



**New mission**  
Actor Rashmika Mandanna, who fell victim to a deepfake video, has been appointed the National Ambassador to promote cyber safety

LEISURE | P2



**Automatic dam gates**  
Dams, barrages and inland storage structures in Odisha will soon be equipped with automatic gates

STATE | P5



**Maiden Pak visit**  
External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar lands Tuesday in Islamabad for his maiden visit to Pakistan to attend the SCO summit

INTERNATIONAL | P10



**Lakshya, Malvika lose**  
Shuttlers Lakshya Sen and Malvika Bansod make first round exits from the Denmark Super 750 badminton tournament, after suffering defeats

SPORTS | P12

**SHORT TAKES**

**Deal inked for Predator drones**

**New Delhi:** India inked Tuesday a mega deal with the US to procure 31 Predator long-endurance drones from American defence major General Atomics under the foreign military sales route at a cost of nearly USD 4 billion to boost the country's military's combat prowess along the contested borders with China. While the Navy will get 15 Guardian drones, the Indian Air Force and the Army will each get eight. The high-altitude long-endurance drones are capable of remaining airborne for over 35 hours and can carry four Hellfire missiles and around 450kg of bombs. The procurement of the drones was finalised just weeks ahead of the US presidential elections.

P9

**Fourth accused in Siddique case held**

**Mumbai:** The Mumbai police have arrested one more person in connection with the killing of NCP leader and former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique, officials said Tuesday. The accused has been identified as Harishkumar Balakram (23), hailing from Bahraich in Uttar Pradesh, they informed. Balakram was working as a scrap dealer in Pune and was also a part of the conspiracy to kill Siddique. He was nabbed from Bahraich, police said. With this, four persons have so far been arrested in connection with Siddique's killing.

P9

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



Good we downgraded relations. Now Canadians will find it harder to come here and steal your jobs

**Youth's murder sparks tension**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Ramachandrapur, Oct 15:** Tensions ran high as a youth was beaten to death Tuesday evening by a co-villager over past enmity at Pandua square under Ramachandrapur police limits of Anandapur sub-division in Keonjhar district. The deceased was identified as Rahamat Khan, 25, a resident of Pandua village. The accused Muna Jena and his family members fled the village after the incident. The incident sparked tension in the area as locals set the house of the accused on fire. Later, they demonstrated with the body of the deceased and set up a road block throwing the traffic in disarray. Anandapur SDPO Prasant Kumar Behera along with a large police contingent rushed to the spot and tried to placate the agitators. He requested them to withdraw the road block. However, the protestors insisted on the arrest of the accused and continued with their demonstrations. They said that as long as the accused is not arrested they will continue with their protests. The incident occurred when Rahamat had gone to Pandua square to buy betel. Rahamat was sitting on his bike when the accused Muna arrived at the spot and picked up a fight with him. During the argument, Muna suddenly picked up a stick and hit Rahamat on the head. Bleeding profusely, Rahamat collapsed on the road and died on the spot.



PLETHORA OF COLOURS: Young girls take part Tuesday in Kumari Puja at a Kali temple in Birbhun district of West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

**CM to visit Mumbai to invite investors**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi will embark on a four-day visit to Haryana and Mumbai beginning Wednesday. He will be in Haryana for two days and attend the swearing in ceremony of the BJP-led Haryana government Thursday. Talking about Majhi's Mumbai visit, Odisha Industry Minister Sampad Swain said that the chief minister will be attending the programme 'India Chem' organised by the Centre October 18. The top chemical industries of our country will participate. Chances are high that such industries may come to Paradip, Gopalpur and Dhamra," Swain said. "On October 19, heads of over 300 industries including garment, apparel, textile and renewable energy will participate in a programme. There will be a roadshow as well. This apart, finan-

cial institutions and banking sectors have also been invited there to discuss how they can achieve significant growth in Odisha," Swain added. Swain also said that Majhi will invite top industrialists to attend the 'Utkarsh Odisha - Make in Odisha' Conclave which the state will host next year. Swain stated that talks are on for the setting up of a mega steel plant in Keonjhar district. A task force headed by Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja has been formed to identify two land plots for the project.



Odisha Kheliba Duniya Dekhiba

**Majhi bats for local paddy farmers**

After increasing the paddy prices from ₹2,300 to ₹3,100 per quintal, Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi is now determined to ensure that farmers from outside the state cannot reap its benefits. He has issued directives so that Odisha farmers benefit from the price hike

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** The Odisha government said Tuesday it will seal borders with the neighbouring states when it begins paddy procurement for the kharif season next month. The decision was taken during a review meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, attended by ministers and departmental secretaries. The state plans to procure paddy at ₹3,100 per quintal, fulfilling a promise made by the BJP before the elections. With the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for paddy set at ₹2,300, the state will provide an additional ₹800 per quintal as a bonus at

government mandis, an official informed. Given the rising price of paddy in the state, the government is concerned about the potential influx of lower-priced paddy from neighbouring states such as Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and West Bengal, the official added. To address this issue, district magistrates have been instructed to deploy enforcement squads in border areas and implement 24-hour monitoring of highways using CCTV cameras. The chief minister emphasised the need to prevent farmers from outside the state from selling their paddy in Odisha markets. The state has set an ambitious target to procure one crore met-



ric tonne of paddy this year, with the possibility of increasing that figure based on demand, Majhi said and directed that the procurement system be streamlined and made more transpar-

ent for the benefit of farmers. "Advised to take necessary measures to make paddy procurement system more simple, smooth and transparent for the benefit of farmers," Majhi said. Each minister will be assigned to oversee the procurement process in two to three districts, and there will be one authorised officer present at each mandi during grain purchases. Zones will be created with multiple paddy mandis, each supervised by a designated official. Notably, 83.16 per cent of registered farmers in the state are small farmers. Majhi highlighted the importance of ensuring that these farmers can sell their paddy without issues and in-

structed officials to prioritise them during procurement. Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said paddy quality will now be assessed only once at the mandis, streamlining the process and reducing potential harassment of farmers over quality assessments. District collectors have been given the authority to extend the token deadlines for paddy procurement without needing to notify the government, he added. Additionally, the government plans to construct godowns at mandis to facilitate proper storage of paddy, especially during rainy periods, allocating ₹50 crore for the modernisation and development of these facilities.

**4 web scribes held for loot**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatna, Oct 15:** Sadar police here in Kalahandi district arrested five persons Tuesday, including four alleged web journalists on the charge of looting ₹2.55 lakh from a businessman of Kantabanji area in Bolangir district. The accused were identified as Lakshmi Ranjan Bag, Ajit Kumar Pujari, Madhusudan Mohapatra, Sangram Keshari Patra and Hanif Khan while the sixth accused is still absconding. All the accused were produced in court after medical examination. Among them, Lakshmi Ranjan, Ajit, Madhusudan and Sangram are allegedly web journalists while Hanif is a cosmetic shop owner. Cash worth ₹68,100, a car, one Bajaj Pulsar motorcycle, eight mobile phones and



booms of various web channels were found in their possession, Sadar police IIC Naresh Pradhan said. The sixth accused Tulamani Nag, also a web journalist is absconding, the IIC informed. The incident occurred when a trader identified as Akbar Khan was returning home in his car from Hyderabad October 2. The miscreants waylaid his car at the 'No Entry' zone near the agriculture college here and robbed him of ₹2.55 lakh. The complaint was lodged October 2. Police registered a case and launched an investigation after the trader lodged a complaint at the Sadar police station.

**Poll dates: Maha Nov 20; J'khand Nov 13, 20**

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The Assembly polls in Maharashtra will be held in a single phase November 20, while Jharkhand elections will be conducted in two phases November 13 and 20, the Election Commission of India (ECI) announced here Tuesday. The votes for the two states will be counted November 23. "There are 9.63 crore eligible voters in Maharashtra, while the number of eligible voters in Jharkhand is 2.6 crore," Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said at a press conference here. Maharashtra has 288 Assembly seats while 81 will up for grabs in Jharkhand. The BJP is keen to retain power in Maharashtra along with allies Shiv Sena led by Chief



Minister Eknath Shinde the NCP, led by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. The BJP led Mahayuti Alliance is facing a challenge from the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) coalition of the Congress-NCP (SP)-Shiv Sena (UBT), which hopes to repeat its performance in the Lok Sabha elections. The opposition MVA alliance won 31 of the 48 seats in

**EXIT POLLS UTTER NONSENSE: CEC**

**New Delhi:** Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar slammed Tuesday the practice of showing early trends on counting day by news channels as 'nonsense'. "We do not govern exit polls, but there is a need for self-introspection. What was the sample size, where was the survey done, how did the result come and what is my responsibility if I did not match to that result, are there disclosures - all of these need to be seen," Kumar said.

Maharashtra in the Lok Sabha elections. In Jharkhand, the Congress is playing second fiddle and it appears to be a straight fight between the JMM and BJP. The JMM has already said it wants to contest on the majority of seats.

**NASA testing if Jupiter's 'moon' can support life**

US SPACE AGENCY LAUNCHES LARGEST-EVER SPACECRAFT WHICH WILL ENTER THE PLANET'S ORBIT IN 2030

AGENCIES

**Florida, Oct 15:** NASA launched a spacecraft from here Monday on a mission to examine whether Jupiter's moon 'Europa' has conditions suitable to support life, with a focus on the large subsurface believed to be lurking beneath its thick outer shell of ice. The US space agency's 'Europa Clipper' spacecraft blasted off from the Kennedy Space Centre in Cape Canaveral. The robotic

solar-powered probe is due to enter orbit around Jupiter in 2030 after journeying about 1.8 billion miles (2.9 billion km) in 5-1/2 years. 'Europa Clipper' is the largest spacecraft NASA has built for a planetary mission, at about 100 feet (30.5 metres) long and about 58 feet (17.6 metres) wide with its antennas and solar arrays fully deployed - bigger than a basketball court - while weighing approximately 6,000 kg.



Even though 'Europa', the fourth-largest of Jupiter's 95 officially recognised moons, is just a quarter of Earth's diameter, its vast global ocean of salty liquid water may contain twice the water in Earth's oceans. 'Europa' has been viewed as a potential habitat for life beyond Earth in the solar system. NASA associate administrator Jim Free told a pre-launch briefing Sunday that 'Europa' boasts one of the most promising en-

vironments for potential habitability in the solar system, beyond Earth. "What we discover on 'Europa' will have profound implications for the study of astrobiology and how we view our place in the universe," Free said. "Scientists believe Europa has suitable conditions below its icy surface to support life. Its conditions are water, energy, chemistry and stability," Free added.

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	81,820.12	↓ 152.93
NIFTY	25,057.35	↓ 70.60
DOLLAR	84.08	↓ ₹0.02
EURO	91.71	↓ ₹0.23
GOLD	₹76,335	↑ ₹289
SILVER	₹91,660	↑ ₹924

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	35.7°C	33.2°C
Min Temp	25.2°C	25.0°C
Humidity	75%	80%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST		
PARTLY CLOUDY SKY		

# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Today is a bright day, and the stars foretell success for you. If you find yourself in a creative mood, indulge in some activity that will satisfy the urge. But, Ganesh says, if you are driving alone, exercise a great deal of caution to be on the safe side.

**TAURUS**  
Fortune favours the brave and you will wake up feeling gutsy. Your performance will peak today and you will reap the benefits of real estate and construction business. Your peers and boss will extend all the support you need. All in all, a day to bask in the glory of advantages and awards.

**GEMINI**  
Maintaining the image you have created in the minds of people, as well as upholding your reputation in society will give you some anxious moments today. You will work hard to improve your social standing, and will get results by the end of the day. It is an auspicious and lucky day for you, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
Today, you are likely to be brimming with love and compassion. However, certain negative thoughts will spoil all your good work. But don't fret! Your efforts won't go wasted and you will get the desired results sooner or later, says Ganesh.

**LEO**  
Do not be surprised if you find yourself today in a situation that somehow feels like a landmark moment in your life. Whether it is a personal matter or something related to work, that you must wait to find out, you will need all your grit and diplomacy to sail through.

**VIRGO**  
The bulb of ideas will burn bright today. A possible saw between your contractual obligation and current duties may baffle you. New contacts will stand you in good stead. Blood will prove thicker, and family and friends will consolidate their place in your life.

**LIBRA**  
Your instincts are at their peak today. Generally, this means a lot of good, but for you, it may also mean having to put up with the trouble of small things bothering you in a big way. So, it becomes highly important for you to remain balanced and focused. Do so and you may produce wonderful results at work, and also look forward to raking in the money from various sources, says Ganesh.

**SCORPIO**  
Investing in real estate could yield maximum profits today, says Ganesh. An unusual gain from speculative trade is also on the cards. But you may need to spend time in the waiting room, before a more profitable opportunity comes by. You may just reinvent yourself to a happier self and savour every moment of life, predicts Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
You are on a high today and a feeling of ecstasy surrounds you. You are performance driven and shall give you best in anything you take up. Listen to your inner voice, it will guide you to the correct path. Ganesh showers His benevolent blessings on you. Make the most of this day.

**CAPRICORN**  
You will be overpowered with nostalgia and may long to get in touch with old pals. And as Ganesh says, chances are that you may take a liking to your ex-lover, while simultaneously strengthening your social standing. All in all, the day will be a productive one.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will be on a spending spree today. But, make sure that your desire to enjoy life doesn't burn a hole in your pocket. Watch your words and steps, as people are observing your every move. You have put all of your eggs in one basket, so make sure that you don't mess up and lose everything that you have, advises Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
Some conflicts could crop up in the morning on the domestic front. However, they will cease to be a cause of annoyance as the day progresses. Come evening and you will be in as fine a mood as you ever were, ready to spend time basking in the affection of your near and dear ones, says Ganesh.



## LUPITA GETS EMOTIONAL AT LONDON FILM FESTIVAL

Actor Lupita Nyong'o got emotional after she saw a clip of the late Chadwick Boseman from *Black Panther* at a BFI London Film Festival event, where she revealed that she hadn't watched their film since his death in 2020.

## SALMA'S CRYPTIC POST AMID FEUD WITH NICOLE

Right after her highly publicised feud with Nicole Kidman at Paris Fashion Week, Salma, in a cryptic post, gave a shout-out to stars including Selena Gomez, Sofia Vergara, and Jenna Ortega. Speculation is rife about whether this has something to do with her tense exchange with Kidman.



## Ananya masters skills of muting

**Mumbai:** Actress Ananya Panday has mastered the art of muting social media profiles and said that it "avoids all the drama of unfollowing a person." Ananya was speaking to Prajakta Koli on her podcast series *So Positive*, where the actress asked the content creator what she does if she doesn't like someone's post and instead of writing a

mute." To which, Ananya replied that the "mute" feature is the best. "Oh my god, mute is the best feature. Left, right and centre, it's the best. Guys, if you didn't know about this secret mute button, it avoids all the drama of unfollowing a person. And you don't have to see it," said Ananya. However, the actress feels that cleansing her feed has made "such a big difference in my life." "It's literally like food, it's your diet. Because you're consuming it all the time," she said.

mean comment, what would she do? Prajakta replied: "Scroll past. Or if you don't already follow them, like for me if I follow someone but the content is not making me happy anymore, I'll just

## Rashmika to promote cyber safety

**Mumbai:** Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who fell victim to a deepfake video earlier this year, has been appointed as the National Ambassador for promoting cyber safety.

The actress has been appointed by the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C) of the Ministry of Home Affairs. She said as someone who has experienced this, she is dedicated to raising awareness about these issues.

Rashmika said in a statement: "Cybercrime is a dangerous and pervasive threat that affects individuals, businesses, and communities worldwide."

She went on to add, "As someone who has experienced this, I am dedicated to rais-

ing awareness about these issues and promoting the message of cyber safety to drive positive change. It is crucial that we come together to combat these threats and protect our digital spaces."

Rashmika will spearhead nationwide cyber awareness campaigns aimed at educating the public on various cybercrime threats, including online fraud, deepfake videos, cyber bullying, and AI-generated malicious content.

The actress' deepfake video started a conversation on the inappropriate use of technology, prompting numerous celebrities to voice their concerns.

Talking about Rashmika, who is South India's highest-paid actresses made it to 2024's list of *Forbes*' 30 Under 30.

## THEATRE TREAT



Bhubaneswar-based drama troupe Labanya Theatre presented its 40th Odia play *Sultan* at Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Tuesday. Directed by Satya Jena (Tunu), the fictional play, set against the backdrop of Mughal rule in Odisha, showcased the greed of those in power and the harmony between Hindus and Muslims. The artistes who performed on stage included Debiprasad, Beauty, Chiranjeevi (Bula), Pratima, Sarada, Ramani Ranjan, Bibhu, and Kalpana.

## BHUMI'S LATEST DESIRE

**Mumbai:** It was in 2015 when Bhumi Pednekar made her debut in films with *Dum Laga Ke Haisha* and ever since then she has featured in movies, which come with a message. The actress now manifests doing a period film around the freedom struggle.

