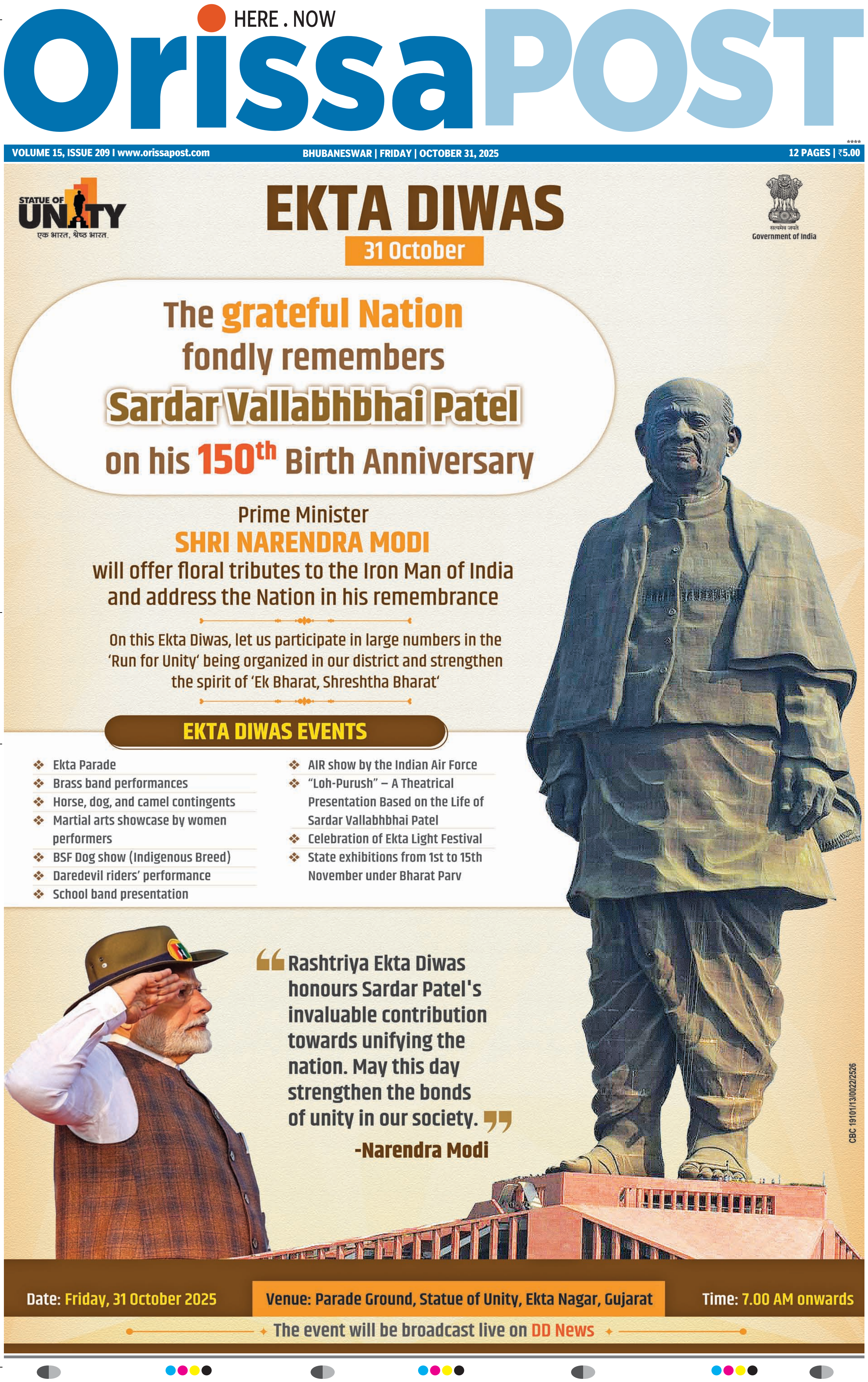
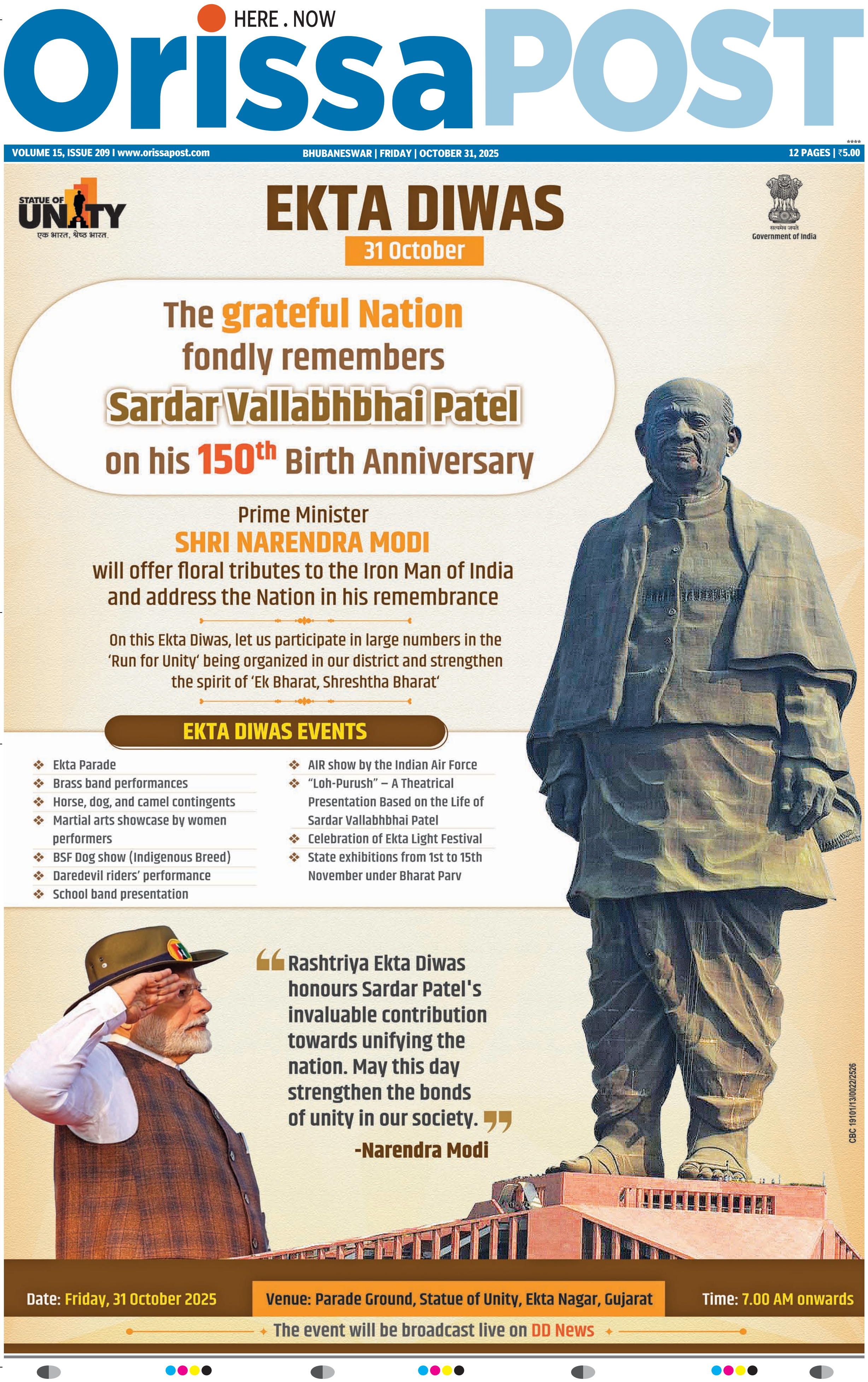
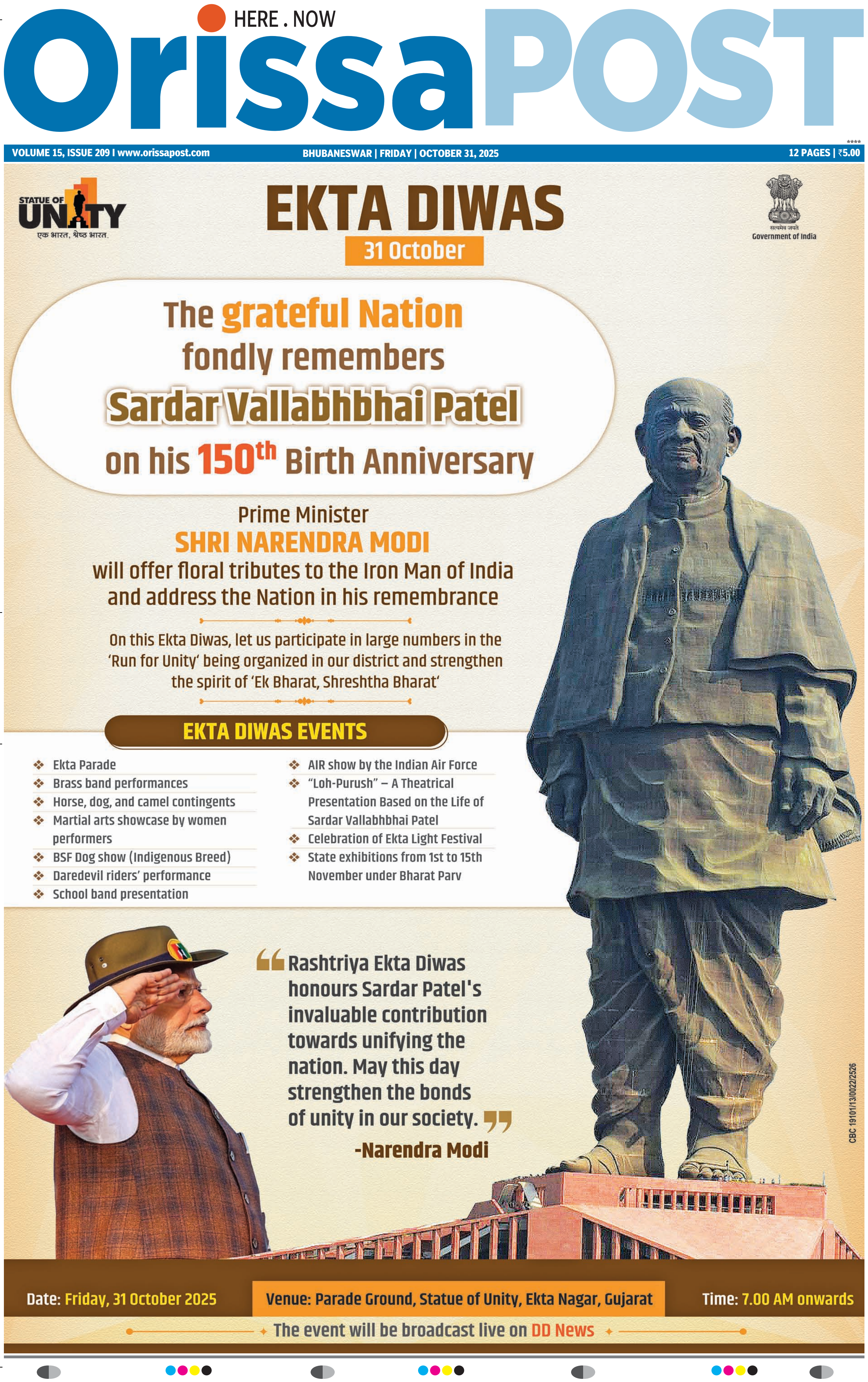




HERE . NOW



VOLUME 15, ISSUE 209 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY | OCTOBER 31, 2025

12 PAGES | ₹5.00

EKTA DIWAS

31 October

The **grateful Nation**
fondly remembers
Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
on his **150th** Birth Anniversary

Prime Minister
SHRI NARENDRA MODI
will offer floral tributes to the Iron Man of India
and address the Nation in his remembrance

On this Ekta Diwas, let us participate in large numbers in the
'Run for Unity' being organized in our district and strengthen
the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'

EKTA DIWAS EVENTS

- ❖ Ekta Parade
- ❖ Brass band performances
- ❖ Horse, dog, and camel contingents
- ❖ Martial arts showcase by women performers
- ❖ BSF Dog show (Indigenous Breed)
- ❖ Daredevil riders' performance
- ❖ School band presentation
- ❖ AIR show by the Indian Air Force
- ❖ "Loh-Purush" – A Theatrical Presentation Based on the Life of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
- ❖ Celebration of Ekta Light Festival
- ❖ State exhibitions from 1st to 15th November under Bharat Parv

“Rashtriya Ekta Diwas honours Sardar Patel's invaluable contribution towards unifying the nation. May this day strengthen the bonds of unity in our society.”
-Narendra Modi

Date: Friday, 31 October 2025

Venue: Parade Ground, Statue of Unity, Ekta Nagar, Gujarat

Time: 7.00 AM onwards

★ The event will be broadcast live on **DD News** ★

CBC 1910113/0022/2526

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
High hopes and expectations are a good thing as long as they can push you to give your best. You will plan with care and perform admirably. But you may be focused on impressing a member of the opposite sex! Don't get carried away, says Ganesha, especially while taking decisions.

TAURUS
This day you are likely to face some health problems. Ganesha urges you not to expose your self to any kind of risk and take even the faintest symptom of illness seriously. Visit a doctor without delay. You could, otherwise, be bedridden for quite some time. Today, you may, unfortunately, be running after greater profits at the cost of family welfare.

GEMINI
There is every possibility that your emotional responses to certain issues will be intense today, foretells Ganesha. You are likely to join some personality development classes. Seductive conversation may culminate into something extraordinary with your partner.

CANCER
Today, you will go on a shopping spree, predicts Ganesha. Sale or no sale, you will have a one-point agenda – buy them all. Your spouse may feel his/her palpitations rising on seeing all the stuff you have bought. You will almost buy a vehicle or a house.

LEO
When like-minded people come together, a lot of good things happen. And when the group happens to be as trustworthy as it is brilliant, it is sheer magic, says Ganesha. Today, in all probability, you will be at the beneficial end of a luminous meeting of minds. End this fulfilling day on a more personal note by treating your sweetheart to a bit of extravagance.

VIRGO
You shall feel and react strongly to certain issues today, says Ganesha. In all likelihood, you may enrol somewhere to hone your personality. For all you know, says Ganesha, seductive dialogue may just ripen into a carnal joyride.

LIBRA
Today, you will entertain and keep people around you amused with your wit and intelligence. That shouldn't be too hard for you, considering you have plenty of both. Intangible benefits may arise out of your social contacts at work, as you will be the number one troubleshooter today.

SCORPIO
Let the day unravel itself today, says Ganesha; you may be surprised to know what it has in store for you. In the afternoon, meetings, business deals and professional dos will dominate proceedings. You shall amuse one and all with your wit, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Wield the baton and conduct proceedings today, says Ganesha. You may enrol yourself in a personality development course to hone your skills. But a small, out-of-synch, unexpected chord may spoil the sonata for you today. But remember, there is always hope.

CAPRICORN
Everybody has some regrets in life. You will have some too, and today may just be the day for it, says Ganesha. You will put your best efforts at work to make things better for others, and although the purpose may be met, your hard work may not bring you the kind of appreciation you were waiting for. There may also be a noticeable change in your attitude, which will be brought about by your sweetheart.

AQUARIUS
Today, you experience the joy of giving freely, as your benevolent side decides to manifest itself. You also realise that a broad-minded approach is less stressful for you. You find it spiritually uplifting to fight against injustice and discrimination.

PISCES
Your focus today will be on finalising your plans for buying a new house. Purchasing new furniture, or planning on renovating your home will also take up a considerable chunk of your time. Make sure you do not fail to account for the savings you need to make for your future needs in this entire process, says Ganesha.



SCHERZINGER: EARLY FAME SLOWED PERSONAL GROWTH

Nicole Scherzinger, 47, reflects on how rising to fame with the *Pussycat Dolls* in her 20s robbed her of a crucial period of personal growth. She relates to struggles faced by stars like Britney Spears, unprepared for the challenges and setbacks fame brought

CHRIS EVANS, ALBA BAPTISTA WELCOME THEIR FIRST BABY

Actor couple Chris Evans and Alba Baptista just had their first baby! *TMZ* reported Tuesday that the *Captain America* star and the *Warrior Nun* actor welcomed a baby Saturday. The couple dated for several years before getting married in 2023



'Being fearless doesn't mean being careless'

Mumbai: Actress Yami Gautam, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Haq*, feels that being fearless doesn't mean being careless.

