

RASHMIKA'S INSIGHT

Rashmika Mandanna shares introspective take on the deeper, authentic meaning of feminine energy

| P2

SHOOTING STREAK

Continuing with her splendid debut run, Mahit Sandhu clinches her fourth medal at the Summer Deaflympics

| P12



FOR A CAUSE

Animal lovers hold placards during a protest in solidarity with stray dogs at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

Atomic Energy Bill to be tabled in Parl winter session

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: A Bill seeking to open up the civil nuclear sector for private players is among the 10 new proposed legislations listed by the government for introduction in the winter session of Parliament, beginning December 1.

Besides the crucial The Atomic Energy Bill, 2025, which seeks to govern the use and regulation of atomic energy in India, the Higher Education Commission of India Bill is also on the agenda.

Among other Bills listed are The National Highways (Amendment) Bill, Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2025, and the Securities Markets Code Bill (SMC), 2025, which proposes to consolidate provisions of the SEBI Act, 1992.

SIR stress kills 3

AGENCIES

Kolkata/Bhopal, Nov 22: Amid the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, two Booth Level Officers (BLOs) in Madhya Pradesh died Friday while a woman BLO in West Bengal allegedly died by suicide Saturday, with relatives in all the incidents blaming severe work pressure linked to the electoral exercise. The incidents have triggered fresh concerns about the strain placed on teachers assigned with BLO duties and triggered a political controversy in Bengal. In Madhya Pradesh, two teachers-cum-BLOs—Ramakant Pandey of Raisen district and Sitaram Gond of Damoh district—died late Friday night. While officials described the deaths as resulting from “illness,” the families of both men alleged that overwhelming workload during the voter-list enumeration contributed to their deteriorating health.



Raisen SDO and Electoral Registration Officer Chandrashekhar Shrivastava said Pandey, who was engaged in the voter revision drive in Mandideep, died Friday night and that the post-mortem report was awaited. Shrivastava added that another BLO from the district, Narayan Das Soni, has been missing for six days after leaving home without informing his family.

Pandey's wife, Rekha, told officials that he had been under immense pressure to meet daily targets and was receiving constant reminders over the phone. She

claimed he had not slept for four nights and feared suspension if targets remained unmet. Pandey reportedly collapsed shortly after joining an online review meeting Thursday night. He was first rushed to a private hospital in Bhopal and later shifted to AIIMS, where doctors declared him dead.

In Damoh district, BLO Sitaram Gond fell critically ill while filling enumeration forms Thursday evening, District Education Officer SK Nema said. He was referred from Damoh to Jabalpur for advanced care but died Friday night. Friends

claimed Gond, assigned to cover 1,319 voters in two villages, was distressed as he had completed only 13 per cent of the workload.

The deaths follow a recent incident where another BLO, Shyam Sundar Sharma, died in a road accident in Damoh. His family too had alleged that he faced SIR-related work pressure.

In West Bengal, political tensions escalated Saturday after Rinku Tarafdar (52), a para-teacher working as BLO in Nadia district, was found hanging at her residence. Her family alleged she was unable to cope with the exhaustive SIR duties, including online updates she struggled to complete.

A purported suicide note, shared by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, blamed the Election Commission of India (ECI) for her death.

Banerjee called the situation “truly alarming” and accused the ECI of conducting the SIR exercise in a “chaotic, coercive” manner.

3 killed, 5 injured in two accidents

AGENCIES

Bhadrak/Sambalpur, Nov 22: At least three persons were killed and five others injured in two road accidents in Bhadrak and Sambalpur districts Saturday, police said.

In Sambalpur, one person was killed and five others were critically injured after an ambulance with a patient and his relatives

on board hit a truck on National Highway-55 near Phuljharan area under the Jujumura police station limits, a senior officer said.

The deceased was identified as ambulance attendant Manabhanjan Sahu, he said.

The accident took place when the ambulance was going to VIMSAR in Burla from Boudh district, the officer said.

“The ambulance attendant died on the spot, and five others suffered injuries. They were taken to a nearby hospital,” the officer said.

In another incident in Bhadrak district, two persons died when a two-wheeler hit a bus near Kamaria Chhak on the Bhadrak-Chandbali road under the Pirhat police station limits, another officer said.

COP30: Compromise deal sidesteps fossil fuels

REUTERS

Belem, Nov 22: World governments agreed Saturday to a compromise climate deal at the COP30 conference in Brazil that would boost finance for poor nations coping with global warming but omit any mention of the fossil fuels driving it.

In securing the accord, countries attempted to demonstrate global unity in addressing climate change impacts even after world's biggest historic emitter, the United States, declined to send an official delegation. “We should support it because at least it is going in the right direction,” the European Union's climate com-



missioner, Wopke Hoekstra, told reporters before the deal was gavelled through.

The Belem deal launches a voluntary initiative to speed up climate action to help nations meet their existing pledges to reduce emissions, and calls for

rich nations to at least triple the amount of money they provide to help developing countries adapt to a warming world by 2035.

Scientists have said existing national commitments to cut emissions have cut projected warming signifi-

cantly, but are not enough to keep world temperatures from breaching 1.5C above industrial levels, a threshold that could unleash the worst impacts of climate change.

Developing countries have argued in the meantime that they urgently need funds to adapt to impacts that are already hitting, like rising sea levels and worsening heat waves, droughts, floods, and storms.

Saturday's agreement also launches a process for climate bodies to review how to align international trade with climate action, according to the deal text, amid concerns that rising trade barriers are limiting the adoption of clean technology.

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ARIES



Your work and family will vie with each other for your attention. Merry-making will seem a good idea in the evening. Your desire for name and fame will meet with success shortly, maybe even today! Ganesha showers his blessings on you.

TAURUS



You may spend a majority of your time on your health and well-being today. Business lunch may see some pending negotiations reaching a successful outcome. Research work will progress better than expected, says Ganesha.

GEMINI



A day of conflicting emotions awaits you. Your personal and professional life will both be important. Hence you will experience anxious moments as you try to balance the demands made by both. However, the good news is you will succeed in your attempts and will do justice to all your duties, says Ganesha.

CANCER



You will love to stroll in a world of fantasy. Religious impact will prevail over you. You will charter your fantasy to a mysterious level. You will have communion with God at a temple, mosque or church, you will try to draw lessons from your experience.

LEO



You will exercise your will today and will be in the mood to soar like a free bird today. You will not be in the mood to listen to anyone. Work related travel will be beneficial. Guard against ego clashes in personal relationships, says Ganesha.

VIRGO



Contemplating on past successes will help you gather the resources for achieving more of it in the near future. New contacts will help you make considerable headway on the road to success. Ganesha says your amiable nature will help you in getting along easily with people.

LIBRA



Ganesha says that your day today will be extremely busy and as a result you will be agitated today. Your happy nature will have to bear the brunt of the sad circumstances and situations that life will shower on you but you will be able to face the situation with your inner strength. You will have to be careful about your health today and will need to watch your diet.

SCORPIO



Long pending task of getting your home renovated may begin today. There are a couple of object de art that have caught your eyes and you wish to decorate your home with those artefacts. You may even plan a small celebration to share your home's new look! A great day indeed.

SAGITTARIUS



Running helter-skelter and muddling of affairs is on the menu. Expect not to find even a moment's peace. But take a break, says Ganesha. And dive right back in the chaos and make the most of it.

CAPRICORN



Generally, it is difficult for you to maintain a cool head over your shoulders, especially during the stressful times. But, to everyone's surprise, you will display remarkable composure while dealing with challenges today, feels Ganesha. Family life will be smooth and it will enable you to fully concentrate on you career and increasing your efficiency level.

AQUARIUS



With no major highs or lows, you will have a balanced day today. You will handle everything with great efficiency and Ganesha gives you a pat on your back for that. Continue to work hard for the day as your efforts will get noticed and not only that, you will also understand the value of your hardships.

PISCES



Today will not find you in the best of spirits. You need to guard against being sad for the smallest of reasons. Pessimistic thoughts could creep in, owing to some external influences. You need to keep your will-power strong to remain positive. Increasing your awareness will help you see things with more truth and clarity, says Ganesha.



BURRUSS, TUCKER
CONFIRM DIVORCE

Real Housewives of Atlanta star Kandi Burruss and husband Todd Tucker are divorcing after 11 years, citing a desire for peace. Their prenup, previously a point of contention, will likely influence asset division. Despite their joint business ventures, sources suggest the split is amicable, with a focus on co-parenting their children

MURPHY TO RECEIVE LIFE
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Hollywood star Eddie Murphy will be honoured with the Life Achievement Award, the American Film Institute's highest recognition for a career in film, the organisation has announced. The award will be presented at a gala tribute at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles April 18, 2026



Wamiqa's
unfiltered
thoughts

Mumbai: Bollywood actress Wamiqa Gabbi wrapped up her day with a burst of honesty as she shared a slew of pictures “for no reason” and said that she was “exhausted” to frame her thoughts.

Taking to Instagram, the hazel-eyed actress shared a string of close-up images of herself and said that she wrote a caption for “no reason.”

Framing her thoughts, she wrote: “Premiqa is exhausted today.... posting these pictures for no reason... writing this caption for no reason... realising that I don't need to write any of this while writing this... okay! (sic)”

“Maybe I should stop writing and rest... umm.... Maybe after eating something sweet... but I hope I rest... wait... why am I still writing? Okay Bye! Goodnight (sic).”

Talking about her work, Wamiqa was last seen in *Bhool Chuk Maaf*, a fantasy romantic comedy directed by Karan Sharma. The film also stars Rajkumar Rao, and Seema Pahwa.

She will be a part of the highly discussed sequel, *Pati Patni Aur Woh 2*, co-starring Ayushmaan Khurrana and Sara Ali Khan. Helmed by Mudassar Aziz, the project will get a theatrical release next Holi March 4, 2026.

Wamiqa also has *Bhooth Bangla*, *Kuku Ki Kundali*, *Tiki Taka*, and *Goodachari 2*.



Rashmika on feminine energy

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna took a moment from her busy schedule to reflect on the true meaning of the much-talked-about feminine energy.

The *Pushpa* actress pointed out how this feminine energy helps one see through things, people, and

situations - allowing women to feel something is off even before they know why. Taking to her Insta handle, Rashmika shared a heartfelt note that read, “There's something about feminine energy..I don't know how to explain it but when you're really in tune with yourself.. you just knoww. You see through things... through people... through situations (Sparkle emojis) You feel something is off way before it actually happens, your gut tells you, but you ignore it because life makes it

complicated..(sic).” Rashmika added that when women come in support of each other and actually listen to each other's problems, life seems to get a little easier. She further reminded that women are unstoppable when they come together. “And then there's another thing I've learnt over the years...There is something so magical about women holding other women..women healing women..women listening to each other with just that gentle ‘I'm here’ energy (red heart emoji),” the *Animal* actress added.

Kareena gets candid

Mumbai: Kareena Kapoor Khan recently attended the Spectacular Saudi event in Mumbai, where she also shared a glimpse into her travel and style preferences in a quick chat with *Vogue*.

The actress revealed that she never boards a flight without a few essentials: her phone, moisturiser, a kajal pencil, and her favourite pyjamas; because comfort, she says, is non-negotiable. She also mentioned that she hopes her children accompany her on most of her trips, calling them the highlight of her travels.

When it comes to wardrobe staples, Kareena listed her trusted classics: a kafftan, well-fitted jeans, a crisp white shirt, and a sleek black dress, pieces that perfectly reflect her

effortless approach to fashion. Talking about her Saudi Arabia bucket list, she named AIUla, the Red Sea, and Riyadh as the destinations she is most excited to explore. Her travel playlist, she added, is a blend of Punjabi tracks she enjoys and the iconic rock music favoured by Saif Ali Khan, including bands like Dire Straits and AC/DC.

A proud foodie, Kareena said she is eager to try Saudi biryani, a dish recommended to her during the event.

On the professional front, she was last seen in *Singham Again* and recently appeared in the OTT release *Dinning With The Kapoor*s. She is currently shooting for Meghna Gulzar's *Daayra* alongside Prithviraj Sukumaran.