In a conversation with this agency, Bhumi spoke about branching out to genres she has never tried her into - action and a period film.

"I think what I would really want to do is maybe an action film, maybe do a film around the freedom struggle," Bhumi said.

She added: "I'm constantly putting this out there in the universe that I want to do a film, a period film around the freedom struggle."

On the acting front, Bhumi was last seen in the crime thriller *Bhakhshak*, which was based on the Muzaffarpur shelter case. The film also had Sanjay Mishra, Aditya Srivastava and Sai Tamhankar.

Recently, the 35-year-old actress turned muse for the designer Richa Khemka's collection at the Lakme Fashion Week.

Bhumi revealed that she finds fashion "liberating and empowering."

"Fashion to me is a form of self-expression, it is so liberating and empowering and I've truly found a space that I really really enjoy," she had said.



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

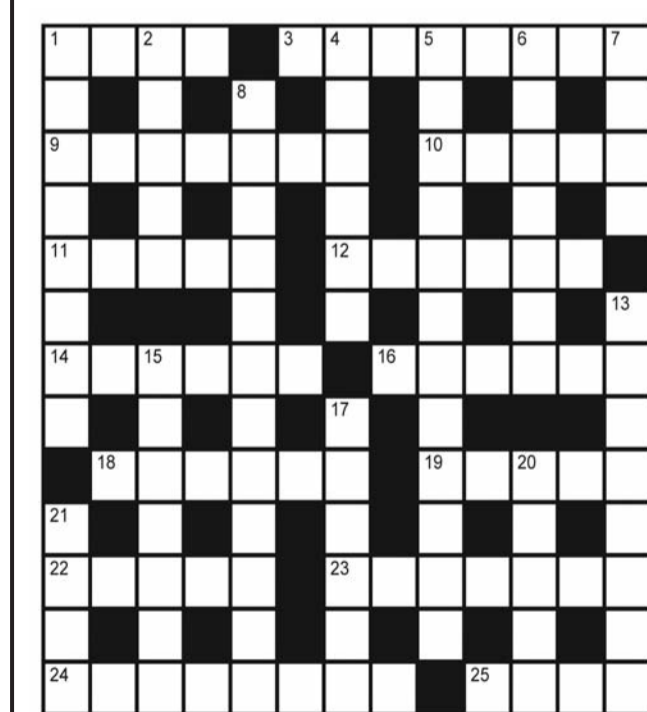


## BREVITY



## FUN post

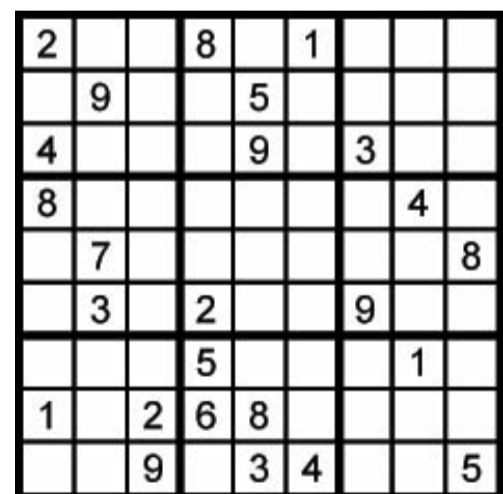
## CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Fleishy fruit
  - 3 Water sport
  - 9 Italian title of respect
  - 10 Pupils take part in it
  - 11 Kitchen light
  - 12 Gets smart
  - 14 Bacon serving
  - 16 Skin disorder
  - 18 Badmouth
  - 19 Charter
  - 22 Excuse
  - 23 Lobster part
  - 24 Breed of sled dog
  - 25 Shaft
  - 5 Judge
  - 6 Theatrical role
  - 7 Box office take
  - 8 Between noon and midnight (4,8)
  - 13 Tear
  - 15 Sporting dog
  - 17 Whole
  - 20 Extension
  - 21 Salve
- Down**
- 1 Travel document
  - 2 Tycoon
  - 4 Cars, to some

## SUDOKU

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



## SOLUTIONS

### CROSSWORD



### SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Workers installing a utility pole at Bali Yatra Ground in Cuttack, Tuesday, as the Silver City gears up to host the biggest open air trade fair in November



# downtown

## ODIA WOMAN GANGRAPE IN DELHI

# State women's commission wants NCW, DCW to step in



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 15: Taking suo motu cognisance of the alleged gangrape of a 34-year-old woman of Puri in Delhi, the Odisha State Commission for Women (OSCW) Tuesday urged the National Commission for Women (NCW) and Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) to initiate a probe into the 'shame' and share its report within 15 days.

OSCW chairperson Minati Behera said as the incident occurred in Delhi, the NCW and DCW have a pivotal role to play in conducting and monitoring the probe. "This is a shameful incident. We have approached the NCW and DCW to take action against accused following a proper investigation. We have requested them to share with us the probe report within 15 days. I'm personally looking into the matter in order to ensure speedy justice to the survivor," the OSCW chief said.

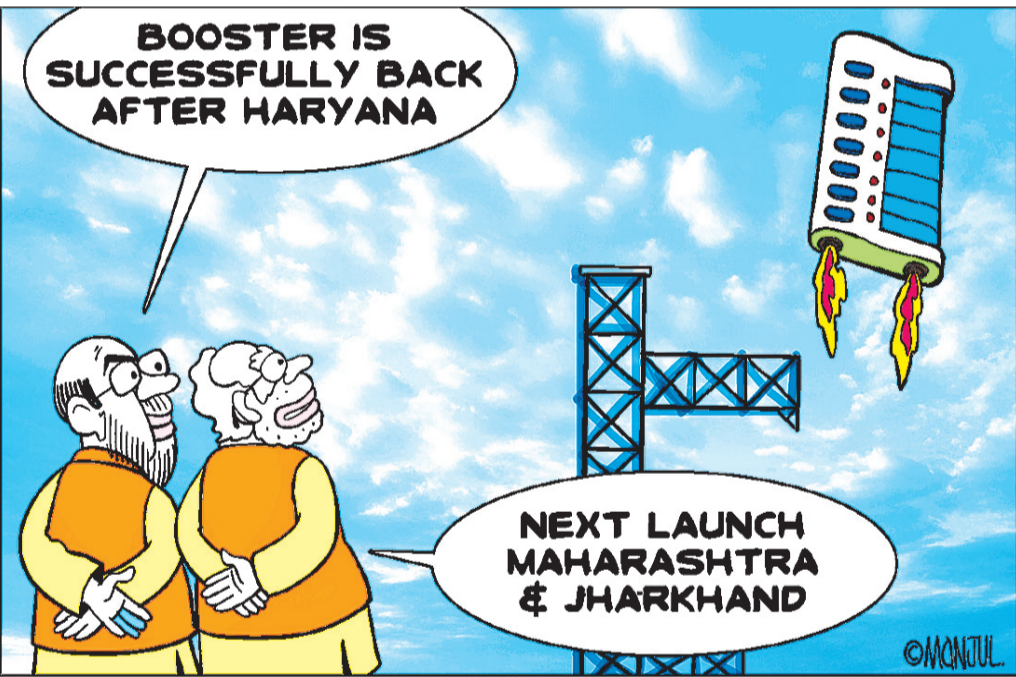
This is a shameful incident. We have approached the NCW and DCW to take action against accused following a proper investigation. We have requested them to share with us the probe report within 15 days. I'm personally looking into the matter in order to ensure speedy justice to the survivor



MINATI BEHERA | OSCW CHAIRPERSON

Odisha Police's IG, Crime Against Women and Children Wing (CAW & CW) S Shyni arrived in New Delhi Tuesday, along with a relative of the survivor, on a direction of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi. Upon his return to Bhubaneswar from his home district Keonjhar Monday night, the CM had directed Shyni to meet the survivor at AIIMS Delhi, where she is being treated, and enquire about her health condition. The CM has also assured the Delhi Police that the Odisha government would provide all support and fully cooperate with them to ensure proper investigation into the matter.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## 4 CHILDREN DIE BY DROWNING

Bhubaneswar/Bhawaniapatna, Oct 15: Four children allegedly died by drowning in two separate incidents in Khurda and Kalahandi districts Tuesday, police said. In Khurda, a 13-year-old girl and her younger brother drowned while they were bathing in a pond. The incident happened in the morning in Subala village under Baliaanta police limits on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar. The deceased were identified as Subhashree Jena and her brother Bhagirathi Jena, 9. Subhashree and Bhagirathi were rescued and taken to the Capital Hospital, where the doctors declared them 'brought dead', police said.

# Patasani blames Pandian for BJD government's fall

Rejecting allegations, BJD spokesperson Lenin Mohanty showed a video clip of Patasani praising Pandian and Naveen before elections



Bhubaneswar, Oct 15: Senior BJP leader Prasanna Patasani Tuesday blamed former bureaucrat-turned politician VK Pandian for the fall of the 24-year-old Biju Janata Dal (BJD) government in Odisha, and asserted that he was forced to leave BJD because of the former. Patasani, who was elected to Lok Sabha and state Assembly several times on BJD ticket, also claimed that the Naveen Patnaik-led party is unlikely to return to power in Odisha till Pandian remains in the party. "I had to quit BJD because of VK Pandian, and the popular government led by Naveen Patnaik was unseated due to

him. It hurts when a person like me — a founding member — is forced to quit the party. After quitting BJD, I joined the BJP," Patasani said. Patasani had severed his links with BJD and joined the BJP in June this year after being denied a party ticket to contest the Lok Sabha seat from Bhubaneswar constituency from where he was elected multiple times, including in 2004, 2009 and 2014. He was denied the BJD ticket in 2019 also. The veteran leader said this while supporting six-time BJD MLA Amar Prasad Satpathy who Monday said that he was no more in the BJD. As Pandian was unavailable

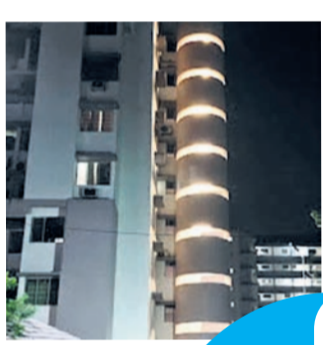


FINAL TOUCHES: An artisan decorates a clay idol of Goddess Laxmi on the eve of Kumar Purnima in Kumbhar Sahi area of Cuttack, Tuesday

# Young engineer leaps to death from City high-rise

FAILED LOVE AFFAIR SUSPECTED REASON BEHIND SUICIDE

Bhubaneswar, Oct 15: A 23-year-old man, an engineer by training, ended his life by allegedly jumping from the terrace of an eight-storied building in Kharavela Nagar area here early Tuesday. IIC, Kharavela Nagar police station, Rajanikanta Mishra said that residents of Chandrama Apartments, near Master Canteen Square, heard a loud thud at around 10 am. Upon inquiring, they found Ronit Jena, who lived alone in a flat on the fourth floor of the building, lying in a pool of blood on the ground. It is suspected that he had taken the leap from the terrace, causing his death instantaneously. Mishra said Ronit, a native of Kendrapara district, was living in the rented accommodation for over a week. "We are yet to ascertain the



exact reason behind the extreme step by the young engineer. However, the deceased's family members have claimed that he slipped into depression recently after ending his relationship with a woman from Berhampur. Ronit got a job in a private company in Bhubaneswar around a week ago after clearing the interview. Thereafter, he went to Berhampur to meet the woman and informed her about his new job. However, Ronit's friends told me that the meeting went awry after the woman said she wanted to end the relationship. Following this, Ronit locked himself up in the flat and did not pickup our calls for two-three days," he added. Mishra said the body was handed over to the family members Tuesday evening after autopsy.

Berhampur. They became close afterwards. Ronit used to extend financial support to the woman during her needs, Mishra said. Meanwhile, speaking to media, Ronit's father said sometime back, he (Ronit) had spent a lot of money on the woman's hospitalisation. "Ronit got a job in a private company in Bhubaneswar around a week ago after clearing the interview. Thereafter, he went to Berhampur to meet the woman and informed her about his new job. However, Ronit's friends told me that the meeting went awry after the woman said she wanted to end the relationship. Following this, Ronit locked himself up in the flat and did not pickup our calls for two-three days," he added. Mishra said the body was handed over to the family members Tuesday evening after autopsy.

## YUVA SANGAM V 45 Odisha students to visit Maha in Dec

POST NEWS NETWORK Bhubaneswar, Oct 15: Forty five UG and PG students from across Odisha will visit Maharashtra in the first week of December as part of Yuva Sangam (Phase V), arrangements for which will be made by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bhubaneswar, official sources said Tuesday. Rajesh Roshan Dash – Dean (Student Affairs) of IIT-Bhubaneswar which is organising the tour of Odisha students to the western Indian state, said, "IIT-Bhubaneswar will select 45 Odia UG and PG students from across the state having educational background in humanities, science, engineering, management and law for Phase V of Yuva Sangam. In the first week of December, we'll coordinate their travel to Maharashtra, where IIM-Mumbai will host the Odisha students during their visit. Similarly, a contingent of 45 youths from Maharashtra will visit Odisha, who will be hosted by IIT-Bhubaneswar." The registration for the tour can be done on or before October 21.

## Excise constable injured in illegal liquor traders' attack



Brahmapur, Oct 15: An Excise department constable was seriously injured after he was attacked by a group of people selling liquor illegally in a lane behind the Berhampur Telephone Bhavan. The injured constable has been identified as Sabyasachi Mishra. An Excise official said that the district administration had imposed restrictions on sale of liquor during the second half of the day in the festive season. However, some unscrupulous liquor traders were reportedly found selling foreign liquor in the sly by defying the restrictions. The Excise department had deployed personnel in plainclothes at various locations of the city to keep an eye on these traders. While on duty, constable Sabyasachi Mishra and his team found some people illegally sell-

ing liquor from a rented house, near a liquor shop that had been closed since March this year, in a lane behind the Berhampur Telephone Bhavan. While Sabyasachi was taking pictures of the illegal liquor sale in progress, some liquor traders approached him and snatched away his mobile phone. They were soon joined by a mob before launching a vicious attack on Sabyasachi who showed them him ID card and Aadhaar card in a bid to stop them. The unrelenting mob beat him up mercilessly, leaving him seriously injured and bleeding. The miscreants also took away Sabyasachi's ID and Aadhaar cards. On being informed, officials from the Excise department rushed to the spot and rescued the constable. They later admitted him admitted him to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital where he is recuperating. The Town Police lodged an FIR following a complaint. According to reports, one of the attackers, an illegal liquor trader, surrendered at the police station, while the house used for selling the illegal liquor has been sealed in the presence of the Tehsildar.

## BJP names Jay Panda in-charge for Delhi polls

AGENCIES New Delhi, Oct 15: The BJP Tuesday appointed Bajajant Jay Panda, one of its vice-presidents, as the party's in-charge for the Assembly polls in Delhi. Ghaziabad MP Atul Garg will be the co-in-charge. Panda, a Lok Sabha MP from Kendrapara constituency, had earlier held organisational responsibilities for Delhi. His appointment as the poll in-charge will help the BJP draw from his understanding of the party's dynamics in the national capital. The Delhi Assembly polls are expected to be held early next year. The polls hold much more symbolic significance than the Union Territory's political weight. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has not been in power in the capital since 1998 and is making strong efforts to inflict a political defeat on Aam Aadmi Party leader and former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, a fierce critic of the saffron party under whom the AAP has become a national party.

WORLD FOOD DAY

# Packaged food posing health hazards: Experts



Health experts are increasingly concerned about the implications of the trend. A study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) shows a 50 per cent increase in childhood obesity cases since 2010, with processed foods being identified as a key contributor.

"The shift from freshly cooked food to packaged food can significantly impact health," warned Bhubaneswar-based nutrition and fitness consultant Priyanka Singh Deo.

"Packaged foods, though convenient, often contain preservatives, artificial additives, high sugar, and unhealthy fats that can contribute to long-term issues like obesity heart disease, and diabetes. Freshly cooked meals usually offer higher nutritional value and fewer chemicals."

Despite these concerns, experts acknowledge that packaged foods have a place in certain situations. "For individuals living in remote areas or those abroad who struggle to access traditional meals, packaged foods can be essential," she said.

She further said that the key is to make informed choices by carefully reading labels and opting for healthier options with balanced nutrients.

**Growing reliance on packaged and processed foods, driven by factors like urbanisation is becoming a key factor in the rise of lifestyle-related diseases**

In India, the shift is particularly pronounced, with the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) reporting that nearly 30 per cent of urban households now rely on processed food as a dietary staple. Packaged food consumption has doubled in the country over the past decade.

RESHMI YADAV, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Alarming shift in global eating habits is a matter of concern as it poses a range of health hazards, experts said Tuesday on the occasion of World Food Day observed worldwide October 16.

The growing reliance on packaged and processed foods, driven by urbanisation, convenience, and lifestyle changes, is becoming a key factor in the rise of lifestyle-related diseases, they said.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the global packaged food market is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.2 per cent by 2027.