The actress spoke with this news agency during the promotions of the film at a 5-star property in the Juhu area of Mumbai, and said that one can be fearless yet be responsible. The actress quoted the examples of some of her films in which she played fearless characters, who were fully aware of their responsibility.

The actress told, "Having been part of some important films, *Uri*, *Article 370*, and now *Haq*, if I tie all these films together, although they are absolutely different films from one another, one thing common between them is the fearlessness. Fearless does not mean careless, you have to be fearless, you have to have the courage to tell such stories, otherwise do not make the film. Having said that, if the film is made with an intention that we have to create or preempt from our script perspective, any controversy, audience can see that as well, at the end of the day we are making a film, as I said, so it has to be presented as a film, and for me the most important thing is to be uninhibited once I have understood the emotional sense of the character".

Janhvi sets example

Mumbai: The ongoing debate around actors' entourages has once again sparked discussion in Bollywood. During the trailer launch of *Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari*, Varun Dhawan and Janhvi Kapoor emphasised the need to avoid burdening producers with unnecessary costs.

Adding weight to her words, Janhvi set a remarkable example by not charging a single penny for her recently released film *Homebound*, co-starring Ishaan Khatter and Vishal Jethwa and directed by Neeraj Ghaywan. The film, notably, is India's official entry to the Oscars this year.

Producer Somen Mishra from Dharma Productions revealed in an interview that Janhvi even covered the expenses for her own staff, while all the writers and crew members accepted pay cuts to make the project financially viable. "Everyone on this film took a cut. Janhvi worked for free and even bore the cost of her staff," he said. Mishra added that *Homebound* and *Dhadak 2* are among Dharma's most tightly budgeted projects in recent times. Refuting inflated budget figures circulating online, he clarified that both films were made economically and are financially secure ventures for the production house, thanks to their controlled costs and assured returns from OTT, satellite, and music rights.



First RK Laxman honour for Aamir

Mumbai: The first ever recipient of the RK Laxman Award for Excellence will be none other than Bollywood's Mr Perfectionist, Aamir Khan.

The family of the famous cartoonist has decided to pay a tribute to him by instituting RK Laxman Award for Excellence.

The family has organised a live music concert by music maestro AR Rahman November 23 and will be celebrating the glorious legacy

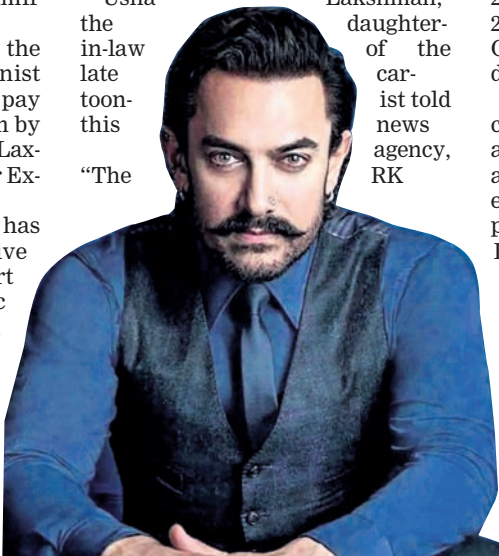
left by RK Laxman during the event. The concert is scheduled to commence from 5 PM onwards in the MCA Cricket Stadium, Pune.

Usha Lakshman, daughter of the cartoonist told news agency, RK

Laxman family has organised an A.R. Rahman live music concert Sunday, 23rd November 2025, at the MCA Cricket Stadium."

She added, "The concert will begin at 5 PM onwards, and during the event, we will be paying tribute to R.K. Laxman by instituting the first-ever RK Laxman Award for Excellence."

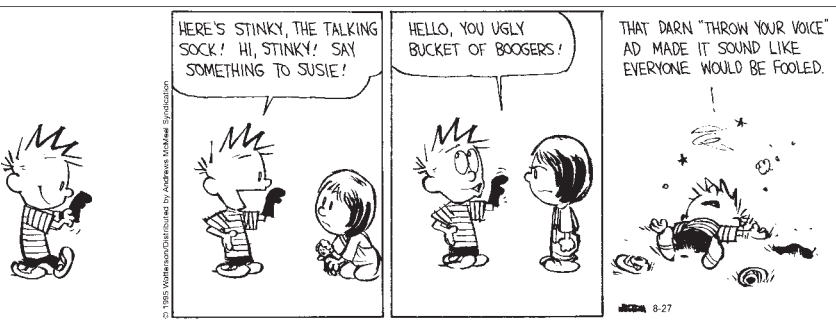
"The recipient of this award will be Aamir Khan, and this will be the biggest tribute we, as a family, are offering to Laxman..," she concluded.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

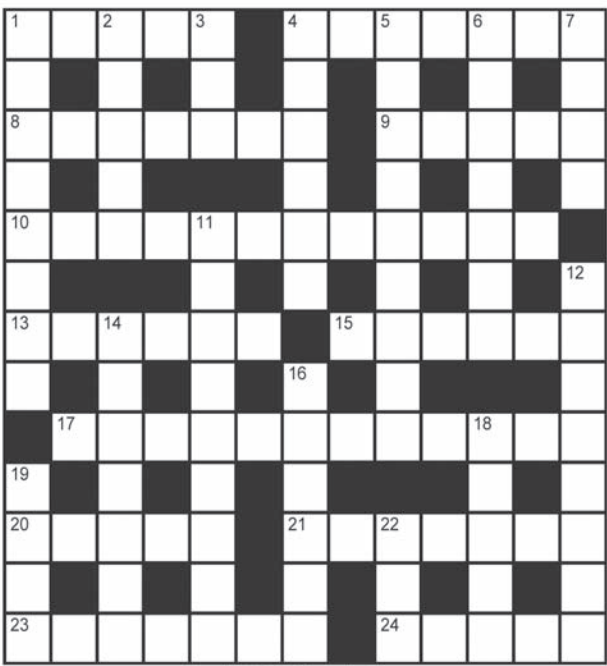


BREVITY



FUN post

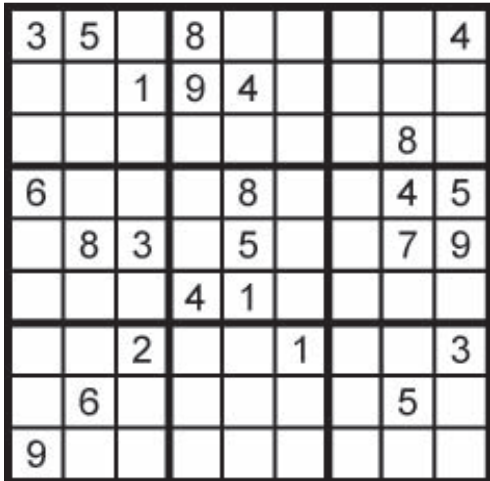
CROSSWORD



- Across**
1 Swears
4 Lobster part
8 Worry
9 Fit for a king
10 Italian sparkling white wine (4,8)
13 Leon Uris novel
15 Ravel classic
17 Horror movie character (4,8)
20 Dutch cheese
- Down**
21 Purplish red
23 Brain-teasers
24 Eye sores
1 Popped up
2 Cousin of a bittern
3 Paltry amount
4 Framework for some plants
5 They say it's fair play
- 6 Lingerie item
7 Comrade in arms
11 University library, perhaps (5,4)
12 Diaries
14 Bombastic
16 Garden decorations
18 Mead ingredient
19 Food thickener
22 Petrol

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.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



Dead denied dignity
3 women carry a body to cremation ground as villagers do not turn up in Lanjigarh

STATE | **P3**



Caribbean hit by Melissa
Hurricane Melissa barrels through northern Caribbean, unleashing devastation in Jamaica & drenching Haiti, where 25 people were killed

INTERNATIONAL | **P8**



Sensex tanks
Equity market falls sharply, with Sensex tumbling 592.67 points and Nifty declining to 25,877.85 level amid FII outflows

BUSINESS | **P9**



Youngsters shine
India continue their impressive show at the Youth Asian Games as the country's medal tally has swelled to 47 medals

SPORTS | **BACK PAGE**

Justice Surya Kant appointed 53rd CJI

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 30: Justice Surya Kant was Thursday appointed as the 53rd Chief Justice of India (CJI) and he will assume charge November 24.

The Department of Justice in the Union Law Ministry issued a notification announcing his appointment. Justice Surya Kant succeeds Justice BR Gavai, who demits office November 23. He will be the CJI for nearly 15 months and will demit office February 9, 2027 on attaining the age of 65.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by the Constitution of India, the President is pleased to appoint Shri Justice Surya Kant, Judge of the Supreme Court of India as the Chief Justice of India with effect from 24th November, 2025," Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said in a post on X. "I convey my heartiest congratulations and best wishes to him," he added.

India looking at diverse energy sources: MEA

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 30: India Thursday said its crude oil purchases are based on securing energy security from 'diverse' sources at affordable prices and it is studying the implications of the latest US sanctions on Russian oil companies Lukoil and Rosneft.

The remarks by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal came amid indications that Indian refiners are slowly reducing procurement of subsidised Russian crude oil and looking at imports of petroleum products from the US.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



If inflation's really at an all-time low, I'm anxious the next pay commission might cut our salaries

CBSE Class X, XII exams from Feb 17

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) will conduct Class X and XII board exams from February 17, 2026, officials announced Thursday.

While the Class X exams will conclude March 10, Class XII exams will end April 9, 2026, according to the final datesheet.

This is the first time that the CBSE released the final datesheet nearly 110 days in advance. The board had announced a tentative datesheet last month. The final datesheet has certain changes including an extra day for Class X exams.

This is the first time that board exams for Class X will be conducted twice in an academic session. The second edition of Class X board exam is scheduled from May 15 to June 1, 2026.

"A sufficient gap has been



INTO THE FINAL: India's Jemimah Rodrigues plays a shot during ICC Women's World Cup semifinal ODI cricket match as Women in Blue stun seven-time champions Australia by five wickets to enter the final, at DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai, Thursday **(Report on back page)**

PTI PHOTO

Mum: 17 kids held hostage, rescued; accused shot dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 30: A three-hour hostage drama in Powai ended successfully Thursday with the rescue of 17 children and two adults but the hostage-taker, Rohit Arya, was killed after sustaining a bullet injury during the police operation.

Arya, 50, who had earlier claimed that his dues for a project for the Maharashtra Education department were pending and had even staged a protest in Pune, was declared dead at hospital.

The incident unfolded around 1:30pm after Powai police station received an alert that a person had taken 17 children hostage inside RA Studio in the Mahavir Classik building.

The children, boys and girls between the ages of 10 to 12, had been called to the studio for an audition for a web series that had been ongoing for six days.

In a video released before police intervention, hostage-taker Arya explained his motive, claiming he made a plan to hold the children instead of committing suicide. "I have very simple demands. Very moral, ethical demands. I have some questions," Arya said, adding, "I want to speak to some people... I want these answers. I



am not a terrorist, nor do I have any demand for money. (I) want to make simple conversations."

Issuing a stern warning to authorities, he said, "The slightest wrong move from your end may trigger me to set this whole place on fire...whether I die or not, the children will be unnecessarily hurt, traumatised for sure...I should not be held responsible." Arya ended by saying that after the 'conversations', he would leave the room and vaguely added that 'a lot of people have these problems' and that he would offer a solution through talks, though he never specified what the problems were. According to police, Arya had been conducting auditions for the last six days. Children would be admitted in the studio at 10am, and given a lunch break before the session ended at 8pm. But Thursday,

children did not emerge during the lunch break, which made the parents worried.

"At 1:30pm, Powai police station received information that a person had taken 17 children hostage at Mahavir Classik building. The Mumbai Police team conducted a rescue operation and safely freed all the children. During the operation, while rescuing the children, the person got injured. He was immediately rushed to the hospital and later declared dead," said Deputy Commissioner of Police Datta Nalawade. Arya was declared dead at 5:15pm, officials said. "All the children are safe," said Satyanarayan, Joint Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) around 4:15pm. According to police, Arya was carrying an air gun and also some chemicals.

100% Central funding for 92 ROB

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: The Centre will bear the entire expenses for the construction of 92 rail over bridges (ROBs) in Odisha and the Union Ministry of Railways has approved a proposal in this regard, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said Thursday.

Earlier, it had been decided that the Centre and the state government would share the expenses for the construction of the 92 ROB in Odisha on 50:50 basis. However, the state

government had urged the Union Ministry of Railways to bear the entire expenses for the construction of the ROB.

"Accepting the request, the Ministry of Railways has approved 100 per cent Central funding for the ROB. It has sent a communiqué in this regard to the state government," added the CMO.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for approving 100 per cent Central funding for the ROB.

CM THANKS PM, RAILWAY MINISTER

Trump slashes China tariffs

REUTERS

Busan (South Korea), Oct 30: US President Donald Trump said Thursday he had agreed with President Xi Jinping to trim tariffs on China in exchange for Beijing cracking down on the illicit fentanyl trade, resuming US soybean purchases and keeping rare earths exports flowing.

Trump's face-to-face talks with Xi in the South Korean city of Busan, their first since 2019, marked the finale of a whirlwind Asia trip on which he also touted trade breakthroughs with South Korea,

Japan and Southeast Asian nations.

"It was an amazing meeting," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One shortly after he left South Korea, ranking the talks a '12 out of 10'.

Trump said tariffs on Chinese imports would be cut to 47 per cent from 57 per cent, by halving to 10 per cent the rate of tariffs related to trade in fentanyl precursor drugs.

Xi will work 'very hard to stop the flow' of fentanyl, a deadly synthetic opioid that is the leading cause of American overdose deaths, Trump said. China agreed to pause export controls unveiled

this month on rare earths, elements with vital roles in cars, planes and weapons that have become Beijing's most potent source of leverage in its trade war with the US.

The pause would last for a year, China's commerce ministry said in a statement.

It added that the two sides had also reached consensus on expanding agricultural trade and would work to resolve issues around short video app TikTok, which Trump seeks to bring under US-controlled ownership.

Earlier in the day, Trump ordered the US military to resume testing nuclear weapons after a gap of 33 years, pointing to the growing arsenals of Russia and China.

Cradle of civilisation at risk of erosion

REUTERS

Ur/Babylon (Iraq), Oct 30: Iraqi officials are sounding the alarm to save monuments of the cradle of civilisation, with thousands of years of history at risk of disappearing as Iraq's ancient southern cities face erosion because of climate change.

Harsh, dry weather is increasing salinity in the soil and damaging the historical monuments in the ruins of cities such as Ur, the birthplace of the Biblical patriarch Abraham, and Babylon, once-magnificent capital of empires.

Sand dunes are causing the deterioration of the northern side of the majestic Ziggurat of Ur, a massive stepped pyramid temple that was dedicated more than 4,000 years ago to the moon god, Nanna. "The combination of wind and sand dunes leads to the erosion of the northern

sections of the structure," said Abdullah Nasrallah, an archaeologist at the antiquities department in Dhi Qar province - where the city of Ur is located.

The shrine, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, remains one of the best-preserved examples of ancient Mesopotamian architecture that offers an insight into religious practices and sacred rituals of the Sumerian empire, where one of the world's first civilisations flourished.

"While the third layer (of the Ziggurat) had already deteriorated due to weathering and climate change, erosion has now begun to affect the second layer," Nasrallah said. Nearby, salt deposits have been eating away the mud bricks of the Royal Cemetery of Ur. "These salt deposits appeared due to global warming and climate change - which led to the destruction of important parts of



Workers clean salt deposits from a wall decorated with animal reliefs at Babylon, Iraq

FILE PHOTO

the cemetery," said Dr Kazem Hassoun, an inspector at the antiquities department in Dhi Qar. "Eventually, the deposits will cause the complete collapse of the mud bricks that make up

this cemetery," Hassoun said.

Iraq is battling rising temperatures and heavy droughts that have increased the salinity levels in its south, where the mighty Tigris and Euphra-

tes rivers converge as they approach the Gulf.

Further up the Euphrates, the archaeological sites of ancient Babylon are in danger as well. They urgently require attention and restoration, but the lack of funding remains a challenge, Dr Montaser al-Hasnawi, the director general of Iraq's Ministry of Culture and Tourism, said.

