



**FESTIVE SPIRIT:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, accompanied by his wife Priyanka Marandi, offers prayers to Goddess Durga on the occasion of Mahashantami at a pandal in Sundarpada, Bhubaneswar, Friday

## CM waives ground rent for pandals

POST NEW NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 11: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday waived the ground rent for Durga Puja pandals across Odisha. Puja organisers expressed their gratitude for the Chief Minister's gesture.

The Chief Minister joined the festive spirit of Durga Puja as he visited several pandals in Bhubaneswar on the occasion of Mahashantami. Accompanied by his wife Priyanka Marandi, Majhi began his pandal tour at Patana Sahi in Bhubaneswar's Old Town, where he offered prayers and performed the aarti with devotees chanting 'Jai Maa Durga.'

Majhi said, "I feel fortunate to receive the blessings of the Goddess and the responsibility as Chief Minister. I prayed before Maa Durga for the happiness, peace and prosperity of our people. May Odisha, in the next five years, transform into a prosperous state."

## Two Agniveers killed during firing practice

ARMY INITIATES COURT OF INQUIRY TO DETERMINE THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

AGENCIES

Nashik, Oct 11: Two Agniveers were killed during a field firing exercise in Maharashtra, an official said Friday, adding the army has initiated a court of inquiry to determine the cause of the accident.

Gunner Gohil Vishvarajsinh (20) and Gunner Saikat (21) from the Artillery Centre Hyderabad died during a field firing exercise at the Deolali Field Firing Ranges in Nashik district, the official said.

A team of Agniveers was firing a field gun when one of the shells exploded, the official said, adding the two sustained injuries and were taken to the military hospital at Deolali, where they were pronounced dead.



Combo photo of Agniveers - Gunner Gohil Vishvarajsinh and Gunner Saikat from Hyderabad's Artillery Centre

who laid down their lives in the line of duty while undergoing training at the firing ranges," the army said in a post on X.

The army has ordered a court of inquiry to find out the exact cause of the accident, it said. The army offers deepest condolences and stands firm with the bereaved families in this hour of grief, it added.

The Indian Armed Forces induct Agniveers under the Agnipath scheme, rolled out in June 2022. The recruits serve a four-year tenure: training for six months and deployment for the remaining 42 months. At the end of the tenure, not more than 25% of Agniveers in an outgoing batch are selected for the permanent cadre.

### DUSSEHRA GREETINGS

To all our readers, advertisers and well-wishers

**HOLIDAY NOTICE**

The offices and press of Orissa POST will remain closed October 12 and 13 on account of Dussehra. Hence, there will be no edition of the paper October 13 and 14. However, OP web will be available to readers on both the days

—EDITOR

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



As a business tycoon, you too will be remembered by history, sir. Your name is in almost every scam

## Nobel Peace for Japan's atomic bomb survivors

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oslo, Oct 11: The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded Friday to Nihon Hidankyo, a Japanese organisation of survivors of the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, for its activism against nuclear weapons.

Jørgen Watne Frydnes, chair of Norwegian Nobel Committee, said the award was made as the "taboo against the use of nuclear weapons is under pressure."

Last month, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced a shift in his country's nuclear doctrine, in a move aimed at discouraging the West from allowing Ukraine to strike Russia with longer-range weapons. It appeared to significantly lower the threshold for the possible use of Russia's nuclear arsenal.

Watne Frydnes said the Nobel committee "wishes to honour all survivors who, despite phys-



Tomoyuki Mimaki of Nihon Hidankyo speaks to media in Hiroshima

ical suffering and painful memories, have chosen to use their costly experience to cultivate hope and engagement for peace."

Hidankyo's Hiroshima branch chairperson, Tomoyuki Mimaki, who was standing by at the city hall for the announcement, cheered and teared up when he received the news. "Is it really true? Unbelievable!" Mimaki screamed. Efforts to eradicate nuclear weapons have been honoured before by the Nobel committee.

## 13 coaches derail as trains collide in TN



AGENCIES

Chennai, Oct 11: A total of 13 coaches of Mysore-Darbhanga Bagmati Express derailed Friday at Kavaraitpettai near Chennai

after ramming into a stationary goods train, an official said, adding that three coaches of the train caught fire after the derailment.

Several passengers travelling in the train sustained injuries and

were admitted to nearby hospitals.

Southern Railway officials, meanwhile, said that no serious injuries have been reported so far. In a statement, the Southern Railway said: "Train No 12578 passed Ponneri at 8.27 p.m. The crew experienced a heavy jerk, and the train entered the loop line. A few coaches derailed." In videos circulating on social media, flames can be seen beneath some derailed coaches, and passengers are seen being rescued.

The Railway Board said that no casualty has been reported so far. "More than

95% passengers have been evacuated from affected coaches and so far we haven't received any information about any casualty or grievous injury," it said.

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# leisure



## HENRY CAVILL TO STAR IN VOLTRON

Actor Henry Cavill, popularly known for portraying the role of Superman, is now all set to be seen in the live-action *Voltron* film. Rawson Marshall Thurber has come on board to helm the project, which he wrote with Ellen Shanman, as per *Variety*.

## DORAEMON VOICE ACTOR NOBUYO OYAMA DIES

Nobuyo Oyama, the beloved voice behind the iconic cartoon character Doraemon, has passed away at the age of 90. From the show's debut until 2005, Oyama voiced the nation's beloved blue cat-robot in her own inimitable way.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Logic and reasoning will hold court, while creativity takes a backseat today. There are challenges at work, but you are a dynamo and will meet them upfront. All tensions will be relieved by the loving touch of your near and dear. Such is life, sums up Ganesh.

**TAURUS**  
Today, you will strike a great balance between your professional and personal life, predicts Ganesh. You will save your money from being swindled by others. You may be lagging in the race to catch up with your goals, but will not be disappointed by what you achieve.

**GEMINI**  
Today, you will have a tendency to remain possessive about your personal belongings, says Ganesh. You are likely to join personality development courses to achieve your ultimate goals. An unpleasant occurrence is likely to throw you off guard.

**CANCER**  
You may have a way with words, but women somehow always have their way with you. Your problem is that while you may use your words to pull some strings, the master puppeteer, in most cases, will be a woman. So, to keep yourself happy, you may have to make the concerned woman happy.

**LEO**  
You may not have a halo around your head, but that most certainly does not deter you from playing the spiritual card today, says Ganesh. On this auspicious day, it is through religious scriptures that you satiate your desire to attain the intangible. Spend some time meditating on the finer aspects of life; you will be amazed at the answers such contemplation can throw up.

**VIRGO**  
Today, your ingenuity will breed ideas like rabbits. You have the healer's hands, and so shall you make right many a wrong, predicts Ganesh. You shall be most understanding, and reading people's mind will do wonders for you and your beloved.

**LIBRA**  
A wistful day lies ahead of you, says Ganesh. This day, just like 'on the summer day that we flew kites', may be the standard when it comes to wanting to have a better future. Ganesh expects a sea of change in your outlook, thanks to your sweetheart's noble gesture today.

**SCORPIO**  
Dear friends and soul mates will bring you much relief and calm today, says Ganesh. Spend as much time as possible with them. Romantic escapades with your beloved will be heaven in itself. Blood relations will stand true and strong in matters of importance, says Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Tempers will fly today, warns Ganesh. Rein in your anger by the leash of control and restraint. But the buck will stop somewhere! When it does, dig your feet in and battle the crunch situation, advises Ganesh.

**CAPRICORN**  
Your outstanding intellectual ability will not only yield exciting results for you, but will also help your close associates who will have progressed a great deal in their career because of your valuable advice, says Ganesh. Scores of problems may come your way, but you will have nothing to worry about. You will deal with each one of them with ease.

**AQUARIUS**  
Your communication skills will work wonders today. Your eloquence will win you precious brownie points, and may prove highly beneficial in meetings. In fact, all your arguments will sound very persuasive. The trick is not to get ruffled, says Ganesh, when people don't agree with you.

**PISCES**  
An auspicious time for starting new projects, today will see you make substantial investments in your future. Your family is the foundation of your success, and keeping that in mind will provide you with some vital insights.

## Alia's future plans

**Mumbai:** Alia Bhatt has revealed her future plans and it includes making more movies, having more babies and jet-setting to several places. Asked about her future, Alia expressed a mix of personal and professional aspirations as she said: "Hopefully many more movies, not just as an actor but hopefully also as a producer. More babies, lots of travel, and just a healthy, happy, simple, quiet, peaceful, full-of-nature life." The actress also shared that she would like to have a house in the mountains.

ress got married to actor Ranbir Kapoor in April 2022, after dating for a few years. The couple welcomed their daughter Raha in November 2022. Talking about which films of hers and husband Ranbir's she would want Raha to watch when she grows up, Alia shared the list during IMDb's Icons Only Segment. She said: "I think for me, maybe *Student of the Year* because honestly, it's the youngest, most chill film that kids could watch. And that is my first film. Although I am not really proud of my performance in that film, but it's full of songs, and I think she would really enjoy that." Alia is currently gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Jigra*.



## Janhvi recounts her near-death experience

**Mumbai:** Actress Janhvi Kapoor was in life threatening situations while shooting for the song *Chuttamale* from the Jr. NTR-starrer *Devara: Part 1*. Janhvi took to Instagram, where she shared some throwback moments from her shoot schedule in Thailand. She shared that she shot for the popular track in jellyfish filled water. The actress also shared several moments from the shoot.

In a video, the actress shared a behind-the-scenes moment from the song *Chuttamale* and was heard saying: "This might be the most life threatening moment... I am going into jellyfish infested waters. Nothing but a thin silk saree to protect me. I hope I survive, I hope it is worth it. I hope it is a memorable shot." In another slide, she showcased the "beware" sign as the water is infested with Jellyfish, whose stinging cells in their tentacles can injure humans. In one clip, the actress was seen talking about climbing "really sharp rock" and then coming to the dangerous waters.

## Rahman concert for Harris



**Mumbai:** Music composer AR Rahman will be performing at a live music concert to celebrate Kamala Harris' historic candidacy for US President, an Indian-American fundraiser has announced. The Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI) Victory Fund, which has endorsed the US Vice President for the upcoming election next month, shared the news in a post Thursday evening. "A very special evening with AR Rahman. Join A R Rahman to celebrate the historic candidacy of Kamala Harris for President with a world-class live music concert streamed straight to your home," the AAPI Victory Fund announced. No date has been set for the event and Rahman has not yet posted about it on his social media handles. The post on X includes a sign-up sheet for people to receive the link for the live streaming of the legendary Indian composer's performance.

## 'Female crew are treated like furniture'

**Mumbai:** Casting couch, patriarchal hierarchies, mistreatment, and sexual harassment have been a part of film industry, in a recent interview Konkona Sen Sharma made some shocking revelation from the film industry. She addressed the existing issue of sexual harassment on the film sets and the troubling hierarchy that lies within the industry based on gender, caste, or class. The Page 3 actress further discussed about the unfair gender dynamics in the industry. She pointed out that film a person's caste and class dictate where they are allowed to sit and what food they are allowed to eat. The actress said, "It's hugely problematic, patriarchal, regressive, and hierarchical. I mean, even in terms of catering. Who is allowed to sit where? Who is allowed to eat what? Where are the bathrooms? What people get away with?" Konkona has worked in showbiz for over two decades and revealed that only senior women are respected on set. Apart from them, other female crew members are treated like furniture or equipment. On the work front, the actress was last seen in *Killer Soup*. She is currently busy filming her next film, *Metro... In Dino*.

## In the line of FIR(E) & FOULPLAY

It seems eerily prophetic that the band *Starfish* was re-named as *Coldplay* in 1993, for, a large flock of music fans were to be left out in the cold and an equal measure were to be played for a fool, come September of 2024. *Martin*, and his boys, bewildered by-standers at best, scratching their scalps, fretting over the events (not their guitars) that subsequently unfolded; would have least anticipated an online ticket booking hulla-baloo-ning into an alleged ticket scalping scam. They may well be cooling

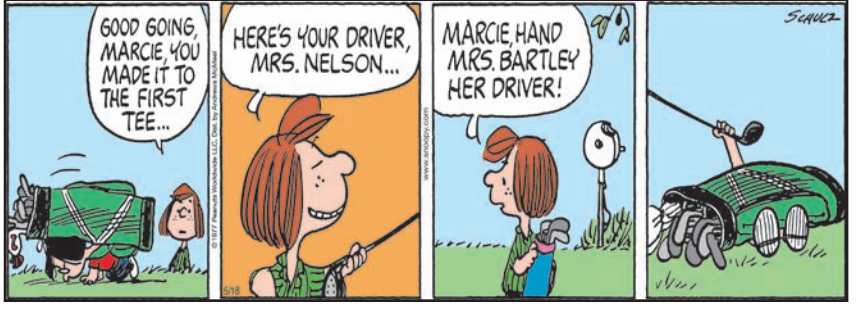
their heels with glasses of ice-cold *Martini* (Bond-style) shaken (up), not stirred; crooning their chartbuster song, "I want something just like this". Collective emotions of almost a billion countrymen get stirred every 2nd of October, when we reminisce the great line by Gandhiji: "Be the change you wish to see in the world". Children of the country have since taken note and ushered in ground-breaking change touching many spheres. In fact, 13 million of us recently logged in and queued up to change

and stamp India's live entertainment history by a defining moment of fandom but, only 1.5 lakh amongst us will be the defining few to touch the concert ground for "Music of the *Spheres*" playing under "A sky full of stars". Who knew that concert-planning would go so fast from securing front-row seat to filing legal suit! Where reigning chaos replaces 'raining tickets' will the members of *Coldplay* develop pre-event cold feet? Dunno! But it is possible that a certain eminent Professor clicked recently at a

luxury hotel with holes in his socks, may have his feet cold. He however insists that said wardrobe choice is his bit towards sustainable living. If only he could teach a thing or two about sustainable online ticketing without portals crashing or alleged bots and black-market operators crashing the party! Anyway, my "hymn for the concert weekend" would be "Viva la Vida" (live the life) watching a past *Coldplay* concert online with cold-drinks and a warm spirit. **Dr Rachna Rath**



### PEANUTS



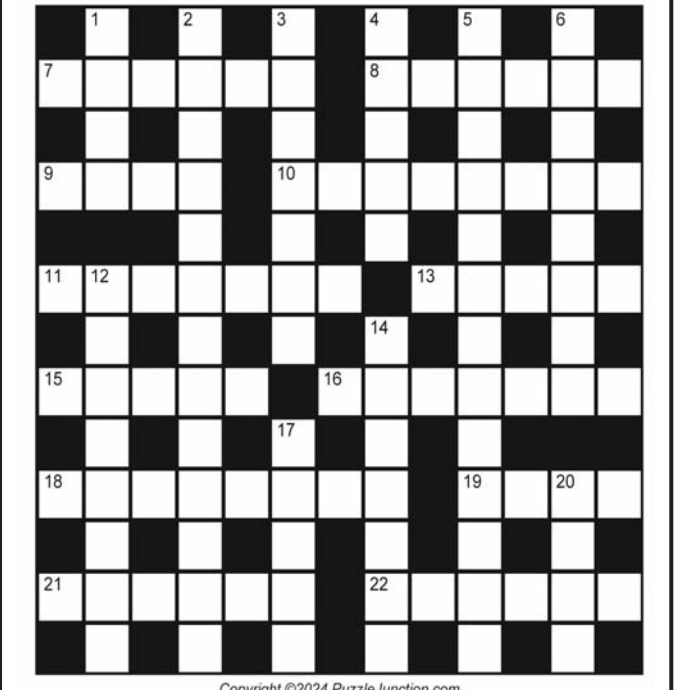
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



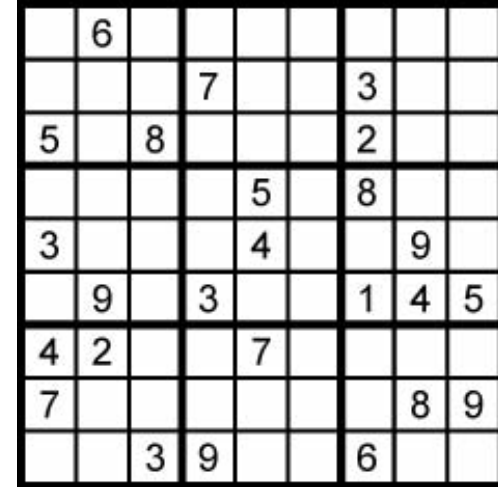
### FUN post CROSSWORD



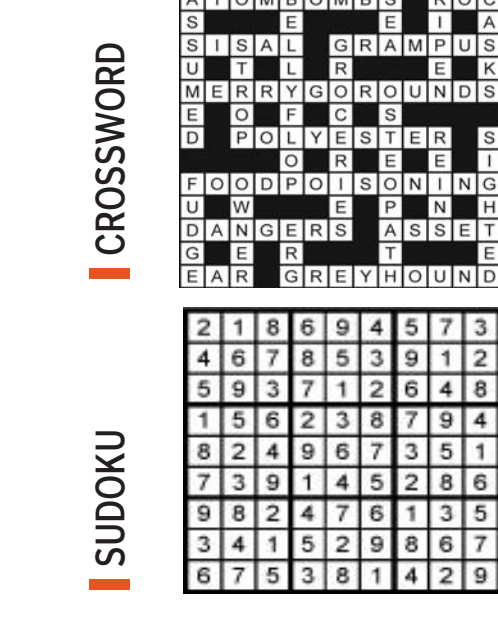
- Across**
- 7 Significance
  - 8 Coarse-furred burrowing rodent
  - 9 Small indentation
  - 10 Trump, mentally
  - 11 Type of vehicle (3-4)
  - 13 Suggest
  - 15 Complain
  - 16 Ticker of the ivories
  - 18 Disposed to agree
  - 19 Dried-up
  - 21 Aft
  - 22 Schedule
  - Down**
  - 1 Shot, for short
  - 2 Sporting dog
  - 3 Footstool
  - 4 Whack
  - 5 Head of state (5,8)
  - 6 Like some discount airlines (2-6)
  - 12 Ranking above all others
  - 14 Stoker
  - 17 Hard dark-colored heartwood
  - 20 Went by car