**MATTER OF LIVELIHOOD:** Members of Odisha Rajya Sarkari Samanvaya Samiti stage a demonstration at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, demanding regularisation of Lady Matrons working under the ST and SC department

## 'Embrace opportunity to drive progress, connectivity'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** The gathering not only highlights India's role in the global tech landscape but also sets the stage for meaningful dialogues on future-ready telecommunication solutions. Let's embrace the opportunity to drive progress and connectivity worldwide, Electronics and IT Minister Mukesh Mahaling said after participating in the roundtable meeting of IT ministers from various states at India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2024 in New Delhi Tuesday.

He also attended the World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (WTSa) 2024, which is organised by the International Telecommunication Union, a



specialised agency of the United Nations.

Taking to his social media account, Mahaling said, "Today, participated in the roundtable meeting of IT ministers from various states at IMC 2024, addressed by the Minister of Communications, GOI Jyotiraditya Scindia, along with

the Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani. We discussed the key issues related to telecom connectivity and cyber security."

He added, "It was a wonderful opportunity to interact with delegates from various countries,

as well as IT Ministers from different states. Additionally, I had the chance to engage with prominent business leaders from the telecom and IT sectors."

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 8th edition of IMC during the International Telecommunication Union - World Telecommunication Standardisation Assembly (ITU-WTSa) 2024 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

It is for the first time that the ITU-WTSa is being hosted in India and the Asia-Pacific. It is a pivotal global event that has brought together more than 3,000 industry leaders, policy-makers and tech experts from over 190 countries, representing telecom, digital, and ICT sectors.

## SOA, HSPL pact to help farmers

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University (SOA) will take up joint programs with Bangalore-based Hydenmet Solutions Private Limited (HSPL) to generate knowledge in agriculture and enable farmers to get affordable access to cutting edge precision farming solutions.

An agreement in this regard was signed Tuesday between SOA and HSPL.

The major aim of the collaboration is to generate knowledge in effective monitoring of various crops from seeding to harvest, compare the real-time condition of crops with documented intelligence to derive the most accurate advisory for managing water stress, nutrition stress, pests, diseases, insect and fungus attacks and ensure maximum yield of good quality produce.



To achieve this objective, several research project proposals along with outreach activities including seminars and workshops would be conducted with clear goals, approaches, deliverables, timelines, and financial inputs to be jointly worked out between the two parties.

The MoU was signed by SOA Vice-Chancellor Prof. Pradipta Kumar Nanda and Chief Executive Officer of HSPL Bhaskaran Rangarajan.

As per the MoU, HSPL will install one automatic weather station and any other crop or soil Internet of Things (IoT) sensor as required in SOA's farm and roll out Hydenmet Solution's Smart Technology-Based Agriculture Enabler (STAGE) platform to monitor the same.

It will also provide the necessary manpower and facilities at its manufacturing plants for conducting trials relevant to the identified projects.

Besides, experts from HSPL shall facilitate visits of faculty and students of SOA to its manufacturing plants in connection with the identified projects and participate in the training of students.

## WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY OBSERVED IN CITY



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** White canes have a significant contribution in making a visually-impaired person self-reliant in the society. By instilling self-confidence in mind, white canes help an individual assert the right to equality, said Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department principal secretary Bishupada Sethi.

Sethi expressed the views at an event organised here by the department on the occasion of World White Cane Day under the auspices of the State Institute of Special Education and Research (SISER), Tuesday.

"White cane is a tool that helps visually-impaired persons integrate into society by allowing them to move around freely and independently. It is important in building an inclusive society," Sethi said. He said that the state government has initiated efforts in establishing the coun-

try's first university for the visually-impaired. Later, SSEPD department director Niyati Patnaik, along with additional secretary Santosh Kumar Pradhan launched an awareness rally participated by more than six hundred students.

On the occasion, additional secretary Deepak Kumar Routrai and deputy secretary Sannyashai Behera addressed the gathering.

In the rally, the students played drums, trumpets, cymbals and jhumkas and gave various awareness messages through roadside plays, pyramids and slogans. The rally covered the distance from the main gate of State Institute for Rural Development at Unit VIII to Stewart School. The artistry and skills of the visually-impaired students amazed everyone.

The programme was organised with the cooperation of all concerned departments. A large number of people joined the march and encouraged the students in attendance.

## 18TH GBM OF CES

## 'Nature camps initiative in each dist'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Forest, Environment and Climate Change additional chief secretary Satyabrata Sahu emphasised the involvement of Eco-clubs in seven themes of Mission LIFE initiatives in their day-to-day life. He also prioritised organising Nature camps in each district of the state.

Sahu was chairing the 18th governing body meeting (GBM) of the Centre for Environmental Studies (CES), Bhubaneswar, convened here Tuesday.

He advised that there a need to include participation of 40-50 students in each nature camp and 50 number of camps for each district.

The initiative is aimed at deepening students' connection with nature and instilling a sense of environmental stewardship. The camps will serve as an experiential learning platform, al-



lowing young minds to engage directly with biodiversity and conservation efforts.

Outlining the deliberations, CES director K Murugesan said the organisation is scaling up awareness on environment protection in a big way in the state.

The meeting marked a pivotal step towards strengthening environmental education and sustainability initiatives in Odisha through Eco-clubs.

Key decisions were taken to promote eco-consciousness among the youth and ensure cleaner, greener spaces in educational institutions.

Further aligning with the commitment to environmental sustainability, the members present advocated for making school campuses across the state plastic-free zones.

"This will be a concerted effort to reduce plastic waste and promote eco-friendly alternatives within educational institutions, reinforcing the importance of sustainability from a young age," Murugesan said.

Moreover, the meeting endorsed the initiative titled "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam", an initiative encouraging students to plant trees in honour of their mothers.

The effort aims to foster a deep personal connection to tree planting, driving home the importance of afforestation for a sustainable future.

Key officials including, director, Environment-cum-Special Secretary, (MoEF&CC) Prem Kumar Jha were present in the meeting.

## Meeting on advancing state's power infra held



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** A meeting on advancing Odisha's power infrastructure was held Tuesday under the chairmanship of Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Energy Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo.

In the meeting, discussion were held on the installation of 132/33 kV grid substation at Titilagarh and 220/33 kV grid substation at Khandapada. Titilagarh MLA Nabin Kumar Jain and Khandapada MLA Dushmantha Kumar Swain were present on the occasion.

Deo explored ways to strengthen energy connectivity, fostering growth and progress across the region.

He said that installation of high-capacity grid substations in these two areas can alleviate the electricity problems of the local people as well as the low-voltage problem during the day.

In the meeting, the senior officers of OPTCL and Tata Power expressed their views on this. At present 20 additional grid substations are being installed in the state. Out of these 11 grids have been completed and will be operational soon.

Minister Deo said that the government is always trying to solve the electricity problems of the people.

He discussed with the officials and MLAs about the connection of lateral grid to provide uninterrupted electricity service to the people of Titilagarh and Khadpada.

## Lancet report aims to halve global early death rates by 2050

**A**head of the 2024 World Health Summit, in which the World Health Organisation (WHO) is a partner, a new report by the Lancet Commission on 'Investing in Health' has set a goal of cutting the probability of premature deaths around the world in half by 2050.

Seven of the 30 most populous countries, including Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Iran, and Türkiye, are on track to meeting the 'ambitious', yet 'feasible' goal, which the report's authors have called '50-by-50'.

The international team includes authors from institutions

such as Harvard University's School of Public Health, the WHO, and Public Health Foundation of India, New Delhi.

They explained that on average, a 2019-born person had a 31 per cent chance of dying before turning 70 years of age. If the 50-by-50 goal was achieved globally, a 2050-born individual can expect to have only a 15 per cent chance of dying before turning 70, they said.

The authors said that the gains made by the seven countries in slashing chances of early death can be achieved early on the route to providing full universal



health coverage.

To achieve the 50-by-50 goal, tobacco control, including taxation, is the most important policy that governments can adopt, given the tobacco-related deaths and the established capacity of governments to implement tobacco policy, the team said.

Besides other causes, consuming sugary drinks has been related with an increased risk of early death and heart disease, among people with type 2 diabetes, according to a study, led by Harvard University and published in the British Medical Journal in April 2023.

With regards to the exceptionally high death risk from pandemics, the authors attributed the success of the best-performing nations, such as China and Japan, to national implementation of public health fundamentals - early action, isolation and quarantine, along with

financial support for the exposed.

As part of a focussed approach to strengthening health systems, the authors proposed a range of interventions that they said could be cost-effective and feasible to implement across high-, middle- and low-income nations.

They said that scaling up investments and services for only 15 priority health conditions - eight infectious and maternal health conditions, and seven non-communicable disease and injury-related conditions - could cut premature deaths by 50 per cent by mid-century in the countries choosing to do so.

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FOCUS HEALTH CARE

# INVESTING IN THE WHO



**A fully funded WHO could protect the world from health emergencies, reduce gender-based disparities, eliminate many more diseases, bridge the mental-health treatment gap, combat antimicrobial resistance, and ensure that displaced people worldwide have access to essential medical services**

tributions for the rest, limiting its effectiveness. Even with institutional reforms underway, the current Investment Round is vital for securing the flexible funding required to implement the organisation's strategy over the next four years.

If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it is that health emergencies know no borders and that another pandemic is not a question of if, but when. Alarmingly, as global health threats grow more frequent and severe, the number of unvaccinated children is rising for the first time in modern history, exposing them to deadly diseases again. Moreover, communicable diseases have re-emerged as a leading cause of premature deaths.

The climate crisis, too, is undeniably an escalating health crisis, with millions more people projected to die from malnutrition, cancer, malaria, air pollution, and extreme weather events. Meanwhile, the silent pandemic of antimicrobial resistance, which contributes to five million deaths annually, threatens to reverse a century of medical progress.

Against this backdrop, the world is grappling with a profound mental health crisis. As our understanding of mental

health disorders has deepened, we now recognise that they are far more prevalent than previously thought. Notably, more than 700,000 people worldwide die by suicide each year.

While health is enshrined as a human right in the constitutions of 140 countries, more than four billion people lack access to basic care, leaving them so vulnerable that they cannot afford to get sick. Investing in health care is thus the best insurance policy we can have. The results speak for themselves: every dollar invested in the WHO generates a remarkable \$35 return in improved health outcomes. But the organisation's 194 member states currently contribute just \$0.30 per person annually to keep it afloat.

Closing the funding gap is crucial for enabling the WHO to respond to the next pandemic swiftly and effectively. Of the \$7.1 billion it aims to raise, \$1.6 billion will be used for expanding health care in low- and middle-income countries – equivalent to just \$0.13 per year from each of the three billion people in the global middle class.

With adequate funding over the next four years, the WHO can address gender-based health disparities, which account for 75 million years of life lost each

year, by tackling issues such as postpartum hemorrhage, the leading cause of maternal deaths. These funds will also accelerate the implementation of the global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer. And they will help finance the organisation's Special Initiative for Mental Health, increasing support for the one billion people living with mental health conditions.

Altogether, fully funding the WHO's programme of work for the next four years could prevent 40 million deaths by 2028, including 7.5 million deaths from climate-related causes, 6.5 million from noncommunicable diseases, and five million from infectious diseases. Moreover, it could improve health outcomes for six billion people and provide access to health care for five billion individuals facing financial hardship as a result of out-of-pocket expenses.

The past few decades have shown what international cooperation, spearheaded by the WHO, can achieve. Coordinated global efforts have successfully eradicated smallpox, advanced the fight against tuberculosis, and reduced HIV deaths by 70 per cent within 20 years. Over the past five years alone, I estimate that 25 countries have eliminated at least one tropical disease, allowing the WHO to expand its efforts to eliminate 30 communicable diseases.

Just imagine what we can accomplish in the next four years. A fully funded WHO could protect the world from health emergencies, reduce gender-based disparities, eliminate many more diseases, bridge the mental-health treatment gap, combat antimicrobial resistance, and ensure that displaced people worldwide have access to essential medical services.

While I remain hopeful, achieving these goals depends on closing the current funding gap. In the face of what Martin Luther King, Jr., famously called the "fierce urgency of now," we cannot afford to wait.

*The writer, a former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, is UN Special Envoy for Global Education and Chair of Education Cannot Wait. @PROJECTSYNDICATE*



Gordon Brown

**AMID CLIMATE DISRUPTIONS, PANDEMICS, AND RAPID POPULATION AGING, THE WHO ESTIMATES THAT ITS FUNDRAISING EFFORT COULD SAVE AN ADDITIONAL 40 MILLION LIVES OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS**

In August, 14 of Africa's poorest countries, alongside international organisations and private companies, pledged over \$45 million to the World Health Organisation's new Investment Round, which aims to raise \$7.1 billion in voluntary contributions to close its current funding gap for the next four years, improve primary care, and build a more robust, better-trained health workforce.

Amid climate disruptions, pandemics, and rapid population aging, the WHO estimates that its fundraising effort could save an additional 40 million lives over the next four years. The African Development Bank has committed \$10 million, while countries like Ethiopia and Niger have each pledged \$2 million. Earlier this month, countries and partner organisations from the WHO South-East Asia Region – including India, Indonesia, North Korea, and Sri Lanka – pledged \$345 million.

This raises an important question: if low-income countries like Chad and lower-middle-income countries like Côte d'Ivoire can contribute their fair share, will their wealthier counterparts step up?

The WHO, which provides critical aid to roughly 166 million people in conflict zones such as Ukraine, Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, urgently requires more consistent and predictable funding. Otherwise, its ability to respond to health crises caused by wars, disease outbreaks, famines, droughts, and floods will be severely constrained, denying millions of people the emergency medical assistance they need. The WHO must also sustain its ongoing efforts in impoverished countries, where billions of people lack regular access to health care. In response to these evolving needs, the new Investment Round calls for just 0.1 per cent of the \$9 trillion spent annually on health care.

When the WHO was founded after World War II, member states provided flexible funding that allowed for long-term planning. But nowadays, the organisation can be certain about only 20 per cent of its budget and relies on voluntary, often earmarked, con-

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THE MOTHER



## Troubled Ties

The already strained ties between India and Canada escalated to a full blown diplomatic row 14 October, as both countries expelled their top envoys after Ottawa sought to link the Indian High Commissioner to an investigation into the assassination of Sikh extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Rejecting the "preposterous imputations" of the accusation, New Delhi said that the whole scheme was part of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's "political agenda" centered around "vote bank politics."

On the same day, Canadian law enforcement officials at a Press conference claimed that the Indian government and its agents were running a broad criminal network in Canada, with a goal of intimidating and harassing Sikh separatists. The officials went on to allege that a criminal gang led by notorious gangster Lawrence Bishnoi has been involved in extortion, intimidation, coercion, and targeted killings of Canadian citizens, all at the behest of the Indian government.

In India, Lawrence Bishnoi is again in the news for the recent murder of a former minister of Maharashtra, Baba Siddique, said to be a close associate of actor Salman Khan. The popular film star has been on the hit-list of the Bishnoi gang for killing a blackbuck two decades ago, as the animal is considered sacred by the Bishnoi community.

Meanwhile, speaking on live television 14 October, Trudeau said that India had made a "fundamental error" by supporting "criminal" activities in Canada and his government needed to act based on the latest findings. "The evidence brought to light by the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) cannot be ignored... It leads to one conclusion, it is necessary to disrupt the criminal activities that continue to pose a threat to public safety in Canada. That is why we acted," Trudeau said.

Making matters worse, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly 15 October hinted at the possibility of sanctions against India. Responding to a media query on whether the country is looking to impose sanctions on India, Joly said expelling diplomats was one of the toughest measures that a country could take under the Vienna Convention. "For the rest, we will continue to push India to make sure they cooperate. We will continue to engage with our Five Eyes partners. We will also continue to engage with the G7 partners. Everything is on the table," she said.

The latest row with Canada may affect India's trade relations with that country. India imports minerals, pulses, potash, industrial chemicals, and gemstones from Canada. Canadian funds have cumulatively invested over \$54 billion in India, while more than 600 Canadian firms have a presence in India's IT, banking, and financial services sectors.

Relations between India and Canada have been frosty since September 2023, when Trudeau claimed in the parliament that Canada had credible evidence linking Indian agents to the assassination of Nijjar, whom India has designated as a terrorist. India has repeatedly said that Canada has not "shared a shred of evidence" to back its claim. Nijjar was killed outside a Sikh temple in Surrey, British Columbia last year. Three Indian nationals have been arrested and charged in the ongoing investigation.

In October 2023, Canada withdrew more than 40 diplomats from India after New Delhi asked Ottawa to scale back its diplomatic presence. In June 2024, a committee of Canadian parliamentarians identified India and China as the biggest foreign threats to the country's democratic institutions, based on information from intelligence agencies.

The rift between the two countries is deepening even as the United States, the European Union and others try to court India as a counterweight to China on the global stage.