In Babylon, high salinity levels are endangering the clay-based materials of ancient structures, on which elaborate Sumerian drawings are still visible. The materials were sourced directly from the land which had lower salinity at the time. That could have made them less vulnerable to climate change, but improper restoration practices in previous decades made the old structures more susceptible, Hasnawi said. Rising salinity makes the need to redo the flawed restoration more pressing.

Cops foil insurance fraud & self-burglary bid, arrest 13



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: The Commissionerate Police prevented a burglary and insurance fraud attempt due to an alert citizen and arrested 13 accused when they were planning to commit the crime, an officer said Thursday.

According to the police, Santosh Kumar Moharana has been running a plywood business at Tamando Bazar on the suburbs of Bhubaneswar since 2016. However, he had been facing financial distress due to losses. Moharana failed to pay the house rent for the last one and a half years and also had a loan of ₹3 lakh, the police said.

In order to get money fraudulently, Moharana, along with his ex-employee Manoj Sejpada, hatched a conspiracy to claim insurance money by committing a burglary at his own shop on the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday, informed Bhubaneswar DCP Jagmohan Meena.

Acting on information from a citizen, the personnel of Tamando police station conducted a raid and apprehended Moharana, Sejpada, and their associates while they were attempting to commit burglary at about 2:30 am Thursday, he said.

Five vehicles, two mobile phones along with cutting machines, face masks, flashlights,

iron rods, gloves, knives, and several other instruments were seized from their possession, the DCP said. Meena said that the accused persons had planned to create the appearance of an actual burglary by unknown miscreants.

Later, it was found that Moharana had promised his Associates that he would initially pay ₹1,000 to each of them, and after receiving the insurance claim amount, he would further pay ₹5,000 to each as remuneration for their participation in the act, he said. The remaining amount was to be shared equally between the two prime accused, Moharana and Sejpada.

During interrogation, prime accused Moharana confessed that he had learned the modus operandi of committing the offence by watching videos on YouTube, the police said.

A case has been registered against the accused under Sections 331(4), 305(a), 62, 318(4), and 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Section 25(1) (a) of the Arms Act at Tamando Police Station. Police said a further investigation is underway to identify additional links in the fraud network.

'Plantation along new roads mandatory'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: In a major green initiative, the Odisha government has decided to make plantation compulsory along all newly constructed roads under Works department. The move aims to balance the state's rapid infrastructure growth with a robust green cover.

Works Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan announced that every new road — including state highways, district roads, and other public routes — will have trees planted on both sides and along the dividers. To ensure proper implementation of the new initiative, one per cent of the total construction cost will be earmarked specifically for plantation and its maintenance.

According to official guidelines, the plantation drive will be part of the Green Corridor Development Programme, which seeks to enhance greenery, reduce pollution, and create cooler, cleaner environment along major road networks. “This step will help absorb carbon dioxide, improve oxygen levels, and reduce both air and noise pollution. It will also prevent soil erosion and keep the surroundings cooler during summer,” officials stated. The move comes as a commitment to fight climate change and promote large-scale afforestation across the state.

Complete ‘Montha’ damage assessment in 3 days: Min



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari Thursday asked the district authorities to complete damage assessment of crop, houses, private, public properties, roads, bridges and infrastructure due to cyclone ‘Montha’ within three days, said an official.

REPORTS OF FRESH LANDSLIDES WERE RECEIVED FROM DIFFERENT DISTRICTS, INCLUDING GANJAM, GAJAPATI AND KANDHAMAL UNDER THE IMPACT OF INCESSANT RAIN IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE CYCLONE

RAINFALL AND THUNDERSHOWER ACTIVITIES ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE STATE FOR TWO MORE DAYS TILL NOVEMBER 1

The state government Thursday started assessment of the damage caused by cyclone ‘Montha’, officials said, adding that the survey is likely to be completed within three days.

Pujari said the cyclone caused extensive damage to standing paddy crops, cotton cultivation, and vegetables in different districts.

‘Montha’, which made landfall on Andhra Pradesh coast Tuesday evening, affected people in 33 blocks and 11 urban areas of Odisha. The cyclone has moved out of the state and has gradually weakened into a low-pressure over the Vidarbha region, officials said.

“The government has asked all the district authorities to complete damage assessment

of crop, houses, private, public properties, roads, bridges and infrastructure within three days and submit their reports so that the affected people could get assistance,” Pujari told reporters.

He also said that districts and departments were directed to ensure early restoration work of damaged roads and bridges.

Meanwhile, reports of fresh landslides were received from different districts, including Ganjam, Gajapati and Kandhamal under the impact of incessant rain in the aftermath of the cyclone, officials said.

In Gajapati, a major landslide occurred along Shankuda-Khiliganda ghat road under Raigada block Thursday, snapping road connectivity to Bonda

and Khilingi villages under S Kardasinh panchayat.

Another landslide disrupted road communication to four villages along the ghat road near Balibada village under Mohana block of Gajapati Thursday. “Repair works and road clearing operations are already on as teams of NDRF, ODRAF, and fire services were present in the district,” an official said.

A landslide also occurred at Khariguda ghat in Ranaba panchayat in Kandhamal's Raikia block. A huge rock collapsed and damaged parts of the Upara Byaghra Devi Temple in Kulada under Bhanjanagar block of Ganjam Thursday due to rains.

The Meteorological Centre, Bhubaneswar Thursday said that rainfall and thunder-shower activities are likely to continue in different parts of the state for two more days till November 1.

In its forecast for Friday, the IMD said that light to moderate rain or thunderstorm are very likely to occur at a few places over the districts of interior Odisha and at one or two places over the districts of the coastal region.

The met office issued a yellow warning (be aware) of light to moderate rains in the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj October 31.

The IMD has forecast thunderstorm with lightning accompanied by gusty surface wind speed reaching 30-40 kmph in the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, and Nayagarh November 1.

Four get 20-year RI

Bhubaneswar: A court here Thursday sentenced four persons to 20 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) after convicting them in a drug case. The court has also ordered the four - Sk Irfan, Sk Samir, Sayed Imtiaz and Ratiranjan Rout - to pay a fine of ₹1 lakh each, said an officer. During the trial, the prosecution examined 10 witnesses and exhibited 28 relevant documents, he said. In March 2022, the Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha police had conducted a raid in a rented house in the Jatni area and seized contraband brown sugar weighing 1320 grams.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Notary Public, Jatani, vide No -2877, dated- 15.10.2025, I, Sheetal Agrawalla, W/o.- Rahul Kumar Agrawalla, Address At- Ramchandrapur Bazar, P.O./P.S.- Jatani, Dist.- Khordha, PIN- 752050, Odisha declare that I have changed my name from Sheetal Kedia to Sheetal Agrawalla. Now onwards I shall be known as Sheetal Agrawalla for all future purposes.

Affidavit before Executive Magistrate, Khallikote, No.- A/3785, 24.10.2025, I, Trilochan Pradhan (Old name), S/o.- Chaitanya Pradhan, Vill./P.O.- Langaleswar, P.S.- Khallikote, Ganjam I change my name Trilochan Pradhan to Trilochana Pradhan. Henceforth, I shall be known as Trilochana Pradhan for all future purpose.

LOST

Vivek Patra, BPUT Regd. No.- 1221211047 of OEC, has been lost B.Tech degree certificate. If anybody found please call me 8658725282.

Odisha to set up CKD registry

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: The Odisha government has decided to set up a statewide Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) registry and a web-based data portal to strengthen monitoring, research, and preventive measures against the rising incidence of kidney-related ailments in the state.

The decision was taken at a technical brainstorming session on prevention and management of CKD, held under the chairmanship of Health and Family Welfare department Secretary Aswathy S, at the Combined Health Directorate here Thursday.

The meeting brought together experts, senior specialists, and researchers from leading institutions across the state and beyond. The participants reviewed findings from global, national, and state-level studies, which indicated a rising trend of CKD cases in different parts of India, including several districts of Odisha.

Currently, over 18,800 patients are receiving free dialysis treatment at about 70 government-run dialysis centres across the state.

PANCHAK PREPARATIONS

Srimandir entry through Lion’s Gate only: Puri DM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, Oct 30: Devotees will be allowed to enter the Srimandir here only through the Singhadwar (Lion's Gate) during the ‘Panchak’ celebrations, an official said Thursday.

This was decided at the coordination meeting between the civil administration and police ahead of the ‘Panchak’ (the last five days of the holy month of Kartik), said Puri Collector Dibyajyoti Parida.

He said this time, ‘Panchak’ falls on four days from November 2 to 5, when lakhs of devotees are expected to visit the temple.

Parida said devotees now enter the shrine through all four gates, but it has been decided that they will enter the temple through the gate on the east side and can exit from the shrine through three other gates from November 2 to 5 during ‘Pachak’ celebrations.

He said barricades are being erected in front of the 12th century shrine to manage the crowd and avoid a stampede-like situation.



The Collector said a dedicated lane is created for ‘Habisiya-li’ (elderly women who keep ‘brata’ all along the Kartik month and stay in Puri). The administration will ensure their smooth darshan inside the temple.

He said the temple servitors are exempt from these restrictions, and they can enter the shrine through any gate of their choice.

Temple officials said that on the last day of ‘Panchak’, Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath are adorned with ‘Suna Beshha’ (golden attire).

The Puri Collector said proper crowd management has also been planned for Gopinath Temple at Sakhigopal, where lakhs of devotees throng on the occasion of ‘Radha Pada Darshan’ on ‘Anla Navmi’ in the month of Kartik.

WORLD CITIES DAY 2025

Building people-centred smart city

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: As the world marks World Cities Day 2025 Friday (October 31) with the theme “People-Centred Smart Cities,” Bhubaneswar aspires to stand out as a model where rapid urban growth, innovation, and tradition coexist through foresight and inclusivity. Experts stress sustainable, citizen-focused growth for a resilient Bhubaneswar.

Architect and infrastructure consultant Gautam Kumar Agrawal highlighted Bhubaneswar’s remarkable transformation over the past decade. “Bhubaneswar has grown many folds in the last ten years. This growth represents more than physical expansion—it’s a redefinition of the city’s identity, blending historical and cultural richness with a modern urban spirit,” he said.

Agrawal noted that Bhu-



baneswar’s real challenge lies in long-term planning, saying, “A city’s progress is measured not by its speed of growth, but by how well it plans for tomorrow,” he said.

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner Chanchal Rana acknowledged that the city’s rapid population growth is both a sign of progress and a major governance challenge. “More than 50 per cent of Odisha’s urban population now resides in Bhubaneswar. Urban challenges and aspirations have increased significantly,” Rana said.

To address growing needs, Bhubaneswar blends technology with inclusion. The Jaga

Mission provides housing for slum dwellers, Smart City projects enhance connectivity and traffic systems, and the Ekamra Heritage Project preserves historic sites. Sustainability remains key, focusing on Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (RRR) practices and better wastewater management.

Urban planner Piyush Ranjan Rout cautioned that unchecked expansion, such as the New Bhubaneswar Project, could lead to ecological and financial stress.

“Expanding the city without addressing core issues is like buying larger pants instead of tackling obesity—it strains both infrastructure and finances,” he remarked. Rout urged a shift toward sustainable urban regeneration over greenfield expansion, advocating models like the 15-minute city, vertical urbanism, and circular economy to boost livability while

conserving natural resources.

Abhaya Mohanta, who works for persons with disabilities through his organisation We4You, emphasised that a truly smart city must serve all citizens.

“We need accessible transport, roads, workplaces, and public spaces. Inclusive policies ensure everyone can participate in city life,” he said.

Social expert Saroj Barik echoed this view, stressing the need to support slum dwellers, street vendors, unorganised labourers, and migrant workers through targeted investments, simplified governance, and citizen-centric services.

Social activist Sudarshan Chhotray said urban development must prioritise children, urging Bhubaneswar to balance tradition with modernity and improve health, sanitation, housing, transport, and child-friendly spaces.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	88.63 ▲ 0.25	SENSEX	84404.46 ▼ 592.67	GOLD	₹121,357 ▲ ₹691
EURO	102.51 ▼ 0.04	NIFTY	25877.85 ▼ 176.05	SILVER	₹148,630 ▲ ₹2,549

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	30.0°	29.2°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thunderstorm.
Min Temp	23.5°	21.6°	
Humidity	92%	14.6%	
Rainfall	26.4mm	Nil	

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Home voting begins for Nuapada bypolls

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, Oct 30: The home voting process for the Nuapada Assembly by-election began Thursday. A total of 15 polling teams have been deployed for the exercise. Each team comprises two polling officers, one micro observer, one security personnel and one videographer.

Altogether, 251 voters including those aged above 85 years and persons with more than 40 per cent disabilities will cast their votes confidentially through postal ballots from their homes between October 30 and November 2.

Returning Officer Surmi Soren said the entire home voting process will be video-graphed to ensure transparency. District Collector Madhusudan Das has directed all officials involved to ensure no eligible voter is deprived of the facility.

SMC signs MoU with Oil India for bio-gas plant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Oct 30: A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Sambalpur Municipal Corporation (SMC) and Oil India Ltd here for establishing a compressed biogas (CBG) plant in the western Odisha town.

The agreement is an important step to produce energy from waste coming out of homes, officials said.

Sambalpur produces around 196 tonnes of solid waste per day, requiring proper and environment-friendly management, they said.

“House waste, agricultural debris and other organic waste will be converted to high-quality bio-gas in the CBG plant,” an official said.

The waste will be processed through anaerobic digestion technology to remove impurities such as carbon dioxide and hydrogen sulfide, he said.

Elephant calf rescued

AGENCIES

Dhenkanal, Oct 30: A baby elephant was rescued from an abandoned well near Kurunti village under Dhenkanal Sadar range, sources said Thursday.

According to reports, the calf, estimated to be around three-four months old, fell into the five-foot deep well while moving with its herd and mother elephant early Thursday morning. Although the herd moved away, the mother elephant stayed behind, refusing to leave its calf.

After making several attempts to rescue its baby, and mother elephant finally succeeded in rescuing the calf from the well. The mother and calf then walked away into the forest.

Upon being informed, Forest department officials reached the spot for investigation.

FMU hosts orientation for inter-university youth fest

Balasure: Fakir Mohan University (FMU) organised an orientation programme Thursday for the upcoming AIU 39th Inter-University East Zone Youth Festival – 2026 (“Utsah-2026”), scheduled for January 27–31, 2026. The session aimed to familiarise university officers, faculty coordinators, and committee members with the festival’s vision, structure, and operational framework. The event was presided over by FMU Vice Chancellor Prof. Santosh Kumar Tripathy, who emphasised collective effort, meticulous planning, and youth participation as key to ensure success of Utsah-2026. He also thanked the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) for selecting FMU to host the event. Expert members from the AIU, who attended as resource persons, praised FMU’s proactive approach and offered guidance on organising youth festivals of national repute. Deliberations were also held by PG Council Chairman Prof. Bhaskar Behera, Registrar Kukumina Das, and Comptroller of Finance Karan Soren, who discussed administrative preparedness, financial planning, and resource mobilisation. The session concluded with interactive discussions and a vote of thanks proposed by Abhaya Kumar Nayak.

Social boycott denies dignity to the dead

3 women carry body to cremation ground as villagers do not turn up in Lanjigarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Lanjigarh, Oct 30: A shocking display of social boycott emerged in Kalahandi district, where a man’s body was carried to the cremation ground by three nieces after members of their community reportedly refused to assist due to social ostracisation.

The incident, which took place Wednesday morning in Lanjigarh town, has laid bare the prevalence of caste-based prejudice even in modern times. Despite advances in education and social awareness, rigid social customs continue to override basic human compassion, observers said.

Forty two-year-old Mahendra Dalei of Pradhanipada died around 8am Wednesday after prolonged illness from an accident related injury six months ago. When family members, including his elder uncle Lingaraj, cousin Purna Chandra and others sought help from the community members



to carry the body to the cremation ground for the final rites, none came forward for nearly eight hours.

Finally, the deceased’s nieces Pratima Dalei, 25, Manorama Dalei, 21, and Barsha Dalei, 14, stepped in and turned pallbearers accompanied by another relative, Ramesh Chandra Dalei, 23. The four carried the body to the cremation ground, defying long-standing traditions that bar women from attending or participating in last rites.

People in the area described the scene as deeply moving yet troubling as it laid bare the enduring grip of social stigma.

However, the Lanjigarh Paika Samaj, a local caste outfit, has rejected the allegations that social ostracisation prevented the community members from participating in the cremation.