Big B turns philosophical

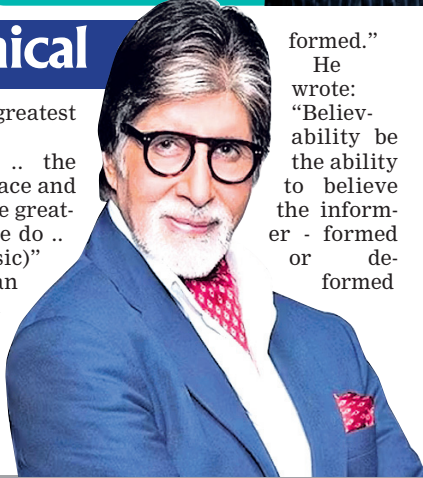
Mumbai: Amitabh Bachchan turned philosophical once again, offering a string of thoughts that read like a meditation on time, truth and the marvel of human existence.

The thespian took to his blog, where he spoke of “documentation” as the keeper of moments, the witness to place, time and happen-

ings calling it the “greatest informer” of all.

“Documentation .. the recordist of time place and happening .. now the greatest informer..Do the do .. the undo will do... (sic)”

The octogenarian went on to reflect on the idea of belief, saying that trust rests in the hands of the one who informs, whether “formed or de-



formed.” He wrote: “Believability be the ability to believe the informer - formed or deformed

(sic). What followed was a burst of raw admiration for the human body, which he described as “the greatest invention ever.”

“AAHHHHH .. the human body .. the greatest invention EVER .. they that can see inside and beyond it , be the ones blessed ..AND BELIEVED,” he wrote.

The icon is currently seen hosting the new season of *Kaun Banega Crorepati*. It is the official Hindi adaptation of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* franchise.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6
7			8		
9		10			
11	12			13	
14			15		
16			17		
18				19	20
21				22	

Across

7 Academic award

8 Medicinal syrup

9 Cafeteria carrier

10 Imports and exports difference (5,3)

11 Metalworks

13 Roughly

15 Destiny

16 Horse-drawn carriages

18 Complain (5,3)

19 Place holders

21 Dowse

22 Woodwind player

Down

1 Orbital period

2 Long-bodied large-eyed insect (7,6)

3 Motion

4 Competitor

5 Echo

6 Asuncion locale

12 Handel work

14 Muggins

17 Decrease

20 In use

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

AITUC protests new Labour Codes in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: The Khurda District Committee of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) Saturday staged a demonstration here protesting the implementation of the four new Labour Codes, which they termed anti-worker. As part of the agitation, protesters raised slogans and burned copies of the Gazette notification at the demonstration site.

The protest was attended by AITUC state vice president Prasanta Mishra, state secretary Jayanta Das, Namita Sahu, and other leaders. Members from various affiliated organisations also participated in the demonstration.

A large procession was taken out from Bhagabati Bhawan to Rajmahal Square, with protesters raising slogans against the Labour Codes and demanding their immediate withdrawal.

AITUC leaders described the agitation as a spontaneous uprising of the working class against what they termed an attack by the BJP-led Central government. The Labour Codes came into effect November 21, 2025, which trade unions observed as Black Day nationwide.

Saturday's demonstration was part of a nationwide protest called by the United Platform of Central Trade Unions and several independent federations.

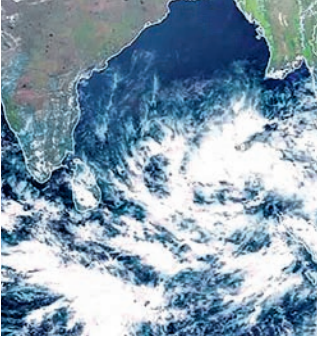
CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT



I, Soudamini Sarangi, aged about 64 years, W/O-Sudhakar Sarangi, Vill-Alarpur, P/o-Rupadeipur, Ps-Balanga, Dist.-Puri, Odisha do hereby declared that, my actual name is Soudamini Sarangi, which reflected in our old PPO Book and Aadhar card, bearing no-xxxxxxx1337,but due to some clerical error my name mentioned as Sauduarini Sarang, instead of Soudamini Sarangi, in our new PPO Book, bearing no.-601198100831 and our residential mentioned as At-Alanapur, P/o-Rupadeiur instead of our original address. I do hereby declared that, Soudamini Sarangi and Sauduarini Sarang is same person and it's me.

I, Sanjaya Kumar Padhiali, formerly called as Sanjaya Ku Padhiali, S/o.-Dandapani Padhiali, permanent resident of At/P.O.- Konkorada, P.S.- Pattapur, Dist.- Ganjam, Odisha, PIN- 761144, currently residing P.O.- Konkorada, P.S.- Pattapur, Dist.- Ganjam, Odisha, PIN- 761144 do hereby Solemnly affirm and state that formerly I was known as Sanjaya Ku Padhiali. Now onwards I will be known with my new name as Sanjaya Kumar Padhiali for all purposes. Hence I filed an affidavit before THE NOTARY PUBLIC, BERHAMPUR, GANJAM on 22.11.2022 bearing No. A-795. Sd/- Sanjaya Kumar Padhiali

Low pressure forms over Bay



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: A low-pressure area has formed over the Bay of Bengal (BoB), and it is likely to intensify into a depression around November 24, India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Saturday.

“Under the influence of a cyclonic circulation, a low-pressure area has formed near the Malacca Strait over the South

Andaman Sea. It is very likely to move west-northwestwards and intensify into a depression over southeast BoB and adjoining south Andaman Sea around November 24, 2025,” the IMD said in a special bulletin.

The weather office also said that the system (possible depression) is likely to move west north-westwards and is very likely to intensify further over southwest BoB during subsequent 48 hours.

Though the IMD scientists are uncertain whether the low-pressure system will develop into a cyclonic storm, they said the weather agency will update people well ahead of the formation of any system.

Anticipating heavy rains in coastal and southern regions of the state, the people have resorted to harvesting paddy crops, which are almost mature.

However, the state Agriculture department was yet to issue any advisory for farmers, an official said.

Meanwhile, the director of Meteorological Centre, Bhubaneswar, Manorama Mohanty, said that the low-pressure area is at a very long distance from the Odisha coast and therefore the IMD has forecast dry weather in the state.

Anticipating heavy rains in coastal and southern regions of the state, farmers have resorted to harvesting paddy crops

DGP VISIT TO KANDHAMAL

‘District to be Maoist-free by March’

PNN & AGENCIES

Phulbani, Nov 22: The state as well as Kandhamal district will be Maoist free by March-2026 in line with the Centre's plan to make the country free of extremists during the same period.

This was stated here by Odisha Director General of Police YB Khurania, who is on a two-day visit to Kandhamal and Boudh districts to review anti-Maoist operations and outline the final steps toward declaring the region free of extremist activity.

Khurania held a review meeting with senior police officials and the district superintendent of police shortly after arriving in Phulbani Friday evening. The discussions continued Saturday morning, focusing on strategies that he said are now close to final.

“The Union Home Ministry has set a target to make the country Maoist-free by March 2026,” Khurania said adding “Odisha is working toward the same goal and that a district-level action plan for



Kandhamal has already been prepared.”

“All concentrations are now on Kandhmal,” said a senior officer associated with the anti-Maoist operations.

“Though there are a handful of Odia-speaking people in the proscribed organisation at

present, the majority of the cadres come from neighbouring Chhattisgarh,” he said, noting that the number of local Maoists could be a maximum of eight.

To tackle left-wing extremism, the state government has taken steps against Ganja

H&UD Min visits BSF waste-upcycling facility

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: Housing & Urban Development and Public Enterprises Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra Saturday visited Insectika's state-of-the-art Black Soldier Fly (BSF)-based waste upcycling facility here at the Bharatpur Micro Composting Centre.

During the visit, Minister Mahapatra reviewed the innovative processes through which organic waste is converted into high-value products using BSF larvae. He appreciated the technology's potential to strengthen municipal waste management, reduce landfill load, and generate sustainable by-products such as protein-rich feed and organic soil enhancers.

Mahapatra commended the



partnership between the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation and Insectika for introducing advanced circular-economy solutions in urban sanitation. He said such technology-driven initiatives align with the state's commitment to scientific waste processing, environmental

stewardship, and the creation of green livelihoods.

N Ganesh Babu, Deputy Commissioner, BMC, Arun Kumar Das, Founder & CEO; Chinmayee Acharya, Head of R&D, Insectika Biotech and other officials were present during the visit.

Man held for killing parents in Cuttack

Cuttack: A man allegedly stabbed his father and stepmother to death over a long-standing property dispute in Cuttack, police said Saturday. The accused, identified as Alok Das, was arrested.

The incident took place at the Old Jail colony under Dargha Bazar police station Friday night around 9 pm, the police said. The deceased were identified as Deepak Kumar Das (58), an employee of the Choudwar Jail, and his wife, 45-year-old Litarani Das. According to the police, Alok and his father were engaged in a heated argument over some financial dispute which led to murder of the two. Alok knifed his father and stepmother to death in their home, police said. After the death of his first wife, Deepak had married Litarani and they were staying separated from Alok, the police said. The accused had a long-standing dispute with his father over distribution of money received from sale of ancestral properties, said Cuttack DCP Rishikesh Khilari. “We have arrested the accused and seized the weapon used in the crime,” he said.

Political row over Ratna Bhandar inventory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: A war of words broke out between ruling BJP and Opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Saturday over the inventory of jewellery and valuables stored in the refurbished ‘Ratna Bhandar’ (treasury) of Srimandir in Puri.

Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Arabinda Padhee Friday announced that the temple authorities have decided to conduct the inventory of the Ratna Bhandar in phases, and the process will be completed by the next ‘Akshya Tritiya’ (April 19, 2026).

The BJD alleged that the state's BJP government was resorting to the tactics of ‘delay and evasion’ in undertaking the inventory of jewellery and valuables stored in the Ratna Bhandar. The ruling BJP immediately rejected the allegation and claimed that the BJD has no moral right to speak on Lord Jagannath's Ratna Bhandar.

“The BJD during its 24-year rule could not open the Ratna Bhandar, even as many people, including Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, demanded immediate repair of the structure. The BJP, after coming to power, opened the Ratna Bhandar and repaired it within 13 months,” said Odisha BJP spokesperson Anil Biswal.

“The people have witnessed how the previous BJD government committed mistakes in the management of the Nabakalebara (new idol installation) festival in 2025. They have no right to speak on the Shree Jagannath temple matter,” he said.

Official sources said that the Ratna Bhandar, which is located inside the temple, was opened July 14, 2024, after a gap of 46 years, and the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) took around one year to repair and renovate the structure. July 7, the temple authorities announced that the ASI, the custodian of the temple, had completed repair of the Ratna Bhandar.

The BJD, in a statement said,



COURTESY VISIT: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi meets Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare JP Nadda in New Delhi, Saturday

MITs hosts DiLSE-2025



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: The Majhighariani Institute of Technology & Science (MITs), Rayagada, organised the District Level Science Exhibition (DiLSE) 2025, showcasing innovation and scientific talent from across the district. With participation from over 40 schools and colleges and more than 200 students, the event stood out as one of the most impactful district-level science exhibitions in the region.

The event was inaugurated at the Basant Auditorium by chief guest Narayan Mitra, Vice President & Head-HR, Aditya Birla International Ltd. The inaugural session featured traditional performances, lighting of the lamp, and addresses by dignitaries including Biswajeet Panda, Vice Chairman, MITs

Group, and CV Gopinath, Director, MITs Rayagada. The ceremony was coordinated by Brijlal Mallik. Mitra visited the exhibition stalls and interacted with students showcasing innovative and socially relevant science models. The displays covered themes such as Health & Hygiene, Waste Management, Water Conservation, Green Energy, Emerging Technologies, and Sustainable Agriculture.

The valedictory and prize distribution ceremony, coordinated by Sagyan Swain, recognised outstanding entries with cash awards of ₹5,000, ₹3,000, and ₹2,000 for the first, second, and third positions in both Junior and Senior categories.

Vice Chairman Biswajeet Panda presented the awards. All participating institutions were also given mementos and certificates.

BJD alleges ‘manipulation’, to move EC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 22: Opposition BJD Saturday said it will lodge a complaint with the Election Commission to seek “justice”, alleging that large-scale ‘state-sponsored manipulation’ in the Nuapada bypoll.

The decision to lodge the complaint was taken at a meeting of the party's political affairs committee (PAC), chaired by Leader of the Opposition Naveen Patnaik.

