduleaves), Odisha & Member Secretary, OSPCB; Sudarsan Behera, Conservator of Forests, Sambalpur Kendu Leaf Circle; S N Nanda, Regional Officer, SPCB; and Hiranya Kumar Nayak, Regional Officer, Jharsuguda. Senior officials from the Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB) and the Aditya Aluminium management team, including JP Nayak (Unit Head), Gulshan Tiwari (Head – CPP), Sandeep Singh (Head, Smelter), Vinoda Thakur (Head – HR), Ranjan Jena (Cluster Environment Head), and Lalit Charan (DH, Environment).

AIET Bhubaneswar hosts AICTE-ATAL FDP

BHUBANESWAR: The Aryan Institute of Engineering and Technology (AIET), Bhubaneswar, successfully hosted a six-day AICTE-ATAL-sponsored Faculty Development Programme (FDP) on "Next-Gen Aerial Communication: Integrating AI and Drone Technologies" from October 13 to 18, 2025. Organised by the Department of Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE), the e-FDP witnessed an overwhelming response, drawing participation from more than 275 faculty members and research scholars from across India, including Assistant and Associate Professors. The programme was inaugurated by MadhumitaParida, Chairperson, AIET, in the presence of Dillip Kumar Biswal, Principal. The event featured 13 expert sessions led by eminent speakers from premier institutions and industries.

Cochlear implant program at Apollo

BHUBANESWAR:

Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar, has achieved remarkable success in restoring hearing and speech in children through its Cochlear Implant Program, which has been operational since 2011. The Department of ENT and Head-Neck Surgery has been performing bilateral cochlear implant surgeries for children with severe to profound hearing loss, many under Ayushman Bharat and other government-supported schemes offering free treatment. Alok Srivastava, Chief Operating Officer & Director-Medical Services, said, "Our hospital has invested in modern operating rooms, advanced implant technology, and dedicated rehabilitation facilities. The teamwork between pediatric, anesthesia, audiology, and surgical units ensures every child's safety and best possible outcome." Sanjeev Gupta, Senior Consultant, ENT (Head & Neck Surgery), highlighted the program's inclusivity: "We began with a mission to restore hearing to every child in need, regardless of financial background. With government support, we've made hearing restoration accessible to all."



es have eased since April 2022, both on the domestic and global fronts.

"In recent times, India's steel sector has encountered challenges due to increased imports and competitive pricing from major steel-producing countries," said the article authored by Anirban Sanyal and Sanjay Singh, officials in the RBI's Department of Statistics and Information Management.

These factors have affected domestic market share, lowered capacity utilisation, and added pressure on domestic producers, it said, adding that the pricing strategies of exporting nations remain a concern for the steel industry.

"Addressing these challenges calls for a balanced approach, including policy support and

initiatives to enhance the competitiveness of India's steel production through innovation, cost efficiency, and sustainable practices," it said.

According to the authors, the surge in imports has been primarily fuelled by lower import prices of steel, which in turn has adversely impacted domestic steel production. The central bank said the views expressed in the article are those of the authors and do not reflect the views of the Reserve Bank of India.

With sluggish economic growth anticipated in China and other major steel-producing and consuming regions, the article added that cross-border trade in steel is being increasingly redirected to high-growth markets, including India.

INDIA DOWN UNDER

Comeback clock ticks for Ro-Ko

Time for India to revisit playing combination as 'Ro-Ko' continue to grab eyeballs in 2nd ODI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Adelaide, Oct 22: The Indian team's heavy reliance on all-rounders will be tested by a plucky Australia in the second ODI but the spotlight will continue to stay firmly on Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, both of whom would look to turn back the clock with series-saving knocks here Thursday.

The opening ODI of the three-match rubber was a forgettable affair for India with multiple stoppages at Perth that affected the momentum of their batting unit, eventually leading to a seven-wicket loss.

The second ODI against Australia Thursday offers not just a chance for India to level the series, but for two icons to remind the world that class never fades — even after time away from the game.

In the rain-hit first ODI, India's batting rust was evident. Returning to 50-over cricket after more than seven months, Rohit and Kohli struggled to find their rhythm — the Mumbai-akar falling for 8, while India's fittest cricketer perished for a duck.

