

PeeCee's perspective
 Actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas opens up about the difference in working in Hindi movies and Hollywood

LEISURE | P2

Hezbollah leader dead
 Hezbollah says that Hashem Safieddine, expected to succeed Hassan Nasrallah, is dead in an Israeli airstrike

INTERNATIONAL | P10

Choppy trade
 Extending its losing streak for the third day, benchmark Sensex declines by 138 points Wednesday in choppy trade

BUSINESS | P11

Profligate India lose
 Olympic bronze-medallists India waste chances galore to lose 0-2 to World Champions Germany in the first hockey Test

SPORTS | P12

SHORT TAKES

Modi, Xi endorse Ladakh agreement

KAZAN: In their first structured bilateral talks in nearly five years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping agreed Wednesday that India and China can have a 'peaceful and stable' relationship by displaying maturity and mutual respect, and endorsed the pact on the resolution of the dragging eastern Ladakh border row. In the meeting, Modi underscored the importance of properly handling differences and disputes and not allowing them to disturb peace and tranquility. In a post on 'X', Modi said, "India-China relations are important for the people of our countries, and for regional and global peace and stability. Mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual sensitivity will guide bilateral relations," Modi added.

P10

Odisha Civil Services prelims postponed

BHUBANESWAR: The Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) said in a notification Wednesday that the Odisha Civil Services Preliminary Examination-2023 has been postponed due to the impending severe cyclonic storm 'Dana'. The exams were scheduled to take place October 27. OPSC also said that the revised date for the exams will be announced within a week. It asked candidates to monitor the OPSC website (opsc.gov.in) for the latest information.

State women's panel dissolved

BHUBANESWAR: The Mohan Charan Majhi-led government removed Wednesday the chairperson and members of the State Commission for Women from their posts with immediate effect. Sources in the CMO informed that Chairperson Minati Behera and the four other members, Swarnalata Samal, Sujata Digal, Babita Swain and Bijaya Barwa have been removed from their posts with immediate effect. All the five are known for their close proximity to the BJD.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



When he called studying overseas a disease, he was actually ruing that his kids left him behind and settled abroad

Landfall between Bhadrak, Kendrapara

From 2013, Odisha has been hit regularly by a number of severe cyclones and the threat of the latest one 'Dana' looms large. Some environmentalists have pointed out that since the landfall of Cyclone 'Dana' is expected in the Bhitarkanika region, its effect may be stunted by the 200-square kms of mangrove plantation which lies in the area. Forest department officials have said that the mangrove forests would reduce the vulnerability of adjacent coastal lands from tidal surges and also reduce the wind velocity. Phailin (2013) caused substantial damage after its landfall in Ganjam district. Twenty three people were killed and properties worth crores were destroyed. Titli (2018) was a major shock as 77 people lost their lives in the state. Severe cyclonic storm Fani hit the state in 2019 and even though there was a minimum loss of lives, the damage to infra was massive. Since then Bulbul (2019), Amphan (2020), Yaas (2021), Gulab (2021), Shaheen (2021) and Jawad (2021) have hit the state, but damages have been minimal. The last two years had been cyclone-free for Odisha, but now Cyclone 'Dana' is slowly getting ready to unleash its ferocity. Yes, protective measures have been taken, but then no one can tackle the unpredictability of nature.



PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE: Large number of boats belonging to fishermen lie anchored on the sea beach in Puri to protect them from Cyclone 'Dana' OP/PHOTO

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: As Cyclone 'Dana' hurls towards the Odisha coast, threatening to impact nearly half the state's population, the government is racing against time to execute

a massive evacuation plan aimed at relocating around 10 lakh people in 14 districts to safety.

The IMD said Wednesday the cyclone is likely to make landfall between Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP) in Kendrapara district and Bhadrak's Dhamra

port, located around 70km away from each other, early Friday.

It said that the landfall process will start from the night of October 24 and will continue till the morning of October 25. The maximum speed during the landfall process is likely to be around

120 kmph, IMD DG Mrutyunjay Mohapatra informed.

Mohapatra said landfall is mostly a slow process which usually takes around 5-6 hours. "Therefore, heavy rainfall, wind and storm surge will reach the peak during the landfall time

BPIA suspends flights for 16 hours

BHUBANESWAR: Director of BPIA, Prasanna Pradhan informed Wednesday that flight operations at the airport will remain suspended from 5.00pm October 24 till 9.00am October 25. A total of 40 flights will be cancelled during this period, Pradhan stated.

which is between October 24 night and October 25 morning," Mohapatra said.

According to the latest IMD bulletin, the cyclone has moved northwards with a speed of 13 kmph and lay centred about 490km southeast of Paradip, 520km south-southeast of Dhamra and 570km southsoutheast of Sagar Island (West Bengal).

Umashankar Das, senior scientist at the regional IMD centre here warned that low-lying areas in Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Balasore districts are likely to be inundated and recommended that the government evacuate residents from these regions.

The government has identified 14 districts that are at risk. They are Angul, Puri, Nayagarh, Khurda, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Balasore, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Ganjam and Mayurbhanj.

Samrudha Krushak Yojana gets govt nod

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: The Odisha Cabinet approved Wednesday the proposal to implement 'Samrudha Krushak Yojana', under which farmers who have registered to sell paddy through the existing government mechanism will be paid ₹3,100 per quintal, including the input assistance of ₹800 per quintal and the prevailing minimum support price (MSP), Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja said. The Cabinet approved the paddy procurement policy for the Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2024-25, which commenced October 18 and will conclude September 30, 2025.

The state government has set a target to procure 80 lakh metric tonne of paddy during the season, officials said, noting that in terms of rice, this would be around 54 lakh metric tonne.

The Cabinet also approved the Air Connectivity Policy under which substantial financial incentives would be offered to airlines to encourage them to launch new domestic and international flights from different airports in the state, officials said.

Besides the BPIA here and Veer Surendra Sai Airport in Jharsuguda, the state has smaller airports at Jeypore,



Rourkela and Utkela. Under the new policy, the government would provide viability gap funding to airlines for starting new services from these airports, they said.

It would provide ₹5 lakh per round trip for domestic routes and ₹10 lakh for international routes, with a potential increase for routes exceeding 750km, an official statement said. This support would mitigate financial risk and make new routes more attractive, the statement added.

The Cabinet also approved minor amendments in the guidelines for Subhadra Yojana that included delinking its database from the Aadhaar, officials said.

Ahuja said that over one crore people have registered so far and more than 60 lakh applications have been approved. About 2.70 lakh applications have been rejected as they were found ineligible during scrutiny, he said.

New Himalayan snake named after DiCaprio

TRIBUTE TO ACADEMY AWARD-WINNING ACTOR WHO IS KNOWN FOR BEING A PASSIONATE ENVIRONMENTALIST

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 23: A new genus and snake species discovered in the Himalayas has been named after the Academy Award-winning Hollywood actor Leonardo DiCaprio - the 'Titanic' star who is also a passionate environmentalist, officials said Wednesday here.

DiCaprio's active involvement in raising awareness about environmental issues and his financial support for field conservation and research were highlighted as reasons for this tribute in a paper authored by a number of scientists and environmentalist. The study also suggested the common name 'DiCaprio's Himalayan snake' to further commemorate his contribution to environment.



known about the biology of the species, officials



informed. They added that though 'Anguiculus dicaprio' is seen once in a while the sighting of another variant 'Anguiculus rappii' has not been recorded in the last couple of decades.

The snake was first found by Virender Bhardwaj in the backyard of his home in western Himalayas during the Covid-19 lockdown. He posted its pictures on social media, leading to a sensation - and a three-year-long investigation coupled

with laborious research - to identify the snake which resembled 'Liopeltis rappii', a species known to be distributed in the eastern Himalayas.

However, the snake population from Himachal Pradesh differs from the true 'Liopeltis rappii' found in Sikkim in many aspects like the scales on the head and general colour patterns - which was confirmed by examining specimens from natural history museums across Europe, the US and even India.

Besides, the DNA sequences generated for this snake did not match any genus and the team included DNA and morphological data for other related species from all over Asia.

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HAILEY REVEALS HUBBY JUSTIN'S SWEET GIFT

Hailey Bieber recently took to the Stories section of her Instagram Stories, and revealed that her husband had bought her a unique gift. "@justinbiber bought me a plant for no reason", Hailey wrote alongside a tear emoji and a picture of the plant.

CHAD REVEALS WHAT HE CONSIDERS TO BE 'SEXY'

Hollywood star Chad Michael Murray says 'sexy' is 'a state of mind.' "There're so many different things that make somebody sexy. It's a combination of being confident in who you are, knowing who you are and just being comfortable in that, no matter what you look or feel like," he said.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You may pick up the hammer and chisel today. No, you're not taking up sculpture; you're finally giving in to your spouse's demands to take some home improvement measures. It's in your interest to be speedy and focused, as you are the guilty party, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
There is a strong possibility of receptivity and sensitivity in your love life. On the down side, your negativity may lead to mediocre results. You are a fire-fighter when it comes to others' problems, but can forget digging a well for your own home, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
Emotional and material security will hold equal importance today. You want to be in love, but you know that love can't buy you dough. In academics, you will be able to solve whatever problems you set your mind on. Your spare time will be spent on devising methods of making the best use of your knowledge.

CANCER
In all likelihood, this is going to be a fairly easy day for you, says Ganesh. The only tough part of the day would be how to spend it. There will be hardly anything to do, anyone to talk to. Ideally, this is what you would call a perfect day. But not today.

LEO
Call it an epiphany of sorts, but today promises to be a day of revelations for you. Finally, things fall into place as your Odyssey nears its end, and you come to terms with your hidden talents, says Ganesh. Follow your heart and dive into the bottomless pool of your imagination.

VIRGO
Ganesh predicts that your writing skills will possibly help you vent your feelings without offending others. You will successfully complete your pending assignments. Great success will knock at your door in anything and everything you undertake today, predicts Ganesh.

LIBRA
Health is always a key issue, and today, you may have to pay some special attention to the same. It may be some elderly person in the family, or even you. Take the time to give your full attention in order to avoid any further complications. You may do well to undergo a physical examination yourself.

SCORPIO
The target is locked in and the arrow is shot. It is only a matter of time before Cupid celebrates and hits the bull's eye and you find yourself in the mush of things. Sentiments and romance will be the order of the day. There is a good chance that marriage proposals or new relationships will find their footing today, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Appreciation for all that excellent work you have put in is a no-go for you! Yet, you stand to gain nothing by losing heart. While the acknowledgement you look for has been delayed, Ganesh says it has not been denied and is in the offing already.

CAPRICORN
New projects and partnership will keep you busy today, says Ganesh. If a meeting is scheduled, you may be praised vociferously for your ability to make the right decision at the right time. You may also bag rewards for the commendable efforts you'd put in the past.

AQUARIUS
If Elvis Presley is who you dreamed of being, today may be your day! You seem to impress one and all, and even money flows in! You play smart today and everything seems to work in your favour.

PISCES
You can probably count your chickens before they hatch today, for it is likely that every nest-egg you expect to mint money will. A good day to trade in the stock markets as well, as long as you keep in mind that the horns of a rampaging Bull market can be every bit as deadly as the paws of a lumbering Bear market, says Ganesh.

HOLLYWOOD-BOLLYWOOD BIG DIFFERENCE

Priyanka: We're a little romantic

Mumbai: Priyanka Chopra was back in India after a long time last week. The actor, now settled in the US, was in Mumbai where she attended the launch of her new brand Max Factor. In a new interview with Forbes India, the actor opened up about the difference in working in Bollywood and Hollywood.

During the chat, when Priyanka was asked how she would compare the experience of working in Bollywood and Hollywood, she replied, "I think every country in general is different. We all have our own cultural things that we like and how we work. I think the one big difference I have noticed between Hollywood and Bollywood is Hollywood has so much paperwork. 100 emails that will come to you before the next day. Timings are very specific... it depends on what time you wrapped the night before. It is really tight and very organized."

She went on to add, "We have a lot

more 'jugaad' (winging it) and get stuff done. We are like a little romantic about it like 'Arey ho jayega, kar lenge (We will get it done),' so it is like a very different way of working. I think our creativity can be super organic sometimes. That's the big difference I have seen otherwise filmmaking around the world speaks the same language."

AGENCIES

Barkha to push the envelope

Mumbai: Barkha Singh has established herself as a remarkable talent in the entertainment industry, captivating audiences with her compelling performances and undeniable charisma. Her ability to bring depth and nuance to her characters has resonated with viewers, contributing to her growing fanbase.

While her girl next door persona has played a key role in her success, there are times when she feels limited by this image. Acknowledging its importance to her journey, Barkha is now eager to explore more complex, darker roles that push her boundaries and showcase a different side of her talent within the en-

tertainment world.

In a recent interview, the actress reflected on her journey and offered insights into her aspirations, "I have enjoyed doing a lot of rom-coms and a lot of girl next door roles. Now, I'm looking forward to more serious and darker roles. We've already made inroads into that."

The actor adds, "My next couple of releases are a big step away from what the audience has seen me doing till now. They have seen me in happier roles. Now they're going to see me in darker and grungy roles. I am excited about the roles. I personally feel I'm better at that, but it's just not been tapped into. I'm very excited for the makers to see that side of me. So, I get more such roles (going forward)."

AGENCIES



THEATRE TREAT

Artists of Satabdira Kalakar, one of the oldest theatre organisations of Odisha, staged Odia play *Ghatantara* at Bhanja Kala Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Wednesday. Adapted from Manoj Mitra's famous Bengali drama *Rajdarshan* by troupe's General Secretary Dhira Mallick, the play was directed by Dr Alok Agnibesh. The plot explored themes of social inequalities and abuse of power. Among the dignitaries, State Law and Excise Minister Prithviraj Harichandan, playwright Upendra Prasad Nayak and troupe's President Gourahari Das were in attendance.

Shraddha's prank on shutterbugs

Mumbai: Actress Shraddha Kapoor hilariously pranked shutterbugs to avoid getting clicked and used Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's name as bait.

While walking out of designer Manish Malhotra's Diwali party along with Raveena Tandon's daughter Rasha, the *Street 2* actress was surrounded by a sea of paparazzis.

The actress hilariously is heard taking Superstar Shah Rukh Khan's name loudly to distract the shutterbugs so that she could run to the car.

Shraddha is heard saying: "Aree wo dekho Shah Rukh Khan. Shah Rukh Khan."

Shraddha, however, in a hurry gets into the wrong car with Rasha. However, the paparazzis are quick to take note and inform her about the funny error.

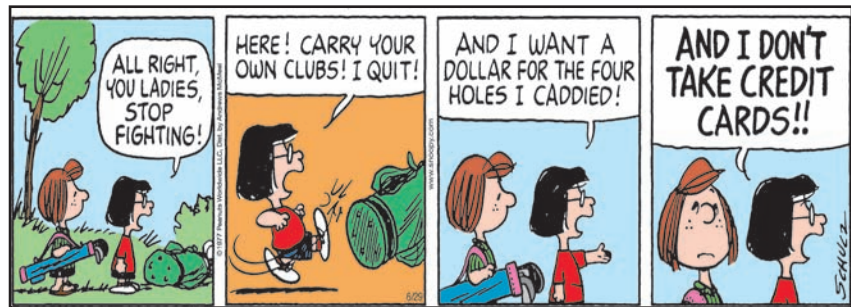
In the last few years she has delivered hits like *Street 2* and *Tu Jhoothi Main Makkar*. Shraddha recently admitted to being in a relationship and said that she likes spending time with her partner.

Looking forward, it is reported that Shraddha will be seen working alongside Ranbir Kapoor in the fourth installment of *Dhoom*.

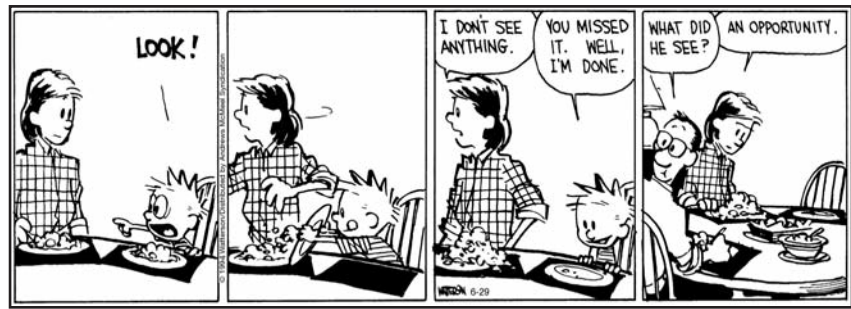
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CALVIN AND HOBBS

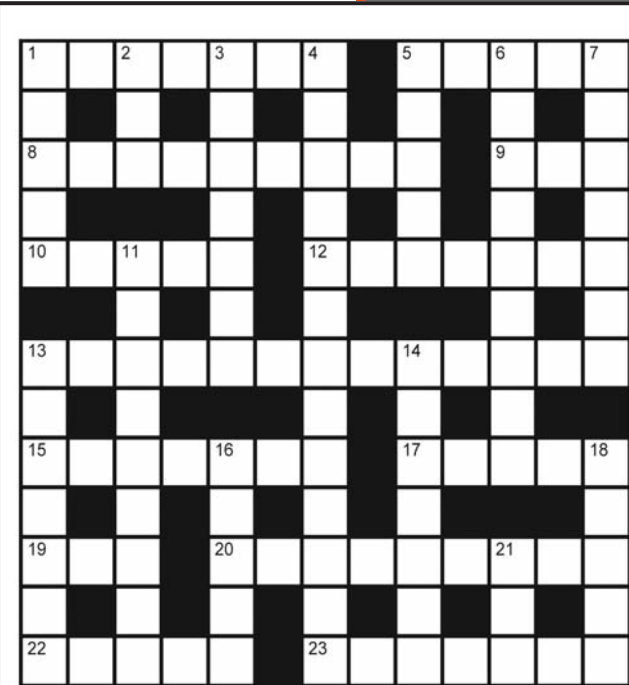


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

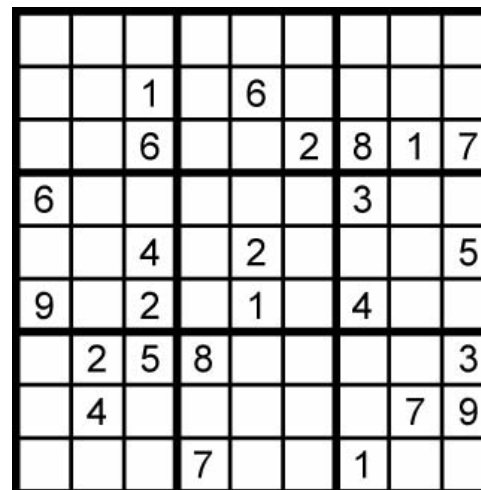


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- Across**
- 1 Edinburgh or Toronto, e.g.
 - 5 Keyed up
 - 8 Australian painted lady, e.g.
 - 9 Small domestic dog
 - 10 Winter hazard
 - 12 Usher in
 - 13 Lacking affection
 - 15 Carry out, as a plan
 - 17 Willow twig
 - 19 Go downhill fast?
 - 20 Genteel
 - 22 Loyal subject
 - 23 Plantagenet line
 - 4 Flotation device (4,9)
 - 5 Big name in games
 - 6 Pizza topper
 - 7 Fall back
 - 11 Oath
 - 13 Part of a place setting
 - 14 Streetcar
 - 16 Cry of defeat
 - 18 Complexion type
 - 21 Roman sun god

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

ICONIC PLAY

City-based theatre troupe Rangam present Odia play Nagamandala, adapted from Girish Karnad's Kannada drama of the same name, at Rabintra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday. The play was translated by eminent dramatist Ramakanta Mishra and directed by Darpa Narayan Sethi



HEART TRANSPLANT AT SCB SOON OCS exam postponed, zoo shut

STATE GOVT INKS PACT WITH CHENNAI'S MGM HEALTHCARE PRIVATE LIMITED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: If things go well, SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) in Cuttack will soon start heart transplantation, with the state government inking a pact with a Chennai-based healthcare facility, Wednesday.

Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET) Director Santosh Kumar Mishra signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with MGM Healthcare Private Limited Co-director Suresh Rao in presence in Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Minister Mukesh



Mahaling here.

The Health Minister said the MoU is a testament to the fact that the state government under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi is committed to providing best healthcare services to the people of Odisha.

"Those, especially from the weaker section of the society, requiring heart transplantation will benefit from this initiative. Heart transplantation will begin

at SCBMCH in a couple of months now," Mahaling said.

According to the H&FW department, the Chennai-based health facility has provided hands-on training to two teams from the medical colleges of Odisha free of cost.

"As the infrastructure is available at SCBMCH, MGM Healthcare Private Limited expressed intent to conduct heart transplant free of cost for the initial 10 cases there. It will also

provide hands-on training, suggestions for operationalisation, patient screening, and post-operative follow ups at SCBMCH. Subsequently, further transplantations will be carried out by the team of doctors of SCBMCH," the department said.

Rao said more than 650 heart transplant and 120 lung transplant surgeries have been conducted at MGM Healthcare Private Limited. "We wondered why patients have to come to Chennai when Odisha has experienced doctors. So, we decided to help the SCBMCH to do heart transplants here," he added.

H&FW department Commissioner-cum-Secretary Aswathy S, SCBMCH CTVS head Manoj Kumar Pattnaik, Cardiology head Sura Kishore Mishra and other senior officials of the H&FW department were present.

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: The preliminary test of the Odisha Civil Services (OCS) Examination, 2023, has been postponed in view of the impending cyclone 'Dana', which will hit the Odisha coast by October 25.

According to a notice issued by the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC), the preliminary examination, which was scheduled to be held October 27 has been postponed and a fresh date will be notified after seven days. The OPSC has advised the candidates to visit its official website for further information.

Meanwhile, the Nandankanan Zoo and State Botanical Garden here will also remain closed for visitors October 24 and 25 in view of the cyclonic storm.

Earlier, the authorities had



Orissa High Court, Odisha State Museum and Harekrushna Mahtab State Library will also remain shut October 24 and 25

closed Similipal Tiger Reserve and Bhitarkanika National Park for tourists from October 23 to 25.

On the other hand, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development Minister Gokulananda Mallik has appealed to people to provide shelters to stray animals, including dogs and oxen, during the cyclone. If any stray animal is found injured, one can call helpline number 1962 for assistance, he said.

Moreover, the Odisha State Museum, Odisha State Archives

and Harekrushna Mahtab State Library will also remain closed for two days - October 24 and 25 - in view of the cyclonic storm. These apart, Rabintra Mandap, Utkal Mandap and Bhanjakala Mandap will also remain shut for two days.

Similarly, the functioning of the court and offices of the Orissa High Court will remain closed October 24 and 25. "Therefore, November 30 and December 7, both Saturdays, are declared as court working days," according to a notification issued by the state's apex court.

Danger signal 10 for 3 ports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: With severe cyclonic storm 'Dana' expected to make landfall by early Friday, great danger signal number 10 has been issued for three ports in the state, a senior IMD official said Wednesday.

The cyclone, with wind speeds expected to reach up to 120 kmph (75 mph), is likely to hit between Bhitarkanika National Park and Dhamra Port by early Friday, the IMD said.

According to Regional Meteorological Centre, Bhubaneswar Director Manorama Mohanty, great danger signal number 10 has been issued for Dhamra, Paradip and Puri ports, and great danger signal number 8 for Gopalpur Port.

The great danger signal number 10 is issued for ports that are expected to experience severe weather due to a storm of great intensity, with wind speeds of 89

kmph or more. It also indicates that the cyclonic storm is expected to cross over or near the ports. Similarly, the port warning great danger signal number 8 indicates wind blowing at a speed of 63-87 kmph.

Port operations in Paradip and Dhamra remained suspended in the wake of the impending cyclone that is expected to cross between Dhamra in Bhadrak and Bhitarkanika in Kendrapara.

Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj told reporters after reviewing the preparedness at the port. "The eye of cyclone 'Dana' will cross through Dhamra due to which the entire area is in danger zone. People are being evacuated and the port authorities have made arrangements for minimising the impact of the calamity," Suraj said, adding that he would spend Wednesday night at Dhamra and visit several places to oversee preparedness.

Beaches wear deserted look

PNN & AGENCIES

Berhampur/Puri, Oct 23: Popular sea beaches of Odisha wore a deserted look Wednesday as the state is making preparations to tackle cyclone 'Dana' which is likely to make landfall in the early hours of October 25.

Besides gusting wind, the cyclone will bring torrential rain and tidal waves in the state because of which the administration has restricted entry of people to the beaches.

Except for some police personnel, no visitors could be found on the seashores of Puri, Gopalpur, Paradip, Chandipur and others. The IMD Wednesday said the cyclone is likely to make landfall between Bhitarkanika National Park and Dhamra Port, located around 70 km away from each other, early Friday.

While the district administration of Ganjam has closed the beaches in Gopalpur and Sunapur for three days from Wednesday, the Jagatsinghpur district authorities imposed a prohibitory order against the assembly of people at Paradip and Siali beaches.

Police personnel have been deployed in the sea beaches in Gopalpur, Puri, Paradip and Chandipur.

Puri's marine drive and Blue Flag beaches attract a sizable number of tourists every day throughout the year. Similar is the case at Gopalpur, a beach resort town, and Sunapur, a Blue Flag beach, in Ganjam district.

The police have tightened

security in beaches after the IMD forecast tidal surge of up to 2 metres in coastal areas. Besides guarding the beach, police officials intensified patrolling in Gopalpur, said Berhampur SP Saravana Vivek M.

He said forces have also been deployed at fishing harbours in Gopalpur to prevent the fishermen from venturing into the sea.

Impact of the cyclonic storm has already been felt due to the high-tidal waves of the sea which lashed the

beach after the formation of the cyclonic storm Wednesday morning. "The tidal waves are higher than usual. It might be due to the impact of the cyclonic storm Dana," said K Rameya, a 50-year-old fisherman in Gopalpur.

The condition of the sea would be rougher when the cyclone was nearing towards the Odisha coast, said K Raghunath of Markandi, a fisherman. "We are closely monitoring the situation," said Ganjam Collector Dibya Jyoti Parida.

All the cyclone centres in the district have been made ready to shift the people.

Transport and Commerce Minister Bibhuti Bhusan Jena, who was asked by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to monitor the rescue and rehabilitation works in Ganjam district in the wake of the cyclone, has already reached the district headquarters town Berhampur.

The minister reviewed the preparation of the district administration to face any eventuality.



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SCAN



'State going through demographic shift'

Experts call for enhancing women's access to education, skilling and employment in the rapidly evolving landscape

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: Odisha is experiencing a demographic shift, with an aging population on one side and a peak in its youth population on the other. This dual trend presents both opportunities and challenges, said Development Commissioner Cum Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg while addressing at the 5th edition of the Odisha Vikash Conclave here Wednesday.

The conclave, themed "Transformative Odisha @2036: Population and Development," held several sessions on issues such as women safety, migration, health, education and employment.

"Odisha offers unique opportunities with its 480 km coastline and 33 per cent forest cover of the total geographical area. Additionally, 23 per cent of its population belongs to Scheduled Tribes (ST). To unlock this potential, the state requires comprehensive planning that taps into the blue economy, the forest-based economy that supports the ST communities, and utilises

ODISHA VIKASH CONCLAVE



their traditional knowledge. At the same time, we must harness the strengths of both the growing youth population and the aging populace," Garg said.

Attending the closing ceremony, Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida emphasised that as Odisha undergoes demographic shifts, the government's priority remains focused on ensuring the social and economic security of women. She assured that the recommendations of the Odisha Vision Council (OVC) regarding enhancing women's access to education, skilling, employment and other sectors would be considered in the rapidly

evolving landscape.

Highlighting the need for urgent and collective efforts to transform Odisha into a model of inclusive growth, she stated, "The public must engage in constructive criticism of the government and collaborate to drive development forward."

Attending a session on Safety and Security of women in Odisha, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan underlined the need for the highest budget allocation to be directed toward women's education. He also announced that the state government is planning to establish fast-track courts in four zones

across Odisha to expedite cases related to crimes against women.

"The elderly population in Odisha is projected to increase by 105 per cent from 3.9 million in 2011 to 8.2 million by 2036, comprising nearly 16 per cent of the state's total population," said Jagadananda, co-founder of the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD). "To effectively address the demographic challenges, it is crucial that we allocate adequate resources, adopt a clear vision, and engage in a multi-stakeholder approach," he said.

The participants noted that keeping in view the surge in work participation of women by 2036 issues like sexual harassment at the workplace, public space violence such as rape and sexual assault, cybercrime and the declining child sex ratio demand urgent policy attention.

The Conclave, conducted under the aegis of the Odisha Development Initiative (ODI), marked a critical juncture in the state's journey towards achieving a developed and inclusive Odisha by 2036.

Tripartite MoU on capacity building of govt employees

AGREEMENT AIMS TO REVOLUTIONISE FORWARD-LOOKING CIVIL SERVICE TRAINING ECOSYSTEM IN THE STATE

POST NEWS NETWORK



Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: In a welcoming step towards transforming the training and capacity building of government employees, the state government with Capacity Building Commission (CBC), and 'Karmayogi Bharat' signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Loka Seva Bhawan here Wednesday.

The agreement aims to revolutionise the training landscape for civil servants in the state. The MoU was signed between director general of Gopabandhu Academy of Administration G Mathi Vathanan on behalf of the state government, CBC secretary and Karmayogi Bharat

CEO V Lalithalakshmi. The ceremony was graced by chief secretary Manoj Kumar Ahuja, and CBC member R Balasubramaniam.

Secretaries, and nodal officers (capacity building) of departments, as well as heads of government training institutes attended the ceremony.

The collaboration will enhance capacity building for government employees of the state by focusing on critical areas, including the development of annual capacity building plans, support in developing the framework of roles, activities, and competence exercises, identifying and publishing learning resources on the iGOT platform, as-

sisting to identify content developers and fostering dynamic collaboration between state and Central governments for capacity building, on boarding state departments and employees onto the iGOT platform, and developing a competency passbook for government employees.

The tripartite MoU reflects state's commitment to creating a forward-looking civil service training ecosystem and represents a major stride towards building an empowered, efficient, and capable administrative framework for state's vision of a Vikshit Odisha by 2036 and contributing to Vikshit Bharat by 2047.

Mancheswar railway station revamp soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: The Mancheswar railway station here will undergo significant transformation with a proposed development investment of ₹26.85 crore. The initiative aims to improve passenger facilities and enhance the overall travel experience for the growing number of commuters.

Mancheswar station is one of the 57 'Amrit stations' declared by the Ministry of Railways for East Coast Railway (ECOR) jurisdiction. Strategically located near the bustling Mancheswar Industrial Estate, the station serves as a critical point of access for daily commuters.

Currently handling 22 trains, the station's development plan includes a new building (G+1) spanning over 760 sqm, improvement in traffic circulation with beautification area of 4000 sqm, featuring unidirectional traffic flow and separate entry and exit gates, enhanced front façade of the existing station building (243 sqm), construction of a 12.0 m wide foot over bridge, well-planned parking area accommodating two-wheelers, four-wheelers, and autos in 1056 sqm, installation of lifts for improved accessibility, additional platform shelters across multiple platforms totaling 45 bays, spacious waiting hall of 180 sqm, premium modular toilets for both male and female in 80 sqm, and installation of comprehensive signage for enhanced navigation.

Dana: Railways opens 9 war rooms

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: With cyclone 'Dana' heading towards Odisha coast, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav chaired a high-level meeting Wednesday where all the preparedness measures by the zonal railways – East Coast Railway and South Eastern Railway – were reviewed.

The meeting was attended by chairman & CEO, Railway Board, all Board members, general managers of ECoR and SER, DRMs of Kharagpur, Chakradharpur, Adra and Khurda Road, Vaishnav instructed the officials to ensure maximum preparedness with minimal disruption. He also advised that utmost care must be taken to ensure minimum inconvenience to passengers.

In the meeting, the GMs of ECoR and SER provided the details of the preparedness measures by the Railways.

As per the decisions, nine round-the-clock war rooms shall be established at state headquarters - Bhubaneswar & Garden Reach (Kolkata) - Divisional offices of Khurda Road, Visakhapatnam, Sambalpur, Chakradharpur, Adra, Ranchi, Kharagpur and Balasore. These war rooms shall be manned by the officers of Engineering, S&T, Operating, Commercial & RPF to help take prompt decisions on account of cyclone. This will ensure early restoration of services and infrastructure.

War room/emergency control rooms are operational with 20 satellite phones for uninterrupted communication with power back-up. Railway is also maintaining constant communication with the India



Help desks will be set up at all important stations like Puri – 8926100356, Khurda road 8926100215, Bhubaneswar- 8114382371, Cuttack- 8114382359, Paradip- 8114388302, Jajpur Keonjhar Road- 8114382342, Bhadrak-8114382301, Palasa- 8114382319 and Brahamapur- 8114382340

Meteorological Department (IMD) to receive real-time updates and mobilise resources as necessary. Specialised teams are positioned for swift restoration of tracks, signalling systems, and electrification at various locations such as Soro, Jaleswar and other important stations as and when necessary. Diesel locomotives are also on standby mode to ensure train operations if power outage occurs.

More than 600 staffers have been deployed at all strategic locations like Bhojudih, Bokaro Steel City, Soro, Nimpura, Adra, Rajgoda, Bachhrawan, Kendua, Kalaghar, Tapang, Chhatrapur, Palasa, Hindol Road, Radhakishorepur, Kenduapada, Raghunathpur and Haridaspur with adequate stocks of restoration materials like 57 BOXN boulders, 86 BOBYN Ballast and 123 BOXN sand/murram/quarry dust, relief vans, 49 heavy ma-

chineries, seven trolleys and other equipment are also kept ready to respond to any emergencies. Scratch rake is planned and assembled for carrying relief material or any other requirement with 6-7 coach & placed at Kharagpur. Tower wagons are arranged and placed at Balasore, Datan, Kharagpur, Rupsa and Haldia.

Stations along the Bhubaneswar-Visakhapatnam corridor are being closely monitored due to the red alert issued for coastal areas. Adjoining divisions like Chakradharpur and Adra are also kept on high alert along with Kharagpur division.

A close watch is being maintained over railway bridges, tracks, yards and signalling systems to prevent damage from heavy rain and flooding. Catchwater drains and side drains are being cleared of obstructions like silt and vegetation.

Standby vehicles with drivers are planned at Soro, Balasore, Jaleswar, Kharagpur and Digha in order to tackle passenger evacuation and other contingencies.

DG power has been planned as an alternative mode of power in Kharagpur-Panskura section, Kharagpur-Bhadrak Section, Tamluk-Haldia Section and Tamluk- Digha section respectively.

Pump sets will be placed at Tamluk, Panskura and Balasore stations. Big hoardings and billboards are planned to be removed from the circulating area of the major stations as a precautionary measure. Continuous track-patrolling has been started from 6pm of October 22 and will continue till 6pm of October 25. It will be extended, if required.

Trains are to be controlled/stopped at stations depending upon the wind force and are planned to be regulated with all safety measures. Several train services have been cancelled, diverted or short-terminated to minimize risk to passengers. These decisions are detailed in official bulletins, while passengers are being advised to monitor updates via official railway channels.

Help desks will be set up at all important stations like Puri – 8926100356, Khurda road 8926100215, Bhubaneswar- 8114382371, Cuttack- 8114382359, Paradip- 8114388302, Jajpur Keonjhar Road- 8114382342, Bhadrak- 8114382301, Palasa- 8114382319 and Brahamapur- 8114382340.