In this context, Canada doubling-down on its accusations against India should also be seen from the perspective of the US. Canada couldn't have gone so far in its claims without the nod from its big brother, the US. Both countries are also part of the Five Eyes intelligence alliance, Australia, UK and New Zealand being the other members of the bloc. The US itself has accused Indian agents of being involved in an attempt to assassinate Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, one of the main leaders of the Khalistan movement who holds dual citizenship of US and Canada. An Indian committee formed to probe the American allegations is currently on a visit to the US. In November last year, US federal prosecutors charged Indian national Nikhil Gupta with working with an Indian government employee in the failed bid to kill Pannun in New York.

It is no secret that Trudeau's party, the Liberal Party of Canada, has been supporting pro-Khalistan elements for political reasons, Canada being home to the largest Sikh community outside India. At the same time, the events that have unfolded since the assassination of Nijjar have also put the spotlight on India's foreign policy establishment. The MEA's aggressive posturing on a slew of issues involving various countries has often done more harm than good for the country as is evident from the situation created all around India's borders where every neighbouring country today stands as an enemy.

### WISDOM CORNER

Swim upstream. Go the other way. Ignore the conventional wisdom. **SAM WALTON**

Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn. **BENJAMIN FRANKLIN**

I do not think that there is any other quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature. **JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER**

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

**1793:** Marie-Antoinette guillotined. After the French Revolution began, Marie-Antoinette, queen consort of Louis XVI, was targeted by agitators who, enraged by her extravagance and attempts to save the monarchy, ultimately guillotined her on this day in 1793.

**1813:** Napoleon led his troops against an allied force of Austrian, Prussian, Russian, and Swedish troops during the Battle of Leipzig.

**1846:** William Thomas Green Morton first demonstrated the use of ether as a general anesthetic before a gathering of physicians at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston.

**1847:** English novelist Charlotte Brontë (under the pseudonym Currer Bell) published Jane Eyre, which became a classic noted for giving new truthfulness to the Victorian novel.

**1916:** Margaret Sanger, an activist for women's reproductive rights, opened the first birth control clinic in the United States, in Brooklyn, New York.

**1946:** Ten of the 12 defendants sentenced to death at the Nürnberg trials, including Joachim von Ribbentrop and Ernst Kaltenbrunner, were executed.

**1968:** During the awards ceremony for the 200-metre race at the Mexico City Olympics, American sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos gave a Black-power salute, for which they were later ordered to leave the Games.

### IN JEST THIS

## Even dogs can teach us life lessons



Melvin Durai

**LULU IS ALWAYS EAGER TO GO FOR A LONG WALK AND SOMETIMES EVEN A LONG RUN. SHE KNOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING IN SHAPE**

Life is full of lessons – and we don't need to be in a classroom to learn them. Almost everybody we meet in life can teach us something new, if we're willing to listen. We can also learn a lot from animals. They're a lot smarter than we think.

I'm always learning lessons from my dog, Lulu. She's a Siberian Husky that we adopted from an animal shelter almost four years ago. Here are just a few of the lessons I've learned from her:

1. Be willing to try new things. Lulu is always willing to try something new. The other day, she grabbed the container of goldfish flakes that I use to feed my pet fish, chewed it open and ate all the flakes. If we do not keep our trash can closed, it's another opportunity for Lulu to try something new. Before we adopted her, she was on the street for at least a few months. You can't survive on the street if

you're unwilling to try something new. Staying in your comfort zone will just make you go hungry.

- 2. Don't let people put you down. As soon as Lulu entered our home, she climbed onto the couch and sat there. I tried to put her back down on the floor, but she believed that she belonged on the couch and declined to even negotiate with me. Our previous dog, Legacy, accepted her spot on the floor. But Lulu knows the importance of aiming high.
- 3. Find support for any position you take. Lulu found support for her position on the couch from my wife and my younger daughter. "Let her stay," my wife said. "She likes it on the couch." My position was that dogs should not be on furniture, but Lulu's position had more support.
- 4. Don't rely too much on technology. Lulu does not need

GPS for directions. If we take her for a long, circuitous walk, she knows exactly how to get back home. The other day, we tied her outdoors but she managed to escape and go on a jaunt. About an hour later, when we opened the front door, she dashed into our home, smelling like she had taken a tour of the local waste treatment plant.

5. Get plenty of sleep. Unlike our kids, we never have to tell Lulu that it's time to go to bed. She knows the value of sleep. By my estimate, she gets about 18 hours of sleep each day. This means, of course, that her brain has had plenty of rest and is extremely alert. This alertness helps her achieve her goals each day: eat, walk and sleep.

6. Get plenty of exercise. Lulu is always eager to go for a long walk and sometimes even a long run. She knows the importance of being in shape.

Without regular exercise, she would have a hard time putting fear into the neighborhood cats. Some of them stare at her from a distance, daring her to chase them. But they don't get very close, because they can tell that she's in good shape.

7. Talk less, listen more. Lulu hardly opens her mouth, except to eat. But she's a good listener. She opens her ears for our commands, for other dogs' barks, and most importantly, for the sound of food being dropped in her bowl.

8. Don't settle in life. Our previous dog, Legacy, was happy with whatever we put in her bowl, even if it was just dry food. But not Lulu. She expects more than that – and usually gets it. Even after she's eaten a full meal, she'll walk to my wife with a look that says, "That was a good appetizer. I'm ready for dinner now."

### Rooted in reality

**Sir,** This refers to "Trio of professors win Economics Nobel," **OrissaPOST**, Oct 15. This year's Economics Nobel winners Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, James Robinson are rooted in reality. This year's award for research on understanding institutions' role in prosperity is a nod to what economics is expected to deliver. The laureates don't offer solutions to inequality but have demonstrated the "importance of societal institutions for a country's prosperity." Their research traces the roots of institutional trajectories, studying how different colonial strategies led to choices institutions made. Support for democracy is at an all-time low because democracy hasn't delivered what it promised – jobs, stability, and quality public goods. Authoritarian, populist leadership styles imperil institutions. When institutions fail, democracy falters – job-creation to law & order to service delivery. AI adds to the complexity, on which the laureates say "it's naive to trust in the benevolence of business and tech leaders." Acemoglu signed off saying it's for institutions "to reclaim the high ground" in order to deliver the promise of democracy – a message highly relevant for India, whose strong GDP growth hides many fault lines.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, WASHINGTON

### Iconic line judges

**Sir,** The announcement that Wimbledon is scrapping its iconic line judges in favour of Electronic Line Calling (ELC) from 2025 comes with a tinge of sadness. No doubt the ELC system will clearly avoid any confrontation between a hot-tempered player and an official like in the case of John McEnroe, who once infamously berated a line judge for a call he disagreed with in the 1981 Wimbledon. Nevertheless, line judges have been part of Wimbledon's unique colour for nearly a century and a half, and without them the Centre Court will look that little bit barren from next year. Most importantly, terminating around 300 line judges means fewer part-time opportunities for trained officials and it will affect the pathway of aspiring chair umpires, as many chair umpires started off as line officials.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, 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)

**OrissaPOST**

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MARITIME SECURITY

# Rajnath lays foundation stone for naval radar station in Telangana

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh emphasizes the importance of collective maritime security and cautions against allowing outside forces, while inaugurating a new VLF Naval Station in Vikarabad



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Vikarabad (Telangana), Oct 15:** In a message to the neighbouring countries who share maritime boundaries with India, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Tuesday stressed that maritime security is a collective effort and inviting "outside forces" to the doorstep would dent efforts for unity.

Speaking after laying the foundation stone for a Very Low Frequency (VLF) Naval Station at Vikarabad near Hyderabad, he said maintaining peace in the Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean region should be top priority.

Cooperation of India's friendly nations is essential in this effort, as even if one country is left out, the nation's security will be at risk, he said.

Describing the Indian Navy as "the biggest guarantee of peace in the entire IOR, including the Bay of Bengal," Singh stressed the need to continuously empower the defence wing in view of the ever-growing global interest in the Indian Ocean Region.

"Bharat believes in bringing all together and not breaking. That is why we are making every possible step to take the friendly neighbouring nations along," he said.

The VLF naval station will prove to be very important for maritime forces when it becomes functional, he said.

Several ships and other platforms of the Indian Navy are spread across the entire Indo-

**“Bharat believes in bringing all together and not breaking. That is why we are making every possible step to take the friendly neighbouring nations along”**

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

Pacific Region and the sphere of interest extends throughout the region, from the Malacca Strait in the east to the Gulf of Aden, Persian Gulf, and the eastern coast of Africa in the west, he further said.

"In the Indian Ocean, the Indian Navy has also emerged as the first responder and net security provider," Singh said.

The upcoming VLF station would expand the military capabilities of the country, proving to be a boon to the Armed Forces, he said, asserting that the high-tech centre, once operational, would not just be a military establishment, but a strategic asset of national importance.

Allaying concerns about the impact of the project on the environment, Singh assured that all environmental conditions are being taken care of.

The upcoming station at

Damagundam forest area in Vikarabad district is the Navy's second VLF communication transmission station in the country.

INS Kattabomman Radar Station at Tirunelveli in Tamil Nadu was the first of its kind, a Telangana government release said.

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar and other dignitaries were present on the occasion. The facility, built at a cost of Rs 3,200 crore, will be spread across 2,900 acres. It will bolster the Indian Navy's operational readiness, ensuring effective command and control capabilities in challenging maritime environments. It will play a pivotal role in strengthening the Naval communication infrastructure, enabling reliable and secure transmission over long distances, an official release said.

The move aims to bolster the region's maritime defenses, supported enthusiastically by Telangana despite ecological concerns

# J'khand to study tribal plight across states

The tea tribes' OBC classification prevents them from accessing critical government benefits and opportunities, including central government schemes tailored for STs like the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme and the National Tribal Health Mission

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, Oct 15:** Barely two weeks after Chief Minister Hemant Soren wrote to his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma claiming marginalisation of tea tribes despite their significant contributions to the economy, the Jharkhand government approved the formation of a committee to study their plight.

The decision was taken during a cabinet meeting chaired by Soren Monday.

"Tribals from Jharkhand were taken to other places such as Assam and Andaman and Nicobar Islands by the British. Their number is about 15 to 20 lakh and they are fighting for their rights. It is known that tribals are working in Assam tea gardens but they have not been given ST status so far and are debarred from the welfare schemes meant for them," the CM said.

"Our government invites all original inhabitants to return to Jharkhand. We will form a committee to study this problem under the Minister for Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste, Minority and Backward Class Welfare Department. All-party representation will be there."

"They will go to those places, study their problems related to housing, jobs, rights etc. Based on the committee's recommendations, the state will introduce welfare measures," Soren told reporters after the meeting.

Tea tribes of Jharkhand origin in Assam have the status of Other Backward Class and are debarred from welfare measures meant for tribals, a statement from the state government said.

In his letter to Sarma September 25, Soren expressed grave concern about the community's situation and advocated for their recognition as STs.

Sarma, the BJP's election co-in charge for Jharkhand, has attacked the JMM government



for "corruption, infiltration and declining law and order issues among others".

"I am acutely aware of the significant challenges faced by the tea tribes in Assam, particularly since many are indigenous to Jharkhand, including Santhali, Kuruk, Munda, and Oraon, whose ancestors migrated during colonial times to work in tea plantations," Soren said.

He stressed that these groups meet the criteria for ST status due to their distinct cultural identity and vulnerability to exploitation.

While most ethnic groups of tea tribes are recognised as STs in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Odisha, Assam continues to classify them as OBCs, Soren said.

**I am acutely aware of the significant challenges faced by the tea tribes in Assam, particularly since many are indigenous to Jharkhand, including Santhali, Kuruk, Munda, and Oraon, whose ancestors migrated during colonial times to work in tea plantations**

HEMANT SOREN | CHIEF MINISTER

"Despite their vital contributions to Assam's economy and culture, they continue to be marginalised and denied the benefits and protections accorded to Scheduled Tribes," Soren wrote to Sarma demanding immediate ST status for them.

The tea tribes' OBC classification prevents them from accessing critical government benefits and opportunities, including Central government schemes tailored for STs like the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme and the National Tribal Health Mission, he added.

Soren emphasised that as non-STs, these tribes miss out on educational scholarships, housing subsidies, and healthcare facilities. "Living far from their ancestral homeland, these tribals may face challenges in preserving their cultural heritage. This can manifest in various forms, such as denial of land rights, limited access to employment opportunities, and prejudice in interpersonal relationships," the letter mentioned.

## Jharkhand approves funds for new colleges, polytechnics

The Jharkhand government gave nod to a slew of proposals in the education sector, including setting up of engineering colleges and polytechnics at a cost of ₹530 crore. A total of 29 decisions were taken by the Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Hemant Soren Monday. "In-principle approvals were given for the construction work of Government Polytechnic, Chakulia, Jamshepur for an estimated amount of ₹134.18 crore, construction work of Government Engineering College, Jamshepur at a cost of ₹254.93 crore and construction work of Government Polytechnic, Potka, Jamshepur at a cost of ₹136.13 crore," a statement said. The Cabinet also approved ₹42.83 crore for the phase-2 development of the Netarhat Tourism Project, besides setting up of institutes on the lines of Netarhat Residential School in Kolhan division, Santhal Pargana division and North Chotanagpur division. It approved ₹109.16 crore for the reconstruction of roads in Garhwa. The cabinet gave its nod for amendment in the guidelines regarding the Anganwadi Centre Building Construction Scheme, the establishment of integrated science and mathematics laboratory in elementary schools at ₹50 crore, and closure of the SPV Patratu Energy Limited (PEL). The cabinet approved about ₹20 crore for the first three years for the implementation of the Jharkhand State Institutional Ranking Framework (JSIRF), besides ₹39.21 crore for the construction work of a degree college at Thakurgangti in Godda district. Approval was also given to the construction work of the women's college at Baharagora at ₹38.20 crore, apart from the amendment in the guidelines issued for Guruji Students' Credit Card scheme.



# Prof Saibaba's body donated to hospital

THE FORMER PROFESSOR WHO TAUGHT ENGLISH AT RAM LAL ANAND COLLEGE OF DELHI UNIVERSITY (DU) DIED SATURDAY DUE TO POSTOPERATIVE COMPLICATIONS, SEVEN MONTHS AFTER HE WAS ACQUITTED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, Oct 15:** The body of former Delhi University professor GN Saibaba was donated to the state-run Gandhi hospital here Monday after several political leaders, activists and friends paid their tributes to him.

Saibaba (58) died due to post-operative complications at the state-run Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences (NIMS) here Saturday.

Saibaba's daughter Manjeera said it was her father's wish to donate the mortal remains. Her father used to say that only the thoughts and ideas of the person would remain after his death and nothing else, she said.

A red cloth was draped on the casket in which the former professor's body was kept.

Saibaba's body was taken in a procession from his brother's residence at Moula-Ali to the Gandhi hospital.

The former professor's friends and activists raised slogans hailing him, 'lal salam' and that the anti-Maoist 'Operation Kagar' should be stopped. Some held placards saying voices should be raised on behalf of the Adivasis, Dalits and the oppressed.

Senior Congress leader K Keshav Rao, BRS president KT Rama Rao and other leaders and activists paid tributes to the departed soul at his brother's residence where it was kept for friends and others to pay their homage.

"Paid my respects to Prof. GN Saibaba Garu at his residence in Hyderabad today. He was arrested under UAPA, denied bail on health grounds for years even though he had 90 per cent disability and did not even get parole to attend his mother's last rites," Rama Rao said on 'X'.

The former professor's friends and activists raised slogans hailing him, 'lal salam' and that the anti-Maoist 'Operation Kagar' should be stopped

Some held placards saying voices should be raised on behalf of the Adivasis, Dalits and the oppressed

Senior Congress leader K Keshav Rao, BRS president KT Rama Rao and other leaders and activists paid tributes to the departed soul at his brother's residence where it was kept for friends and others to pay their homage



competent authorities as it was a VIP zone, police said.

However, Saibaba's friends and others held banners at the Gun Park, hailing him and raised slogans like 'Saibaba amar rahe'.

Saibaba's family said Sunday that his eyes had already been donated to LV Prasad Eye Hospital here. In March this year, Saibaba was released from the Nagpur Central Jail after 10 years of incarceration.

The Bombay High Court set aside the life sentence handed to him by a trial court in an alleged Maoist links case in which



Saibaba was acquitted of UAPA charges after spending nearly a decade in jail, he said.

CPI national secretary K Narayana wrote a letter to the Chief Justice of India in which he alleged that Saibaba's demise was "not a natural death but definitely institutional murder".

Referring to Saibaba's acquittal, Narayana found fault with the government for instituting criminal charges under UAPA against him and "jail au-

thorities and personnel who tortured and ill-treated him".

The CPI leader said the apex court should find out who was at fault when Saibaba was found to be not guilty.