In Perth, India limped to 136/9 in 26 overs — a target Australia chased down comfortably in just 22 overs — to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. It was a comeback that promised much but delivered little. Having last played an ODI during the ICC Champions Trophy earlier this year, both Rohit and Kohli looked short of match sharpness. For fans, it was an



After a faltering comeback in Perth, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli head into Adelaide with both form and future under the spotlight

unfamiliar sight — watching two stalwarts who have defined India's batting for over a decade fall without a fight.

As the caravan moves to Adelaide, the stakes are higher than ever. Both players, having already stepped away from T20Is and Tests, are believed to be under evaluation for their ODI roles. A big innings could change the narrative; another failure might deepen the uncertainty surrounding their future in the format. Both Rohit and Virat have already retired from Test and T20 formats to prolong their ODI careers.

For India, this contest is about more than just a series scoreline — it's about pride, belief, and timing a comeback right. And for Rohit and Virat, Thursday's clash could well determine how the next chapter of

their storied careers is written. The bowling unit also failed to impress but to be fair to the likes Mohammed Siraj and Axar Patel, the batters gave them only 136 to defend.

The challenges at the Adelaide Oval won't be any different with Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood once again set to ask probing questions down that "corridor of uncertainty", relentlessly. With the Australian summer just about starting, there would be bounce and lateral movement on the country's fresh tracks, combining for conditions that can deflate the best in the business.

For the home team, last match's hero left-arm spinner Matt Kuhnemann has been released and seasoned leg-break bowler Adam Zampa is back after attending the birth of his child along with a fit-again Alex Carey, who was playing a Sheffield Shield game.

With a talent like Yashasvi Jaiswal warming the bench, there is enormous pressure on Rohit Sharma to perform and the former skipper arrived at the Adelaide Oval practice arena at least 45 minutes before some of the members joined him for an optional net session.

Fallible eves desperate for NZ scalp

With three defeats in a row against each of this World Cup's semifinalists -- Australia, South Africa and England -- India have repeatedly cracked under pressure, often after being in complete control

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Navi Mumbai, Oct 22: A fallible India will look to be in control of their fate and seal the last semifinal berth in what would effectively be a virtual quarterfinal against a sprightly New Zealand, in the Women's World Cup here Thursday.

Harmanpreet Kaur's side would become the fourth team to book the semifinal berth if they get the better of the White Ferns here on the familiar mat of the DY Patil Stadium.

But any more errors like in each of their previous three outings will leave India dependent on other scenarios.

If India lose to New Zealand, they will need England to beat the White Ferns and then must also win their final group league match against Bangladesh to make the cut.

New Zealand, who need to win both their remaining matches to make the final four, find themselves heading into another contest under rain threat as there are predictions of "rain or thunder-showers" towards the evening or night here.

In the event of a washout, India will be in an advantageous position courtesy more wins and better net run-rate equation, when stocks are taken to identify the fourth semifinalist.

While both Australia and South Africa exposed India's bowling skills and depth with spirited chases, the biggest shocker came in Indore, which captain Harmanpreet described as a "heartbreak" when her side failed to make 56 from 54 balls with seven wickets intact on a belter of a track. India's problems go beyond



playing combinations with the sixth bowling option in mind, as the camp grapples to handle the pressure of a home World Cup.

The margins of those defeats notwithstanding, India's fallibility under pressure and lack of specific skillsets remain the biggest concern for skipper Harmanpreet and head coach Amol Muzumdar, who had overseen a near-perfect build-up to this mega event.

So far, none of India's top batters have lasted long enough to finish games, and none of the bowlers have stepped up consistently, leaving the team heavily reliant on Richa Ghosh for big hits.

In such a scenario, the leadership duo of Harmanpreet and in-form Smriti Mandhana, who

have been Indian batting mainstays, will need to take responsibility as the team enters the 'now-or-never' zone.

India left out Jemimah Rodrigues to accommodate the sixth bowler and brought in Renuka Thakur, an exponent of swing bowling, but pressure will firmly be on No 3 Harleen Deol who has not been able to convert her starts.