Medical teams with adequate chlorine tablets, bleaching & other medicines have been placed at Mecheda, Tamluk, Kharagpur and Balasore to tackle any emergency.

Take safety measures, Naveen urges people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 23: Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Assembly Naveen Patnaik Wednesday urged people not to be scared of cyclone 'Dana' but to take necessary precautions for safety.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said cyclone 'Dana' is likely to make landfall between Bhitarkanika National Park and Dhamra port early Friday.

Patnaik emphasised that awareness and caution are key to protecting residents from the impending storm. He also called on people to cooperate with the administration in handling the cyclone's impact.

"Odisha has faced numerous cyclones in the past and our people have bravely weathered them. Let's take every precaution to stay safe this time too. Caring for ourselves and our loved ones is essential," Patnaik said.

Having come to power after the devastating Super Cyclone in 1999, which resulted in over 10,000 fatalities, Patnaik has consistently aimed for 'zero casualties' during disasters.

Patnaik also urged all the elected representatives to stand with people in this time of crisis.

"Help people. I strongly believe, together we can weather the storm like never before," he said.

Earlier, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi instructed all MLAs to visit respective Assembly segments and assist with the rescue and relief efforts.

Majhi has assigned nine ministers to districts expected to be heavily impacted by cy-



clone 'Dana'.

While Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo has been assigned the responsibility of Kendrapara district where cyclone 'Dana' is likely to make landfall early Friday, Deputy CM Pravatī Parida will monitor cyclone management in Puri district.

Other ministers who have been deputed in different districts are Commerce and Transport Minister Bibhuti Jena (Ganjam), Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra (Keonjhar), Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain (Jagatsinghpur), Panchayati Raj Minister Rabi Nayak (Balasore), Sports Minister Suryabanshi Suraj (Bhadrak) and Housing and Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra (Mayurbhanj).

This apart, the government has deputed six senior IAS officers – K Sudarshan Chakravathy, Trilochan Majhi, Balwant Singh, Vineet Bhardwaj, Yamini Sarangi and Samarth Verma – to supervise cyclone management in the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Puri, Mayurbhanj, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapada districts, respectively.

| MARKET WATCH | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| INDEX | VIARIATION |
| SENSEX | 80081.98 ↓ 138.74 |
| NIFTY | 24435.50 ↓ 36.60 |
| DOLLAR | 84.08 ↓ ₹0.04 |
| EURO | 90.66 ↓ ₹0.12 |
| GOLD | ₹77,795 ↓ ₹861 |
| SILVER | ₹97,005 ↓ ₹2967 |

| WEATHER | | |
|----------|--------|--------|
| | BBSR | CTC |
| Max Temp | 31.7°C | 30.6°C |
| Min Temp | 23.6°C | 23.0°C |
| Humidity | 77% | 77% |
| Rainfall | Nil | Nil |

HEAVY RAINFALL & THUNDERSTORM

Preventing resurgence of viral disease through vaccination

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Oct 23: On this World Polio Day, it's essential to recognise the persistent threat posed by poliomyelitis, especially in the wake of recent polio incident witnessed in Meghalaya, India.

Polio is a highly infectious viral disease which spreads through faecal-oral transmission and primarily affects children under five, leading to irreversible paralysis and, in some cases, death.

Despite decades of progress, the disease remains a global health risk, particularly for nations like India, which are polio free, however must remain vigilant to avoid resurgence.

Sunil Kumar Agarwalla, Professor Paediatrics in

SCBMCH and SVPPGIP, Cuttack remarked, "Our battle against polio is ongoing, and the key to winning it lies in consistent immunisation. Children, as early as six weeks, should be administered the inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) to ensure their immunity."

India's success story—12 years of being polio-free—has been an extraordinary public health achievement, facilitated by massive immunisation drives.

According to WHO, in lieu of polio eradication in India, around 1 billion doses of polio vaccine were administered annually to 172 million children over the course of four years leading up to the last case.

Yet, recent incidents of polio



resurfacing in parts of the world raise a crucial concern: India cannot afford to let its guard down.

Agarwalla emphasised, "Polio knows no borders, and neither should our efforts to prevent it. While India has made in-

credible strides, we must continue to support global vaccination initiatives to eliminate the disease worldwide."

"The Indian Academy of Paediatrics Advisory Committee on Vaccines and Immunisation Practices (IAP ACVIP) stresses

the need to strictly follow the recommended vaccination schedule. This includes a birth dose of oral polio vaccine (OPV), an inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) at 6, 10, and 14 weeks, followed by boosters at 16-18 months and again at 4-6 years. Adherence to this schedule is critical to maintaining individual and herd immunity," he said.

"India, with its large population and high-density areas, faces a particular risk if the disease is reintroduced. Therefore, ensuring that every child receives the polio vaccine is not just a personal health responsibility but a national priority," Agrawalla added.

He warned, "Vaccination is an investment in our future.

Every dose given today ensures that tomorrow's generation can grow up without the fear of polio. Our goal isn't just to prevent a resurgence but to completely eradicate polio from the world, and that starts with every child being immunised."

On World Polio Day, the message is clear: vaccination is the key to preventing a resurgence. By maintaining high immunisation rates and supporting public health initiatives, India can continue its fight against polio and protect future generations from this preventable disease. The global goal is within reach, but only if every nation—including India—remains steadfast in its commitment to eradicating polio once and for all.

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Man murdered in Kandhamal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Phulbani, Oct 23: A 35-year-old man was murdered in Kandhamal district, police said Wednesday.

The deceased, identified as Anik Patnaik of Karada village, was attacked with sharp weapons when he was returning home on his cycle Tuesday evening, they said.

Those behind the attack are yet to be identified, said Ashutosh Paikray, a sub-inspector of Raikia police station.

Locals found his body lying in a pool of blood on the roadside and informed the police, he said.

"We have sent the body for post-mortem. Nobody has been arrested so far," he said.

"Previous rivalry over some domestic disputes is said to be the cause of the murder. However, the exact cause will be known only after an investigation," the officer added.

RI in Vigilance net for accepting ₹20K bribe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, Oct 23: Vigilance sleuths here Wednesday arrested Vivekananda Tripathy, assistant RI, in-charge Sindurpur Revenue Circle, under Binika tehsil in Subarnapur district, while accepting a bribe of ₹20,000 from a complainant for conversion of his land from agricultural to non-agricultural.

Complainant Surya Kumar Mahakud of Balaranga village under Sindurpur revenue division had applied for conversion of his land and issuance of RoR. Binika tehsildar then sent a letter to the in-charge RI of Sindurpur to conduct a field visit and provide the report.

However, the accused ARI demanded ₹60,000 from the complainant to provide the report to the tehsildar. Finding no other

way, Mahakud lodged a complaint against the ARI with the Vigilance department Tuesday. The anti-corruption wing of Sambalpur registered a case (26/2024) in this regard and laid a trap to nab Tripathy.

The ARI was putting the cash amounting ₹20,000 in his pocket when Subarnapur Vigilance DSP Ritanjali Pradhan and inspector Dillip Kumar Pradhan, who were present there as per an earlier plan, caught him red-handed. The Vigilance sleuths also seized 40 pieces of ₹500 denomination notes from Tripathy's possession. He was taken into custody for questioning.

Simultaneous searches were conducted at two locations linked to Tripathy. Further investigation was underway in the case against Tripathy and a detailed report is awaited.



SAFETY FIRST: As cyclonic storm 'Dana' comes closer to Odisha coast, a Fishery department official uses a public address system to alert fishermen to return to the shore at Chandanipal jetty in Dhamra of Bhadrak district, Wednesday

Illegal quarrying rampant in Keonjhar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Oct 23: Peeved over rampant illegal mining and smuggling of stones at some of the villages like Nuabaripal, Ostapura and Bhol Nuagaon under Ghasipura tehsil of Keonjhar district, BJP's Yuva Morcha state coordinator Yagnya Prasad Sahu Wednesday lodged a complaint with the district Collector Vishal Singh seeking stringent action against the errant miners.

Alleging that stones are being smuggled by throwing all rules and regulations to the winds, the BJP leader stated that the area also houses many illegally installed high-powered crushers.

Sahu sought the intervention of the Collector as the local administration has been a mute spectator to the daylight plunder of the minerals. The complainant alleged that a firm is extracting



Alleging excessive quarrying at Ostapura and Bhol Nuagaon stone quarries, the complainant said these units are extracting about 15 times more stones than the permissible limits

and selling about 10 times more than the permissible amount every day from Nuabaripal stone quarry, which, according to gov-

ernment data, is non-functional. Alleging excessive quarrying at Ostapura and Bhol Nuagaon stone quarries, the complainant

said these units are extracting about 15 times more stones than the permissible limits and selling them illegally for the last several years.

Such illegal mining and quarrying have caused revenue losses to the tune of around ₹700 crore to the state government.

Buttressing his stand, Sahu said, "Information received through satellite imagery proves the charges of illegal quarry fields," said Sahu.

Earlier, two lessees of Ostapura mine had sold stones and chips for the construction of National Highways and other government/private projects without valid transit passes. It was alleged that the stones were also used in the stone-packing at Anandapur barrage on Baitarani river.

It is learnt that 90 per cent of the minor minerals used in various development and construction activities in the public and private sectors in the

district are being illegally extracted.

The quarry mafias in cahoots with some former and incumbent officials are plundering the minerals even as repeated complaints before the higher authorities have yielded no results, the complainant said.

He urged the Collector to take strict action against the accused government officials, the lessee and the smugglers after conducting a thorough probe.

"Although the previous government was well aware of the illegal mining, it took no action. The Collector has assured us of action within two/three days of receiving the complaint," Sahu added.

Moreover, the illegal excavation has created huge ditches which pose grave threats to humans as well as animals. As per the mineral extraction rules, the voids should be filled with soil to retain the status quo, which has not been done.

Woman, her 2 kids meet watery grave

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Oct 23: In a shocking incident, a woman, her son and daughter drowned in a pond at Panapasi village under Ghatagaon block of Keonjhar district. The deceased were identified as Kamini Mohakud, her son Mithun Mohakud, 7, and daughter Sunita Mohakud, 5.

The incident took place around 9:30am when Kamini, wife of Pabana Mohakud, along with her two sons and daughter had gone to the village pond to take bath. While taking bath, Mithun and Sunita got drifted into the deep waters. Seeing this, Kamini, who was washing clothes, jumped into the pond and tried to rescue the drowning kids. However, all of them met watery grave.

The third child, who was the lone witness to the tragic incident, rushed back home and informed his grandmother who



called the villagers for rescue.

The villagers fished out the bodies of mother and two children and took them to Ghatagaon community health centre in a 108 ambulance. The doctors there declared all of them dead.

On being informed, police rushed to the hospital, seized the bodies and sent them for post-mortem after an enquiry.

IIC of Ghatagaon police station Subhanta Kumar Jena said, "It is a very unfortunate incident. Autopsy of the bodies has been conducted and bodies handed over to their family members."

RSP gets new classrooms for schools in periphery

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Oct 23: Recognising education as the foundation of a sustainable society, RSP is aggressively providing infrastructural facilities to schools in the periphery under its CSR initiatives.

The CSR department of RSP has undertaken the construction of new classrooms in the local schools to provide better learning environment for students. Over the past two years, RSP has invested approximately ₹28 lakhs in the construction of two new classrooms at the Ratakhandi Government UP School in Kuanmunda and the Barabhansa

Government High School in Bisra.

These newly constructed classrooms offer a more spacious and conducive learning environment, addressing overcrowding issues in the schools and significantly enhancing the overall quality of education for the students. By improving educational infrastructure, RSP is playing a pivotal role in fostering better learning outcomes and promoting the long-term development of the surrounding communities.

This initiative reflects RSP's commitment to enhancing the lives of the people in the peripheral areas through sustainable and impactful CSR programs.

Woman ultra surrenders before Kalahandi police

BHAWANIPATNA: A woman Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist) cadre ultra, surrendered to the police in Kalahandi district, said Niti Sekhar, DIG southwestern region during a presser at the SP office here in Kalahandi district Wednesday afternoon. Debi Sori alias Gita, a native of Sukma district in Chhattisgarh, got inspired by dreaded Mao commander Hidma and joined the Dandakaranya special zonal committee (DKSZC) as an artist. After meeting Kamala, the area commander of Maoists, she became an active member. She was inducted to Kalahandi-Kandhamal-Boudh-Nayagarh (KKBN) division of the CPI-Maoist organisation in 2022 and was providing treatment to Maoists at the military group of the red rebels. Debi was also involved in five gunfire incidents, said the DIG. Kalahandi SP Abilash G was present at the presser. Disillusionment with the unethical activities and highhandedness of senior cadres prompted Gita to lay down the arms and return to the mainstream.

PHAILIN MEMORIES STILL HAUNT PEOPLE OF GANJAM

Phailin made landfall near Gopalpur October 12, 2013, destroying infrastructure in the district, claiming at least 15 lives, and damaging around 2,50,000 houses



FILE PHOTO

Although she rebuilt her home with government assistance, she prays to God that such a cyclone does not repeat.

District Collector Dibya Jyoti Parida held a meeting with officials, emphasising the readiness of cyclone shelter centres.

"If needed, people in low-lying and vulnerable areas will be evacuated to these centres," a senior officer said.

The Collector has ordered all government employees to remain at their workplaces and prohibited anyone from leaving without permission. The administration is particularly focused on the five coastal blocks - Ganjam, Rambha, Khallikote, Rangeilunda, and Chikiti.

Fishermen in the coastal villages have been barred from fishing since Monday. "We are spreading awareness in all coastal villages from early morning, advising them not to go into the sea until October 26," said Subrat Patnaik, additional district fishery officer (marine).

Fishermen who were in the sea and in Chilika Lake around Rambha area have started returning, following the administration's directives, sources said.

Berhampur, Oct 23: The scene of devastation caused by cyclone Phailin in 2013 still haunts the people of Ganjam, as the state government prepares for another potential disaster that is likely to strike the state's coastal areas early Friday.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), a deep depression over east-central Bay of Bengal intensified into cyclonic storm 'Dana' Wednesday morning.

The storm is likely to move in a northwestward direction, intensify further into a severe cyclonic storm over northwest Bay of Bengal and cross the Odisha-West Bengal coasts between Puri and Sagar Island in the early hours of October 25 with wind speeds

of up to 120 kmph, the IMD added.

At 5:30am, the system lay 560 km southeast of Paradip and 630 km south-southeast of Sagar Island, it said.

Phailin made landfall near Gopalpur October 12, 2013, destroying infrastructure in the district, claiming at least 15 lives, and damaging around 2,50,000 houses.

"When the district administration began preparing for the possible cyclone and prevented us from going to the sea for fishing, the memories of that dark night came flooding back," recalled M Tateya, 65, from the coastal village of Aryapalli.

"During my lifetime, I will never forget the disaster caused by Phailin, which robbed me of all my belongings, including my thatched house," said Laxmi, 50, of Jagdalpur.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM No.1 & 2 to Tender Notice No. SNTPBBS-KAVACH-082024
Necessary corrigendum has been issued in connection with the above mentioned tender notice no. Complete information of the above e-tender with corrigendum is available at www.irops.gov.in
Dr. Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/PT PR-77/CH/24-25 Bhubaneswar

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. ST-OT-VDU-KUR-DIVN-432, Dt: 17.10.2024
NAME OF WORK: REPLACEMENT OF VISUAL DISPLAY UNIT (VDU) OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Tender Value: ₹ 1,34,98,233.76, EMD: ₹ 2,17,500/-
Bidding Start Date: 25.10.2024.
Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1100 Hrs. of 08.11.2024.
No manual offers sent by Post/ Courier/ Fax or in person accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: www.irops.gov.in
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to review the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigendum issued for this tender.
Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, PR-649/P/24-25 Khurda Road

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA NO.O-448
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RURAL WORKS DIVISION-I, BHADRAK
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"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works
Bid Identification No. Online Tender 01 of 2024-25
1. Name of the Work : Roads 2. Total No. of Works : 45 Nos 3. Estimated Cost : Rs. 5.08 lakh to 27.12 lakhs 4. Class of Contractor : "B", "C" & "D" Class 5. Period of Completion : As per Annexure
6. Type of Tender : Single Cover 7. Other Details :
Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of Tender On-line for bidding Date of seeking of Tender Date & Time of Opening of Tender
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division-I, Bhadrak Online-1 of 2024-25 29.10.24 At - 11.00 A.M. 11.11.24 At - 4.00 P.M. 11.11.24 At - 2.00 P.M. 12.11.24 At - 11.00 A.M.
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1 Assistant Director (F&A) 11 Deputation 02*
*The No. of vacancies may vary as per actual requirement.
The last date of receipt of application in NRIDRA is 08.12.2024. For detailed eligibility criteria and application format please visit website www.pmgys.nic.in under 'Advertisement/Circulars' icon or <https://rural.nic.in> under 'Advertisement/Tenders' icon.
Advt. No. 03/2024
CBC-35104/11/0005/2425 Deputy Director (F &A)