Earlier, the body of Saibaba was taken to the martyr's memorial at Gun Park in front of the Telangana legislature. The mortal remains were not allowed to be taken out of the ambulance as any activity at the place requires permission from

the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) was invoked. The former professor who taught English at Ram Lal Anand College of Delhi University (DU) died Saturday due to postoperative complications, seven months after he was acquitted.

Saibaba was suffering from gall bladder infection and was operated on two weeks ago in the state-run NIMS, but developed complications subsequently.

## Telangana villagers urge Rahul to implement six guarantees



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad, Oct 15:** People from a village in Telangana's Adilabad district have written to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, demanding immediate implementation of six guarantees.

Villagers of Mukhra in Echoda Mandal of Adilabad district sent postcards to the Leader of Opposition, urging him to immediately start implementation of the guarantees given during Assembly elections held in November last year.

The villagers have also sent postcards to Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, expressing their dissatisfaction over the delay in implementation of the six guarantees.

They reminded Rahul Gandhi that the Congress party had promised to implement the guarantees in 100 days but it failed to do so even after completing 300 days in power.

The villagers wrote that the Congress failed to implement promises like enhancing social security pensions from ₹2,000 to ₹4,000 per month, a monthly pension of ₹2,500 to every woman, a tola gold to beneficiaries of the Kalyana Lakshmi scheme, scooters to girl students, input investment of ₹15,000 per acre to farmers and waiver of crop loans up to ₹2 lakh.

The villagers said if the Congress party failed to honour its commitments, they would stage a protest in New Delhi.

Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) working president KT Rama Rao has posted on 'X' the postcard sent by the villagers along with photographs of villagers holding postcards in their hands.

## RS 1.36 LAKH-CR COAL DUES UNPAID

### Soren writes open letter to Modi

The CM pointed out that Jharkhand's underdevelopment is hampering essential socio-economic projects due to these dues



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, Oct 15:** Hours before the Election Commission is set to announce the schedule for Jharkhand and Maharashtra Assembly polls Tuesday, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding clearance of ₹1.36 lakh-crore in pending dues from coal companies.

Soren emphasised that he is not asking for a "special budget" for the state but is requesting its rightful dues, which he claims are causing irreparable harm to Jharkhand's development.

"This outstanding amount is our right. Jharkhand is not asking for a special budget. We are just asking for our rights—which we will take under all circumstances," Soren posted on X, sharing the open letter to the PM.

"In spite of provisions in the law and judicial pronouncements, coal companies are not making any payment. These questions have been raised at various forums, including your kind office, Finance Ministry and NITI Aayog. But till now this compensation (Rs 1.36 lakh crore) has not been paid," he said.

A recent ruling by a nine-judge Supreme Court bench affirmed the state's right to collect its mining and royalty dues. Soren pointed out that

Jharkhand's underdevelopment is hampering essential socio-economic projects due to these dues.

"The State of Jharkhand is an under-developed state and there are lots of social economic development projects which are getting hampered due to non-payment of our justifiable demands," Soren wrote.

Last month, he suggested a direct debit of the owed amount from Coal India's account to the state from the Reserve Bank of India, similar to the arrangements made for Jharkhand State Electricity Board dues to the DVC.

"This delay in payment of the just demand raised by the state has constrained me to write to you that this negligence is causing irreparable damage to Jharkhand and its people. Various social sector schemes in Education, Health, Women & Child Development, Clean Drinking Water & last mile connectivity are unable to be translated on the ground because of lack of funds," Soren said.

Earlier, he accused the Central government of indifference to the state's plight, highlighting the disparity in treatment regarding dues. "If state-run power companies delay payments, we face 12 per cent interest and direct debits, yet coal companies' dues remain unpaid," he remarked.

# national



When tourism rises, incomes across the board rise. I urge you all, leading and respected professionals, to explore new opportunities in the tourism sector and also share your ideas with me on the same

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

## SC JUNKS PLEA FOR IN-HOUSE PROBE AGAINST GOGOI

Miffed over the allegations levelled by a litigant against former Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi, the Supreme Court Tuesday dismissed a plea and ordered the security personnel to remove him from the courtroom. The litigant levelled allegations against the former CJI following which a bench comprising Justices Bela M Trivedi and Satish Chandra Sharma asked the security personnel to escort him out of the courtroom



### of the day quote

It is alarming to see how some areas have been affected by this strategic shift, turning them into impenetrable strongholds where democracy loses its essence

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT

The misappropriation of funds in the Valmiki Corporation should not be a reason for any shortage of funds for the tribal development

SIDDARAMAIAH | K'TAKA CM

33 teams each from the DPCC, revenue and industry departments will inspect both private and government construction sites to ensure compliance with dust mitigation measures

ATISHI | DELHI CM

### SHORT TAKES

#### Reuven Azar meets Adityanath

**Lucknow:** Israel's Ambassador to India Reuven Azar met Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath here Tuesday and congratulated the BJP leader for making "UP more secure". The envoy also met UP's agriculture minister and their discussions centred around collaborating for better use of technology and marketing to boost agriculture.

#### CBI arrests inspector, SI

**New Delhi:** The CBI Tuesday arrested two Delhi Police officers, an inspector and a sub-inspector posted in Burari, for allegedly taking a bribe of ₹10 lakh to not implicate the complainant in a case, officials said. It is alleged that Inspector Sandeep Ahlawat and Sub-Inspector Bhupesh Kumar demanded ₹1.5 crore from the complainant for "not implicating him in a fake case", the officials said.

#### Man fatally stabbed in road rage; 1 held

**New Delhi:** A 22-year-old man died while his brother suffered injuries after they were allegedly stabbed by three bike-borne men in the Harsh Vihar area of northeast Delhi, police said. The police said they have arrested one accused, identified as Vikas (22), and recovered the motorcycle used in the crime. The deceased has been identified as Ankur, a resident of Pratap Nagar, who was returning from a Dussehra fair with his brother Himanshu Saturday when the incident took place, they added.

#### Cong, BJP workers clash in Assam

**Guwahati:** A clash broke out between Congress and BJP workers in Rupahihat in Assam's Nagaon district when the Opposition party took out a bike rally Tuesday, police said. The Congress had taken out the rally to campaign for the upcoming by-election to the Samaguri Assembly constituency.

#### Delhi court extends Rashid's interim bail

**New Delhi:** A Delhi court Tuesday extended the interim bail of Jammu and Kashmir MP Sheikh Abdul Rashid, also known as Engineer Rashid, in a terror-funding case till October 28. Additional Sessions Judge Chandar Jit Singh passed the order on the ground of the health condition of Rashid's father, after the National Investigation Agency (NIA) said it had verified the documents and was not opposing the application.

## 40% DISABILITY NOT A BAR FOR MBBS ADMISSION: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** In a landmark judgement, the Supreme Court Tuesday ruled that mere existence of a benchmark disability of 40 per cent does not bar a candidate from being considered for admission to an educational institution, unless a medical assessment board opines the disability will come in way of pursuing the course. A bench of Justices B R Gavi, Aravind Kumar and K V Viswanathan also held that if the Disability Assessment Boards

conclude the candidate won't be able to pursue the course, it should state why. "We hold that quantified disability per se will not disentitle a candidate with benchmark disability from being considered for admission to educational institutions. The candidate will be eligible, if the Disability Assessment Board opines that notwithstanding the quantified disability the candidate can pursue the course in question," the bench said. The top court gave its detailed reasoning in the case of Omkar Ramchandra Gond, an aspiring



medical student from Maharashtra who qualified the NEET (UG)-24. Gond was held as ineligible from pursuing an MBBS course as he suffered 45 percent speech and language permanent disability under the Graduate Medical Education

Regulations of 1997. The top court had September 18 granted admission to Gond after seeking an opinion from a medical board. Justice Viswanathan, who penned the verdict on behalf of the bench, said that it is the constitutional goal that within the limits of its economic capacity and development, the State was to make effective provisions for securing the right to education including for the persons with disabilities. In its 42-page verdict, the bench directed that the DABs assessing the candidates should positively record

whether the disability of the candidate will or will not come in the way of the candidate pursuing the course in question. "The Disability Assessment Boards should state reasons in the event of the Disability Assessment Boards concluding that the candidate is not eligible for pursuing the course," it said. The bench added that pending formulation of appropriate regulations by the National Medical Commission (NMC), pursuant to the communication of January 25, 2024 by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, the

DABs will keep in mind the salary points while forming their opinion. Justice Viswanathan said the court seized of the matter in the judicial review proceedings shall refer the case of the candidate to any premier medical institute for an independent opinion and relief to the candidate will be granted or denied based on its the opinion. The top court set aside the August 29 order of the Bombay High Court refusing to interfere with the decision of not allowing Gond to pursue an MBBS course.

### CIVIC VOLUNTEERS' RECRUITMENT

## Top court pulls up WB govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The Supreme Court Tuesday questioned the West Bengal government over hiring of civic volunteers in the state and sought data regarding their recruitment and appointment process. A bench of Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra called the process of hiring as a means of granting "political patronage" to unverified people.



The apex court was hearing a suo motu case related to the rape and murder of a doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata

The top court, as a result, directed the state government to furnish details on the legal source of authority for recruitment, modalities, qualification, verifications, institutions the civic volunteers are assigned duties in and the payments made to them. The apex court was hearing a suo motu case related to the rape and murder of a doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. The top court further directed the state government to enlist steps ensuring these volunteers were not posted at sensitive establishments such as hospitals and schools.

The top court was informed that Sanjay Roy, an accused in the rape and the murder of the Kolkata doctor was a civic police volunteer and had unrestricted access to the hospital building. Senior advocate Karuna Nundy, appearing for a doctors' association, submitted that the state government had doubled the recruitment of civic volunteers which was a violation of a Calcutta High Court order disallowing them from discharging any law and order functions. Bengal government. Nundy stated that over 1,500 such volunteers were working in the state and sought setting aside of the "Rattirer Sathi" programme that aimed to protect women working in night shifts. Advocate Vrinda Grover, appearing for the victim's kin, said the main accused in the case was recruited as a civic volunteer despite facing criminal cases of domestic violence. "Who recruits these civic volunteers? We need to know what are these qualifications. We need to know that such volunteers do not operate in hospitals, schools that are sensitive in nature... Otherwise this a nice process of conferring political patronage on people who are totally unverified", the top court told senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, representing the West

### BAHRAICH VIOLENCE

## More than 50 held, markets stay shut for second day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bahraich (UP), Oct 15:** Over 50 people have been arrested after communal violence in Maharajgaj town of UP's Bahraich, officials said Tuesday, as markets remained shut and people stayed indoors for a second day in a row amid heavy deployment of police and other security personnel. The area remained virtually cut off with mobile and broadband internet suspended, though senior officials said that traffic movement with adjoining district Sitapur has started and normalcy was returning in the trouble-torn area.

A 22-year-old man was shot dead and about half a dozen people were injured in stone pelting and firing as communal violence broke out during a Durga idol immersion procession in Bahraich Sunday. The incident prompted heavy security deployment in the area and a police crackdown, leading to the arrest of at least three suspected rioters and detention of around 30 others Monday. "Efforts are underway to identify the anti-social elements and police officers are taking action on them. Over 50 arrests have been made so far and soon further action would be taken by the police," District Magistrate Monika Rani Tuesday told reporters.

A senior official at the superintendent of police's office said all arrests were preventive except for two accused, who have been arrested in connection with Sunday's violence. During the hearing, Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta, representing the CBI, submitted the fifth status report of the agency and informed that the investigation in the Kolkata rape and murder case was being carried out with "utmost seriousness". The top court observed that the CBI report indicated that the agency was probing the role of other persons as a part of its ongoing investigation and sought a further status report within three weeks.

## OPPN MPs WALK OUT OF JPC MEET



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** Opposition MPs Tuesday wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on the "gross violation of parliamentary code of conduct" in the meeting of the joint committee examining the Waqf (Amendment) Bill by panel chairman Jagdambika Pal. The letter came a day after several Opposition MPs boycotted a sitting of the committee over the submission of former Karnataka State Minorities Commission chairman Anwar Maniappad, who named several opposition leaders, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and K Rahman Khan, in the alleged embezzlement of Waqf properties.

"The proceedings of the Committee were conducted in a biased and partisan manner by the Chairperson Shri Jagdambika Pal," Opposition members Gaurav Gogoi, Syed Naseer Hussain, Imran Masood (all Congress), A Raja and M M Abdulla (both DMK), Asaduddin Owaisi (AIMIM) and Kalyan Banerjee (TMC) said in the letter. The Joint Committee on Waqf

(Amendment) Bill had Monday called Maniappad to hear his views on the draft legislation in the context of the Karnataka Waqf Scam Report of 2012.

"The note contained no observations on the the Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024. Instead, it was full of politically motivated allegations against leaders of the Karnataka Congress, including Shri Mallikarjun Kharge, Hon'ble Leader of Opposition (Rajya Sabha)," the letter said. The members said despite vehement protests by several committee members that Kharge occupies a constitutional position of high dignity and is not present in the meeting, the witness was allowed to speak by the chairperson. The Opposition members also said that Pal refused to provide adequate time to the committee members to lodge their protests. "We request your immediate intervention in the matter, and expect you to remind the Chairperson of the Committee of his duty to be bipartisan and uphold parliamentary norms," the Opposition members said.



Fishermen row boats through toxic foam floating on the surface of the polluted Yamuna river, at Kalindi Kunj, New Delhi

### SNIPPETS

#### Workers call off over a month-long strike at Samsung's TN plant

**Chennai/ New Delhi:** In a major relief to consumer electronic major Samsung, the over a month-long strike by its employees at Tamil Nadu-based plant was called off Tuesday following extensive discussions between the representatives of workers, the state government and company management. The 37-day strike was called off after various departments conducted meetings with concerned parties at various stages and the Samsung management announced several welfare measures in the interest of the workers. A Samsung India spokesperson said the company welcomed the decision of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) to call off the strike.

#### EC turns down NCP-SP demand to freeze trumpet symbol

**New Delhi:** The Election Commission Tuesday said it had agreed to a request by NCP (Sharad Pawar) for prominent display of its poll symbol -- man blowing 'turha' -- on ballot units of EVMS, but turned down the demand to freeze the trumpet symbol. Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said the NCP-SP had conveyed to the poll authority that its election symbol -- 'man blowing turha' -- was not displayed prominently on the ballot units of EVMS. "We had asked them to specify how would they want their poll symbol to be displayed on the ballot unit," Kumar said.

#### Calcutta HC sets aside prohibitory orders near Durga Puja Carnival

**Kolkata:** The Calcutta High Court Tuesday set aside prohibitory orders imposed in areas adjacent to the 'Durga Puja Carnival' venue on Red Road, allowing a simultaneous protest rally by junior doctors nearby. The orders under Section 163 of BNSS were imposed on some roads and areas near the Red Road where the West Bengal-organised carnival was held Tuesday evening. The junior medics launched their 'Droher Carnival' to protest against the RG Kar incident from Rani Rashmoni Road, shortly after the high court set aside the prohibitory orders. On a petition by the Joint Platform of Doctors, the court permitted them to hold the protest rally. Observing that the width of prohibition contained in the order is disproportionate, excessive and unreasonable, Justice Ravi Krishan Kapur set aside the restrictions imposed by the state government. "Such restrictions on fundamental rights cannot possibly achieve any bonafide purpose," the court observed.

## Stage set for Priyanka's electoral debut from Wayanad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** With the Election Commission (EC) announcing the bypoll to the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat, the stage is set for Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's electoral debut from the Kerala constituency that could see her enter Parliament five years after joining active politics. Soon after the EC announced the Wayanad bypoll, the Congress declared that Priyanka Gandhi (52) would be its candidate from the seat in Kerala. With the Congress fielding the AICC general secretary from

Wayanad, party workers put up posters in the constituency which had "Wayanadinte Priyankari (Wayanad's beloved)" written on it. Days after the Lok Sabha polls, the Congress had announced in June itself that Rahul Gandhi will retain the Rae Bareilly parliamentary constituency in Uttar Pradesh and vacate the Wayanad seat in Kerala, from where his sister Priyanka Gandhi will make her electoral debut. If elected, this will be the first time that Priyanka Gandhi will enter Parliament as an MP. This will also be the first time that the three Gandhi family



members -- Sonia, Rahul and Priyanka -- will be in Parliament together. The EC Tuesday announced

#### In December 2023, Priyanka Gandhi was made a Congress general secretary "without a portfolio". She emerged as the party's key strategist and later, its star campaigner for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls

bypolls to the Wayanad and Nanded Lok Sabha seats as well as in 48 Assembly constituencies. The bypoll to the Wayanad parliamentary seat and 47 Assembly seats will be held November 13, along with the first phase of polling for the Jharkhand Assembly. Since her entry into active politics in 2019, Priyanka Gandhi has often been projected as a

possible challenger to Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Varanasi and also, as a successor to Congress veteran Sonia Gandhi in the family pocket borough of Rae Bareilly. However, the Congress has decided to field her from Wayanad, the parliamentary seat that her elder brother Rahul won for two consecutive elections. Priyanka Gandhi was ear-

lier the Congress in-charge of Uttar Pradesh. She emerged as the party's strategist and star campaigner, helping the Congress make impressive gains in some states as well as in the Lok Sabha polls held earlier in the year. After her name was announced for the Wayanad bypoll in June, Priyanka Gandhi had said, "I am not nervous at all... I am very happy to be able to represent Wayanad. All I will say is that I will not let them feel his (Rahul Gandhi's) absence. I will work hard and try my best to make everybody happy and be a good representative."