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



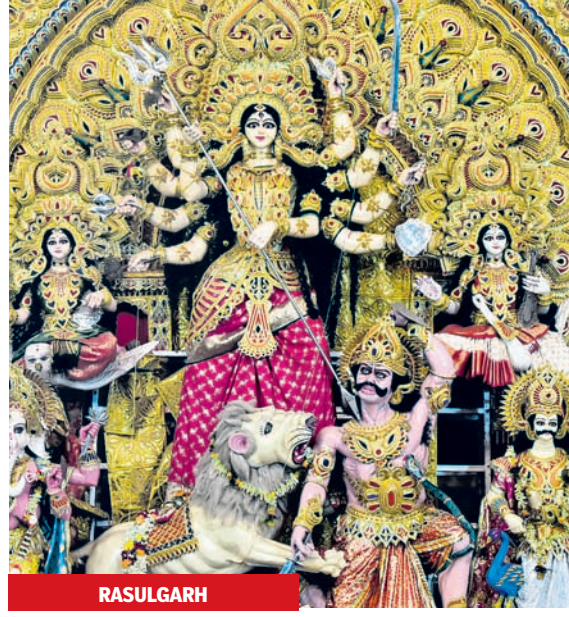
# CITY SOAKS IN DEVOTIONAL FERVOUR



SAHEED NAGAR



BOMIKHAL



RASULGARH



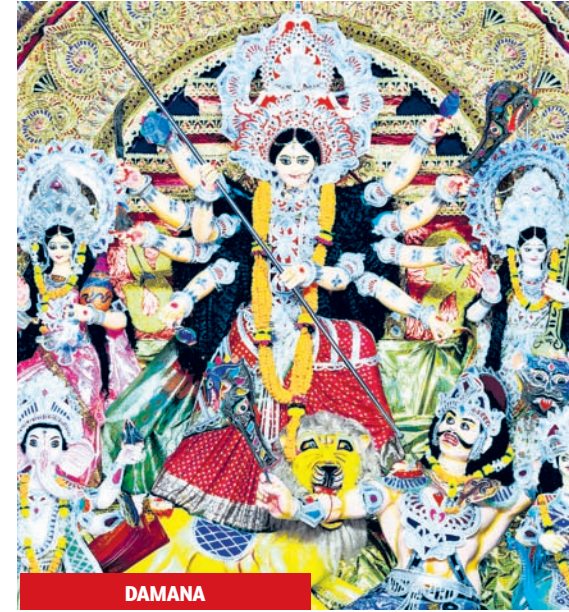
OLD STATION BAZAAR



NAYAPALLI



JHARPADA



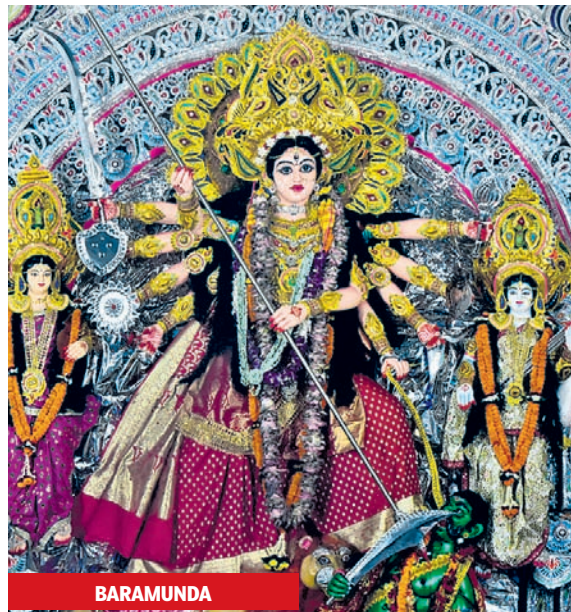
DAMANA



RABI TALKIES



SAMANTARAPUR



BARAMUNDA



PATIA



OLD TOWN

## PRESIDENT GREETS CITIZENS ON DUSSEHRA EVE

**NEW DELHI:** President Droupadi Murmu Friday greeted citizens on the eve of Dussehra and said the festival is a reminder to strengthen one's faith in higher human ideals. The festival of Dussehra, also known as Vijayadashami, marks the victory of good over evil. "On the auspicious occasion of Vijayadashami, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all my fellow citizens. The festival of Vijayadashami marks the victory of justice over injustice," the President said. "This sacred festival reminds us to further strengthen our faith in higher human ideals," she said. "Many inspiring stories of dignity, commitment to duty, purity of conduct, humility and courageous struggle for justice are associated with this festival. These stories should be our source of inspiration," she said and added, "May this festival of faith and zeal bring success, prosperity and happiness for all," Murmu said.

## 'Administrative delay' plagues cyber policing

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 11:** In the face of the alarming rise in cyber crimes in the Capital City, the Commissionerate Police seems to be dragging its feet over measures to counter the clear and present danger.

Sample this. Online criminals mopped up over ₹10.61 crore from the account of unsuspecting citizens using various pretexts in just one month (August), which is the highest figure for a month so far this year.

Moreover, in just three months (May-July), the Cyber Crime and Economic Offences Police Station, the dedicated unit to investigate cyber-crimes, had logged eight cases of UPI, debit/credit card frauds every day. Also, as many as 312 complaints of online harassment and 310 cases of website



- A proposal to engage two cyber forensic experts, an equal number of IT and finance/accounts experts has been gathering the dust since 2023
- Even though some appointments in the lower rung has been made at the Cyber Crime and Economic Offences Police Station in the past two months, lack of appointment in the upper rungs has resulted in massive pendency in the detection of the cases
- Sources stressed the need for setting up of a Cyber Crime Centre of Excellence in the City unit which will bring in technical expertise necessary for early detection of crimes

frauds, spam calls and text messages had been reported during this period.

Meanwhile, highly placed sources in the City police said that the technological preparedness to prevent and detect the growing menace of cybercrimes

seems to be inadequate on account of administrative delays. To begin with, sources said, a proposal to engage two cyber forensic experts, an equal number of IT and finance/accounts experts has been gathering the dust since 2023. Even though some appointments in the lower rung has been made at the Cyber Crime and Economic Offences Police Station in the past two months, lack of appointment in the upper rungs has resulted in massive pendency in the detection of the cases. Besides, sources also stressed the need for setting up of a Cyber Crime Centre of Excellence in the City unit which will bring in technical expertise necessary for early detection of crimes.

According to the Commissionerate Police statistics, as many as 3,660 cyber fraud complaints had been received between January and September this year, involving a total amount of ₹68.49 crore. The police managed to freeze ₹11.86 crore of the fraudulent funds, while a total of ₹1.86 crore has been returned to the victims.

**ଶାରଦୀୟ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ**

ଦା' ଦେବୀ ସର୍ବଭୂତେଷୁ, ଶକ୍ତିରୂପେଣ ସଂସ୍ଥିତା  
ନମସ୍ତସ୍ମୈ ନମସ୍ତସ୍ମୈ, ନମସ୍ତସ୍ମୈ ନମୋନମଃ । ।

ଜରଜନନୀ ନା' କୂର୍ବାକ ନବରାତ୍ନା ପୂଜା ଓ ଦଶହରା ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ  
କେନ୍ଦୁଝର ଜିଲ୍ଲା, ରାଜ୍ୟ ତଥା ଦେଶବାସୀଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଆତ୍ମିକ  
ଶୁଭେଚ୍ଛା ଓ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ । ନା'ଙ୍କ କୃପାକୁ ସମର୍ଥନ ଜୀବନରେ ସୁଖ,  
ଶାନ୍ତି ଓ ପ୍ରଗତି ହେଉ; ଏତିକି ନା' ଦଶରାଜୀଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ ପ୍ରାର୍ଥନା ।

**ସନାତନ ମହାକୁଡ଼**  
ବିଧାୟକ, ଚମ୍ପୁଆ, କେନ୍ଦୁଝର

## 4 bodies found in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 11:** Four bodies were found scattered around the Capital City – three under the jurisdiction of the Government Railway Police (GRP) and one under the Khandagiri police limits, Friday.

In the first case, locals found the blood-stained body of Manoj Kumar Gauda, 25, a resident of Tapoban Basti, in a bush near Khandagiri Hills in the morning. Manoj had been missing since October 9, and a complaint to that effect had been lodged at the local police station.

The police later sent the body for autopsy even as his family members alleged that he had been murdered by some rivals as the body bore multiple wounds. GRP IIC Ashok Gochhayat said of the three bodies, two are yet to be identified. The GRP recovered a body

from a bench on Platform 2 of Patia railway station. He was later identified as Abdul Aalim Sardar, 41, a native of Howrah in West Bengal. Blood stains were found on his face. "After post-mortem the body will be handed over to his family members," Gochhayat said.

Gochhayat said the decomposed body of a man, who is still to be identified, was recovered from below Kalikhama bridge, near Mancheswar railway station during the day. From the injury marks found on the body, he said, it is assumed that he had been killed in a rail mishap.

Meanwhile, the GRP found another mutilated body in a decomposed condition near Patia railway station. His identity is yet to be ascertained. Gochhayat said the police are scanning CCTV footage in the area to identify the cause of death.

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# Bogus RAY beneficiaries in Capital mint money

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 11:** Exposing serious loopholes in execution of affordable housing scheme - Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) - under Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), the beneficiaries were found to have been minting money by renting out the properties allotted to them for free in the Capital city.

According to reports, the illegal activities of about 250 RAY beneficiaries, who have availed the houses by declaring themselves 'homeless, landless and poor', have defeated the very purpose of the government housing scheme, prompting the BMC to swing into action and issue notices to the illegal tenants.

A civic body team conducted raids at eight places Wednesday and identified around 250 such errant house owners who have rented out their RAY accommodations here. Moreover, the team found that some of the beneficiaries also own landed properties and houses in other places.

The civic body has said that it would take stringent action against the illegal beneficiaries and cancel the allotments.

Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das said, "We had received some complaints about renting of some of the affordable



**BMC recently raided eight places, and has identified around 250 unscrupulous owners who have rented their free government houses to tenants**

houses by a few owners. It was also alleged that some of the RAY beneficiaries, who already have housing and landed properties, have availed houses by submitting fake documents."

Das also said that the BMC had distributed houses as per the list provided by the Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA). Some of the houses were also allotted to the RAY beneficiaries, she added.

"BMC officials, in the presence of police, had raided several houses in the City and found that at least 250 houses have been rented out by the RAY beneficiaries. We have issued notices to them and decided to take steps to cancel their licences (possession) if they fail to provide any satisfactory response," the Mayor said.

According to sources, the BMC launched a crackdown on illegal housing beneficiaries and con-

ducted raids at eight Awas Complexes - Rangamatia, Mandap Basti, Nilamadhav Basti, Buddha Vihar, Patharabandha, Mahishakhala, Shanti Nagar and Subdhipur.

The civic officials reached out to every house owner and asked them to show their identity documents. The team then matched the documents with the list provided by BDA. It was found that some of the RAY beneficiaries were residing in houses allotted to them, but some others have rented out their houses and living in houses they have built by encroaching upon government land.

Interestingly, some other beneficiaries were found to have sold out their houses and returned to their villages.

Sources said the illegal house owners would visit their properties once in a month to collect the rent.



**RANGILO RAAS 2024 CONCLUDES**  
Madhavas Rock Band performed on the concluding night at the vibrant Rangilo Raas 2024 Navratri celebrations with a soulful devotional tune at Hotel Crystal Crown in Bhubaneswar Friday. Organised by Regal Designs, Crystalline Event, and VG Designs, the event blended traditional Garba rhythms with modern rock, celebrating the festive spirit of Navratri in an electrifying atmosphere

## Tanty bats for separate Rourkela rly division

**THE REGION IS RICHLY BLESSED WITH VAST INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RAILWAY DIVISION IN ROURKELA WILL SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY AND FACILITATE FREIGHT MOVEMENT, THEREBY PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE, RAGHUNATHPALI MLA DURGA CHARAN TANTY SAID**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Oct 11:** Raghunathpali MLA Durga Charan Tanty has written to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw the establishment of a separate railway division for Rourkela that would serve as a catalyst for regional development.

In his letter, Tanty said, "We believe that this initiative is essential for the interest of resourceful Keonjhar district (130km away from Rourkela) and Jharsuguda district (120km away) in the western part of Odisha, which falls under Sambalpur revenue division," Tanty said in the letter.

"The region is richly blessed with vast industrial and commercial opportunities. The establishment of a railway division in Rourkela will significantly enhance connectivity and facilitate freight movement, thereby promoting economic growth and development



of the state," Tanty added.

The lawmaker is hopeful that the proposed division would serve as a catalyst for regional development, creating job opportunities and improving infrastructure. "We are optimistic that our request will receive your favourable consideration during the 2024-2025 fiscal," the

letter said.

At present, Rourkela comes under Chakradharpur railway division which extends for 741.70km. Out of this, 335.78km falls in Jharkhand and the remaining 405.90km in Odisha. Tanty claimed that it is the stretch in Odisha which is contributing majorly

to Railway funds.

"Rourkela is under CKP division and is contributing more than 40 per cent of the total revenue. Hence, Rourkela should be a separate division. Land and infrastructure won't be a problem," said Tanty.

In his letter, Tanty claimed that Bondamunda maintenance yard here is the second largest in Asia. Sufficient Railway land is also available. If the Rourkela railway division is formed, the tracks will cover 1,000km including parts of Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, he said.

"The tracks will pass through areas that are rich in mineral resources like coal, iron ore, lime stone and dolomite. Also a large number of steel and cement industries are present in these localities. Hence, the revenue of the Rourkela division will be quite substantial and will also be profitable for the Railways," Tanty stated in his letter.

## Former Kodala MLA Niranjana Pradhan dies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 11:** Former legislator Niranjana Pradhan died while undergoing treatment at a hospital here, family sources said.

The veteran politician was under treatment at the hospital for nearly a month after a brain stroke and breathed his last Thursday night, they said.

Pradhan's son Deepak said his father was also suffering from diabetes.

He was first elected from Kodala Assembly constituency in Ganjam in 2004 and also won the Polasara segment in the same district five years later. He won both the seats on Biju Janata Dal (BJD) tickets.

Pradhan joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) after being denied a BJD ticket in the 2019 elections. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik consoled Pradhan's demise.



## Plea to Prez for promotion of Ol Chiki, Santali language

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** A delegation from 'Fagun', a monthly Santali newspaper, met President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhawan here Friday, urging her for development of Santali language and promotion of Ol Chiki script.

A letter written in Ol Chiki script was submitted to the President mentions about the demands like featuring the value of Indian currency in Santali using Ol Chiki script, promoting Santali language and script in CBSE and ICSE curricula, using Ol Chiki for administrative exams conducted by UPSC, UGC NET exams, and CIL programmes, establishing a dedicated DD Santali channel and broadcasting daily programmes on Santali language on All India Radio, setting up of

a Central university in Mayurbhanj district named after Pandit Raghunath Murmu, building a Santali Bhawan in New Delhi, ensuring the success of the Mission Ol Chiki 2025 programme with government support for publishing and distributing textbooks and conducting government operations using Ol Chiki script on the 100th anniversary of its invention.

The delegation presented a photograph of Pandit Raghunath Murmu, sal trees and a brass horse as gifts to President. 'Fagun' editor Malati Murmu, Radhika Murmu, Mangat Chandra Chapey, Mangat Murmu, Chandramohan Beshra, Dubaraj Tudu, Dhirendranath Baskey, Niranjana Marndi, Surukuni Murmu, and 40 other members were present in traditional attire during the interaction.

## Dhak & dhakis steal the show in festive season

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 11:** The festive season is incomplete without the sound of *dhak*, huge, almost cylindrical or barrel-shaped membranophone instrument from Bengal and Assam, suspended from the neck, tied to the waist and kept on the lap or the ground, and usually played with wooden sticks.

*Dhak* and *dhakis* are an integral part of Durga Puja celebrations in eastern states. In the Capital city, *dhakis* from nearby areas including Puri, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur are usually hired by the puja committees, for elevating the festive mood and pulling in crowds.

The festive season helps the *dhakis* earn some extra money, apart from their regular engagement in odd jobs and daily wage labourers, and sometimes migrant workers, for earning livelihood. A few of them are also year-around farmers, who have access to agricultural land.

Subrat Kumar Nayak from Niali in Cuttack districts said he has been continuously coming to Bhubaneswar for last 15 years



with his family to play *dhak*. "Our forefathers used to play *dhaks* full-time, but nowadays we only play it during the festive season," he said.

"We are engaged in cultivation to run the family. We generally earn decent amount during the festive season. This is a seasonal occupation for us but it

helps us to earn a little more," Nayak said.

Similarly, Narendra Nayak of Sailagobindapur in Cuttack said, "Playing *dhak* for Durga Maa during the festival is a traditional occupation of our family for several years, but now, our future generation is not interested to continue the tradition.

However, I will continue to play till my last breath."

Basant Samal, a sehnai player from Jagatsinghpur, said they are small artists who depend upon these festivals and ceremonies for their livelihood. "We are only remembered during the marriage functions, thread ceremonies and festival season," he said.

*Dhak* and *dhakis* are an integral part of Durga Puja celebrations in eastern states

In the Capital city, *dhakis* from nearby areas including Puri, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur are usually hired by the puja committees, for elevating the festive mood and pulling in crowds

"Durga Puja is a festival of sharing happiness. The *dhakis* come from far-off places, leaving their family away during the festival to work and perform in different pandals. They look forward to the festive season with huge expectations," said Sachinandan Nayak, secretary of Saheed Nagar Durga Puja Committee.

Being a full-time *dhak* player is not stable. Most *dhakis* choose alternative ways of income to support themselves and their families. *Dhakis* have to stay away from their families during the festive season because of their job, and they have been doing it every year. While everyone dances to the beat of *dhak*, which indeed invokes the aura of Durga puja, the *dhakis* make a silent sacrifice.

## Army recruitment rally from Oct 18-26

**Cuttack:** An Army recruitment rally will be conducted from October 18 to 26 here for selection of candidates under Agnipath scheme. Candidates from Cuttack, Puri, Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Bhubaneswar, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Khurda and Nayagarh, and women military police candidates of West Bengal, Sikkim and Odisha have been asked to participate in the rally. Candidates who have passed the common entrance examination will appear for physical fitness and medical tests. The candidates can download their admit cards from their registered email ids. Candidates can also download admit cards by signing in to their profiles through www.joinindianarmy.nic.in. For any clarification, applicants have been advised to contact the Army recruitment office in Cuttack on 0671-2305280 or 9437162280. The candidates have been advised not to give their original certificates to any unknown person. If anyone asks for original certificates, the candidate should report immediately at the local police station or officer-in-charge during the recruitment rally.

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SUBHADRA YOJANA

## Beneficiaries duped while linking mobile number with Aadhaar

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, Oct 11:** Around 20-25 women have been duped while linking their Aadhaar cards with mobile number as money has allegedly been withdrawn from their savings accounts following the process.