“Though we had earlier lodged a complaint in this regard with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), there was no result. Therefore, the PAC today decided to approach the EC,” opposition Chief Whip Pramila Mallik said.

She claimed that votes for

NUAPADA BYPOLL

the BJD were “diverted” by means of EVM manipulation using “official machinery and money power”.

“Such rigging was observed in at least 63 polling booths. The votes given to the BJD by people were diverted to some other party. There seems to be manipulation in the EVM also,” she alleged.

“The BJP won the bypoll by capturing the votes of BJD through EVM tampering, use of money, muscle and official mechanism,” she alleged.

Mallik claimed that the party arrived at the conclusion that there were manipulations after reviewing the by-election results. “We will also conduct our own inquiry,

expose the EVM manipulation and make the people aware about the BJP's efforts to kill democracy,” she said.

The bypoll, held November 11, witnessed a record voter turnout of 83.45 per cent. BJP's Jay Dholakia won the election by a margin of 83,748 votes, while BJD candidate Snehangini Chhuria was pushed to third place. Congress nominee Ghasiram Majhi finished second.

Chhuria said, “The EC first announced 75 per cent turnout at 5 pm November 11, later raised it to 77 per cent at 7 pm, then 81 per cent the next morning, and finally revised it to 83.45 per cent. There should be no doubt about manipulations,” she said. The BJP rejected the allegations.

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.6°	29.6°	Partly cloudy Sky
Min Temp	19.1°	15.6°	
Humidity	80%	74%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

Climate Change: Finding Solutions



Sunita Narain: Advocate for environmental justice

Sunita Narain is a leading Indian environmentalist, currently serving as the Director General of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) and the editor of its fortnightly magazine, Down To Earth. With over four decades of experience, she has been at the forefront of advocating for sustainable development, climate justice, and the environmental concerns of the Global South. Sunita will attend the fifth edition of the Dharitri Youth Conclave as the chief speaker and address the next generation of environmental leaders on the urgent need for action on climate change. Sunita's work focuses on integrating environmental issues with social justice, particularly in marginalised communities. She has contributed extensively to air pollution control, water management, sanitation, and climate change, using research and public advocacy to push for transformative and inclusive policies. Her works in India, especially on rainwater harvesting, river conservation, and air quality improvement, has influenced national policies and led to real-world changes such as the switch from diesel to natural gas in New Delhi's public transport system. Sunita's contributions have earned her numerous accolades, including the Padma Shri, the Stockholm Water Prize, and inclusion in TIME 100 (2016) as one of the world's most influential people. Her advocacy for climate justice has been recognised globally, and she continues to champion the cause of environmental policies that prioritize both equity and sustainability.

Chami Murmu: Championing green restoration

Chami Murmu, an Indian environmental activist, is best known for her extraordinary efforts in planting trees across India. Starting her mission in 1996, Murmu has planted over 2.5 million trees around her village Bagraaisai, Rajnagar block, Seraikela Kharsawan district, Jharkhand, India to combat deforestation, particularly caused by illegal logging by the "mafia" and the threats posed by Naxalites. Her grassroots movement, which continues to thrive despite adversity, focuses not only on reforestation but also on community mobilisation. Her work is deeply personal; she started planting saplings in her village in the hope of restoring the lost greenery and providing a sustainable future for the community. As a result, she formed the Sahayogi Mahila Bagraaisai in 2020, which now has 3,000 members and is dedicated to environmental protection and empowerment of women. Murmu will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award at the fifth edition of Dharitri Youth Conclave November 24. This prestigious award honours her decades of tireless work in environmental conservation and significant contributions to empowering communities, particularly women, in the fight against deforestation.



Arun Krishnamurthy: Devoted to the cause of waterbody conservation

39-year-old Arun Krishnamurthy, a former Google employee, is the man behind restoration of 460 waterbodies including lakes and ponds in 16 states. The founder of Chennai-based Environmentalist Foundation of India (EFI) and a committed activist to the cause of conservation of lakes and other waterbodies across India, Krishnamurthy had also found a mention in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat' in the past. EFI plans to expand across all 28 states of India and neighboring countries such as Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Bangladesh. Arun says more than 70 per cent of surface water in the country is polluted, largely because of the poor management of industrial and domestic waste. Arun was honoured with the Rolex Awards for Enterprise in 2012 for his lake restoration efforts in Chennai and British Council International Climate Champion Excellence Award two years prior to that. Prestigious TIME Magazine also named Arun in 2022 as one of its 'Next Generation Leader', a series elevating young people from across fields and around the globe who are working to build a better world. He will join Dharitri Youth Conclave as a moderator and set to share his ideas of waterbody conservation as a social cause.



Meet Sijariya: Youth leader shaping global climate action

At a very young age, Meet Sijariya stands at the forefront of youth-led climate action and global advocacy. As a panellist at the Dharitri Youth Conclave, Meet brings a wealth of experience from his extensive work across youth networks, climate movements, and global forums. Currently a sophomore at Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies, Delhi University, Meet has a track record of academic excellence. His academic brilliance is matched by his dedication to tackling some of the world's most pressing challenges, particularly in the realm of climate change. As Vice Chair of Partnerships & Stakeholders at Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network, Meet represents voices of 56 countries and 1.5 billion youth, working to amplify youth participation in fight against climate change. He is also the youngest global fellow for Mercedes-Benz beVisioneers programme and youngest South Asian Shaper in World Economic Forum's Under 30 Network. His participation reflects his commitment to empowering the next generation of climate leaders and driving transformative change on a global scale.



Debabrata Swain: Unwavering dedication to wildlife conservation

Debabrata Swain is a distinguished environmental leader with over 35 years of experience in wildlife conservation, forestry, and environmental governance. A passionate advocate for elephant and tiger conservation, he has held several key positions in the Indian Forest Service, including serving as the PCCF and HoFF, Odisha (2018-2019). He is the founder of the Save Elephant Foundation Trust, an organisation committed to the protection of elephants and their habitats. In addition to his role as the Member of Lokayukta Odisha (2019-2024), Swain has also been recognised internationally for his expertise, having served as Member Secretary and CEO of the NTCA in New Delhi and as Inspector General, NTCA, Central Region. Swain will attend the mega event as a panellist and a Dharitri Climate Grant jury member.



only to inform but also to inspire participants to implement tangible solutions in the fight against climate change.

Later in the evening, there will be performances on environmental themes by notable musicians.

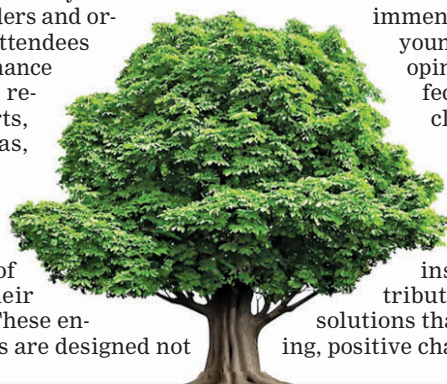
On the occasion, a Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to an eminent environmental personality, and the Dharitri Climate Grant will be awarded to a local environmental group and an individual working for climate safety.

Additionally, nine student speakers from various higher educational institutions will share their thoughts and raise their voices about climate change and its impact on their lives.

The conclave serves as a platform for youth to share innovative ideas, engage in meaningful discussions, and collaborate on actionable solutions to combat climate change. The event will not only enable participants to inspire one another but also create a foundation for future initiatives that have the potential to shape global environmental policy and action.

As the next generation takes the lead, the Dharitri Youth Conclave 2025 showcases the immense potential of young minds in developing creative and effective solutions to climate change.

The event offers an invaluable opportunity for youth to connect, share insights, and contribute to crafting real solutions that can bring lasting, positive change.



Purnima Devi Barman: Biologist who built an 'army' to save hargila

Purnima Devi Barman is a renowned wildlife biologist from Assam, celebrated for her groundbreaking conservation efforts with the greater adjutant stork (Leptoptilos dubius), locally known as the hargila bird. As the founder of the Hargila Army, a pioneering all-female conservation initiative, Purnima has led a movement that has not only protected a critically endangered species but also empowered women in her community to take an active role in environmental conservation. Purnima's journey as a conservationist began in 2007 when she was alerted about a tree set to be felled, which was home to a family of greater adjutant storks. Upon arriving at the site, Purnima found that the storks' nests had fallen to the ground, and the local belief that these birds were a bad omen posed a significant threat to their survival. Despite facing opposition and anger from her community, Purnima's determination to protect the birds marked the beginning of her lifelong mission to save the species. Through the Hargila Army, Purnima has mobilised an extraordinary network of 20,000 women, who actively work to protect the storks' nests and educate communities about the importance of preserving this unique species. Inspiring story of Purnima, who will join the conclave as the chief guest, will undoubtedly ignite a spark of passion and action at the mega event.



Dr Andrew Fleming: Committed to green transition

Dr Andrew Fleming, British Deputy High Commissioner to East and North East India, will grace the Dharitri Youth Conclave 2025 November 24 as the guest of honour. Reaffirming the UK's commitment to supporting India's green transition, Dr Fleming lauded the efforts of Odisha government in promoting renewable energy, despite being a coal-rich state. Drawing parallels between UK cities like Coventry and Bhubaneswar, he expressed confidence that Bhubaneswar could achieve its energy transition goals with stricter action plans and timely corrective measures. Putting the youth at the centre of environmental advocacy, Dr Fleming opines that youths have increasingly become agents of change against climate change. He will share his insights on global cooperation, youth leadership, and strengthened climate action at the conclave.



Kartik Shanker: Steering sustainable environmental practices

Kartik Shanker, ecologist and Founder Trustee of Dakshin Foundation, a non-profit organisation dedicated to conservation, natural resource management, and sustainable development, will join Dharitri Youth Conclave 2025 as a panellist. The mission of Shanker's organisation is to inform and catalyse efforts for environmental conservation. An ecologist by training, he has expertise in both mountain and marine ecosystems. He is currently a professor at the Centre for Ecological Sciences at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, where his research spans a diverse range of taxa, including frogs, reptiles, birds, plants, and reef fish. Shanker's contributions to ecological research and conservation have made him a prominent figure in the field, and his work continues to shape policy and action around sustainable environmental practices.



Rahgir: Voice behind the viral anthem

Rahgir, born Sunil Kumar Gurjar May 18, 1993 in Sikar, Rajasthan, is a name you have probably heard, especially if you are an Instagram user. Known for his thought-provoking lyrics and soulful music, Rahgir's song "Aadmi Ch****a Hai" has taken social media by storm, becoming a viral hit with over 6 million views on YouTube and more than 1 million streams on Spotify. The track, which critiques the consumerist mindset and unchecked desires, gained massive attention after it became a popular audio on Instagram reels. His music often addresses societal issues through poetic verses, with songs like "Aalsi Dopahar" critiquing casteism and "Tan Kha Gayi Ye Tankha" exploring human greed. Rahgir's refusal to conform to trends or commercial pressures makes his music not only refreshing but also deeply authentic. At the Dharitri Youth Conclave November 24, Rahgir will bring his powerful message and soulful sound to an audience ready for music with meaning.





Valley’s Voice

A lot of things are being alleged by ‘sources’ regarding a raid on a newspaper called Kashmir Times, and its editor, Anuradha Bhasin.

Some background is in order so readers can place things in perspective. On 2 June 2020, the Modi government announced ‘New Media Policy 2020’, a policy specific to Kashmir. Note that the pretence behind the government’s actions in Kashmir was the ostensible integration of the state and the abolition of laws that distinguished it from the rest of India.

Yet, here was another Kashmir-only policy. Over 50 pages long, it gave the government unbridled powers to determine what was ‘fake’, ‘unethical’ or ‘anti-national’ news. On the basis of this, it could take legal and other punitive action against journalists and media organisations. Media watchdogs abroad noted the use of ambiguous and undefined terms such as ‘fake’, ‘unethical’, ‘anti-national’ and ‘anti-social’, which opened the doors for misuse because they offered the bureaucrat judging the news no guiding standards or principles.

It was entirely at the discretion of the government. The press in Jammu remained silent on the matter, while the media in Kashmir voiced their strong opposition to the policy. Bhasin was one of those brave voices.