Chandradhwaj Peshnia, president of the Kalahandi Paika Samaj, said he was present at the site and that the community had not boycotted the family.

“Many people were away at work in nearby industrial areas and needed time to return. We requested the family to wait, but they proceeded with the cremation. Our community has always extended respect to the dead,” Peshnia said.

He condemned those circulating videos and levelling allegations against the Paika community, calling it an attempt to malign the community’s image.

The incident, regardless of conflicting claims, has reignited debate on the deep-rooted social barriers and prejudices that continue to shape life and even death in rural parts of the state.

Mining officers get death threat during raid on sand quarry

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jaleswar, Oct 30: Miscreant allegedly threatened two junior mining officers of dire consequences after they raided an illegal sand quarry at Kuanr-pur ghat under this tehsil in Balasore district Thursday.

Illegal sand smuggling con-

tinues at the ghat despite repeated complaints to the authorities, sources said.

The incident occurred when Jaleswar Junior Mining Officer Tapas Behera and Basta Junior Mining Officer Satyachin-maya Jena jointly conducted a raid at the illegal sand quarry. However, they did not find any-

one engaged in sand lifting during the inspection.

While the officers were present at the spot, a local resident identified as Pradeep Sahu reportedly clicked photos of the officials’ vehicle, leading to a heated argument between Sahu and the mining officers. During the confrontation, Sa-

Farmer electrocuted while spraying pesticide

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paikamal, Oct 30: A farmer was electrocuted after coming in contact with a live electric cable while spraying pesticide on his farmland at Bukuramunda village under this block in Bargarh district Thursday.

The deceased was identified as Rabi Sahu, 34, in the village.

According to sources, Sahu came in contact with a live electric cable that had fallen dangerously close to his farmland.

Villagers and police immediately rushed him to Padmapur hospital, where doctors pronounced him dead. The body was later sent for post-mortem.

After reports surfaced, villagers and members of a local farmer outfit held demonstrations in the locality demanding ₹10 lakh as compensation and a job for the deceased farmer’s wife.

The protest was underway till the filing of this report, with no settlement reached yet. Sahu is survived by his wife and two children. The family, already struggling financially, is now left without its sole breadwinner.

Paikamal Sarpanch Anita Bhoi visited the bereaved family, expressed condolences, and urged the state government to provide immediate financial assistance to the victim’s family.

OPRB RECRUITMENT SCAM

94 SI candidates released from jail



PNN & AGENCIES

Berhampur, Oct 30: Ninety-four aspirants for sub-inspector (SI) jobs, who were arrested by police for their alleged involvement in cheating, forgery and fraud in examination, were Thursday released from jail here.

A special Vigilance Court here Wednesday had granted conditional bail to 114 aspirants who were arrested by police October 1 on charge of alleged involvement in the recruitment scam. The court allowed them to be released on bail on a bond of ₹50,000 along with two sureties.

A total of 94 accused, including six women, were released on bail following the court order, said DN Barik, senior superintendent of the circle jail here. Another 20 persons, whose bail was granted, were not released as they could not produce the necessary documents, sources said.

The jail authorities released them in groups after verifying their documents, officials said.

As many as 123 persons, including 114 aspirants, were arrested by police in phases, on charges of cheating, forgery and fraud in police SI examination scheduled to be held October 5 and 6, conducted by

the Odisha Police Recruitment Board (OPRB).

The written examination was later postponed till further notice. Others held in the case were middlemen and agents of the organised crime syndicate.

Initially, Berhampur police arrested 117 persons, including three agents from the Odisha-Andhra Pradesh border area September 30 night, while they were going towards Andhra Pradesh in three AC buses.

The police, based on the preliminary investigation, had said that the aspiring candidates, who paid first instalment of ₹10 lakh of the agreed ₹25 lakh per post of SI to the fraud syndicate, were going to some undisclosed place in Andhra Pradesh to get a copy of the question paper before the written examination.

Police accused all of them of being engaged in an organised crime for sabotaging the SI recruitment examination.

Though the case was first probed by the local police, it was later handed over to the Crime Branch of Odisha Police.

Later, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi recommended a CBI probe into the incident. However, CBI was yet to initiate the investigation, sources said.

Tiger scare grips villagers after pugmarks discovered



POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Oct 30: Panic gripped villages adjoining Chhatrapur after residents reported spotting pugmarks in a paddy field that they believe may belong to a tiger.

Villagers in Laxmipur panchayat

under Chhatrapur block said they were returning from a temple when they noticed the pugmarks along a route regularly used by locals. Fear spread quickly as word of the possible presence of a tiger circulated through the area. Some villagers claimed they saw the animal leap across their path.

Locals alerted the Chhatrapur forest range office, prompting forester Babu Sethi and his team to visit the site and examine the footprints.

Forest officials said they were still determining whether the pugmarks belong to a tiger or another animal. “We are using measuring scales and other tools to identify the exact species,” Sethi said.

Meanwhile, several villagers alleged that goats and chickens had gone missing over the past two days, suspecting that the livestock may have been killed by the tiger. They demanded authorities take swift action to capture the animal.

Notably, the sighting has caused greater alarm as there is no major forest area in and around Chhatrapur block, making the possible presence of a tiger unusual.

Odia psychiatrist among top 2% scientists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, Oct 30: In a moment of pride for the state, Professor Nilamadhab Kar, an eminent psychiatrist serving with the Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust in the United Kingdom, has been named among the top 2 per cent of scientists in the world by Elsevier and Stanford University.

With more than 300 scientific publications, including peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and textbooks, Kar has made significant contributions to stress-related mental health, geriatric psychiatry and psychiatric education.

He also serves as an honorary professor of psychiatry at the University of Wolverhampton and plays a key role in advancing mental health services within the Trust.

His recent publication, ‘Geriatric Psychiatry in South Asia’, is the first comprehensive work of its kind



focusing on elderly mental health in the South Asian context.

Congratulating him, Acting Chief Medical Officer Dr Madhav Rao said, “This recognition is a testament to Prof. Kar’s tireless dedication to improving mental health care and education. We are proud of his achievements and global impact.”

Responding humbly, Kar said, “I hope this recognition inspires more of my colleagues to pursue research and publications. Research-active organisations always provide better patient care.”

Florence Okwu, Head of Research and Innovation at the Trust, also praised his contributions, describing his work as “instrumental in shaping the future of mental health care through collaboration among clinicians, educators, and policymakers.”

This global honour for Prof. Kar has brought immense pride to the Odia community worldwide.

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The Global Polytunity

Conflicts, trade wars, inequality, and democratic decay fill today’s headlines. Each crisis appears to be feeding the next, and it can feel as though the world is coming apart. Western leaders and thinkers have embraced a single word to capture this entanglement of threats: “polycrisis.”

Adam Tooze, the Columbia University historian who helped popularise the term, summarised its appeal in 2023: “Here is your fear, here is something that fundamentally distresses you. This is what it might be called.” But when fear becomes the central theme, the result can only be angst and paralysis, as Mark Leonard observed after the 2024 World Economic Forum in Davos.

Crises, however, are not necessarily followed by collapse. In fact, disruption has often paved the way for renewal – but only for those who were willing to let go of the old order.

With that in mind, I see the same moment through a different lens – as polytunity, a term I coined in a November 2024 Project Syndicate commentary and then later elaborated at the United Nations Development Program. The idea is simple: Simultaneous disruptions offer a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the deep transformation of global institutions and ideas. When everything seems to crumble at once, we are forced to go beyond patchwork solutions and redesign systems from the ground up.

For starters, we should recognise that the polycrisis is a Western-centric narrative masquerading as global. Two European theorists coined the word in 1993, while another European expert popularised it recently. A Western-based summit of elites gave the term a prominent platform, prompting its viral amplification by Western media, think tanks, and academics.

Despite constant lamentations about a “ghastly future,” the conversation on polycrisis rarely, if ever, acknowledges the agency of the non-Western world – nowadays euphemistically called the “Global South” – or the solutions it has offered. Even as some theorists call for “Renewed Humanism,” they fail to confront the reality of a structurally unequal order and growing frustrations with it. Western dominance of international finance and institutions persists, while non-Western ideas and voices remain marginalised in supposedly global canons.

The establishment favours the language of polycrisis because it obscures the root causes of global breakdowns, making them appear like natural disasters. In reality, today’s overlapping crises can be traced back to the industrial-colonial paradigm that has prevailed since the Industrial Revolution, a worldview that defined progress as control: mechanical control over nature, and Western control over the rest of the world.

To be sure, that chapter of modernisation produced immense material and social gains. But it also sowed the seeds of our current predicament. Global warming, the defining crisis of our time, is the result of an extractive industrial model, supported by a trading system in which workers in poor countries manufacture for low pay what consumers in rich countries purchase in excess.

The industrial-colonial paradigm has expired in a hyper-complex, multipolar world. We need a new mindset – which I call AIM: Adaptive, Inclusive, and Moral Political Economy. To be adaptive is to govern societies not as crude machines, but as living networks that learn and evolve. To be inclusive is to recognise that progress depends on using what you have, which means mobilising local creativity rather than copying the models of the rich and powerful. And to be moral is to acknowledge that ideas are shaped by power, and to redress this imbalance.

Over the course of decades of research, I have studied China – as well as other countries – through the lens of AIM. In my book *How China Escaped the Poverty Trap*, I traced development not as a linear path, but as a co-evolutionary process, marked by a recursive feedback loop (Adaptive). This analysis showed that the strategies that create new markets can look starkly different from standard prescriptions for “good institutions” (Inclusive). Then, in China’s Gilded Age, I challenged the Orientalist assumption of “Chinese exceptionalism,” revealing that China’s trajectory mirrors forgotten Western histories, not the mythologised versions taught in textbooks (Moral).

AIM provides a compass for thinking and policymaking in an age when the global majority is increasingly taking ownership of its own development, rather than following Western formulas or waiting to be rescued from poverty through aid.

Consider, for example, that China, India, and Saudi Arabia are investing heavily in clean energy, while sub-Saharan African countries are experimenting with energy leapfrogging. And as US tariffs shrink export options to high-income markets for late developers like Vietnam and Ethiopia, South-South trade is surpassing North-South trade in volume.

On the intellectual front, the experts most qualified to teach about the “political economy of justice” and “circular economy” are not philosophers or consultants in Europe and North America, but indigenous groups who have long protected ecosystems, despite centuries of dispossession.

Polytunity is not a call for naive optimism in the face of existential threats. Instead, it represents purposeful realism that draws on the creativity of a genuinely global community, not a single region or privileged class. Nor does it promote platitudes or vibes. Polytunity is a constructive agenda grounded in an empirical foundation. Applied correctly and seriously, it should change the way we study and tackle a range of challenges, not least development.

What we are witnessing is not the end of progress, but rather the end of the industrial-colonial paradigm and the beginning of another – if we have the conviction to develop it.

The writer is Professor of Political Economy at Johns Hopkins University, where she directs The Polytunity Project and The Multipolar World & US-China Roundtables.

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FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

OBLITERATION OF TRUST



The introduction of private professionals signals a subtle and ingenious shift in the governance architecture of state-owned financial institutions and a serious legal and constitutional transgression

On 4 October, in an executive order, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), approved revised consolidated guidelines for appointment of Whole Time Directors, Managing Directors, Executive Directors and Chairpersons in public sector insurance companies like the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), Public Sector General Insurance (PSGI) Companies and the Public Sector banks including the State Bank of India.

The Department of Financial Services (DFS) under the Union Ministry of Finance (MoF) has formally circulated these revised procedures to all public sector banks and state-owned insurers. In a major procedural change, the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB), which is responsible for selecting and recommending candidates for top financial appointments, has been authorised to engage independent human resource agencies to assess applicants from the private sector.

The proponents of these reforms argue that they are intended to strengthen professionalism, governance, accountability, innovation, competitiveness and accelerate digital transformation in public sector banking system and insurance industry.

However, this has triggered reaction among public sector employees and progressive intellectuals. In different statements, the All-India Insurance Employees' Association (AIIEA) of public sector insurance industry and the United Forum of Bank Unions (UFBU) representing nine major officers' and workmen's unions across all banks expressed strong reservations and vehemently opposed the moves. They demanded that the government should keep in abeyance the revised guidelines in dispute and set up a joint stakeholder committee to review the leadership appointment frameworks and

refer the entire policy to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance.

The introduction of private professionals signals a subtle and ingenious shift in the governance architecture of state-owned financial institutions and a serious legal and constitutional transgression –a de facto creeping privatisation of public sector financial institutions. The public-sector banks and insurance companies are pillars of the edifice of India's economic progress and prosperity and have played a vital role in extending financial services to underserved rural and semi-urban populations.

These organisations are governed by Acts of Parliament—the LIC Act 1956, General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Act 1972, the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970, the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980 and State Bank of India Act 1955. Their management structures, roles and appointment processes are clearly defined in these laws.

The issuance of new guidelines without any amendment

to the above governing Acts amounts to 'executive overreach', 'executive privatization' of leadership in public sectors financial institutions, and endangerment of financial sovereignty and obliteration of public trust enjoyed by the public sector. Allowing lateral entry from the private sector could convert public sector leadership roles into open market appointments, thereby dismantling the historic model of career-based succession and institutional continuity in public sector banks and insurance.

Work culture, management-union relationships, labour law practices, and trade union activities in private and public sectors are not the same, primarily driven by their core objectives. The public sector focuses on service, while the private sector aims for profit maximisation. This move will compromise the institutions' original purpose and regulatory frameworks and strike at the very ethos of nationalisation, which ensured that banking and insurance serve the public interest rather than private profit.

Public sector unions demand

greater job security, dignity of life, conducive working atmosphere, and decent wage while there is a wide wage gap in the private sector without much job security. In the past, deputation of IAS officers to public sector financial institutions has proved a botched experiment, owing to lack of domain expertise, internal antipathy.

Some argue that private banks are more efficient, but many private banks have collapsed and were rescued by public sector banks. Before nationalisation, from 1913 to 1968, 2132 banks were closed, liquidated, ceased operation or amalgamated. After nationalisation from 1969 to 2020, 25 private banks have failed which are rescued or taken over by public sector banks. In a recent example, YES Bank was bailed out by the State Bank of India in 2020.

The world has experienced many financial crises because of the collapse of private financial institutions, and governments around the world have spent trillions of dollars to bail them out. The glaring example is the global financial crisis of 2007-09.

Both public sector and private financial institutions have common problems which are not linked with leadership. The escalating NPAs and subsequent huge loan write offs coupled with rising banking frauds have affected both public sector and private banks. Hence, entry of private sector professionals into senior leadership positions in public sector banks and insurance companies will not solve any purpose.

Rather a conflict of interest will arise when private professionals in public sector financial institutions face a situation where their personal or financial interests, often stemming from their private work, could improperly influence their official duties and decisions.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

SPECTRUM

SOCIETY

Gender violence: A reflection of societal malaise

The scourge of atrocities against women continues to plague societies worldwide, leaving deep scars that transcend generations. Two authors, Mumtaz and Madhu, have poignantly captured the essence of this shameful phenomenon in their works. Mumtaz, focusing on mass abuse of women in Rwanda, Myanmar, and other ethnic conflict zones, sheds light on the trauma inflicted upon women of all ages, with effects that resonate across generations. Her writing is a searing indictment of the world’s apathy towards this issue.

The specifics of these atrocities are bone-chilling, and it’s disheartening that despite the attention given to this topic, little has been done to obviate the issue. The international community’s response has been inadequate, with GDP, economic growth, and sanctions dominating the agenda while women’s rights are relegated to the sidelines. The destruction of mothers, who are the nurturing force behind civilization, has far-reaching consequences that can destroy the very fabric of society.

Madhu’s work, focused on India, provides a grim reminder that this problem is not confined to conflict zones. The Indian scenario is particularly disturbing, with atrocities against women making headlines daily. The media’s sensationalism and TRP-driven debates often do more harm than good, creating a spectacle that further traumatizes the victims. Panel discussions, while well-intentioned, often lose sight of the larger issue, getting mired in rhetoric rather than meaningful action.

The Indian legal system, despite its best efforts, has struggled to address these issues effectively. The POC-SO Act, intended to protect children from sexual offences, has been criticized for its implementation, with many

cases highlighting the system’s inadequacies. The delay in investigation, abuse by investigative agencies, and the burdened courts have all contributed to the perpetuation of this problem.