The venerable duo of Sophie Devine and Suzie Bates would present a tough challenge for India as New Zealand would be keen on getting a full match after their two matches were washed out in the rain-hit Colombo.

It's been more than two decades since New Zealand were last seen in the Women's Test circuit and with white-ball

cricket being their only platform to showcase their mettle, the likes of Devine and Bates would be keen on adding one more title to last year's T20 World Cup win.

Even there, New Zealand had outplayed India across departments to serve a reality check.

Devine had explicitly made her emotions clear about getting limited opportunities in World Cup events after the last washed out game against Pakistan.

With this being a 'do-or-die' match for New Zealand, skipper Devine, who is also third highest run-getter with 260 runs in five matches including a century and two fifties would present a tough challenge to India in particular.

Olympic champion Neeraj conferred rank of Lt Colonel

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh conferred the insignia of honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel to the star javelin thrower, serving in the Territorial Army

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: Olympic gold medallist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was Wednesday conferred with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh describing him as an "epitome" of perseverance, and national pride.

Singh conferred the insignia of honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel to the star javelin thrower, serving in the Territorial Army, at a pipping ceremony in New Delhi that was also graced by Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi and many other senior officials of the force.

Chopra joined the Indian Army as a Naib Subedar August 26, 2016 and was promoted to Subedar in 2021 and Subedar Major in 2022.

Born December 24, 1997 in Khandra village in Haryana's Panipat, he created history by winning India's first-ever Olympic gold medal in athletics in the men's javelin throw competition at the Tokyo Olympics 2020.

Chopra continued his stellar performance by winning a silver medal at the Paris Olympics in 2024 and a gold medal at the World Athletics Championships in 2023.

He has also secured multiple



gold medals at the Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, and Diamond League events. His personal best throw of 90.23 metres (2025) stands as a milestone in

Indian sporting history. Interacting with Chopra and his family members, Defence Minister Singh described him as an "epitome of perseverance,

patriotism and the Indian spirit of striving for excellence".

"Lt Col (Hony) Neeraj Chopra embodies the highest ideals of discipline, dedication and national pride, serving as an inspiration to generations within the sporting fraternity and the Armed Forces alike," Singh said.

In recognition of his outstanding achievements and exemplary service to the nation, Lt Col (Hony) Chopra was granted an honorary commission in the Territorial Army by President Droupadi Murmu on April 16, the defence ministry said.

Chopra is also a recipient of many coveted awards, including Padma Shri, Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award, Arjuna Award, Param Vishisht Seva Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal.

Vishvajit clinches bronze again, opens India's medal account

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Novi Sad (Serbia), Oct 22: Indian Greco Roman wrestler Vishvajit More won the bronze medal after getting the better of Kazakhstan's Yerassyl Mmayrbekov 5-4 in the U23 Wrestling World Championship here Wednesday.

More won the medal in the 55kg category. However, three Indian women wrestlers in action lost their respective first rounds on the day.

With this victory, Vishvajit not only became a two-time U23 World bronze medalist, but also opened India's medal tally for the second year in a row an impressive reflection of his steady rise in a discipline where Indian success has historically been limited.

Hanny Kumari (50kg) lost her



bout by fall after a close fight against Sviatlana Katenka, who is competing under UWW (global wrestling body) flag. The score was 4-6 in favour of Katenka when she found the pin move against the Indian.

Diksha Malik (72kg) could not cross the qualification round, losing 3-9 to China's Yuqi Liu, who later lost her bout by fall to shut the door on the Indian.

ASIA CUP TROPHY FIASCO

BCCI, PCB head for showdown in next month's ICC meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, Oct 22: The BCCI and Pakistan Cricket Board are headed for a showdown at next month's ICC meeting as PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi is not budging from his stance of personally handing over the Asia Cup trophy to India in his capacity as head of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC).

In the reply sent to the BCCI and other ACC member nations, Naqvi has insisted that he is willing to organise a ceremony November 10 in Dubai, where a representative of the BCCI and any available Indian team player can take the trophy from him.