The matter came to the fore after multiple applicants Friday lodged a complaint at Telkoi police station in Keonjhar district. Police have registered a case and launched a probe into the matter.

Sources said that some women from Benamunda and Galda villages went to a Jana Seva Kendra at Benamunda October 4 to connect their mobile numbers with Aadhaar to get the benefits under Subhadra Yojana.

A youth at the centre carried out the process and took their finger prints on an e-POS for authentication, they said. However, later the women found out that money had been withdrawn from their savings bank accounts.

Satyabhama Sahu, wife of Trilochan Sahu of the village, received a message on her mobile that ₹10,000 was withdrawn from her bank account October 4 and another ₹10,000 October 6.

Similarly, Snehalata Baksingh, Bhabani Patra, Jyotirmayee Dehuri, and Sanjukta Jena of Galda village were also duped in a similar manner at the said Aadhaar centre. Telkoi police station IIC Sushant Parida said that the details have been sought after receiving the complaint and the youth has denied the allegation.

## CHHATAR JATRA

# Animal sacrifice continues unabated

**AWARENESS DRIVES, APPEALS THROUGH PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM AND SOCIAL MEDIA TO DESIST FROM ANIMAL SACRIFICE FAIL AS "PEOPLE HARDLY CONSIDER IT AN ACT OF CRUELTY"**

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhawanipatna, Oct 11:** Despite repeated appeals by the administration to desist from animal sacrifice, hundreds of goats and hens were slaughtered to appease Maa Manikeswari during the annual 'Chhatra Jatra' in Bhawanipatna town Friday.

Every Mahashtami, the eighth day of Durga Puja, the streets of Bhawanipatna, the district headquarters of tribal-dominated Kalahandi, become bloodstained as both tribal and non-tribal people publicly sacrifice animals in the presence of senior police and administrative officers, all of whom expressed their helplessness to stop the practice due to its deep ties to the religious sentiments of the local population, including the Kandha tribes.

Requesting anonymity, a senior magistrate said, "Though the administration held several awareness campaigns against animal sacrifice, people hardly consider it an act of cruelty."

The official noted that while the practice has persisted for generations, there has been a decline in the number of animals slaughtered each year.

Kalahandi District Magistrate Sachin Pawar conducted a series of meetings with senior officials, police and public representatives. There was announcement in public address system and on social media to de-



sist people from animal sacrifice. But due to age-old belief and tradition, it had no impact on devotees, the official said. Thousands of devotees also released doves before the 'Chhatra' as mark of fulfilment of their wishes.

According to custom, the 'Chhatra Jatra' symbolises Maa Manikeswari's return from Jenakhal after the ritualistic secret worship at midnight to the main temple.

The procession, which began around 4am with the beating of drums like 'Jena Badya' and 'Ghumura Badya', covered a 3-

UNLIKE OTHER DURGA PUJA FESTIVALS IN THE STATE, THE 'CHHATAR JATRA' BLENDS TRIBAL, ROYAL, AND NON-TRIBAL CULTURES

'CHHATAR JATRA' SYMBOLISES MAA MANIKESWARI'S RETURN FROM JENAKHAL AFTER THE RITUALISTIC SECRET WORSHIP AT MIDNIGHT TO THE MAIN TEMPLE

km distance to the main temple by noon. The event starts with a secret sacrifice of a buffalo, followed by mass animal sacrifice on the streets, a priest explained. The three-km road from Jenakhal to the temple was

stained with sacrificial blood of the animals.

Other devotees welcomed the Chhatra with incense and lamps, and offering coconuts. Thirty five cultural troupes and local artistes showcased their art during the procession.

Upon arrival at the temple gate around noon, the procession was received by Maharaja Anant Pratap Deo, a member of the royal family. He carried the Chhatra to the Maa Manikeswari temple on the royal palace premises.

To maintain law and order, 15 platoons (each comprising 30

personnel) of police force were deployed, as over three lakh people gathered for the occasion.

Additionally, barricades were set up at major roads in the town such as Junagarh, Thuamul Rampur, Kesinga, and Narla. Three police control rooms were established at Jenakhal, Bhagirathi Hotel, and Maa Manikeswari temple, and CCTV cameras were installed to monitor the event.

Kalahandi SP Abhilash G, Bhawanipatna Sadar SDPO Sunaram Hembram, and Dharagarh SDPO Manoj Behera were responsible for the security arrangements.

Pawar noted that the Jatra was conducted peacefully with the assistance of police and volunteers.

"Unlike other Durga Puja festivals in the state, the 'Chhatra Jatra' blends tribal, royal, and non-tribal cultures. Kalahandi is predominantly home to the Kandha tribes, who boast a rich tradition, culture, and musical heritage," tribal researcher Bhagaban Sahu said.

The true display of Kandha tribal culture can be witnessed at the Chhatra Jatra. People from across the state visit Bhawanipatna town on Mahashtami to experience the festival and immerse themselves in local culture, said Binita Mohapatra, a Bhubaneswar-based academic.

## 4 injured as Ferris wheel malfunctions



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Oct 11:** Four persons were injured when they fell off a bucket seat of a Ferris wheel at a crowded Durga Puja pandal at Telephone Bhawan here Friday, police said.

The accident took place when the safety bar of the ride malfunctioned, resulting in the fall, they added. The victims included a family of three — father, mother and child — along with another kid who was with them. They fell from a height of around five to 10 feet, police said.

The ride was immediately stopped and the injured were taken to Ispat General Hospital (IGH). Fortunately, their injuries were not severe, they added.

Police have stopped the Ferris wheel, but celebrations are continuing as planned, according to one of the event organisers.

## Baby Gharial rescued from Luna river

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, Oct 11:** A baby Gharial hatchling, entangled in a fishing net, was rescued from the Luna river in coastal Kendrapara and handed over to the Forest personnel.

Forest officials stated that the hatchling was caught in the fishing net of Dolagobinda Mallik, who was fishing near the Basapur bridge. Mallik rescued the baby Gharial and informed the local Forest personnel.

Upon receiving the information, the Forest team rushed to the spot and rescued the hatchling which the officials said will be sent to Nandankanan Zoo for further care.

Local villagers reported that a 12-foot-long Gharial had been spotted in the Luna river. Two days ago, a dead Gharial hatchling was also found in another fishing net from the same river.

Forest personnel suspect that the Gharial might have strayed from its natural habitat in Satkosia, located in the Mahanadi river system.

The regular sightings of Gharial hatchlings in the Mahanadi's tributaries suggest that the temperature and environment in these waters are suitable for the species' survival.

## Utkal Alumina's Project URMI augments healthcare, hygiene

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 11:** Utkal Alumina International Ltd (UAIL), an Aditya Birla Group company, has recently launched Project URMI with an aim to provide better healthcare in Kashiipur block of Rayagada district and Thuamul Rampur block in Kalahandi district. Project URMI will have over a three-year span, touching the lives of thousands as it targets over 5,000 villagers across 40 villages.

Within a span of six months, this project has successfully established 40 Adolescent Clubs, fostering community engagement and support. It has ensured health registrations for 375 Antenatal Care (ANC) and 526 Postnatal Care (PNC), providing vital health services to mothers. So far, 902 adolescent girls and 582 infants have been brought



ALL DECKED UP: Goddess Durga in a beautifully decorated pandal prepared by Ambedkar Nagar Durga Puja Committee near Sambalpur Gurudwara, Friday

## 7 cops injured during bid to rescue kidnapped girl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jajpur, Oct 11:** At least seven police personnel, including a woman officer, were injured while attempting to rescue a kidnapped girl in Jajpur district.

The police personnel were allegedly assaulted by Ananta Samal and his brother Manoj Samal, accused of kidnapping the girl from Delang area in Puri district, an officer said Friday.

Police claimed that the girl had been held captive in Samal brothers' home in Barchana for two days.

Acting on a complaint by the girl's parents, a team from Delang police station, with assistance from Barchana police, arrived in the village Thursday night to carry out the rescue operation. As they approached the village,

Ananta, Manoj and their sister attacked police, resulting in critical injuries to seven officers, the officer added.

The injured officers were initially treated at Barchana community health centre before being transferred to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack.

A case has been registered at Barchana police station, and a special team has been formed to apprehend the suspects, who fled the area after the incident.

"Delang police, with the support of four of our officers, went to Barchana village to rescue the kidnapped minor girl. During the rescue attempt, the accused siblings and others attacked police personnel, leaving seven officers critically injured," said Srikanth Barik, IIC of Barchana police station.

## Reserve Police Line Durga Puja marks golden jubilee

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, Oct 11:** Golden jubilee of Reserve Police Lines Durga Puja is being celebrated with great pomp and show in Keonjhar district headquarters town.

The Durga Puja festival, organised for the first time in 1974, has completed 50 successful years this Dussehra. For the golden jubilee celebrations, extensive arrangements have been made by the District Police family in Keonjhar.

Attractive clay statues of police personnel clad in different types of costumes are attracting the visitors as many are seen taking selfies with the statues. Besides, the dazzling silver statue is also another attractive show piece for the visitors. Outside the pandal, a big statue of Ravan has also been displayed,



An arms exhibition organised as part of the golden jubilee celebrations

where visitors are taking photos and selfies to share on various social media platforms.

Elaborate security arrangements have also been put in place to maintain law and order as devotees continue to throng the pandal. "The festival will end with Vijaydashami

Puja, Sunday," said Kamal Kant Sethi, president of the District Constables Association, on behalf of the organisers.

Similarly, golden jubilee special programmes are being organised at the Reserve Police Ground here. Keonjhar SP Nitin Kushalkar inaugurated an exhibition and Meena Bazaar at the Reserve Ground Thursday. Painting, song, dance, alpina competitions were also organised for children.

A 'Bhajan Sandhya' programme was held Friday by Shri Kshetra Bhajan Manch, Kendrapara while bhajan and melody programme will be held Saturday by the police family. Anil Sandh, secretary of the District Constables Association said that colourful dance programmes will be organised by Krishna Melody of Cuttack Sunday.

## Artist creates map of Ganjam 'Shakti' shrines

PNN & AGENCIES

**Berhampur, Oct 11:** A 22-year-old artist has crafted miniature wooden models of the goddesses of 18 prominent 'Shakti' shrines located in Ganjam district in celebration of the ongoing Navaratri festival.

Dilip Kumar Moharana's intricate creation showcases the models in a wooden map of the district. The faces of each wooden model, measuring about half an inch in height, have been carefully crafted using 'gambhari' and teak wood.

He carved both the map of the district and the faces of each model deity separately and assembled them meticulously.

After adding the final touches by polishing the sculptures, Moharana



fixed the models of the goddesses in their respective places on the map, using an adhesive. Moharana, a first-year Post

graduate (PG) student, took 10 days to make the sculpture measuring 15x13 inches and acknowledged the support of his father, brother, and others who assisted him in completing it.

The miniature map includes shrines of major Shakti temples such as Tara Tarini near Purushottampur, Maa Budhi Thakurani in Berhampur, Siddha Bhairavi at Mantridi, Bala Kumari at Chikiti, Baghradevi at Kulada near Bhanjanagar, Mahuri Kalua at Kukulakhandi, Narayani near Khalikote, and Bankeswari near Digapahandi, among others.

"I created this miniature sculpture to highlight the importance of the Shakti shrines in Ganjam district," Moharana said.

He planned to display the artwork in a public place in Berhampur to

educate people about these famous temples.

Before carving the faces of the model goddesses, Moharana visited several temples and took their photographs. He sourced images from the internet for those he couldn't visit.

"This project is not the first. Earlier this year, during the inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, I crafted a wooden replica of it," Moharana said.

He also included the temples of Chardham alongside the Ram temple, with the entire sculpture measuring 14 inches in height and 11 inches in width.

Moharana's talent in miniature wood carving is a way of preserving and celebrating local culture and religious customs, a district official said.

**STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD, ODISHA** No. CAD-978

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**APPEAL TO OBSERVE POLLUTION FREE GANESH PUJA, KHUDURUKUNI PUJA, BISWAKARMA PUJA, DURGA PUJA, KALI PUJA, GAJALAXMI PUJA AND SARASWATI PUJA**

**Puja Committees/Organisers**

- Use natural clay for making of idols instead of baked clay, plaster of paris etc.
- Use water soluble and nontoxic natural dyes for painting of idols instead of toxic non-biodegradable chemical dyes.
- Height of the super structure of the idol shall be limited to 40ft. and of the idol shall be limited to 20ft. in height.
- Immerse Idols only at the identified immersion sites constructed by the district authorities or local bodies.
- Remove worship materials like flowers, decorating materials before immersion of idols and to be disposed of in municipal dump site and make sure that they are not burnt near the immersion site.
- Do not use single use plastic or thermocol materials for decoration purpose and Prasad Sevan or distribution.

**District Authorities or Local Bodies**

- Aware the public regarding water pollution caused by idol immersion.
- Aware the public to purchase eco-friendly idols made up of natural clay and coloured with natural dyes.
- Identify adequate number of designated immersion sites and inform the Puja Committee authorities well in advance.
- In case of immersion of idols in rivers and lakes, arrangements may be made for construction of temporary confined ponds with earthen bunds and removable synthetic liner for the purpose of immersion of idols. Identify the immersion sites at the points where the flow in stream is naturally available.
- Within 24 hours of the immersion, the left over materials from the immersion site shall be removed for disposal at designated municipal dump site and the supernatant water may be allowed to flow into the river after adding lime to clear the water.

**Individual Households**

- Individual households are encouraged to use only eco-friendly idols made of natural clay and biodegradable materials as decorative and puja materials.
- Immersion the idols at their homes in eco-friendly manner or immerse the idols in the designated on land temporary artificial ponds or tanks located nearby or artificial movable tanks arranged by the local bodies.
- Do not throw puja left overs tied in polythene bags into the river or any waterbody, rather dispose in designated immersion sites.

**Penal Provision**

- As per the Odisha Prevention and Control of Water Pollution (Procedure for Immersion of Idol after Pujas) Rules, 2021 for violation of Rule 3 by idol makers, they may be prohibited from idol making for 2 (two) years by the concerned local body, and deposition of the idol manufacturers towards registration fees shall be forfeited by the respective local body in addition to the prohibition of idol making for 2 (two) years.
- Further, violation of Rules 5 and 6 by the Puja Committee Organisers, the concerned local bodies may impose penalty on Puja Committee Organisers as below.
  - In case the Puja Committee is located in the area of Panchayat, Rs.3000/-.
  - In case the Puja Committee is located in the area of Municipality or Notified Area Councils, Rs.5000/-.
  - In case the Puja Committee is located in the area of Municipal Corporation, Rs.7000/-.

**LET US TAKE A PLEDGE TO OBSERVE A POLLUTION FREE PUJA**

Note: The Odisha Prevention and Control of Water Pollution (Procedure for Immersion of Idol after Pujas) Rules, 2021 in this regard can be downloaded from SPCB website. (WebLink: <http://ospcbboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/1741-F-E-Idol-Immersion-Rule-by-Odisha.pdf>)

Sd./- Member Secretary

OSPCB-CL-MISC-0049-2023/14/2024 OIPR-08012/11/0067/2425



FOCUS MONETARY POLICY

# CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM



The decision to keep the repo rate unchanged was not unanimous; it came by a majority vote with one of the six members calling for a rate reduction

The monetary policy announced recently by the Reserve Bank of India has kept the policy repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent, which is the rate as it has been since April 2023. At a time when it can be argued that the rate could be cut to give a boost to growth, given that the RBI itself says the "horse of inflation" has been put back in the stable, the unchanged repo rate signals a cautious approach looking to some of the uncertainties on the horizon. Among them is the flare-up in the Middle-East, adding a new dose of uncertainty to the geopolitical climate and concomitant worries about energy and food prices.



RK Pattnaik

**A HIGHER INTEREST RATE IN INDIA WILL ATTRACT CAPITAL FLOWS FROM ABROAD AND PUT PRESSURE ON MONETARY MANAGEMENT IN TERMS OF ABSORBING LIQUIDITY BY THE RBI**

The overall picture that stands out from the remarks and statement of the RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das is one of optimism on the one hand but caution on the other; an incongruous mix that tells us that the RBI eye remains sharply focused on inflation, and in particular the coming bump in inflation that has been forecast for the festival season even though the overall inflation outlook is benign.

In many ways, this eye on inflation is a celebration of the framework that is known by the acronym of 'FIT' - Flexible Inflation Targeting under which the RBI runs the monetary policy through the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), which has the mandate to keep inflation at 4%, within a band of two percentage points up or down, while keeping in mind growth.

Wednesday's policy decision comes from an MPC that has new external members, the third time in its short history that the MPC has changed members after the completion of their terms. This indicates the grow-

ing maturity of the MPC system. It is also the 51st meeting of the MPC since it was constituted on 27 June 2016 under Section 45 ZB of the RBI Act, 1934.

The decision to keep the repo rate unchanged was not unanimous; it came by a majority vote with one of the six members calling for a rate reduction. But the MPC unanimously voted to shift the stance of the monetary policy from 'withdrawal of accommodation' (in place since June 2022) to a 'neutral' stance. Technically, the 'neutral' stance reflects neither an accommodative stance to stimulate growth nor a tightening stance to maintain price stability.

As the RBI put it, the neutral stance provides "greater flexibility and optionality" to address the evolving global and domestic macroeconomic situation with a view to achieving price stability.

In short, the MPC resolution read in conjunction with Governor's statement brings out clearly a robust growth outlook accompanied by a benign inflation outlook with a near term hump. The consumption demand supported by both rural and urban demand (backed by improved

agricultural outlook) and urban demand (sustained by services) coupled with momentum in the investment outlook by uptick in non-food bank credit, improved capacity utilisation, higher government infrastructure investment will help fostering economic growth. Accordingly, the real economic growth (not taking in to account inflation) is projected at 7.2 per cent in 2024-25.

Furthermore, in Q1 of 2025-26 the projected growth will be at 7.3 per cent. Even though the inflation outlook remains benign at 4.5 per cent for 2024-25 and 4.3 per cent for Q1 of 2025-26, there are some upside risks in terms of unexpected weather conditions, worsening geo-political conflicts, and potential increase in global commodity prices.

Here are a few contextual issues that stand out.

