





DHARITRI YOUTH CONCLAVE 2025

DHARITRI CLIMATE GRANT

CALLING ALL YOUNG CLIMATE LEADERS!

SUBMIT:

**YOUR CLIMATE STORY,
JOURNEY & PASSION!**
(250–300 WORDS)

4 HIGH-RES PHOTOS
CAPTURE YOUR EFFORTS!

ACTION VIDEO
SHOW YOUR CLIMATE WORK
IN MOTION!

YOUR FUTURE PLANS
OUTLINE YOUR NEXT
CLIMATE GOALS!



<https://tinyurl.com/yk7ct969>

SCAN TO APPLY

**YOU CAN ALSO
NOMINATE OTHERS!**

LAST DATE OF ENTRY

31ST OCTOBER 2025

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

JOIN A NETWORK OF YOUTH AND CLIMATE EXPERTS

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
There is all likelihood today of things not shaping up as you desired. It may seem you made all the wrong investments, as the benefits may be very less. However, Ganesha indicates that life is full of unexpected happenings.

TAURUS
You will find it difficult to keep up appearances. Be prepared, says Ganesha. Situations are likely to bring out your inner feelings, your true nature. If someone crosses or confronts you will neither take it lying down, nor be inclined to forget and forgive. Maintain your composure and don't allow anyone to hassle or provoke you.

GEMINI
You will be faced with difficult situations and circumstances today. You will become sentimental as a result. You will be able to extricate yourself only when the time is right from these adverse circumstances. You will receive co-operation from your colleagues. This will ease some of your burden, says Ganesha.

CANCER
Today, you are likely to exhibit tremendous patience while dealing with your loved ones. Giving them a patient ear is your way of saying that you care. Some may, however, think otherwise. But that's their problem, says Ganesha. At work, you will make plans and ensure a smooth implementation of those plans.

LEO
You will pay attention only to your work and will not be distracted by other issues today, says Ganesha. People involved in Research and Development related fields will find that their knowledge will come in handy for them today. Steps taken in the right direction will make your task very easy today.

VIRGO
Today is a day to do some hard training and hard thinking. Ganesha says you will have to exercise both your muscles and your brain. Hard work will eventually lead to rich rewards. A romantic meeting with your beloved in the evening will put you in high spirits.

LIBRA
Ganesha says that today you should think before spending your money because you know and understand the importance of money. You will not hesitate to spend money on family members and on entertainment. You will be able to meet like-minded people with whom you will be able to share your experiences and knowledge.

SCORPIO
It's time to live your dreams. You may just land up in your dream house or drive in a plush car, you once dreamt of. Evening time is spared for family and loved ones, says Ganesha. You may even go shopping to buy object de art for your new cosy corner.

SAGITTARIUS
Fuel those tanks and propel yourself today to meet your targets today. On the business front, the fast buck that you expected might just not materialise. Expect to sail into rough seas in the love journey. Ganesha advises playing the wait-and-watch game in matters of the heart.

CAPRICORN
You are in for an exciting ride, today. Happiness and contentment will fall in your lap and you'll be delighted with this positive energy, feels Ganesha. Job requirements will keep you occupied as you need to find answers to some complicated questions at the earliest. With rise in your bank-balance and available finance schemes, you can plan to set up your own business venture, also.

AQUARIUS
Be appreciative of the achievements of others as it will inspire them to continue and put their best foot forward. Your amicable approach at work will create friendly environment and motivate your colleagues to perform better. You will be in the good books of everyone, says Ganesha.

PISCES
You are blessed with exceptional grasping power today, and will be able to easily imbibe whatever you see or hear today. You will also be able to speed through your routine tasks. You will be able to concentrate on the tasks you have taken up. Your enhanced sensitivity today could see that special someone's words enter straight into your heart and cause you to fall head-over-heels in love with them, says Ganesha.



DREW BARRYMORE'S REHAB EXPERIENCE

Hollywood actress Drew Barrymore has spoken about entering a rehabilitation facility at 14 years old, where she was treated for nearly two years, and tagged it as the "best thing that ever happened" to her. Barrymore shared this during a conversation with Mae Martin on *The Drew Barrymore Show*, reports *people.com*.

CELINE DION ON HER BIGGEST SUPPORT

Legendary singer-songwriter Celine Dion has called her 15-year-old sons as her biggest support system since she was diagnosed with Stiff Person Syndrome. This comes as it has been revealed that panic buttons have now been installed in their home, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.



Kubbra gets nostalgic

Mumbai: Actress Kubbra Sait, who is known for her work in Sacred Games, Gully Boy, Farzi and others, is getting nostalgic. On Saturday, the actress took to her Instagram, and embarked on an emotional journey back to 2009, the year she left her corporate job at a tech MNC, to chase her dreams in Mumbai.

The actress shared a series of throwback pictures. The post also included the pictures from her portfolio shoot. She also penned a long note in the caption, as she shared her journey.

She wrote, "Circa 2009. Somewhere between spreadsheets and dreams, I decided to quit my job at Microsoft and move to Mumbai. Everyone said you needed a "portfolio", yes yes! that mythic ticket to the big city. Mine was shot by a kind photographer in Dubai, Sunith Shyam, right after I'd won Miss Personality at Miss India Worldwide. I remember how proud I felt when I framed this first photo, my first real step towards a life and career I hadn't yet lived. Today, years later, I tried to change that old frame".

Kubbra's post struck a chord with fans for its honesty and heart.

The actress was recently seen in The Trial season 2 and made her reality debut with Rise and Fall. She will next appear in Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai.

IAN S



Be your own champion: Gauahar

Mumbai: Actor and *Bigg Boss 7* winner Gauahar Khan is setting major fitness goals just two months after welcoming her second baby.

The actress, who became a mother recently, has started her post-pregnancy fitness routine. She recently shared a video from a first day back at the gym. In the clip, Gauahar is seen working out with dumbbells dressed in a striped sleeveless top and black leggings. She captioned the video, "Be Your Own Champion: Day 1 in the gym, almost two months postpartum."

She also tagged her husband Zaid Darbar, stating that his latest song, which released a few days ago, had now become her gym anthem. The video, shared on her social media stories, shows her performing bicep curls and strength training exercises.

Gauahar and her husband, social media influencer Zaid Darbar, welcomed their second child together in September.

The actress recently shared a striking new picture on her social media where she highlighted that she was back on set working just 25 days post her delivery. Khan was seen donning a stylish black pantsuit with wide-legged trousers and a statement white lapel blazer. The picture was taken from her appearance on *Bigg Boss season 19* during the *Weekend Ka Vaar* episode.

IAN S



Supermodel Vartika makes celluloid debut

Mumbai: Former Miss Universe India-supermodel Vartika Singh is set to make her Bollywood debut with the upcoming courtroom thriller *Haq* starring Emraan Hashmi and Yami Gautam.

Directed by Suparn Varma, the film is produced by Jungle Pictures. Haq will have Vartika play a woman who is unpredictable and emotionally exacting.

Varma, known for *The Family Man* and *Rana Naidu*, calls her performance "controlled fire."

To prepare, the former beauty queen trained with dialect coaches and worked through improvisation-based workshops to understand her character's silences, what Varma calls "the quiet machinery of guilt."

Set against the backdrop of a controversial legal battle, Haq brings Emraan and Yami opposite each other in a case that collides with Singh's character in ways neither expects. Based on Jigna Vora's

book *Bano: Bharat ki Beti*, Haq offers a fictionalised account of the events surrounding the Shah Bano case, a landmark issue that stirred public discourse decades ago and remains relevant in contemporary times.

Backed by Jungle Pictures, in association with Insomnia Films and Baweja Studios, Haq releases November 7. IAN S



Legend who redefined TV comedy

Satish Shah, who had been battling kidney-related health issues and passed away Saturday in Mumbai, has left behind a legacy of laughter, wit, and an unparalleled contribution to Indian television and cinema.

Shah's career spanned over four decades wherein he worked in theatre, films, and television. Born on June 25, 1951, in Bombay (now Mumbai), his sharp timing and nuanced performances in acting quickly caught the attention of industry insiders. He made his film debut with supporting roles in Hindi cinema during the late 1970s and 1980s.

While Satish Shah appeared in several films, his portrayal

of Indravadan Sarabhai in *Sarabhai vs Sarabhai* (2004-2006) cemented his status as a television icon. The show, a sophisticated comedy set in Mumbai, revolved around the quirks of the Sarabhai family. Indravadan's sarcastic wit and playful banter, along with the quirks of other characters became a defining aspect of its charm.

Fans

fondly remember his one-liners, impeccable timing, and the effortless way he brought humour to everyday situations.

The show, though initially running for two seasons, became a cultural phenomenon, with Satish Shah's performance continuing to resonate with audiences years later. Satish Shah's Indravadan is a popular subject of memes on social

media. Beyond television, his filmography includes several memorable characters. From comic roles in films like *Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro* to supporting performances in movies such as *Dil Hai Ki Manta Nahin*, he had a unique ability to inhabit every role with authenticity.

He was last seen on screen in *Humshakals* in 2014. Throughout his career, he won several accolades including three Indian Television Academy Awards for *Sarabhai vs Sarabhai* alone.

Fans and colleagues of the veteran artist have taken to social media to express their grief, sharing anecdotes and tributes that celebrate his humour, kindness, and legacy.

AGENCIES

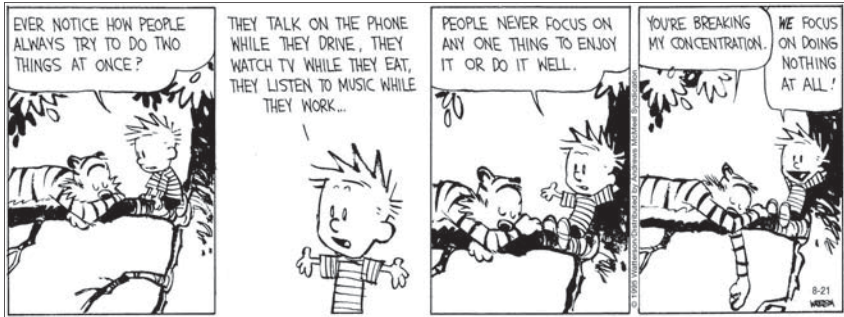


SATISH SHAH (1951 - 2025)

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

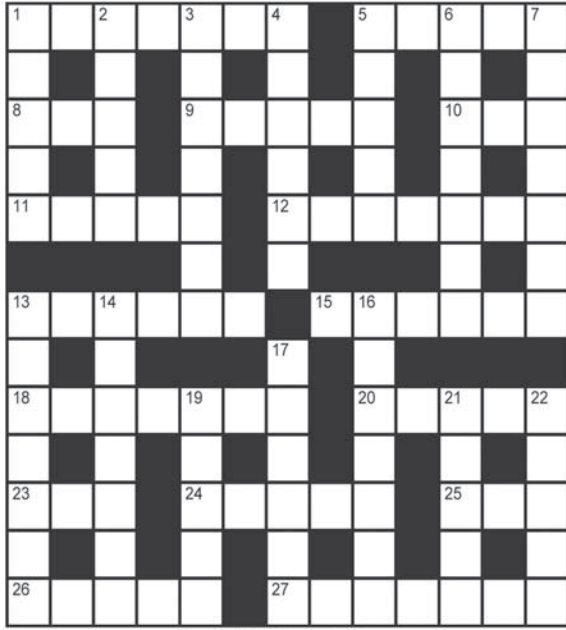


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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- Across**
- Wet blanket
 - Knight mare?
 - Convent dweller
 - Kangaroo kids
 - Easy mark
 - Swagger
 - Philanders
 - Plaster of Paris starter
 - Snub
 - Timepiece of old
 - Modify
 - Venom carrier
 - English race place
 - Curling surface
 - Cheque recipient
 - Methods
 - Resulting
 - Sediment
 - Illumination of yore (3,4)
 - Impressive array
 - Simple shelters (4-3)
 - Trousers
 - Publicist's concern
 - Old hat
 - Flightless birds
- Down**
- Picture cards
 - Recluse
 - Martial art
 - Rates of return
 - Rope fibre

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

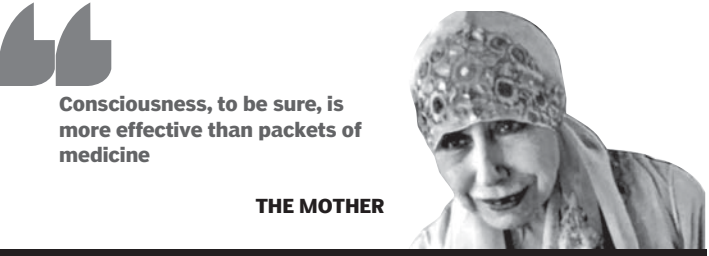
O	C	T	O	P	U	S	A	I	D	E	S
W	A	A	P	R	I	T					
L	E	G	I	S	L	A	T	E	S	I	R
E			T				T	C	A		
T	A	B	L	E							
	A	L	O								
S	R	E	S	E	M	B	L	E	D		
H	B										
O	R	A	C	L	E	S					
C	R	I									
K	O	I									
E	A	N									
D	I	N	E	S							
C	A	L	I	P	S	O					

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

OIPR-25107/11/0030/2526 Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Raichangpur



Mamdani’s Miracle

If all goes well, and your columnist is really hoping that it does go well, the world’s most famous city will soon be won and run by a man with a Gujarati father and a Punjabi mother. Zohran Mamdani won the Democratic Party’s nomination in June and on 4 November will likely win the general election to become New York’s mayor.