"The ACC trophy rightly belongs to the Indian cricket team and is being held in trust till such time that a BCCI office holder along with any available participating player can collect the same from the ACC President," Naqvi wrote in his reply.

GOAL-FILLED NIGHT IN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

In all, there were 43 goals in nine games, with six teams scoring four or more

to a 2-0 win at Villarreal.

PSG runs wild in Leverkusen

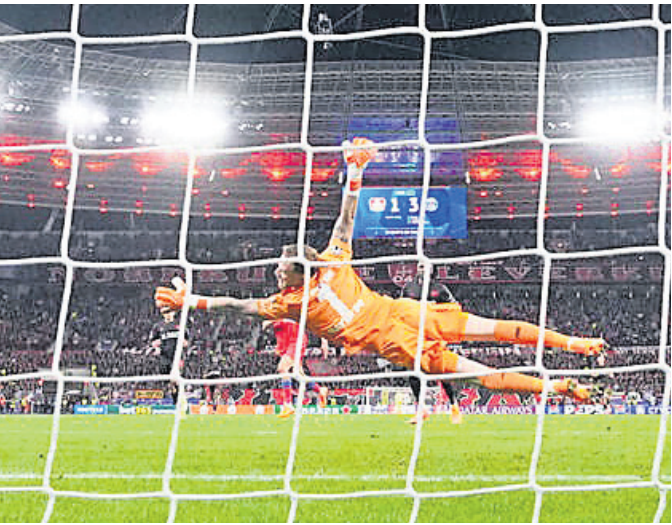
By halftime at the BayArena PSG was 4-1 up - but that didn't come close to telling the full story of a chaotic first period, which included a red card for each team and two penalties for Leverkusen.

Two goals for Desire Doue put the French champion well in control and the action continued after the break with Nuno Mendes extending the lead within five minutes of the restart. Ousmane Dembele also came off the bench to make a scoring return after injury.

"That's three games, three wins, and crucially we're at the top of the UEFA Champions League table," Dembele said. "We've started this campaign really well, especially considering how difficult it was last season."

Lopez treble

Fermin Lopez scored a hat trick and Marcus Rashford hit two goals as Barcelona blew



away 10-man Olympiakos.

Barca took full advantage when Santiago Hezze was shown a contentious red card in the second half — scoring four goals to complete the rout.

It was Lopez's first hat trick of his career, with Lamine Yamal also on the scoresheet from

the penalty spot.

Olympiakos had no answer when Hezze was shown a second yellow card in the 57th minute, despite replays appearing to show he did not make contact with Marc Casado, who was trying to pull him back.

Rashford, on loan from Man-

chester United, now has four goals in three games in the Champions League this season.

Arsenal powers past Atletico

Top of the Premier League and perfect in Europe, Arsenal is flying high.

A powerful second half at the Emirates saw Mikel Arteta's team brush aside Atletico with summer signing Gyokeres sealing the victory with two goals in three minutes. Those goals ended the striker's seven-game scoring drought for Arsenal.

"I am delighted as he fully deserves it. The workrate he brings to the team is outstanding. We value a lot of things that he does for the team and it was the biggest smile on his face today," Arteta said.

Goals from Gabriel Magalhaes and Gabriel Martinelli had given Arsenal a 2-0 lead before Gyokeres struck.

Arsenal is third in the standings — behind PSG and Inter on goal difference.

Red hot Haaland

Haaland just can't stop scoring right now.

The Norwegian international's opener at Villarreal was his 24th in 14 games this season and extended his current scoring streak to 12 games in a row. He now has 53 goals in the Champions League in just 51 appearances. The only game he didn't score in this term was City's 2-0 defeat to Tottenham in August.

Bernardo Silva was also on target as City moved up to fifth.

Napoli stunned in Eindhoven

The biggest shock of the night was Napoli's defeat at PSV. That's back-to-back losses for Antonio Conte's team, following Saturday's 1-0 defeat at Torino. And such a heavy loss in Europe will be particularly humbling for the Italian champion, with three goals conceded in the last 10 minutes after going down to 10 men when Lorenzo Luccha was sent off in the 76th.

Napoli has just one win from three games in Europe so far.