Aakar Patel

DESPIKE THE ‘RESTORATION’ OF THE INTERNET IN KASHMIR, ARBITRARY SUSPENSION OF INTERNET SERVICES REMAINS THE NORM. ANY INCIDENT, AND ANY WHIM FROM THE ADMINISTRATION, RESULTS IN THE SENDING BACK OF KASHMIRIS TO A PRE-MODERN ERA

On 10 January 2020, hearing a case related to the restoration of internet in Kashmir, the Supreme Court determined that access to the internet was a fundamental right of Indians. This was the way several papers reported the story even the following day: ‘Access to internet is a fundamental right, says Supreme Court’ and ‘SC recognises internet users’ right, also formalises their accountability’.

Unfortunately, justice was not actually done and the total blockade of Kashmiris from using the internet continued. The government said: ‘The right to access the internet is not a fundamental right and thus the type and breadth of access for exercising the right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a) and/or to carry on any trade or business under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution of India through the medium of internet can be curtailed.’

The justification given for this collective punishment of Kashmiris was that ‘post August 2019 constitutional developments, Pakistan handlers, either directly or indirectly, have increased activity on social media intending to and aiming at disturbance of peace in the region, inciting violence and abetting terror activities’. Solicitor general Tushar Mehta argued in court: ‘Unfortunately, internet jihad is a successful one. It is a global phenomenon. The jihadi leaders can engage through the internet to spread hatred and illegal activities.’ The bench asked if internet access could be permitted with some restrictions. ‘Increase in internet speed,’ the Union submitted, ‘will lead to swift uploading and posting of provocative videos and other heavy data files.’ ‘The only solution is that either you have internet or you don’t have the internet,’ Mehta said.

It should be noted here that the peak of violence in Kashmir, with over 4,000 killed in 2001, happened when there was no internet and not even any mobile telephony in Kashmir.

There is no linkage between the levels of violence and access to the internet, according to the data. But this was not the way that the government or the court saw it. Since the 2019 constitutional change, internet access has been disrupted in Jammu and Kashmir by at least 90 government-imposed internet shutdowns—the highest in the world. The world noticed.

It was reported that the shutdown (17 months in all, including seven months when even 2G mobile telephony was suspended) was the longest ever imposed in a democracy, according to Access Now, the international advocacy group that tracks internet suspensions.

Amnesty India documented a total of 67 government-enforced internet shutdowns between 14 January 2020 and 4 August 2020. Despite the ‘restoration’ of the internet in Kashmir, arbitrary suspension of internet services remains the norm. Any incident, and any whim from the administration, results in the sending back of Kashmiris to a pre-modern era.

To come to the point, the petitioner in the case that was heard on 10 January 2020 was Anuradha Bhasin, editor and publisher of the newspaper Kashmir Times. She had told the court she could not publish the newspaper due to communications restrictions imposed by the Government of India. She petitioned the Supreme Court for the removal of restrictions imposed on the access of internet, mobile and landline phones, and for other appropriate relief (the inability of media to publish without communications is another reason why the court had to judge the matter from the free speech angle). The court did not respond as it should have and the restrictions continued.

Kashmir Times could not publish and was forced to stop its work. The world noticed and called out the reason: ‘Vendetta’: Kashmir newspaper’s office sealed by India officials’, is one headline from 20 October 2020.

After the current round of allegations, has come another headline from this week: ‘Kashmir Times: A Jammu newspaper that stood up for the Valley’. The report says that ‘established in 1954, it is considered to be an influential and credible voice in Kashmir’s media landscape.’

That is absolutely true and it is shameful that it has been attacked in the way it has and that Bhasin has not found more voices, especially from India’s craven media, to speak in support of her and her paper.



Paola Subacchi

UNIVERSITIES WERE LARGELY SPARED THE #METOO RECKONING THAT HIT THE ENTERTAINMENT AND MEDIA INDUSTRIES IN 2017

As emails and documents from the estate of the convicted pedophile Jeffrey Epstein continue to surface, the revelations have embarrassed many prominent men and, in some cases, toppled them from their positions. But the disclosures have a wider significance, because they require us to reflect on the frameworks, particularly within academia, that enable the systematic exploitation of young women.

What stands out in the email exchanges between Epstein and renowned economist Larry Summers – a former US Treasury Secretary and president of Harvard University, where he is currently University Professor – is the predatory dynamic in which professional support is implicitly traded for what Summers bluntly calls “romance/sex.” For a young academic, such support can change the course of a career.

Universities were largely spared the #MeToo reckoning that hit the entertainment and media industries in 2017. But academic women of my generation know that this was not because professors and administrators were models of good behavior; rather, it was a matter of timing and the absence of a single, catalyzing scandal.

To their credit, universities have since created safer channels for raising concerns, such as mechanisms for whistleblowing and confidential reporting. While these safeguards can be misused or abused, they have fostered a culture of respect for women – and minorities – that simply did not exist before.

When I was a student and a young academic economist, comments about a woman’s body or appearance – both “appreciation” and outright



In academia, especially in the humanities and social sciences, where definitions of excellence are more subjective than in engineering and the natural sciences, endorsements from a few “great men” can weigh heavily in recruitment and promotion decisions

shaming – were common. These demeaning remarks were often intended to affirm male power. Women were expected, and often advised, to accept them silently, no matter how humiliating.

I remember being openly discriminated against in graduate school by a few senior faculty members. As a foreign female student in a male-dominated environment, I was often asked, “What do women do in your country?” – as though Italy were some backward outpost. It was both frightening and degrading, although my ego was spared the worst, no doubt partly because of my limited grasp of the subtleties of the English language.

I am heartened to see a genuine shift in academia toward a culture of respect that simply did not exist when I was starting my career. Many

colleagues treat students with care and seriousness, creating environments where trust and learning can thrive. Is this the “woke” system that, as Summers whined to Epstein, prevents a person from working “at a network or a think tank” if he “hit on a few women 10 years ago”? Whatever one calls it, we should be proud of this progress and vigilant in ensuring that it is not rolled back.

The troubling theme that emerges from the Epstein emails is how powerful men use favors to wield influence over young people (especially women). In highly competitive, winner-takes-all professional fields, being plugged into an influential network is an invaluable advantage, as is a mentor who is willing to spend personal or political capital to further your career.

In academia, especially in the humanities and social sciences, where definitions of excellence are more subjective than in engineering and the natural sciences, endorsements from a few “great men” can weigh heavily in recruitment and promotion decisions. This creates fertile ground for predatory behavior.

To be clear, competent candidates may benefit from well-connected mentors, but unqualified candidates rarely advance through external influence alone. This is a subtle game that powerful men know how to play without overtly breaking the rules. For young scholars, the stakes are enormous: research funds, publications in distinguished journals, invitations to prestigious conferences, and, the ultimate prize, tenure at a top university.

Of course, one could argue that it takes two to tango. But the power imbalance makes this game fundamentally unfair. That imbalance also explains why the incentives to confront sleazy, well-connected men remain minimal.

Among other things, the Epstein emails offer a glimpse into how women (and some men) are vulnerable to unsolicited advances and coercive situations early in their careers. To prevent powerful men like Summers and those born into immense privilege and wealth, like Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor, from acting on their sense of entitlement, we must continue to build a culture that repudiates the perverse norms of the old boys’ club – nowhere more so than in academia.

The writer is Professor and Chair in Sovereign Debt and Finance at Sciences Po.

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SPECTRUM SOCIETY

The Epstein Files: A network of criminal socialites



Bhabani Shankar Nayak

THE CAPITALIST CLASSES DERIVE THEIR PLEASURE BY EXPLOITING THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE ACROSS THE WORLD

Jeffrey Epstein’s scandal is not merely an abnormal aberration of a perverted, prodigious pedophile and his group of rotten socialites who were enjoying the architecture of impunity that shields abuse and exploitation based on access to power, privilege, and wealth. It is not an isolated event but a product of hyper-carnivorous capitalism, which produces and promotes a libidinal market of female bodies as mere objects of pleasure. The rotten system of capitalism enables different forms of heinous crimes like the sexual exploitation of children and the culture of sexual trafficking of women. The Epstein files are unmasking the rotten core of capitalist high society and its perverted networks, where celebrities, leading politicians, diplomats, journalists, kings, so called liberals, democrats, conservatives, bankers, and businessmen pay to realise their perverted sexual desires at the cost of human dignity by exploiting vulnerable children and women.

Jeffrey Epstein’s files reveal a strong network of people from the Wealth Management Industry (WMI), which

enabled people like him. The WMI has not only been catering to the needs and desires of high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth individuals and their families in matters of money, but also working as pimps for these people to realise their perverted sexual fantasies. The systems, processes, and networks are designed to facilitate a predatory culture empowered by wealth, which transforms convicted sex offenders into successful celebrities. Capitalism and its WMI not only provide money but also, in effect, offer political and legal protection to people like Jeffrey Epstein. Such a criminal system led by the WMI promotes predatory capitalism, and capitalism in turn promotes its inseparable, legalised criminal syndicate, exemplified in the operations of people like Mr Epstein and his associates.

The network of Mr Epstein also reveals the unity of the billionaire class, who use their capital to exploit children and women and shield each other in times of crisis and crime. There is absolute class unity among the capitalist classes. These parasitic classes survive and derive their pleasure

by exploiting the most vulnerable people across the world. Trafficking human beings for cheap labour and sexual pleasure is normal for these capitalist classes, who dominate and domesticate society, people, and culture to ensure the growth of their pyramid of profit.

The so-called upper echelons of capitalist society and their networks reveal the nature of solidarity among the capitalist classes in the pursuit of their pleasure—the “happiness industry”—entirely without regard for morality and basic human decency. However, these forces form alliances with reactionary religious and cultural forces in society to promote mass morality, thereby domesticating people in accordance with the requirements of capitalism. Dominance, fear, shame, surrender, and compliance are the five core features of the capitalist governance system, disguised in the form of religious morality that capitalism promotes.

There is no moral compass to measure the moral decay in capitalist society and its commodification of human life, love, emotion, sexual

pleasure, the objectification of bodies, and labour. Moral decay defines the predatory capitalist network and the decadent culture of capitalism, where different forms of exploitation are normalised in the name of individual choices and a predatory market that enables the ability to buy sexual pleasure without any qualms about the women and children who become victims of their rotten network. This new form of sexual and other forms of slavery is naturalised under a capitalist economic, social, cultural, and legal system that often facilitates the activities of people like Jeffrey Epstein, who lived a criminal life with impunity. What the Epstein files reveal is that the rottenness of capitalist society, its governing elites, and their predatory culture is fundamentally opposed to human values. Capitalism and its culture are not compatible with basic human values. Therefore, the struggle against capitalism and its culture is a struggle for survival of basic human values of life.

The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University

WISDOM CORNER

If what you have done yesterday still looks big to you, you haven't done much today.

MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

If you're walking down the right path and you're willing to keep walking, eventually you'll make progress.

BARACK OBAMA

Child slavery is a crime against humanity. Humanity itself is at stake here. A lot of work still remains but I will see the end of child labor in my lifetime.

KAILASH SATYARTHI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

PK’s allegations

Sir, Having drawn blank in the Bihar Assembly election, Jan Suraj Party founder Prashant Kishor has dubbed that the Bihar cabinet is packed with full of corrupt leaders and criminals. The statement reminds Buddha’s advice to a woman to bring mustard from any family where no death is witnessed. This advice was tendered when the woman begs for the life of her dead child. There is no political party anywhere in the world free from corrupt leaders and criminals. The law says that a person is ‘innocent until he is proved guilty’ and it is not ‘a person is guilty until his innocence is proved’. Accusations and allegations against political rivals are not the proof of corrupt practice and criminality. Therefore, Kishor’s will not only be not taken serious note of by the people, but also such allegations are dismissed by the people as politically motivated. This is time for him to introspect over the debacle of his party and take corrective action to make his party a force to reckon with.

KV Seetharamaiah, BANGALORE

Anxiety among workers

Sir, With reference to news article “Government implements 4 labour codes” published in your esteemed newspaper November 22, I wish to highlight the growing concern over the Centre’s decision to implement the four new labour codes. While the government claims these reforms will modernise labour regulations and boost investment, worker unions across the country strongly oppose them. They fear reduced social security, longer working hours, and weakened bargaining power. Many provisions remain unclear, creating anxiety among both organised and unorganised workers. It is essential that the government holds wider consultations to ensure that labour reforms protect workers’ rights while promoting economic growth. Otherwise, the very workforce that fuels the nation’s progress will be left vulnerable to exploitation, widening inequality and eroding trust in policy-making. Transparent dialogue, clear safeguards, and phased implementation are vital to balance industry needs with labour welfare.