First, should economic growth be supported by government investment, leading to a higher fiscal deficit accompanied by a large revenue deficit. It should be clear that the government should play the role of a catalyst role and private sector investment should pick up. An in-

crease in credit off-take and capacity utilisation is a necessary condition for this, but private investment to infrastructure has been lower as evident in industrial production data. It may be mentioned that there was evidence of moderation in external commercial borrowing (US\$3.6 billion April-August 2024 as against US\$4.3 billion a year ago). It appears that the private sector is not enthusiastic enough to take up capital expenditure.

Second, most of the countries have reduced the policy rate since the August meeting. Notable among them are the US, the Euro zone, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa. A higher interest rate in India will attract capital flows from abroad and put pressure on monetary management in terms of absorbing liquidity by the RBI.

Third, a clear message from the MPC through the adoption of a 'neutral' stance is a welcome move. The growth outlook is bright and inflation outlook is largely benign. The Governor emphasised that reduction in the inflation rate further needs to be monitored. While the Governor's metaphor of keeping the inflation horse firmly bolted in the stable is welcome, there is equally a need for some forward guidance on the beginning for the policy rate cut.

If the expected inflation bump presents as just a temporary bump, then the December MPC meet will be the time when a policy rate cut of 25 basis points could be on the cards.

*The writer is a former central banker and Professor at Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune. Views are personal* @THEBILLIONPRESS

Let us keep flaming in our heart the fire of progress

THE MOTHER



## RBI Re-appointments

The government has decided to extend the term of RBI Deputy Governor M Rajeshwar Rao for another year, until October 8, 2025. The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved this re-appointment, effective from October 9, 2024, or until further orders. Rao, who originally took on the role of Deputy Governor in October 2020, has been with the RBI for years and was promoted to Executive Director in November 2016. His experience spans various key areas within the RBI, including the Risk Monitoring Department.

Rao's extension raises the question: will similar decisions be made for RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das and Deputy Governor Michael Debrabara Patra, whose terms are also nearing an end? Das, initially appointed in December 2018 for a three-year term, received an extension in December 2021, which is set to expire in December 2024. Patra, who has played a significant role in the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) since its inception, saw his first term as Deputy Governor end in January 2023, only to be granted a one-year extension until January 2024. His second term will expire in January 2025.

Patra's deep involvement in monetary policy makes his potential re-appointment a key point of interest, especially given his previous contributions as both an Executive Director and a member of the MPC. Currently, the RBI operates with four deputy governors: Patra, Rao, T Rabi Sankar, and Swaminathan J.

As we watch these decisions unfold, it's clear that the leadership within the RBI will play a critical role in shaping India's monetary policy and economic stability in the years ahead. The re-appointments of such key figures, especially during economic uncertainty, could signal continuity or a shift in approach. Only time will tell what direction the government will take.

### BCCI's interesting move to tackle corruption

The appointment of Sharad Kumar, former chief of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), as the head of the BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) has stirred up an interesting question: should someone of such seniority and importance be taking on this position? Kumar, who led the NIA from 2013 to 2017, is no small name. He's handled major terrorism cases, such as the Pathankot airbase attack, and later served as Vigilance Commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). With a career spanning decades, he's also been awarded the President's Police Medal twice. Clearly, he's got an impressive track record. But is this really the kind of job for him?

On one hand, his credentials make him seem like a great fit. With the BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit tasked with tackling issues like match-fixing and betting scandals, someone with Kumar's investigative background might be needed to bring some discipline and transparency to Indian cricket. After all, corruption in sports can undermine public trust just as much as in any other sector, and Kumar's experience in busting crime networks could be invaluable.



**BABUDOM BYTES**

Dilip Cherian

But then again, some observers can't help but wonder—is it overkill? Does Indian cricket really need someone with such a high-profile national security background to handle corruption? Wouldn't someone with a more direct understanding of the sports ecosystem be a better fit? We've seen other IPS officers in this role before, like KK Mishra, but Sharad Kumar comes with a much larger portfolio.

It's a bit of a double-edged sword. On one side, his appointment might signal that the BCCI is finally serious about cracking down on corruption. On the other hand, it makes you question whether such senior law enforcement officials should be pulled into what is, at the end of the day, sports management. Wouldn't their expertise be better utilized elsewhere?

What do you think? Should top-level national security officials be handed roles like this? Is this the right direction for the BCCI, or is there a better way to approach the corruption problem in cricket? I'd love to hear more perspectives—especially on Twitter. Let's open up this debate!

### Violation of SC guidelines

The Supreme Court of India has once again spotlighted the issue of temporary appointments for Director Generals of Police (DGP), as it issued notices to the Central government and eight state governments—Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, West Bengal, Punjab, and Jharkhand. All these states, except for Odisha, are currently functioning with acting DGPs, clearly violating the Supreme Court's guidelines.

It's concerning how long some states have been dragging their feet on this. States like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, and Punjab have had temporary police chiefs for over a year. In Uttar Pradesh, this issue is particularly stark; the state has had a revolving door of acting DGPs since 2022, with Prashant Kumar becoming the fourth such appointment earlier this year. What's troubling is that this isn't just a procedural issue. It undermines the stability and authority of law enforcement leadership.

Odisha seems to have set a good example by appointing YB Khurania as a permanent DGP in August, but the same can't be said for others. Jharkhand appointed a temporary DGP as recently as July, continuing the trend despite clear directions from the Supreme Court in the landmark Prakash Singh case. The court had explicitly ruled that no temporary or ad hoc police chiefs should be appointed unless in truly exceptional circumstances. Yet, we see states continuing this practice, seemingly disregarding the law.

These repeated delays reflect poorly on governance. A stable police leadership isn't just about ticking a bureaucratic box—it's essential for effective law and order. When states continue to rely on temporary leadership, it creates a sense of uncertainty within the force, affecting morale and decision-making. The Ministry of Home Affairs has already reminded states to comply with the court's directives, but it seems those reminders are falling on deaf ears.

It's time to stop this revolving door of acting appointments. There's no excuse for these delays if eligible officers are available. Now the apex court has stepped in and hopefully, this issue will be resolved quickly.

Share a habu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@twitter.com](https://twitter.com/dilipthecherian). Let's multiply the effect

### SPECTRUM HUNGER

# Building a buffer against food-price shocks

Of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved by 2030, eliminating hunger used to be seen as the most feasible. But in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, 15 years of progress on improving access to food have been lost. Despite global agricultural production being more than sufficient to meet the world's nutritional needs, food insecurity is significant and rising everywhere, even in rich countries. Especially worrying are the significant increases in hunger in low-income countries.

Soaring food prices are to blame for this damaging reversal. Worse, more such shocks are likely to emerge as climate change worsens and geopolitical tensions mount. The G20, under Brazil's presidency this year and South Africa's in 2025, must devise a new stabilization playbook to address these risks.

Although food prices have fallen globally from their 2022 peaks, they have remained high or continued to rise in many countries, with the sharpest increases often occurring in the poorest economies. By September 2023, the food-price index produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations had fallen by around 11.5% from the previous year. During that same period, average food prices in low-income countries rose by 30%—an alarming situation, given

that people in these countries spend 30-60% of their disposable income on food.

One major reason for persistent food-price inflation in the Global South, despite cooling agricultural prices worldwide, is currency depreciation, which has made imported food and fuel more expensive. The influx of capital into developing countries after the 2008 global financial crisis, driven by quantitative easing in advanced economies, has reversed in recent years, following interest-rate hikes in the United States and Europe. These capital outflows have weakened developing-country currencies, forcing their own central banks to raise interest rates even at the risk of triggering an economic downturn. At the same time, the interest-rate hikes have led to high debt-servicing costs, depleting these countries' foreign reserves and impeding their ability to pay for food imports.

Developing countries' dependence on global commodity and capital markets is undermining their efforts to ensure food security. To counter this, advanced and developing economies should work together to develop international strategies aimed at regulating financial and commodity markets and addressing sovereign-debt problems. But even in the absence of such cooperation, developing countries can reduce the destructive effects of this de-

pendence by forging partnerships to accumulate buffer stocks of essential commodities and coordinate capital-account-management policies.

Public buffer stocks of certain staples—especially grains—can help prevent price spikes, which hurt consumers, and avoid price collapses, which hurt farmers. Some countries, including India and China, have long used buffer stocks to enable such countercyclical open-market operations, as well as to guarantee supplies during emergencies. Another advantage of buffer stocks is that they allow governments to establish public procurement policies that incentivize sustainable cultivation practices and crop diversification.

Countries that lack the fiscal space to build substantial buffer stocks could work with regional partners to create joint stockpiles. For example, South Africa, as the continent's largest economy, could lead a regional buffer-stock initiative in coordination with the African Union.

Developing countries should also consider implementing macro-prudential and capital-account-management policies to prevent destabilizing capital flows. Such policies could include setting limits on and establishing minimum lock-in periods for foreign investment in local financial assets, imposing reserve requirements for inflows, and using differential tax

rates for domestic and foreign asset holdings. Global South governments successfully used this approach in the 1990s, and they should do so again.

Rich-country central banks have begun cutting interest rates, owing to cooling inflation. The anticipated increase in global liquidity should make it easier to introduce capital-account-management policies, whereas doing so now, when financial conditions are tighter, risks exacerbating capital flight. Moreover, developing countries are less likely to face backlash from global financial centers if they coordinate their efforts to manage capital accounts, rather than go it alone. As large middle-income countries, Brazil and South Africa are well-placed to spearhead this effort.

Besides, other developing countries should also consider systematic and coordinated interventions in commodity futures markets to complement their buffer-stock initiatives. The successive presidencies of Brazil and South Africa provide an opportunity to translate this understanding into global action.

*Isabella M. Weber is Associate Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, while Jayati Ghosh is Professor of Economics at the same institution*

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Isabella M Weber & Jayati Ghosh

**DEVELOPING COUNTRIES' DEPENDENCE ON GLOBAL COMMODITY AND CAPITAL MARKETS IS UNDERMINING THEIR EFFORTS TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY**

### WISDOM CORNER

- "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." **THOMAS A. EDISON**
- "Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change." **STEPHEN HAWKING**
- "Coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous." **ALBERT EINSTEIN**

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1901:** President Theodore Roosevelt officially changed the name of the president's residence from Executive Mansion to the White House.
- 1968:** Equatorial Guinea gained its independence from Spain.

### Quitting when in top

Sir, It is better to quit the game when people ask why? Tennis players realise the importance of quitting the game when in top form. High profile Roger Federer announced a timely retirement, and now it is the time for Rafael Nadal to hang his boots. There are some moments in sports that stand above all others. For Nadal, that moment came in the early evening at Wimbledon in 2008. With natural light fast running out, Roger Federer's final forehand landed in the net, and Nadal fell on his back, joy unconfined. At 22, the Spaniard was Wimbledon champion, something he—and many others—had thought might be beyond him. He was always adapting his game, adding pace to his serve, flattening out his forehand, and ripping his two-handed backhand. Naturally right-handed, some players said playing Nadal was like facing a man with two forehands. His net play was second to none. But Nadal leaves tennis as one of the all-time greats and someone who changed the sport for the better. Not many people can say that.

Anandambal Jayanthi Subbu, EAST MUMBAI

### Divine connect

Sir, I wonder if Mithun Chakraborty has a divine connect with Gemini Ganesan, as Mithun 'rashi' is Gemini (astrology) and Chakraborty is God Ganesha who conquered the world by circling his parents. His exceptional talent and contribution to Indian cinema have truly been acknowledged as he receives the Dada Saheb Phalke Award. As a versatile actor, he has left an indelible mark on the hearts of millions through his memorable roles and dialogues. His journey in the film industry is a testament to his dedication, and we are honoured to witness his achievements.

TS Karthik, CHENNAI

### Summing up Tata

Sir, I wonder if Mithun Chakraborty has a divine connect with Gemini Ganesan, as Mithun 'rashi' is Gemini (astrology) and Chakraborty is God Ganesha who conquered the world by circling his parents. His exceptional talent and contribution to Indian cinema have truly been acknowledged as he receives the Dada Saheb Phalke Award. As a versatile actor, he has left an indelible mark on the hearts of millions through his memorable roles and dialogues. His journey in the film industry is a testament to his dedication, and we are honoured to witness his achievements.

Tharcus S Fernando, CHENNAI

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



KARNATAKA COVID-19 'SCAM'

# SIT to probe 'irregularities'

THE DECISION WAS TAKEN AT A CABINET MEETING CHAIRED BY CHIEF MINISTER SIDDARAMAIAH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, Oct 11:** The Karnataka government Thursday decided to constitute a Special Investigation Team (SIT) and a Cabinet subcommittee to take further action on the report by the Justice Michael D' Cunha Commission of Inquiry which investigated alleged irregularities in the purchase of equipment and medicines during the COVID-19 when the BJP was in power.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. In the "partial" report submitted August 31 in 11 volumes, the commission examined the expenditure to the tune of Rs 7,223.64 crore, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil told reporters later, adding, "they have not pinpointed that so much (scale) is misappropriation."

He, however, said the commission had recommended recovery of Rs 500 crore.



Home Minister G Parameshwara, Law Minister HK Patil, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, Rural Development Minister Priyank Kharge, Labour Minister Santosh Lad, and Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil are members of the committee

The Commission has sought reports from four zones in Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and 31 districts of the state and it's yet to receive them, he said. The "partial" report has been submitted after verifying 55,000 files from the concerned departments.

The minister said based on the report, as criminal intent is also involved, it has been decided to constitute an SIT, and also a Cabinet subcommittee for "review and monitoring." It has also been decided to begin the recovery proceedings immediately

and to black list those companies or establishments involved in the wrongdoing.

"Wherever the criminal element is there, SIT will naturally look into it. Apart from that, the Cabinet subcommittee will be assisted by relevant officers to go into details of other malpractices. The details about those involved are not there in this report and it may come in the final report," he added.

Following the Cabinet decision, CM Siddaramaiah constituted a seven member Cabinet subcommittee under the lead-

ership of Deputy CM DK Shivakumar.

Home Minister G Parameshwara, Law Minister HK Patil, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, Rural Development Minister Priyank Kharge, Labour Minister Santosh Lad, and Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil are members of the committee.

The Cabinet also decided to withdraw 43 criminal cases registered in various police stations in the state.

It also gave its approval to extend by a year the term of the SIT constituted in the Karnataka Lokayukta for investigating the illegalities in mining, with a probe into several cases still pending, the minister said.

Administrative approval has also been given for construction of "Reshme Bhavana" at an estimated cost of Rs 527.50 crore on 4.25 acres of land owned by the Department of Sericulture at Okalipuram here with entire investment by Karnataka State Minerals Corporation Limited (KSMCL).

The Cabinet also gave its nod for construction of a hi-tech co-op market at Shidlaghatta in Chikkaballapura district at an estimated cost of Rs 200 crore.

It also decided to create Karnataka Skill Development Corporation under the Companies Act, 2013.

SANJAULI MOSQUE

# Muslim bodies in Himachal divided over demolition

The All Himachal Muslim's Organisation has said it will challenge the order in the court of appellate authority and go to the Supreme Court if necessary while the Sanjauli mosque committee has already given its nod for demolition of the unauthorised portion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, Oct 11:** Two Muslim bodies in Himachal Pradesh are divided over the issue of demolition of three unauthorised storeys of the disputed mosque located in Sanjauli here.

The Shimla Municipal Commissioner's court had October 5 ordered demolition of the three unauthorised storeys of the five-storey mosque. It gave two months time to the Waqf Board and the president of the mosque committee to execute the orders.

The All Himachal Muslim's Organisation (AHMO) has said it will challenge the order in the court of appellate authority and go to the Supreme Court if nec-



The Shimla Municipal Commissioner's court had October 5 ordered demolition of the three unauthorised storeys of the five-storey mosque

essary while the Sanjauli mosque committee has already given its nod for demolition of the unauthorised portions. The municipal commissioner's court had also observed that the mosque committee had itself offered to demolish the unauthorised portion.

A day after 10 people were injured during a protest demanding demolition September 12, the Muslim welfare committee gave a representation to the municipal commissioner asking to seal an unauthorised portion of the Sanjauli mosque and said they will themselves demolish this portion.

AHMO state spokesperson Nazakat Ali Hashmi in a statement issued Wednesday here

The Shimla Municipal Commissioner's court had October 5 ordered demolition of the three unauthorised storeys of the five-storey mosque

It gave two months time to the Waqf Board and the president of the mosque committee to execute the orders

said a meeting of the members unanimously concluded that those who gave an undertaking to demolish the unauthorised storeys of the mosque had no authority to make any such submission and the orders passed by the municipal commissioner's court are contrary to the facts.

He maintained that the land belongs to the Waqf board. The mosque is 125 years old and the unauthorised storeys are not illegal. The approval of maps is lying with the authorities but the municipal commissioner's court ordered demolition of the storeys, he added.

Hashmi claimed the commissioner's court passed the orders on the basis of application of some individuals and did not bother to ascertain the owner of the land, the stakeholders, those who are authorised to demolish the structure and those who are authorised to plead the case.

# Birth, death certificates to be available online: CM Sukhu



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, Oct 11:** Residents of Himachal Pradesh will be able to access their marriage, birth, and death certificates online, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said Thursday.

He made the announcement while presiding over a review meeting of the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department here.

"Marriage, birth, and death certificates issued by gram panchayats across the state will soon be available online," Sukhu said.

He said 344.31 lakh labour days were achieved in the financial year 2023-24, surpass-

ing the target of 275 lakh set under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

For 2024-25, a target of 300 lakh labour days has been set, of which, 214.51 lakh labour days have already been earned, he said.

Sukhu said the state has formed 43,161 self-help groups, or SHGs, under the National Rural Livelihood Mission and provided them with financial assistance.

Ninety-three 'Himera' shops selling SHG products opened under the State Rural Livelihood Mission collectively sold products worth Rs 1.4 crore during the 2023-24 financial year.

In addition, products worth Rs 1.2 crore were sold in 80 weekly markets organised by the SRLM, a government statement said.

The CM announced plans to create an online platform for SHGs to market their products, to enhance their reach and sustainability.

He said that Himera products were being developed as premium brands to be sold at reputed institutes and these products will be displayed in exhibitions to be organised in Delhi and Chandigarh.



A vegetable vendor takes shelter under a cart during rain, in Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka

PTI PHOTO

# Incentive for Himachal farmers pursuing natural farming

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hamirpur (HP), Oct 11:** Farmers practising natural farming in Himachal Pradesh will receive a grant of Rs 33,000 for buying a cow, along with a subsidy of Rs 8,000 for paving the floor of the cowshed, ATMA official said Thursday.

"Farmers doing natural farming in the state will be given a grant of Rs 33,000 for buying a local cow besides a subsidy of Rs 8,000 for paving the floor of the cowshed," said Neha Bhardwaj, Assistant Technical Manager of the Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA), during an event at Manjhiar village.