What I wanted to focus on was his campaign and how he came out on top. In January this year, he was polling at 1% but by June had won 43% of the primary (the election that decides who will represent the Democratic Party in the general) and now polls show him at 50% in an expanded electorate of the entire city. How did this happen? Americans refer to such analysis as punditry and let us indulge in it.

First, take a look at the city’s demographics. New York has 350,000 millionaires and 123 billionaires, as might be expected in the place that is host to Wall Street. But one fourth of its population lives in poverty as defined in that city. That definition is that a family of four surviving on \$47,000 or less a year. That is a total of more than 20 lakh New Yorkers.

Mamdani’s starting point in his campaign was to focus on this problem of affordability. This went against conventional wisdom and polling, which showed that crime and safety were top priorities for voters. Mamdani’s rivals focussed on those, but he took up affordability and made it his plank. He then offered three primary solutions: a four-year rent freeze on rent-stabilized apartments (in which 20 lakh tenants live); free childcare for children up to the age of five (something which costs a family around \$22,000 per year if both parents are working); and free buses.

He stayed with this message from the start of his campaign a year ago till now with no change. The second element to his success is the volunteer army that took up his cause. In June these were 50,000 in number of whom 30,000 had participated in knocking on doors, canvassing on the street or making phone calls on his behalf to raise money or sign-up volunteers. By the end of October, this is likely to be just under double.

This is a staggering number and can be explained by two things. The base comes from Mamdani’s political home, the New York branch of the Democratic Socialists of America. This is a group that began participating in elections only a decade ago, but has seen success because it is laser-focussed on issues affecting working class people. Mamdani’s campaign greatly expanded the number of volunteers that the DSA deployed in previous elections. His campaign team of youngsters (he is 34 and many of his team are younger than he is) managing something of this size have turned out to be more competent and effective than the usual consultants and strategists.

The third element was the candidate himself. Mamdani is Muslim and openly identifies as being such, in a city where Islamophobia has been an issue, particularly after 9/11. But New York is also a city where 40% of the population was born outside America and has a large Muslim and South Asian population, which has rallied to his cause.

As important as this is his ability to attract all sorts of people towards him, including young Jewish New Yorkers, because of his charm and his talent. His dazzling social media output will be studied for years as a model and many months ago, politicians across America were already copying it, most of them badly because they lack Mamdani’s ability to make it all look effortless and fun. A happy warrior, as American pundits referred to him.

These three things to my mind are the building blocks of his (fingers crossed) victory come 4 November. I have touched on this in a previous column, but if and when he wins, he will represent a shift in the way many Americans see Israel. Polls consistently now show that the majority of Americans sympathise with Palestinians over Israel because of its practice of apartheid and genocide. But this shift has not been owned in politics because the Israel lobby is powerful and nasty and can kneecap candidates running for office. Mamdani has weathered their sharpest attacks, being called, predictably, a jihadist and bigot and anti-semitic and so on. We know this because it was an essential part of his rival’s attack on him in the primary.

It continues even now, but has not been as effective as it might have been even just a couple of years ago, because of his courage as much as the appalling behaviour of the Israeli state.

Optimists think that if he is able to government New York competently his campaign and his platform can offer a model for the entire Democratic Party in America. We shall see if that happens, but it is true that there is no other alternative that has been put forward by those inside the party which is as original as Mamdani’s and (again fingers crossed) as successful.

What an achievement it will be if a young Gujarati-Punjabi man is able to give the most powerful nation in the world a new direction.



Aakar Patel
WHAT AN ACHIEVEMENT IT WILL BE IF A YOUNG GUJARATI-PUNJABI MAN IS ABLE TO GIVE THE MOST POWERFUL NATION IN THE WORLD A NEW DIRECTION



Juan Manuel Santos

TODAY, MANY CONNECTIONS ARE BROKEN – BETWEEN PEOPLES AND BETWEEN HUMANS AND THE PLANET. OUR TASK IN THE YEARS AHEAD IS TO RESTORE THEM



Dhurjati Mukherjee

RENEWED EFFORTS ARE NECESSARY TO MAKE AGRICULTURE REMUNERATIVE BY PROMOTING CASH CROPS, AND AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIES

WISDOM CORNER

Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned

BUDDHA

Die to everything of yesterday so that your mind is always fresh, always young, innocent, full of vigor and passion

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

I find hope in the darkest of days, and focus in the brightest. I do not judge the universe

DALAI LAMA

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1970: Following an absence of more than three years, American boxer Muhammad Ali returned to the ring, defeating Jerry Quarry; Ali had been barred from fighting after he refused to be inducted into the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War.
- 1979: South Korean President Park Chung Hee was assassinated by his lifelong friend Kim Jae Kyu, head of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, who was sentenced to death for his actions.
- 1984: The action thriller The Terminator was released in the United States; hugely successful, it made actor Arnold Schwarzenegger a star and established director James Cameron as a bankable filmmaker.

FOCUS CLIMATE ACTION

HEAL THE PLANET



As climate-driven disasters intensify, the costs are falling hardest on the poor, underscoring the urgent need for a just transition to clean energy and a net-zero-emissions economy. Although multilateralism is no longer in vogue, it remains the only viable path forward

relentless the crises we face may be. Multilateralism was developed precisely for times like these –to guide us through disagreements and disasters, with no exceptions.

This November, two major summits aimed at tackling global problems will take place. The first is the second World Summit for Social Development. The first such summit 30 years ago brought together an unprecedented number of world leaders, marking a new chapter for multilateralism in the service of human development. The other summit next month, the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil, will address the existential crisis of global warming.

As president of Colombia, I saw firsthand that when disaster strikes, the poor are always hit the hardest. That is why we created various institutions to coordinate assistance following the 2010 floods. Now, it is essential that all countries take heed of climate warnings and scale up their own resilience and adaptation policies.

A timely new report from

researchers at the University of Oxford and the United Nations Development Programme shines a spotlight on this issue. It finds that almost 80% of multi-dimensionally poor people –whose deprivations are measured beyond low incomes – across 108 developing countries, totaling 887 million individuals, live in regions exposed to at least one climate-related hazard (such as extreme heat, drought, flooding, or air pollution).

The report also confirms that people in lower-middle-income countries confront more overlapping climate hazards than those in low-income or upper-middle-income countries. And while upper-middle-income countries have relatively fewer poor people, this cohort is still exposed to air pollution and flooding in particular. Such findings underscore the need for a just energy transition.

To that end, Colombia introduced Latin America’s first carbon tax in 2016. Now, in the run-up to COP30, The Elders are calling for G20 countries to use their financial advan-

SPECTRUM AGRICULTURE

Big farm promises, small farmers’ pain

India will never compromise with the interests of the farmers, livestock holders and fishermen. And I know that I will have to personally pay a very heavy price for this, but I am ready,” said Prime Minister Modi recently. Agriculture sustains around 46 percent of Indian population and employs over 46 percent of workers, but it generates less than a fifth of the GDP and thus priority to agriculture and agro-based industries is quite natural.

The Opposition promptly recalled and criticised the Modi government’s three farm laws, highlighting police actions and negative campaigns against protesting farmers, with over 750 reported deaths. While Modi’s claim of personal loss to protect farmers was unclear, officials linked his remarks to resisting the US demands for zero-duty market access for American agricultural and dairy products, which India has consistently opposed.

An important development in the sector is the very recent launch of two mega central schemes with a total outlay of ₹35,440 crore to transform 100 low-performing agri-districts and increase productivity of pulses to reduce imports.

These are highly significant, specially the first one as the country’s productivity needs to be improved by focusing on the low productivity regions. These include PM Dhan Dhaanya Krishi Yojana with an outlay of ₹34,000 crore and Mission for Self-Sufficiency in Pulses with an outlay of ₹11,440 crore.

Meanwhile, the National Mission on Natural Farming with an outlay of ₹2481 crore aimed at promoting sustainable farming on 750,000 hectares of land and increasing the income of 10 million farmers, according to government officials. The central government will be contributing ₹1584 crore towards the scheme with states accounting for ₹897 crore.

Despite all efforts, the overall scenario in the sector does not look quite encouraging. There is no doubt that farmers are poor and experts suggest the government must come forward to free them from the yoke of subsistence farming. Fragmentation of farm size as also lack of modernisation of agriculture has come in the way of increase in output while the failure of industry to create jobs has led to more people being dependent on agriculture.

However, questions remain regarding the government’s actions to modernise agriculture, provide training to farmers for diversification into value-added crops, extend additional financial support for such initiatives, and enhance overall productivity.

After crossing western Uttar Pradesh into Bihar and West Bengal, the Indo-Gangetic plain has productive areas but faces high rural poverty. Rising temperatures have already reduced yields, especially for small farmers in Eastern India, and even prosperous regions like Punjab and Haryana may see declines. This could lead to a drop in overall food supplies soon. Nutritious foods such as vegetables, fruits, pulses, dairy, and millets should remain affordable and accessible.

Two aspects that need to be given special attention are diversification of food crops where the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR) has a big role to play though at the sub-divisional and block levels its presence is not evident. Training of small and marginal farmers, especially in the interior and backward regions, and giving them seeds and other inputs and technical knowledge to diversify crops

and earn better returns, which should have been taken up in right earnest, is virtually absent.

Another aspect is marketing, which included recent developments such as the Centre releasing a draft national policy framework on agriculture marketing. The framework recommends that states transition to a unified national market for agricultural products through a single licensing or registration system and a single fee.

Increasing farm income is indeed a great challenge for the country and the policy makers must sincerely look into the matter. The small and marginal farmers are in great distress, and this can’t be allowed to continue for long, if agriculture must contribute in a bigger way to GDP. Renewed efforts are necessary to make agriculture remunerative by promoting cash crops, setting up peasant cooperatives and agro-based industries.

Considering the opportunities in agriculture, agro-based industries, and export potential, the government, in cooperation with state governments and agricultural experts, may develop an action plan to address these issues.

INFRA

ROKO show in Sidney

Sir, Has anyone dreamt that Rohit Sharma would claim the man of the match and man of the series award in the concluded ODI against Australia? While there were memes on Kohli by joining him in the band of most number of zeros scored by Indian players and Virat proved his comeback at the right time. ROKO silenced the critics and proved that the form is temporary and class is permanent. Indeed, one can’t ask for a convincing victory than this from team India after losing out in the first 2 ODIs. It was yet another classic ton from Rohit Sharma to equal the records of Sachin Tendulkar by scoring the 9th one against the Aussies. It was a fairytale finish orchestrated by two legends of Indian Cricket. Incidentally, this is India’s first ODI win at the Sydney Cricket Ground since 2016. Kudos to India for a spectacular win. ROKO showed their class. The performance once again endorsed why the crowd love and respect this pair as the invincible one in world cricket..

A.P. Thiruvadi, CHENNAI

Adieu ad icon

Sir, Leaving behind iconic advertisements, jingles and lyrics that tug a chord in every Indian heart, Piyush Pandey the advertising legend has passed away creating a void that can never be filled. Pandey redefined the Indian advertising world with his brilliant ads that was very much Indian - blended with Indian life, its wit, humour, emotion and flavour. He took ads to the global stage showcasing Indian creativity and culture at its best. Simple but powerful narratives made his ads worth watchable and memorable. His penchant for writing memorable and mesmerising lyrics came through the song - Mile sur mera tumhara (1988), a patriotic video song promoting national integration and unity in diversity. A recipient of the CLIO Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012 he became the first advertising professional in India to be honoured with the Padma Shri.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

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, Rasulgargh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Government of India

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jorbagh Road, Aliganj, New Delhi – 110003, Dated: As per e-Sign
5-ORC288/2016-BHU I/102806/2025

To
The Addl. Chief Secretary (Forests),
Government of Odisha,
Bhubaneswar.