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank Regional Office : Cuttack, Shreeji Complex, Plot No.: 840/858 & 840/859, Cuttack Town, Unit No.-17, Machhua Bazar, Cuttack-753001
DEMAND NOTICE
Notice issued under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002
Demand Notice u/s. 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 issued by the CANARA BANK as Secured Creditor against the Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s) of its Khuntakata Branch details of which are mentioned in the table below.
You, the below mentioned Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) have committed default in repayment of loan as mentioned in above table with further interest at the agreed rate available from our branch as mentioned below. The bank had issued notice under the said Act to you to repay the outstanding amount in the below mentioned table. Due to irregularity in repayment of outstanding dues, the debt has been classified as Non-Performing Asset. By this notice you are hereby called upon to discharge the entire liabilities as on date with future interest thereon in the above account as secured creditor, within 60 days from the date of this notice, failing which we shall be constrained to exercise all or any of our rights conferred under section 13(4) and other provision of the above Security Interest Act, 2002. You are required to note that in terms of Sec. 13(13) of the said Security Interest Act, you shall not, after receipt of this notice, transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise, any of the secured assets mentioned below referred to without prior written consent of our Bank. You are also put on notice that any contravention of the injunction/restraint as provided under the said Security Interest Act-2002 is an offence. This notice is issued without prejudice to any other rights available to our Bank under the above Security Interest Act-2002 and/or any other law in force. This is without prejudice to any other rights available to us under the Act and/or other law in force. Please comply with the demand under this notice and avoid all unpleasantness. In case of Non-compliance, further remedial action will be resorted to, holding you liable for all costs and consequence. In case the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) fails to discharge liability in full within the period specified in sub-section (2), the secured creditor may take recourse to one or more of the following measures to recover his secured debt, namely: a) Take possession of the secured assets of the borrower including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realizing the secured asset; b) Take over the management of the business of the borrower including the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realizing the secured asset; Provided that the right to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale shall be exercised only where the substantial part of the business of the borrower is held as security for the debt. Provided further that where the management of whole of the business of part of the business is severable, that secured creditor shall take over the management of such business of the borrower which is relatable to the security for the debt and under other applicable provisions of the said Act.
KHUNTAKATA BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower(s)/Mortgagor(s) / A/c. No. (A) Loan/Limit Sanctioned (B) Date of NPA/Recall Notice (C) Date of Demand Notice
Borrower & Mortgagor: Mr. Akshaya Kumar Tunga Samanta, C/o- Ananta Charan Tunga, At: Athagarh Uppersahi, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha, PIN-754029 / A/c. No.: 182001148547, 125006671775 (A) ₹ 10,00,000/- (Dairy Loan) & ₹ 48,832.60 (NPA-Credit Card) (B) 13.09.2024 (C) 18.10.2024
Date: 23.10.2024 Place: Cuttack Total Liabilities due on specified date ₹ 6,06,176.69 + ₹ 56,753.56 = ₹ 6,62,930.25 as on 18.10.2024 plus interest & cost thereon
Description of the property/ies mortgaged to the Bank EMT and MODTD of Land & Building situated at Dist.: Cuttack, PS/Tahasil: Athagarh, Mouza: Badabhuindala, ROR Bearing Khata No.: 290/671, Plot No.: 386, Area: Ac.0.310dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, standing in the name of Akshaya Kumar Tunga Samanta. Bounded by- North: Arjuna Dash, South: Dhani Mantri, East: Ananda Charan Tunga, West: Road.
Authorised Officer, Canara Bank

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

GIVE PEACE A CHANCE



Unlike other countries mainly the United States and its allies, New Delhi remained neutral while insisting on involvement of both parties to the war in any negotiation for peace. Both Putin and Zelenskyy have somewhat acknowledged India's role

tentials very well. It is time that other world leaders recognise India's credibility as champion of peace. In the growth-focused world politics, India seems unstoppable in becoming the third largest economy in near future and according to Cameroon, "perhaps the largest economy in the world in this century."

India is the country which gave birth to non-violence as a potent strategy for resisting oppression, injustice and invasion of sovereignty, then in the form of colonialism. Once again, the Indian way of non-violence and dialogue against domination or aggression is the way forward. India has never invaded any country nor has it taken any one's territory. Second, India's foreign policy has been based on neutrality—non-alignment, strategic autonomy and independence. New Delhi now is advocating multi-alignment for a multi-polar world. This strategy is an extension of the concept of neutrality as one could go with any country in common interest. However, absolute neutrality in an interdependent world is unviable.

Given India's track record of neutrality, non-violence, non-aggression, New Delhi is best placed for conducting negotiations on peace. It is for the world powers to shed their big power or super power complex, encourage and support credible countries to initiate the peace process in any part of the world. The international community has to give peace a chance. There is no alternative. India's efforts and role have to be acknowledged and supported.

The writer is Secretary General, Association for Democratic Socialism. [@INDIA](#)

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to give a similar message which is to come to the negotiating table. India reiterated then that it will support any feasible and mutually acceptable solution or format that could restore peace.

Unlike other countries mainly the United States and its allies, New Delhi remained neutral while insisting on involvement of both parties to the war in any negotiation for peace. Both Putin and Zelenskyy have somewhat acknowledged India's role. Putin has said that it respects and accepts the concerns of partners like China, Brazil and India. But his spokesman Dmitry Peskov was more forthright about India's role when he told Izvestia, a daily newspaper in Moscow, that India could help establish contacts and a dialogue with Ukraine. Underlining the highly constructive, even friendly relations between Modi and Putin, he said, "Prime Minister Modi could meet the line on getting first-hand information from the

participants in the conflict as he freely communicates with Putin, Zelenskyy and Americans."

Likewise, Zelenskyy appreciated India's initiative although with a rider. He wanted India to join others in condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine. He said immediately after Modi departed from his country that India should host the next peace conference after signing the communiqué issued in the first Ukrainian press conference in Switzerland. New Delhi has refused to take sides and to call out Russia. India also has maintained that it will not try to mediate, initiate any process until it is asked by both parties to do so.

In the beginning of this month, I had written in this column that India could be a peace broker in Ukrainian war. Cameroon's statement gives weight to such a conjecture. Cameroon has been a successful Prime Minister; then a Foreign Minister for a brief period, who understands India's po-

The statement by David Cameroon, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, lends credibility and perhaps an impetus to India playing the role of a peace-broker in the Ukrainian war. Speaking at an event on 21 October, titled 'India century', Cameroon acknowledged India's credibility and capability to play the mediator's role. At the same time, he asserted that any mediation efforts in the Russian-Ukrainian war, must give priority to the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine. I have covered in this column on the possible terms of negotiation; the independence of Ukraine is non-negotiable.

Cameroon pointed out that conflicts and climate change are two formidable challenges faced by the international community. He underscored that India is the largest democracy, one of the fastest growing economies and is undergoing a rapid green transition. India is making a massive investment in green technology and carbon reduction.

Cameroon appreciated India's efforts to secure a more prominent role in global governance and peace building are gaining recognition. He added that world bodies urgently need a reset in view of the changed international situation and India needs a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council.

India's position on Ukrainian war has been consistent since the war began over two years ago. New Delhi has supported diplomacy and dialogue. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has conveyed in person to Russian President Vladimir Putin that the solution cannot be found in the battle field. He travelled to Kyiv last August to meet



DK Giri

INDIA'S POSITION ON UKRAINIAN WAR HAS BEEN CONSISTENT SINCE THE WAR BEGAN OVER TWO YEARS AGO



Michael Ignatieff

When societies face up to their past, they create the possibility of a politics based in reality, not fantasy

A hero fears nothing, complains of nothing and never gives away.
THE MOTHER



A New History

Thirty years ago, in a Ukrainian churchyard where my Russian ancestors are buried, I knelt beside a very old woman leaning on a stick, her hair covered in a black kerchief. Behind us stood the Russian church that my great-grandfather built on his estate and where he lies buried.

The old woman was the last villager left who could remember the time when our family lived there. She had been a young girl of six or seven, running up to the kitchen door of the big house, carrying blueberries in her apron, and receiving from my grandfather's sister a spoonful of hot blackberry jam. After that, the Bolshevik Revolution came, my family fled, the church was closed, and Soviet agents from the city eventually confiscated the grain, took away the kulaks, and left everyone to starve. The Holodomor, the famine that Stalin inflicted on Ukraine, reduced people who had farmed the richest soil in Europe to eating grass.

Then came the war, when the Nazis set the village thatches alight and massacred the local Jewish population. The old woman sat next to me in the church and told me her story; at the end, she leaned her thin body against mine and began to howl.

I have never forgotten the sound. Whenever I hear it again in memory, I understand what the Ukrainian struggle is about. The troops fighting to hold on in Pokrovsk in eastern Ukraine, the firemen pulling civilians out of the rubble of bombed buildings in Kharkiv, and the drone pilots targeting Russian ships in the Black Sea are fighting to give themselves and their children a different history than the one that made that old woman howl.

This is what we don't seem to understand. The Western European and American public is increasingly disengaged from their struggle. The carnage seems unbelievable—is it really possible that a half-million Russians and perhaps nearly as many Ukrainians have been killed or wounded since the war began in February 2022? For too many, the dying could just as well be happening on another planet, and our politicians' insistence that our security depends on a Ukrainian victory sounds abstract, thin, and less than credible.

If the Ukrainians are truly fighting for us, it is because they are fighting the last battle against European imperialism. Every other imperial power in Europe has given up its colonies and begun a reckoning with the harm that empire did to its colonial subjects and to its own people. For with empire came the invention of racial hierarchy and racially justified domination, violence, and cruelty.

These poisons still affect us, and nostalgia for vanished imperial greatness has been just as damaging. Even in America, which had no empire, but an immensely profitable global hegemony, much of Donald Trump's presidential campaign stokes and exploits this atavistic sentiment, with its call to "make America great again."

You can't build democracy at home unless you dispense with empire and nostalgia for its loss. Until you do this, your politics will be consumed by deluded dreams.

Spanish historians have told me that the final defeat of the Spanish empire with the loss of Cuba and the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century fostered the authoritarian turn that delivered Spain to Franco and delayed the transition to democracy for two generations. Empire in Africa prevented a democratic transition in Portugal until 1974. Marine Le Pen's right-wing movement in France began with her father's fury at the loss of Algeria and his contempt for the democratic institutions Charles de Gaulle put in place after he withdrew France from North Africa.

When societies face up to their past, they create the possibility of a politics based in reality, not fantasy. In Britain, the Labour government of 1945 understood that it could not build democracy at home unless it abandoned India and Palestine. Germany had to be unconditionally defeated before it gave up its fantasy of an imperium across Europe and Asia.

Russia remains the one European society that has never honestly faced up to its imperial past. In refusing to acknowledge the legacy of Stalin, in failing to face up to his crimes in Ukraine, in the other "captive nations," and in Russia itself, Russia closed off any path to its own democratic future. Its people have laid themselves open to the perpetual tyranny of a man who can only turn their sons into cannon fodder.

This is the lethal pathology that Ukraine is fighting in our name. When Ukraine's citizens say they want to join Europe, what they mean is that they want to rip empire out of their souls and live as free people, liberated from a past whose memory made an old woman howl in pain.

All imperial nostalgias are best laid to rest, even benign ones like hers and mine for the sweet days of the ancien régime when my Russian ancestors kept the kitchen door open for peasant girls and gave them dollops of blackberry jam. A free Ukraine will have to make its own peace with the remnants of old Russia, like the churchyard where my ancestors are buried.

For now, Ukrainians are pulling Tolstoy off their shelves, and toppling Catherine the Great from her plinth in Odesa. Later, a more complex reckoning will fall due. You have to own all of your history, not just the parts that fit your mythologies.

Once Ukrainians have won a peace they can live with, a free Ukraine will have to own the imprint of the Russian past on its soul, and then wrestle free of that past. Only then can it begin to make a new history beyond terror, violence, and fear.

The writer, Professor of History and Rector Emeritus of Central European University in Vienna, is a former Canadian politician. [@PROJECTSYNDICATE](#)

SPECTRUM CLEAN ENERGY

Waste-to-energy: A sustainable solution



Kiran Kothari & Sanjay Kumar Kar

EXISTING GOVERNMENT POLICY REQUIRES REFINEMENT TO CREATE ENABLING ECOSYSTEM FOR FASTER DEPLOYMENT OF WASTE-TO-ENERGY PLANTS, WASTE-COLLECTION, AND OUTPUT OFFTAKE

India is an agrarian economy with immense potential to utilise agro-waste for sustainable energy production. Tapping this potential can diversify India's energy basket for energy independence. Waste-to-energy can enhance domestic clean energy supply, reduce fossil fuel import dependency, minimise emissions, and support socio-economic empowerment of farmers. Stakeholders in the waste-to-energy value chain are multiple, but the major stakeholders are the central government, state governments, municipal corporations, panchayats, project developers, waste aggregators, financial institutions, and farmers. Each stakeholder in the value chain has a unique role to play to make the waste-to-energy programme successful.

Efficient and effective management of agro-waste poses many challenges with respect to seasonal availability, storage, logistics challenges, capex requirements for purchasing farm machineries, opex cost of biomass depot. A plant capacity of processing 100 tonne per day biomass can produce 14-15 tonnes of compressed biogas and 60-65 tonnes of organic manure daily. Such a plant will cost about Rs 100 crore. In the context of the existing ecosystem, challenges faced by farmers/aggregators, project developers/plant owners and district administration are highlighted. In India 85% of farmers are small and marginal

with land holding capacity of 2.5-5 acres. Generally, they are not equipped with farm machineries and transportation facilities. Small land holding with smaller size crop fields make mechanised harvest of residue extremely difficult. The narrow aggregation period and lack of economic incentives for biomass, make it prone for stubble burning in fields.

The aggregators contribute towards aggregation of agro-waste from fields and further transportation of it to the plant site. Significant cost incurred in terms of equipment, land rentals for biomass storage, biomass insurance and fire-fighting arrangements makes it unviable.

Plant owners play the crucial role in setting-up commercially viable plants. Despite governments' continued efforts, often the plant owners face numerous bottlenecks. Some of them are highlighted here. In many parts of India, farm mechanisation is in nascent stage so agro-waste aggregation is incredibly challenging. About 1.5 acres of land is needed for production of 1 tonne of CBG which includes plant setup and depot for biomass. Further, unproven and limited technology availability complicates the matter. Marketability of by-products like: Fermented organic manure and fly ash offers plenty of challenges. There is no price fixation/formulation mechanism in

place for purchasing agro-waste and selling 2G ethanol. There is a need for setting uniform price for agri-waste and a robust centralised system for raw material procurement.

The district administration plays a critical role in liaising between farmers, plant owners, government, and policymakers. The administration executes the policies and provides necessary input to amend the policies. Administration assists transfer of technologies from lab to field by creating awareness among beneficiaries and monitoring the project progress.

Considering the rising scope and emerging challenges in the waste-to-energy value chain the following suggestions could remove the bottlenecks. The allocation of barren land/panchayati land/waste land for development of biomass depots can reduce the storage cost to farmers/aggregators/owners which will make supply chain viable. Modified tractor trolleys should be included in farm mechanisation schemes and additional subsidy on farm equipment should be given which will motivate farmers. To foster the robust biomass ecosystem, biomass pricing or benchmarking with respect to methane content/calorific value associated with it should also be done like in the case of biquettes. From government part, collaboration with foreign parties must be made for effective and proven

technologies suitable as per Indian agro-climatic conditions. More investment in R&D is the need of the hour. The government's push for funding from multilateral agencies like World Bank or Asian Development Bank should be helpful to reduce financial bottlenecks for biofuel development projects. Existing government policy requires refinement to create enabling ecosystem for faster deployment of waste-to-energy plants, waste-collection, and output offtake.

Although biofuel business is having many challenges, it can still ensure a healthy environment, reduce import dependency on fossil fuels, generate additional employment and supplementary income for farmers through crop incentivisation. The government of India must look into the sustainable production of biofuels with feasible, clear policy and financial support to make India a global champion. The government's wholehearted attempts can result in supplementing domestic energy supply security. Additionally, it will assist India to fulfil United Nations Sustainable Development Goal-7: Affordable & clean energy for all.

Kiran Kothari is Senior-Manager Biofuel Operations, HPCL. Sanjay Kumar Kar is Professor, Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Petroleum Technology.

The peacekeeper

Sir, Since 1948, the United Nations Day is observed among all member states on 24 October. After the world was ravaged by World War-II, the necessity of a robust, and widely-accepted, peace-keeping body was felt by the global leaders. From there, starting with 51 member states, the United Nations grew as only as it can to encompass 193 nations in its fold. Promotion of peace and co-operation along with the prevention of war are the key functions of the world peace body though climate change, the issue of refugees and migrants, justice to member nations, upholding democratic principles, wriggling out of global health crises, and prevention of violence against children and women are all important agendas. The UN has more than one lakh "peacekeepers" to ensure continental peace. Despite the UN's tendency to play into the hands of the five strong permanent members of the Security Council, its logistic and humanitarian support to the cause of world peace cannot be belittled at all despite facing a massive liquidity crunch in 2019.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Growing influence

Sir, In the last decade or so, the Democrats and the Republicans in the United States have come to see Indian Americans as a demographic of growing influence. Although they make up just one per cent of the electorate, Indian Americans comprise the second largest immigrant group in the US and their numbers are expanding rapidly. In key swing states like Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Florida, and Virginia, they even make up two per cent of the population, and their potential high voter turnout and political engagement can swing tight races in the upcoming US presidential elections. By fully engaging with the electoral process and making their voices heard, the community can ensure that their needs and priorities are well represented, making their votes a critical factor in shaping the country's political landscape and deciding the future of the country's policies and leadership as well.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

WISDOM CORNER

If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.
HENRY DAVID THOREAU

In the long run, we shape our lives, and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility.
ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

Quiet minds cannot be perplexed or frightened but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private pace, like a clock during a thunderstorm.
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1917: More than 600,000 Italians surrendered or retreated at the Battle of Caporetto during World War I.
- 1922: Benito Mussolini helped plan the March on Rome, which began on October 28 and resulted in him becoming dictator of Italy.
- 1929: A record 12,894,650 shares of stock were traded, causing the first day of real panic in the Crash of 1929, known as "Black Thursday."

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

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

Tiger census to begin in Pilibhit Reserve



THE PTR COVERS AN AREA OF 730.24 SQUARE KILOMETRES, WHICH INCLUDES APPROXIMATELY 602.79 SQUARE KILOMETRES OF CORE AREA AND ABOUT 127.45 SQUARE KILOMETRES OF BUFFER ZONE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pilibhit (UP), Oct 23: A tiger census in the forests of the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (PTR) will commence October 25 and will be conducted in two phases, according to officials.