An awareness and mass sensitisation camp on natural farming was organised in Manjhiar, where Bhardwaj said that chemical fertilisers and poisonous pesticides should not be used in natural farming.

Crops produced from natural farming are safer for health and it also reduces the cost of farming. By adopting this farming, farmers can increase their income and can also contribute to environmental protection, she said. She said that the main com-



Farmers doing natural farming in the state will be given a grant of ₹33,000 for buying a local cow besides a subsidy of ₹8,000 for paving the floor of the cowshed

NEHA BHARDWAJ | ASSISTANT TECHNICAL MANAGER, ATMA

ponents of natural farming like Jeevamrit, Beejamrit, Dhanjeevamrit and indigenous pesticides can be prepared at home from the dung and urine of indigenous cows.

She also gave information about local breeds of cows like Sahiwal, Red Sindhi, Rathi, Thar and Parker and also told about Rajiv Gandhi StartUp Yojana. Pea seeds were also distributed to the farmers in the camp.

# AstroSat captures eruptions from black hole's wreckage

ASTROSAT'S SOFT X-RAY TELESCOPE AND ULTRA-VIOLET IMAGING TELESCOPE (UVIT) DETECTED THE SOURCE AT2019QIZ, SOLIDIFYING INDIA'S ROLE IN THIS GROUNDBREAKING DISCOVERY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, Oct 11:** India's AstroSat and NASA's space observatories have captured dramatic eruptions from stellar wreckage around a massive black hole, the ISRO said Thursday.

A massive black hole has torn apart one star and is now using that stellar wreckage to pummel another star or smaller black hole that used to be in the clear - this discovery was made using NASA's space observatories - Chandra, HST, NICER, Swift - and ISRO's AstroSat, the Indian space agency said.

valuable insights, linking two mysteries where there had previously only been hints of a connection", Bangalore-headquartered ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) said in a statement.

In 2019, it was noted, astronomers witnessed the signal of a star that got too close to a black hole and was destroyed by the black hole's gravitational forces. Once shredded, the star's remains began circling the black hole in a disk in a type of stellar graveyard.

Over a few years, however,

this disk has expanded outward and is now directly in the path of a star, or possibly a stellar-mass black hole, orbiting the massive black hole at a previously safe distance, according to ISRO.

The orbiting star is now repeatedly crashing through the debris disk, about once every 48 hours, as it circles. When it does, the collision causes bursts of X-rays that astronomers captured with Chandra, it stated.

"Imagine a diver repeatedly going into a pool and creating a splash every time she enters the water," Matt Nicholl of Queen's

Astronomers recorded X-ray bursts occurring roughly every 48 hours as a star orbits and repeatedly crashes through a debris disk surrounding the black hole, captured by NASA's Chandra and NICER, and ISRO's AstroSat

The study provides evidence connecting tidal disruption events, where stars are torn apart by black holes, to quasi-periodic eruptions (QPEs), solving two astronomical mysteries

University Belfast, the United Kingdom, the lead author of the study that appears in the current issue of 'Nature' was quoted as saying in the ISRO statement.

"The star in this comparison is like the diver and the disk is the pool, and each time the star strikes the surface it creates a huge 'splash' of gas and X-rays. As the star orbits around the black hole, it does this over and over again," he said.

According to ISRO, scientists have documented many cases where an object gets too close to a black hole and gets torn apart in a single burst of light.

Astronomers call these "tidal disruption events" (TDEs).

In recent years, astronomers have also discovered a new class of bright flashes from the centers of galaxies, which are detected only in X-rays and repeat many times. These events are also connected to supermassive black holes, but astronomers could not explain what caused the semi-regular bursts of X-rays. They dubbed these "quasi-periodic eruptions," or QPEs, it was stated.

"There had been feverish speculation that these phenomena were connected, and now we've discovered the proof that they are," said co-author Dheeraj Pasham of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "It's like getting a cosmic two-for-one in terms of solving mysteries."

This tidal disruption event, now known as AT2019qiz, was first discovered by a wide-field optical telescope at the Palomar Observatory, called the Zwicky Transient Facility, in 2019. In 2023, astronomers used both Chandra and NASA's Hubble Space Telescope to study the debris left behind after the tidal disruption had ended.

DIWALI CHEER

# Himachal govt employees to get salaries, arrears Oct 28

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, Oct 11:** The Himachal Pradesh government will release state employees' salaries and pension October 28 in view of Diwali, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu said Friday.

The government will pay dearness allowance calculated at 4 per cent pending since January 1, 2023 benefiting around 3.50 lakh employees and pensioners, and also clear their medical reimbursement bills, he said.

"Salaries and pensions for October would be given October 28 because of Diwali," Sukhu said. He said the salaries were earlier delayed to bring some financial discipline.

The payment of DA would put an additional burden of Rs 600 crore per year on the state exchequer, he said.

A provision of Rs 10 crore has already been made to pay medical bills.

The Revenue Deficit Grant and tax share from the Centre are received September 6 and 10 and paying salary on the first day of every month necessitates borrowing from the market at 7.5 per cent interest, Sukhu had earlier said.

The state's decision to defer salaries help it save about Rs 3 crore every month and Rs 36 crore annually on interest payment, he said.

He said that about 1.15 lakh employees have opted for the Old Pension Scheme, while 1,364 have opted for the New Pension Scheme. It has been decided that DA would also be given to employees who opted for NPS, he said.

Sukhu alleged that freebies amounting to Rs 5,000 crore given by the previous BJP government ruined the financial health of the state.

The state's decision to defer salaries help it save about ₹3 crore every month and ₹36 crore annually on interest payment



# national

## of the day quote

This time, through a consolidated ballot, they registered their strong disapproval of the drastic unilateral changes made in August 2019. Since then they have been systematically disempowered, deprived and stifled our voices

MIRWAIZ UMAR FAROOQ | HURRIYAT CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN

RPI (A) will contest the elections on its party symbol. As an ally of the Mahayuti, it has demanded eight to 10 seats

RAMDAS ATHAWALE | UNION MINISTER

The results of the Assembly elections in Haryana were very unexpected and opposite to the expectations of people

ASHOK GEHLOT | FORMER RAJASTHAN CM

## SHORT TAKES

### 4 kids killed by speeding SUV

**Guwahati:** Four children were mowed down by a speeding SUV in Assam's Dhubri district Friday, a senior police official said. Dhubri Superintendent of Police Navin Singh told PTI that the sports utility vehicle (SUV) hit the four kids early in the morning when they were strolling near their home adjacent to National Highway 17 in Golakganj. "We have arrested the culprit driving the SUV at a high speed," he said. Three children died on the spot, while another died on the way to a hospital, Singh said.

### MP: Three killed as car hits road divider

**Gwalior:** Three men were killed and two of their friends wounded critically when the car they were travelling in hit the divider of a national highway in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior district Friday, police said. The vehicle overturned and broke into three pieces after the accident around 3 am near the Sitholi area on the Gwalior-Jhansi stretch of the carriageway, inspector Mangal Singh Papola of Jhansi Road police station told PTI.

### Delivery man killed after Audi hits bike

**Pune:** A food delivery man was killed after an Audi car driven by an allegedly drunk senior executive of a private firm hit his two-wheeler in Pune in the early hours of Friday, police said. The luxury car's driver Ayush Tayal (34) fled from the spot after the accident near Tadigutta in the city's Mundhwa area and was arrested later with the help of CCTV footage, an official said. "The incident took place at Koregaon Park, Mundhwa road near Poonawala Fincorp around 1.30 am Friday. Tayal's car first hit a couple of two wheelers, causing minor injuries to riders," said Manoj Patil, Additional Commissioner of Police (North Region). The delivery boy later succumbed to his injuries, the official added.

### Militant arrested

**Imphal:** A militant of the proscribed Kangleipak Communist Party (People's War Group) was arrested in Manipur's Imphal East district, police said Friday. The accused, identified as M Dhanbir (39), was allegedly involved in extortion in and around Imphal, they said. He was arrested Thursday, they added. Meanwhile, security forces seized a huge cache of arms and ammunition during a raid at the foothill areas of IVR Road near Uyoik in Bishnupur district.



Navratri is not just a festival of worshipping Shakti (power) but also represents respect for women, who make up half of the population. Since ancient times, Indian wisdom has embraced the belief that where women are worshipped, divine powers reside

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

## SC SEEKS ED RESPONSE ON PARTHA CHATTERJEE'S BAIL PLEA

The Supreme Court has sought a response from the Enforcement Directorate on a bail plea of former West Bengal minister Partha Chatterjee who has been arrested over alleged irregularities in the recruitment of teaching and non-teaching staff in the state's primary schools



## First arrest made in Pune gangrape case; hunt on for 2

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Pune, Oct 11:** A week after a woman was allegedly raped by three men on Pune city's outskirts, police have made the first arrest, officials said Friday, a breakthrough coming after nearly 700 cops worked on the case and scanned hours of CCTV footage.

The 21-year-old woman was allegedly raped by three unidentified men Thursday (October 3) night in the Bopdev Ghat area where she had gone with a male friend. About 700 police personnel were deployed to identify and trace the culprits, said Devendra Fadnavis, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister, who also holds the home portfolio, while congratulating police for the breakthrough.

"Footage from several CCTV cameras was scanned and on the basis of technical analysis, one suspect has been arrested and a search for the other two suspects was on," said Pune police commissioner Amitesh Kumar.

Kumar was speaking at the launch of new projects for the Pune police worth more than Rs 700 crore in the presence of Fadnavis. During the incident, the assailants had also tied and beaten up the victim's male friend, as per the complaint. Police had declared a reward of Rs 10 lakh for information about the culprits and formed multiple teams to nab them.

"An incident shaming humanity had taken place, but police have now arrested one accused and the remaining two accused will also be nabbed as their whereabouts have been traced," Fadnavis told reporters.

The government will ensure that the accused get the strictest possible punishment, said the Home Minister.

The horrific incident had caused a furore in the city and police were under pressure to crack the case.

Earlier, the IMA expressed concern over the deteriorating health conditions of the fasting junior doctors, prompting it to write to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for immediate intervention.

In a letter dated October 10, which was made public Friday, Asokan emphasised the state government's need to meet the doctors' demands. "It has been almost a week since the young doctors of Bengal have been on a fast-unto-death struggle. The IMA supports their just demands. They deserve your immediate attention," the letter said.

## CDSCO meets WHO standards for vax regulatory system

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** Drug regulator CDSCO and the National Regulatory Authority of India have met the standards set up by the World Health Organisation for a functional vaccine regulatory system.

A team of international experts from various countries led by the World Health Organisation (WHO) headquarters in Geneva reviewed India's vaccine regulatory system from September 16 to 20, the health ministry said in a statement.

Safety, efficacy, and quality were the three basic parameters of assessment of vaccines,



The WHO has established global standards and benchmarks for assurance of vaccine quality through the development of tools and guidelines, benchmarking of the NRA and pre-qualification programme of vaccines

it said. The WHO has established global standards and benchmarks for assurance of vaccine quality through the development of tools and guidelines, benchmarking of the National Regulatory Authorities (NRA) and pre-qualification programme of vaccines, the statement said.

The WHO NRA re-benchmarking was aimed to assess and document the status of the India regulatory system in the area of vaccine regulation, re-benchmark the status of the India vaccine regulatory system against the WHO NRA Global Benchmarking Tool (GBT) and measuring the ma-

turity of the system. "India has been declared 'functional' against all the core regulatory functions of the WHO Global Benchmarking Tool Version VI. India's vaccine regulatory system was benchmarked in 2017 against Global benchmarking tool (GBT) version V which is

now revised to GBT VI with raised bars and stringency in bench-marking criteria," the statement said.

India retains maturity level 3 with highest marks in several functions.

Speaking about the achievement, Punya Salila Srivastava, Union Health Secretary, stated, "The Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO), in collaboration with WHO, has made exemplary efforts towards this achievement. India is one of the main players in the pharmaceutical industry worldwide and is known for its affordable vaccines and generic medicines."

## BSF: 150 militants waiting at launchpads across LoC



The forces strive to ensure that soldiers are trained not only in traditional aspects of border management such as weapon handling, firing, field craft and tactics and endurance activities, but also in the latest technology

establish a domination plan along the border."

"We also keep in mind the number of terrorists at the launching pads, which helps us shape our strategy and domination plan to ensure we foil any plans," BSF Inspector General (Kashmir Frontier) Ashok Yadav told reporters here. He said the security forces would ensure any infiltration attempt is thwarted.

Asked how many militants were waiting at terror launchpads now, he said, "The number of terrorists at the launching pads usually varies between 130 and 150, at times it may be slightly higher."

On the challenges after conducting peaceful assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Yadav said the security forces coordinated closely with the Jammu and Kashmir Police and the administration to ensure fair and peaceful polls.

"There were numerous threat

inputs, but with our well-coordinated domination plan, we prevented any attack, and the elections were successful."

"Now, with winter approaching, preparations are in place. Before winter sets in, terrorists often attempt infiltration, and we are dominating the area accordingly," he said, adding there are inputs about possible infiltration attempts along the LoC.

Asked about the volatile West Asia situation having any impact in the Valley, the IG BSF said while the security forces do not have specific inputs on militants trying to take advantage of the crises "we keep these international developments in our analysis and factor them into our operational plans".

On a question about narcoterrorism, Yadav said narcotics comes in from across the LoC and is a good source for terror financing.

"There are some villages along the LoC, some vulnerable patches like Tangdhar and Keran sectors, but we have deployed mobile bunkers and women troopers as well because there were inputs that they might use some women as couriers, to stop the inflow of narcotics. There has been a huge impact and we have been successful in bringing it down to a large extent," he added.

## RG KAR HORROR IMA president meets protesting jr doctors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Oct 11:** Representatives of the Indian Medical Association (IMA), led by national president RV Asokan, met the agitating junior doctors who have been on an indefinite hunger strike demanding justice for their murdered colleague at RG Kar hospital.

"I am touched by the way these children are fighting for the cause of the people and not for themselves. I am emotional. They are the real heroes, and we are all very proud of them," Asokan said Friday after meeting the junior doctors at Dorina Crossing here.

Speaking to PTI, Asokan shared that during their meeting, the junior medics detailed their demands and expressed frustration over the West Bengal government's indifference.

"They did not talk much about withdrawing the fast but focused on their demands and the indifferent attitude of the state government towards their movement. They are quite confident about the success," he added.

Asokan mentioned he would convey the junior doctors' anguish to other IMA officials. "We are very much with them and will continue to support them for this cause. The situation is being monitored by the association," he told PTI.

Before heading to the protest site, Asokan visited another jun-



ior doctor, Aniket Mahato, who is receiving treatment at RG Kar hospital.

"I had gone to the hospital to meet the other doctor, but I was informed he is in the CCU, and his condition is still not stable, making a meeting inadvisable. I met the principal of RG Kar hospital to discuss safety and security measures," Asokan said.

Earlier, the IMA expressed concern over the deteriorating health conditions of the fasting junior doctors, prompting it to write to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for immediate intervention.

In a letter dated October 10, which was made public Friday, Asokan emphasised the state government's need to meet the doctors' demands. "It has been almost a week since the young doctors of Bengal have been on a fast-unto-death struggle. The IMA supports their just demands. They deserve your immediate attention," the letter said.



Devotees dressed as 'langoor' take part in a religious procession, marking the Navratri festival and 'Langoor Mela' celebrations, at Durgiana temple in Amritsar, Punjab

## HUBBALLI RIOT K'taka govt withdraws case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, Oct 11:** The Congress government in Karnataka has decided to withdraw a criminal case registered against a mob which had attacked policemen with stones April 16, 2022 in Hubballi town.

This was one of the 43 cases the state Cabinet decided to withdraw at its meeting Thursday following a petition by the Anjuman-e-Islam to the Home Minister G Parameshwara, official sources said. Union Minister Pralhad Joshi Friday described the Government's decision as "height of appeasement."

"Unfortunately, the Congress party here in Karnataka has reached the height of appease-

The government has the powers to withdraw some cases. There is a Cabinet subcommittee under Home Minister's leadership, as per their discretion they have taken the decision and the Cabinet has approved it. I will see what it is.

SIDDARAMAIAH | CHIEF MINISTER

ment. They have withdrawn the case under the UAPA case, when the matter is before the NIA court. In normal course as far as I know, the state cannot withdraw it but still they have withdrawn it. This is the height of appeasement," Joshi said. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said: "The government has the pow-

ers to withdraw some cases. There is a Cabinet subcommittee under Home Minister's leadership, as per their discretion they have taken the decision and the Cabinet has approved it. I will see what it is."

On BJP planning a protest against the decision in Hubballi in north Karnataka, Siddaramaiah told reporters in Mysore: "BJP always protests on false issues, not on true issues." According to the police, an accused had allegedly posted derogatory content on social media. "Upset with the post, nearly 150 people from the minority community armed with stones and clubs gathered near the Old Hubballi Town police station April 16, 2022 at about 10.30 pm," a police official said.

## '4 state information commissions defunct with no commissioners'

According to the RTI Act, the state and central information commissions have a Chief Information Commissioner and 10 Information Commissioners to adjudicate complaints and appeals filed by citizens if the public authority does not supply information sought by them as per provisions of the law

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** Four state information commissions, the top appellate bodies in RTI-related matters in states, have been lying defunct with no information commissioners to adjudicate complaints and appeals

against public authorities, a report said Friday.

The report by Satark Nagrik Sangathan, a transparency advocacy group, on the eve of the 19th anniversary of the enactment of the Right to Information Act, said the state information commissions in Goa, Jharkhand,



Tripura, and Telangana have been without a commissioner.

The report said no information commissioner was appointed in

Jharkhand after the completion of the tenure of the last incumbent May 8, 2020, rendering it completely defunct for more

than four years. In Tripura, the SIC has been defunct for over three years, in Telangana for 19 months and in Goa for seven months, it said. Several Information Commissions including the Central Information Commission are functioning with reduced capacity because of vacant positions of Information Commissioners.

The Central Information has just three information commissioners, including the chief, as against the total strength of 11. The report said 2,31,417 appeals and complaints were registered between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, by 27 information

commissions for which relevant information was available.

The Maharashtra SIC disposed of the highest number of cases (56,603) followed by the SICs of Uttar Pradesh (31,510) and Karnataka (28,630), it said.

The study claimed that the Central Information Commission returned nearly 14,000 appeals and complaints while it registered 19,347 during the period which comes to 42 per cent of cases which came to the CIC.