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 23.80 ha of forest land (as per Sabik records as on 25.10.1980) including 2.240 ha of forest land in safety zone area for chromite ore mining of Kalarangiatta Chromite Mines by M/s Ferro Alloys Corporation Ltd. (FACOR Ltd.) in Cuttack Forest Division coming under jurisdiction of Sukinda Tehsil of Jajpur District, Odisha (Online proposal no. FP/OR/MIN/16453/2015).

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Odisha's letter No 10F (Cons)-228/2026/13769 dated 27.07.2016 on the above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government under 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and additional information submitted by the State Govt. vide letter No. 10F (Cons)-228/2016/17975F&E dated 28.09.2016, vide letter No. 16103 /9F(MG)-368/2016 dated 19.08.2022, vide letter dated 30.12.2022, vide letter No. 25.09.2024 and vide letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0021-2017-3740 dated 13.02.2025 and to say that the proposal has been examined by the Advisory Committee constituted by the Central Government under Section - 3 of the aforesaid Adhiniyam.

2. After careful examination of the proposal of the Government of Odisha and on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, and approval of the same by the competent authority of the MoEF&CC, New Delhi, the Central Government hereby accords 'in-principle' approval under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 23.80 ha of forest land (as per Sabik records as on 25.10.1980) including 2.240 ha of forest land in safety zone area for chromite ore mining of Kalarangiatta Chromite Mines by M/s Ferro Alloys Corporation Ltd. (FACOR Ltd.) in Cuttack Forest Division coming under jurisdiction of Sukinda Tehsil of Jajpur District, Odisha (Online proposal no. FP/OR/MIN/16453/2015 subject to the fulfillment of the following conditions:

1. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;

2. **Compensatory Afforestation:**

a. The User Agency shall transfer the cost of raising and maintaining the compensatory afforestation as per the approved CA Scheme at the current wage rate in consultation with State Forest Department in the account of CAMPA of the concerned State through online portal;

b. The non-forest land identified for raising compensatory afforestation shall be transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department before issue of the final approval;

c. The identified non-forest land for raising Compensatory Afforestation shall be notified by the State Government as PF under Section-29 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or under the relevant Section (s) of the local Forest Act, as the case may be, before handing over the forest land to the user agency;

d. The matter regarding imposition of penal CA is under consideration for the formulation of a uniform policy guideline in the matter. Keeping this in view, the imposition of penal CA (if any) shall be as per the said guideline, if issued;

e. The cost of survey, demarcation and erection of permanent pillars, if required on the identified CA land, shall be deposited in advance with the Forest Department by the user agency. The CA will be maintained for 10 years. The scheme may include afforestation of indigenous species with appropriate provision for anticipated cost increase for works scheduled for subsequent years;

f. The compensatory afforestation over non-forest land, equal in extent to the forest land being diverted as identified in Plot No.315 & 318 Khata No.155 of Village Kerajodi under Kankadahad Tahsil of Dhenkanal District, and additional CA over an area of 24 ha of degraded forest land identified in Dolia RF of Mahabirod Range of Dhenkanal Forest Division shall be raised at the project cost and afforestation works shall start within two years from the date of final approval and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved CA scheme.

g. The land identified for the purpose of CA shall be clearly depicted on a Survey of India toposheet of 1:50,000 scale;

3. **NPV:**

a. The User Agency shall transfer the funds towards the cost of Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land being diverted under this proposal from the User Agency as per the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 28.03.2008, 24.04.2008 and 09.05.2008 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 202/1995 and the guidelines issued by this Ministry vide its letter No. 5-3/2007-FC (Pt.) dated 29.12.2023 through online portal of CAMPA account of the State Concerned;

b. At the time of payment of the Net Present Value (NPV) at the present rate, the user agency shall furnish an undertaking to pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India;

c. The penalty for violation shall be equal to NPV of forest land per hectare for each year of violation w.e.f. 31.12.2016 with maximum up to five (5) times the NPV plus 12 percent simple interest from the date of raising of such demand till the deposit is made.

4. Compensatory levies to be realized from the User Agency under the project shall be transferred/ deposited, through e-challan, in to the account of CAMPA pertaining to the State concerned through e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>);

5. User agency either himself or through the State Forest Department shall undertake gap planting and soil & moisture conservation activities to restock and rejuvenate the degraded open forests (having crown density less than 0.40), if any, located in the area within 100 meter from outer perimeter of the mining lease. The plan for plantation and SMC activities will be prepared and submitted to MoEF &CC before grant of final approval;

6. The KML files of diverted area, the CA areas, the proposed SMC treatment area and the WLMP area shall be uploaded on the e-Green watch portal along with GPS lds and all other requisite details prior to Stage II approval;

7. Following activities, as per approved plan / schemes, shall be undertaken in the lease area by the User Agency under the supervision of the State Forest Department. Approved scheme/plan shall be submitted to the Ministry along with compliance of Stage-I approval:

a. Mitigative measures to minimize soil erosion and choking of stream shall be implemented within a period of three years with effect from the issue of Stage-II clearance in accordance with the approved Plan in consultation with the State Forest Department;

b. Planting of adequate drought hardy plant species and sowing of seeds, in the appropriate area within the mining lease to arrest soil erosion in accordance with the approved scheme;

c. Construction of check dams, retention /toe walls to arrest sliding down of the excavated material along the contour in accordance with the approved scheme;

d. Stabilize the overburden dumps by appropriate grading/benching, in accordance with the approved scheme, so as to ensure that angles of repose at any given place is less than 28°.

8. **Safety Zone Management:** Following activities, at project cost, shall be undertaken by the user agency for the management of safety zone as per relevant guidelines issued by the Ministry's guidelines:

a. User agency shall ensure demarcation of safety zone (7.5-meter strip all along the inner boundary of the mining lease area), and its fencing, protection and regeneration by erecting adequate number of 6 feet high RCC boundary pillars inscribed with DGPS coordinates with barbed wire fencing and deploying adequate number of watchers under the supervision of the State Forest Department;

b. Boundary of the safety zone of the mining lease, adjacent to habitation/roads, should be properly fenced by the user agency;

c. Safety zone shall be maintained as green belt around mining lease and to ensure dense canopy in the area, regeneration shall be taken up in this area by the user agency at project cost under the supervision of the State Forest Department;

d. The State Government and the user agency shall ensure that safety zone is maintained as per the prescribed norms;

9. The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall undertake to take up works for construction and cleaning of garland drains, stabilizing retaining walls, proper terracing of OB dumps and checking gully formation resulting in soil erosion;

10. The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall maintain that plants which are having lowest translocation factor can be preferred under afforestation on the OB dumps and fruit trees to be avoided in planting during biological stabilization of OB dumps;

11. Adequate care shall be taken to check any rolling of overburden/dumps beyond diverted area and also to check soil erosion caused due to mining activities;

12. The State Govt. shall ensure that the user agency shall made all possible efforts to prevention of fall of wild animals into mining pit by fencing the open pit area;

13. No damage shall be caused to the top-soil and the user agency will follow the top soil management plan;

14. The User Agency shall prepare a list of existing village tanks and other water bodies with GPS co-ordinates located within five km from the mine lease boundary. This list is to be duly verified by the concerned Divisional Forest Officer. The User Agency shall regularly undertake desilting of these village tanks and other water bodies so as to mitigate the impact of siltation of such tanks/water bodies. A detailed approved plan for desilting of identified ponds and water bodies to be prepared in consultation with forest department and shall be submitted to MoEF & CC before final approval;

15. The cost of felling of trees shall be deposited by the User Agency with the State Forest Department;

16. Trees should be felled in phased manner as per the requirement in the approved Mining Plan with prior permission of concerned DFO;

17. The user agency shall explore the possibility of translocation of maximum number of trees identified to be felled and shall ensure that any tree felling shall be done only when it is unavoidable and that too under strict supervision of the State Forest Department;

18. User agency in consultation with the State Forest Department shall create and maintain alternate habitat/home for the avifauna, whose nesting tress are to be cleared in this project. Bird nests artificially made out of eco-friendly materials shall be used in the area, including forest area and human settlements, adjoining the forest area being diverted for the project;

19. A site-specific Wildlife Management Plan shall be prepared by the State Government in consultation with the PCCF (Wildlife) for the protection and conservation of wildlife of the area. A copy of approved plan shall be submitted to the Ministry along with the compliance of the conditions on 'inprinciple' approval. Entire cost of implementation of the provisions of the Wildlife Management Plan shall be deposited into the account of CAMPA of the State;

20. State Government shall complete settlement of rights, in term of the Scheduled Tribes and Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, if any, on the forest land proposed to be diverted as per the provisions of the Rule 11 (7) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023;

21. The User Agency shall undertake mining in a phased manner after taking due care for reclamation of the mined over area. The concurrent reclamation plan as per the approved mining plan shall be executed by the User Agency from the very first year, and an annual report on implementation thereof shall be submitted to the Nodal Officer, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, in the concerned State Government and the concerned Regional Office of the Ministry. If it is found from the annual report that the activities indicated in the concurrent reclamation plan are not being executed by the User Agency, the Nodal Officer or the concern Addl. Principle Chief Conservator of Forests (Central) may direct that the mining activities shall remain suspended till such time, such reclamation activities area satisfactorily executed;

22. The User Agency shall comply with the Hon'ble Supreme Court order on regrassing, and re-grass the mining area and any other areas which may have been disturbed due to mining to restore them to a condition which is fit for growth of fodder, flora, fauna, etc. in a timely manner;

23. Period of diversion of the said forest land under this approval shall be for a period co-terminus with the period of the mining lease proposed to be granted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, as amended time to time and the Rules framed there-under;

24. The User Agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required;

25. No labour camp shall be established on the forest land and the User Agency shall provide fuels preferably alternate fuels to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas;

26. The boundary of the diverted forest land, mining lease and safety zone, as applicable, shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, distance from pillar to pillar and GPS coordinates;

27. The layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without the prior approval of the Central Government and the forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal.

28. The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agency, department or person without prior approval of the Central Government;

29. No damage to the flora and fauna of the adjoining area shall be caused;

30. The User Agency shall submit the annual self-compliance report in respect of the above stated conditions to the State Government, concerned Regional Office and to this Ministry by the end of March every year regularly;

31. Any other condition that the concerned Regional Office of this Ministry may stipulate with the approval of competent authority in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife;

32. The user agency shall comply all the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Hon'ble Court Order (s) and NGT Order (s) pertaining to this project, if any, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project.

33. Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.16 of Chapter 1 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications on Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter dated 29.12.2023.

34. The compliance report shall be uploaded on e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>).

After receipt of the complete compliance report on fulfillment of the conditions mentioned above, the proposal shall be considered for final approval under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. Transfer of forest land shall not be affected till final approval is granted by the Central Government in this regard.

Yours faithfully,
Sd./- (Sunet Bhardwaj)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:
1. PCCF (HoFF), State Forest Department, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar
2. PCCF & Nodal Officer (FCA), O/o PCCF, State Forest Department, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar
3. DDGF (Central), Regional Office of MoEF&CC at Bhubaneswar.
4. User Agency
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi
6. Guard File.

Government of India

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Aliganj, Jor Bag Road, New Delhi - 110003, Dated: 03-10-2025
5-ORC288/2016-BHU I/136266/2025

To
The Addl. Chief Secretary (Forests),
Government of Odisha,
Bhubaneswar.

Sub: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 23.80 ha of forest land (as per Sabik records as on 25.10.1980) including 2.240 ha of forest land in safety zone area for chromite ore mining of Kalarangiatta Chromite Mines by M/s Ferro Alloys Corporation Ltd. (FACOR Ltd.) in Cuttack Forest Division coming under jurisdiction of Sukinda Tehsil of Jajpur District, Odisha (Online proposal no. FP/OR/MIN/16453/2015)

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Odisha's letterNo 10F (Cons)-228/2026/13769 dated 27.07.2016 on the above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. After careful examination of the proposal by the Advisory Committee, constituted under Section-3 of the said Adhiniyam, 'inprinciple' approval to the proposal under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 was granted vide this Ministry's letter of even number dated 21.03.2025 subject to fulfillment of certain conditions prescribed therein. The State Government has furnished compliance report in respect of the conditions stipulated in the 'in- principle' approval and has requested the Central Government to grant final approval.