Sidhartha Kar Mohapatra, BARIPADA

Maha seeks strict measures to stop nylon manja sale

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: Maharashtra Legislative Council Deputy Chairperson Neelam Gorhe has called for stronger enforcement to stop the sale of nylon manja, a type of thread linked to several injuries and deaths.

“Impose a total ban on nylon manja and stop its online sale, take strict action,” she said in a representation submitted to the Union and state governments.

Gorhe has written to Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal and the state Environment and Home departments, seeking effective restrictions on the production, sale, storage, transport and particularly online sale of nylon manja.

She stated that although the Maharashtra government has already prohibited nylon manja, weak enforcement has aggravated the problem.

She highlighted incidents of deaths reported in Wardha, Nashik, Bhiwandi and other parts of Maharashtra due to injuries caused by nylon manja.

The sharp and non-biodegradable thread has severely



injured two-wheeler riders, pedestrians and police personnel, apart from causing large-scale deaths of birds and other animals, Gorhe stated.

Gorhe claimed nylon manja is easily available on e-commerce platforms under alternative names such as fishing line, nylon thread, and strong wire.

She claimed it was also being sold on Instagram and WhatsApp groups under misleading labels such as eco-friendly or cotton thread.

Gorhe demanded that the Centre issue immediate directions to e-commerce companies to stop deliveries of such materi-

als in Maharashtra.

Calling for strict enforcement, she suggested setting up of district-level special task forces to conduct raids in markets, godowns and stock points and seize stock.

She said offences should be registered under applicable provisions, including culpable homicide, the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the Environment Protection Act.

Gorhe called for promoting environmentally friendly cotton manja and financial support, training and incentives for khadi and village industries and local manufacturers to produce safe alternatives.

RWAs, security staff to receive electric heaters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: In a bid to curb pollution caused by the burning of coal and wood during winter, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta Saturday announced that the government will distribute 10,000 electric heaters to Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) and security personnel across the city.

Speaking at an event at the Open Amphitheatre, Delhi Haat, Pitampura, where she launched the initiative along with Industries Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa, the chief minister said the move is part of the government's broader efforts to reduce local emissions during peak winter months.

“In Delhi's war against pollution, the government has taken another positive step. Coal and wood combustion are among the sources of Delhi's pollution. To reduce that, we have decided to distribute 10,000 electric heaters to RWAs and will request people not to burn wood and cause pollution,” Gupta said.

She emphasised that public participation is crucial for the success of the initiative. “Every resident of Delhi has to contribute to this effort. We will connect every RWA with this initiative and felicitate those who perform well,” she said.

Namo Bharat trains now available for private pre-wedding shoots in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: The National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) has opened its Nammo Bharat trains and stations to celebrate personal milestones, offering options for birthday events, pre-wedding shoots and other private occasions, an official statement said Saturday.

Under the new policy, individuals, event organisers and photography or media companies can book static or running Nammo Bharat coaches, the statement said.

A mock-up coach at the Du-hai Depot is also available for static shoots. Bookings start at ₹5,000 per hour, with 30 minutes each allotted for setting up and removing decorations or equipment, it stated.

The NCRTC said the service offers a distinctive experience, with Nammo Bharat's modern, internationally designed coaches providing a visually appealing setting for photographs and small gatherings.

The facilities may be personalised with simple decorations, subject to guidelines, the corporation stated, adding that the celebrations will be permitted only



With stations located at key points such as Anand Vihar, Ghaziabad and Meerut South, the initiative is expected to attract residents across the Delhi-Meerut corridor, offering them a familiar yet unusual space to mark special moments

between 6 am and 11 pm and will be organised in a way that does not disrupt train operations or inconvenience commuters.

All activities will take place under the supervision of NCRTC staff and security personnel to ensure safety and adherence to operational protocols, the statement said.

With stations located at key points such as Anand Vihar, Ghaziabad and Meerut South, the initiative is expected to at-

tract residents across the Delhi-Meerut corridor, offering them a familiar yet unusual space to mark special moments, it said.

The NCRTC stated that it has also formulated a detailed premises hiring policy for film shoots, documentaries, advertisements, and other visual projects at Nammo Bharat trains and stations.

These locations can be booked for short-term use at competitive rates, it said.

Delhi Secretariat to get upgraded LAN, Wi-Fi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: The Delhi government is working on revamping the local area network (LAN) and Wi-Fi infrastructure at the Secretariat building for an updated digital ecosystem, officials said Saturday.

The existing LAN at the Delhi Secretariat is over a decade old, which needs an overhaul as it sometimes faces glitches, hampering work. It also requires updates according to the new technology and improvements in internet connectivity, they said.

The LAN refers to interconnected computers and digital devices in a specified geographical location, like a building. The LAN works through inter communication of digital devices like computers with the help of components like routers, switches, firewalls and signal repeaters.

The Information and Technology (IT) department of the government has taken up the project for complete modernisation of the LAN and Wi-Fi infrastructure at the Delhi Secretariat to meet current digital demands, said a department official.

It will provide a robust, high-speed, and secure communication network to support e-governance applications and internal collaboration. The upgraded infrastructure will ensure seamless connectivity for all departments, enabling efficient use of cloud-based tools and digital platforms, he said.



The upgrade will support high-bandwidth activities like video conferencing, improve connectivity, thereby directly enhancing productivity and inter-departmental coordination, he added.

Currently, the Public Works Department (PWD) is carrying out a survey of the LAN and the Wi-Fi infrastructure of the building to suggest required interventions and revamp work, he added.

The Delhi Secretariat is a nine-storey building near ITO that serves as the seat of the city government. Its various floors are occupied by the offices of the chief minister, cabinet ministers, the chief secretary, as well as top officers of different departments.



Fishermen navigate through polluted foam as they cast nets to catch fish in the Yamuna river near Kalindi Kunj, in New Delhi, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

Jackals escape from Delhi zoo; search underway

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: A few jackals escaped from their enclosure at Delhi's National Zoological Park Saturday morning, prompting authorities to launch a search operation in the forested area behind the animal exhibits, according to an official.

Meanwhile, calls and messages to the Administration department of Delhi zoo went unanswered, and there was no immediate response on the incident.

The breach, reported the Saturday morning, has once again brought the zoo's preparedness and animal management under scrutiny.

An official privy to the matter said, the jackals slipped out from the rear side of the enclosure, which opens into a dense

forest patch forming the zoo's outer boundary.

There was no threat to visitors, who remained unaware of the situation, he added.

He said the escaped jackals are suspected to have taken advantage of a gap in the fencing at the back of the enclosure. Zoo teams have been deployed across the forested area to locate and secure them.

The jackal enclosure is surrounded by high wire mesh and includes burrows, shaded areas, and a shelter structure. The section where the breach occurred is now being examined to determine how the animals managed to get through, the official added.

Another official said initial assessments suggest the jackals have not moved towards the visitors' pathway and are likely still within the zoo premises.



Woman cooks noodles inside train, Central Railway initiates action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: The Central Railway has launched efforts to trace a woman passenger after her viral video of cooking instant noodles using an electric kettle inside an AC coach of an express train has raised safety concerns, officials said Saturday.

A Central Railway official told PTI that the woman passenger has been identified and efforts are on to trace her. She will face action under section 147(1) of the Railways Act.

The video shows an electric kettle plugged into a mobile charging socket. The woman, speaking in Marathi, says she prepared tea for 10-15 people using the same method.

After the widely circulated video raised serious concerns over passenger safety and potential fire hazards, Central Railway said action was being taken against the channel that posted the clip as well as the person involved.

“Using an electronic kettle inside trains is strictly prohibited. It is unsafe, illegal, and a punishable offence. It can lead to a fire incidence and be disastrous for other passengers also.

May also cause disruption of electric supply and malfunction of the AC and other electronic ports in the Train,” the Central Railway stated on X.

A TALE OF COURAGE

11-year-old boy fights off leopard in Palghar forest; school bag saves life

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Palghar, Nov 22: An 11-year-old schoolboy displayed exemplary courage as he fought back a menacing leopard with the help of his friend by hurling stones and raising an alarm, which forced the big cat to beat a hasty retreat in Palghar district of Maharashtra, officials said Saturday.

The encounter could have had worse consequences had Mayank Kuvara not been carrying his school bag, which turned out to be a protective shield when the big cat pounced on him Friday evening near the Mala Padvipada area.

“A leopard attacked Kuvara, a class 5 student, when he was returning from school. He and another boy fought back with brave cries and threw stones”, officials confirmed.

The commotion and the swift reaction of the children alerted people who ran to the scene, causing the leopard to flee back into the forest.

Kuvara suffered a claw injury to his hand and is currently undergoing treatment at Vikramgad Rural Hospital. A medical officer said the boy has received stitches for the injury.

Resident Forest Officer, Kan-chad, Swapnil Mohite told PTI Saturday that forest officials immediately rushed to the spot



The boy suffered a claw injury to his hand and is currently undergoing treatment at Vikramgad Rural Hospital. A medical officer said he has received stitches for the injury

and later to the hospital where the boy was taken.

The Forest department is taking the incident seriously and is implementing several preventive measures, he added.

The Forest department has requested schools in leopard-prone areas to shut down by 4pm.

Mohite said an AI-enabled camera is being installed to track the movement of the big cat, while villages are being alerted through traditional 'Davandi' (public announcements).

of the day quote

I believe democracy is strengthened by healthy discussion, and not by confrontation. The ruling party and the opposition should have the objective of public welfare and the development of the state in mind

SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR | JHARKHAND GOVERNOR

Guwahati creates history! Proud to see ACA Stadium become India's 30th Test venue, bringing the pinnacle of cricket to Assam

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | CHIEF MINISTER, ASSAM

We will finally have the data we have been waiting for. Many people have come in, now we must know who they are, how long they have stayed, and whether their ILPs are valid or expired. Even those with ILPs who are overstaying will now be visible in the system

PEMA KHANDU | CHIEF MINISTER, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

SHORT TAKES

SIA arrests man in white collar case

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Police's State Investigation Agency arrested a man here Saturday in connection with a 'white collar' terror module case, officials said. The arrested person has been identified as Tufail Niyaz Bhat, a resident of the Batamalo area of the city here. He was arrested as part of the ongoing investigation into the 'white collar' terror module case, the officials added. The entire module was busted after the Srinagar Police began an investigation into the pasting of posters that threatened police and security forces on walls in Bunpora, Nowgam, in mid-October.

Police constable held in ₹7cr Bangalore heist

Bangalore: Three people, including a police constable, have been arrested in connection with the ₹7.11 crore robbery in the city following a manhunt involving over 200 personnel, City Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh said here Saturday. Also, three more accused were 'detained' in Hyderabad and a bag with ₹53 lakh cash was seized from them, the Deputy Commissioner of Police of Bengaluru South division Lokesh B Jagalasar said. Briefing reporters on the sensational heist where a gang posing as RBI officials decamped with the money, Singh said ₹5.76 crore has been recovered so far and efforts are on to trace the remaining amount.

Trans-border drug module busted

Chandigarh: In a major recovery of narcotics, Punjab Police's Anti-Narcotics Task Force Saturday recovered 50 kg of heroin after busting a trans-border drug trafficking module, officials said. Sandeep Singh alias Seepa, a notorious drug smuggler and a resident of village Shanna Sher Singh Wala in Kapurthala district, was arrested in connection with the recovery of the heroin, police said. Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said that apart from recovering a big haul of heroin, the police also impounded his white car in which he was travelling. Preliminary investigation revealed that this trans-border shipment of 50 kg of heroin was sent by Pakistan-based and ISI-supported smugglers.



There is no replacement for books. Books are not just a source of knowledge, but a deep process of thinking, understanding, and learning. Give books, not bouquets, at any event

PUSHKAR SINGH DHAMA | CHIEF MINISTER, UTTARAKHAND

TRUMP JUNIOR PRAISES MEWAR RULERS' LEGACY

Donald Trump Jr, son of US President Donald Trump, met erstwhile royal family member Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar at the Udaipur City Palace Saturday during his visit to Rajasthan for a high-profile wedding, officials said. Trump Jr was accompanied by US businessman Raj Mantena. The meeting featured discussions on Mewar's history, culture and contemporary global developments



Cong questions effectiveness of 'repackaged' 4 labour codes



A day after the Centre notified the four Labour Codes, pending since 2020, with several worker-friendly measures, the principal opposition party questioned their effectiveness in giving justice to workers and said it should learn from the Congress governments in Karnataka and Rajasthan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said the 29 existing labour-related laws have been re-packaged into the four Codes and are being marketed as some revolutionary reform when even the Rules are yet to be notified.