The report said the number of appeals and complaints pending June 30, 2024, in the 29 information commissions, stood at 4.05 lakh.



# national

## of the day quote

Just as the boundaries of a state cannot create any difference among us, similarly the basis of birth should also not create casteism among us. Any society, whether weak or rich, cannot be separated from the Hindu society

I had to leave early to attend a scheduled programme at Ahmedpur in Marathwada region

We have to move forward and for that the restoration of the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir is key. We will together demand that on the floor of the House

## XPOST OF THE DAY

**BIG EXPOSE** Election Commission under scrutiny! Vote for Democracy founder Dr Pyarelal Garg alleged massive irregularities in Haryana Election, citing 6.7% increase in voting data. Why ECI is silence on this matter?

## SHORT TAKES

### Sena factions to hold Dussehra rallies

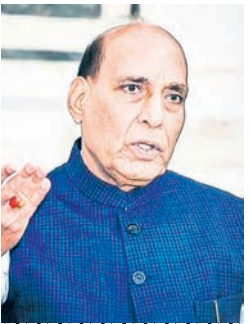
**Mumbai:** Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena and the rival Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) will hold their respective Dussehra rallies in Mumbai Saturday in a show of strength and set the tone by attacking each other ahead of Maharashtra Assembly polls. While the Shiv Sena (UBT) will hold its rally at the historic Shivaji Park in Dadar, Shinde will address his faction at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai. Incidentally, heavy rains Thursday night have made both the venues sludgy. However, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said it would not be a dampener. Shiv Sena leader and former MP Rahul Shewale said around 2 lakh people are expected to attend the rally at Azad Maidan to hear the CM.

### Live cockroach removed from man's intestine

**New Delhi:** A live cockroach measuring 3 centimetres was successfully removed from the small intestine of a 23-year-old man at a private hospital here, officials said Friday. The procedure, which took 10 minutes, was carried out using advanced endoscopic techniques at Fortis Hospital in Vasant Kunj, a hospital spokesperson said. The patient had complained of severe abdominal pain and difficulty in digesting food for the past few days, said Senior Consultant in Gastroenterology Shubham Vatsya, who led the medical team. An Upper Gastrointestinal (GI) Endoscopy was performed that revealed the live cockroach lodged in the patient's small intestine, Vatsya said.

### Mohalla bus trials launched

**New Delhi:** The trial run of the Delhi government's last-mile connectivity Mohalla bus service started on the Munirka-Vasant Kunj circular route Friday. Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot flagged off the Mohalla bus, an official statement said.



**The Indian Army plays a significant role in guarding our borders and fighting terrorism apart from providing assistance to the civil administration in every need of hour**

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

### PWD OFFERS BUNGALOW TO DELHI CM ATISHI

The 6, Flagstaff Road bungalow in Civil Lines was formally allotted to Delhi Chief Minister Atishi Friday, two days after she was allegedly forcibly made to vacate it, officials said. An offer letter issued by the Public Works Department (PWD) said the bungalow in Civil Lines has been formally allotted to Atishi, after completing the due process of handover and preparation of inventory



## JPNIC ROW SP, Cong call it 'tyranny' of govt

The political rivalry between the SP and the ruling BJP intensified, centred around the JPNIC in Gomti Nagar after the Lucknow Development Authority informed SP chief Akhilesh Yadav that his planned visit to the JP Narayan International Centre Friday is "not advisable" as it cited security concerns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, Oct 11:** Samajwadi Party and Congress leaders attacked the BJP over the JPNIC issue calling it a "tyranny". Hitting back, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya and called it a "double standard" of Akhilesh Yadav.

The political rivalry between the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the ruling BJP intensified, centred around the Jayaprakash Narayan International Convention Centre (JPNIC) in Gomti Nagar after the Lucknow Development Authority informed SP chief Akhilesh Yadav that his planned visit to the JP Narayan International Centre here Friday is "not advisable" as it cited security concerns due to the ongoing construction work at the site.

JP, as the late socialist ideologue and fierce critic of the Emergency was known, has emerged as the latest centre of the tussle between the ruling BJP and the Opposition party. Friday was the late socialist leader's birth anniversary.

Congress State president Ajay Rai condemned the actions of the government, stating, "This is the extreme tyranny of this government. The same thing was done last year too. I think they are preparing to destroy it (JPNIC) or sell it to some big businessman."

Shivpal Singh Yadav, National General Secretary of the Samajwadi Party, voiced



**Yadav appealed Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to withdraw support to the NDA, saying the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh stopped 'Samajwadis' from paying tributes to Narayan and asserting that the JD(U) chief owes his political emergence to the JP movement**

concerns over the prevention of garlanding the statue of Jayaprakash Narayan, asserting that the BJP and state government are perpetuating oppression through police actions.

"If we could have garlanded JP's statue today, it would have been a moment of respect," Yadav remarked.

"Instead, the BJP's actions reflect a deliberate disregard for our history and leaders," Yadav said.

He emphasised that the movement initiated by Jayaprakash Narayan serves as an inspiration for the SP to launch a renewed effort against the BJP,

reaffirming their commitment to social justice and democratic values.

In response, UP Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya criticised Akhilesh Yadav's duality. He said, "This is a huge double standard of SP chief Shri Akhilesh Yadav. On one hand, he openly serves Rahul Gandhi, while on the other hand, he wants to worship 'Loknayak' Jayaprakash Narayan, who freed the country from the dark dictatorship of Congress."

Slamming the SP, the UP BJP president Bhupendra Chaudhary took to social media, asserting, "Anarchy and hooliganism have

### Cong submits more complaints to EC

**NEW DELHI:** The Congress Friday submitted more complaints to the Election Commission alleging discrepancies in the electronic voting machines during counting of votes for the Haryana Assembly elections. The Congress candidates from 20 assembly constituencies, in their written complaints to the Election Commission (EC), have alleged that the batteries in some of the EVMs were charged at 99 per cent during counting October 8. The complaints follow the Congress' shock defeat in the Haryana Assembly elections after the party failed to win a simple majority even after 10 years of the BJP rule in the state. The Congress has said that the assembly polls results were "unexpected" and have alleged discrepancies in the EVMs in some seats.

### HARYANA POLLS

### DELHI DRUG BUST

## ED registers money laundering case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** The Enforcement Directorate Friday said it has registered a money laundering case into the recent mega narcotics seizure in the national capital and conducted searches in Delhi, Mumbai and Gurugram.

The Delhi Police Special Cell October 2 seized over 500 kg cocaine and 40 kg hydroponic marijuana, estimated to be worth Rs 5,620 crore, from a godown in the Mahipalpur area of south Delhi.

Seven people have been arrested by the police in the case till now.

"Key financial documents which have details of the financial activities of the accused as well as the details regarding the movable and immovable properties of the accused and their family members have been recovered," the federal probe agency said in a statement. The raids were undertaken in Delhi, Gurugram

and Mumbai.

The agency took cognisance of the police FIR filed against accused Tushar Goel, Himanshu Kumar, Aurangzeb Siddiqui and Bharat Kumar to press sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to launch its own investigation.

The agency raided the premises of various persons and suspects including that of main accused Tushar Goel and his wife in Vasant Enclave and Rajouri Garden areas of Delhi. The residential premises of Himanshu Kumar in Prem Nagar in Delhi and that of Bharat Kumar in Nalasopara, Mumbai, were also being searched.

The business premises of Tushar Books Publication Private Limited and Tulip Publications Private Limited in Jhandewalan area of Delhi and ABN Buildtech Private Limited in Gurugram were also raided, as per the ED.

### AI Express faces mid-air glitch, lands safely

AGENCIES

**Chennai, Oct 11:** A Sharjah-bound Air India Express flight from Tiruchirappalli, shortly after departure Friday evening, witnessed mid-air technical glitch and later landed safely, police said.

Chief Minister MK Stalin held an emergency meeting with officials and directed them to follow all safety measures. Later, he congratulated the flight captain and crew for the safe landing.

After taking off at about 5.30 pm from the airport, the fault related to hydraulic systems, the landing gear, was noticed. The aircraft had to circle above the airport for more than two and a half hours before landing to reduce the aircraft's weight



by burning off the fuel. All 141 passengers are reported to be safe.

The Chief Minister in a post on 'X' said: "I am heartened to hear that the #AirIndiaExpress flight has landed safely. Upon receiving news of the landing gear issue, I immediately coordinated an emergency meeting with officials over the phone and instructed them to implement all necessary safety meas-

## NC-Cong alliance stakes claim to form govt in J&K



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, Oct 11:** The National Conference (NC)-Congress alliance Friday staked the claim to form government in Jammu and Kashmir as Chief Minister-designate Omar Abdullah called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha here.

During his meeting with Sinha, Abdullah presented the letters of support from the coalition partners, hours after Congress extended its support to the NC vice president. Abdullah was unanimously elected as the leader of NC legislature party Thursday, paving the way for his second term as the Chief Minister of J&K.

His first tenure as the head of the NC-Congress coalition government from 2009 to 2014. The NC won 42 of the 90 seats for which elections were held in three phases with the alliance partner Congress bagging six seats.

Although the two parties have a majority in the 95-member House, four Independents and the lone AAP MLA have also extended their support to the NC.

Talking to reporters at his residence after returning from the Raj Bhavan, Abdullah said he requested the LG to fix a date for swearing-in of the new government at the earliest. "I met the LG and presented the letters of

support from the NC, Congress, CPI(M), AAP and Independents who have supported the NC. I requested him to fix a date as soon as possible so that the oath ceremony takes place and the government elected by the people starts functioning," the CM-designate said. He said the oath ceremony is likely to take place Wednesday.

"This process will take some time. It is not that an elected government is replacing another elected government. This is a central rule, we are a Union Territory, and the LG has to prepare documents and send them to the Rashtrapati Bhavan, from the Rashtrapati Bhavan, they will

go to the Home Ministry where they will do their paperwork and then the documents will be sent back. We have been told that it will take at least two-three days. I hope that if this process is completed at the earliest, then the oath ceremony will take place Wednesday," Abdullah added.

Earlier in the day, the six Congress MLAs met here and authorised the party high command in New Delhi to nominate the leader of its legislature party. After the meeting, JKPC president Tariq Karra said the CLP meeting unanimously decided to give the right to the central leadership to take the call on the CLP leader.

### MAHADEV BETTING SCAM

## Kingpin Sourabh likely to be deported to India soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** Sourabh Chandrakar, one of the main promoters of the Mahadev betting app, is expected to be brought to India soon following his recent formal arrest in Dubai on the basis of an Interpol issued arrest warrant in a money laundering and fraud case, official sources said Friday.

Chandrakar along with another promoter of the app, Ravi Uppal was detained and put under "house arrest" in that country late last year following the ED's request for issuance of a Red Notice (RN) against them. An RN is issued by the Interpol.

Sources said Chandrakar is expected to be either extradited or deported to India over the next few days after he was formally placed under arrest in Dubai recently. The ED is in the process of sending relevant documents for his extradition to Dubai authorities following which a competent court there will be approached, they said. Indian consulate sources in Dubai told PTI that they have "not heard anything from UAE authorities yet."

The ED has alleged that its probe in the Mahadev Online Book (MOB) gaming and betting app has shown involvement of various high-ranking politicians and bureaucrats from Chhattisgarh, the state where Chandrakar and Uppal hail from. The ED has arrested a total of 11 people in this case till now. Two charge sheets have also been filed by the agency till now, including against the two promoters.



## BJP claims INDIA bloc may rotate LoP role

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** The BJP Friday claimed the Opposition INDIA bloc constituents are considering making the Leader of Opposition's post in the Lok Sabha rotational and said they should go ahead with such a decision if they feel Rahul Gandhi is not able to fulfill his responsibility with dedication.

BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj said there are many leaders in the Opposition parties who are "capable" of handling the work of the Leader of Opposition (LoP) but it is up to them to take a decision as it is their "internal matter". While there was no word from the Congress till the filing of this report, RSP MP N K Premachandran termed the BJP's claim as "baseless" and said the very question of making the Leader of Opposition's



post rotational doesn't arise. Experts also said that only an MP from the single largest party in the Opposition with at least 10 per cent seats can be appointed as the LoP. Gandhi has been appointed as the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha with the Congress

being the single largest Opposition party in the House. The BJP MP's remarks came after she was asked to comment on talks about the Opposition parties considering making the Leader of Opposition's post rotational in the Lok Sabha. "Yes, absolutely. I have also

heard that there is talk of making the post of Leader of Opposition rotational. But I would politely say that this is an internal matter of the Opposition," Swaraj told a press conference at the party headquarters here while replying to the media query.

"Yes, there are definitely many leaders in the Opposition parties who are quite capable of fulfilling the responsibility of the Leader of Opposition. If the INDI Alliance feels that Rahul Gandhi is not able to fulfill his responsibility with complete dedication, they should take such a decision," she added.

However, RSP MP N K Premachandran clarified that there is no such thinking in the INDIA bloc. "It's impossible. There is not even such thinking. It's totally baseless," he told PTI when asked for comment.

He said a leader of the single largest Opposition party is appointed as the Leader of Opposition. The RSP is one of the constituents of the INDIA bloc of the Opposition parties.

Asked if the Leader of Opposition's post can be made rotational, former Lok Sabha Secretary General PDT Achary said only an MP from the single largest Opposition party in the House can be appointed as the LoP.

The person whom the single largest opposition party wants to be appointed as the LoP is chosen by it only, he said. "Neither the government nor the Speaker have any role to play in it," Acharya told PTI.

The Speaker only recognises a person as the LoP in the Lok Sabha whose name is forwarded by the single largest Opposition party, he added.



# international

## of the day quote

He (Vladimir Putin) refuses to accept peace and every day sends another signal in favour of war and destruction. These days, he is no longer even prepared to speak to the German chancellor on the phone

I think it is urgent given what is happening in the Middle East that the international community stops exporting weapons to the Israeli government

When it comes to the security on the peninsula and our alliance with South Korea, that's something that we obviously take very seriously

## SHORT TAKES

### Kenya to send more police to Haiti

**Nairobi:** Kenya will send 600 more police officers to Haiti next month to bolster an international anti-gang mission, President William Ruto said Friday during a visit by the Haitian Prime Minister intended to speed up deployments to the force. At least 10 countries have promised to send a total of about 2,900 troops to participate in the Kenyan-led Multinational Security Support (MSS). But only about 430 have deployed since the UN-authorized mission got under way in June, nearly 400 of them from Kenya. Heavily-armed gangs, which control most of the capital Port-au-Prince, have continued to gain territory. Last week, members of the Gran Grif gang carried out one of the country's deadliest attacks in recent years, killing at least 115 people in a farming region, according to a local mayor.

### Italy opens migration centres in Albania

**Shengjin:** Italy's government Friday formally opened two centres in Albania where it plans to process male migrants who are intercepted in international waters. The opening was delayed for several months because crumbling soil at one centre needed to be repaired. Italian Ambassador to Albania Fabrizio Bucci said the two centres are ready to process migrants, but could not say when the first ones would arrive. "As of today, the two centres are ready and operational," Bucci told journalists. The centres have capacity to accommodate up to 400 illegal migrants as a start, expected to increase to 880 in a few weeks, according to Italian officials, speaking off the record.

### 2021 dam attack: Pak kills 2 terrorists

**Lahore:** Two alleged masterminds of the 2021 attack in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, in which nine Chinese engineers were killed, were reportedly shot dead during an attack on a police van in Pakistan's Punjab province Friday. At least 12 people, including nine Chinese engineers and two Frontier Corps personnel, died and several others were injured in the bus attack near the Dasu hydropower plant in the Upper Kohistan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2021. "On Friday, two terrorists involved in the Dasu dam attack were killed by their own accomplices while they were being transferred from Sahiwal Jail, some 200 kilometres from Lahore, in view of a threat alert," a spokesperson said.

# Israeli forces target UNIFIL

Israel says its campaign in Lebanon aims to make northern Israel safe for tens of thousands of people who were forced to leave

REUTERS

**Beirut, Oct 11:** Two peacekeepers were injured Friday after two explosions near a watchtower in southern Lebanon, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said, while its main base in the area was shaken by explosions for the second time in 48 hours as Israeli forces battled Hezbollah.

UNIFIL in a statement said this was a "serious development", adding the security of UN personnel and property must be guaranteed.

In central Beirut, rescue workers were searching through the rubble of a collapsed building Friday, hours after two Israeli



We continue to operate against the enemy and will not stop until we ensure that we can safely return the residents not just now, but with a future outlook

HERZI HALEVI | CHIEF OF STAFF OF ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES

In all, over 100 medical and emergency workers have been killed across Lebanon since October last year

RAVINA SHAMDASANI | UN HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE SPOKESPERSON

strikes hit the Lebanese capital, killing at least 22 people and wounding dozens.

The air raid was the deadliest attack on central Beirut in over

a year of war, hitting two residential buildings in neighbourhoods that have swelled with displaced people fleeing Israeli bombardment elsewhere in the country.

Israel says its campaign in Lebanon aims to make northern Israel safe for tens of thousands of people forced to leave over the last year by Hezbollah rocket fire.

"We continue to operate against the enemy and will not stop until we ensure that we can safely return the residents not just now, but with a future outlook,"

## Top commander of Hamas' ally killed: Israel

**Jerusalem:** Israel's army said Friday it had killed Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad's top commander for the Nur Shams refugee camp in the occupied West Bank. The military said Mohammad Abdullah was "eliminated" Thursday after Israeli aircraft struck the camp in Tulikarem. An additional "terrorist" was killed in the operation, which recovered M-16 rifles and vests, it added. Abdullah was the successor of Muhammad Jabber, also known as Abu Shujaa, who was killed in an Israeli strike in late August. Islamic Jihad is an ally of Hamas, with both groups battling Israeli forces in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

## SNIPPETS

### Top BRICS officials did not attend Moscow meeting

**Moscow:** Most finance ministers and central bank chiefs from the BRICS group of countries did not attend a high-level meeting in Moscow Friday ahead of a BRICS summit later this month, sending more junior officials instead, official documents showed. Finance ministers from Egypt and the United Arab Emirates and the head of Iran's central bank were present as Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov called for the creation of an alternative to the Western-dominated global financial system. But finance ministers and bank chiefs from China, India and South Africa stayed away, sending deputies or more junior officials instead, a day after Kremlin aide Yuri Ushakov accused the West of pressuring countries not to attend the BRICS summit. BRICS, originally comprising Brazil, Russia, India, and China, has expanded to include South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia. The Moscow meeting is modeled on the Group of 20 schedule, where summits are preceded by meetings of top economic policy officials who outline proposals to be reviewed by leaders at the summit.