“The first phase of the census will begin October 25 and will last for one month. We will deploy 402 cameras at 201 selected locations to accurately assess the tiger population,” Manish Singh, Deputy Director of Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, told PTI.

According to official records, the PTR covers an area of 730.24 square kilometres, which includes approximately 602.79 square kilometres of core area and about 127.45 square kilometres of buffer zone.

Forest department officials said all preparations for the two-phase campaign have been completed.

“There is a strong possibility of an increase in the tiger population. Recently, several female tigers have been seen with cubs, and footage of these

cubs has been captured by the cameras, with some related videos going viral,” Singh said. He said that male cubs typically separate from their mothers at around 18 months and female cubs at about 22 months, indicating potential growth in the tiger population.

The deputy director added that accurately counting tigers presents a significant challenge for the department. Two trap cameras equipped with special sensors will be placed on two trees facing each other at potential tiger locations.

He said these cameras capture images of wildlife movement, which are then analysed based on physical characteristics and stripes to identify and estimate the tiger population.

Recently released data from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) indicated that the number of tigers in PTR exceeds 71.

Forest officials said that the tiger population in PTR was just 24 in 2014, but this figure has increased significantly to over 71 by 2022.

This growth has earned Pilibhit Tiger Reserve the T2X Award and several other international accolades.

The PTR is one of the 50 Project Tiger reserves in India.

It is home to several rare and endangered species, including the Bengal tiger, Indian leopard, swamp deer, Hispid hare, and Bengal florican.

Located on the India-Nepal border, the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve spans across the districts of

Pilibhit and Shahjahanpur in Uttar Pradesh. The reserve is part of the Terai Arc Landscape within the Upper Gangetic Plains biogeographical province.

Several rivers originate within the reserve, including the Chuka, Mala, and Khannaut rivers. The Sharda River forms the north-eastern boundary of the reserve, while the Ghaghra River flows along its southwestern edge.

Indians are searching for are Troms in Norway, Tashkent in Uzbekistan, and al-Ula in Saudi Arabia, highlighting that Indian travellers are seeking unforgettable and diverse experiences in newer destinations,” read the report with the sample size of 1,000 Indian respondents.

It has also come out with another list, called “Best Value Destinations category”, which names the cities that give the most value for their money and have seen the biggest airfare price drop from India over the last year.

“So, topping the list is Almaty, Kazakhstan for which the flight prices have fallen by a little less than half (44 per cent), followed closely by Jakarta in Indonesia (27 per cent), Singapore and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia both 19 per cent each,” it said.

According to the report, cost is an important consideration for value-driven Indians, with the cost of hotels (65 per cent),

flights (62 per cent), and food and drinks (54 per cent) being important factors in the deci-

sion-making process.

“Indian travellers are not just exploring new destinations; they’re seeking meaningful and collective travel experiences. With 86 per cent budgeting to spend the same or more on flights and 80 per cent on accommodations in 2025, their desire to explore is stronger than ever.”

“Cost remains a crucial factor in decision-making as travellers choose their next adventure,” said Mohit Joshi, Skyscanner’s travel and destinations expert.

The data from the report also reveals an exciting shift towards shared experiences and immersive adventures — inviting travellers to discover the world together in new and inspiring ways.

While 44 per cent -- those aged between 25 to 34 -- are excited to attend live sports events, eager to support their favourite teams alongside fellow fans; 47 per cent are on the lookout for immersive art experiences that invite active participation.

The other buzzing travel trends that are inspiring Indian travellers to embark on adventures in 2025 are ‘Gami-Vacation’ and ‘Astro-adventures’.

So, as per the report, gaming is a huge hit with Gen Z, with nearly two-thirds (62 per cent) saying it’s their go-to leisure activity and 57 per cent feeling inspired to book a trip based on a location featured in a video game.

Similarly, the alluring night skies and cosmic wonders are drawing Indian travellers with a captivating 53 per cent expressing their desire to sleep under the Milky Way and 56 per cent keen on embracing night photography to capture the beauty of the cosmos

flights (62 per cent), and food and drinks (54 per cent) being important factors in the deci-

Parvati Arga bird sanctuary set to attract visitors

Kirti Vardhan Singh, Union Minister of State for Forest, Environment and Climate Change, and local Lok Sabha MP, said developing this area could serve as an additional attraction for pilgrims visiting yodhya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gonda (UP), Oct 23: Efforts are underway to attract domestic and international pilgrims visiting Ayodhya to bordering Gonda district by developing the Tikri forest and the Parvati Arga bird sanctuary as eco tourism destinations.

Kirti Vardhan Singh, Union Minister of State for Forest, Environment and Climate Change, and local Lok Sabha MP, said developing this area could serve as an additional attraction for pilgrims visiting Ayodhya.

“The Parvati Arga bird sanctuary, covering an area of 1,084 hectares, is part of the Ramsar project. This sanctuary provides refuge to Siberian birds and is

Arunachal CM inaugurates heritage museum

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, Oct 23: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu Wednesday inaugurated the Kameng Culture and Heritage Museum at Nyukmadung in West Kameng district.

Speaking at the event, Khandu cited references from ancient texts like the ‘Kalika Purana’ and the ‘Mahabharata’ and underscored the region’s profound cultural, historical, and religious significance, describing the Kameng Museum as an essential institution to preserve the past while inspiring future generations. Defence PRO Lt Col Mahendra Rawat said in a statement.

He praised the Indian Army for helping in establishing the museum and also border area development through Sabhavana projects in various parts of the state.

Khandu said the museum is a reflection of the army’s commitment to transform border areas through initiatives such as model villages, border tourism, and enhancing infrastructure and aligning with the government’s Vibrant Village programme.

The chief minister cited the inauguration of the museum as

bustling with over three dozen local species, along with migratory birds from Tibet, China, Europe, and Siberia during the winter season,” he noted.

Singh said foreign birds begin arriving in the second half of October and stay for nearly four months before returning home. Some of these birds travel over 5,000 km.

Notable migratory species include Eurasian coots, mallards, greylag geese, northern pintails, northern shovellers, cotton teals, red-crested pochards, and gadwalls, he said.

The Parvati Arga lakes were declared a bird sanctuary by the government in 1990.

The minister also mentioned that the Tikri forest area, spanning approximately 7,500 hectares and rich in valuable trees like sal and teak, is being developed as an eco tourism destination. Necessary budget allocations for this initiative will be made soon. “Ayodhya’s proximity makes these projects a unique attraction for pilgrims visiting Lord Shri Ram’s temple. Visitors will enjoy nature along with their spiritual journey,” Singh added.

Every year, thousands of devotees visit the birthplace of Bhagwan Ghanshyam, the

ECOTOURISM BOOST



founder of the Swami Narayan sect, located in Chapia village within the district, with a significant number of them from Gujarat.

District administration officials said the birthplace of Maharishi Patanjali, ‘Kondar’, is also being developed as a tourist site.

A grand temple is under construction in the village near Wazirganj on the Gonda-Ayodhya highway. A six-and-a-half-foot-long, two-ton statue of Maharishi

Patanjali in a seated posture, made from red granite, has been transported from Jaipur and will be installed in the temple soon.

According to officials, a two-lane road is also being constructed from the highway to the birthplace. Maharishi Patanjali’s birthplace is expected to attract tourists on an international level.

Additionally, development work is rapidly progressing at the birthplace of Goswami Tulsidas,

Gonda district has immense tourism potential due to the birthplaces and contributions of several great personalities, along with its proximity to Ayodhya. The district administration, in collaboration with the Tourism department, is working diligently in this direction

NEHA SHARMA | DISTRICT MAGISTRATE

the author of Ramcharitmanas, located near Sukarkhet on the banks of the Sarayu River.

“Gonda district has immense tourism potential due to the birthplaces and contributions of several great personalities, along with its proximity to Ayodhya. The district administration, in collaboration with the Tourism department, is working diligently in this direction,” District Magistrate Neha Sharma said.

She said efforts have begun to develop Parvati Arga lake and Tikri forest as tourist destinations. Gonda will soon establish its distinct presence on the tourism map.

Asiatic golden cat spotted in Manas National Park

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Oct 23: Wildlife experts have reconfirmed the existence of Asiatic golden cat, a rare medium-sized felid, in Assam’s Manas National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has put the animal (Catopuma temminckii), protected under Scheduled-I of India’s Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, as ‘Near Threatened’ in its Red List.

Environment and Forest Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary said that the presence of the species has been reconfirmed with camera trap captures, as highlighted in the latest IUCN newsletter CATnews.

A team of officials from the Assam Forest Department, conservationists from the biodiversity conservation organisation ‘Aaranyak’ and from other parts of the country, have reconfirmed the existence of the cat in Manas National Park.

This cat is known to occur across a wide range of habitats, including dry deciduous forests, subtropical evergreen forests, tropical rainforests, temperate and sub-alpine forests, and at elevations ranging from 0 m to 3,738 m.

“Despite the species expected to occur in the region based on a direct sighting made in 2007, an intensive annual systematic camera trapping effort of 39,700 trap days over eight years between 2011 and 2018 yielded no records.”



“Nevertheless, two photographic captures of the species were made in December 2019 and January 2021, reconfirming its presence in the park,” the project’s lead scientist M Firoz Ahmed said in the CATnews article.

Besides Ahmed, senior conservation biologist Dr Dipankar Lahkar along with seven other conservationists contributed to the research findings.

Shillong most popular destination for Indian travellers

THE REPORT HIGHLIGHTS A SHIFT TOWARDS EXPLORING NEW DESTINATIONS WITH MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES, EMPHASIZING COST-EFFECTIVE TRAVELS AND A RISE IN BOOKINGS FOR MAJOR EVENTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: Meghalaya’s capital Shillong pips Azerbaijan’s historic capital city Baku as the most popular destination for Indian travellers in 2025, reveals the new ‘Travel Trends Report’ by global travel app Skyscanner.

Shillong is the only Indian city to feature in the list as part of the annual report, released Wednesday.

The report, which offers insights into the pulse of Indian travellers in the coming year, claimed that 66 per cent of Indians plan to “travel more” in the coming year.

Known as the Scotland of the East, Shillong in India sits on top among the most buzzing destinations followed by Baku, Azerbaijan and Langkawi, Malaysia known for their diverse experiences and the perfect blend of relaxation and adventure.

“Other destinations that



Indians are searching for are Troms in Norway, Tashkent in Uzbekistan, and al-Ula in Saudi Arabia, highlighting that Indian travellers are seeking unforgettable and diverse experiences in newer destinations,” read the report with the sample size of 1,000 Indian respondents.

It has also come out with another list, called “Best Value Destinations category”, which names the cities that give the most value for their money and have seen the biggest airfare price drop from India over the last year.

“So, topping the list is Almaty, Kazakhstan for which the flight prices have fallen by a little less than half (44 per cent), followed closely by Jakarta in Indonesia (27 per cent), Singapore and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia both 19 per cent each,” it said.

According to the report, cost is an important consideration for value-driven Indians, with the cost of hotels (65 per cent),

flights (62 per cent), and food and drinks (54 per cent) being important factors in the decision-making process.

“Indian travellers are not just exploring new destinations; they’re seeking meaningful and collective travel experiences. With 86 per cent budgeting to spend the same or more on flights and 80 per cent on accommodations in 2025, their desire to explore is stronger than ever.”

“Cost remains a crucial factor in decision-making as travellers choose their next adventure,” said Mohit Joshi, Skyscanner’s travel and destinations expert.

The data from the report also reveals an exciting shift towards shared experiences and immersive adventures — inviting travellers to discover the world together in new and inspiring ways.

While 44 per cent -- those aged between 25 to 34 -- are excited to attend live sports events, eager to support their favourite teams alongside fellow fans; 47 per cent are on the lookout for immersive art experiences that invite active participation.

The other buzzing travel trends that are inspiring Indian travellers to embark on adventures in 2025 are ‘Gami-Vacation’ and ‘Astro-adventures’.

So, as per the report, gaming is a huge hit with Gen Z, with nearly two-thirds (62 per cent) saying it’s their go-to leisure activity and 57 per cent feeling inspired to book a trip based on a location featured in a video game.

Similarly, the alluring night skies and cosmic wonders are drawing Indian travellers with a captivating 53 per cent expressing their desire to sleep under the Milky Way and 56 per cent keen on embracing night photography to capture the beauty of the cosmos

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Government of Odisha
Office of the Superintending Engineer,
Rural Works Division-II, Dhenkanal
Kamakhyanager
E-Mail : rw.kamakhyanager@yahoo.co.in
e-procurement Notice No. 10 / Building Work / 2024-25

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Name of the work | : Building Work |
| 2 | Total No. of Works | : 01 (One) No. |
| 3 | Tender Cost | : Rs. 46.69 lakh (approx) |
| 4 | Class of Contractor | : 'B' Class |
| 5 | Period of Completion | : 6 calendar months |
| 6 | Availability of Tender online for bidding | : 29.10.2024 at 11.00 A.M. to 11.11.2024 up to 5.00 P.M. |
| 7 | Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification | : 08.11.2024 upto 4.00 P.M. |
| 8 | Date & Time of opening of Bid | : 12.11.2024 at 11.00 A.M. |

Other Details can be seen from the website <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
R.W. Division-II, Dhenkanal
Kamakhyanager
OIPR-25094/11/0013/2425

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, PADAMPUR
1st Corrigendum to
Tender Call notice No. Online 03 of 2024-25
Due to some administrative reasons the following changes have been made vide tender call notice no. Online 03 of 2024-25

| Sl. No. | Name of the Work | As per TCN estimated cost put to tender (Rupees in lakhs) | As per 1st corrigendum Approx. estimated cost put to tender (Rupees in lakhs) | E.M.D. required (in Rs.) as per TCN | E.M.D. required (in Rs.) as per 1st Corrigendum | Time of Completion as per the TCN | Time of Completion as per the 1st Corrigendum |
|---------|---|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Construction of sub-centre building at Patharia of Bijepur Block | 37.22 | 38.20 | 37220/- | 38200/- | Six Calendar Months | Nine Calendar Months |
| 2 | Construction of sub-centre building at Sanbansen of Bijepur Block | 37.22 | 38.20 | 37220/- | 38200/- | Six Calendar Months | Nine Calendar Months |

All other terms and conditions remains unchanged.
OIPR-25069/11/0009/2425

Sd./- Superintending Engineer,
Rural Works Division, Padampur

EAST COAST RAILWAY

(1) Tender Notice No.SBP-ELECT-2024-T222

NAME OF WORK : ELECTRICAL WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH UPGRADEATION / MODERNISATION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AT BARGARH ROAD, DUNGRIPLA BALANGIR & HIRAKUD GOODS SHED (CENTRAL SECTION) OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 1,58,11,404.56, EMD: ₹ 2,29,100/-

(2) Tender Notice No.SBP-ELECT-2024-T223

NAME OF WORK : ELECTRICAL WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH UPGRADEATION / MODERNISATION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AT KOMAKHAN, JUNAGARH ROAD, KANTABANJI & KHARIAR ROAD GOODS SHED (WEST SECTION) OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 1,58,89,211.88, EMD: ₹ 2,29,500/-

(3) Tender Notice No.SBP-ELECT-2024-T224

NAME OF WORK : ELECTRICAL WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH UPGRADEATION / MODERNISATION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AT BELSONDAGOODS SHED OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 39,97,720.94, EMD: ₹ 80,000/-

Completion Period of the Work : 6 (Six) Months from the date of issue of LOA (for all SI.Nos.)

Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1530 hrs. of 18.11.2024 (for all the Tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm’s letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website fifteen (15) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G)/ PR-652/P/24-25 Sambalpur

national

of the day quote

The government is committed to ensuring optimal patient-to-nurse ratios, with a 1:1 ratio in ICUs, 1:2 in labour rooms and 1:4 in antenatal general wards



SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL PRADESH CM

This is also an insult to the lakhs of voters who have elected him and sent him to Parliament. This kind of insult cannot be accepted in a democratic system. I want to ask all the leaders of the Congress party and the INDI alliance what their stance is on this matter



GAENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT | UNION MINISTER

Delhi's air quality has already reached alarming levels and the government has implemented the Winter Action Plan from September 25, 2024, to combat pollution. However, in case the situation worsens, we are exploring alternative solutions for immediate relief



GOPAL RAI | ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

IIT student hangs self in hostel room

New Delhi: A 21-year-old IIT Delhi student allegedly committed suicide by hanging from a ceiling fan in his hostel room, police said Wednesday. They said they have found no suicide note from the room but Kumar Yash, an MSc second year student from Jharkhand's Deoghar, was under psychiatric treatment and had visited the IIT Hospital Tuesday as well. "The room was closed from inside but his friend and IIT staff broke the window to enter his room," a senior police officer said.

231 gm of heroin seized, 3 arrested

Aizawl: Three persons, including a woman, have been arrested in separate incidents for possessing a total of 231 gm of heroin in Mizoram, an official release said Wednesday. Officials of the Exercise and Narcotics Department, aided by Young Mizo Association (YMA) volunteers, seized 59 gm of heroin from Rangvumal area on the outskirts of Aizawl Tuesday, the release said, adding two persons were arrested in connection with the seizure. The arrested persons were identified as Lalrinsangzuali (41), a resident of Rangvumal, and Lalchhanhima (38) of Aizawl's Vaivakawn locality, it said.

School bus catches fire

Shivpuri (MP): In a narrow escape from a potential disaster, an alert school bus driver swiftly evacuated 12 students and staff from the moving vehicle that caught fire in Shivpuri city of Madhya Pradesh Wednesday afternoon. The incident occurred on Circular Road, but fortunately, nobody was injured, a police official said. Bus driver Gotu Dhakad was transporting students from Geeta Public School when he noticed smoke billowing from the engine.