A recent example that highlights the system’s flaws is the Bharatpur Police Station case, where an Army officer and his companion were subjected to police abuse. A commission was set up to investigate, but the report remains shrouded in secrecy, and the investigation has been dragging on for over a year. This case exemplifies the need for high honesty and integrity in law enforcement.

The issue of atrocities against women is deeply rooted in human psychology and societal norms. Education, particularly sex education, is crucial in shaping young minds and fostering a culture of respect. Policemen need to be trained to be human-sensitive, rather than being seen

as foes to the law-abiding and friends to the accused.

Each individual has the capacity for both good and evil; it’s the rationalization that sets us apart from those who commit atrocities. A thorough overhaul of our mindset is necessary to address this issue. We must learn from our mistakes and work towards creating a society that respects and values women.

In conclusion, the issue of atrocities on women is a reflection of societal malaise, requiring a multifaceted approach to address. Education, legal reform, and a shift in societal norms are essential steps towards creating a more just and equitable society. As we reflect on this issue, let us strive to create a world where women can live without fear, and their dignity is respected. The time for change is now.

The writer is a senior advocate.

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



Restorative justice

Sir, The Supreme Court’s recent call for government assistance to frame clear norms for compensating victims of wrongful arrest, prosecution, and conviction marks a crucial step toward restorative justice. The bench made this observation while overturning the conviction of a man who languished on death row for six years, underscoring a deep malaise in India’s criminal justice system. Time and again, the Court has acquitted death row convicts while censuring the dishonest police investigations and negligent prosecutions responsible for these grave injustices. Wrongful imprisonment is not merely justice denied—it is dignity obliterated, livelihoods shattered, and faith in the system irreparably eroded. The Law Commission had earlier recommended a structured compensation framework that considers the seriousness of the offence, the length of detention, health deterioration, reputational harm, loss of income, and legal expenses. Yet, India neither maintains a record of wrongful convictions nor ensures meaningful reparations. When compensation is awarded, it is typically meagre and tokenistic, leaving the victim to rebuild life from ruins. The Supreme Court’s intent is welcome, but it must translate into binding policy—because true justice is not mere acquittal, but restoration of dignity and trust in the rule of law..

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Frugality is a virtue

Sir, “Habit of saving is an education” is a famous quote attributed to American clergyman and writer Theodore Munger. Saving one’s own money is an art and, of course, mathematics. Wise utilisation of available money, without wasteful expenditure -- in other words “thrift” -- although not easy but is inevitable for personal security towards education, exigency and retirement to name only a few. Furthermore, increment in economic health of a nation is a huge plus. Money saving is financial prudence, and this concept must have been foremost in the mind of the officers of “World Society of Savings Bank”, during the International Savings Bank Congress, way back in 1924, when they announced the “World Thrift Day” or “World Savings Day” on 31 October. The focus is principally on people of developing countries.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

'SUBSIDY TRAP'

Free power slows solar shift

Subsidised electricity a barrier in adoption of solar power in Tamil Nadu, says study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Oct 30: The farmer-focused PM KUSUM-C scheme has no takers in Tamil Nadu since its introduction in 2019, while PM Surya Ghar has low uptake due to Tamil Nadu's subsidised and free electricity schemes, finds a study done by Puducherry-based think tank.

The study, titled "Advancing Distributed, Equitable Solar Energy in Tamil Nadu", aims to facilitate higher clean energy deployment in Tamil Nadu.

Done by the think tank, Auroville Consulting, the study focuses specifically on leveraging distributed solar energy (DERs), particularly rooftop solar and solar for agriculture, in Tamil Nadu.

The researchers have found out that as of July 2025, Tamil Nadu is yet to see any adoption of progress under PM KUSUM-C, or 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan' scheme.

Incidentally, the progress under the scheme has been low nationwide -- only about 14.7 per cent of the target has been achieved as of July 2025, finds the report.

PM KUSUM-C, which was launched in March 2019 by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, aims to provide energy and water security to farmers while reducing environmental pollution.

Under the scheme, the central government offers subsidies of 30 per cent to 50 per cent for solar pumps or for the solar



TN'S ELECTRICITY SUBSIDY UP FROM ₹ 5,600CR IN 2014-15 TO OVER ₹16,000CR IN 2025-26

SUBSIDY INCLUDES 100 UNITS FREE FOR ALL DOMESTIC AND FREE/ LOW TARIFFS FOR SEVERAL SECTORS

CENTRAL GOVT SCHEME OFFERS ₹30,000 TO ₹78,000 PER KW SUBSIDY TO INSTALL SOLAR POWER

isation of existing grid-connected agricultural pumps.

Further, farmers can also install grid-connected solar power plants up to 2MW under the scheme on their barren/fallow land and sell electricity to local DISCOM at a tariff determined by state regulator.

According to the study, technically, PM KUSUM-C, is a win-win for farmers despite subsidies. If solar systems generate surplus power beyond on-farm needs, farmers could even receive direct payments by "exporting" excess power to the grid. However, the researchers found that the biggest barrier for PM KUSUM-C in Tamil Nadu is the energy meters.

"The scheme relied on the introduction of energy meters, while farm electricity consump-

tion is currently unmetered. This metering requirement was seen as a step toward re-introducing electricity charges for farmers, leading to strong opposition," stated the report.

This misconceived notion has even overruled the potential "export incentives" that the scheme offered, finds the study.

Free electricity offered by the state is also one of the reasons why PM Surya Ghar has low uptake in Tamil Nadu, according to the study. The central government scheme offers ₹30,000 to ₹78,000 per KW subsidy to residential households to install solar power.

"As per July, 2025 data, Tamil Nadu has received 99,244 applications, installation realisation of less than 40 per cent, covering 43,808 households, and 136.38 MW of commissioned capacity," states the report.

Tamil Nadu's electricity subsidy has increased from ₹5,600 crore in 2014-15 to over ₹16,000 crore in 2025-26, pointed out the report adding that most of this subsidy goes to domestic and agricultural users.

In Tamil Nadu, electricity subsidy includes 100 units free for all domestic and free/low tariffs for several sectors.

According to the report, Tamil Nadu's power sector is an example of the "subsidy trap", where a blend of tariff suppression, cross-subsidies, and fiscal bailouts sustains artificially low tariffs for priority groups.

"While this protects the poor and agricultural sector in the short term, the long-term impact is persistent losses for the power utility. These policies also undermine the business case for household rooftop solar, which cannot compete with highly subsidised grid tariffs," states the report.

The study also pointed out that despite having a technical rooftop solar potential estimated at over 60GW -- enough to meet approximately 47 per cent of its projected electricity demand by 2030-31 -- Tamil Nadu has realised less than 2 per cent of this potential as of mid-2025. Through their findings, the think tank suggests reforms such as 100 per cent subsidy under PM KUSUM-C, explicit targeting, direct benefit transfers, and dedicated rooftop solar programs for low-income households and marginal farmers as the way forward.

"This presents a unique opportunity for the state of Tamil Nadu to achieve multiple goals simultaneously, including social welfare, economic development, and environmental sustainability," conclude the researchers.

The think tank, Auroville Consulting, which pitches for sustainable urban and industrial development policies and ecologically friendly technologies, published the "white paper" in collaboration with World Resources Institute India (WRI), a global research organisation.

Jaipur IIT student humanises AI

The innovator builds world's first speech-to-speech AI Model that can sing, whisper, feel



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Oct 30: Jaipur-based 25-year-old founder Sparsh Agrawal has unveiled one of the first speech-to-speech foundational AI models that can sing, whisper, pause, and respond with emotional intelligence -- all developed without big-tech infrastructure or venture capital funding.

Launched under his start-up Pixa AI, Luna AI directly processes audio to generate human-like speech instead of converting it to text and back, resulting in faster, more expressive, and emotionally aware conversations.

The system's architecture allows it to whisper, modulate tone, and even sing -- creating an experience that feels more human than machine, Agarwal said.

He recently met with Union IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and got appreciation from industry leaders for his achievement.

"Where is India's AI? Every WhatsApp group, every conference hallway, every founder call asks the same question. Today, we're sharing the an-

I didn't have a re-search lab or a \$100 million runway. I borrowed GPUs, cloud credits, and even took on credit card debt to build Luna. This is proof that world-class technology can come from India -- built with resourcefulness, not just resources

SPARSH AGRAWAL | FOUNDER OF LUNA AI

swer. Meet Luna, world's first speech-to-speech foundational AI model to unify audio, music and speech," Agarwal posted on X after launching the model.

Benchmark results show Luna outperforming leading global systems such as OpenAI's GPT-4 TTS and ElevenLabs, with 50 per cent lower latency and greater naturalness in speech output.

Agarwal is an IIT-BHU graduate. His other teammates are Nitish Kartik, Apoorv Singh and Pratyush Kumar.

Backed by investors including Kunal Shah, Kunal Kapoor, and Nikhil Kamath, Pixa AI aims to make Luna the "voice layer" for global

entertainment, wellness, and automotive ecosystems.

Early demand has already emerged from automakers, gaming platforms, and consumer AI companies.

"While most voice models are built for customer support, Luna is built for emotion," Agrawal said. "It's not just about responding -- it's about feeling."

HCL co-founder Padma Bhushan awardee Ajai Chowdhry posted on X on this achievement. "Sparsh has created an amazing product. India's first!", Chowdhry said.

Sudarshan Kamath, a known figure in voice AI research and founder of small-est.ai, said, "Truly amazing deep tech founders building silently from India!" "We need to back more people like Sparsh who understand how AI works and are willing to think from first principles," he said.

Agarwal, the only solo founder selected from over 15,000 applicants to the WTFund, said Luna's creation is part of his mission to make India a hub for emotionally intelligent AI innovation.

Children skipping schools in TN

For a state long regarded as one of India's best performers in school retention, the new data has caused widespread concern



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Oct 30: Tamil Nadu has recorded a sharp increase in school dropout rates across all three key stages—primary (Classes 1–5), upper primary (6–8), and secondary (9–10)—for the academic year 2024–25, according to the latest Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) data released by the Union Ministry of Education Tuesday.

For a state long regarded as one of India's best performers in school retention, the new data has caused widespread concern. Dropout rates at the primary and upper primary levels have climbed from 0% last year to 2.7% and 2.8%, re-

spectively—the highest in the past five years.

At the secondary level, the rate rose from 7.7% in 2023–24 to 8.5% this year. Officials in the School Education Department said they would respond after reviewing the report in detail.

The figures mark a dramatic reversal for Tamil Nadu, which now trails its southern peers in primary education—Kerala (0.8%), Karnataka (0%), Andhra Pradesh (1.4%), and Telangana (0%) all perform better.

Nationally, Tamil Nadu ranks ninth from the bottom, far behind the average primary dropout rate of 0.3%. However, it continues to fare better than the national averages in upper

primary (3.5%) and secondary (11.5%) categories.

The data also point to a worrying trend of declining enrolment in government and aided schools and a corresponding rise in private school admissions.

Enrolment in Class 1 at government schools fell from 2.8 lakh in 2023–24 to 2.7 lakh this year, while government-aided schools saw a drop from 97,692 to 91,694. In contrast, private schools registered an increase, with Class 1 admissions rising from 5.17 lakh to 5.62 lakh.

Tamil Nadu currently has 57,935 schools catering to 1.25 crore students and employing 5.49 lakh teachers. The pupil-teacher ratio improved slightly from 24 to 23, but the number of single-teacher schools rose sharply from 2,758 to 3,671, serving over 95,000 students. While the UDISE+ report noted that nearly 98% of government schools have functional toilets, activists argue that infrastructure alone cannot stem dropout rates.



Vice President CP Radhakrishnan pays tribute to freedom fighter Muthuramalinga Thevar on his 63rd guru pooja and 118th jayanthi, in Ramanathapuram district, Tamil Nadu, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

From ₹15cr horse to ₹23cr buffalo: Showstoppers at Pushkar Fair

THE FAIR IS A CELEBRATION OF RAJASTHAN'S ANIMAL HUSBANDRY TRADITIONS

AGENCIES

Jaipur, Oct 30: The annual Pushkar Cattle Fair in Rajasthan is known to showcase some of India's most expensive livestock. This year, the fair is playing host to thousands of animals. Among them, a ₹15-crore horse and a ₹23-crore buffalo have attracted traders, tourists, and curious visitors from across India and abroad.

Competitions like Best Milk Producer, Best Horse Breed, and Best-Dressed Camel are among the highlights. Gir cows, known for producing A2 milk, have their own special category, while the traditional Nagaur Bull Competition continues to draw huge crowds.

The fair, which began October 23 and runs until November 7, has seen massive participation this year, with 3,021 ani-



mals registered so far. **Shahbaz: ₹15 crore horse**

Shahbaz, a two-and-a-half-year-old horse from Chandigarh, owned by Gary Gill, is worth ₹15 crore. The young stallion, needless to say, is one of the marquee animals at the fair this year.

"Shahbaz, a two-and-a-half-

year-old horse, has won multiple shows and belongs to a prestigious lineage," Gill said. "His covering fee is ₹2 lakh, and his asking price is ₹15 crore. Offers of up to ₹9 crore have been received."

The horse's breeding cost alone is ₹2 lakh, and visitors have been lining up to catch a glimpse of the

prized Marwari breed. **Anmol: ₹23 crore buffalo**

Anmol, a buffalo from Rajasthan, has left everyone speechless. According to its owner, Anmol's value is priced at ₹23 crore. The owner claims the buffalo is raised like royalty.

"He is given special food every day which includes milk,

desi ghee and dry fruits," the owner said.

Badal: ₹11 crore champion horse

Another superstar at the Pushkar fair is Badal, a veteran stallion already father to 285 colts. It's his third time at the fair. His owner has received offers of up to ₹11 crore but has refused to sell him.

Rana: ₹25 lakh buffalo

Rana, a buffalo from Ujjain priced at ₹25 lakh, has become a new attraction at the Pushkar Fair. The animal weighs around 600 kg and is 8 feet long and 5.5 feet tall.

Its owner said, "This buffalo, which is about three and a half years old, requires food worth up to ₹1,500 per day. The food includes gram flour, eggs, gram flour, oil, milk, ghee and liver tonic," as per reports.

Veterinary doctors and officials are available round the clock at the fairgrounds.

REVERSE STERILISATION

After heartbreak, Jhalawar tragedy moms hope to heal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kota (Rajasthan), Oct 30: Binti Bai and Raju Bai, two mothers who lost their children in the tragic collapse of a school in Piplodi, Jhalawar, are set to regain their motherhood through recanalisation surgery.

Both women had undergone sterilisation under the family welfare initiative before the tragedy July 25 this year, when a portion of a government school in Rajasthan's Jhalawar district collapsed just as the students were assembling for morning prayers, killing seven children and leaving 28 injured, some of them critically.

Raju Bai, whose son Kartik (10) died in the tragedy, had her sterilisation reversal surgery last month. Meanwhile, Binti Bai, who lost her son Kanha

(7) and daughter Meena (10) in the incident, underwent the surgery Wednesday.

"The loss of their children left both mothers in profound shock and depression after the tragedy. We provided them with counselling from our psychologists and encouraged them to regain motherhood through recanalisation," said Dr Sajid Khan, Chief Medical and Health Officer (CMHO) of Jhalawar.

"Recanalisation is performed in the rarest of the rare cases, and we chose to conduct it in Jhalawar to offer hope to the families affected by the tragedy," he explained further.

At the direction of the district collector, both women will receive access to the IVF facilities available in Kota and Jaipur, Dr Khan noted.

of the day
Quote

So, I hope that more and more of you will also come into politics, more and more of you will lead, more and more of you will show the men how much women can do when we stand strong and when we recognise our own inner strength



PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS MP

Before 2005, Bihar was living in an era of darkness, but now there is light all around. Bihar has progressed from being a BIMARU state to a leading state, and it was made possible through people's power to vote



JP NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

Strict laws have been enacted in the state to ensure the safety of cows. There is a provision for ten years of imprisonment for cow slaughter and seven years for cow smuggling



NAYAB SINGH SAINI | HARYANA CM

SHORT TAKES

Four killed as van overturns

Ranchi: Four people were killed and 12 others injured as a passenger van overturned following a tyre burst in Jharkhand's Ranchi district Thursday, police said. The incident happened at Gosaindih in the Bundu police station area, 45 km from the state capital, around 2 pm, they said. Sixteen people were travelling in the van to the 'Adivasi Jan Akrosh' rally organised by various tribal groups in Tau ground when the accident happened, they added.