### China sends inter-agency task force to Pakistan

**Beijing:** China Friday said it dispatched an inter-agency working group to Pakistan following the deadly suicide bomb attack in Karachi in which two Chinese were killed and another injured to review security for scores of Chinese personnel working in CPEC projects. Following the attack on a Chinese convoy of the coal-fired power plant at Karachi which killed and injured Chinese personnel October 6, China quickly sent an inter-agency working group to Pakistan, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a statement. "After arriving in Islamabad October 8, the working group immediately joined the Embassy in Pakistan and the company concerned in the emergency response," it said. The working group met intensively with heads of Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, and the military, police and intelligence departments. It said public concerns here mounted over the continued attacks on Chinese personnel working in the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). China is in a quandary to deal with the successful attacks especially by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) which is fighting for the independence of Balochistan and the CPEC which the militant group says is aimed at exploiting the rich natural resources of the province.

## 19TH EAST ASIA SUMMIT

# Modi calls for peace in Eurasia, West Asia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Vientiane, Oct 11:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday said the Global South countries face the severe impact of conflicts in parts of the world, and called for restoration of peace at the earliest in Eurasia and West Asia through dialogue and diplomacy.

Addressing the 19th East Asia Summit here, Modi said a free, open, inclusive, prosperous, and rules-based Indo-Pacific is crucial for peace and progress of the entire region.

As the first speaker at the Summit after the host, Lao PDR, and incoming chair, Malaysia, the Prime Minister asserted that the East Asia Summit, Indo-Pacific's premier forum for strategic dialogue, is a key pillar of India's Act East Policy.

Amid increasing Chinese assertiveness in the region, the Prime Minister said peace, security, and stability in the South China Sea are in the interest of the entire Indo-Pacific region.

Stating that ensuring freedom of navigation and airspace is essential, Modi said, "We believe that maritime activities should be conducted in accor-

## Hezbollah forges new command

**Beirut:** Hezbollah is preparing for a long war of attrition in south Lebanon, after Israel wiped out its top leadership, with a new military command directing rocket fire and the ground conflict, two sources familiar with its operations said. Hezbollah has been diminished by three weeks of devastating Israeli blows, most notably the killing of its leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah. Avraham Levine, an analyst with Israeli think-tank Alma, said it should be assumed Hezbollah was "well prepared and waiting" for Israeli troops and that it was no easy target. "The fact that the chain of command has been damaged does not take away the ability to shoot Israeli communities or try to hit" Israeli forces, Levine told Reuters.

Lieutenant General Herzi Halevi, Chief of Staff of the Israel Defense Forces, said in a video released by the military Friday after he held a security assessment inside southern Lebanon Thursday.

The Israeli military said an anti-tank rocket fired from Lebanon into Israel wounded two civilians and that at least 26 projectiles fired from Lebanon entered Israeli territory, some of which were intercepted. The Israeli air force intercepted two drones that approached from Lebanon, it said.

## REMAINS FOUND AFTER A CENTURY

The partial remains of a British mountaineer who might, or might not, have been one of the first two people to climb Mount Everest are believed to have been found after a century



# Trump calls India 'biggest import tariff charger'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Washington, Oct 11:** Vowing to introduce a reciprocal tax if elected to power, former US President Donald Trump has claimed that India imposes the highest tariffs on foreign products. But they do it with a smile, he added.

"Perhaps the most important element of my plan to make America extraordinarily wealthy again is reciprocity. It's a word that's very important in my plan because we generally don't charge tariffs. I started that process, it was so great, with the vans and the small trucks, etc," Trump said Thursday in a major economic policy speech.

"We really don't charge. China will charge us a 200 per cent tariff. Brazil is a big charger. The biggest charger of all is India," the Republican presidential candidate said in Detroit.

But he softened the blow by heaping praise on Modi.

"India is a very big charger. We have a great relationship with India. I did. And especially the leader, Modi. He's a great leader. Great man. Really is a great man. He's brought it together. He's done a great job," he said.

"I mean, I think they probably charge more than, in many ways, China. But they do it with a smile. They do it. Sort of a nicer charge. They said thank you so much for purchasing from India,"



he told members of the Detroit Economic Club.

Trump returned to the theme of import duties on Harley-Davidson motorcycles, and his meeting with the representatives of the American company during his previous term as President.

"I said how's business? Good, good. What are the bad countries? Well, India is very tough. And they gave me some others. Why? Tariffs. I said what are they? And they said like 150 per cent, some massive amount," Trump said.

He recalled the company representatives saying India wanted them to build a plant there.

Thursday's remarks by Trump follow his praise for Modi earlier this week when he described Modi as "the nicest human being".

"Modi, India. He's a friend of mine. He's great. Before him, they were replacing them every year. It's very unstable. He came over. He's a friend of mine. But on the outside, he looks like he's your father. He's the nicest, but he's a total killer," he had said.

## Zelensky meets Pope Francis

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Vatican City, Oct 11:** Pope Francis met Volodymyr Zelenskyy at the Vatican Friday, the latest step on the Ukrainian President's European tour to win support for his proposed "victory plan" aimed at ending the war with Russia.

The pope and the Ukrainian leader held private talks for 35 minutes. After their private meeting at the Sala della Biblioteca and the presentation of the Ukrainian delegation, Francis gave Zelenskyy a bronze plaque depicting a flower and an inscription reading: "Peace is a fragile flower."

In turn, Zelenskyy gifted the pontiff with an oil painting portraying "The massacre of Bucha. The story of Marichka". Bucha, a suburb northwest of Kyiv, was occupied by Russian troops shortly after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 and witnessed some of Russia's worst atrocities against civilians.



Later Friday, Zelenskyy met the Vatican's secretary of state, Pietro Parolin, accompanied by Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, secretary for relations with states and international organizations.

"The discussions were dedicated to the state of the war and the humanitarian situation in Ukraine, as well as the ways in which it could be brought to an end, leading to just and stable peace in the country," the Vatican said in a statement, adding that "some matters relating to the religious life of the country were also examined."

Since the first Russian attack on Kyiv, there have been multiple contacts between Francis and Zelenskyy, through visits, letters and phone calls.

The pope sparked some criticism from Ukrainian leaders in March when he suggested they should have the courage of the "white flag" negotiating an end to the war with Russia, in what was interpreted by many as a call to surrender.

# Record wildfires ravage Peru's ecosystems, wildlife

THE GLOBAL WILDFIRE INFORMATION SYSTEM, WHICH TRACKS WILDFIRES BY SATELLITE, SHOWS AROUND 10,400 FIRES IN PERU IN 2024, MORE THAN DOUBLE THE PREVIOUS RECORD IN 2020

REUTERS

**Lima, Oct 11:** A record number of fires tore through Peru over the past few weeks, wreaking havoc across the country's ecosystems as grasslands, dry forests, coastal areas, and the Amazon were set ablaze.

In northern Peru, spectacled bears fled burning dry forests to nearby towns where some were shot by frightened residents.



Jaguars in the southern Amazon, with nowhere to flee, were left charred on trees. Grasslands and wetlands that play a key role in storing water were left in ashes.

"The rainforest is usually impervious to fire," said Paul Rosolie, a conservationist and founder of JungleKeepers, an NGO that patrols and preserves the Amazon in Peru, adding that

they've seen burned turtles, snakes, birds, and jaguars after recent patrols. "The forest is their world, so when you burn it, they die."

The Global Wildfire Information System (GWIS), which tracks wildfires by satellite, shows around 10,400 fires in Peru in 2024, more than double the previous record in 2020 and nearly 2.5 times the total

This year there's been more regions, more ecosystems, and more species affected

LUIS ZARI | LEGAL SPECIALIST FOR THE PERUVIAN SOCIETY OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

area burned.

Record fires have been recorded across South America this year, with Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay registering the largest numbers.

"This year there's been more regions, more ecosystems, and more species affected," said Luis Zari, a legal specialist for the Peruvian Society of Environmental Law (SPDA), adding that both human and environmental factors led to such widespread fires.

Aside from less rainfall and higher temperatures after the end of the El Nino weather phenomenon, Zari says a failed government response and human-started fires led to widespread

destruction.

Peru's President Dina Boluarte acknowledged the country lacked logistics to fight the fires when she declared a state of emergency in September. "There's nothing in Peru, that's the problem, there's no help," said Robyn Appleton, founder of the Spectacled Bear Conservation (SBC), an NGO that protects spectacled bears in Peru's northern dry forests.

Alexander Moore, executive director of the SBC, says the bears have adapted to the drier climate and are able to go months without water, unlike other spectacled bears across the Andes. With only a few hundred bears in the population, Moore says conserving everyone is essential to the ecosystem.

"Fragmentation and loss of habitat is the biggest threat to these bears," Moore said, adding that the SBC works with local communities to educate, incentivize conservation, and help fight fires.



# business

of the day **quote**

We have been in India now for more than 26 years. We have a very high market share. We are at number two position in India in the passenger vehicle space. So we believe this is the right time to take one step forward and even further Indianise our operations

TARUN GARG | COO, HML

As we pursue our growth objectives, agility and decisive action remain at the core of our strategy

RITESH AGARWAL | FOUNDER & GROUP CEO, OYO

By extending our expertise in RE finance to retail market, we will provide innovative financing options for both urban and rural consumers, promoting sustainable practices and reducing carbon footprints

PRADIP KUMAR DAS | CMD, IREDA

## SHORT TAKES

### Forex kitty drops

**Mumbai:** India's forex reserves dropped by \$3.709 billion to \$701.176 billion for the week ended October 4, the RBI said Friday. In the previous reporting week, the reserves had jumped by \$12.588 billion to an all-time high of \$704.885 billion. For the week ended October 4, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, decreased by \$3.511 billion to \$612.643 billion, the data released Friday showed. Gold reserves decreased by \$40 million to \$65.756 billion during the week, the RBI said. The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by \$123 million to \$18.425 billion, the apex bank said. India's reserve position with the IMF was down by \$35 million to \$4.352 billion in the reporting week.

### Life insurers shine

**New Delhi:** Life insurers recorded a 14 per cent rise in underwriting new business with a premium collection of ₹35,020 crore in September. New business premiums stood at ₹30,716 crore in same month a year ago. The new business premium collection in the first half of FY25 rose 19 per cent to ₹1,89,214 crore from ₹1,58,377 crore in the same period last year, as per the monthly data released by the industry body Life Insurance Council. Driven by a strong demand for enhanced insurance protection from individual consumers, new policy issuances too increased by 45.49 per cent on a year-on-year basis in the month, resulting in the addition of new 32,17,880 policies vis-à-vis 22,11,680 policies in the year-ago period, it said.



**Indian industries are confronted with unfair rules of deforestation, rules around CBAM (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism) and various other measures**

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

## TURKEY IMPOSES DUTIES ON INDIA STEEL IMPORTS

Turkey imposed anti-dumping duties on some steel imports from China, Russia, India and Japan, an Official Gazette announcement said Friday, with the highest tariffs on Chinese imports, boosting stocks of flat steel producers



## Noel takes reins at Tata Trusts

After the death of Ratan Tata, half-brother Noel succeeds him as the head of Tata Trusts, a collective of charities that indirectly controls the \$165bn business empire spread across 100 countries

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** He was considered a potential candidate to lead Tata Sons - the holding company of the Tata Group, when legendary industrialist and his half-brother Ratan Tata was retiring in 2012. But the low-profile, Irish national Noel Tata saw his brother-in-law Cyrus Mistry take that role.

After the death of Ratan Tata, Noel, 67, succeeded him as the head of Tata Trusts, a collective of charities that indirectly controls the \$165 billion business empire spread across 100 countries.

Ratan Tata, who is credited with taking Tata global and growing the conglomerate as one of India's most respected groups, passed away October 9 at the age of 86. He was the chair for Tata Trusts, which owns 66 per cent of closely held Tata Sons Pvt Ltd - the holding company of the group.

Tata Sons is 65.9 per cent owned by the trusts, 12.87 per cent by half a dozen Tata Group companies, and 18.4 per cent by the Mistry family. Tata Sons runs 30 firms across consumer goods, hotels, automobiles and airlines.

Noel is known for his relatively low-profile leadership style, a stark contrast to predecessor's more public-facing role. Though being on the board of several Tata Group firms, Noel has remained out of the limelight and instead focused on operations.

He is also on the board of key Sir Ratan Tata Trust and Sir Dorabji Tata Trust since 2019. His



children - Maya, Neville and Leah - were appointed as trustees in multiple trusts associated with the Sir Ratan Tata Trust and Sir Dorabji Tata Trust earlier this year.

After graduating from Sussex University in the United Kingdom, Noel completed the International Executive Programme (IEP) from INSEAD in France.

Noel's career began at Tata International, where he gained understanding of Tata Group's global operations. In June 1999, he joined his mother Simone Dunoyer's retail business, Trent, as managing director. Under his leadership, Trent expanded significantly, especially with the creation of the Westside retail chain.

In 2003, he took on new responsibilities when he was appointed director of Voltas and Titan Industries.

He currently serves on the board of various Tata Group companies, including as the Chairman of Trent, Tata International Ltd, Voltas & Tata

I am deeply honoured and humbled by the responsibility that has been cast on me by my fellow Trustees. I look forward to carrying on the legacy of Mr Ratan N. Tata and the Founders of the Tata Group

NOEL TATA

Investment Corporation and as the Vice Chairman of Tata Steel and Titan Company Ltd.

He has been associated with the Tata Group for over 40 years. His last executive assignment was as the Managing Director of Tata International Ltd, the trading and distribution arm of the Tata Group, between August 2010 and November 2021. He had overseen the growth of the company from a turnover of \$ 500 million to over \$3 billion.

Before his stint in Tata International, Noel Tata served as the Managing Director of Trent Ltd, Tata group's retail arm. He played a pivotal role in the growth of Trent across formats, from a one-store operation in 1998 to over 700 stores across formats.

Noel is the son of Naval H Tata and Swiss businesswoman Simone H Tata. Naval was previously married to Soonoo Commisariat, with whom he fathered two children, Ratan and Jimmy.

While Ratan and Jimmy never married, Noel is married to Aloo Mistry, daughter of late Pallonji Mistry and sister of late Cyrus Mistry. They have three children - daughters Leah and Maya and son Neville.

## Net direct tax collection rises 18% to ₹11.25L-cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** Net direct tax collection grew 18.3 per cent to about ₹11.25 lakh crore as of October 10 this fiscal, government data showed Friday.

The mop-up includes personal income tax collection of ₹5.98 lakh crore and corporate tax collection of ₹4.94 lakh crore. Securities Transaction Tax (STT) stood at ₹30,630 crore, while other taxes (including equalisation levy and gift tax) earned ₹2,150 crore.

The income tax department

had collected ₹9.51 lakh crore during the same period a year ago.

Refunds worth ₹2.31 lakh crore were issued between April 1 and October 10, a growth of 46 per cent.

On a gross basis, direct tax collection grew 22.3 per cent to ₹13.57 lakh crore. The collection includes PIT (personal income tax) of ₹7.13 lakh crore and corporate tax of ₹6.11 lakh crore.

The government has budgeted to collect ₹22.07 lakh crore in the current fiscal from direct taxes.



## IIP turns negative after nearly 2 years

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION CONTRACTS 0.1% IN AUGUST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

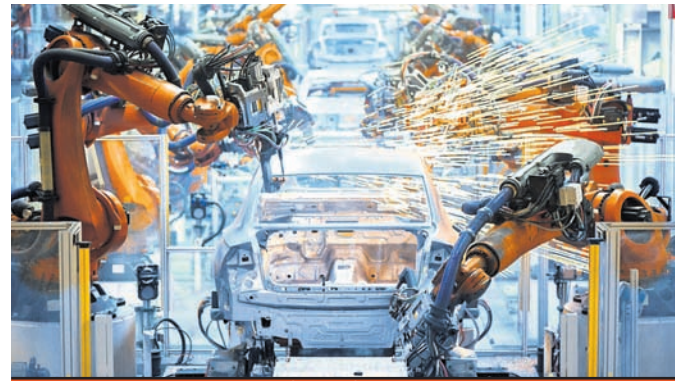
**New Delhi, Oct 11:** After a gap of nearly two years, India's industrial production turned negative as it contracted by 0.1 per cent in August, mainly due to a decline in the mining and power generation sectors' output, in addition to an almost flat expansion in the manufacturing sector.

According to the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), factory output growth based on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) has also been revised downwards for July to 4.7 per cent from the earlier estimate of 4.8 per cent.

"The IIP growth rate for the month of August 2024 is (-) 0.1 per cent, which was 4.7 per cent in the month of July 2024," NSO said in a release.

The IIP growth in August 2023 was 10.9 per cent.

During April-August 2024-25, the IIP growth was 4.2 per cent lower



**DECLINING TREND**

- Manufacturing output rose 1% YoY, while electricity generation fell 3.7% and mining activity fell 4.3%
- The sectors had grown by 10%, 15.3% and 12.3%, respectively YoY
- In the April-August period, industrial output growth slowed to 4.2% from a revised 6.2% jump YoY

against 6.2 per cent a year ago.

The growth rates in mining, manufacturing and electricity during August 2024 were (-) 4.3 per cent, 1 per cent and (-) 3.7 per cent, respectively.

"It is likely that the decline in the growth of the mining sec-

tor is due to heavy rainfall in the month of August 2024," NSO said.

The last contraction in IIP was witnessed in October 2022, when the output index declined by 4.1 per cent.

As per the use-based classifi-

cation released by the NSO, the capital goods segment growth decelerated to 0.7 per cent in August 2024 from 13.1 per cent in the year-ago period.

Consumer non-durables output contracted by 4.5 per cent against a growth of 9.9 per cent in August 2023.

Consumer durable goods production growth too slowed to 5.2 per cent during the reporting month compared to an expansion of 6 per cent in August 2023.

According to the data, infrastructure/construction goods reported a growth of 1.9 per cent in August 2024, down from a 15.7 per cent expansion in the year-ago period.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods contracted by 2.6 per cent in August against a growth of 12.4 per cent a year earlier.

The expansion in the intermediate goods segment was 3 per cent.

## US continues to be largest source of FDI in India: RBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Oct 11:** The US continued to be the largest source of FDI in India, followed by Mauritius, Singapore and the UK, according to an annual census of the Reserve Bank of India.

Out of the 41,653 entities, which responded in the latest census, 37,407 reported foreign direct investment (FDI) and/or overseas direct investment (ODI) in their balance sheets for March 2024.