Students detained

New Delhi: Delhi Police detained around half a dozen students who gathered at Jamia Millia Islamia University for Diwali celebrations Wednesday, a day after a scuffle broke out between two groups of students during a similar event. A senior police official stated the detentions were made because the university administration, in view of the last night's scuffle, had not granted permission for holding another Diwali event this evening.

SC SETS ASIDE NCLAT ORDER AGAINST BYJU'S

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: In a major setback to Byju's, the Supreme Court Wednesday set aside the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal's (NCLAT) verdict that had halted the insolvency proceedings against the embattled ed-tech firm and held US creditor firm Glas Trust Company LLC would have the locus to intervene.

The top court verdict also came as a jolt for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) as it annulled the NCLAT's order approving Rs 158.9 crore dues settlement of Byju's with the cricket board.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra directed the cricket board to deposit the settlement amount of ₹158.9 crore with the committee of creditors (CoC).

As a result of the verdict, now Byju Raveendran and his brother Riju Raveendran will again lose control over "Think and Learn Pvt Ltd" or Byju's -- a company engaged in providing online educational services and the insolvency resolution



professional (IRP) will be back at the helm. The bench held the US firm, being the creditor, had the locus to intervene in matters relating to the corporate insolvency proceedings at NCLT, NCLAT and in the apex court as an affected party.

Writing a 61-page judgement on the plea of the US firm against the NCLAT verdict, the CJI, on the future course of action, said, "Parties are at liberty to invoke their remedies, to seek a withdrawal or settlement of claims, in compliance with the legal framework governing the withdrawal of CIRP (corporate insolvency resolution process)."

ED raids former TN minister

Chennai: The Enforcement Directorate Wednesday raided premises linked to former AIADMK minister and serving MLA R Vaithiyalingam and some others as part of a money laundering case investigation, official sources said. The raids are being undertaken in four cities of Tamil Nadu, including in the Ekkattuthangal area of Chennai and the minister's house in Orathanadu taluk of Thanjavur district, under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). Supporters of the 69-year-old politician, who represents the Orathanadu seat in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, stood outside his house while the searches were being carried out by the federal agency along with a security team of the CRPF.

Over 77% kids lack WHO-suggested diversity in diet: Study

THE STATES OF UTTAR PRADESH, RAJASTHAN, GUJARAT, MAHARASHTRA AND MADHYA PRADESH REPORTED THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF INADEQUATE DIVERSITY IN CHILDREN'S DIETS -- ALL ABOVE 80 PER CENT -- WHILE SIKKIM AND MEGHALAYA WERE THE ONLY TWO TO REPORT AN UNDER-50 PER CENT PREVALENCE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: About 77 per cent of children in India aged 6-23 months lack diversity in diet as suggested by the WHO, with the country's central region showing the highest prevalence of minimum dietary failure, a study has found.

The states of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh reported the highest levels of inadequate diversity in children's diets -- all above 80 per cent -- while Sikkim and Meghalaya were the only two to report an under-50 per cent prevalence.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) suggests using the Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDD) score to evaluate

SC holds states have power to regulate industrial alcohol

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: The Supreme Court Wednesday held the states have regulatory power over production, manufacture and supply of industrial alcohol.

In a 8:1 majority ruling, the top court held that the phrase "intoxicating liquor" in Entry 8 of the State List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution would include industrial alcohol within its ambit. The majority bench comprised Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud and Justices Hrishikesh Roy, Abhay S Oka, J B Pardiwala, Manoj Misra, Ujjal Bhuyan, Satish Chandra Sharma and Augustine George Masih, Justice B V Nagarathna, however, dissented and held states did not have the legislative competence to regulate industrial alcohol or denatured spirit. The apex court's majority verdict overturned its 1990 seven-judge bench judgment in Synthetics & Chemicals Ltd v State of Uttar Pradesh holding that Centre had the regulatory power over the production of industrial alcohol.

Ethyl alcohol (which has 95 per cent ethanol) is an industrial form of alcohol and unfit for human consumption. The CJI, who authored the majority verdict, also writing on behalf of the



The apex court's majority verdict overturned its 1990 seven-judge bench judgment in Synthetics & Chemicals Ltd. v. State of Uttar Pradesh holding that Centre had the regulatory power over the production of industrial alcohol

seven judges, said Entry 8 sought to regulate everything from "raw materials to production of intoxicating liquor".

"Parliament cannot occupy the field of the entire industry merely by issuing a declaration under Entry 52 of List I. The State Legislature's competence under Entry 24 of List II is denuded only to the extent of the field covered by the law of Parliament under Entry 52 of List I," the bench said.

Parliament does not have the legislative competence to enact a law taking control of the industry of intoxicating liquor, it added. The majority judgment said the phrase "intoxicating liquor" in Entry 8 included all alcoholic liquids which could harm public health. While Entry 8 in

Siddique Murder Case: Cops Make 11th Arrest

In a breakthrough in NCP politician Baba Siddique's murder case, police arrested a Haryana native, suspected to be an important link between a shooter and the mastermind of the conspiracy, an official said Wednesday. The latest arrest took the number of persons in the custody of Mumbai Police to 11



Devotees gather during the inauguration of 63-foot tall Ramanjaneya statue, at Ramamandir Temple, Rajajinagar in Bangalore, Karnataka PTI PHOTO

Maha: Cong, NCP & UBT to fight on 85 seats each



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 23: After days of stalemate, Maha Vikas Aghadi of Congress, NCP (SP), and Shiv Sena (UBT) Wednesday announced contesting 85 seats each in Maharashtra Assembly elections even as deliberations to seal a final pact are still underway.

The three allies are discussing the sharing of the remaining 33 seats out of the total 288 among themselves and smaller parties.

Addressing a press conference here in the evening, Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut said consensus has been reached on 270 out of a total of 288 seats for the November 20 elections. "We will include Samajwadi Party, PWP, CPI(M), CPI, and AAP. Discussions are still on for the remaining seats. We have amicably arrived at a con-

sensus on 270 seats. MVA stands united to defeat the Mahayuti government," Raut said. State Congress chief Nana Patole said the remaining seats will be left for smaller parties. Speaking separately to reporters, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Anil Desai explained the division of seats so far.

"The three MVA constituents have arrived at a consensus on 85 seats each (totalling 255). Among the remaining 33 constituencies, the allies are discussing 18 seats among themselves, while the rest segments (15) will be allocated to smaller parties," Desai added.

The seat-sharing talks among Opposition members dragged on for weeks due to a bitter dispute between Sena (UBT) and Congress on certain seats, especially in the Vidarbha region and Mumbai.

Serious questions remain: Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: Days after India and China firm up an agreement on patrolling by their militaries along the LAC in eastern Ladakh, the Congress Wednesday said it expects that the disengagement will restore the status quo ante as it existed in March 2020 and asked the government to take the people of India into confidence on the matter.

The Opposition party's assertion comes ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping's bilateral talks on the margins of the BRICS summit in Russia. Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said many questions remain about the Modi government's announcement that an agreement has been reached with China on patrolling arrange-



ments along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). "The Foreign Secretary has said that this is 'leading to disengagement and eventually a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020'. We hope that India's worst foreign policy setback in decades is being honourably resolved," he said in a statement. "We expect that the disengagement will restore the status quo ante as it existed in March 2020," he said. Ramesh alleged

Priyanka files nomination

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wayanad (Kerala), Oct 23: Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra Wednesday filed the nomination for her maiden electoral battle from Wayanad for the Lok Sabha bypoll as she took out a massive roadshow in Kalpetta and thanked the people of the Hill district for supporting her brother Rahul Gandhi when "the whole world had turned its back" on him.



Accompanied by her mother and Congress Parliamentary party chairperson Sonia Gandhi, brother Rahul, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge among others, Priyanka filed her nomination for the November 13 bypoll at the collectorate here.

the quality of a child's diet -- it is considered to be diverse if it contains five or more food groups, including breastmilk, eggs, legumes and nuts, and fruits and vegetables.

Analysing National Family and Health Survey data from 2019-21 (NFHS-5), researchers, including those from the National Institute of Health and Family Welfare, found that the country's overall rate of minimum dietary diversity failure has dropped from 87.4 per cent, which was calculated using data from 2005-06 (NFHS-3).

However, "our study shows that the prevalence of minimum dietary diversity failure remains high (above 75 per cent) in India," the authors wrote in the study published in the National Medical



Journal of India.

The team also looked at children's dietary habits across various food groups like proteins and

vitamins, comparing data from 2019-21 with that from 2005-06.

The consumption of eggs registered an "impressive" rise,

from around 5 per cent in NFHS-3 to over 17 per cent in NFHS-5 while that of legumes and nuts increased from nearly 14 per cent during 2005-06 to over 17 per cent during 2019-21.

"The consumption of vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables increased by 7.3 percentage points, whereas the consumption of fruits and vegetables increased by 13 percentage points over the same time. For flesh foods, the consumption increased by 4 percentage points," the authors wrote.

However, the consumption of breastmilk and dairy products was found to drop from 87 per cent in NFHS-3 to 85 per cent in NFHS-5 and 54 per cent to 52 per cent, respectively.

The authors also found that the children of illiterate and rural-

residing mothers having no exposure to mass media, those born first and not exposed to counselling and health check-ups at Anganwadi or Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) centres were more likely to be consuming diets deficient in diversity.

Anaemic children and those having a low birth weight were also found to have a higher chance of consuming a non-diverse diet. To tackle the issue of inadequate diversity in children's diets, the authors called for a holistic approach from the government, including an improved public distribution system, intensified ICDS programme, use of social media and nutrition counselling through local self-governance.



It's clear that the BJP hates Delhi and is using Haryana and UP to attack Delhi
ATISHI | DELHI CM

OMAR ABDULLAH MEETS SHAH

The newly elected Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Omar Abdullah, met Union Home Minister Amit Shah Wednesday and discussed issues related to the Union Territory including early restoration of statehood



of the day quote

Efforts are now on to complete the construction of the Sabari guest house. At Nilakkal, facilities to park over 2000 vehicles are now being prepared
PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CM

The state will play a pivotal role in India's journey toward achieving a USD 5 trillion economy while moving swiftly towards becoming the nation's top economic powerhouse shortly
YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

There is a long list of scams and corruption associated with this dishonest government. Large sums of money have been recovered from the houses of JMM ministers while ordinary citizens suffered from rising costs and dwindling resources
SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | UNION MINISTER

X POST OF THE DAY

We have heard about fake judges, fake govt officers, fake tolls, duplicate Gold, Silver, bonds, medicines, food etc. Have we ever heard about Duplicate Branch of SBI? This is the height of pro max forgery in India.
@nkk_123

SHORT TAKES

Jan Suraaj replaces two candidates

Patna: Jan Suraaj, led by political strategist Prashant Kishor, has made significant changes to its candidates for the upcoming Bihar bypolls. The party replaced its candidates for the Tarari and Belagnj Assembly seats due to unforeseen circumstances Tuesday.

Rajasthan resident doctors end strike

Jaipur: Resident doctors in Rajasthan announced to call off their strike Wednesday evening. The doctors had been protesting since Saturday night over their unmet demands, including stipend hike and enhanced security measures at the workplace. The doctors have decided to end the strike in view of the recent decision of the Rajasthan High Court.

Court records KTR's statement

Hyderabad: Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) working president KT Rama Rao Wednesday recorded his statement in a ₹100 crore defamation case filed by him against Telangana Forest and Environment Minister Konda Surekha. In his statement before the Special Judicial Magistrate of First Class for Excise, Rama Rao said the minister's remarks were highly offensive and were aimed at tarnishing his reputation.

Objectionable video on Mayawati; 1 held

Saharanpur (UP): A 27-year-old man was arrested here for allegedly posting a mischievous video of himself performing Karwa Chauth rituals in front of a poster of Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati, police said Wednesday. In the purported video shared on the occasion of Karwa Chauth, the man is seen looking at the former Chief Minister's poster through a sieve, blowing a kiss and offering it water.

POLLUTION CRISIS

'Toothless' laws: SC slams Centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: The Supreme Court Wednesday pulled up the Centre for making the environment protection law "toothless," even as it asserted that there is a fundamental right for every citizen of India to live in a pollution free environment.

A bench of Justices Justices Abhay S Oka, Ahsanuddin Amanullah, and Augustine George Masih also pulled up the Punjab and Haryana governments for not implementing court orders in cases of stubble burning.

"Time has come to remind us to the Government of India and state governments that there is a fundamental right of every citizen of India to live in a pollution free environment," the bench said. "These are not the matters of implementing the existing laws but these are matters of blatant violation of fundamental rights guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India," it added. It noted that in Punjab more than 1,000 and in Haryana more than 400 cases of stubble burning have been reported till now.

The court said it is not only a question of implementing the orders of the commission (Commission for Air Quality Management) and taking action for breaches of law, the governments must also address the ques-



"Time has come to remind us to the Government of India and state governments that there is a fundamental right of every citizen of India to live in a pollution free environment," the bench said

tion how they are going to protect the lives of citizens and allow them to live with dignity and in a pollution-free environment.

"Therefore, it is high time that the governments and all other authorities note that this litigation is not an adversarial litigation and this litigation is to only ensure that laws related to the environment are strictly complied with, so that the constitutional rights of the citizens are upheld," the bench said.

The top court was hearing a plea filed by MC Mehta in 1985 seeking directions to curb air

pollution in the national capital and adjoining areas.

The bench said in matters of environment protection, the court needs to pass harsh orders, which many people may not like it. It observed that the Centre amended section 15 of the Environment Protection Act, substituting it with a provision relating to punitive action that diluted the rigours of the environmental law. It said the amended provision came into force April 1, 2024 but it has been rendered completely ineffective due to "inaction" on part of the

Apex court defers marital rape hearing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, who is demitting office November 10, Wednesday deferred by four weeks hearing on pleas challenging the immunity granted to husbands in cases of marital rape.

At the outset, a bench comprising the CJI and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, which commenced final hearing October 17 on the pleas, asked lawyers about the time they would be needing individually to argue.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for a party, said he will take at least a day to complete his submissions as he did not want to stifle the elaborate pleadings needed to be advanced in an important matter like this. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, senior advocates Rakesh Dwivedi, who represents Maharashtra, and Indira Jaising, representing a woman, also said they would need a day each to argue.



A car moves through waterlogged Delhi-Gurugram Expressway following heavy rainfall, at Narsinghpur in Gurugram PTI PHOTO

BJP MPs write to LS Speaker seeking Kalyan's suspension

NEW DELHI: Three BJP MPs have written to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla demanding the filing of an FIR against TMC member Kalyan Banerjee and his immediate suspension from the House pending investigation for what they called "unprecedented violence" during a meeting of the joint parliamentary panel on the Waqf Bill. The letter signed by Nishikant Dubey, Aparajita Sarangi and Abhijit Gangopadhyay also sought an investigation into the matter by the Lok Sabha Ethics Committee to consider rescinding Banerjee's membership from the Lower House. Amid a heated exchange of words with Gangopadhyay during the meeting Tuesday, Banerjee smashed a glass bottle and allegedly threw it towards the panel's chairperson Jagdambika Pal.

Bangalore building collapse: Seven more bodies found

BENGALURU: Seven more bodies were recovered during search and rescue operation after an under-construction building collapsed at Babusapalya here, taking the death toll to eight, police said Wednesday. Teams from the fire and emergency department, National Disaster Response Force and State Disaster Response Force have been pressed into rescue operations since the incident occurred during heavy downpour Tuesday, they said. "Bhuvan Reddy, son of Muniraja Reddy under whose name the building is being constructed and the contractor Muniyappa who was building it have been taken into custody," a senior police official said. "Permission was only for construction of a four-storey building but seven floors were being constructed," he said. One body was recovered by the rescue team Tuesday.

J'khand polls: JMM releases second list

RANCHI: The JMM Wednesday released its second list of candidates for the upcoming Jharkhand Assembly polls, fielding Rajya Sabha MP Mahua Maji from Ranchi. Maji, who was elected unopposed to the Rajya Sabha in June 2022, previously served as the chairperson of the Jharkhand State Commission for Women and was the former president of the JMM's women's wing. She had contested the Ranchi assembly seat unsuccessfully in 2014 and 2019. NDA constituent BJP fielded incumbent legislator CP Singh from Ranchi.

SC: Awareness is key to success of functioning of legal aid mechanism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: Awareness is the key to the success of the functioning of legal aid mechanism, the Supreme Court said Wednesday while directing that addresses and phone numbers of the nearest legal aid office should be displayed in public places.

A bench of Justices B R Gavai and K V Viswanathan passed a slew of directions on the aspect of access to free legal aid for prison inmates. It said the high courts may consider the feasibility of issuing a "practice direction" to the effect that all the courts, while furnishing the copy of the judgment of conviction or reversal of acquittal and dismissal of bail pleas, may append a cover sheet to the verdict informing the convict about the availability of free legal aid facilities to pursue higher remedies.

The bench said the high courts may on their webpage carry information about the legal aid facilities available in the state. It also directed that the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), in cooperation with the state and district legal services authorities, will ensure that the standard operating procedure for access to legal aid services to prisoners and the functioning of prison legal aid clinics (PLACs) are operated efficiently in practice.

"A robust mechanism should be put in place and periodically updated to ensure that the various beneficial schemes promoted by the legal services authorities reach the nook and corner of the nation and particularly, to those whose grievances it has set out to address," it said.

Calling husband hijda is cruelty, HC upholds divorce

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Oct 23: The Punjab and Haryana High Court has upheld the divorce granted by a family court in favour of a man, saying that calling a husband "hijda" (eunuch) is an act of mental cruelty.

The division bench of justice Sudhir Singh and justice Jasjit Singh Bedi was hearing a woman's plea against the divorce granted in favour of her husband by a family court in July this year.

"If the findings recorded by the family court are examined in the light of the judgments of the Supreme Court, it comes out that the acts and conduct of the appellant-wife amount to cruelty," the high court bench said. "Firstly, terming the respondent-husband as hijda and calling his mother to have given birth to an eunuch, is an act of mental cruelty," it added.