2. In this connection, I am directed to say that on the basis of the compliance report furnished by the State Government vide letter No. 18556/9F (MG)-368/2016 dated 06.09.2025, 'final' approval of Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 is hereby accorded for diversion of 23.80 ha of forest land (as per Sabik records as on 25.10.1980) including 2.240 ha of forest land in safety zone area for chromite ore mining of Kalarangiatta Chromite Mines by M/s Ferro Alloys Corporation Ltd. (FACOR Ltd.) in Cuttack Forest Division coming under jurisdiction of Sukinda Tehsil of Jajpur District, Odisha subject to fulfillment of the following conditions:

1. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;

2. **The State Government shall ensure that the non-forest land identified for raising compensatory afforestation i.e. 24.0 ha, which has already been mutated and transferred in favour of State Forest Department shall be notified as PF under Section-29 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or under the relevant Section (s) of the local Forest Act, as the case may be before handing over the forest land to the User Agency;**

3. The State Government shall ensure that the compensatory afforestation shall be raised as per the approved plan, and the work of the afforestation shall start within two years from the date of issue of diversion order of the forest land;

4. The State Govt. shall ensure that Additional Compensatory Afforestation shall be carried out on the degraded forest land over 24.0 ha of degraded forest land identified in Doha RF of Mahabtrod Range of Dhenkanal Forest Division to accommodate the balance seedlings and the work of the afforestation shall start within two years from the date of issue of diversion order of the forest land;

5. The State Government shall ensure that the User agency either himself or through the State Forest Department shall undertake gap planting and soil and moisture conservation activities to restock and rejuvenate the degraded open forests (having crown density less than 0.40), if any, located in the area within 100 meter from outer perimeter of the mining lease;

6. The user agency shall pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India;

7. Compensatory levies, if any, realized in future under the extant project, shall be transferred/ deposited, through e-payment module on PARIVESH portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>), into the account of CAMPA of the State concerned, managed by the National Authority (CAMPA);

8. Following activities, as per approved plan / schemes, shall be implemented in the lease area by the User Agency under the supervision of the State Forest Department:

i. Mitigation measures to minimize soil erosion and choking of stream, shall be implemented within a period of two years with effect from the date of issue of order of diversion of forest land, in accordance with the approved Plan in consultation with the State Forest Department;

ii. Planting of adequate drought hardy plant species and sowing of seeds, in the appropriate area within the mining lease to arrest soil erosion in accordance with the approved scheme;

iii. Construction of check dams, retention /toe walls to arrest sliding down of the excavated material along the contour in accordance with the approved scheme;

iv. Stabilize the overburden dumps by appropriate grading/benching, in accordance with the approved scheme, so as to ensure that angles of repose at any given place is less than 28°; and

v. No damage shall be caused to the top-soil and the user agency will follow the top soil management plan.

9. **Safety Zone Management:** Following activities, at project cost, shall be implemented by the user agency for the management of safety zone as per relevant guidelines issued by the Ministry's guidelines:

i. User agency shall ensure demarcation of safety zone (7.5 meter strip all along the inner boundary of the mining lease area), and its fencing, protection and regeneration by erecting adequate number of 6 feet high RCC boundary pillars inscribed with DGPS coordinates with barbed wire fencing and deploying adequate number of watchers under the supervision of the State Forest Department;

ii. Boundary of the safety zone of the mining lease, adjacent to habitation/roads, should be properly fenced by the user agency;

iii. Safety zone shall be maintained as green belt around mining lease and to ensure dense canopy in the area, regeneration shall be taken up in this area by the user agency at project cost under the supervision of the State Forest Department;

iv. The State Government and the user agency shall ensure that safety zone is maintained as per the prescribed norms.

9. **The State Govt. shall ensure that the KML files of diverted area, the CA areas, the proposed SMC treatment area and the WLMP area shall be uploaded on the e-Green watch portal along with all other requisite details before handing over the forest land to the UA;**

10. The matter regarding imposition of penal CA is under consideration for the formulation of a uniform policy guideline in the matter. Keeping this un view, the imposition of penal CA (if any) shall be as per the said guideline, if issued,

11. No damage shall be caused to the top-soil and the user agency will follow the top soil management plan;

12. The User Agency shall regularly undertake desilting of village tanks and other water bodies, located within five km from the mine lease boundary, as per plan submitted along with the compliance of 'in-principle' approval, so as to mitigate the impact of project on such tanks/water bodies.

13. The cost of felling of trees shall be deposited by the User Agency with the State Forest Department;

14. The State Government shall ensure that the trees should be felled in phased manner as per the requirement in the approved Mining Plan with prior permission of concerned DFO;

15. The User Agency shall undertake that afforestation of the non-mineralized virgin forest land within the mining area shall be taken up at project cost;

16. The user agency shall explore the possibility of translocation of maximum number of trees identified to be felled and shall ensure that any tree felling shall be done only when it is unavoidable and that too under strict supervision of the State Forest Department;

17. The provisions of the approved Site-Specific Wildlife Management Plan shall be implemented by the State Forest Department from the cost realized from the user agency on pro rata basis;

18. The User Agency shall undertake that the project authority needs to take up works for construction and cleaning of garland drains, stabilizing retaining walls, proper terracing of OB dumps and checking gully formation resulting in soil erosion;

19. The User Agency shall undertake that plants which are having lowest translocation factor can be preferred under afforestation on the OB dumps and fruit trees to be avoided in planting during biological stabilization of OB dumps;

20. The User Agency shall undertake that prevention of fall of wild animals into mining pit by fencing the open pit area;

21. The User Agency shall undertake that the angle of repose in OB dumps to be maintained to ensure stability and safety;

22. The User Agency shall undertake that vetiver grass can be planted at the lower reaches of the dump to bind the soil and prevent soil erosion giving better stability to the dump;

23. The User Agency shall undertake mining in a phased manner after taking due care for reclamation of the mined over area. The concurrent reclamation plan as per the approved mining plan shall be executed by the User Agency from the very first year, and an annual report on implementation thereof shall be submitted to the Nodal Officer, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, in the concerned State Government and the concerned Regional Office of the Ministry. If it is found from the annual report that the activities indicated in the concurrent reclamation plan are not being executed by the User Agency, the Nodal Officer or the concern Addl. Principle Chief Conservator of Forests (Central) may direct that the mining activities shall remain suspended till such time, such reclamation activities area satisfactorily executed;

24. The User Agency shall comply with the Hon'ble Supreme Court order on regrassing, and re-grass the mining area and any other areas which may have been disturbed due to mining to restore them to a condition which is fit for growth of fodder, flora, fauna, etc. in a timely manner;

25. Period of diversion of the said forest land under this approval shall be for a period co-terminus with the period of the mining lease proposed to be granted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, as amended and the Rules framed there-under;

26. The User Agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required;

27. No labour camp shall be established on the forest land and the User Agency shall provide fuels preferably alternate fuels to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas;

28. The boundary of the diverted forest land, mining lease and safety zone, as applicable, shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, distance from pillar to pillar and GPS coordinates;

29. The layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without the prior approval of the Central Government and the forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal except the change in land use allowed on the forest land vide Ministry's guideline dated 26.12.2024;

30. The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agency, department or person without prior approval of the Central Government;

31. No damage to the flora and fauna of the adjoining area shall be caused;

32. Any other condition that the concerned Regional Office of this Ministry may stipulate with the approval of competent authority in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife;

33. The user agency shall comply all the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Hon'ble Court Order (s) and NGT Order (s) pertaining to this project, if any, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project;

34. Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.16 of Chapter 1 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications on Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter dated 29.12.2023;

35. The User Agency shall submit the annual self-compliance report in respect of the above stated conditions to the State Government, concerned Regional Office and to this Ministry by the end of March every year regularly; and

36. The State Government and user agency shall ensure compliance to all conditions stipulated in the 'in-principle' approval letter dated 21.03.2025 for which undertakings have been obtained from the user agency;

37. As per Sub-rule 7 of Rule 11 of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 the State Govt. after receiving the 'Final' approval of the Central Government under sub-section (1) of section 2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and after fulfilment and compliance of the provisions of all other Acts and rules made thereunder, as applicable including ensuring settlement of rights under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (2 of 2007), shall issue order for diversion of the forest land.

Yours faithfully,
Sd./- (S.Sundar)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:
1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
2. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office of MoEF&CC at Bhubaneswar.
3. The Nodal Officer (FCA), Department of Forest, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
4. User Agency
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.

of the day **note**

The assurance that a weighing scale is fair or that a packaged product is accurate builds confidence in trade. Every measure matters. Every gram, every litre, every metre represents the honesty of our markets and the faith of our consumers

PRAMOD SAWANT | CHIEF MINISTER, GOA

The number of medical colleges in the country has gone up from 387 to 819 in the last 11 years

JP NADDA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

Apart from documenting the traditional chanting of the priests, we need to translate it into a simple language for the younger generations to understand, in order to keep our shamanistic traditions alive

CHOWNA MEIN | DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

SHORT TAKES

5 killed as speeding car runs over pedestrians

Agra (UP): A speeding car ran over pedestrians, killing five people and leaving two injured in Agra, police said Saturday. Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Shesh Mani Upadhyay said that the five critically injured individuals were rushed to Sarojini Naidu Medical College on Friday night, where doctors pronounced all five dead upon arrival. The deceased have been identified as Babli (33), Bhanu Pratap (25), Kamal (23), Krish (20), and Bantesh (21). Bhanu Pratap worked as a parcel delivery agent for a private company, police said. The accident occurred in the New Agra police station area, near Nagla Budhi, ahead of the Central Hindi Institute.

1 dead, several ill after eating spoiled offerings

Hathras (UP): A woman died, and about a dozen villagers, including children, fell seriously ill after consuming temple offerings (prasad) in a village under the Sikandrarao police station area, police said Saturday. According to local sources, residents had placed several boxes of sweets at a temple on the village outskirts as a festive ritual. Devotees distributed the sweets among themselves Thursday. Soon after consuming them, 12 to 15 people started experiencing severe stomach pain, vomiting, and diarrhoea, the sources said. One of the victims, Munni Devi (55), succumbed to the ailment Saturday morning, police said.

Suspected Maoist killed in encounter

Kokrajhar: A suspected Maoist, allegedly involved in a recent IED blast on a railway track in Assam's Kokrajhar district, was killed in a police encounter here, officials said Saturday. Addressing a press conference here, Kokrajhar SP Pushpraj Singh said the encounter took place during an operation in Nadanguri, which was launched to trace militants behind the blast in Kokrajhar Thursday. "We got information that a few militants were hiding in the area. When police reached the spot, they opened fire. When our personnel retaliated, they fled. Upon searching the place, we found one injured militant, who was taken to hospital. He was subsequently declared dead," Singh said. From the encounter location, one pistol, two grenades, a voter card and an Aadhaar card were recovered, the SP said.



The government is working to remove regulatory barriers wherever they exist. Rating Point (TRP) guidelines are being formulated. The first round of consultation is complete, feedback has been received, and a second consultation paper will be published soon

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | UNION INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING MINISTER

BOOK ON INDIA-UK TIES LAUNCHED IN LONDON

A new book, *The Reverse Swing: Colonialism to Cooperation* by Ashok Tandon, explores India-UK relations from 1947 to the present, highlighting evolving diplomacy and trade, including the recent Free Trade Agreement



RS POLLS

Farooq Abdullah, BJP reject allegations of 'fixed match'

The ruling NC won three seats Friday, while the BJP managed one in the first Rajya Sabha elections held in Jammu and Kashmir after it became a Union territory in 2019

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Oct 25: The National Conference and the BJP Saturday rejected allegations that the Rajya Sabha polls were a "fixed match", with NC president Farooq Abdullah saying his party had rejected an offer from the BJP and had preferred a contest.

Abdullah also denied the charge by People's Conference chief and MLA from Handwara, Sajad Lone, that the NC had "gifted" seven votes to the BJP. The ruling NC won three seats Friday, while the BJP managed one in the first Rajya Sabha elections held in Jammu and Kashmir after it became a Union territory in 2019.