# national



Due to the government's efforts, an environment conducive to ease of doing business in the country has been created, and a target set for making India's defence industry export-oriented

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

## SOUTHWEST MONSOON WITHDRAWS FROM INDIA

The southwest monsoon has completely withdrawn from the country and the northeast monsoon has begun over southeast peninsular India, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Tuesday. This year, the southwest monsoon reached Kerala May 30 and covered the entire country by July 2



### of the day quote

The Maratha community had hoped that its demands (regarding quota) would be fulfilled, but Fadnavis has worked to ruin the life of Maratha youth. He worked to ensure that the community did not remain united, didn't progress and was deprived of reservation. Hence, they have announced the elections without fulfilling our demand

MANOJ JARANJE | ACTIVIST

We waited for justice but now justice will be done by the electorate. Jai Maharashtra!

AADITYA THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

I congratulate the people of Jammu and Kashmir for trusting democracy and forming their own government, and for saving the Constitution. The next step after the elections is to restore full statehood of J&K. I am hopeful they will get full statehood

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

## XPOST OF THE DAY

Unlike most nations in the world, India's population is still growing. It will peak around 2065. This means a range of things. But, one of the core things is: need of jobs. An empty mind is a devil's workshop. Aimless youth, which has nothing to do: would spend their energy becoming internet trolls and ultra-nationalists. Not only we need to improve the job situation within India. But, we need to forge stronger ties with developed nations, so that our young workforce can be absorbed in productive work. It is no accident: that most politicians are sending their kids abroad. They already have a plan B, do you?

@Akshat\_World

### SHORT TAKES

#### Places of worship attacked in Tripura

Agartala: Places of worship of two communities were attacked by mobs in a village in Tripura's North district Tuesday, prompting the administration to suspend mobile internet services and remove the superintendent of police, officials said. Tension prevailed in Pekurcherra, a remote village of Panisagar subdivision, following the attacks that came days after a clash between two communities over collection of Durga puja subscriptions left one person dead and 17 others injured at another place in the same district.

#### Four mowed down by truck

Jaipur: Four labourers standing on the roadside were mowed down by a truck in Murlipura area here, police said Tuesday. All four died on the spot, they said. The accident took place late Monday night when all four victims were standing on the 200-foot bypass in the Murlipura area.

#### Heavy rains lash parts of K'taka

Bangalore: Incessant rains since early Tuesday threw normal life out of gear in central and southern parts of Karnataka, including the state capital Bangalore where several localities witnessed water-logging and traffic congestion.

## Panchayat polls held in Punjab amid security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Oct 15: Polling to elect gram panchayat members concluded amid tight security arrangements in Punjab Tuesday, officials said. Two incidents of firing were reported, they added.

Voting for the posts of "sarpanch" and "panch" through ballots started at 8 am and concluded at 4 pm, the officials said, adding that a voter turnout of more than 45 per cent was recorded.

The polling percentage is likely to go up once the data is compiled, they said. After the polling, the votes will be counted at the polling stations, the officials said. A firing incident was reported outside a polling booth in Sohan Sain Bhagat village in Tarn Taran district, leaving a man injured. Mandeep Singh was rushed to a hospital where his condition was stated to be out of danger.

A police official said a scuffle took place between two groups, adding that the matter is being investigated.

Another firing incident was reported from Khudda village in Patiala district, leaving one person injured. A police official said 20-25 unidentified people arrived at a polling booth, allegedly manhandled the polling staff and took away a ballot box. Subsequently, they left the ballot box.

At a polling booth in Lohke Khurd village in Ferozepur's Zira, an unidentified person tried to throw ink on a ballot box. An official said the incident has been brought to the notice of senior officials for further action.

# India-Canada ties plunge to new low

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 15: The India-Canada diplomatic row over the killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar escalated further Tuesday with Ottawa hinting at possible sanctions against India in view of certain findings in the case and New Delhi forcefully trashing the allegations including those levelled by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

The Canadian authorities also accused Indian agents of involvement in "homicides, extortion and violent acts" targeting pro-Khalistan supporters and even attempted to link the Bishnoi gang to unspecified criminal activities on Canadian soil.

As the ties between the two countries hit rock bottom, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly did not rule out imposing sanctions against India saying "everything is on the table".

On its part, India strongly rejected attempts by Canadian authorities to link Indian agents with criminal gangs in Canada with official sources even saying that Ottawa's assertion that it shared evidence with New Delhi in the Nijjar case was simply not true. The sources also rejected Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations that India was engaging in activities including carrying out covert operations targeting Canadian nationals in his country. At a press conference, Trudeau, pointing fingers at India on the Nijjar case, said Canada will never tolerate the involvement of a foreign government in threatening and killing Canadian citizens on Canadian soil. India expelled six Canadian diplomats and announced withdrawing its high commissioner from Canada Monday after dismissing Ottawa's allegations linking the envoy to a probe into the killing of Nijjar.



As the ties between the two countries hit rock bottom, Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly did not rule out imposing sanctions against India saying "everything is on the table"

The sources also rejected Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations that India was engaging in activities including carrying out covert operations targeting Canadian nationals in his country



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"So today was a really important step. When you look at what is available in our toolbox, expelling diplomats is one of the highest and toughest measures a country can take under the Vienna convention...Everything is on the table," she said.

In a related development, Prime Minister Trudeau spoke to his British counterpart Keir Starmer and discussed "developments" related to what Ottawa described as "targeted campaign against Canadian citizens by agents linked to the government of India". A British readout said the two Prime Ministers discussed recent developments regarding allegations under investigation in Canada and both agreed on the importance of the rule of law.

The ties between India and Canada came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September last year of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Nijjar. New Delhi rejected Trudeau's charges as "absurd".

## MANIPUR PEACE TALKS

# Meitei, Kuki, Naga MLAs meet in Delhi



- This was the first time since May 3, 2023 that the Meitei and Kuki MLAs were in a same room
- None of the 10 Kuki MLAs set foot in the Meitei-dominated Imphal valley and state capital Imphal in the last year and a half
- They have also given all the Assembly sessions held since then a miss

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 15: Around 20 MLAs belonging to the warring Meitei and Kuki communities of Manipur met here Tuesday for the first time since ethnic violence broke out in the northeastern state 17 months ago, in a bid to hammer out a peaceful solution to the ongoing conflict.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Sambit Patra and three MLAs from the Naga community were also present at the over-two-hour-long meeting convened by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) as part of its efforts to iron out differences between the Meiteis and Kukis, and find an amicable solution to the crisis. However, Union Home Minister Amit Shah

and Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh did not attend the meeting, even though the Centre's interlocutor, A K Mishra, and other senior officials were present. In a statement, the MHA said a group of elected members of the Manipur Assembly, representing the Kuki-Zo-Himar, Meitei and Naga communities, met here to discuss the current scenario in the state. "The meeting unanimously resolved to appeal to the people of the state belonging to all communities to shun the path of violence so that no more precious lives of innocent citizens are lost," the statement said. Sources said both sides put forward the views and grievances of the two communities and their sufferings during the long turmoil.



Vehicles ply on waterlogged roads amid rains in Chennai, Tamil Nadu

PTI PHOTO

# Fourth accused sent to police custody till Oct 21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 15: Police Tuesday said the fourth accused arrested for the murder of NCP leader and former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique had provided financial help and firearms for the operation.

A court here Tuesday remanded the fourth accused, Harishkumar Nisad (23), in police custody till October 21. Nisad was apprehended from Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh, earlier in the day.

The police had earlier identified the fourth accused as Harishkumar Balakram. The additional chief judicial magistrate (Esplanade Court) V R Patil, while sending the accused to police custody, noted

that the "offence is serious in nature" and his presence with the probe agency "is essential for custodial interrogation".

The crime branch informed the court that Nisad had provided money to the others involved in the crime, and a probe was necessary to find "the upper link and lower link" with regard to financial assistance.

It further stated that information about bank accounts and other modes of transactions Nisad used for financial assistance to the other accused needs to be gathered from him.

The police said they also have to ascertain how he supplied weapons used in the crime to the other arrested accused. Police had earlier arrested Haryana

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



resident Gurmail Bajit Singh (23), Uttar Pradesh native Dharmaraj Rajesh Kashyap (19), both alleged shooters, and "co-conspirator" Pravin Lonkar from Pune. They have been remanded in police custody till October 21.

During the remand hearing, the police told the court that Nisad and Kashyap belonged to the same village as the wanted accused, Shivkumar Gautam. Moreover, Nisad ran a scrap shop

in Pune, where the wanted accused used to reside, and further investigation is necessary to gather information about Gautam's whereabouts, police said. According to the police, the accused conspired and carried out the crime after conducting a recon of the victim's residence and the crime scene. Nisad's lawyer, Ajay Dubey, opposed the remand plea, saying that the accused was a "victim of the circumstances and a scapegoat". The court heard both sides and remanded the accused in police custody. Siddique (66) was waylaid by three persons in Mumbai's Nirmal Nagar area, just outside his MLA son Zeeshan Siddique's office, and shot at Saturday night.

# India inks \$4bn deal with US for 31 Predator drones

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 15: India Tuesday sealed a mega deal with the US to procure 31 Predator high-altitude long-endurance drones from American defence major General Atomics under the foreign military sales route at a cost of nearly \$4 billion to crank up Indian military's combat prowess along the contested borders with China.

The deal, signed in presence of top defence and strategic brass of India in the national capital, marks a significant upswing in military ties between the two

countries, officials told PTI. The procurement of the drones was finalised just weeks ahead of the US presidential elections.

Besides the main contract, a separate agreement was inked between the defence ministry and General Atomics Global India Pvt Ltd for performance-based logistics for the drones through depot-level maintenance, repair and overhaul of the platforms in India.

Last week, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi cleared the procurement of the MQ-9B 'hunter killer' drones. Vivek Lall, the

The India-US defence cooperation has been on an upswing in the last few years



In June 2016, the US designated India a "Major Defence Partner" paving way for sharing of critical military equipment and technology

Chief Executive of General Atomics Global Corporation who played a key role in the negotiations on the deal, was present at the signing ceremony. The drones are being procured at an

estimated cost of around \$4 billion, the officials said. India is acquiring the drones primarily to crank up the surveillance apparatus of the armed forces, especially along the con-

tested frontier with China. In June last year, the Defence Ministry approved the procurement of the MQ-9B Predator armed drones from the US under a government-to-government framework.

The MQ-9B drone is a variant of the MQ-9 "Reaper" which was used to launch a modified version of the Hellfire missile that eliminated al-Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri in the heart of Kabul in July 2022. While the Navy will get 15 Sea Guardian drones, the Indian Air Force and the Army will get eight Sky Guardian drones each.

The high-altitude long-en-

durance drones are capable of remaining airborne for over 35 hours and can carry four Hellfire missiles and around 450 kgs of bombs. The Sea Guardian drones are being procured as they can carry out a variety of roles including maritime surveillance, anti-submarine warfare and over-the-horizon targeting, among others. The India-US defence cooperation has been on an upswing in the last few years. In June 2016, the US designated India a "Major Defence Partner" paving way for sharing of critical military equipment and technology.

# international

## of the day quote

What struck me is that this war is three weeks old and so many children have been affected. As we sit here today, 1.2 million children are deprived of education. Their public schools have either been rendered inaccessible, have been damaged by the war or are being used as shelters

**TED CHAIBAN** | UNICEF'S DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS

It (sending migrants to Albania) is a new, courageous, unprecedented path, but one that perfectly reflects the European spirit and has all the makings of a path to be taken with other non-EU nations as well

**GIORGIA MELONI** | PM, ITALY

We must ensure that every voice is heard and every person is empowered to contribute to disaster risk reduction and receives the assistance that they need if the time comes

**FERNINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS** | PRESIDENT, THE PHILIPPINES

## SHORT TAKES

### US, Philippines start joint military drills

**Manila:** The armed forces of the United States and Philippines began large-scale joint exercises with key allies Tuesday that will take place in several areas in the Philippines, including those facing Taiwan and the South China Sea. The drills, running until October 25, come after China conducted war games around Taiwan Monday that drew condemnation from the Taipei and US governments. The military exercises will involve more than 2,000 American troops and Filipino soldiers and personnel and include island-based exercises in amphibious landings, live fire and humanitarian assistance, the Philippine Marine Corps said. US allies Australia, Britain, Japan and South Korea are joining the exercises, which are taking place while joint naval drills between the Philippines, Washington and four other countries off the coast of northern Luzon are underway.

### Taiwan detects 153 Chinese aircrafts

**Taipei:** Taiwan detected a record 153 Chinese military aircraft around the self-ruled island, official data showed Tuesday, after China held a day of large-scale drills. Beijing deployed fighter jets, drones, warships and coast guard boats to encircle Taiwan Monday, with Taiwan responding by dispatching "appropriate forces" and placing its outlying islands on heightened alert. Taiwan condemned China's actions as "irrational and provocative", and the US called them "unwarranted". Japan said Tuesday it had expressed its "concerns" to China over the drills, and scrambled fighter jets near its southern island of Yonaguni.

### Lanka President to visit India

**Colombo:** President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's visit to Delhi at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will happen only after November this year, Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath said Tuesday. "We will discuss dates for the visit only after we form the new government," Herath told reporters here. Voting for the parliamentary election is to take place November 14, almost 10 months ahead of the schedule. Dissanayake was elected September 21. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar became the first foreign dignitary to meet Dissanayake after the presidential polls.

## AMID FROSTY TIES

### Jaishankar lands in Islamabad

Both sides (India-Pakistan) have ruled out any bilateral talks between Jaishankar, his Pakistan counterpart Ishaq Dar during SCO summit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, Oct 15:** External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Tuesday exchanged pleasantries with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, hours after landing in the Pakistani capital to attend a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The brief exchange took place at a dinner reception hosted by Sharif at his residence in honour of the delegates of the SCO member countries.

Jaishankar and Sharif warmly shook hands and held a very brief interaction. The Pakistan Prime Minister greeted all the leaders of the delegations of the SCO member nations.

It is the first time in nearly nine years that India's foreign minister travelled to Pakistan even as the ties between the two neighbours remained tense over the Kashmir issue and cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. The external affairs minister will lead the Indian delegation at the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) summit Wednesday.

"Landed in Islamabad to take part in SCO Council of Heads of Government Meeting," Jaishankar posted on 'X' along with photographs of children and officials welcoming him with flowers at the airport.



Jaishankar's visit is first by Indian foreign minister in nearly a decade

SCO meeting to discuss economic and trade cooperation

High security in Islamabad amid recent attacks, public holiday declared

Like with any neighbour, India would certainly like to have good relations with Pakistan. But that cannot happen by overlooking cross-border terrorism and indulging in wishful thinking

**S JAISHANKAR** | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, INDIA

Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Belarus Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko, Kazakhstan Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, Tajik Prime Minister Kohir Rasulzoda, Uzbek Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov, Kyrgyzstan's Chairman of Ministers Cabinet Zhaparov Akylbek, Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref, and Indian External Affairs

Minister S Jaishankar are participating. The last Indian Foreign Minister to visit Pakistan was Sushma Swaraj. She had travelled to Islamabad to attend the 'Heart of Asia' conference on Afghanistan held from December 8-9, 2015.

Jaishankar, who was then India's foreign secretary, was part of Swaraj's delegation. Following the Swaraj-Aziz talks, a joint statement was released in which both sides an-

## Israel attacks refugee camp in Gaza, kills 50

REUTERS

**Cairo, Oct 15:** Israeli military strikes killed at least 50 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip as Israeli forces tightened their squeeze around Jabalia in the north of the enclave Tuesday, amid fierce battles with Hamas-led fighters.

Palestinian health officials said at least 17 people were killed by Israeli fire near Al-Falouja in Jabalia, the largest of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps, while 10 others were killed in Bani Suhaila in eastern Khan Younis in the south when an Israeli missile struck a house.

Earlier Tuesday, an Israeli airstrike destroyed three houses in the Sabra suburb of Gaza City, and the local civil emergency service said they recovered two bodies from the site, while the search continued for 12 other people who were believed to have been in the houses at the time of the strike. Eight others were killed when a house was struck in the Nuseirat camp in central Gaza. Later Tuesday, the Gaza health



ministry said one doctor was killed when he tried to help the people wounded by Israeli strikes in Al-Falouja in Jabalia. It added that several medics were wounded when their ambulance came under Israeli fire in the northern and southern Gaza Strip.