"...Considering the overall acts and conduct of the appellant-



wife and further considering that the parties had been living separately for the last six years, it was rightly found by the learned family court that the marriage between the parties has ruptured beyond repair and it has become a dead wood," the order stated.

The couple got married in December 2017. The husband, who had initiated divorce proceedings, had claimed that his wife was a

"late riser". She would ask his mother to send her lunch in the bedroom on the first floor and would call her upstairs 4-5 times a day, ignoring that his mother was suffering from arthritis.

The man alleged that his wife was addicted to watching porn and used to taunt him for not "being physically fit" and wanted to marry some other person, as per the man's plea

The man alleged that his wife was addicted to watching porn and used to taunt him for not "being physically fit" and wanted to marry some other person, as per the man's plea

The woman had denied the allegations and claimed that her husband could not produce any evidence to prove that she used to watch porn sites

She even accused her in-laws of administering intoxicating medicines to her

claimed that her husband could not produce any evidence to prove that she used to watch porn sites. She even accused her in-laws of administering intoxicating medicines to her.

"They (in-laws) put a 'tabiz' from a 'tantrik' on my neck besides administering intoxicated water so that they could have control over me," she had submitted. The counsel appearing for the woman argued that the family court had not taken into consideration that it was the

husband and his family who committed cruelty against her.

The man's mother deposed in her testimony that the wife used to call her son a 'hijda', said the order. On the other hand, the allegations of administering intoxicants to the wife and placing her under the influence of a 'tantrik' could not be substantiated by the wife, it added.

"It is well settled that in order to constitute a cruelty, the party alleging the same must prove on record that the behaviour of the party complained against, is or has been as such that it has made it impossible for the said party to live in the company of the party complained against," the order stated.

"Indisputably, as noticed above, the parties have been living separately for the last six years. In the absence of any resumption of matrimonial obligation and cohabitation between the parties for a long period, there is no possibility of their reunion," it said.

international



Every international meeting I attend, they (global leaders) pull me aside, one after the other, quietly and say, Joe, he (Donald Trump) can't win
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

DINOSAUR FOSSILS FOUND IN HK

Officials in Hong Kong said Wednesday they have discovered dinosaur fossils in the city for the first time on a remote, uninhabited island that's part of a geopark



of the day quote

After we attack in Iran, they (the world) will understand in Israel and elsewhere what your (Iran) preparations have included
YOAV GALLANT | DEFENCE MINISTER, ISRAEL

We know they (European Union) want to force us into the war (in Ukraine), that they want to impose their migrants upon us and hand over our children to gender activists. We know that they've got a puppet government (in mind), the party they want to impose on us
VIKTOR ORBAN | PM, HUNGARY

We had a good, constructive discussion and, of course, as prime minister of the United Kingdom I will work with whoever the American people elect as their president in the elections, which are very close now
KEIR STARMER | PM, UK

SHORT TAKES

Attackers kill 4 at Turkish aviation site

Ankara: Four people were killed and 14 others wounded in an attack at the Turkish Aerospace Industries' headquarters Wednesday, the government said, and witnesses said they heard gunfire and a loud explosion at the site near Ankara. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said two attackers were killed in what he called a terrorist attack, adding three of the injured are in critical condition. TV broadcasters earlier showed footage of armed assailants entering the TUSAS building. "Two terrorists were neutralised in the terror attack on the TUSAS Ankara Kahramankazan site. Sadly, we have 3 martyrs and 14 wounded in the attack," Yerlikaya said, referring to the Aerospace Industries.

Greenland extends detention for Watson

Copenhagen: Anti-whaling activist Paul Watson will remain in detention in Greenland where he has been held since July while Denmark decides whether to extradite him to Japan, local police said Wednesday. US-Canadian Watson, 73, founder of the Sea Shepherd conservationist group and of the Captain Paul Watson Foundation, was apprehended by police in the Danish autonomous region when his ship docked at the port of Nuuk July 21. Japan issued an international warrant for his arrest more than a decade ago, seeking him on charges of breaking into a Japanese vessel in the Antarctic Ocean in 2010, obstructing its business and causing injury as well as property damage.

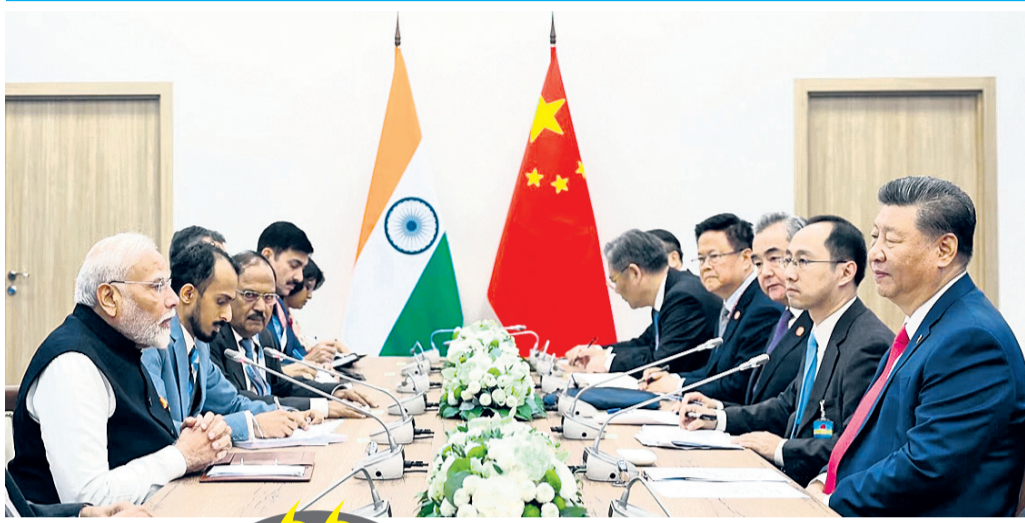
'No decision yet on Prez's removal'

Dhaka: Bangladesh's interim government Wednesday said it has not taken any decision on the removal of President Mohammed Shahabuddin from office, a day after protesters tried to storm his official residence, demanding him to quit from his post over comments that raised questions on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation. In an interview with Bangla daily Manab Zamin last week, the President said that he did not have any documentary evidence of Hasina resigning as Prime Minister before leaving the country August 5. Several hundred protesters Tuesday tried to storm Bangabhaban, the President's official residence, demanding Shahabuddin's resignation.

Modi, Xi hold bilateral talks

THE TWO LEADERS MEET ON THE SIDELINES OF THE BRICS SUMMIT IN RUSSIA

1ST FORMAL TALKS IN 5 YRS



New Delhi, Oct 23: Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed Wednesday to boost communication and cooperation between their countries and resolve conflicts to help improve ties that were damaged by a deadly military clash in 2020.

The two leaders met on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Russia for their first formal talks in five years, signalling that ties between the Asian giants have begun to recover from the diplomatic rift caused by the clash along their disputed Himalayan frontier.

India and China, two of the world's biggest economies, have maintained strong trade ties despite the military and diplomatic tensions. The rapprochement is expected to boost Chinese investment in India.

India said the two leaders have directed their officials to take further steps to stabilise all aspects of bilateral ties.

The Xi-Modi meeting in the city of Kazan came two days after New Delhi said it had reached a deal with Beijing to resolve the four-year military stand-off in the Himalayan region of Ladakh, although neither side has shared details of the pact.

The two sides should strengthen communication and cooperation, resolve conflicts

and differences, and realize each other's development dreams, Chinese state broadcaster CCTV reported Xi as telling Modi. In response, Modi told Xi that peace, stability, mutual trust and respect were crucial for relations. "We welcome the agreement on the issues that had come up over the last four years," Modi told Xi in comments aired on India's state broadcaster Doordarshan. "It should be our priority to maintain peace and tranquillity on the border. Mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual sensitivity should be the basis of our relationship," Modi said. In a post on 'X', Modi said, "India-China relations are important for the people of our

India-China relations are important for the people of our countries, and for regional and global peace and stability
NARENDRA MODI | PM, INDIA

- Two leaders meet on the sidelines of the BRICS summit
- Comes after deal to resolve stand-off over disputed frontier
- Talks expected to result in more Chinese investment into India

countries, and for regional and global peace and stability."

"Mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual sensitivity will guide bilateral relations," he said.

PATH TO IMPROVING TIES

Relations between the world's two most populous nations, both nuclear powers, have been strained since a clash between their troops on the largely undemarcated frontier in the west Himalayas left 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers dead in 2020.

The neighbours have added tens of thousands of troops and weapons along the icy frontier over the last four years.

Modi and Xi had not held formal bilateral talks since then, although both participated in multilateral events. Their last bilateral summit talks were held in October 2019 in the southern Indian town of Mamallapuram.

The two spoke briefly on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Bali in November 2022. They spoke again on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Johannesburg in August 2023 but released different versions of the conversation, suggesting they didn't see eye to eye.

Xi skipped the G20 summit hosted by New Delhi the following month, a decision seen as another setback to relations.

Diplomatic efforts gained momentum in recent months after the two countries' foreign ministers met in July and agreed to

Boost to local currency

BRICS nations Wednesday agreed to strengthen trade and financial settlement in local currencies, study feasibility of an independent cross-border settlement and depositary infrastructure, and a BRICS reinsurance company. The leaders also agreed to jointly develop the New Development Bank into a new type of multilateral development bank (MDB) in the 21st century and supported further expansion of the BRICS-led bank's membership. In the declaration issued after the 16th BRICS Summit here, the leaders reiterated their commitment to enhancing financial cooperation within BRICS. "We recognise the widespread benefits of faster, low cost, more efficient, transparent, safe and inclusive cross-border payment instruments built upon the principle of minimizing trade barriers and non-discriminatory access. "We welcome the use of local currencies in financial transactions between BRICS countries and their trading partners," it said. The BRICS leaders encouraged strengthening of correspondent banking networks within BRICS and enabling settlements in local currencies in line with BRICS Cross-Border Payments Initiative (BCBPI), which is voluntary and non-binding.

step up talks to ease the border tensions.

India had made improving the wider political and damaged business ties contingent upon finding a solution to the border stand-off. New Delhi had increased the scrutiny of investments coming from China, blocked direct flights between the two countries and had practically barred issuing any visas to Chinese nationals since the Ladakh clashes.

Pak court grants bail to Khan's wife in Toshakhana case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Oct 23: A Pakistani high court Wednesday granted bail to Bushra Bibi, the wife of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan, in the Toshakhana corruption case involving the alleged illegal sale of state gifts, nearly nine months after she was arrested.

The Islamabad High Court judge, Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb, accepted the bail plea of the 50-year-old former first lady against a surety bond of ₹1 million.

The court's decision provides relief to Bushra, who was arrested after a court convicted and sentenced the couple to 14 years in jail in a corruption case January 31.

During the hearing, Justice Aurangzeb questioned the Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) investigative officer about the necessity of further interrogation of the former first lady. The officer confirmed that no additional investigation was required.

The Toshakhana case involves allegations of corruption against Imran Khan and his wife for receiving profit from the sale of gifts received from foreign dignitaries.

Bushra is Khan's third wife and a spiritual healer.

Meanwhile, the indictment proceedings against Khan and Bushra, scheduled Wednesday were postponed due to security concerns as the hearing set to take place at Adiala Jail was moved to Islamabad's Judicial Complex. However, security concerns continued to prevent the proceedings, and the court rescheduled the indictment for October 26.

Israel kills Nasrallah's 'successor'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beirut, Oct 23: Hashem Safieddine, the top Hezbollah official widely expected to succeed slain secretary general Hassan Nasrallah, was killed in an Israeli attack, the group said Wednesday.

Hezbollah confirmed that Safieddine was killed in an Israeli airstrike.

Safieddine, who was about 60, was killed in early October in a series of Israeli airstrikes in a southern suburb of Beirut that shook much of the Lebanese capital, part of Israel's campaign against Hezbollah.

Safieddine's death came as he was widely expected to be elected the group's next leader after the death of Hassan Nasrallah, one of its founders.



Safieddine, Nasrallah's maternal cousin, had spent years preparing for the position, but the announcement was slow in coming following the September 27 airstrike in the Beirut suburbs that killed Nasrallah, part of a series of blows dealt by Israel that had left Hezbollah in disarray. A black-turbaned cleric with

a thick gray beard who bore a strong resemblance to Nasrallah, Safieddine was known for defiant speeches in which he vowed that Hezbollah would keep fighting Israel no matter the price.

A familiar face in Lebanon and a leader with close ties to Iran, he was a member of the group's decision-making Shura Council and its Jihad Council, which acts as its military command. He also headed its Executive Council, which runs schools and social programs.

Safieddine's death comes at a delicate time for Hezbollah. In the wake of its ally Hamas' October 7 attack on Israel and Israel's ensuing offensive in Gaza, Hezbollah began firing rockets, drones and missiles at Israel and they have exchanged fire regularly since.



Boulevard World, a premier entertainment zone located in the Hittin neighbourhood of Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, that provides a journey through diverse civilizations
PTI PHOTO

NASA eases rivalry to study China's lunar treasure

THE DISCUSSIONS ON ACCESS TO THE ROCKS ARE AMONG A HANDFUL OF ONGOING EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE US AND CHINA ON SPACE ISSUES EVEN AS THE COUNTRIES CONTINUE TO COMPETE FOR MILITARY AND ECONOMIC DOMINANCE IN SPACE

REUTERS

Washington, Oct 23: NASA and Chinese officials are engaged in talks to let American scientists analyze rocks retrieved by China from the moon's far side, according to the head of the US space agency, as Washington pursues improved communication with Beijing on issues involving space.

China in June became the first country to collect rock samples from the permanently dark side of the moon's surface, a demonstration of its growing prowess in space. Chinese officials offered the material to the world's scientists for study, but publicly mentioned a US law that limits cooperation by NASA with China.

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said officials with his agency have been discussing with their Chinese counterparts the terms of Beijing's loan agreement for the moon rocks after he assured American lawmakers "a month or two ago" that the talks would not pose national security concerns.

"We are now going through further clarification" with China, Nelson told Reuters at the

International Astronautical Congress, a gathering of the world's space agencies, in Milan.

Nelson said he thinks the talks will end "positively," with China agreeing to provide access to the samples.

China's uncrewed Chang'e-6 spacecraft returned to Earth June 25 carrying the moon samples. Chang'e-6 earlier had landed on the moon's South Pole-Aitken Basin, an impact crater on the side of the moon that always faces away from Earth.

The discussions on access to the rocks are among a handful of ongoing exchanges between the United States and China on space issues even as the countries continue to compete for military and economic dominance in space. They are the world's two biggest space powers and two biggest economies.

Officials from multiple US government agencies in the past year have embarked on delicate efforts to engage with China to establish areas of coordination and communication in space, according to three US officials involved in the talks, speaking on condition of anonymity. This represents a shift in US strat-



egy toward China's space program that is aimed at avoiding miscalculations in future space operations, they said.

US-Chinese scientific cooperation has been criticized in recent years by some US lawmakers focused on the military rivalry between the two nations. In August, President Joe Biden's administration let a decades-old science and technology agreement with China expire. The two countries are now negotiating over whether to renew it.

to certify to Congress that any such talks with China would not threaten US national security.

RARE TALKS

The moon rock talks represent a rare instance of contact between the two rivals in recent years.

NASA officials exchanged data with their Chinese counterparts in 2021 to avoid possible collisions between their robotic spacecraft orbiting Mars. NASA and US State Department officials last year held brief

talks with their Chinese counterparts regarding China's first lunar sample mission, Chang'e-5, which in 2020 brought to Earth moon rocks from its sunlit side. The rocks retrieved by Chang'e-6 from the moon's far side may give researchers insight into how the lunar surface could be exploited for resources to sustain long-term astronaut missions and moon bases within

the next decade.

Roughly four US universities have applied for access to the Chang'e-6 samples, according to Nelson. Some of them are believed to have been accepted through the science review phase of China's application process, according to Clive Neal, a University of Notre Dame professor who has been involved in efforts to gain access to moon samples obtained by China.

NASA is awaiting Chinese clarification on the terms of the loan agreement, according to two people familiar with the discussions, speaking on condition of anonymity. One of the sources also said some US officials are hesitant about a potential agreement because it could weaken the US posture of toughness toward China.

Nelson said he expects NASA to have to work with the FBI for another certification on national security to Congress to enable any moon rock deliveries to US universities for research.

"When you actually start getting cooperation, you get an enduring space program," Neal said. "Science diplomacy should not be underestimated."

Diplomacy on space has long been deterred by a 2011 US law called the Wolf Amendment to ensure that American technologies stay out of the hands of China's military

of the day quote

India is one of the markets where we want to focus and want to invest, because of the growing middle class here, which is one of the biggest in the world

DEEPAK RAINA | GENERAL MANAGER, AMIT GPS & NAVIGATION

We estimate that Uber Moto and Uber Auto will support ₹360 billion of economic activity (exchange of money between the customer and rider through the platform) in India in 2024

PRABHUJEE SINGH | PRESIDENT (SOUTH ASIA), UBER

The contagion effect of retailers' overstocking last fiscal impacted RMG manufacturers' revenue growth in the first half of this fiscal. The second half, however, is expected to receive a fillip from the festive season and a higher number of weddings

GAUTAM SHAHI | DIRECTOR, CRISIL RATINGS

Q2 RESULTS

TVS Motor net up

New Delhi: Chennai-based TVS Motor Company Wednesday reported a 41.4 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at ₹588.13 crore in the second quarter ended September 30, 2024 riding on record sales. The company had posted a net profit of ₹415.93 crore in the same quarter last fiscal, TVS Motor Co said. Revenue from operations in the second quarter stood at ₹11,301.68 crore as against ₹9,932.82 crore in the year-ago period, it added.