J&K BJP president Sat Sharma defeated NC candidate Imran Nabi Dar by securing 32 votes.

"Had we gifted it, then how did our fourth candidate secure 21 votes? We did not give any gift. They (BJP) had come to us (saying) -- let there not be an election and we (NC) take three and give them (BJP) one. We said no, we will contest and it will be decided on the ground," Abdullah said while replying



to queries from reporters.

He expressed gratitude to the Congress and the PDP for supporting NC candidates in the Rajya Sabha polls, and also asserted all his party MLAs were united and the BJP could not break even one of them.

"All MLAs of our party remained united; they could not break even one. There were some media reports that we are not united, but we remained united. We are thankful to Mehbooba (Mufti) ji's party (PDP), Congress party and those independents, including Langate and Shopian MLAs, and others who supported us," he said.

When asked whether the PDP had supported the NC, Abdullah said, "Yes, PDP supported us".

"I am thankful to them, I thank Mehbooba ji," he said.

He said while it was a matter of happiness that NC's three candidates won the election, it is "regretful" that the fourth candidate could not win because some MLAs "backtracked" from their promise

of support.

"He got 21 votes but could not win because some people did not keep the promise they had made," he added.

He downplayed allegations of a "fixed match" between the NC and the BJP.

"Allegations were made even against our Prophet, and we are nothing in comparison to him. Allegations will continue to be levelled and we have to fight them," the former chief minister of the erstwhile state of J&K said.

Leader of Opposition in J&K Assembly Sunil Sharma said they are thankful to the seven legislators who "rejected" NC and supported the BJP candidate.

"We do not know them, but one thing is clear that they have rejected the NC government and served them a warning. We welcome these seven legislators because the BJP bagged the seat because of them. There may be more like them who are not happy with the government," he said.

SNIPPETS

SC to hear suo motu case on digital arrest victims Oct 27

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear a suo motu matter on victims of digital arrest who are defrauded by using forged documents October 27. According to the apex court's cause list, the suo motu petition titled "In Re: victims of digital arrest related to forged documents" will come up for hearing before a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi Monday. While hearing the matter October 17, the top court observed that, prima facie, a stern action on a pan-India basis with coordinated efforts between the Central and state police was required to unearth the full extent of the criminal enterprise involving forgery of judicial documents, cyber extortion and cyber arrest of innocent people, especially senior citizens. It sought responses from the Centre, the CBI and others in the matter, saying such offences strike at the "very foundation" of public trust in the judicial system.

Delhi HC orders removal of AI-generated fake video against Udaipur's Taj Lake Palace

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has ordered removal of an AI-generated video which claimed that guests were poisoned by employees of hotel Taj Lake Palace in Udaipur. The court said it was of the prima facie opinion that the contents of the video were false. "This court finds merit in the submission of the plaintiff (The Indian Hotels Company Ltd) that circulation of such a false video directly infringes upon the plaintiff's reputation and grossly misrepresents the plaintiff's property Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur before the public," Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora said in an order passed October 15. The court passed the interim order on a suit filed by Tata Group's Indian Hotels Company Limited which runs and operates hotel brand Taj.

SC to hear suo motu case pertaining to stray dogs Oct 27

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear a suo motu case relating to stray dogs October 27. The apex court had August 22 expanded the scope of the stray dogs case beyond the confines of Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR) and directed that all states and Union Territories be made parties in the matter. As per the cause list of October 27 uploaded on the top court's website, the matter will be heard by a three-judge special bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and NV Anjaria. Besides the suo motu case, four separate pleas related to the issue are also listed for hearing. In its order passed August 22, the apex court had modified its earlier direction prohibiting the release of vaccinated stray dogs from pounds in Delhi-NCR, calling it "too harsh" and ordered the canines to be released post sterilisation and de-worming.

Yamuna cleaner ahead of Chhath: Delhi water min; AAP rejects claim

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 25: Delhi Water Minister Parvesh Verma Saturday said the Yamuna river's water quality ahead of Chhath was better than last year, citing data on faecal coliform bacteria.

Verma, in a joint press conference with Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa, slammed the opposition Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), whose leaders are targeting the BJP government over Yamuna pollution during the Chhath festival.

Verma said the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) collected Yamuna water samples October 9 and October 20 from eight points, including Palla, Wazirabad Barrage, Okhla Barrage, ITO, and Yamuna Canal, among others.

The faecal coliform bacteria concentration in the Yamuna has come down to 7,900 units per 100 ml at Nizamuddin this year, from 11 lakh units per 100 ml last year, Verma said.

The count similarly dipped over the year from 920 to 600 at Palla, from 16,000 to 800 at Wazirabad, and from 35,000 to 7,000 at ITO, he said. "They (the opposition) are baffled because our government, led by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, is doing a lot of work, and women are praising the preparations being made for the celebration of Chhath," the minister said.

According to Verma, water samples collected from ISBT also showed improvement with the bacterial count down to 8,000 this year from 28,000 in 2024.

It dropped to 7,900 from 11 lakh at Nizamuddin, to 2,700 from 18 lakh at Okhla, and to 1,600 from 22 lakh at Agra Canal, he said.

"AAP leaders, including its Delhi unit president Saurabh Bharadwaj, are raising the issue of Yamuna pollution, while the truth is that no DPCC reports on it were published during the AAP government's rule," he alleged.

EC to roll out first phase of all-India SIR next week



The poll authority is likely to announce the first phase of SIR middle of next week, in which as many as '10 to 15 states' would be included

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 25: The Election Commission is likely to roll out the first of pan-India Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' list next week beginning with "10 to 15 states", including those going to polls next year, officials said Saturday.

Assam, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and West Bengal will to polls in 2026 and they are amongst the states where the voters' list cleanup exercise will begin first.

The poll authority is likely to announce the first phase of SIR middle of next week, in which as many as "10 to 15 states" would be included, officials said.

The EC 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, they said

The SIR in such states will be held in later phases.

The voters' list cleanup exercise has concluded in Bihar where the final list with nearly

7.42 crore names was published September 30.

Biahr will go to polls in two phases, November 6 and November 11, and the counting will take place November 14.

The Commission has already held two conferences with state chief electoral officers (CEOs) to firm up the SIR rollout roadmap. Several CEOs have already put the voter lists published after their last SIR on their websites.

The website of the Delhi CEO has the 2008 voter list when the last intensive revision took place in the national capital.

In Uttarakhand, the last SIR took place in 2006, and that year's electoral roll is now on the state CEO website.

The last SIR in states will serve as the cut-off date, just as the 2003 voter list of Bihar was used by the EC for intensive revision. Most states had the last SIR of the voter list between 2002 and 2004. Most have nearly completed the mapping of current electors with the voters according to the last SIR held in their respective states or Union territories.

The primary aim of the SIR is to weed out foreign illegal migrants by checking their place of birth.

The move assumes significance in the wake of a crack-down in various states on illegal migrants, including from Bangladesh and Myanmar.



Members of the Association for Protection of Democratic Rights (APDR) and other organisations raise slogans during a rally in protest against the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, in Kolkata, West Bengal, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

Acid attack survivor gets ₹5 lakh 'relief' after 28 years

The victim received ₹1 lakh as compensation from the Centre last year, and ₹4 lakh from the Uttar Pradesh government this month, nearly three decades after she was attacked October 28, 1997, when she was 15 years old

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shahjahanpur (UP), Oct 25: Twenty-eight years after an acid attack shattered her life, a 43-year-old woman here has received Rs 5 lakh as compensation, with the NGO supporting her fight for justice vowing to

move the high court seeking Rs 50 lakh as relief.

According to sources, the victim received Rs 1 lakh as compensation from the Centre last year, and Rs 4 lakh from the Uttar Pradesh government this month, nearly three decades after she was attacked October 28, 1997, when she was 15 years old.

The attacker, Pappu, a resident of the same locality under the Sadar Bazar police station, threw acid on her face after her family called off their proposed marriage. Pappu was arrested within days and sent to jail November 11 that year.

According to Shaheen Malik, founder of the NGO Brave Souls Foundation, the survivor's face was completely disfigured in



the attack.

"The victim has lived through years of pain, surgeries, and trauma. Her father, a

tailor, spent everything he had on her treatment -- around Rs 10 lakh -- and later sought donations before he passed away.

Her mother too died, leaving her alone," she told PTI.

Malik, herself an acid attack survivor, said the organisation took up Jahida's case last year and pursued government authorities seeking financial aid.

"After multiple letters and meetings, the Uttar Pradesh government granted Rs 4 lakh this month, while the Centre had provided Rs 1 lakh," she said.

The survivor continues to undergo therapy to prevent further health complications, including possible cancer in the affected areas, she said.

Criticising the district administration for its inaction despite knowing the survivor's condition, Malik said, "Twenty-eight years of suffering, and she gets only Rs 5 lakh. We

will approach the high court seeking Rs 50 lakh in compensation."

The survivor, who now lives alone, says she still struggles to rebuild her life.

"My face and life were ruined in one moment. My parents are gone, and my brothers have abandoned me. I just want to live with dignity," she said.

District probation officer Gaurav Mishra confirmed that financial assistance was provided under the Rani Laxmibai Mahila and Bal Kalyan Yojana, which was launched in 2014.

"The survivor received Rs 4 lakh this financial year and Rs 1 lakh last year," Mishra said.

Attempts to contact the district magistrate for comments were unsuccessful.

international

of the day quote

As the international landscape becomes increasingly dominated by contestation rather than consensus, division rather than dialogue, ASEAN finds itself at a crossroads

MOHAMAD HASAN | FOREIGN MINISTER, MALAYSIA

He's (Russian President Vladimir Putin) rejected the opportunity for talks once again, instead making ludicrous demands for Ukrainian land, which he could not and has not taken by force

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

Pakistan looks forward to the establishment of a concrete and verifiable monitoring mechanism in the next meeting to address the menace of terrorism emanating from Afghan soil towards Pakistan and prevent any further loss of life of Pakistanis

TAHIR ANDRABI | FOREIGN OFFICE SPOKESPERSON, PAKISTAN

SHORT TAKES

US sanctions Petro

Washington: The US Friday imposed sanctions on Colombian President Gustavo Petro, as President Donald Trump sharply escalated a feud with Washington's longtime Latin American ally over accusations that Petro has refused to stop the flow of cocaine into the United States. Tensions between Washington and many countries in the region have been mounting for weeks. The US military has ratcheted up activity in the southern Caribbean, striking vessels in international waters that it has alleged without evidence are carrying drugs. Trump this week called Petro an "illegal drug leader" after the leftist president accused the US of committing "murder" with the strikes.

Indian nurse jailed

Singapore: An Indian national working as a staff nurse at a Singapore premium hospital was sentenced to a year and two months' jail, and two strokes of the cane after he pleaded guilty to a molestation charge. Elipse Siva Nagu, 34, molested a male visitor to the Raffles Hospital in June, after claiming that he wanted to "disinfect" the victim, The Straits Times reported. He was suspended from his nursing duties soon after the offence. The offence caused the victim to have flashbacks of the incident, the court heard. Deputy Public Prosecutor Eugene Phua said that the victim was at the hospital in North Bridge Road on June 18 to visit his grandfather, who had been admitted there.

PIA resumes UK flights

Islamabad: State-run Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Saturday resumed its flight operations to the UK after a five-year suspension following a ban imposed over a fake pilot licence scandal. The "first flight from Islamabad to Manchester since July 2020 departed with 284 passengers" on board in the presence of Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, the PIA said. The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and the UK Civil Aviation Authority had banned PIA flights in 2020 after a tragic air crash in Karachi that left around 100 passengers dead and subsequent revelations by then aviation minister Ghulam Sarwar Khan that a large number of Pakistani pilots held fake licences. While EASA lifted the ban in November last year, the UK removed Pakistan from its Air Safety List in July this year, allowing Pakistani airlines to apply to operate flights in Britain.

Democracy 'alien concept' for Pak, says India at UN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, Oct 25: Asserting that democracy is an "alien" concept for Pakistan, India has called upon Islamabad to end grave human rights violations in territories under its illegal occupation, where the population is in "open revolt" against military occupation, repression, brutality and exploitation.

Responding to references made by Pakistan's envoy at the UN Security Council's open debate on 'The United Nations Organisation: Looking into the Future' Friday, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, said, "The people of Jammu and Kashmir exercise their fundamental rights in accordance with India's time-tested democratic traditions and constitutional framework. We, of course, know that these are concepts alien to Pakistan," he said. The envoy reiterated that Jammu and Kashmir "has been, is, and will always be" an integral and inalienable part of India.