'Montha' to bring rain in parts of WB

Kolkata: Cyclone 'Montha', which has gradually weakened into a well-marked low-pressure area, will bring heavy rain in some districts of West Bengal till Saturday, the IMD said. The weather system, which is situated over south Chhattisgarh, is likely to move northwards towards east Madhya Pradesh and weaken further, the India Meteorological Department said in a bulletin.

India, UAE to boost air force cooperation

New Delhi: India and the UAE Thursday discussed ways to strengthen air force cooperation through participation in exercises, air shows and defence exhibitions. The Indian defence ministry said this post on X and also shared some photos. Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh met Major General Staff Pilot Rashed Mohammed Abdullah Al Shamsi, Commander UAE Air Force & Air Defence today in New Delhi, it said.

7 held for illegal sand extraction

Panaji: The Goa police Thursday arrested seven persons, including two canoe owners, for allegedly illegally extracting sand from the Terekhol river, days after two labourers associated with them were injured in firing, officials said.

2 killed as crane falls on truck

Dhar (MP): Two persons were killed after a crane engaged in railway bridge construction overturned and fell on a truck in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar district Thursday, police said. The incident took place near Sagour town, located 48 km from the district headquarters, close to Pithampur industrial area, they said.



Although I have no evidence, I believe Netaji Subash Chandra Bose did not die in that plane crash only because freedom fighter Pasumpon Muthuramalinga Thevar, a staunch follower of Netaji, had said it. He said 'Netaji did not die in that plane crash, and I met him'

C P RADHAKRISHNAN | VICE PRESIDENT

INDIA FULLY COMMITTED TO AFGHAN'S SOVEREIGNTY

India Thursday threw its weight behind Afghanistan in the face of its border conflict with Pakistan and said Islamabad's efforts to "practice" cross-border terrorism with "impunity" is unacceptable to its neighbours



Shimla court gives nod to demolish Sanjauli mosque

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Oct 30: The district court here Thursday upheld the municipal commissioner court's decision to demolish the entire structure of Sanjauli mosque, rejecting a plea by the Himachal Pradesh Waqf Board and the Sanjauli Mosque Committee.

A court order to demolish three floors of the mosque was being implemented by authorities at the mosque. The Sanjauli Mosque Committee, however, challenged a May 3 order by the commissioner's court that ordered the demolition of the remaining two floors of the five-storey structure in Sanjauli locality, Shimla.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Yajuvinder Singh Thursday rejected the petitions seeking a stay on the commissioner's court's decision.

The court directed to demolish the remaining two floors of the mosque, saying the Waqf Board and the mosque committee were unable to provide valid documents to support their plea, according to Jagat Pal, an advocate representing locals.

Muhammad Latif of the Sanjauli Mosque Committee said they will now move the high court against the decision and will also approach the Supreme Court if required.

On May 3, the commissioner's court had directed the Sanjauli Mosque Committee and the Himachal Pradesh Waqf Board to demolish the remaining two floors of the mosque, saying the Waqf Board failed to provide records regarding the ownership of the land.

In October 5, 2024, the commissioner's court had directed the Sanjauli Mosque Committee and the Waqf Board to raze the top three floors of the five-storey mosque, which were found illegal.

Some demolition work has been carried out in the top three floors. The mosque committee had itself offered to demolish the top three floors but has contested the other two floors.

Delhi gasps for breath as toxic haze engulfs city

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: A blanket of haze shrouded the national capital Thursday, with people complaining of eye irritation and cough, as air quality stood close to the "severe" level. Experts blamed meteorological conditions that trap pollutants near the surface for the rise in the pollution level.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the haze is expected to persist during early morning and late evening hours through the week, as particulate matter continues to accumulate near ground level.

Delhi, which has been witnessing a fall in air quality since Diwali, recorded 'very poor' air quality with an AQI of 373, a sharp rise from 279 a day earlier. Smog significantly reduced visibility, with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) recording PM 2.5 levels at 184.4 and PM 10 at 301.9.

Out of the 38 monitoring stations in the city, 37 recorded "very poor" air quality with readings above 300, the CPCB said. Vivek Vihar (426), Anand Vihar (415), Ashok Vihar (414), Bawana (411), Wazirpur (419) and Sonia Vihar (406) saw "severe" category air quality.

In the NCR region, Noida recorded an AQI of 372, Ghaziabad 364, Greater Noida 330, Gurugram 248 and Faridabad 166. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 to 100 'satisfactory', 101 to 200 'moderate', 201 to 300 'poor', 301 to 400 'very poor' and 401 to 500 'severe', according to the CPCB classification.

Experts said the yellowish smoke enveloping the city is smog -- a mixture of fog and pollutants that reduces visibility and poses serious health risks, especially for vulnerable groups.

According to the IMD's Decision Support System, Delhi's



Doctors at city hospitals say they have been receiving a rising number of patients with complaints of cough, breathlessness, chest tightness and nasal congestion

transport sector contributed around 15.9 per cent to PM2.5 levels, while stubble burning accounted for about 6 per cent and emissions from Delhi residents around 4 per cent.

Neighbouring cities such as Ghaziabad and Noida contributed 10 and 6 per cent to the pollution, respectively, while other regional sources together added over 22 per cent.

Satellite data for October 29 detected 283 farm fire incidents in Punjab and 10 in Haryana, indicating a continued impact of stubble burning on Delhi's worsening air quality.

Weather experts attributed the rise in pollution to meteorological conditions that trap pollutants near the surface.

The Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi reported that the city's ventilation index -- a measure of the atmosphere's ability to disperse pollutants -- remained below the favourable level of 6,000 m²/s.

Weak winds under 10 kmph and high humidity prevented pollutants from dispersing, resulting in a hazy sky.

At 7.30 am, the IMD record-

ed a visibility of 1,000 metres at Palam and 800 metres at Safdarjung, both reporting calm wind conditions.

Doctors at city hospitals say they have been receiving a rising number of patients with complaints of cough, breathlessness, chest tightness and nasal congestion.

According to Dr Vivek Nangia, the vice-chairman and head of pulmonology at the Max Super Speciality Hospital in Saket, all the patients who visited the facility Thursday were complaining that their symptoms had worsened since Diwali.

Delhi's maximum temperature settled at 27 degrees Celsius, two notches below normal, while the minimum stood at 20.1 degrees Celsius -- four notches above the seasonal average. Humidity at 5.30 pm was recorded at 75 per cent.

The weather department has forecast shallow fog Friday, with the maximum and minimum temperatures expected to hover around 30 and 18 degrees Celsius, respectively.



Devotees take part in 14 Kosi Parikrama, a pilgrimage that involves a 42-kilometer circumambulation of the city, culminating at Ram's Paudi, amid rainfall, in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

Grieving father's viral post leads to cops' suspension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Oct 30: A police sub-inspector and a constable have been suspended after a grieving father's social media post about facing harassment and corruption went viral.

Sivakumar K, a retired chief financial officer of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), shared his harrowing experience following the death of his 34-year-old daughter from a brain haemorrhage in September, in a now-deleted LinkedIn post.

In the now-deleted post, Sivakumar had alleged that he was

forced to pay bribe at every stage, for an ambulance, for an FIR copy, at the cremation, and for the death certificate (to corporation staff).

He had levelled allegations against the officer and a personnel at the Bellandur Police station for demanding bribes and showing arrogance. "I had money I paid, what will the poor do?" he asked in the post.

Expressing anguish over the Shivakumar's experience, many have sought action by tagging posts on 'X' to the accounts of Bengaluru city police and Deputy Commissioner of Police Whitefield.



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

SNIPPETS

Days ahead of Bihar polls Jan Suraaj Party supporter found dead

Patna: Amid heightened political campaign in Bihar polls, a Jan Suraaj Party supporter was found dead under mysterious circumstances in Patna's Mokama area Thursday, police said. Locals, however, claimed that the Jan Suraaj activist was shot dead during a clash between supporters of two parties. "Police received information that a supporter of a candidate died during the campaign in the Mokama Taal area. The exact cause of the incident is not known yet, as the body has not been handed over to the police," Patna SSP Kartikeya K Sharma told PTI. Dular Chand Yadav died while he was campaigning for Jan Suraaj Party's candidate Piyush Priyadarshi, another officer said.

95-year-old man dies by suicide; family blames fear over SIR

Kolkata: A 95-year-old man from West Bengal's Paschim Medinipur district allegedly died by suicide in Birbhum after being reportedly distressed over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, his family claimed Thursday. This is the second such death reported in West Bengal in the past 72 hours, following a similar incident at Panihati near Kolkata. A farmer in Cooch Behar, who tried to end his life, is currently admitted to the hospital. According to police, the deceased, identified as Kshitish Majumdar, was found hanging at his daughter's residence in Illambazar area of Birbhum district Wednesday night.

RSS route march: KSAT stays PDO's suspension

Bangalore: The Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal (KSAT) has stayed the "arbitrary suspension" of a Panchayat Development Officer (PDO) for taking part in an RSS route march, BJP MP Tejasvi Surya said Thursday. The Bangalore South MP, who is also a lawyer by profession, said his law office had challenged the suspension of Lunganugur PDO Praveen Kumar in Raichur district. "My law office had challenged the arbitrary suspension of PDO Praveen Kumar K P for participating in the RSS Pathasanchalana in Lunganugur, Raichur, before the Hon'ble Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal," Surya said in a post on 'X'.

Sivakumar K, a retired chief financial officer of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), shared his harrowing experience following the death of his 34-year-old daughter from a brain haemorrhage in September, in a now-deleted LinkedIn post

In the now-deleted post, Sivakumar had alleged that he was forced to pay bribe at every stage, for an ambulance, for an FIR copy, at the cremation, and for the death certificate (to corporation staff)

The DCP's office replied on the official 'X' account, assuring that the matter will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate legal action will be initiated against the individuals involved.

On Thursday, the DCP office posted, "In connection with the incident mentioned in Sivakumar's tweet (post), one PSI and one Police Constable of Bellandur Police Station have been immediately suspended."

"The Police Department will not tolerate any such indecent or inappropriate behaviour under any circumstances," it added.

of the day

quote

The United States is prepared to offer immediate humanitarian aid to people of Cuba who were affected by Hurricane Melissa

MARCO RUBIO | US SECRETARY OF STATE



In light of the changing security conditions in Europe, we must leave behind problems in the procurement of defence industry products and focus on joint projects

TAYYIP ERDOGAN | PRESIDENT, TURKEY



An airline in Greece will start running direct flights from the European Union country to Baghdad before the end of the year

GIORGOS GERAPETritis | FOREIGN MINISTER, GREECE



SHORT TAKES

17 stranded Indian tourists rescued

Kathmandu: Security personnel Thursday rescued 72 trekkers, including 17 Indian tourists, who were stranded at Annapurna Base Camp in Nepal's Myagdi due to continuous snowfall. All the foreign tourists who reached the Annapurna Base camp were Indian nationals, according to Armed Police Force (APF) sources. The tourists were stranded after heavy snow blocked trekking routes along the Dhaulagiri Circuit trail, known as the "Hidden Valley", which connects Myagdi and Mustang districts, according to APF sources. A rescue team was deployed from Mustang to assist those stuck in the mountain region. They have been rescued from 4,190 metres and safely brought down to Annapurna Rural Municipality, the APF sources said.

Italy approves justice reform

Rome: Italy's Senate approved sweeping judicial reform Thursday, advancing Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's flagship constitutional overhaul despite fierce opposition from magistrates and the centre-left opposition. The real test lies ahead, with the measure facing a nationwide referendum expected next spring in order to become law. Recent polls show Italians split on a contentious issue that has roiled domestic politics for decades. The Senate vote came against a background of heightened tensions between Meloni's coalition and the judiciary after the state auditors court refused to authorise a government plan Wednesday to build a bridge connecting Sicily to the mainland.

Louvre heist: 5 more held

Paris: Police have arrested five more suspects linked to the theft of treasures worth \$102 million from the Louvre Museum's Apollo gallery, the Paris prosecutor said Thursday, expressing hope the latest developments will help them find the jewels. Four hooded thieves made off with their booty during opening hours on the morning of October 19, exposing security lapses at the world's most-visited museum in a brazen daylight heist. Paris prosecutor Laure Beccau told radio station RTL Thursday the latest suspects had been arrested in coordinated raids in Paris and its northern suburbs Wednesday evening. One of them was identified through DNA traces left at the crime scene but it was not clear if all were suspected of direct involvement.

Trump orders US nuclear testing

Trump appeared to be sending a message to both Xi, who has more than doubled China's nuclear warhead arsenal over the past five years, and to Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has tested two new nuclear-powered weapons over recent days

REUTERS

Busan, South Korea, Oct 30: President Donald Trump ordered the US military Thursday to immediately resume testing nuclear weapons after a gap of 33 years, minutes before beginning a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping. Trump made the surprise announcement on Truth Social while he was aboard his Marine One helicopter flying to meet Xi for a trade-negotiating session in Busan, South Korea. He said he was instructing the Pentagon to test the US nuclear arsenal on an "equal basis" with other nuclear powers. "Because of other countries testing programs, I have instructed the Department of War to start testing our Nuclear Weapons on an equal basis. That process will begin immediately," Trump posted. "Russia is second, and China is a distant third, but will be even within 5 years." Trump appeared to be sending a message to both Xi, who has more than doubled China's nuclear warhead arsenal over the past five years, and to Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has tested two new nuclear-powered weapons over recent days. Russia - which tested a new nuclear-powered cruise missile October 21, held nuclear readiness drills October 22 and tested a new nuclear-powered autonomous torpedo October 28 - said it hoped Trump had been properly informed that Moscow had not tested a nuclear weapon on itself. "President Trump mentioned in his statement that other countries are engaged in testing nuclear weapons. Until now, we didn't know that anyone was testing," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. Putin, who commands the world's biggest arsenal of nuclear warheads, has repeatedly said that if any country tests a nuclear weapon then Russia will do so too. No nuclear power - other than North Korea most recently in 2017 - has carried out explosive nuclear testing in over 25 years. Post-Soviet Russia has

never tested. The Soviet Union last tested in 1990, the US last tested in 1992 and China in 1996. China's Foreign Ministry called for the US to abide by its commitment to a moratorium on nuclear testing and uphold the global strategic balance and stability.

NUCLEAR TESTING SITES TO BE DETERMINED LATER Later, on his way back to Washington, Trump said testing was needed to ensure the US keeps up with rival nuclear powers.



Kremlin reacts cautiously to Trump's nuclear remarks **Russia's recent nuclear tests include Poseidon super torpedo** **Chinese arsenal expected to exceed 1,000 by 2030, CSIS says**

"With others doing testing, I think it's appropriate that we do also," Trump said on board Air Force One, adding that nuclear test sites would be determined later. Asked whether the world was entering a more risky phase around nuclear weapons, Trump dismissed the threat, saying US stocks were "well locked up" before adding that he would welcome denuclearisation. "I'd like to see a denuclearisation because we have so many and Russia's second and Chi-

SNIPPETS

Hamas to hand over bodies of two Israeli hostages

Cairo/Gaza: Palestinian militant group Hamas said it will hand over two bodies of deceased Israeli hostages Thursday, a day after the tenuous Gaza ceasefire was shaken by a series of deadly Israeli strikes across the enclave. The Israeli military said the Red Cross had received two coffins of deceased hostages from Hamas in Gaza and was en route to hand them over to Israeli forces. The remains will then be transported to Israel for identification and burial. Under the ceasefire accord, Hamas released all living hostages in return for nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners and wartime detainees, while Israel pulled back its troops, halted its offensive and increased aid into the enclave. Hamas also agreed to hand over the remains of all 28 dead hostages in exchange for 360 Palestinian militants killed in the war. Up to Thursday it had handed over 15 bodies.



Russia strikes Ukraine energy grid, killing 3



two men were killed in the southeastern industrial city of Zaporizhzhia, and a seven-year-old girl from the central Vinnystia region died in hospital from injuries sustained in the attacks.