Jabalia has been the focus of an Israeli offensive for more than 10 days, with troops returning to areas of the north that came under heavy bombardment in the early months of the year-long war. The operation has raised concerns among Palestinians and UN agencies that Israel wants to clear residents from the north of the crowded enclave, a charge it has denied. Residents said Israeli forces destroyed dozens of houses in the past 10 days.

United Nations human rights office says Israeli military appears to be 'cutting off North Gaza completely from the rest of the Gaza Strip'

## Maldives President fires over 225 political appointees

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Male, Oct 15:** The Maldives President has sacked more than 225 political appointees, including ministers, in a bid to reduce the cash-strapped Indian Ocean nation's expenditure, his office said Tuesday.

Mohamed Muizzu ordered the removal of those he appointed after coming to power last year as the small but strategically located nation struggles to stave off a debt crisis.

"This significant reduction in political appointments aligns with the President's broader efforts to streamline government operations and ensure more efficient use of public funds," a statement from Muizzu's office said. Among those sacked were seven state ministers, 43 deputy ministers and 178 political directors. It was not clear what functions they performed in the tiny nation of about half a million people.

The statement did not say how many more political appointees remained in the administration but added that the mass reduction of staff would save the country about \$370,000 a month.

# THE 27-YEAR-OLD ECONOMIC ADVISER FOR GEN Z

**K**yla Scanlon doesn't like being called an influencer.

Sure, she has hundreds of thousands of social-media followers, but she isn't trying to sell them anything, except maybe a book about the economy she published earlier this year. She's happy with the title "author," though that only covers part of what she does. "Economic commentator" is what San Francisco Federal Reserve President Mary Daly recommended, so that's what Scanlon has been calling herself. "Whatever makes sense to people, I suppose, but my goal is economics education," Scanlon said in an interview. "Social media is just the medium that I use to do that."

Scanlon, 27, is breaking all the rules for a career in finance and doing things her own way. Forget grinding away for years on Wall Street or getting a Ph.D. in economics. Young people pay attention to her analysis of topics ranging from monetary policy to the housing market to the business of dating apps, all delivered via TikTok, Instagram, X, YouTube,

Substack and her podcast. She is perhaps best known for coining the term "vibecession" in 2022, to describe the disconnect between economic data and consumer sentiment. We weren't in a recession, but Americans felt down about the economy. The vibes, she observed, were off.

A debate ensued, with notable names from Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman to former U.S. Labor Secretary Robert Reich weighing in on whether we were in a vibecession. UBS and Fidelity published reports explaining the term to clients. Growing up near Louisville, Ky., Scanlon just wanted to make it out of her hometown. She first started posting bite-size videos online during the Covid-19 pandemic. Now, Fed presidents and White House officials sit down with Scanlon for interviews, eager to get in front of her audience.

Her research is sometimes shaped by her own experiences figuring out adulthood rites of passage, such as how to get health insurance now that she's aged out of her parents' plan, or con-

templating whether she will ever be able to buy a house. "The work I do almost feels more like cultural anthropology than economics sometimes," Scanlon said.

Her rise coincides with the entrance of millions of Americans into the stock market since the pandemic—and less reliance on the traditional financial-media diet of cable TV



The message (to Russian President Vladimir Putin) is that we will continue, that we will do what's necessary to make sure that he will not get his way, that Ukraine will prevail

**MARK RUTTE** | NATO SECRETARY-GENERAL



## CHINA'S LUNAR SPACE STATION

China Tuesday announces plans to launch a manned lunar mission, construct a lunar space station and explore habitable planets and extra-terrestrial life



## UK man jailed for supporting terror activity in Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, Oct 15:** A 41-year-old man from east London who sent hi-tech rifle parts to Pakistan in support of terrorist activity by the Taliban in Afghanistan has been sentenced to seven years' imprisonment by a UK court Tuesday.

Muhammad Choudhary had previously pleaded guilty to terrorism funding and fundraising offences following a joint investigation by His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism Command.

Met Police detectives and investigators identified that Choudhary sent thermal imaging night vision rifle scopes to Pakistan on a number of occasions in 2017 and 2018. He later admitted they were intended for use by the Taliban, which, at the time, launched various attacks against the then-government and coalition forces in Afghanistan.

"This case is a prime example of how terrorist activity can take many different forms, and shows that we will investigate anyone in the UK who supports terrorist activity, regardless of what it may be in support of or to where it may be linked," said Gareth Rees, Acting Commander of the Met's Counter Terrorism Command.

## Khan's party calls off protest

**Islamabad:** Pakistan's main Opposition called off its protest Tuesday as the 23rd meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government (CHG) of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation begins here under tight security. The two-day meeting will discuss ongoing cooperation in fields of economy, trade, environment and socio-cultural linkages and review the performance of the Organisation. The threat of unrest was avoided when the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf last night agreed to call off its protest in the capital after the assurance by the government that a medical team would be allowed to meet its jailed leader 72-year-old Imran Khan. "After long consideration and negotiations that went back and forth, we decided to call off the protest," Khan's international spokesman Zulqifur Bukhari said in a WhatsApp voice message. He also said that the PTI was also urged by its political allies and friendly embassies to postpone the protest. He, however, defended the right to protest on the occasion of an international event which he said was an international norm as all over the world protests are held on such occasions.

nounced their decision to start a Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue.

Before Jaishankar left for Pakistan, India Tuesday said that it remains actively engaged in various mechanisms of the SCO. Pakistan is hosting the two-day SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) summit October 15 and 16.

"The SCO CHG meeting is held annually and focuses on the trade and economic agenda of the Organisation," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

"External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will represent India at the meeting, India remains

actively engaged in the SCO format, including various mechanisms and initiatives within the SCO framework," it said in a brief statement in New Delhi. Both sides have already ruled out any bilateral talks between Jaishankar and his Pakistan counterpart Ishaq Dar on the sidelines of the SCO heads of the government summit.

In his recent address at an event, Jaishankar said, "like with any neighbour, India would certainly like to have good relations with Pakistan."

"But that cannot happen by overlooking cross-border terrorism and indulging in wishful thinking."

## SNIPPETS

### N Korea blows up roads connecting to South

**Seoul:** North Korea blew up sections of the deeply symbolic roads connecting it to the South Tuesday, Seoul's military said, adding it had conducted a "counter-fire" operation in response. Pyongyang's military last week vowed to permanently seal its southern border after spending months laying mines and building anti-tank barriers in the wake of leader Kim Jong Un declaring the South his country's "principal enemy". The North also accused Seoul of using drones to drop anti-regime propaganda leaflets on the capital Pyongyang, with Kim convening a security meeting to direct a plan of "immediate military action" in response, state media reported Tuesday. "North Korea has detonated parts of the Gyeongui and Donghae roads north of the Military Demarcation Line," the Joint Chiefs of Staff said Tuesday, referring to inter-Korean infrastructure that once connected the two countries. "There has been no damage to our military, and our forces conducted counter-fire in areas south of the MDL," it added. The roads have long been shuttered, but destroying them sends a clear message that Kim is not prepared to negotiate with the South, experts said.



### US warns Iran to stop plotting against Trump

**Washington:** The United States has warned the Iranian government to stop all plotting against Republican Donald Trump and said that Washington would view any attempt on his life as an act of war, a US official said Monday. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said US President Joe Biden has been briefed regularly on the threats and directed his team to address Iranian plots against Americans. At Biden's direction, top US officials have sent messages to the highest levels of the Iranian government warning Tehran to cease all plotting against Trump and former US officials, the official said. The Iranians have been told that Washington would view it as an act of war if any attempt was carried out against Trump's life, the official said. Iran has denied interfering in US affairs. Tehran, in turn, says Washington has interfered in its affairs for decades, citing events ranging from a 1953 coup against a Prime Minister to the 2020 killing of its military commander in a US drone strike. The White House said the United States has been closely tracking Iranian threats against Trump for years and it warned of "severe consequences" if Tehran was to attack any US citizen.



# business

## of the day quote

**We are committed to democratising AI, offering powerful AI models and services to everyone in India at affordable prices.**

**AKASH AMBANI | RELIANCE JIO CHAIRMAN**

**Vodafone Idea is committed to bringing new and innovative solutions that will fundamentally address spam and fraud at the very core. Public awareness campaigns too are helping to educate users about how to identify and avoid spams**

**KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA | ADITYA BIRLA GROUP CHAIRMAN**

**We cannot achieve the goals of Viksit Bharat if we cannot create manufacturing jobs, because we all know 1 million people are coming to the workforce every month**

**N CHANDRASEKARAN | TATA GROUP CHAIRMAN**

## SHORT TAKES

### BoM Q2 profit surges 44%

**New Delhi:** State-owned Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) Tuesday posted a 44 per cent jump in its profit at ₹1,327 crore in the second quarter ended September 2024 on account of improvement in interest income. The Pune-based lender had posted a net profit of ₹ 920 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Total income increased to ₹6,809 crore during the quarter under review against ₹5,736 crore in the same period last year. BoM said in a regulatory filing. Talking about the financial performance, BoM Managing Director Nidhu Saxena said Net Interest Margin (NIM) increased to 3.98 per cent, from 3.88 per cent in the same quarter a year ago. Among the stack of 12 public sector banks, BoM has the highest NIM, Saxena said, adding the target for the NIM for the current fiscal is 3.75-3.85 per cent anticipating a rate cut during the course of the year.

### Reliance, Disney merger in Q3

**New Delhi:** The merger of media assets of Reliance Industries and the India business of global media house Walt Disney is expected to be completed by the end of the third quarter of this fiscal, according to a regulatory filing by Mukesh Ambani-led group. The fair trade regulator, the Competition Commission of India (CCI), has already approved the merger of Viacom18 and Star India. The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has sanctioned the merger scheme. "The companies are in the process of obtaining other requisite approvals for the completion of the transaction and transaction closer is expected in 3Q FY25," informed Reliance Industries on Monday in its quarter earning statement.

### Govt to sell up to 5% in Cochin Shipyard

**New Delhi:** The government Tuesday said it will sell up to 5 per cent stake in Cochin Shipyard at a floor price of ₹1,540 a share starting October 16. "Offer for sale in Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) opens tomorrow for Non-Retail investors. Retail investors and Employees of CSL can bid on Thursday, 17th October," Department of Investment and Public Asset Management Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on X. The government will divest 2.5 per cent equity or 65.77 lakh shares, with an option to sell an additional 2.5 per cent. At a floor price of ₹1,540 a piece, the share sale of 5 per cent stake would fetch about ₹2,000 crore to the exchequer.



**Indeed, central banks are much like wicketkeepers in cricket or goalkeepers in football -- often unnoticed in success but always in the spotlight during failure. When everything works seamlessly, their efforts remain behind the scenes, often taken for granted**

**SWAMINATHAN J | RESERVE BANK OF INDIA DEPUTY GOVERNOR**

## MEGA IPO

The initial public offer of Hyundai Motor India Ltd, the Indian arm of South Korean automaker Hyundai, received an 18 per cent subscription on the first day of bidding Tuesday. The ₹27,870 crore initial share sale received bids for 1,77,89,457 shares against 9,97,69,810 shares on offer, as per NSE data. The IPO received over 9 lakh applications on the first day.



# India says no auction of satellite spectrum after Musk decries move

REUTERS

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** India's government Tuesday said it will allot spectrum for satellite broadband administratively and not via auction, hours after Elon Musk criticised the auction route being sought by rival billionaire Mukesh Ambani as 'unprecedented.'

In what is seen as a battle between billionaires, the methodology of awarding spectrum for satellite services in India - a market set to grow 36% a year to reach \$1.9 billion by 2030 - has been a contentious issue since last year.

Musk's Starlink argues administrative allotment of licences is in line with a global trend, while India's Reliance, led by billionaire Mukesh Ambani, says an auction is needed to ensure a level playing field and as there are no provisions in Indian law on how individuals can be provided satellite broadband services.

Telecoms Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said during a New Delhi event that the spectrum will be allocated administratively in line with Indian laws, and its pricing worked out by the telecom watchdog.

"If you do decide to auction it, then you will be doing something which is different from the rest of the world," he said.

The minister's comment will come as a shot in the arm for Musk, who wrote on X late



Monday that any decision to auction "would be unprecedented."

"This spectrum was long designated by the ITU as shared spectrum for satellites," Musk said, referring to the International Telecommunication Union, a UN agency for digital technology.

India is a member of the ITU and signatory to its treaty that regulates satellite spectrum and advocates that allocation must be done "rationally, efficiently and economically" as it is a "limited natural resource."

Sunil Mittal, co-chair of global satellite group Eutelsat, which has partnered with India's telecom operator Bharti Airtel, voiced support for the auction

route Tuesday.

"Satellite companies who have ambitions to come into urban areas, serving elite retail customers, just need to take the telecom licenses like everybody else... they need to buy the spectrum as telecom companies buy," Mittal, who is also the chair of Airtel, said at the New Delhi event.

Earlier in 2023, both Eutelsat unit OneWeb and Airtel had voiced concerns about auctioning the spectrum in their submissions to the Indian government.

Musk's Starlink and some global peers like Amazon's Project Kuiper back an administrative allocation, saying spectrum is a natural resource that should be shared by companies.

## 'Surge in steel imports affect domestic players'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The surge in steel imports has impacted the margins of domestic players and such pressures are likely to intensify in the second half of the ongoing fiscal year, a report said Tuesday.

The report covers global causes of increased steel imports to India, the likely trajectory of imports, key exporting nations, and domestic demand supply balance, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said in a statement.

The increasing steel imports to India - particularly from the third quarter of FY24 - have affected the gross margin spreads in the domestic steel industry, it said.

"Ind-Ra believes the Indian steel industry is witnessing margin pressure because of higher volumes of lower-priced steel imports from China, Vietnam, Japan, and Korea, and such pressure is likely to intensify over 2HFY25," it said.

As per the report, the Chinese steel export volumes were at its peak in FY25 over at least past 21 quarters, as its domestic steel prices have been consistently declining, keeping international steel prices subdued along with global demand headwinds.

Ind-Ra said it expects the imports to remain elevated over the short-to-medium term, which may dampen domestic realisations and hence further impact the gross margins over the October-March period in FY25.

# Govt issues guidelines to curb greenwashing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The government Tuesday unveiled comprehensive guidelines to regulate greenwashing and misleading environmental claims by companies, aiming to protect consumers and promote transparency in eco-friendly marketing.

Greenwashing refers to claims by companies about any product or service having climate-friendly impact.

The new guidelines, issued by the consumer affairs ministry, aim to ensure that eco-friendly assertions are backed by verifiable evidence and clear disclosures.

Briefing media, Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare emphasized that the guidelines do not prohibit environmental claims but seek to ensure they are made with integrity and transparency. "The claims have to be supported by verifiable evidence and independent studies," the secretary said.

For instance, terms like '100% eco-friendly', 'zero emissions', and 'cruelty-free' must now be substantiated with accurate and accessible qualifiers. The guidelines provide definitions for 'greenwashing' and 'environmental claims' to establish clear parameters. Companies are required to use consumer-friendly language for technical terms, while comparative environmental claims must be based on

verifiable and relevant data, with specific aspects of comparison disclosed.

Aspirational or futuristic environmental claims can only be made when supported by clear and actionable plans, she added.

The new guidelines mandate that companies making environmental claims must disclose all material information in advertisements or communications, either through QR codes, URLs, or other digital media.

They must also specify whether the claim refers to the product as a whole, its manufacturing process, packaging, usage, or disposal.

Specific environmental claims, such as 'compostable', 'degradable', 'recyclable', and 'net-zero', must be supported by credible certification, reliable scientific evidence, or third-party verification. These disclosures should be easily accessible to consumers.

The guidelines also address the use of technical terms, requiring companies to provide consumer-friendly explanations for concepts like 'environmental impact assessment' and 'ecological footprint'.

While these guidelines are in addition to existing regulations, the consumer affairs ministry clarified that in case of any conflict with specific laws, the latter would prevail. The central authority's decision will be final in cases of ambiguity or disputes in interpretation.

# Sensex falls by 153 pts, RIL major drag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Oct 15:** Benchmark Sensex closed lower by nearly 153 points Tuesday due to selling in index major Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finance and HDFC Bank as weak quarterly results and spike in inflation dented investor sentiment.