Strongly rebuking Islamabad, Harish said, "We call upon Pakistan to end the grave and ongoing human rights violations in the areas illegally occupied by it, where the population is in open revolt against Pakistan's military occupation, repression, brutality and illegal exploitation of resources."

Harish also emphasised that the UN must undertake "real, comprehensive reforms," say-



ing that the 80-year-old Security Council architecture no longer reflects contemporary geopolitical realities.

"An outdated Council architecture that mirrors the geopolitical realities of 1945 is not equipped to handle the challenges of 2025," he said, calling for expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories through "time-bound" and "text-based negotiations".

He underlined that the Global South must have a greater voice in global decision-making, adding that "postponing reforms indefinitely does immense disservice to our citizens, especially in the Global South".

"This bloc of countries represents the overwhelming proportion of humanity and has its unique set of challenges, particularly in the areas of development, climate and financing," Harish said, adding that global decision-making must be more democratic and inclusive.

Highlighting India's commitment to multilateralism, he said the world must move

We call upon Pakistan to end the grave and ongoing human rights violations in the areas illegally occupied by it, where the population is in open revolt against Pakistan's military occupation, repression, brutality and illegal exploitation of resources

PARVATHANENI HARISH | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN

beyond "pennies and posts" to craft a new vision for the UN that is more agile and responsive to global challenges such as pandemics, terrorism, economic instability, and climate change.

Harish noted that the world's largest multilateral body faces questions of "relevance, legitimacy, credibility, and efficacy".

He cautioned that international cooperation is increasingly being viewed as charity and that prosperity is being "ring-fenced amid shrinking access to resources and technologies necessary for growth". He said progress that is not universal is "neither sustainable nor tenable in moral terms or on a practical basis".

Harish also called for making UN mechanisms more agile, noting that peacekeepers face "newer challenges every day" and need realistic mandates, adequate resources, and technological support.

"Structural adjustments of different UN bodies are welcome, but not enough," he said, urging that UN80, the 80th anniversary of the organisation, should aim for "real, comprehensive reforms of the UN and its principal organs."

In the region around Japan, military activities and other actions from our neighbours China, North Korea and Russia are causing grave concerns

SANAE TAKAICHI | PM, JAPAN

TRUMP'S ASIA TRIP

Southeast Asian foreign ministers held talks Saturday ahead of a landmark ASEAN summit that will formally welcome East Timor as the bloc's 11th member and mark US President Donald Trump's first trip to Asia since returning to the White House



A firefighter works to extinguish a fire at a warehouse following a Russian attack, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

Connolly set to be Ireland's next prez

London: Left-wing independent Catherine Connolly is set to become Ireland's next president after her rival conceded defeat in the country's presidential election Saturday.



Vote counting was still underway but ahead of the official result being declared, Heather Humphreys, of the centre-right party Fine Gael, told reporters that she "wanted to congratulate Catherine Connolly on becoming the next president of Ireland." "Catherine will be a president for all of us and she will be my president, and I really would like to wish her all the very, very best," she said. Polls have suggested consistent and strong voter support for Connolly, 68, over Humphreys, 64, for president, a largely ceremonial role in Ireland.

Trump okays contentious drilling, mining in Alaska

The decision marked the latest development in the long-standing battle over the future of the refuge's coastal plain, a pristine 1.56-million-acre area believed to contain billions of barrels of oil, yet serving as vital habitat for polar bears, caribou, migratory birds, and other wildlife

AGENCIES

Washington, Oct 25: US President Donald Trump's administration has authorised oil and gas drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, effectively disturbing the pristine condition of one of America's largest wildernesses.

During his first term, Trump signed a 2017 tax bill that allowed two oil and gas lease sales in Alaska, but they were later cancelled by Joe Biden during his presidency.

The Interior Ministry Thursday announced plans to hold an oil and gas lease sale during the winter in the coastal plain. The agency also said that it would reinstate the old leases that were approved by the previous Trump administration but cancelled by Biden's government two years later.

What's the plan?

Interior Secretary Doug Burgum said, "This land should and will be supporting responsible oil and gas leasing."

Burgum also revealed that the Interior Department has finalised an agreement permitting construction of a controversial gravel road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge in southwestern Alaska. He further reaffirmed the agency's plan to approve an industrial road cutting through untouched wilderness to access a proposed copper and zinc mine in northern Alaska.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed the Alaska National



Interest Lands Conservation Act, designating most of the refuge as wilderness and effectively prohibiting drilling. However, congressional Republicans pushed to lift the ban and seized an opportunity in 2017, when they passed a tax bill mandating two lease sales in the coastal plain by the end of 2024.

'We will fight this'

The contentious plan has sparked concerns among environmentalists. According to a report by the New York Times, Kristen Miller, executive director of the Alaska Wilderness League, said, "We will fight any attempt to industrialise the fragile coastal plain of the Arctic refuge and every option is on the table."

In fact, despite Trump's 'drill, baby drill' spree, major oil companies have shown little interest in setting up bases in Alaska, largely because of the great expense and some concerns about public relations.

Patrick Lavin, an Alaska policy adviser at Defenders of Wildlife, said, "One of the worst things you can do for conserving polar bears is to industrialise their denning habitat."

Thailand's Queen Mother Sirikit passes away

REUTERS

Bangkok, Oct 25: Thailand's Queen Mother Sirikit, who brought glamour and elegance to a postwar revival in the country's monarchy and who, in later years, would occasionally wade into politics, has died aged 93, the Thai Royal Household Bureau said Saturday.

Sirikit had been out of the public eye since a stroke in 2012. The palace said she had been hospitalised since 2019 due to several illnesses and developed a bloodstream infection October 17 before passing away late Friday.

A mourning period of one year has been declared for members of the royal family and household.



The government said public offices would fly flags at half-mast for a month and asked government officials to observe mourning for one year.

STYLE ICON

Sirikit's husband, King

- Sirikit's fashion sense charmed global media
- Sirikit supported rural development, revitalised Thai silk industry
- Death prompts one-year mourning period for royal family

Bhumibol Adulyadej, was Thailand's longest-reigning monarch, with 70 years on the throne since 1946. She was at his side for much of that, winning over hearts at home with their charity work.

When they travelled abroad, she also charmed the world's media with her beauty and fashion sense.

During a 1960 visit to the

United States that included a state dinner at the White House, Time magazine called her "svelte" and "archfeminist." The French daily L'Aurore described her as "ravishing".

Born in 1932, the year Thailand transitioned to a constitutional monarchy from an absolute monarchy, Sirikit Kitiyakara was the daughter of Thailand's ambassador to France and led a life of wealth and privilege.

Always stylish, Sirikit collaborated with French couturier Pierre Balmain on eye-catching outfits made from Thai silk. By supporting the preservation of traditional weaving practices, she is credited with helping revitalise Thailand's silk industry.

LOUVRE MUSEUM: THE HEIST AND AFTER

The high-profile heist at the Louvre in Paris October 19, 2025, played out like a scene from a Hollywood movie: a gang of thieves steal an assortment of dazzling royal jewels on display at one of the world's most famous museums.

But with the authorities hot in pursuit, the robbers still have more work to do: How can they capitalise on their haul?

Most stolen works are never found. In the art crime courses, it is often pointed out that the recovery rate is below 10 per cent. This is particularly disturbing when you consider that between 50,000 and 100,000 artworks are stolen each year globally – the actual number may be higher due to underreporting – with the majority stolen from Europe.

That said, it's quite difficult to actually make money off stolen works of art. Yet the types of objects stolen from the Louvre – eight pieces of priceless jewellery – could give these thieves an upper hand.

A narrow market of buyers

Pilfered paintings can't be sold on the art market because

thieves can't convey what's known as "good title," the ownership rights that belong to a legal owner. Furthermore, no reputable auction house or dealer would knowingly sell stolen art, nor would responsible collectors purchase stolen property.

But that doesn't mean stolen paintings don't have value.

In 2002, thieves broke into Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum through the roof and departed with "View of the Sea at Scheveningen" and "Congregation Leaving the Reformed Church in Nuenen" in tow.

In 2016, Italian police recovered the relatively unscathed artworks from a Mafia safe-house in Naples. It isn't clear whether the Mafia actually purchased the works, but it's common for criminal syndicates to hold onto valuable assets as collateral of some sort.

Van Gogh's 1884-85 oil on canvas painting 'Congregation Leaving the Reformed Church in Nuenen' was one of two of the artist's works stolen from Amsterdam's Van Gogh Museum in 2002.

Other times, stolen works do unwittingly end up in the hands of collectors.



The centuries-old, exquisitely crafted works have unique historic and cultural value. But even if each one were broken to bits and sold for parts, they would still be worth a lot of money

Some people do knowingly buy stolen art. After World War II, stolen works circulated on the market, with buyers fully aware of the widespread plunder that had just taken place across Europe.

Jewels and gold easier to monetise

The Louvre theft didn't involve paintings, though. The thieves came away with

bejewelled property: a sapphire diadem; a necklace and single earring from a matching set linked to 19th-century French queens Marie-Amélie and Hortense; an opulent matching set of earrings and a necklace that belonged to Empress Marie-Louise, Napoleon Bonaparte's second wife; a diamond brooch; and Empress Eugénie's diadem and her corsage-bow brooch.

Thieves can peddle the precious gemstones and metals to unscrupulous dealers and jewellers, who could reshape and sell them. Even at a fraction of their value – the price received for looted art is always far lower than that received for legitimately sourced art – the gems are worth millions of dollars.

While difficult to sell stolen goods on the legitimate market, there is an underground market for looted artworks. The pieces may be sold in backrooms, in private meetings or even on the dark web, where participants cannot be identified.

Studies have also revealed that stolen – and sometimes forged – art and antiquities often appear on mainstream e-commerce sites like Facebook and eBay. After making a sale, the vendor may delete his or her online store and disappear.

A heist's sensational allure

While films like "The Thomas Crown Affair" feature dramatic heists pulled off by impossibly attractive bandits, most art crimes are far more mundane.

Art theft is usually a crime

Agencies

of the day

quote

India's ethanol drive has so far added Rs 1,07,580 crore to farmers' earnings while saving Rs 1,26,210 crore in foreign exchange by curbing crude oil imports



HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION PETROLEUM MINISTER

Chipsets for various applications, including CCTV, are being developed in India. Within two years, India is set to achieve complete domestic production of mobile phone components



ASHWINI VAISHNAW | RAILWAYS MINISTER

India currently operates 164 airports and aims to add approximately 200 more by 2047, but the challenge is not about constructing airports but about "how to bring in more aircraft to India"



K RAMMOHAN NAIDU | CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Kotak Bank profit falls

New Delhi: Kotak Mahindra Bank Saturday reported a 3 per cent decline in standalone profit to Rs 3,253 crore in the second quarter ended September 30, 2025. The private sector lender had recorded a net profit of Rs 3,344 crore in the same quarter a year ago. The bank's total income increased to Rs 16,239 crore during the quarter under review, from Rs 15,900 crore in the same period last year, Kotak Mahindra Bank said in a regulatory filing. The bank earned interest income of Rs 13,649 crore during the quarter, compared to Rs 13,216 crore in the same period a year ago. Net Interest Income (NII) improved to Rs 7,311 crore, from Rs 7,020 crore in the second quarter of the previous year, registering a 4 per cent growth. However, Net Interest Margin (NIM) moderated to 4.54 per cent, from 4.91 per cent at the end of the second quarter of the last financial year. The bank reduced gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) to 1.39 per cent of gross loans by the end of September 2025, from 1.49 per cent a year ago. Similarly, net NPAs or bad loans too declined 0.32 per cent, from 0.43 per cent at the end of the second quarter of the previous fiscal. On a consolidated basis, the bank reported an 11 per cent dip in net profit to Rs 4,468 crore, as against Rs 5,044 crore in Q2FY25.

NCC bags order from Coalfields

New Delhi: NCC Ltd Saturday said it has bagged a Rs 6,828.94 crore order from Coal India arm Central Coalfields to extract and transport coal and overburden from one of the mining projects in Jharkhand. In a regulatory filing, the company said it has received a letter of acceptance dated October 24 from Central Coalfields Ltd (CCL) regarding this. The extraction and transportation of overburden and coal will have to be done from the Amrapali open-cast project of CCL in the Chandragupt area of Jharkhand, NCC said in the regulatory filing. NCC will hire Heavy Earth Moving Machinery (HEMM) for the removal of 413.59 M CuM of OB (overburden), extraction of 233.325 MT coal and transportation to Shivpur siding and surface stock yard under different lead slabs and wagon loading of 139.995 MT of coal at Shivpur siding at Amrapali OCP, Chandragupt Area, the filing said.