Of these entities, 29,926 had also reported in the previous census round and 7,481 have newly reported in the current round, according to Census on Foreign Liabilities and Assets of Indian Direct Investment Entities for 2023-24.

Over three-fourths of the companies that reported inward direct investment were subsidiaries



During 2023-24, total sales and purchases of foreign subsidiaries in India increased by 13.2% and 10.6%, respectively, in rupee terms

of foreign companies. Non-financial companies accounted for nearly 90 per cent of the FDI equity at face value, the RBI said.

"Supported by valuation gains as well as fresh inflows, total FDI in India surged by 23.3 per cent at market value in rupee terms during 2023-24; on the other hand, ODI growth was much lower at 3.4 per cent," it said.

Unlisted entities recorded 17.5 per cent growth in FDI at market value during the year. In the listed space, the corresponding growth

was even higher at 29.8 per cent. With FDI growth outpacing overseas direct investment (ODI) rise, the ratio of outward to inward DI stock at market value declined to 16.1 per cent in March 2024 from 19.3 per cent a year, the RBI's census revealed.

Further, foreign subsidiaries in India maintained strong external trade linkages as exports and imports accounted for 35.4 per cent and 31.5 per cent of their sales and purchases, respectively.

## Edible oils import falls 29% in Sept

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** India's import of edible oils fell 29 per cent annually in September to 10,64,499 tonne due to lower inward shipments of crude and refined palm oils, according to industry data. Import of edible oils stood at 14,94,086 tonne in the same month last year.

Solvent Extractors' Association of India Friday released the import data for vegetable oils (both edible and non-edible) for September. Imports of non-edible oils fell to 22,990 tonne in September from 57,940 tonne in the year-ago period.

According to the data, import of vegetable oils in September declined 30 per cent to 10,87,489 tonne compared to 15,52,026 tonne a year earlier. In the edible oil category, the SEA data showed that import of crude palm oil declined to 4,32,510 tonne last month from 7,05,643 tonne in September last year, while refined palm oil shipments were down to 84,279 tonnes from 1,28,954 tonnes.

## Festive demand pushes e-comm sales

E-COMMERCE PLATFORMS WITNESS ₹54K-CR OF SALES IN 1ST WEEK

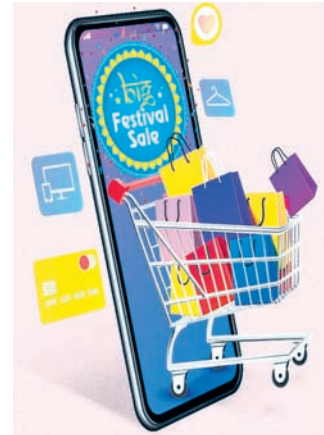
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** Online e-commerce platforms in the country saw sales worth over ₹54,500 crore in the first week of the festive season, about 55 per cent of total sales projected during the next month.

According to latest data from Datum Intelligence, a market research firm focused on consumer technology, the e-commerce platforms saw a 26 per cent in the first week of the festive sale, compared to the same period in 2023.

Mobiles, electronics and consumer durables, home and general merchandise categories accounted for 75 per cent of sales during the period, while smartphones and TVs accounted for over 70 per cent of sales in the tier 2 and 3 cities.

The festive month started from September 26. It will continue till November 3 (post Diwali) and



sales are expected to be Rs 1 lakh crore.

According to the report, sales of fashion, grocery, beauty and personal care items have seen an increase of 2-4 times. Categories like toys, books, kitchen essentials saw 2-5 times increase in the number of orders during the first week.

Consumer focus is now shift-

ing towards quick-commerce, with lower average selling price categories playing a key role, including grocery, beauty and personal care.

With the festive season in full swing, Artificial Intelligence (AI), quick-commerce, and the rise of micro-influencers are some factors playing a leading role in influencing festive purchases this year.

Meanwhile, another report said that the festive period, which ends after Diwali, is expected to see more than 85 million smartphones being sold this year, a growth of 3 per cent YoY in terms of volume and 9 per cent YoY in terms of value.

Notably, the ultra-premium segment (Rs 45,000 and above) saw 12 per cent YoY growth during the first wave of festive sales, thanks to Apple and Samsung. The festive season contributes to 20-25 per cent of the smartphone annual sales.



# Pak Test at new low

In the 147-year-long history of Test cricket, no team has suffered a defeat of the magnitude of Pakistan, all thanks to a double hundred from Joe Root and a triple century from Harry Brook

AGENCIES

**Lahore, Oct 11:** Despite scoring 556 runs in the first innings of the Multan Test, the Pakistan cricket team went on to lose by an innings and 47 runs.

In reply to Pakistan's 556-run total in the first innings, England put a whopping total of 823/7 on the board before declaring the innings. In reply, Pakistan could only score 220 runs in the second innings, hence losing the Test in a 'record-breaking' fashion.

Courtesy of the result, Pakistan went into history books for the wrong reasons, becoming the first team in the history of the game to lose a Test by an innings after scoring over 500 runs in the first innings.

In the 147-year-long history of Test cricket, no team has suffered a defeat of the magnitude of Pakistan, all thanks to a double hundred from Joe Root and a triple century from Harry Brook.

Pakistan did well in scoring over 500 runs in the first innings, with Abdullah Shafique, skipper Shan Masood, and Agha Salman scoring centuries. Even Saud Shakeel did well in his 84-run knock.

But, Pakistan's bowling unit looked toothless against England's batting attack, with the visitors' loss of wicket coming more through fatigue and less through the host bowlers' skill set.

In the second innings, Pakistan's batting unit barely managed to withstand England's bowling attack, with Agha Salman's 63 being the highest score. Aamer Jamal remained not out on 55 runs as England wrapped up the win by claiming 9 of Pakistan's 10 wickets.

Abrar Ahmed couldn't bat in the second innings as he was admitted to the hospital when the match concluded.

Though there remain many reasons behind Pakistan's dismal performance against England, ar-



**Definitely it is a special win for us in the background of the match. I would rate it among the top three alongside our wins in Rawalpindi (2022) and this year in Hyderabad in India**

OLLIE POPE | STAND-IN CAPTAIN, ENGLAND

**I wouldn't say my team is mentally weak but we expected this pitch to break by the third day onwards that is why we prolonged our innings. But at the end of the day you have to find ways to take 20 wickets and we are not doing that in recent times**

SHAN MASOOD | CAPTAIN, PAKISTAN

guably the biggest of all if their inability to click as a unit. Clear game plans seem to be missing from skipper Shan Masood's captaincy, with star players like Babar Azam, Shaheen Afridi, Naseem Shah, etc are yet to find their best form. After losing the Test se-

## PCB revamps selection panel

Recently-retired Test umpire Aleem Dar was among the prominent names added to Pakistan Cricket Board's revamped selection committee, hours after the national team suffered a humiliating innings and 47-run defeat to England despite scoring over 500 runs in the first essay. Former Test players Aaqib Javed and Azhar Ali, along with analyst Hassan Cheema, a well known sports broadcaster who has served as manager of a franchise in Pakistan's Super League, have also been named in the panel.

## INTERNAL FEUD

# IOC withholds Olympic Solidarity fund for IOA

**OLYMPIC SOLIDARITY PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO ALL NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEES A SHARE OF THE BROADCAST RIGHTS FROM THE OLYMPIC GAMES WHICH IS TO BE USED FOR ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** The fighting in the IOA has prompted the International Olympic Committee to withhold the Indian body's share of the Olympic Solidarity grants meant for athlete development programmes, triggering a fresh war of words between its embattled President PT Usha and treasurer Sahdev Yadav.

The IOC took the decision in its Executive Board meeting October 8 and communicated it to the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) in a letter Friday.

"There are obvious ongoing internal disputes and governance issues facing the IOA, including a number of reciprocal allegations which have been raised within the Executive Council," said the letter sent to Usha and Executive Council members by James MacLeod, NOC Relations and Olympic Solidarity Director. "This situation creates a lot of uncertainty and needs clarification and therefore, until further notice, the IOC and Olympic Solidarity will not make any payments to the IOA, except for direct payments to athletes benefiting from Olympic scholarships."

Through Olympic Solidarity, athletes can benefit from scholarships, which allocate subsidies, enabling them to train and qualify for the Olympic Games.



The IOC said it has taken note of the latest communication sent to it by various parties relating to the "unfortunate situation" in the IOA.

"As you know, the IOC has deployed intense efforts over the past few months to help you collectively find constructive solutions to address the daily functioning of the IOA and work together as a team but, unfortunately, these numerous attempts have been unsuccessful so far. Once again, we urge all concerned parties to act quickly and responsibly to remedy all outstanding governance issues in accordance with the IOA Constitution and the Olympic Charter."

The IOA issued a press release, laying the blame for the IOC's decision on Sahdev Yadav, accusing him of failing to file the necessary annual financial reports to the international parent body.

"The IOA is deeply concerned over the severe financial repercussions caused by the failure of the IOA Treasurer to file the necessary annual financial reports, despite repeated reminders from the IOC," the press release said.

"This negligence will result in the IOA losing out on critical Olympic Solidarity grants for the past few years, dealing a major blow to the IOA's efforts to support Indian athletes. This shall significantly impact the IOA's ability to provide the necessary financial support to Indian athletes, threatening their

preparation and performance for upcoming international competitions," it added.

According to an IOA official, the national apex sports body got Rs 8.50 crore annually in the last four years from the Olympic Solidarity fund.

"For the coming two years, we have to submit the annual financial reports to the IOC first and then see whether we get the funds or not," the official told PTI. The IOA press release also said that the IOC Executive Board also "specifically noted the persistent obstruction to the ratification of the CEO's appointment, an action which has hindered the IOA's ability to function effectively".

The ongoing internal feud between Usha and 12 Executive Council members over the appointment of Raghuram Iyer as CEO has led to the summoning of a Special General Body meeting of the IOA October 25.

Usha had said that Iyer's appointment was approved by the EC in a meeting January 5, while his salary was the only issue left to be negotiated. The 12 EC members had refused to ratify Iyer's appointment as CEO.

Usha had earlier also refuted Yadav's claims in a CAG report that a faulty sponsorship agreement with Reliance India Limited (RIL) led to a loss of Rs 24 crore to the IOA.

Usha had said due process was followed while redrafting the deal with RIL and the negotiation proposal was circulated to all the EC members.

In a rebuttal sent to Usha Thursday, Yadav alleged that the "president has sold IOA's assets i.e. Rights, without exploring alternative nor discussing with EC, a situation that can be seen as president's office has been compromised".

"...you chose to singularly and personally agree to the terms of amended agreement and put your signature before the approval of the Executive Council as required under IOA Constitution," Sahdev wrote.

## SHORT TAKES

### Djoko survives scare

**Shanghai:** Novak Djokovic became the third oldest semi-finalist in the history of the ATP Masters 1000 series (since 1990) as the 37-year-old survived a scare against Jakub Mensik, earning a 6-7(4), 6-1, 6-4 win to advance to the last four stage in Shanghai Friday. Djokovic has reached this stage for the ninth time in his quest to win his 100th tour-level title. After a sluggish start, Djokovic clicked into gear in a near-flawless second set during which he won 92 percent (11/12) of points behind his first serve. He then went on to put the game to bed in the next set. Djokovic will be facing Taylor Fritz in the semifinals Saturday. The American defeated David Goffin 6-3, 6-3 Friday to advance to the Rolex Shanghai Masters final four. With his 82-minute victory, Fritz advanced to his third Masters 1000 semifinal on a hard court.

### Slow start for golfer

**Paris:** Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma's patchy form continued as he carded a topsy-turvy one-over 72 in the opening round of the FedEx Open de France that left him tied 77th in the standings here. Sharma struck four birdies against five bogeys. He was one of the early starters and stumbled to a bogey on the second hole but quickly made amends with two fine birdies on the fourth and the sixth. On the back nine, he had a good start with a birdie to go to two-under.

### Toyota returns to F1

**Tokyo:** Toyota is returning to Formula 1 after 15 years as the Japanese automaker becomes a "technical partner" of American racing team Haas. There will be Toyota branding on the Haas cars starting from next week's United States Grand Prix in Austin, Texas, and the auto giant's racing division will provide "design, technical and manufacturing services" to the North Carolina-based team. This doesn't mean a return of the Toyota works team which raced in F1 for eight seasons until 2009, however.

## India eye series sweep



### TEAM EXPECTS RUNS FROM OPENERS IN FINAL T20 AGAINST BANGLADESH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, Oct 11:** Despite its inconsequential nature, India will be eagerly pursuing the twin goals of a series sweep and monitoring the progress of impressive second-line players during the third and final T20 against Bangladesh here Saturday.

India have already bagged the series 2-0 after wins at Gwalior and New Delhi.

This Indian bunch under Gautam Gambhir has shown an insatiable hunger for victory, and doubters can glance back at its result-oriented approach during the rain-marred Kanpur Test against the same opposition a few days ago.

Hence, they are unlikely to show any laxity here too as a 3-0 sweep will sit nicely along with the 2-0 margin in the preceding Test series.

Beyond the obvious, India will also look to add new pieces to their white ball jigsaw puzzle ahead of some important assignments such as the Champions Trophy. So, in a season teeming with showpiece events globally as well as bilaterally, it's critical for the team to have multiple backup options.

In that context, it's clear that Gambhir and his colleagues in the backroom have set in mo-

tion the process of finding able support cast to frontline players keeping in mind the long-term goals such as the ICC event next year.

Be it pacer Mayank Yadav or spinner Varun Chakravarthy, Gambhir wants to take a closer look at them and assess their readiness for the sterner assays ahead.

They haven't been disappointing either in this series.

Mayank, who missed a lot of action since IPL 2024 due to an injury, bowled at over 150 clicks while Chakravarthy returned with a three-wicket haul in his first outing in blue in three years at Gwalior. The team management will also keep a close eye on the journey of Nitish Kumar Reddy, highly impressive in the Delhi T20 while smashing a 34-ball 74 and returning with a couple of wickets.

### Opening woes

Among these slivers of positives, the outings of Sanju Samson and Abhishek Sharma stick out like a sore thumb.

Samson has given a chance to open the innings in this series and it's a godsend in T20s, giving the batter a chance to exploit the six power play overs.

But the Kerala man has two modest outings to show so far - a 19-ball 29, a missed chance to make a fifty in a small chase of 128, and a 7-ball 10. Samson will have to come up with something special here not to slip away from the eyesight of management, unless they want to give a go to Jitesh Sharma, the second wicket-keeper batter in the squad.

## HISTORIC MILESTONE

# Haaland: Norway's leading scorer

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Oslo, Oct 11:** Erling Haaland became Norway's all-time leading goal scorer when he grabbed a brace against Slovenia in a 3-0 win in their Nations League match at Ullevaal.

The Norwegian, who made his national team debut in 2019, has only taken 36 games to reach the record mark.

Haaland equalled Jorgen Juve's goal record of 33 national team goals when he sent Norway into the lead after seven minutes. Slovenia's goalkeeper Jan Oblak first saved the finish from Antonio Nusa before Haaland tapped in the rebound from the corner of the five-meter before.

Forward Alexander Sorloth doubled the advantage soon after the restart. Then Haaland made it three with his second on the hour, breaking his nation's male goal scoring record.



The victory against Slovenia sent Norway to the top of the Nations League group. Norway has seven points after the first three games, three points more than Austria and Slovenia in the places behind. Kazakhstan is last with one point.

Besides records in national team records, he has already reached many goal scoring landmarks in his club career. He equalled Cristiano Ronaldo's

**It was a big moment. It is a record that has stood for a long time. I am proud and happy and I just want to thank everyone around me, my teammates, and the entire association for their support. I really appreciate it and am very happy**

ERLING HAALAND

record at Real Madrid of fewest games needed to reach a century for a team from Europe's top five leagues when he scored his 100th goal for Manchester City - in his 105th game.

The 24-year-old holds the record for most Premier League goals in a season - the 36 he recorded in 2022-23 season. Moreover, he has scored 42 goals in just 41 UEFA Champions League appearances, rewriting the record books in the process.

## FENESTA OPEN

# Odisha's Aahan storms to finals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 11:** Odisha's Aahan stormed into the finals of the girls' singles Under-16 and Under-14 categories in the Fenesta Open National Tennis Championship here Friday.

In the Under-16 semis, Aahan defeated Angel Patel of Gujarat 7-5 6-0 to set up final with Maharashtra's Aishwarya Jadhav, who beat Delhi's Yashika Shokeen 6-4, 6-3.

Later, the Odisha girl got the better of Avipsha Dehury 6-1 6-0 to reach the final of the Under-14 category.

She will now face Maharashtra's Pratharthi Mundhe, who beat Deepshikha Vinayagamurthy 6-2, 6-4, in the title match. The third seed Samarth Sahita continued his winning run to reach the final of the boys' singles Under-16 category.

## ManU legend Gary Neville to visit India

THE PLAYER WILL VISIT CHANDIGARH TO SUPPORT GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL PROGRAMME OCT 18

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chandigarh, Oct 11:** Former Manchester United superstar Gary Neville will be present in India to support the grassroots football programme and motivate the young kids playing football in the country as part of the 'United We Play' initiative.

Considered one of the greatest right-backs ever to play the game, Neville's illustrious career includes eight English Premier League titles and two UEFA Champions League titles for United and will be seen in action at the grand finale of the fourth edition of 'United We Play' in Chandigarh October 18.

A rare one-club man, Neville played for United for his entire career, spending almost 20 years with the club with a whopping 602 appearances for his boyhood club under his belt. He has also served English football with a dis-



inction of 85 appearances over a 12-year career for his country.

The 'United We Play' programme is an on-ground grassroots football initiative, supported by United to encourage young football talent from across geographies by giving them a platform to showcase their skills

with the objective of motivating aspiring footballers to continue playing and introducing them to global training methodologies.

The launch of the fourth edition of 'United We Play' took place in Kolkata in December 2023, where former United and French footballer Louis Saha

**We are thrilled and honoured to welcome a player of the stature of Gary Neville to India. His presence will surely elevate the experience for young budding footballers who will be a part of the United We Play finals in Chandigarh, inspiring young athletes with his illustrious journey in the sport and offering insights into his storied career**

RAJESH DAHIA | VICE PRESIDENT (COMMERCIAL, INDIA AND SAARC), APOLLO TYRES LTD

kicked off the programme.

The fourth edition of the grassroots football programme, was the biggest ever with a season-round programme, reaching out to 18 cities pan-India and over 15,000 young footballers across the country.