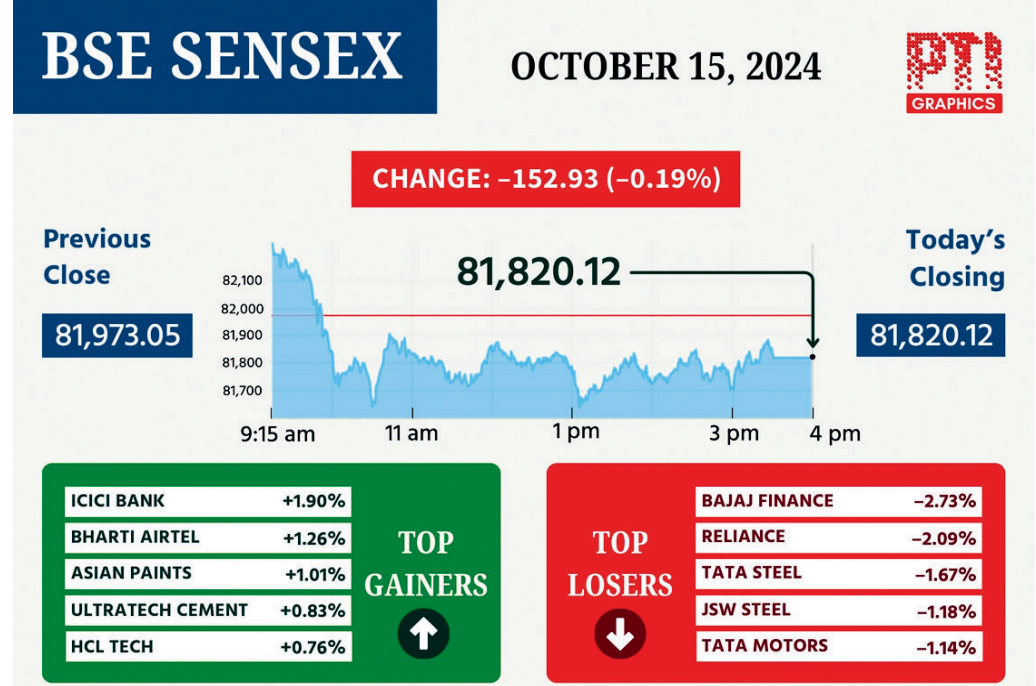
Paring early gains, the BSE Sensex declined 152.93 points or 0.19 per cent to settle at 81,820.12. During the day, it fell by 337.48 points or 0.41 per cent to a low of 81,635.57.

The NSE Nifty settled lower by 70.60 points or 0.28 per cent to 25,057.35 with 30 of its components closing down, 18 with gains and two unchanged.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Reliance Industries, Tata Steel, JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra, Tata Motors, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Maruti were the biggest laggards.

Reliance Industries Ltd, India's most valuable company, on Monday reported a 5 per cent fall in the July-September quarter net profit as weak oil refining and petrochemical business hurt operational performance.

"The domestic market experienced a downturn, influenced by a mixed global trend and partial profit-booking. Although declining crude prices are beneficial for the domestic economy, they signal weakening global demand. Additionally, India's CPI surged driven by food prices, which will delay expected rate cuts," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial



Services, said.

ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, Adani Ports, UltraTech Cement and HCL Technologies were among the gainers.

IT services major HCL Technologies (HCLTech) reported a 10.51 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to ₹4,235 crore in the July-September quarter and also raised the lower band of its growth guidance on the back of better-than-expected performance.

"The sharp cut in Brent crude ... is a macro positive for India, but CPI inflation for September

coming worse-than-expected at 5.49 per cent is a concern and the MPC will be forced to take this seriously and postpone the rate cut to 2025," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services.

Soaring vegetable prices pushed the retail inflation rate to a nine-month high of 5.49 per cent in September, according to government data released on Monday.

The BSE smallcap gauge jumped 1.05 per cent while BSE midcap index climbed 0.25 per cent.

Among the indices, metal tanked 1.56 per cent, auto declined 0.67 per cent, energy (0.39 per cent), commodities (0.23 per cent), IT (0.22 per cent) and oil & gas (0.03 per cent).

Realty jumped 2.07 per cent, services (0.85 per cent), industrials (0.69 per cent), consumer durables (0.41 per cent) and capital goods (0.41 per cent).

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dropped 4.71 per cent to USD 73.81 a barrel.

In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled in the positive territory while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

# AI-LED FIRMS SEE REMARKABLE GROWTH: REPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** Companies embracing AI-led processes globally are experiencing remarkable growth, surpassing their peers with higher revenue growth and greater productivity, according to a report by Accenture.

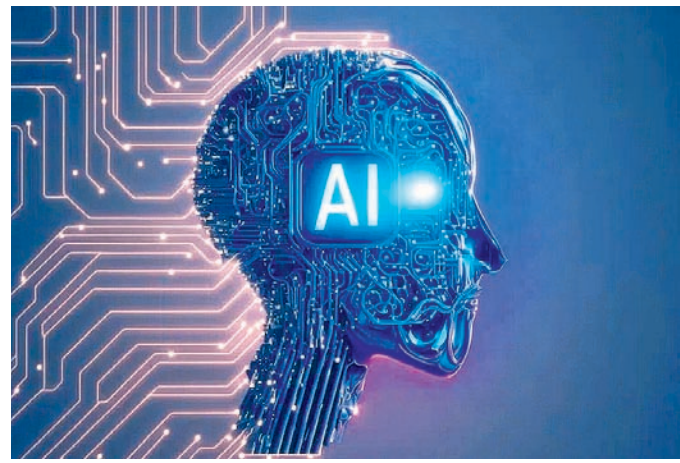
In India, the percentage of organisations fully modernised with AI has surged from 8 per cent in 2023 to an impressive 25 per cent in 2024, marking a significant leap in operational efficiency and revenue generation, the report said.

The findings are based on a survey of 2,000 executives across 12 countries and 15 industries,

including insights from 200 senior executives based in India.

The report, titled "Reinventing Enterprise Operations with Gen AI," highlighted that globally, organisations that have adopted intelligent operations are achieving 2.5 times higher revenue growth and 2.4 times greater productivity than their peers.

This trend underscores the transformative power of Generative AI, which has become a catalyst for innovation across various sectors. Notably, 79 per cent of Indian companies reported that their investments in generative AI and automation have met or exceeded expectations, prompting 64 per cent to plan further enhance-



ments by 2026. Despite these advancements,

the survey indicates that many organizations still face chal-

lenges in fully harnessing the potential of AI.

Approximately 64 per cent of companies worldwide struggle with operational readiness, primarily due to inadequate data foundations and a lack of talent reinvention strategies. In India, 58 per cent of executives expressed concerns about their workforce's preparedness for the rapid advancements in AI technology.

Accenture Group's Chief Executive for Operations Arundhati Chakraborty emphasised the urgency for businesses to adapt, and said Generative AI is more than just technology—it requires a mindset change that impacts the en-

terprise.

"Most executives understand the urgency of reinventing with generative AI, but in many cases their enterprise operations are not ready to support large-scale transformation...an end-to-end perspective leveraging talent, leading practices and effective collaboration between business and technology teams is essential for intelligent operations," Chakraborty said.

Outlining four key strategies, the report said centralised data governance, talent-first strategy, collaborative innovation, and utilising cloud-based process mining are essential for business leaders aiming to enhance operational maturity.

HIL WOMEN'S AUCTION

DENMARK OPEN BADMINTON TOURNAMENT

# Udita attracts highest bid

# Lakshya, Malvika make first round exits, Sindhu advances



UDITA DUHAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Odense, Oct 15:** India's Lakshya Sen battled hard against China's Lu Guang Zu but ultimately lost in three games to make an early exit from the Denmark Open Super 750 badminton tournament here Tuesday.

Lakshya, a 2021 World Championship bronze medalist, squandered an opening game advantage, losing 21-12 19-21 14-21 to Lu in men's singles opening-round match, which lasted 70 minutes.

The 22-year-old from Almora, who finished fourth at the Paris Olympics, had previously lost in the second round of the Arctic Open in Finland last week.

Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu moved into the second round after her opponent Pai Yu Po of Chinese Taipei retired midway in the second game with the score reading 21-8 13-7 in favour of the Indian.

However, Malvika Bansod, who had

reached the quarterfinals at the China Open, couldn't cross the opening hurdle, going down to Vietnam's Nguyen Thuy Linh 13-

**DOUBLE OLYMPIC MEDALLIST PV SINDHU MOVED INTO THE SECOND ROUND AFTER HER OPPONENT PAI YU PO OF CHINESE TAIPEI RETIRED MIDWAY**

shuttler Supanida Katethong. Panda sisters - Rutaparna and Swetaparna - also made a first-round exit after losing 18-21 22-24 against Chinese Taipei's Chang Ching Hui and Yang Ching Tun in women's doubles.

Lakshya, competing in his second event since the Olympics, kept pace with his Chinese rival before pulling ahead at 8-8 to take an 11-9 advantage at the break. The Indian kept his nose ahead after resumption and jumped to 20-11 with a seven-point burst to comfortably pocket the opening game.

After the change of sides, Lakshya surged to 8-2 but Lu rallied to narrow the gap to 11-12.

The Indian extended his lead to 16-11 but Lu's persistence paid off as he kept troubling Lakshya and reversed the situation, taking a 19-18 lead. The Indian drew parity but Lu got the required two points to script a comeback.

In the decider, Lu maintained his composure and pulled ahead

to 14-9, while the Indian struggled to keep

pace. In a jiffy, Lu seized six match points and sealed the victory when Lakshya went long.



21 12-21 in women's singles. Aakarshi Kashyap also faced an early exit, losing 13-21 12-21 to seventh-seeded Thai

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** Indian defender Udita Duhan emerged as the costliest buy at the Hockey India League women's auction after she was acquired by Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers for ₹32 lakh here Tuesday.

Dutch star drag-flicker Yibbi Janssen was the second most expensive player and was bought by Odisha Warriors for ₹29 lakh, followed by young Indian forward Sunelita Toppo, who was picked up by Delhi SG Pipers for ₹24 lakh.

Indian players Lalremsiami (for ₹25 lakh to Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers), Sunelita Toppo

**India captain Salima Tete (₹20 lakh), Ishika Chaudhary (₹16 lakh) and Neha Goyal (₹10 lakh) were picked up by Odisha Warriors**

(for ₹24 lakh to Delhi SG Pipers), and Sangita Kumari (for ₹22 lakh to Delhi SG Pipers) attracted significant attention during the auction.

Several overseas players, including Belgium's Charlotte Englebert (for ₹16 lakh to Soorma Hockey Club), Germany's Charlotte

Stapenhorst (for ₹16 lakh to Soorma Hockey Club), and Australia's Jocelyn Bartram (for ₹15 lakh to Odisha Warriors) were the notable buys.

Veteran India striker Vandana Katariya fetched ₹10.5 lakh from Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers.

India captain Salima Tete (₹20 lakh), Ishika Chaudhary (₹16 lakh) and Neha Goyal (₹10 lakh) were picked up by Odisha Warriors.

Former India captain Savita (₹20 lakh), Sharmila Devi (₹12 lakh) and Nikki Pradhan (₹12 lakh) are some of the big Indian names bought by Soorma Hockey Club.

Delhi SG Pipers also picked

up India internationals Navneet Kaur (₹19 lakh), young goalkeeper Bichu Devi Kharibam (₹16 lakh) and Deepika (₹20 lakh).

After approving a request from unsold players of the Indian senior women's and junior teams to reduce their base price to ₹2 lakh, players such as Madhuri Kindo (for ₹3.40 lakh to Odisha Warriors), Jyoti Chhatrari (for ₹5 lakh to Odisha Warriors), Deepika Soreng (for ₹2.20 lakh to Soorma Hockey Club), and Rutuja Dadaso Pisal (for ₹4.90 lakh to Odisha Warriors), among others, secured their place in the inaugural edition of the Women's HIL.

SHORT TAKES

Hathurusingha suspended

**Dhaka:** The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has suspended men's team head coach Chandika Hathurusingha due to inappropriate conduct by him during last year's ODI World Cup in India. Hathurusingha, the former Sri Lanka all-rounder under whom Bangladesh recently endured a forgettable tour of India where they were whitewashed in both the Test and T20I series, will be sacked and replaced by former West Indies player Phil Simmons.

Japan and Australia draw 1-1

**Saitama (Japan):** Two own-goals saw the points shared Tuesday as Japan and Australia drew 1-1 in Asian World Cup qualifying. Shogo Taniguchi accidentally put Australia ahead just before the hour at Saitama Stadium, but Australia's Cameron Burgess returned the favour soon after to leave Japan top of Group C with 10 points from four games, five clear of the Soccerros in second.

Jonas Eidevall quits

**London:** Arsenal Women manager Jonas Eidevall quit Tuesday, less than a month into the new season. The English team has won just one of its first four matches in the Women's Super League and lost its opening game in the Champions League group stage, 5-2 at Bayern Munich. Eidevall joined in June 2021 from FC Rosengard in his native Sweden and led Arsenal to two League Cup titles as well as the Champions League semifinals in the 2022-23 season. It was the first time in 10 years Arsenal reached that stage in Europe's top club competition.

Ferguson to step down

**Manchester:** Manchester United great Alex Ferguson will step down from his role as club ambassador at the end of the season, a person with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press Tuesday. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because the move has not been publicly announced. Ferguson will be 83 in December and the person said the ending of his ambassadorship was 'amicable' and he would always be welcome at Old Trafford.

# Gill, Jaiswal look to continue good form



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, Oct 15:** Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shubman Gill, the torchbearers of India's transition phase, will have to be the team's driving force in its quest to lord over an unsettled New Zealand

when the two sides square off in a three-Test series, beginning here Wednesday.

The baton has not been completely passed, but Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma are certainly running their last lap and these two young superstars will have

to show that they can carry forward the legacy of the titans.

Since a productive series against England earlier this year, Gill is now more familiar and comfortable with the Test cricket format.

It is reliably learnt that Gill has

a stiff neck, but should be able to play here and the team physio is hard at work to ensure that he is fully fit for the game that also faces the threat of rain.

Gill's last 10 innings are dotted with three hundreds and two fifties, while Jaiswal's last eight outings in Test cricket feature a 214 and five fifties. Those numbers are not to be scoffed at. But at the same time, it is important for them to build on the foundation through this series, a precursor to the much tougher journey to Australia next month.

Gill seems to have sorted his issues with the in-coming deliveries from pacers, but a trace of the old failing still remains.

In Chennai, Bangladesh pacer Hasan Mahamud troubled him with nip-backers before eventually grabbing his wicket.

Similarly, Jaiswal has a penchant to go for expansive shots against pace bowlers to get dismissed, evidenced by his three dismissals recently against Bangladesh quicks.

In all, the left-hander has fallen to pacers 12 times in 20 innings, and he would want a better record before facing a clutch of top-class Australian pacers.

While these concerns are not deeply rooted, they serve as cautionary points against a New Zealand attack that has capable hands in pacers Matt Henry, William O'Rourke and the experienced Tim Southee, if he gets to play here after a sharp decline in his form.

# IOA doesn't pay heed to our suggestions: MC Mary Kom

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** Boxing great MC Mary Kom, who is also the chairperson of IOA's athletes' commission, says she has stopped giving suggestions to the National Olympic Committee as it doesn't pay attention to them.

Mary Kom was among 10 elite sportspersons who were elected on the IOA athletes' commission back in November 2022.

The IOA is currently witnessing intense infighting with a section of the office-bearers questioning the governance of president PT Usha, who has de-

nied all allegations against her.

"I am not into the IOA functioning. We shared so many things with IOA but they don't listen to it. I have a voice but they don't listen to what I suggest. I don't know politics and I don't want to blame anyone," Mary Kom told PTI when asked about the ongoing power struggle in the IOA.

The boxers returned without a medal from the Paris Olympics and Mary Kom was terribly disappointed at that outcome. The 41-year-old lamented that nobody in the Boxing Federation of India sought her help ahead of the Olympics.

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# Favourite tag for World Championship isn't extra pressure: Gukesh

The teenager has been in sensational form since winning the prestigious Candidates and recently guided India to their maiden Chess Olympiad victory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** First-time challenger D Gukesh Tuesday insisted he is not weighed down by the favourite's tag heading into the World Championship clash against China's Ding Liren, having enjoyed a purple patch after overcoming a rough phase.

The 18-year-old won the Candidates tournament in April

to become the youngest challenger to the world title. He will take on Liren in Singapore from November 20 to December 15 for the coveted title and a prize fund of USD 2.50 million.

"I'm glad that people say this (that I am expected to win) and in general, I'm happy with my form. But it doesn't really add any pressure," Gukesh told a select group of media during a virtual



interaction. "I think it's just the pressure of playing in the World Championship. But there is no additional pressure by what people are saying. I just want to play a good game in every round and see what happens."

The teenager has been in sensational form since winning the prestigious Candidates and recently guided India to their maiden Chess Olympiad victory.

On the other hand, Liren, the highest-rated chess player of all time, took a break from the game after defeating Russian GM Ian Nepomniachtchi at the

World Championships, due to his battle with depression. The 31-year-old made his return earlier this year but has faced challenges with a significant drop in form.

Gukesh has largely been discreet about his plans for the World Championship, and when questioned about his match against Liren, the Indian chose to remain guarded. "For me, it's just a match against a very strong player. And I'm sure he'll be coming to the match with the right spirit and he'll be trying his best," Gukesh said.