The government remains committed to strengthening regulations and enforcement mechanisms against unfair trade practices, while simplifying compliance to build a reliable and trust-worthy environment for all consumers

PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION MINISTER
CONSUMER AFFAIRS

HUDCO, JNPA TO COLLABORATE FOR PORT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

HUDCO has signed an initial pact with Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) to collaborate for port infrastructure projects worth Rs 5,000 crore. In a regulatory filing Friday, Housing and Urban Development Corporation Ltd (HUDCO) informed that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with JNPA



RBI draft norms to help banks fund acquisitions



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 25: The Reserve Bank Friday came out with draft norms to enable banks to fund acquisitions by Indian companies and raise the loan amount to individuals to purchase shares through IPOs and FPOs. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed to implement the rationalised norms from April 1, 2026, a move that will open up more funding avenues for corporates. The central bank said the draft Reserve Bank of India (Commercial Banks - Capital Market Exposure) Directions, 2025 seeks to rationalise and consolidate the applicable regulations governing such exposures. The central bank said Capital market exposures (CME) by regulated entities (REs) carry higher risk and are therefore

subject to sectoral exposure limits, purpose-specific lending caps, and loan-to-value (LTV) ratios. It has invited comments on the draft from stakeholders by November 21, 2025. CME includes direct exposures (investments in securities) and indirect exposures (lending against securities, financing to capital market intermediaries like stockbrokers and custodians). The existing guidelines have been comprehensively reviewed to align with evolving market practices and provide a more enabling framework for bank financing of CME, the draft said. "Acquisition finance may be extended by banks to Indian corporates for acquiring equity stakes in domestic or foreign companies as strategic investments, i.e. those investments, which are driven by the core objective of creating long-term

value for the acquirer through potential synergies, rather than mere financial restructuring for short-term gains," it said. This has been a long-pending demand of Indian banks. Recently, the State Bank of India Chairman CS Setty also made a strong case for permitting banks to provide funding for mergers and acquisitions, as done by global lenders. Acquisition finance can be extended directly to the acquiring company, or its step-down special purpose vehicle (SPV) set up specifically for acquiring the target firm, the draft said. "A bank may finance at most 70 per cent of the acquisition value, with at least 30 per cent of the acquisition value to be funded by the acquiring company in the form of equity using its own funds," it added. The draft further said banks may grant loans to individuals for subscribing to shares under an initial public offer (IPO), follow-on public offer (FPO), or under an employee stock option plan (ESOP) up to Rs 25 lakh per individual, subject to certain conditions. The current limit is Rs 10 lakh. "...the loan amount shall not exceed 75 per cent of the subscription value, i.e., borrowers shall contribute a minimum cash margin of 25 per cent," the draft said. A lien should be created on the shares to be allotted under the IPO/FPO/ESOP, and such shares should be pledged to the lender upon allotment, the draft norms said.

Investments made with integrity: LIC



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 25: The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) Saturday denied reports by The Washington Post, reaffirming all investments are made with integrity and due diligence. In a rebuttal to the article, LIC said the allegations leveled by The Washington Post that the investment decisions of LIC are influenced by external factors are "false, baseless, and far from truth". "No such document or plan as alleged in the article has ever been prepared by LIC, which creates a road map for infusing funds by LIC into Adani group of companies," the company said in a statement. The article had claimed that officials allegedly fast-tracked a proposal in May this year to direct approximately \$3.9 billion in investments from the LIC to an Adani group firm. LIC said that the investment decisions are taken independently as per Board approved policies after detailed due diligence. "Department of Financial

Services or any other body does not have any role in such decisions. LIC has ensured highest standards of due diligence and all its investment decisions have been undertaken in compliance with extant policies, provisions in the Acts and regulatory guidelines, in the best interest of all its stakeholders," it further stated in the statement. LIC said that these purported statements in the article "appear to have been made with the intentions to prejudice the well settled decision-making process of LIC and also to tarnish the reputation and image of LIC and the strong financial sector foundations in India". LIC, the country's largest life insurer, reported a 3.91 per cent year-on-year (YoY) increase in its consolidated net profit for the June quarter of the current financial year (Q1 FY26). The profit rose to Rs 10,957 crore from Rs 10,544 crore recorded in the same period previous year (Q1 FY25), according to its stock exchange filing.

Reliance, Meta announce AI joint venture in India

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Oct 25: Reliance Industries on Saturday announced that its subsidiary, Reliance Intelligence Ltd, has established a joint venture with US tech giant Meta's subsidiary to market and distribute enterprise AI in India. A new company, namely Reliance Enterprise Intelligence Limited (REIL), has been formed as a joint venture with Facebook Overseas, Inc., according to an exchange filing. The Mukesh Ambani and Mark Zuckerberg-led companies have committed an initial combined investment of around Rs 855 crore in the unit, aimed at "developing, marketing, and distributing enterprise AI services." Reliance Intelligence will own 70 per cent of REIL, while Facebook Overseas, Inc., a unit of Meta Platforms, will hold 30 per cent, the filing said.

The partnership will provide an enterprise AI platform-as-a-service, enabling organisations to customise and deploy generative models, along with a suite of pre-configured solutions for industries including sales, marketing, IT operations, customer service, and finance. RIL's AI arm will invest Rs 2 crore towards the initial subscription of 20 million equity shares of Rs 10 each. The transaction does not fall within related party transaction and none of the company's promoter or promoter group or group companies have any interest in the above transaction, the filing said. No governmental or regulatory approvals were required for incorporation of REIL, it added. Reliance announced a joint venture in August that will use Meta's open-source Llama models combined with Reliance's enterprise reach to offer AI tools across sectors.

SNIPPETS

VIT opens applications for VITEEE 2026

Vellore: Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) has announced the opening of online applications for the Vellore Institute of Technology Engineering Entrance Examination (VITEEE) 2026, inviting students across India and abroad to apply for its flagship engineering programs. Candidates can register at the official portal www.viteee.vit.ac.in for admission to VIT campuses located in Vellore, Chennai, Amaravati, and Bhopal. VITEEE 2026 will be conducted in a single phase from April 28 to May 3, 2026. The test will be held across 134 cities in India and at nine international centres, enabling students to choose a location convenient to their place of study or native region. Known for its state-of-the-art infrastructure, strong industry partnerships, and high placement records, VIT continues to be among the most preferred institutions for engineering aspirants in the country.

Jindal Steel wins Rotary India National CSR Award 2025

Bhubaneswar: Jindal Steel has been honoured with the Rotary India National CSR Award 2025 (Eastern Region) in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Mega Category for its impactful initiatives in improving rural water access and sanitation. The award was presented to Prashant Hota, President and Group Head (CSR & Education), Jindal Steel, at a ceremony in Kolkata , Wednesday. The event was graced by KP Nagesh, Director, Rotary International, Padma Bhushan awardee Usha Uthup, actor Rituparna Sengupta and other dignitaries. The recognition highlights Jindal Steel's extensive WASH programmes implemented through the Jindal Foundation across Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. The initiatives, guided by the vision of Naveen Jindal, Hon'ble MP and Chairman, Jindal Steel, focus on watershed management, groundwater recharge, and community-led sanitation improvements. "We believe that ensuring access to safe water, proper sanitation, and hygienic living is not just a developmental goal but a shared responsibility," said Shalлу Jindal, Chairperson, Jindal Foundation. "Through our WASH initiatives, we remain committed to transforming lives and building healthier, more resilient communities across India."

What will \$250 in Ozak AI be worth if the token hits \$1 or \$2 in 2026?

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 25: The rise of Ozak AI (\$OZ) is turning heads in the crypto investment world. Positioned at the intersection of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and DePIN (Decentralized Physical Infrastructure Network), Ozak AI is not just another blockchain project, it's a pioneering ecosystem that merges AI-powered tools, decentralized computing, and tokenized growth into one seamless model. With investors pouring into its ongoing presale, the question many are asking is simple: What could a \$250 investment in \$OZ become by 2026 if the token reaches \$1 or even \$2? Presale Momentum and Investor Interest As of the latest presale update, Ozak AI has raised over \$3.97 million, selling more than 964 million tokens at a current price of \$0.012 in Phase 6. The next phase price is set to increase to \$0.014, whereas the target listing price is \$1.00- this signifies a possible



gain of more than 8,000 per cent from the present prices. The investors from the first stages (\$0.001) have already profited more than 1100 per cent, which is evidence of the steady and natural momentum of the project. An investment of \$250 at the present presale rate would yield approximately 20,833 \$OZ tokens for the investor. If Ozak AI achieves \$1 in 2026, then the amount of \$250 could escalate to \$20,833; in case it reaches \$2,

the same investment would be worth \$41,666, an impressive figure. These numbers not only indicate speculative math but also the increasing trust in Ozak AI's basic value and the growing ecosystem.

distribution. Its AI layer manages smart data optimization, while the DePIN structure decentralizes the physical computing layer—ensuring faster, more scalable, and more reliable execution. Strategic Partnerships Ozak AI's progress has been further energized by a series of significant alliances aimed at deepening the technological footprint and enhancing the market position. Through its alliance with Hive Intel (HIVE), Ozak AI gains access to multi-chain blockchain data APIs that empower its predictive AI agents to analyze wallet behavior, NFT activity, and DeFi trends in real time. This integration enhances Ozak AI's analytics precision and predictive reliability. The partnership with We-

blume brings Ozak AI's market intelligence to creators and developers via a no-code Web3 builder, enabling real-time AI data integration into dashboards and dApps without technical barriers. In collaboration with Meganet, a bandwidth-sharing network with 6.5 million nodes and 77,000+ community members, Ozak AI leverages decentralized compute power to enhance AI processing speeds and reduce infrastructure costs. Additionally, its strategic tie-up with SINT, a "one-click AI upgrade platform," allows seamless embedding of Ozak AI's real-time market signals into autonomous agents, voice tools, and cross-chain systems, enabling intelligent execution across digital ecosystems. The Investor Perspective: calculating the bullish future For investors, the attractiveness of Ozak AI consists in the mixture of technologi-

cal revolution, the company's openness, and continuous expansion. Each presale milestone signifies real adoption rather than speculative hype. With verified audits, a clear roadmap, and ongoing integrations, the project continues to mature as a long-term ecosystem rather than a short-term token play. If Ozak AI successfully executes its roadmap and maintains steady adoption across AI and DePIN sectors, reaching \$1-\$2 per token by 2026 is within reason. A \$250 investment today could therefore represent a potential five-figure return, reflecting the growing confidence in decentralized AI infrastructure as the next frontier of blockchain utility. Conclusion Ozak AI's presale journey isn't just a sign of investor enthusiasm—it's evidence of a powerful, real-world fusion of AI and decentralized infrastructure that could redefine data, analytics, and compute economics.

Ro-Ko: Sydney showstopper

Centurion Rohit, Kohli turn back the clock and play vintage knocks as Men in Blue get consolation nine-wicket win over Australia after series loss

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Oct 25: Rohit Sharma struck his 50th international hundred and Virat Kohli played time-bending knock in possibly their last outing in Australia, propelling India to a consolation nine-wicket victory in the third ODI here Saturday.

After Harshit Rana-led bowlers restricted Australia to a below-par 236, Rohit (121 not out) and Kohli (74 not out) stitched a 168-run alliance in just 170 balls for the second wicket to take India to 237 for one in 38.3 overs.

Australia won the three-match series 2-1 but Rohit and Kohli gave the ecstatic Sydney crowd precisely what they wanted, while unfurling archetypal innings and in the process saved the team from an embarrassing whitewash.

Rohit was all fluency and wholehearted shot-making, and Kohli resembled a mathematician solving a puzzle with meticulousness.

Once skipper Shubman Gill returned to the hut after helping his senior partner to milk 69 runs for the opening wicket, Rohit took over the chase in his inimitable manner and went on to produce his 33rd ODI century. He has 12 Test and five T20Is hundreds to his name.

Starting with a couple of silky-smooth drives and flicks off Mitchell Starc, Rohit slipped in to his punishing self once Adam Zampa was introduced.