"But will these codes make these 5 essential demands of India's workers for Shramik Nyay a reality? National minimum wage at ₹400 per day, including for MGNREGA. Right to Health law that will provide universal health coverage of ₹25 lakhs. Employment Guarantee Act for urban areas. Comprehensive social security for all unorganised workers, including life insurance and accident insurance and a commitment to stop contractualisation of employment in core Government functions," Ramesh said in a post on X.

"The Modi Government must learn from the examples of the Congress Government in Karnataka and the former Government in Rajasthan, which have pioneered labour reform for the 21st century with their groundbreaking gig worker laws that preceded the new codes," the Congress leader also said.

The four Labour Codes include worker-friendly measures like a timely minimum wage for all and universal social security, including gig and platform

The Modi Government must learn from the examples of the Congress Government in Karnataka and the former Government in Rajasthan, which have pioneered labour reform for the 21st century with their groundbreaking gig worker laws that preceded the new codes

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY, COMMUNICATIONS

workers, while allowing longer work hours, broader fixed-term employment and employer-friendly retrenchment rules.

While the four Labour Codes -- the Code of Wages (2019), Industrial Relations Code (2020), Code on Social Security (2020) and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020), which were passed by Parliament five years back -- were notified Friday to replace 29 fragmented laws with a unified and modern framework, rules that will bring them into force with immediate effect will be issued shortly.

Key reforms include mandatory appointment letters to workers to ensure formalisation and job security; universal social security coverage, including to gig, platform, contract, and migrant workers, with PF, ESIC, and insurance benefits; statutory minimum wages and timely payment across all sectors; expanded rights and safety for women, including night-shift work and mandatory grievance committees; and free annual health check-ups for workers aged 40 and above.

The Codes, however, had earlier come under criticism from trade unions over unclear provisions on retrenchment and possible discretionary behaviour during the implementation by the central or state governments.

Court allows accused's plea to meet lawyer at NIA headquarters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: A Delhi court Saturday allowed the plea of Jasir Bilal Wani, an accused in the Red Fort blast case, to meet his lawyer at the National Investigation Agency (NIA) headquarters, court sources said. The plea was allowed by Principal District and Sessions Judge Anju Bajaj Chandna of the Patiala House Court, they said.

The Delhi High Court refused to pass an order to allow the accused's plea Friday, saying he failed to show any order passed by the trial court rejecting his prayer.

The high court, in the alternative, granted Wani's counsel

the liberty to approach the trial court concerned Saturday for adjudication of his plea in accordance with law.

A resident of Qazigund in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag, Wani was arrested in Srinagar by the NIA November 17 for allegedly providing technical support for carrying out terror attacks by modifying drones and attempting to make rockets ahead of the November 10 blast.

The next day, Judge Chandna sent him to 10-day NIA custody.

According to the NIA, Wani was an "active co-conspirator" in the blast and worked closely with "suicide bomber" Dr Umar-un-Nabi to plan the "terror carnage".

DELHI BLAST



A Bangladeshi national rests with a child as they wait to return to their homeland after allegedly illegally entering the Indian territory, following the implementation of the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, at Hakimpur checkpost, in North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

TEJAS CRASH: 'PATRIOT, OUTSTANDING ATHLETE'

IAF pilot's village in Himachal mourns a life lost too soon

The single-engine light weight aircraft crashed around 3.40 pm IST after Namansh had flown across the site during the demonstration flight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dharamsala/Hamirpur, Nov 22: For the people of Patiyalkar, a sleepy village in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district, the news of the death of local hero Namansh Syal -- the IAF Wing Commander killed after a Tejas fighter jet crashed during an aerial display at the Dubai Air Show Saturday -- is yet to sink in.

For most of them, Namansh, who was in his mid-30s, remains an outstanding athlete distinguished by his dedication

to the country, "who even set an example in death by diverting the aircraft to save thousands present at the mega air show".

Since early Saturday, heart-wrenching scenes have been witnessed at the Syal household in the Nagrota Bagwan area, with villagers trying to console the wailing family members mourning a life lost too soon.

Jogindernath Syal, Namansh's uncle, told PTI Videos that the mortal remains of the wing commander reached the Sular Air Force station near Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu around 9 am Saturday, from where they will be flown to the Gaggal airport in Kangra Sunday.

"We have made all arrangements for the cremation," he said.

Jogindernath came to know about the crash Friday after-



noon after Namansh's father, who was not at home at the time, called him and asked if he had any information about the incident.

"My wife rushed to their tenant, who works in Qatar and had come to the village on a holiday. After scanning the latest news on the internet, he confirmed that it was

Namansh who was flying the jet that crashed. I immediately contacted my brother to give him the tragic news. Initially, he did not believe what I said, and came to terms with reality only after I told him that it was confirmed information," he told PTI Videos.

Namansh is survived by his father, mother, wife, who is

also serving in the Air Force, and their six-year-old daughter. Namansh and his wife met during their first posting in Pathankot, and later got married in 2014.

"As soon as I came to know about the crash, I contacted Namansh's family members. Initially, we thought he was injured. Sadly, we were wrong... A promising career came to an abrupt end," Nagrota Bagwan SDM Manish Kumar Sharma said.

Namansh's alma mater, the Sainik School at Sujampur Tira in neighbouring Hamirpur district, is also struggling to come to terms with the tragic passing of one of its illustrious alumni. A special prayer meeting was held at the school during which principal Rachna Joshi and other teachers fondly remembered their former student Saturday. Many alumni of the school

also shared photos and messages remembering their former schoolmate. Pankaj Chadha, former president of the Sainik School Sujampur Old Boys Association, said Namansh brought glory to the country, and his martyrdom will always be remembered.

As the crash in Dubai cast a tragic shadow on an otherwise mega spectacle on the last day of the event, video footage showed the jet abruptly dropping height after what looked like a low-altitude manoeuvre and then nosedived into the ground in a matter of seconds before being engulfed in a ball of fire.

The single-engine light weight aircraft crashed around 3.40 pm IST after Namansh had flown across the site during the demonstration flight. The aerial display of Tejas was scheduled to last eight minutes.

Train services hit after fire breaks out in Dharavi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 22: Several shanties were gutted in a major fire that broke out in Dharavi slum area of Mumbai close to the Harbour line local train tracks Saturday, leading to suspension of train services for three hours on the affected stretch, officials said.

Nobody was injured in the blaze, but several blasts, apparently of cooking gas cylinders, could be heard when the fire was raging, emanating thick black smoke that could be seen from afar.

The fire in the huts located inside the Navrang Compound on the 60-foot road broke out at 12.30 pm.

"The fire started from a single storey shanty, which later spread to similar adjacent structures. After being informed, eight fire engines and 10 jetties, many other fire brigade vehicles and some senior officials reached the spot for a firefighting operation," a civic official said.

"There is no report of any injuries to anyone," he added.

Several shanties were gutted in the fire, which was doused at 3.40 pm after more than three hours of efforts, he said.

As the fire broke out close to the railway tracks, local train services between Bandra and Mahim on the Harbour line were suspended, railway officials said.

Shah distributes books at Ahmedabad International Book Fair



AGENCIES

Ahmedabad, Nov 22: Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah distributed books to children and visited various stalls at the Ahmedabad International Book Fair, held in Ahmedabad Saturday.

In a post on 'X', Shri Amit Shah said that books are not only a source of knowledge but also an important medium for personality development. He said, today, I distributed books to children and visited various stalls at the Ahmedabad International Book Fair organized by AMC and National Book Trust (NBT).

Shah said that this fair, featuring literary programs, folk song and poetry recitations and a start-up forum, will play a vital role in enriching children and youth intellectually by promoting reading and skill development.

international

of the day quote

If Japan dares to attempt an armed intervention in the cross-Strait situation, it would be an act of aggression

FU CONG | UN AMBASSADOR, CHINA

The US administration has so far been unable to secure the consent of the Ukrainian side. Ukraine is against it. Apparently, Ukraine and its European allies are still under illusions and the dream of inflicting a strategic defeat on Russia on the battlefield

VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

The position on race relations, I feel, if you're an ethnic minority in Britain, you can say with confidence, unfortunately, has deteriorated

SHABANA MAHMOOD | SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT, UK

SHORT TAKES

Banerji resigns as BBC board member

London: Shumeet Banerji, an Indian-origin tech industry investor, has resigned from his role as a non-executive board member of the BBC over "governance issues" at the top rung of the UK's public broadcaster. Banerji's resignation Friday comes amid ongoing upheaval within the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) over the edit of US President Donald Trump's 2021 speech for a documentary, leading to the resignation of its top officials and an apology from chairman Samir Shah. In his resignation letter referenced by 'BBC News', Banerji said he was "not consulted" about the events leading up to the departures of director-general Tim Davie and news chief Deborah Turness.

Trump blow for Somali migrants

Washington: President Donald Trump has said that he's "immediately" terminating temporary legal protections for Somali migrants living in Minnesota, further targeting a programme seeking to limit deportations that his administration has already repeatedly sought to weaken. Minnesota has the nation's largest Somali community. Many fled the long civil war in their east African country and were drawn to the state's welcoming social programs. But how many migrants would be affected by Trump's announcement Friday night that he wants to end temporary protective status could be very small. A report produced for Congress in August put the number of Somalis covered by the programme at just 705 nationwide.

Rare bird flu strain kills Washington man

Washington: A Washington state man is believed to be the first person to die from a rare strain of bird flu, but state health officials have said the risk to the public is low. The man, an older adult with underlying health conditions, was being treated for a bird flu called H5N5 after becoming seemingly the first known human infected by the strain, according to a statement from the Washington State Department of Health Friday. The man from Grays Harbor County, about 125 km southwest of Seattle, had a backyard flock of domestic poultry that had been exposed to wild birds, health officials said. "The risk to the public remains low," the statement from state health officials said. "No other people involved have tested positive for avian influenza."

REIGN OF TERROR

School kidnappings have come to define insecurity in Africa's most populous nation, and armed gangs often see schools as "strategic" targets to draw more attention

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Abuja, Nov 22: A total of 303 schoolchildren and 12 teachers were abducted by gunmen during an attack on St Mary's School, a Catholic institution in north-central Nigeria's Niger state, the Christian Association of Nigeria said Saturday, updating an earlier tally of 215 schoolchildren.

The tally was changed "after a verification exercise and a final census was carried out," according to a statement issued

Pak's Asif mourns Indian pilot's death

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Nov 22: Pakistan Defence Minister Asif has offered condolences to the Indian Air Force and the family of the pilot who died in a crash during the Dubai Air Show, saying rivalry with the neighbouring country belongs "to the skies only."

"Pakistan Strategic Forum on the behalf of the whole nation offers sincere deep condolences to the Indian Air Force & to the family of the pilot of the Indian Air Force HAL LCA Tejas that crashed today at the Dubai Air Show 2025," Asif said in an overnight message on X.

Pakistan Strategic Forum is an agency of defence analysts from Pakistan and allied nations' committees to provide tactical and military insights, according to the forum's description on its X account.

The minister sharing Forum's message noted that "Unfortunately the IAF pilot wasn't able to eject & hasn't survived the crash." The minister further clarified that rivalry with India's air force was limited to skies.

"Our rivalry belongs to the skies ONLY, & as per the teachings of Quran & Sunnah we do not celebrate any unfortunate incident," he said, and ended the post with, "Over to the skies & beyond, RIP BRAVE HEART." Asif's message comes amid the strained ties after the conflict in May this year. The Pakistan Strategic Forum too in its X post offered condolences. "Our rivalry belongs only to the skies not at air shows where we stand together on common ground, united by passion for flight and respect for those who dare to push the limits," it added. "Our prayers are with his family and his squadron in this difficult hour."



by the Most. Rev. Bulus Dauwa Yohanna, chairman of the Niger state chapter of CAN, visited the school Friday.