Kyiv: Russia launched a barrage of drones and missiles at Ukraine's energy infrastructure overnight, forcing nationwide power restrictions and killing three people, including a seven-year-old girl, officials said Thursday. Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko accused Moscow of targeting Ukrainian people and power supplies as the cold winter months approached. "Its goal is to plunge Ukraine into darkness. Ours is to preserve the light," Svyrydenko said on the Telegram app. "To stop the terror, we need more air defence systems, tougher sanctions, and maximum pressure on the aggressor." Regional officials said

More protests in Tanzania's main city after chaotic election

Nairobi (Kenya): Police in Tanzania fired tear gas and gunshots Thursday to disperse groups of protesters who returned to the streets a day after a general election marred by violent demonstrations, witnesses said. Protests broke out in commercial capital Dar es Salaam and other cities during the vote Wednesday over the exclusion of President Samia Suluhu Hassan's two biggest challengers from the presidential race, as well as what demonstrators say is increasing government repression. Police ordered an overnight curfew in Dar es Salaam, a city of more than seven million people, after government offices and other buildings were set ablaze. Internet access, disrupted during the election, appeared to be returning intermittently Thursday.



Hurricane Melissa smashes through Caribbean

REUTERS

Port-Au-Prince/Kingston/Havana, Oct 30: Hurricane Melissa smashed through the northern Caribbean and was seen picking up speed as it churned across open ocean towards Bermuda Thursday, leaving a trail of high winds and destruction from Jamaica to Cuba and Haiti in its wake. People across the Bahamas and nearby Turks and Caicos hunkered down as the passing storm pummelled them with dangerous gusts and rain. Around 600 miles (970 km) northeast of the storm's last position, Bermudans prepared for its approach, expected by the evening. Authorities across the region, struggling to keep track of the devastation, confirmed 25 deaths in Haiti - 10 of them children - and four in Jamaica. As of 8:00 am Thursday, Me-

lissa was packing winds of close to 105 miles per hour (165 kph), according to the US National Hurricane Center, downgraded from its peak to a Category 2 hurricane.

WADING BAREFOOT THROUGH MUD

It was expected to keep accelerating northeastward and "pass to the northwest of Bermuda" later Thursday, before likely weakening Friday, the Florida-based forecaster said. Bermuda will close its causeway Thursday night and all schools and ferries Friday among other measures "out of an abundance of caution," National Security Minister Michael Weeks said in a statement. "I implore all residents to remain vigilant while we navigate another natural threat to our way of life," he said. People should check on their neigh-



bours and stay off roads until further notice, he added. Melissa struck Jamaica Tuesday as the strongest-ever hurricane to directly hit its shores, with sustained winds of 185 mph, far above the minimum strength for a Category 5, the strongest classification for hurricanes.

Russia continues its systematic energy terror – striking at the lives, dignity, and warmth of Ukrainians on the eve of winter. Its goal is to plunge Ukraine into darkness; ours is to keep the light on

YULIA SVYRYDENKO | PRIME MINISTER, UKRAINE



CHINA AIMS MOON LANDING 2030

China said Thursday it's on track to land astronauts on the moon by 2030 as it introduced the next crew of astronauts who will head to its space station as part of the country's ambitious plans to be a leader in space exploration



THAI-CAMBODIA CONFLICT

Xi denies Trump's claim of China role

REUTERS

Beijing, Oct 30: Chinese President Xi Jinping Thursday refuted his US counterpart Donald Trump's claims at their summit meeting in Busan that China was not involved in establishing peace between Cambodia and Thailand. At the much-publicised summit, Xi said that he appreciated Trump's "great contribution to the recent conclusion of the Gaza ceasefire agreement". However, Xi rebutted Trump's assertion that China was not involved in establishing peace between Cambodia and Thailand. Xi told Trump that Beijing had been helping the two Southeast Asian neighbours to settle their border dispute "in our own way", the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported. Xi's assertion outlines Beijing's redlines as China too seeks to play a dominant role in Southeast Asia, where it has established strong security and trade links with countries of the region, including Thailand and Cambodia. During the height of the Thailand-Cambodia confrontation, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held closed consultations to persuade the two countries to end their conflict.

Dutch centrist 'confident' as far-right suffers setback

REUTERS

The Hague, Oct 30: Dutch centrist leader Rob Jetten said he was "very confident" of being able to put together a government after his party's strong showing in parliamentary elections that saw Geert Wilders' anti-Islam Freedom Party lose ground. With most of the votes counted from Wednesday's election, which was seen as a test of the far right's strength in Europe, Jetten's D66 and Wilders' PVV were tied Thursday, with both projected to take 26 seats in the 150-seat lower house of parliament. That was a sharp drop for Wilders' party, which lost over a quarter of its seats in two years, stemming from a poor performance in its first attempt at government and growing competition on the right. D66 tripled its score. Major mainstream parties have ruled out governing with Wilders this time after he brought down the last coalition, which was led by his own party. This leaves him no viable path to a majority, unlike D66's young leader Jetten - who will still need to clinch the support of several other parties.



Dutch election seen as test of support for far right in Europe **Centrist D66 and far-right PVV tied for first spot** **Mainstream parties have ruled out a coalition with PVV** **Talks to form a government could take months**

JETTEN 'VERY CONFIDENT' ON COALITION

At 38, Jetten would be the Netherlands' youngest, and first openly gay, prime min-

ister. The election delivered a "very strong message form Dutch voters that they want positive political powers in the center to work together and deliver for all the people in the Netherlands," he said. With polished messaging and a surge in advertising spending, Jetten moved beyond his D66 party's traditional themes of climate change and education, plunging into the divisive topics of immigration and a housing crisis. In the process he won over some voters who had previously looked to right-wing parties.

read the front page headline Thursday's Jamaica Observer newspaper.

EVACUATIONS AND FLOODS

Melissa was the Caribbean's third-most intense recorded hurricane, as well as its slowest-moving, which made it particularly destructive, AccuWeather said. Across the Bahamas archipelago, the government flew out nearly 1,500 people as the storm approached, in what it called one of its largest evacuation operations. High winds shook palm trees and whipped up waves at a resort near George Town, video showed Wednesday. The storm did not directly

hit Haiti, the Caribbean's most populous nation, but lashed it with days of rain. Authorities reported at least 25 deaths, largely due to floods in Petit-Goave, a coastal town 64 km west of the capital where a river burst its banks. At least 10 children were killed and 12 people are missing there, Haiti's disaster management agency said, adding that more than 1,000 homes have been flooded nationwide and nearly 12,000 people moved into emergency shelters. In Cuba, at least 241 communities remained isolated and without communications Wednesday following the storm's passage across Santiago province, according to preliminary media reports, affecting as many as 140,000 residents.

Forecasters say Melissa will accelerate across open ocean **Storm expected to pass northwest of Bermuda** **At least 25 people dead in Haiti, four in Jamaica**

of the day

quote

To ensure better returns, the government will promote integrated farming, encouraging farmers to focus on allied activities like poultry and dairying alongside agriculture

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | AGRICULTURE MINISTER

India's shipping power is expanding across coasts and rivers. Indian-flagged vessels increased from 1,205 to 1,549, and fleet gross tonnage grew from 10 MGT to 13.52 MGT. Coastal shipping cargo nearly doubled from 87 to 165 MMT

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER, INDIA

Gold prices traded with mild gains Thursday. The sentiment is driven after US President Donald Trump hinted at allowing nuclear weapons testing amid other nations pushing for nuclear tests, which kept the risk meter elevated

JATEEN TRIVEDI | VP RESEARCH ANALYST, LKP SECURITIES

SHORT TAKES

Aditya Birla profit up

New Delhi: Aditya Birla Capital Thursday reported 3 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at Rs 855 crore for the second quarter ended September 2025. The financial services arm of Aditya Birla Group earned a net profit of Rs 834 crore in the same quarter of the previous financial year.

Union Bank posts loss

Mumbai: State-run Union Bank of India Thursday reported a 10 per cent decline in September quarter profit at Rs 4,249 crore, driven by a decline in core income.

IEX profit up

New Delhi: The Indian Energy Exchange (IEX), Thursday posted nearly 14 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 123.34 crore for September quarter FY26, mainly on the back of higher revenues. The company had clocked a net profit of Rs 108.32 crore a year ago, a regulatory filing stated.

Swiggy's loss widens

New Delhi: Quick commerce firm Swiggy, Thursday reported widening of consolidated net loss to Rs 1,092 crore for the second quarter ended September 2025. The company had reported a net loss of Rs 626 crore for the year-ago period.

Canara Bank Q2 rises

New Delhi: State-owned Canara Bank Thursday reported 19 per cent increase in net profit at Rs 4,774 crore for the second quarter ended September on the back of decline in bad loans. The bank had earned a net profit of Rs 4,015 crore in the year-ago period.

Hyundai Motor net up

New Delhi: Hyundai Motor India Ltd Thursday reported a 14.3 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 1,572.26 crore in the second quarter ended September 30, 2025. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 1,375.47 crore in the second quarter last fiscal.



We await the same as on such a day the rupee will gain by 40-50 paise. Asian currencies were generally on the upside, and therefore, we expect the rupee to be bought against the dollar

ANIL KUMAR BHANSALI | TREASURY HEAD, FINREX
TREASURY ADVISORS LLP

Sensex tanks 593 points

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 30: Equity markets fell sharply Thursday, with the Sensex tumbling 592.67 points and the Nifty declining to 25,877.85 level, as fresh foreign fund outflows and uncertainty on the future course of rate action by the US Federal Reserve dampened investors' sentiment.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 592.67 points or 0.70 per cent to settle at 84,404.46. During the day, it dropped 684.48 points or 0.80 per cent to 84,312.65.

A total of 2,291 stocks declined while 1,876 advanced and 155 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The 50-share NSE Nifty tumbled 176.05 points or 0.68 per cent to 25,877.85.

From the Sensex firms, Bharati Airtel, Power Grid, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Bajaj Finance and Reliance Industries were among the major laggards.

However, Larsen & Toubro, Bharat Electronics, UltraTech Cement and Maruti were among the gainers.

"Equity benchmarks slipped Thursday as cautious commentary from the US Federal Reserve and renewed foreign fund outflows weighed on sentiment. The Fed's 25 bps rate cut was in line with expectations, but Chair Jerome Powell's indication of a pause in further easing dampened risk appetite, especially amid the ongoing US gov-



ernment shutdown," Gaurav Garg, Research Analyst, Lemonn Markets Desk, said.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,540.16 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) bought equities worth Rs 5,692.81 crore in the previous trade.

The BSE smallcap gauge dipped 0.06 per cent and midcap index ended unchanged.

BSE telecommunication tanked 2.52 per cent, teck (1.02 per cent), bankex (0.72 per cent), financial services (0.59 per cent) and BSE Focused IT (0.55 per cent). Energy, industrials, capital goods, oil & gas and realty ended higher.

In Asian markets, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index

settled lower while South Korea's Kospi and Japan's Nikkei 225 index ended in the positive territory.

Markets in Europe were trading lower. US markets ended on a mixed note, Wednesday.

Profit-taking has taken centre stage on the back of weak European and Asian cues, while investors also exercised caution after the US Fed chairman indicated that further rate cuts over next two months look unlikely, Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.59 per cent to \$64.54 a barrel.

Wednesday, the Sensex climbed 368.97 points or 0.44 per cent to settle at 84,997.13. The Nifty went up by 117.70 points or 0.45 per cent to 26,053.90.

ALPHABET REVENUE CROSSES \$100BN

Sundar Pichai, CEO and Director of Google's parent company Alphabet, has announced that the company has achieved its first \$100 billion quarter, fuelled by strong double-digit growth across all its verticals, including search, cloud and YouTube. During Alphabet's Q3 2025 earnings call, Pichai announced that the Gemini app has surpassed 650 million monthly active users, with queries increasing threefold since Q2



Samsung expands language support

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gurugram, Oct 30: Samsung Electronics Co, Ltd Thursday announced that its Galaxy AI platform now supports 22 languages, with the addition of Gujarati and Filipino.

The new language update began rolling out October 29, furthering Samsung's goal of making artificial intelligence more inclusive and accessible across the world.

With this expansion, Galaxy AI brings its powerful tools to even more users, helping people communicate and stay productive in their preferred languages.

The update allows users to download the new language packs directly from the Settings app.

Galaxy AI includes several smart features that make daily communication easier. The Live Translate feature enables real-time, two-way voice and text translation during phone calls, making cross-border conversations smoother.

The Interpreter tool instantly translates face-to-face talks on a split screen, useful while traveling, dining out, or asking for directions.

Other tools like Chat Assist, Note Assist, Transcript Assist, and Browsing Assist help users write, summarise, translate, and stay organised more efficiently.

These AI features are designed to feel natural and adapt to the unique ways people communicate in different regions.

China suspends export control on rare earth



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 30: China Thursday announced that it will suspend certain export restrictions, including export control on rare earth minerals, for one year.

The development came after US President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping agreed to ease trade tensions between the world's two largest economies.

Earlier, October 9, Beijing announced further controls on the export of rare-earth technologies and items, adding to existing regulations on the critical industry.

The export restrictions were a reaction to US tariffs that were about to take effect following the expiration of an interim trade agreement.

However, for a year, the restrictions will be lifted while the Chinese government reviews and improves certain plans. In a significant development, the US President said

that he and Xi Jinping have agreed on a one-year deal for the supply of crucial rare earth materials.

The announcement followed the two leaders' first face-to-face encounter in six years, which took place on the fringes of the 32nd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Busan, South Korea.

According to Trump, the agreement, which will be renewed yearly, marks a substantial improvement in the tense trade relationship between the two nations.

"All the rare earths have been settled, and that's for the world," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One after the meeting.

He added that he had also agreed to reduceentanyl-related tariffs on China from 20 per cent to 10 per cent, describing the meeting with Xi as "a 12 out of 10."

Trump said, "A lot of things we brought to finalisation," and praised the Chinese President as "a tremendous leader of a mighty country."

Indian travellers to soon pay via UPI in Malaysia

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bengaluru, Oct 30: In a big step towards taking India's digital payment innovation global, Razorpay, Thursday announced that Indian travellers will soon be able to make Unified payments interface (UPI) payments in Malaysia.

The move comes through Razorpay's Malaysian entity, Curlec, in partnership with NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), the international arm of the National Payments Corporation of India.

The collaboration, formalised at the Global Fintech Fest 2025, marks a major milestone in expanding UPI's acceptance beyond Indian borders.

With this integration, millions of Indian tourists visiting Malaysia will be able to make instant, secure payments to local businesses using their preferred UPI apps without needing international cards or worrying about currency exchange hassles.

In 2024, more than one million Indian tourists visited Malaysia and spent over Rs 110 billion, a sharp 71.7 per cent rise from the previous year.

The growing flow of travellers between the two nations highlights the need for simpler, cashless, and cost-efficient payment solutions.

The introduction of UPI in Malaysia is expected to make transactions more seamless, reduce foreign exchange costs, and benefit both travellers and local merchants.

UPI, India's flagship real-time payment system, has revolutionised the way Indians make transactions.

In September 2025 alone, it processed nearly 20 billion payments, offering instant and secure money transfers at an unprecedented scale.

By connecting to this robust ecosystem, Malaysian businesses can tap into a massive base of Indian travellers who trust and prefer UPI for their day-to-day payments.

Under the new arrangement, Malaysian merchants will be able to accept payments directly through Razorpay Curlec's platform, with settlements made in the local currency, ringgit (RM).

This will allow Indian users to pay instantly via their UPI-enabled apps, just like they do in India. Commenting on the development, Shashank Kumar, Managing Director and Co-founder of Razorpay, said, "UPI has totally changed the way India pays, showing what's possible when innovation and inclusion come together at scale."

BOI inaugurates new branch

Bhubaneswar: Bank of India (BOI), a premier Bank, has opened its new Branch in Balugaon. Bijoy Kumar Malik, Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone inaugurated the new Branch. This is the 86th Branch under Bhubaneswar Zone. Shyamal Kumar Das, Deputy Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone, Kailash Chandra Behera, Branch Manager, Balugaon Branch along with other dignitaries were present on this occasion. Speaking on this occasion, Zonal Manager Sri Malik said "Providing excellent service to the customers is the main objective of the Bank, and this Branch will help in providing quality banking services to the people of the locality, and make them aware about banking facilities."



Vedanta Aluminium empowers Kalahandi youth

Bhubaneswar: Vedanta Aluminium's skill development programme is transforming lives in Kalahandi, training over 800 youths from Bhawanipatna and Lanjigarh . Implemented in partnership with the Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) and NABARD, the initiative offers industry-aligned courses in hospitality, retail, and food & beverage services, ensuring strong job placement outcomes. So far, 75 per cent of trained candidates have secured employment across reputed organizations, while the latest batch of the Food and Beverage course achieved a 100 per cent placement rate. "Empowering youth through skill development is central to our vision for growth," said Pranab Kumar Bhattacharyya, CEO, Vedanta Alumina Business.