The 38-year-old slog-swept Zampa for a six to nullify Australia's already weakened spin department, and followed it up with a wonderful inside out six over covers off the leg-spinner.

Kohli played trademark straight drive off Starc for a four after getting off the mark with a single, which he celebrated with a smile and punch, a small atonement for the two preceding successive ducks.

But soon Kohli found his



Always love coming here and playing here. Fond memories of 2008. I'm not sure if we'll be coming back to Australia, but we enjoy our cricket no matter what accolades we achieve

ROHIT SHARMA

We've loved coming to this country, we've played some good cricket, thank you guys for coming in big numbers and supporting us

Virat Kohli

groove, galloping for those quick singles interspersed with occasional boundaries. He made his fifty off 56 balls, soon had his old mate a tight embrace as Rohit went past his 33rd ODI hundred in 105 balls.

Before the two old boys went about their business in their respective ways, the Indian bowlers led by Rana (4/39) limited the Aussies to a sub-par total.

The catch Kohli took at backward point to get rid of Matthew Short off Washington Sundar could be counted among the best reflex catches.

But Shreyas Iyer bettered that effort with a running catch to oust Carey. The wicketkeeper batter tried to loft Rana, but a leading edge took the ball to the opposite direction.

Shreyas hared off from point and covered a fair bit of distance to make a diving catch,

though he had to leave the field for medical assessment to know the extent of a left rib cage injury after that.

A couple of cameos down the order took them to 230s, but just enough for Rohit and Kohli to unleash a vintage performance.

The Sydney crowd also had their fill while watching Rohit

and Kohli, but there will be a tinge of sadness in their hearts. They might not get another look at them on these shores. But the last sighting of RoKo was worthy to freeze forever in their memories.

The two teams will now face each other in a five-match T20I series, commencing October 29.

Brief Scores:

Australia 236 all out in 46.4 overs (Matt Renshaw 56, Mitchell Marsh 41, Matthew Short 30, Harshit Rana 4/39, Washington Sundar 2/44, Axar Patel 1/18, Mohammed Siraj 1/24) lost to **India** 237 for 1 in 38.3 overs (Rohit Sharma 121 not out, Virat Kohli 74 not out).

Only Sachin to go: Kohli now 2nd-highest ODI run-scorer

Indian batting stalwart Virat Kohli Saturday broke another record as he became the second-highest run-getter in the ODI format. Kohli, who endured a subdued form in the first two ODIs against Australia, broke the shackles and announced his return on the international stage. The No 3 batter, who is famously known as 'Chase Master', hammered his 75th ODI fifty and also completed 2500 runs against Australia in the format. During the course of his innings, Kohli surpassed Sri Lanka great Kumar Sangakkara's tally of 14,234 runs (in 404 ODIs) in his 293rd ODI innings. The former India captain is now only behind legendary batter Sachin Tendulkar, who is sitting at the top of the table with a massive tally of 18,426 runs. However, Kohli boasts a better average than Tendulkar or any of the top 10 batters in the list. He averages 57.69 in 305 ODIs played so far, while Tendulkar's average stood at 44.83 in his 463-match ODI career. With Kohli at the fag end of his career and only playing in the 50-over format, it is likely that the Delhi batter will finish his ODI career as the second-highest run getter behind his idol Tendulkar.

SHORT TAKES

Shriya secures silver

Riffa: India's Shriya Milind Satam clinched the silver medal in the girls' 50kg Traditional Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) category at the Asian Youth Games in Manama, Bahrain, Saturday. India have so far won 16 medals, including two gold, six silver and eight bronze medals. Shriya lost the final to Kazakhstan's Amelina Bakiyeva. This was India's second medal in MMA, which made its debut at the Asian Youth Games, following Veer Bhadu's bronze in the boys' 80kg category Friday. India had earlier secured gold medals in both the boys' and girls' kabaddi events.

Shuttlers dominate

Chengdu: Talented shuttlers Diksha Sudhakar and Lakshya Rajesh set up a summit clash to assure India of a gold medal in the girls u-17 category of the Badminton Asia U-17 & U-15 Championships here Saturday. With top seed Shaina Manimuthu also reaching the girls U-15 final, India will have a chance to bring home two gold medals. The Indian contingent was already assured of five medals ahead of Saturday's semifinal matches.

India edge past SL

Ranchi: India's gold medal rush continued on the second day of the fourth edition of the South Asian Athletics Championships here at Birsa Munda (Morabadi) Stadium Saturday. Home team won as many as seven gold medals on the second day, swelling their medal tally to 12. Sri Lanka trailed in second place with eight gold medals. Neeru Pathak (400m), Sanjana Singh (1500m), Nandhini K (100m hurdles) and Seema (discus throw) were winners of gold medal in the women's group while Arjun Waskale (1500m), Manav R (110m hurdles) and Kirpal Singh (discus throw) were victorious in the men's section.

Odisha take early advantage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kanpur, Oct 25: Odisha gained the upper hand on the opening day of their Ranji Trophy encounter against Uttar Pradesh on the opening day of their Ranji Trophy Elite Group A match here. After electing to bat first, Odisha posted a competitive total of 243 runs in 77.1 overs, thanks to valuable contributions from their middle order.

Govinda Poddar anchored the innings with a composed 64 off 109 balls, striking seven boundaries. He was well-supported by debutant Sambit S Baral, who remained fluent during his 59 off 90 balls, and Sandeep Pattanaik, who grafted a patient 53 from 138 deliveries. Late in the innings, Rajesh Mohanty added a brisk 48 off 57 balls, helping Odisha cross the 240-run mark.



In response, Uttar Pradesh reached 17 without loss at stumps, with openers Madhav Kaushik (9 not out) and Abhishek Goswami (6 not out) holding firm in the seven overs before close of play. At the end of Day 1, Uttar Pradesh trail by 226 runs, setting the stage for an intriguing battle on Day 2 as they look to build a solid foundation against a disciplined Odisha attack.

Odisha star Pramod on a gold rush

India dominate Australian para badminton meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Victoria (Australia), Oct 25: Paralympic champion Pramod Bhagat bagged two gold medals while Sukant Kadam returned with a gold and a silver as India dominated the Australian Para Badminton International 2025, finishing on top of the medals tally.

The Bargarh-born para-badminton player clinched the men's singles SL3 title after defeating compatriot Manoj Sarkar 21-15, 21-17 in the final, before pairing up with Kadam to win the men's doubles SL3-SL4 crown, beating the Indian duo of Umesh Vikram Kumar and Surya Kant Yadav 21-11, 19-21, 21-18.

"I'm really happy to win two gold medals here in Australia. The match against Manoj was



tough, we know each other's game so well, and it's always a challenge when we face off," Bhagat said. "I'm also very happy for Manoj winning the silver."

Kadam settled for silver in men's singles SL4, going down fighting 21-23, 21-14, 19-21 to Surya Kant.

NATIONAL EMBARRASSMENT

BCCI left red-faced after Oz cricketers molested

This disturbing event has cast a shadow over what has otherwise been a highly competitive Women's ODI World Cup, reigniting international concerns about the safety of women athletes in India



punish the culprit. We assure to revisit our safety protocols if required to further tighten the security," he said.

BCCI vice president Rajiv Shukla also expressed regret over the incident of molestation of Australia's women cricketers after the event unfolded recently in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

Commenting on the situation and expressing distress over the matter, Shukla said, "This is a deeply regrettable incident. No one could have anticipated something like this, and it should never happen to anyone. While a robust security system is already in place for all visiting teams during the ICC Women's ODI World Cup, we will further strengthen it to ensure such incidents are not repeated. The police have arrested the accused, and we trust that the law will take its proper course to deliver justice. We are confident that the remainder of the World Cup will proceed smoothly and safely."

The Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association has also expressed its shock and anguish over the deplorable incident, stating that "no one should ever have to endure such trauma".

The disgraceful incident has triggered global outrage. Following the episode, the Australian team has reportedly been provided with enhanced security measures.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, Oct 25: The BCCI Saturday strongly condemned the alleged stalking and molestation incident involving two Australian women's team cricketers promising to revisit its safety protocols and further tighten the security ahead of the knock-out stage of the World Cup.

The two players had stepped out of their hotel and were walking towards a café when a man on a motorcycle started following them. He allegedly touched one of them inappropriately and rode off, according to the Sub-Inspector of the area Nidhi Raghuvanshi.

The police have arrested the man involved in the incident that occurred on the Khajirana Road area of the city Thursday morning. "It is a very condemnable but stray incident. India is known for its hospitality and care. We have zero tolerance for such incidents. We appreciate the State Police (Madhya Pradesh) for their prompt action to nab the culprit," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said in a statement.

"Let the law take its course to

INDIA VS BANGLADESH

Eves aim to iron out flaws in semis clash

Navi Mumbai: India will have a final opportunity to iron out any flaws, especially while responding to pressure situations, when they face Bangladesh in their final fixture here on Sunday ahead of Women's World Cup semifinals. The winner of Saturday's clash between Australia and South



Africa at Indore will top the points table and subsequently meet India in the semifinal here October 30. A win over Bangladesh will not alter the World Cup hosts' fourth-place finish in the league stage. India can get to a maximum of eight points with triumph over Bangladesh but will remain behind England, who are placed third with nine points and can take that tally to 11 if they defeat New Zealand Sunday.

Bhubaneswar to host men's HIL matches

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 25: Season two of the revived men's Hockey India League will commence in Chennai on January 3 with a clash between Tamil Nadu Dragons and Hyderabad Too-fans, the organisers announced Saturday.

The tournament, scheduled to be held in three legs across three different cities, will culminate January 26 in Bhubaneswar. The women's HIL will begin December 28 this year in Ranchi with the final January 10 next year.

Hockey India said the opening leg of men's HIL, which will be an eight-team affair, will be held in Chennai from January 3-9 at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium.

Action will then move to Ranchi for the second leg, scheduled from January 11-16 at the Marang Gomme Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Stadium, before heading to Bhubaneswar for the final leg from 26 January 17-26 at the Kalinga Stadium, which has become the hub of hockey in the last few years.

As per the format, each team will face the others once in a single round-robin format, with the top-four teams advancing to the playoffs. The knockout stage, comprising Qualifier 1 and the Eliminator January 23, followed by Qualifier 2 January 25 - will all take place in Bhubaneswar.

A total of 33 matches will be played in men's HIL, with international stars from more than 10 countries, including Argentina, Belgium, Germany, England, Spain, and Australia taking part in the nearly month-long event.

The other teams in the fray are, JSW Soorma Hockey Club, defending champions Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, Vedanta Kalinga Lancers, Ranchi Royals, SG Pipers, and HIL Governing Council.

Fans left waiting for the G.O.A.T as Argentina cancels November visit to the state

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 25: The Messi conundrum surrounding Argentina's much-hyped visit to India has taken a fresh twist, with sponsors confirming that ace footballer Lionel Messi and his team will not be coming to Kerala in November. The clarification came soon after the Argentina Football Association (AFA) announced that the national team would play only in Angola next month.

The confirmation has poured cold water on weeks of excitement in India with fans eagerly awaiting the football G.O.A.T's arrival in the country and both the Kerala government and private sponsors announcing a

high-profile friendly match in Kochi November 17.

According to reports in the Argentine media, AFA officials attributed the cancellation to Kerala's "lack of readiness" and delays in completing logistical arrangements within the agreed timeline.

While organisers have now suggested that the visit may be rescheduled to March 2026, the latest development has once again raised questions about planning, coordination and communication between the stakeholders.

A political controversy has also erupted, with the Con-



gress leadership accusing the state government of prematurely announcing the event without formal confirmation from the AFA.

The episode underscores a recurring challenge in international sports engagements — balancing political optics with procedural clarity.

This would have been Messi's first match in India since 2011, when he captained Argentina against Venezuela at Kolkata's Salt Lake Stadium, a landmark game that marked his debut as national captain.

For now, the wait for Messi continues and with it, Kerala's hopes of scripting a historic football moment remain in suspense.

With the next likely date of

Hype to heartbreak

According to reports, the cancellation to Kerala's "lack of readiness" and delays in completing logistical arrangements within the agreed timeline

For Indian fans, the setback is particularly disappointing, given the massive local fan base for Argentina and Messi in Kerala and in the country

March 2026 now surfacing, it remains to be seen if that is going to be feasible as during that time Kerala and the entire political leadership will be busy with the Assembly polls which in most likelihood will happen in April or latest by May.