He said 88 other students "were also captured after they tried to escape" during the attack. The students were both male and female and ranged in age from 10 to 18. The school kidnapping in Niger state's remote Papiri community happened four days after 25



Using AI responsibly means using it in ways that help you grow. Don't ask it to do your homework for you

POPE LEO | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

UK BLOCKS ANCIENT HINDU ART

The UK government has placed an export bar this week on a series of 200-year-old bold and colourful paintings that are said to depict one of the most important narratives in Hinduism. A buyer is being sought to keep the set of 56 paintings, valued at around 280,000 pounds, representing the origins and triumphs of Devi, or the Divine Mother



Trump okay with Mamdani calling him a 'fascist'



AGENCIES

Washington, Nov 22: United States President Donald Trump Friday met newly elected New York City mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani, a man who he has publicly lashed out against.

Among other things, Trump has in the past called Mamdani a "communist lunatic" and a "total nut job." The NYC mayor had also proudly proclaimed that he was Trump's "worst nightmare."

However, the customary meeting between the two seemed warm and cordial, with Trump also indulging in praising the Democrat for his aims and manner of conduct.

"I think he is going to surprise some conservative people, actually," Trump told reporters at the Oval Office after the meeting with Mamdani. The US President also said he would be "helping" the mayor in making New York "strong and safe."

For his part, Mamdani said he "appreciate" the US President for the meeting not being focused on disagreements but on the "shared purpose" of "serving New Yorkers."

Mr. Trump and Mr. Mamdani said they focused their private discussion on the cost of living and affordability, issues at the heart of Mr. Mamdani's mayoral victory.

Mr. Trump talked at length about bringing down the price of groceries and housing. By emphasizing pocketbook issues, the two men largely dodged topics of disagreement such as immigration policy and the war in Gaza. But their economic focus also represented smart politics for Trump as polls show affordability remains the number one concern for voters nationwide.

Both Trump and Mamdani were grilled by reporters regarding remarks made about each other, including the latter's comment calling the US President a "fascist."

When asked whether Mamdani was "affirming" his thinking that Trump is a "fascist", Trump quipped in between, saying the NYC mayor could just agree to the question.

"That's okay, you can say it," Trump said, following which Mamdani replied in the affirmative. "It's easier than explaining it. I don't mind," the US President said while patting Mamdani's arm affably.

Nigerian gunmen abduct 300 kids

Niger state has now shut down all schools as a measure to forestall other kidnappings

opened for studies despite an earlier directive for schools in that part of Niger state to close temporarily due to security threats.

"We did not receive any circular. It must be an afterthought and a way to shift blame," he said, calling on families to remain calm and prayerful."

UNICEF said last year that only 37 per cent of schools across 10 of the conflict-hit states have early warning systems to detect threats.

Niger state has now shut down all schools as a measure to forestall other kidnappings. The decision was in a bid to protect lives and property, Niger Gov Umar Bago told reporters Saturday after meeting with security officials in

Minna.

"It is the decision of stakeholders today to close all schools in Niger state. All schools are closed till further notice. So we have declared Christmas holiday for all schools in Niger state," Bago said.

The kidnappings are happening amid US President Donald Trump's claims of targeted killings against Christians in the West African country. Attacks in Nigeria affect both Christians and Muslims. The school attack earlier this week in Kebbi state was in a Muslim-majority town.

The attack also took place as Nigerian National Security Adviser Nuhu Ribadu was visiting the US, where he met Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth Friday.

G20 adopts Declaration ignoring US

Generally, the adoption of the Declaration happens at the end of the Leaders' Summit. This time it happened at the start of the meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Johannesburg, Nov 22: The heads of state attending the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg Saturday adopted a Declaration by consensus despite US attempts to stop it.

"It is a great moment for us because we believe that this will revolutionise the (African) continent," South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Ronald Lamola said on host broadcaster SABC, calling the Declaration as "an affirmation of multilateralism."

Generally, the adoption of the Declaration happens at the end of the Leaders' Summit. This time it happened at the start of the meet.

"The Declaration has been negotiated and agreed upon by the Sherpas that needed to agree on (it). The various leaders who are here have been briefed by their Sherpas on what is in the Declaration, so there was nothing that stops us from putting the Declaration forward for adoption by the leaders who are in the first segment of this (two-day) meeting," Lamola said about the unusual step of adopting the Declaration early in the start of the meeting.

"We are thrilled that they agreed to do it. It contains a number of revolutionary aspects for the African continent and the world," he said.

Asked about the US' stance on not participating and trying to stop the declaration in its absence, Lamola expanded on



Modi proposes four initiatives

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday called for a profound rethink of the global development parameters and proposed setting up of a G20 initiative to counter the drug-terror nexus and a global healthcare response team. Addressing the opening session of the G20 Leaders' Meeting here, Modi said the G20 has long shaped global finance and growth, but prevailing models have deprived large populations of resources and driven the over-exploitation of nature -- challenges felt acutely in Africa. Modi also presented the principle of Integral Humanism -- part of India's civilisational values -- which he said showed a way forward in striking a balance between development and nature. The prime minister outlined four path-breaking new initiatives -- the Global Traditional Knowledge Repository, the G20-Africa Skills Multiplier Initiative, the G20 Global Healthcare Response Team, and the G20 Initiative on Countering the Drug-Terror Nexus. Acknowledging that the G20 Leaders Summit was being held in Africa for the first time, Modi said the focus on striking a balance between development and environment was more appropriate, given that the continent has been a victim of overexploitation of natural resources. "Now is the right moment for us to revisit our development parameters and focus on growth that is inclusive and sustainable. India's civilisational values, especially the principle of Integral Humanism offers a way forward," Modi told the session on 'Inclusive and sustainable economic growth leaving no one behind.'

his earlier remarks that the G20 would continue with or without the US.

The G20 cannot be paralysed on the basis of the absence of someone who was invited. The multilateral platform must function. It has served good since the second World War, so that is the message that South Africa was sending across in all the engagements to say we have to move with the Declaration.

"We have to ensure that the

Declaration becomes a success and the whole world is here. They have agreed that that is the way to go. It is now a platform for cooperation where all the leaders of the world are saying this is where the world must go. Cooperation is the only way. This is an affirmation of multilateralism," Lamola said.

"With regard to our bilateral relations with the US, the Department of Trade and Industry is continuing with their engage-

This G20 is not about the US. It is about all the 21 members of the G20. We are all equal members of the G20. What it means is that we need to take a decision. Those of us who are here have decided this is where the world must go and that is what is going to happen

RONALD LAMOLA | MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION, SOUTH AFRICA

ments and we look forward to finding a positive resolution. But the reality is that the South African government has acted responsibly with regard to the US," he said.

Lamola added that South Africa would not act "recklessly from the beginning or at any stage" because it knows that the US is the world's largest economy and South Africa's second largest trading partner.

"So, there is no way you can deal with the economy without the US," he said. "But there must be a point where we are able to stand firm even when we are being diplomatically correct."

Escape plot lands Brazil's ex-president in custody

For more than 100 days, Bolsonaro has been under house arrest for violating precautionary measures in a separate case over allegedly courting US interference to halt the criminal case against him

REUTERS

Brasilia, Nov 22: Former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro was taken into federal police custody Saturday before a planned supporters' vigil near his home, ending months of house arrest as he appeals a Supreme Court conviction for plotting a coup.

Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes ordered the detention in a court decision, seen by Reuters, citing the risk of encamped supporters hampering police monitoring of Bolsonaro's house arrest. He also noted evidence of tampering with the ex-president's ankle monitor the night before.

Bolsonaro's lawyers confirmed the detention, citing the planned vigil as the main reason for Moraes' decision

and noting they plan to file an "appropriate appeal". A federal police representative said Bolsonaro underwent custody intake examinations in Brasilia early Saturday.

JUDGE CITES ESCAPE RISK

"The tumult caused by an illegal gathering of the convict's supporters has a strong chance of putting at risk the house arrest and other precautionary measures, allowing for his eventual escape," wrote Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes in his decision ordering the detention Saturday.

The judge cited evidence that Bolsonaro had previously considered seeking asylum in the Argentine embassy in Brasilia. One of his sons and other close allies have fled



Brazil to avoid the reach of the country's courts, Moraes noted in his decision.

In a statement, Bolsonaro's lawyers said his detention caused "deep perplexity", noting that what would be a "prayer vigil" was guaranteed by the Brazilian Constitution under the right to religious freedom.

"Despite claiming the 'existence of very serious evidence of a possible escape,' the fact is that the former president was

arrested at his home, with an electronic ankle monitor and under police surveillance," they added.

Moraes' decision will be submitted to a Supreme Court panel for confirmation, Monday.

The right-wing former leader was sentenced in September to 27 years and three months in prison for plotting a coup after losing the 2022 presidential election to leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

- Brazil's ex-president Bolsonaro detained by police ahead of vigil
- Judge cites risk that vigil hampers monitoring of house arrest
- Bolsonaro appealing against prison sentence for plotting coup
- Arrest order cites tampering with ex-president's ankle monitor

Bolsonaro was identified as the leader and main beneficiary of a scheme to prevent Lula from taking office in 2023. However, the courts have not yet issued a final arrest order in that case, as Bolsonaro has not exhausted the appeals process.

US President Donald Trump, who was friendly with Bolsonaro when they were both in office, has called the case a "witch hunt". He imposed sanctions on Moraes, the justice overseeing it, and a 50% tariff on US imports of several Brazilian goods, which he began to roll back this month.

'COME FIGHT WITH US', SAYS BOLSONARO'S SON

While under house arrest, Bolsonaro was barred from using social media, but received visits from political allies.

His son, Senator Flavio Bolsonaro, put out a call on social media for supporters to gather outside his father's condominium in Brasilia on Saturday evening. "I invite you to come fight with us," the senator said in a video posted online. "With your strength, the strength of the people, we'll fight back and rescue Brazil."

If his appeals are unsuccessful, Bolsonaro's defense is expected to seek permission for him to serve his nearly three-decade sentence under house arrest, citing several health issues. The former president, who was stabbed in the abdomen during a 2018 campaign event, has a history of hospitalizations and surgeries related to the attack. Bolsonaro had previously been banned from running for office until 2030 after Brazil's electoral court found him guilty of abusing his office during his 2022 re-election campaign.

TWO-DAY ASHES BLITZ

Head, Starc orchestrate England's annihilation

Stokes & Co gets a taste of their own 'Bazball' medicine in the third session

REUTERS

Perth, Nov 22: Makeshift opener Travis Head scored a brilliant 83-ball 123 to lift Australia to an astonishing eight-wicket victory inside two days against England Saturday, powering his side to 205-2 late in the final session of the Ashes opener at Perth Stadium.

The manic style of cricket, which produced the shortest Ashes test by overs-bowled to deliver a result since 1888, kept the crowd enthralled as both sides gained and relinquished the ascendancy throughout.

England had set Australia a target of 205 after being bowled out for 164 by tea on day two, losing nine second-session wickets in the wake of a Scott Boland seam masterclass of four for 33. The tourists had made 172 in their first innings.

Head, taking the place of opener Usman Khawaja, who gingerly left the field in England's 27th over with back trouble, got Australia's run chase off to a rollicking start, giving England a taste of their own 'Bazball' medicine in the third session.

The near 50,000-strong crowd came to life when Head slashed Brydon Carse (2-44) for six over third man to bring up 50 for his side, and later roared their approval when he peeled four boundaries off Ben Stokes' second over.

Marnus Labuschagne added an impressive 49-ball 51 after debutant Jake Weatherald (23) had fallen to Carse, but the moment belonged to Head, who brought up Australia's equal-third fastest century with a risky upper-cut and a scurried single.

The fourth innings raced to a conclusion with Head clubbing four sixes and 16 boundaries before launching Carse to Ollie Pope at deep midwicket, hugging Labuschagne and soaking in the applause as he walked off.

Stand-in skipper Steve Smith, unbeaten on two, hit the winning run with a single punched to the off-side.

"Today was just incredible, wasn't it?" said Smith.

"That innings from Travis Head was out of this world. He just played some outrageous shots, and even when he shanked it, he seemed to hit the gaps. "It's one of those days when you're on, you're on, and he made the most of it and got us home," he added.