BUDGET 2026

Assocham suggests tax simplification

It also said there is an urgent need to provide a formal clarification on the precise meaning of the terms 'fraud', 'forgery', 'outright smuggling', and 'clandestine removal of excisable goods' within the context of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) certification

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: Industry body Assocham, Thursday proposed several recommendations, like tax simplification and rationalisation, for the forthcoming Union Budget to enhance ease of doing business and further boost investments in the country.

Representatives of the industry chamber met Revenue Secretary Arvind Shrivastava and submitted a pre-Budget memorandum, detailing suggestions

for direct and indirect taxes.

The body suggested the restoration of the concessional tax rate of 15 per cent for new manufacturing companies (as under section 115BAB under the ITA for companies incorporated up to March 2024).

"This will enable India to remain attractive for making fresh capital investment, provide a boost to the domestic economy and also encourage exports," Assocham said.

It has also proposed a loan waiver as a part of the resolution plan under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) to help the resolution process.



tion plan under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) to help the resolution process.

"Waiver of loan as a result of IBC process (by COC) should not be considered as an income in the hands of debtor as that

goes contrary to the purpose behind the IBC," it said,

Other recommendations relate to tax deduction at source, definition of associated enterprises, tax neutrality for fast-track demergers, and setting

up approved data centres.

On the indirect tax front, Assocham suggested the introduction of a comprehensive tax amnesty scheme under the Customs regime to provide an opportunity to taxpayers to clear past baggage and reduce the litigation burden.

"While such an amnesty scheme is requested for customs duties as a whole, there is an even stronger case for extending this relief to pre-GST additional duties of customs, viz Countervailing Duty (CVD) and Special Additional Duty (SAD), which have since been subsumed under the GST. Addressing disputes relating to these erstwhile," the chamber's memorandum said.

It further said the voluntary disclosure provision, introduced in the Budget 2025, has not yet been implemented due to pending changes in backend systems and the absence of supporting rules.

It also said there is an urgent need to provide a formal clarification on the precise meaning of the terms 'fraud', 'forgery', 'outright smuggling', and 'clandestine removal of excisable goods' within the context of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) certification.

The government has started the process for the presentation of the next Union Budget. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Budget in Parliament in February.

ON CUSP OF HISTORY

Jemimah plays innings of her life

Ton-up Rodrigues takes India to World Cup final after record chase against Australia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Navi Mumbai, Oct 30: A diminutive Jemimah Rodrigues stood tall on the biggest stage with the innings of her life as her unbeaten 127 off 134 balls sent India into their third Women's ODI World Cup final, halting the juggernaut of seven-time champions Australia with a record chase here Thursday.

Jemimah's arduous knock for only her third century and first in a World Cup was built along with a robust 167-run stand for the third wicket with skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (89 from 88 balls, 10x4s, 2x6s), which helped India to end the reigning champions Australia's 15-match unbeaten run in the competition across two editions.

Chasing a mammoth 339, Jemimah anchored the spirited response with an incredible 127 not out from 134 balls including 14 fours, as India scored 341/5 in 48.3 overs to win with five wickets and nine balls to spare. It was the highest ever chase in Women's ODIs.

Having lost knock-out games from winning positions several times in the past, India finally found a way to get over the line on this occasion. No wonder tears of sheer joy rolled down the eyes of skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and Rodrigues who did have all those heartbreaks at the back of their mind during the run chase.

In the middle as early as in the second over, Jemimah built her innings with utmost resolve of keeping it simple, finding boundaries regularly and not taking any risks.

Towards the end, an exhaust-



ed Jemimah kept slumping on her haunches to preserve whatever little energy she was left with, and thrived on cheers of a packed house here at the DY Patil Stadium to take the hosts one step closer to that elusive title.

Skipper Harmanpreet would have never imagined walking out to bat in front of a shell-shocked home crowd which was reeling in silence when the team's best batter Smriti Mandhana fell in the 10th over.

A first time winner of the tournament is assured as India will face South Africa in the final Sunday

At 59 for two inside the powerplay with their best batter (Mandhana) back in the hut, that was that moment where this team had botched up from win-

ning positions not too long ago.

But eventually, they did not. Harmanpreet (89 off 88) and Jemimah batted with purpose and at no stage of their third-wicket association did they look under stress with the asking rate.

A lightening quick outfield aided to their benefit and once well-settled, Harmanpreet launched one over cover off McGrath and another off Gardner. The dew also arrived late in the

Towards the end, I was just quoting a scripture from the Bible - to just stand still and that God will fight for me

JEMIMAH RODRIGUES

evening, making batting easier.

A pivotal moment arrived in the 33rd over when Jemimah was gifted a lifeline by the Australian captain Alyssa Healy when she was on 82, spilling a sitter when the batter got a leading edge off King while trying to sweep. Later on, she was given another lifeline on 106.

Earlier, Phoebe Litchfield's scintillating 119 and half-centuries from venerable Ellyse Perry (77) and Ashleigh Gardner (63) helped Australia set a 339-run target against India who were sloppy in the field.

If not for a tidy third spell of 3-0-9-2 in which Shree Charani (2/49) dismissed Beth Mooney (24) and an in-form Annabel Sutherland (3), Australia might have finished with far more than they managed.

Australia were bowled out for 338 with one ball left in their innings.

Brief Scores:

Australia 338 in 50 overs (Phoebe Litchfield 119, Ellyse Perry 77, Ashleigh Gardner 65; Deepti Sharma 2/73, Shree Charani 2/49) lost to India 341-5 in 48.3 overs (Jemimah Rodrigues 127 not out, Harmanpreet Kaur 89; Kim Garth 2/46)

YOUTH ASIAN GAMES

Athletes continue to bring glory



India's medal tally swells to 47 medals, including 13 golds, 17 silvers and 17 bronze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bahrain, Oct 30: India continued their impressive show at the Youth Asian Games, clinching four golds, two silvers and one bronze in boxing, along with three gold and two silver medals in beach wrestling here Thursday.

India's medal tally has swelled to 47 medals, including 13 golds, 17 silvers and 17 bronze. The boxers delivered a historic performance, finishing with the highest medal tally by any discipline in the Indian contingent as Khushi Chand (46kg), Ahaana Sharma (50kg), Chandrika Bhoreshi Pujari (54kg), and Anshika (+80kg) secured gold medals.

Khushi defeated China's Luo Jinxiu 4:1, displaying exceptional precision and control, while Ahaana followed with a first-round Referee Stopped Contest (RSC) win against Ma Jong Hyang of Korea.

Chandrika then secured gold with a commanding 5:0 decision over Uzbekistan's Muhammadova Kuminiso and Anshika added the fourth gold, while Harnoor Kaur (66kg) claimed silver after a hard-fought bout.

On the boys' side, Lanchenba Singh Moibungkhongbam (50kg) fought valiantly but narrowly missed gold, taking silver against Kazakhstan's Nurmakhan Zhumagali.

Earlier, Anant Deshmukh (66kg) clinched bronze, rounding off a stellar campaign for India's young boxers.

In beach wrestling, Sani Subhash Fulmali and Anjali won gold medals in the boys' and girls' 60kg and 55kg categories respectively, while Arjun Ruhil also finished on top in the boys' 90kg event.

Sujay Nagnath Tanpure (70kg) and Ravinder (80kg) settled for silver medals after losing their respective finals.

In the title bouts, Sani Subhash beat Iran's Amirali Domirkolaei 2-0, Anjali defeated Vietnam's Bui Ngoc Thao Thom 2-1, and Arjun overcame Iran's Mohammadmahdi Fottouhi in the 90kg category.

SHORT TAKES

Kiran stuns world No 13

Saarbrücken: India's Kiran George stunned world No.13 Toma Junior Popov of France to enter the men's singles quarterfinals of the \$475,000 Hylo Open Super 500 badminton tournament. World No 38 Kiran, son of former national champion George Thomas, produced a gritty performance to outwit eighth seed Popov 18-21, 21-18, 21-19 in a 69-minute thriller. The 25-year-old, who trains at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy, had last reached a Super 750 quarterfinal at the India Open in January. Earlier, Lakshya Sen and Rakshit Ramesh booked their berths in the men's and women's singles quarterfinals with contrasting victories.

India A take command

Bangalore: South Africa A resisted through a century-stand between Jordan Hermann and Zubayr Hamza, but India A spinners, led by Tanush Kotian, plucked wickets at regular intervals to keep the visitors to 299 for nine on the first day of the opening four-day match here Thursday. Hamza was not precisely happy with the call as was Hermann later with the umpire's leg-before decision in favour of off-spinner Kotian (4/83), the most impressive Indian bowler on show on this day.

Blow to Esports Olympics

Geneva: The IOC and Saudi Arabia have canceled their 12-year deal to host the video gaming Esports Olympics in Riyadh. The International Olympic Committee said Thursday they "mutually agreed that they will end their cooperation on the Olympic Esports Games." It is a rare failure for a Saudi-backed sports project that was a key part of the Vision 2030 program driven by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Bayern's European record

Munich: Harry Kane grabbed a double as Bayern Munich set a European record of 14 successive victories to start a season with their 4-1 win at Cologne in the German Cup second round Wednesday. Kane's first, an incredible curling strike on the turn, and a second-half header brought his tally to 22 goals in 14 games this season. Bayern's victory bettered the record of 13 wins to start a season in all competitions set by Fabio Capello's AC Milan in 1992-93 -- the previous best mark in Europe's top-five leagues.

CONQUERING UNCHARTED TERRITORY

Sindoor, Rakshikha put India on Pickleball map

AGENCIES

Florida, Oct 30: Sindoor Mittal, Vice Chairperson of Aava-da Group, has won the silver medal, while representing Team India in the Women's Open Doubles 5.0 category at the Pickleball World Cup 2025, Florida, USA, in partnership with Rakshikha Ravi.

Their stellar partnership at the championship, which brought together marquee players from across the globe, has placed India firmly on the international Pickleball map.

Speaking on the achievement, Sindoor Mittal said, "Pickleball is a sport that celebrates agility, strategy, determination and teamwork; qualities which are an integral part of our corporate philosophy at Aava-da. It is an incredible feeling to represent India on the world stage in an emerging sport like Pickleball and bring home a medal."

The Pickleball World Cup 2025 brought together leading players from across the globe, marking the sport's rapid rise in popularity and India's grow-



It is an incredible feeling to represent India on the world stage in an emerging sport like Pickleball and bring home a medal

SINDOOR NITTAL

ing presence on the world stage.

In a proud moment for Indian pickleball, 14-year-old Anushka Chhabria made history by winning the bronze medal in the Under-34 Women's Singles (3.5) category, becoming the

youngest Indian ever to stand on the World Cup podium.

Her achievement came just a day after her father, Vijay Chhabria, scripted history of his own. Vijay clinched India's first-ever gold medal at the Pickleball World Cup, dominating John Singleton 21-8 in the Men's Singles 35+ (3.5) final to open a new chapter for Indian pickleball on the global stage.

Thereafter, Nitten Kirrtane, the former Indian tennis ace, scripted a remarkable new chapter in his sporting journey by winning the Gold medal in the 50+ Men's Singles (5.0) category.

After washout, India head to Melbourne

Rain is also forecast for Friday in Melbourne but, without worrying about what's beyond their control, the visitors will look to pick up where they left off in the abandoned series opener

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Oct 30: Formidable India have their tails up as they head to the gargantuan MCG for the second T20I against Australia here Friday, thanks to the influx of young talent and the return to form of skipper Suryakumar Yadav.

The likes of Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma, and Shivam Dube arrived on Australian shores after having redefined the art of T20 batting with their relentless power-hitting, but the lack of big runs from their captain's blade has been a bit of dampener for the team in recent times.

Entering the opener of the five-match series under scru-

tiny, Suryakumar, however, roared back to form with a 24-ball 39, and his humongous 125-metre six off Josh Hazlewood will stay in memory for long.

However, rain had the last word in Canberra as the match was abandoned with India strongly placed at 97 for one after 9.4 overs, and both Suryakumar and Shubman Gill in the mood to decimate the Australian attack.

Going into the second match, what must have gladdened Indian hearts most was the return to form of Suryakumar, as the team continues on its World Cup path with its high-risk, high-reward approach implemented by head coach Gautam Gambhir.

Gambhir wants his team to



regularly go for totals in excess of 250, 260, and even if they end up getting bowled out for 120-130 in trying to do that and lose a few matches in the process, he wouldn't mind.

Their explosive batting in recent months is a clear indication that the batters have embraced Gambhir's philosophy,

months before the T20 World Cup gets underway in India and Sri Lanka, where the 'Men in Blue' will look to defend the title they won in the Americas last summer.

India didn't get to bowl in Canberra but as far as that department is concerned, they boast of Jasprit Bumrah's class

SNIPPETS

Dalwinder suspended for using prohibited substance

New Delhi: The International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) Thursday suspended 2017 national champion Dalwinder Singh for using prohibited substance morphine. Singh, who reached a career-high world singles ranking of 791 in April 2017, tested positive for morphine in March 2025 while competing in an ITF World Tennis Tour event in Chandigarh. "During the period of ineligibility, Singh is prohibited from playing in, coaching at, or attending any tennis event authorised or sanctioned by the members of the ITIA (ATP, ITF, WTA, Tennis Australia, Fédération Française de Tennis, Wimbledon and USTA) or any national association," ITIA said in a release. In line with precedent and TADP rules, a two-year suspension was proposed to the player, which was acceded to and became effective October 22, 2025. The period of ineligibility will end October 21, 2027.



Carlsen wins Clutch Chess Champions Showdown

Saint Louis: Magnus Carlsen emerges victorious in the Clutch Chess Champions Showdown, while reigning world champion Gukesh Dommaraju finished fourth. Carlsen defeated Gukesh twice and then also beat GM Fabiano Caruana twice to win the event and secure the \$120,000 first prize, all before his final match against GM Hikaru Nakamura.

He made two draws against Nakamura and earned another \$50,000 bonus in the end, for a total of \$170,000 over three days. Caruana finished second with 16.5 points, nine points behind Carlsen, while Nakamura was third with 14 points and Gukesh placed fourth with 10 points.



and Varun Chakravarthy's guile, with the likes of Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel forming a potent attack that can also defend a small total should the batters fail to fire.

They will, nevertheless, have their task cut out against big hitters Mitchell Marsh and Travis Head, who has troubled India in the past.

Australia's T20 template is pretty similar to the one adopted by the Indian team with focus primarily on playing attacking cricket irrespective of the match situation. In men like Head, Marsh, Marcus Stoinis, Tim David and Josh Inglis, they have the personnel to put up big totals or pull off tricky chases.

With pace ace Mitchell Starc retiring from T20Is and Pat Cummins recovering from an injury, the bowling looks a bit thin on experience and onus is on Hazlewood to lead the attack that comprises Xavier Bartlett, Matthew Kuhnemann, and Nathan Ellis among others.

TRAGEDY HITS AGAIN

Australian teen cricketer dies after getting hit in neck during training

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Oct 30: Ben Austin, a 17-year-old Australian cricketer, has died after being hit in the neck during a training session in Melbourne, evoking widespread grief and painful memories of the tragic passing of Phillip Hughes in 2014.

Austin was rushed to hospital in a critical condition after being struck in the neck and the head area by a ball while training for his club at Ferntree Gully in suburban Melbourne Tuesday.

Austin was facing bowlers in the nets ahead of a T20 match when the injury took place in front of his teammates.

He was put on ventilator after the incident but he succumbed to his injury.

The Ferntree Gully Cricket Club confirmed the player's death Thursday. "We are absolutely devastated by the passing of Ben, and the impacts of his death will be felt by all in our cricket community," the club said in a statement.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with his family – Jace, Tracey, Cooper and Zach, his extended family, his friends and to all of those who knew Ben and the joy that he brought."

He was wearing a helmet but not a neck guard, and the tragic incident is likely to trigger calls to make such protection mandatory at every level of the sport, like it is in top-flight cricket.

Back in November 2014, Australia player Hughes died in a Sydney hospital at the age of 25, two days after being hit near the ear by a ball while batting for South Australia against New South Wales in a first-class match.