- Australia destroy England by eight wickets
- Head scores century, Starc claims 10 wickets
- Thrilling Ashes opener all over within two days

FAST BOWLING MASTERCLASS

England had quickly bowled Australia out for 132 to start the day, breaking the last-wicket partnership between Nathan Lyon and Brendan Doggett which added only nine to the side's overnight score.

In a relatively sedate passage of play in the lead-up to lunch, the visitors added 59 for the loss of Zak Crawley, who suffered his second first-over duck of the match at the hands of spearhead Mitchell Starc, leading the attack in the absence of stalwarts Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood.

Boland, who stood up with 4-33 after going wicketless in the first innings, then ran rampant, breaking through in the second session when opener Ben Duckett was caught for 28.

The 36-year-old claimed two more in his next over, with Pope left punching his bat in frustration after being caught behind on 33 and Harry Brook trudging off for a three-ball duck having nicked to first slip.

One of the loudest roars of the day came when Joe Root, on eight, chopped-on Starc (3-55) from well outside off-stump.

Not even the boisterous support of the "Barmy Army" could lift the tourists, as Starc celebrated his first match-haul of 10 wickets in an Ashes test with a bouncy delivery that Ben Stokes, on two, popped to second slip.

Debutant Mahit continues to bring glory

Mahit Sandhu clinches 50m Rifle 3 Positions gold, her fourth medal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 22: Continuing with her splendid debut run, India's Mahit Sandhu clinched the women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions gold for her fourth medal at the Summer Deaflympics in Tokyo.

Mahit totalled 456.0 after 45 shots to bag her second gold of the Games. South Korea's Dain Jeong took silver with 453.5, while Hungary's Mira Zsuzsanna Biatovszki claimed bronze with 438.6.

Mahit also broke both the Deaf Qualification World Record and the Deaflympics world record on her way to the final.

She topped qualification



Kuldeep keeps India in fight

Bowlers give India upper-hand as South Africa slip to 247/6 on Day 1 in 2nd Test

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Nov 22: Temba Bavuma paid price for his momentary indiscretion while Tristan Stubbs fell prey to Kuldeep Yadav's guile as bowlers put India on top in the second Test, reducing South Africa to 247 for six on an attritional opening day's cricket, here.

It was a track with a difference where survival, unlike Kolkata, wasn't difficult but at the same time, it wasn't a belter either where a team could just race away with a flurry of boundaries.

The Indian bowlers -- especially Kuldeep (3/48) and Jasprit Bumrah (1/38) -- displayed immaculate control and mastery on a track that was reasonably good for batting with no signs of variable bounce whatsoever.

Ravindra Jadeja (1/30) didn't get much help off the surface but dismissing Bavuma (41 off 92 balls) was one of the turning points of day one.

It was an over-pitched delivery and Bavuma wanted to play the lofted drive over mid-off. The ball stopped on him and hit slightly higher part of the bat and never got the elevation required. Yashasvi Jaiswal pounced it smartly.

This was after his 84-run stand with Tristan Stubbs (49 off 112 balls) and South Africa were looking good to carry on with the momentum.

Following Bavuma's dismissal, Tristan Stubbs, playing his first innings of note in the series, also lost concentration.

It was a delivery from Kuldeep that was angled across Stubbs who wanted to play a non-existent steer as a practice catch went to KL Rahul at the first slip.

Stubbs did look good after some initial jitters as he used his big 6 feet 4 inch frame to come down the track, defend the deliveries based on length and attack when need be. Both



his sixes off Kuldeep -- one over long-on and other over long-off -- were a result of picture-perfect footwork.

The two quick wickets resulted in a third as Wiaan Mulder (13) also repeated the mistake made by Bavuma. The bowler this time, though, was Kuldeep, who had tossed one up outside the off-stump, enticing him to go for an inside out drive over extra cover.

Once again there was no elevation and Jaiswal made no mistake as South Africa from a comfortable 166 for 2 slumped to 201 for 5.

At the fag end of the day, Mohammed Siraj produced a beauty where the ball deviated late to get Tony de Zorzi (28 off 59

balls) nick one to a diving Rishabh Pant behind the stumps.

His was another case of a batter getting set and not converting the start.

After an under-prepared track that messed up things for India in the opening game in Kolkata, the Barsapara Stadium track remained firm while offering some lateral movement due to the underlying moisture in the first hour and half.

But all the Proteas batters were guilty of throwing away the initial hardwork. They survived those anxious moments, got their eye in but could not turn their knocks into substantial ones.

The opening day had a retro like feel from 1980s and 90s as

with 585-31x -- scoring 194 in kneeling, 198 in prone and 193 in standing -- breaking her own previous mark of 576 set at last year's World Deaf Shooting Championships in Hannover.

India's Natasha Joshi also made the final, qualifying seventh with 566-12x. She finished fifth with 417.1.

In the final, Mahit led the field through the kneeling, prone and the first 10 stand-

ing shots. A 9.4 on her 41st shot briefly handed the advantage to Jeong, who hit a 10.1, but the Indian staged a composed comeback, producing four successive 10s to seal the title.

Indian shooters have so far won 14 medals at the Deaflympics including five gold, six silver and three bronze.

Abhinav Deshwal and Chetan Hanmant Sapkal are in the fray in the 25m pistol event.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Lakshya overpowers Chou to storm into men's finals

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Sydney, Nov 22: India's ace shuttler Lakshya Sen overpowered Chinese-Taipei's Chou Tien Chen in the thrilling semi-final to reach the summit clash of the Australian Open Super 500 at Sydney Olympic Park Saturday.

In a remarkable fightback, Sen came from a game down to defeat second seed Chen 17-21, 24-22, 21-16 in one one-hour and 26-minute encounter.

Sen, who is still chasing his first title of the season, started the match under pressure as Chen took an early lead of 4-0 and entered the break with a score of 11-6. The Indian tried to reduce the deficit but Chen clinched the game 21-17.

The second game saw a fierce battle between the two players to take advantage from the beginning. The lead was briefly swapped by them before Sen showed his prowess in the tense situation to take two consecutive points at 22-22 to seal the game.

In the final game, Sen quickly seized control, heading into the mid-game break with an 11-6 advantage. He stretched the lead to 14-7, and a service fault from Chen widened the gap to 17-9. A sharp cross-court smash then handed Sen eight match points. Though Chen managed to save four of them, he eventually sent a shot into the net, allowing Sen to complete a strong comeback win.

Sen is the lone Indian alive in the tournament after he powered past a determined Ayush Shetty in straight games to reach the semifinal Friday.



BRIEF SCORES:
South Africa 247/6 in 81.5 overs (Tristan Stubbs 49, Temba Bavuma 41; Jasprit Bumrah 1/38, Kuldeep Yadav 3/48, Ravindra Jadeja 1/30, Mohammed Siraj 1/59) vs India

JEANSGATE

FIDE relaxes dress code

International Chess Federation allows classic non-distressed jeans for both men and women, a year after the 'jeansgate' storm involving Magnus Carlsen at the same event

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New Delhi, Nov 22: The International Chess Federation (FIDE) has announced a significantly relaxed dress code for next month's World Rapid and Blitz Championships in Doha, "allowing classic non-distressed jeans for both men and women", a year after the 'jeansgate' storm involving Magnus Carlsen at the same event.

The updated regulations from the world chess governing body now "allow" dark business-casual trousers "including classic, non-distressed jeans in blue, black or grey for both men and women" for the Doha event from December 25 to 30.

Suits, unicoloured shirts, dress shoes, loafers and unicoloured sneakers are also allowed for men, while women may wear skirt or pant suits, dresses, dark trousers including jeans, blouses and similar footwear, stated the FIDE dress code requirements.

Clothing must be neat and free of rips, tears, offensive slogans or prohibited logos.

T-shirts, shorts, baseball caps and beachwear remain banned.

Any request to wear national or traditional dress requires approval from the Global Strategy Commission.

The 101-year-old world governing body of chess had already broken from tradition earlier this year when, in September, it had eased its long-standing dress code in response to last year's controversy.

It allowed players to wear "appropriate jeans" at the Grand Swiss and Women's Grand Swiss tournaments in a relaxation that has now effectively been extended across the board.

FIDE also detailed sanctions for violations of the upcoming Doha meet. It said infringements such as untidy appearance or wrinkled clothing will attract penalties during the Doha meet.

FIDE's announcement comes a day after world No 1 Carlsen revived memories of last year's

high-profile spat at the same venue.

Carlsen had kicked up a storm last year when he turned up for a Rapid round in jeans that did not meet the 2024 dress code. He was fined \$200, warned by the arbiter, but refused to change immediately and was eventually excluded from the day's pairings.

He withdrew from the remainder of the Rapid tournament and publicly criticised FIDE's handling of the event. He eventually returned for the Blitz section where he shared the title with Ian Nepomniachtchi and later auctioned his jeans for about Rs 31.5 lakh, donating the proceeds to charity.

World champion D Gukesh will lead a 41-member Indian contingent -- 28 men and 13 women -- at the year-ending championship.

Other top Indian names include Arjun Erigaisi, R Praggnanandhaa, Nihal Sarin, Koneru Humpy and Divya Deshmukh.

India thrash Australia to reach Women's T20 WC for the Blind final

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Colombo, Nov 22: India delivered a powerhouse performance at the iconic P. Sara Oval on Saturday, storming into the finals of the 1st Women's T20 World Cup Cricket for the Blind with a dominant nine-wicket win over Australia.

The innings was anchored by Player of the Match Basanti Hansda, whose composure and class defined India's chase. With a damp outfield after overnight showers, India's decision to field first proved decisive. The bowling and fielding unit held Australia under tight control -- highlighted by skipper Deepika's brilliant run-out that shifted the momentum India's way. Australia's B2 batter Julie Neumann battled for 25 (28), while B3 players Chanakan Buakhao 34 (33) and Courtney Lewis 14 (14) kept the scoreboard moving, aided by 20 extras.

Chasing with confidence and clarity, India turned the semi-final into a show of dominance.

B3 spark Ganga Kadam set the rhythm with a fluent 41 (31). B2 star Basanti Hansda, who earned Player of the Match honours, anchored the innings with a superb 45 (39).

B1 striker Karuna finished the job in style with an explosive 16 off just 5 balls. India sailed to 112, sealing a resounding nine-wicket win and booking their spot in Sunday's grand finale.

LAS VEGAS GRAND PRIX

McLaren's Norris grabs pole

THE POLE WAS HIS 7TH OF THE SEASON, EQUALLING VERSTAPPEN'S TALLY, AND THE 16TH OF HIS CAREER, WITH THE LAST SEVEN RACES ALL WON FROM THAT POSITION

REUTERS

Las Vegas, Nov 22: Formula One championship leader Lando Norris swept to a stunning pole position for the Las Vegas Grand Prix in a wet and slippery qualifying Friday with McLaren teammate and closest title rival Oscar Piastri only fifth.

Red Bull's reigning world champion Max Verstappen, third in the standings after 21 of 24 races and 49 points off the lead, joined the Briton on the front row but was 0.323 slower.

Norris, who can take another huge stride towards the title in Saturday night's race, leads Australian Piastri by 24 points and will be chasing a third win in a row at a street circuit where McLaren had expected to struggle.

"Boy, that was stressful. Stressful as hell," said Norris after a cold night session that started in steady rain with the Aston Martins on full wets and the rest on intermediates.

"It's so slippery out there. As soon as you hit the kerb a bit



- Verstappen joins Norris on front row
- Norris takes seventh pole of season
- Hamilton to start last for Ferrari
- Last year's winner Russell qualified fourth

Debut season: Hamilton's Ferrari 'nightmare'

Lewis Hamilton admitted things "can't get much worse than that" after qualifying slowest on pure pace for the first time in his Formula 1 career at the Las Vegas Grand Prix Saturday. After calling his debut season with Ferrari a "nightmare" in the wake of the team's double DNF at the Sao Paulo Grand Prix, Hamilton's fortunes dipped even further in Las Vegas. "I just don't really have words for it. It's obviously not good enough, and I didn't have any -- I couldn't get any temperature into the tyres. I just had a lot of understeer, and then I think one of my front brakes was glazed, so I was really struggling to stop in the corners," said Hamilton following his Q1 exit. Hamilton's result signalled an unwelcome milestone for the seven-time World Champion and marked the first time a Ferrari has qualified slowest since the 2009 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