SBI Life net rises

New Delhi: SBI Life Insurance Wednesday reported a 39 per cent increase in net profit at ₹529 crore for the second quarter ended September 30 of this fiscal. The insurer had posted a profit of ₹380 crore in the July-September quarter of the last financial year. Total income of the insurance firm promoted by State Bank of India rose to ₹40,015 crore during the quarter under review, as compared to ₹28,569 crore in the same period a year ago.

HUL profit drops

New Delhi: FMCG major Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) Wednesday reported a 2.33 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at ₹2,595 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2024. The company had logged a net profit of ₹2,657 crore in the July-September quarter a year ago, the company said. However, revenue from product sales was up 2.36 per cent at ₹15,703 crore in the September quarter. It was at ₹15,340 crore in the year-ago period.

Godrej profit jumps

New Delhi: Realty firm Godrej Properties Wednesday reported a five-fold jump in its consolidated net profit to ₹335.21 crore for the quarter ended September on higher income. Its net profit stood at ₹66.80 crore in the year-ago period. Total income more than doubled to ₹1,346.54 crore in the second quarter of this fiscal from ₹605.11 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year.

NDTV posts loss

New Delhi: News broadcaster New Delhi Television Ltd Wednesday reported a consolidated net loss of ₹53.45 crore in the second quarter ended September 2024. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹55.55 crore in the July-September quarter last fiscal.



Finance ministry will take a view on scrapping windfall tax on local crude oil output

TARUN KAPOOR | ADVISOR TO THE PM

LAST-MINUTE RELIEF FOR PAYTM

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has granted approval to Paytm to onboard new UPI users, subject to the adherence to all procedural guidelines and circulars. The move is expected to come as a relief to Paytm, which had suffered a blow following the RBI's restrictions earlier this year on associate company Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL) in onboarding new UPI users on the Paytm app



Inflation remains a risk: RBI

REUTERS

Mumbai, Oct 23: India cannot risk another bout of inflation and the monetary policy committee (MPC) must adopt a cautious approach to lowering interest rates, members of the rate-setting panel said in the minutes of the October meeting.

At this stage of the economic cycle, having come so far, we cannot risk another bout of inflation. The best approach now would be to remain flexible and wait for more evidence of inflation aligning durably with the target

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | GOVERNOR, RBI

The MPC, which consists of three Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and three external members, had kept the repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent for a tenth straight policy meeting while changing the policy stance to 'neutral'.

The panel has three new external members, who were appointed for a four-year term earlier this month. "The arduous battle against inflation is far from won, but we are more confident of eventual success in bringing CPI inflation durably closer to the target," external member Saugata Bhattacharya said in the minutes published Wednesday.

Govt lifts curbs on rice exports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: Lifting curbs on rice exports, the government Wednesday removed the floor price for non-basmati rice shipments and exempted parboiled and husked (brown) rice from export duty.

The government has removed the minimum export price (MEP) of \$490 per tonne on overseas shipments of non-basmati white rice and has exempted parboiled rice and husked (brown) rice from export duty.

On September 28, the government withdrew a blanket ban on overseas shipments of non-basmati white rice and imposed the floor price.

"The requirement of MEP for the export of non-basmati white rice...has been lifted with immediate effect," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

The government has also exempted parboiled rice and husked (brown) rice from export duty.

Export duty has been reduced from 10 per cent to 'nil' on parboiled rice, husked (brown) rice and rice in the husk (paddy or rough), said a late-night notification issued by the finance ministry Tuesday. The duty cuts are effective from October 22.

The government had imposed a ban on exports of non-basmati rice exports July 20, 2023. These measures came at a time when the country has ample stock of rice at government godowns and retail prices are also under control.



India's inflation on downward trend but need to be cautious, cenbank minutes show

Retail inflation in Sept accelerated to its highest in nine months at 5.49%, due to higher food prices

Michael Patra, RBI deputy governor, wrote that while the persistence of inflationary pressures could dissipate with a less restrictive stance of monetary policy, "reducing restraint too quickly may negate the progress made on disinflation".

India's retail inflation in September accelerated to its highest in nine months at 5.49%, due to higher food prices, data released after the MPC meeting showed. The central bank targets inflation at 4%.

Five out of the six MPC members had voted in favour of holding policy rates, while newly-appointed external mem-

ber Nagesh Kumar voted to cut the policy rate by 25 basis points.

"Given that inflationary expectations have been successfully anchored, and industrial demand in both domestic as well as export markets is flagging, a rate cut could help to revive demand and help boost private investment," Kumar said.

Demand deficits in both domestic and external markets could be the reason private investment has not picked up momentum despite companies' healthy balance sheets and government reforms, he added.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta

Gold, silver continue to add sheen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: Rallying for the sixth straight session, gold and silver prices breached fresh record high levels in the national capital Wednesday mainly driven by festive and wedding season demand, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Gold prices jumped by ₹500 to an all-time high of ₹81,500 per 10 grams while silver surged ₹1,000 to ₹1.02 lakh per kg.

Gold prices of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity rose by ₹500 each to ₹81,500 per 10 grams and ₹81,100 per 10 grams, respectively.

Silver jumped ₹1,000 to reach a fresh high of ₹1.02 lakh per kg from the previous close of ₹1.01 lakh per kg Tuesday.

WEDDING DEMAND

- Gold jumps ₹500 to ₹81,500 per 10 grams
- Gold up by ₹2,850 per 10 grams since Oct 16
- Silver surges ₹1,000 to ₹1.02 lakh per kg
- In last 6 sessions, silver rose ₹10,000 per kg

In the last six trading sessions, silver prices have zoomed by ₹10,000 per kg. Gold increased by ₹2,850 per 10 grams since October 16.

In July, gold and silver prices corrected sharply by 7 per cent in the local markets after the government slashed basic customs duty on gold and other metals.

However, the bullion prices rebounded as demand from Indian consumers increased due to ongoing festivals, expectations of rate cuts in the US and flare up in geopolitical tensions.

In futures trade on the MCX, gold contracts for December delivery increased ₹112 or 0.14 per cent to ₹78,768 per 10 grams.

The precious metal had jumped ₹263 or 0.33 per cent to touch an all-time peak of ₹78,919 per 10 grams during the day.

"Gold prices saw another positive move, supported by gains in Comex, where gold moved closer to \$2,750," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst of Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

Odisha: A destination for experiential tourism

ARUN K CHITTHILAPILLY

Tucked away on India's east coast, Odisha has silently emerged as a prime destination for experiential tourism. Known for its vibrant cultural heritage, breathtaking landscapes, and spiritual significance, the state is embracing a tourism approach that immerses visitors in unique experiences.

Diving into Culture and Heritage

Odisha's ancient temples, fascinating dance forms like Odissi, and colourful festivals offer travellers with deep cultural experiences. From the iconic Jagannath Temple in Puri to the majestic Sun Temple in Konark and interactions with

various tribal communities, visitors can delve into age-old traditions. These encounters go beyond mere sightseeing by allowing guests to connect deeply with local customs.

Adventure and Eco-Tourism

The state's diverse geography, from the beaches of Puri and Gopalpur to the forests of Similipal and Bhitarkanika, caters to adventure and nature enthusiasts. Eco-tourism initiatives are on the rise, offering guided treks, wildlife safaris, and bird-watching escapades that showcase its abundant biodiversity. Travellers can engage in responsible tourism practices while relishing the natural beauty of Odisha.



Craft and Culinary Journeys

Experiential tourism in Odisha extends to interactions with skilled local artisans dedicated to preserving traditional handicrafts. Travelers can learn the craft of silver filigree, Pattachitra paintings, or the weaving of ikat textiles. Adding to this experience is Odisha's culinary scene which allows travellers to savour authentic dishes like pakhal and dalma while even trying their hand at preparing these traditional delicacies.

Spiritual and Wellness Tourism

For those on a spiritual quest, Odisha offers serenity at Buddhist sites like Dhauri and the sacred ambience of the Jagannath Temple that attracts pilgrims from far and wide. Moreover, wellness tourism is gaining traction with retreats offering ancient Ayurvedic treatments, yoga sessions, and meditation practices.

Government Initiatives

Odisha's tourism department plays an instrumental role in promoting experiential travel through infrastructure enhancements, sustainable tourism strategies, and promotion of lesser-known destinations, attracting a new wave of visitors. The state's com-

mitment to sustainability ensures that tourism flourishes without harming its natural surroundings or heritage.

Odisha's transformation into a destination for experiential tourism is a testament to its ability to merge the old with the new. Travellers now have the chance to not only witness the beauty and culture of the state but also actively participate in its traditions, making every journey deeply personal and enriching. As Odisha continues to evolve, it's positioning itself as a leading destination for those seeking authentic and immersive travel experiences.

The writer is MD, Wonderla Holidays

India to retain FDI curbs on border nations

INDIA'S COMMERCIAL TIES WITH NEIGHBOURS AFGHANISTAN, BANGLADESH, BHUTAN, MYANMAR, NEPAL AND PAKISTAN ARE DWARFED BY THOSE WITH CHINA, ITS BIGGEST SOURCE OF GOODS AND LARGEST SUPPLIER OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS LAST YEAR

REUTERS

New Delhi, Oct 23: India will retain investment curbs on bordering nations, the finance minister said, days after it struck a pact with China on patrols along their disputed Himalayan frontier, with the leaders of both countries expected to meet Wednesday.

The deal paves the way to end a four-year military stand-off and improve political and business ties between the Asian giants, strained since a deadly border clash in 2020 that slowed exchanges of capital, technology and talent.

"I cannot blindly receive foreign direct investment (FDI) because I want money for invest-

ment, forgetful or unmindful of where it is coming from," Nirmala Sitharaman told a gathering at the Wharton business school in the United States Tuesday.

The comments, which blunt hopes for a swift easing of trade curbs, came ahead of the expected meeting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and China's President Xi Jinping, on the sidelines of a summit of BRICS nations in Russia.

"We want business, we want investment, but we also need some safeguards, because India is located in a neighbourhood which is very, very sensitive," Sitharaman added.

The place of origin of some investments could spark the con-



cern of authorities, rather than the identities of investors, she said.

"So such restrictions will be in place in the national interest."

I cannot blindly receive foreign direct investment because I want money for investment, forgetful or unmindful of where it is coming from

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

The dispute between the world's two most populous countries led to stagnation in ties at a time of exploding demand for electric vehicles, semiconductors and artificial intelligence, key growth areas offering opportunities for co-operation.

India stepped up vetting and security clearances in 2020 as part of its scrutiny of investments from companies based in neigh-

bouring countries, but did not specifically mention any nations.

The step, widely seen as aimed at staving off takeovers and investments by Chinese firms, effectively turned away billions of dollars from the likes of car-makers BYD and Great Wall Motor, while red tape ensnared Indian firms with Chinese stakeholders.

India's commercial ties with neighbours Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan are dwarfed by those with China, its biggest source of goods and largest supplier of industrial products last year.

Indian imports of goods from China have surged 56 per cent since the 2020 clash, nearly doubling New Delhi's trade deficit with Beijing to \$85 billion.

Profligate India lose

STAR DRAG-FLICKER AND SKIPPER HARMANPREET MISSES PENALTY STROKE AS INDIA GO DOWN 0-2 TO GERMANY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: Olympic bronze-medallists India wasted chances galore to lose 0-2 to world champions Germany in the first hockey Test of the two-match series here Wednesday.

Germany, who are reigning Olympic silver-medallists, fielded a young team for the series. It lived up to the expectations, at least in the first match, with Henrik Mertgens (4th minute) and skipper Lukas Windfeder (30th minute) scoring the winning goals.

There was great excitement surrounding the series as international hockey was returning to the national capital for the first time after 2014.

The Major Dhyan Chand Stadium witnessed a good turnout but the fans had to return disappointed as home team's ever-reliable skipper and star drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh endured a rare off day.

The second Test of the series will be played Thursday.

The Indians were slow off the blocks as Germany dominated

the exchanges in the first quarter. The two teams were clashing for the first time after Germany beat India in the Paris Olympics semifinal.

It took only four minutes for the visitors to take the lead, courtesy some poor defending from the Indians. Mertgens was quick to spot the opportunity and slammed home the ball for the early edge.

Germany secured the first penalty corner of the match four minutes later but India went for a video referral which was upheld. The Indians made some circle penetrations but didn't really threaten the German defence.

In the ninth minute, India secured their first penalty corner but wasted the opportunity in the absence of Harmanpreet, who had been substituted in that moment.

The Indians came back strongly in the second quarter and dominated the exchanges.

India secured their second penalty corner in the 22nd minute and went for variation but Sanjay's effort went wide.

Three minutes later, India earned another penalty corner,

but Amit Rohidas' grounded flick was easily saved by the German defence. Seconds later, back-to-back penalty corners came India's way but not a goal as Harmanpreet looked off colour.

India's sixth penalty corner came in the 27th minute from which Dilpreet Singh scored from a rebound but the Germans protested and the umpire asked for a referral, which resulted in a penalty stroke for the hosts.

But as luck would have it,

India's most trusted player and skipper Harmanpreet's effort from the spot was saved by the German keeper Joshua Onyekwue Nanji. Germany secured their second penalty corner 14 seconds from half-time, and skipper Windfeder shot went past the Indian keeper to hand his side a 2-0 lead.

The Indians continued to apply pressure after the change of ends and in the 41st minute secured their seventh penalty corner, followed by another but Harmanpreet could not convert

We went on the mock today. There was Varun (Kumar) and Sanjay but you obviously want Harman (skipper Harmanpreet Singh) to score a few from penalty corners. I want to win badly, don't like to lose but it is a different phase. It wasn't too bad but there wasn't much fire upfront

CRAIG FULTON | INDIA'S CHIEF COACH

on both occasions.

In the resultant counter-attack, Germany secured a penalty corner, which was saved by Indian goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak.

India withdrew their goalkeeper for an extra field player five minutes from the hooter but it hardly made any difference to the final outcome.



SHORT TAKES

Manika advances

Montpellier (France): India's table tennis star Manika Batra produced a dominant performance to defeat America's Lily Zhang 3-0 to advance into the women's singles pre-quarterfinals of the WTT Champions here Wednesday.

Manika, who made history in Paris Olympics to become the first-ever Indian to reach the singles pre-quarterfinals, took less than 22 minutes to cruise to a 11-4, 11-8, 12-10 victory. The four-time Olympian Zhang, who also had a pre-quarterfinal finish in Paris, fought hard to come back in the third game but Manika's consistency and precision saw her through. The Indian won a total of 34 points, compared to Zhang's 22 and she was especially strong on her opponent's serve, winning 14 points off the Chinese-American. Manika will face the winner of eighth seeded Romanian Bernadette Szocs and Orawan Paranang of Thailand.

Oz beat India

Johor Bahru: Australia ended India Colts' unbeaten run at the Sultan of Johor Cup hockey tournament with a resounding 4-0 win here Wednesday. While India's forward line struggled to break the Australian defence, Daykin Stanger (33', 39', 53') scored a hat-trick of goals with Patrik Andrew (29') opening the deadlock. Despite the defeat, India continued to lead the points table with nine points while Australia (7 points) is placed third after New Zealand, who are in second place with eight points. With three wins in their kitty and one more match left in the round robin league, India remain potential contenders to reach the final.

Mehidy saves B'desh

Mirpur: Mehidy Hasan's 87 not out helped Bangladesh take an 81-run lead Wednesday, ending fears of an innings defeat in the opening Test against South Africa. The battling Mehidy led his side to 283-7 at stumps, a comeback from 112-6 during a third day interrupted by rain and bad light. Nayeem Hasan was also unbeaten on 16. Mehidy shared a record 138-run stand with debutant Jaker Ali, who made 58 as the hosts wiped out a first-innings deficit of 202. Bangladesh was bowled out for 106 in its first innings before South Africa replied with 308, thanks to Kyle Verreyne's 114.

WORLD RECORD ALERT

Zimbabwe post highest-ever T20I total of 344 vs Gambia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nairobi, Oct 23: Zimbabwe posted the highest-ever team total in the history of T20Is by amassing a monumental 344 for 4 against a lowly Gambia in a Group B encounter of the T20 World Cup Sub Regional Africa Qualifier here Wednesday.

Skipper Sikander Raza, who has played IPL for Punjab Kings in recent years, smashed 15 sixes in his unbeaten 133 off just 43 balls as Zimbabwe surpassed Nepal's 314, scored against Mongolia in Asian Games last year. In all, Zimbabwe hit 27 sixes in 20 overs apart from 30 boundaries.

Raza's 15 sixes, however, is not a world record for most number of maximums in a T20 innings, the record that belongs to Sahil Chauhan of Estonia for hitting 18 sixes against Cyprus.

Zimbabwe also became the highest scoring team in a T20I among all Test playing nations, surpassing India's 297 for 6



against Bangladesh posted at Hyderabad earlier this month.

Gambia's Musa Jobarteh also earned the ignominy of being the most expensive bowler in the history of T20Is giving away 93 runs in his 4 overs which was worse than Kasun Rajitha of Sri Lanka, who had given away 75 runs in 4 overs.

Zimbabwe registered the largest win in the format after they bowled Gambia out for 54 in 14.4 overs, earning victory by 290 runs, eclipsing the previous record winning margin of 273 by Nepal against Mongolia.

India look for revenge against NZ

MEN IN BLUE EYE RIGHT SELECTION CALLS TO COUNTER KIWIS SPUNK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, Oct 23: Jolted by an unexpected loss on home turf, star-heavy India will look for right balance in the line-up to counter-attack against a spunky New Zealand in the crucial second Test beginning here Thursday.

After being shot out for an embarrassing 46 in the first innings at Bangalore, India's resolute show in the second innings could not prevent an eight-wicket pounding which saw the top-ranked team in the World Test Championship table dropping points even though it continues to hold the top spot.

With India in a spot of bother, focus has undeniably been on the nature of the pitch here at the MCA Stadium here. It does not have grass cover and is composed of black soil to negate the bounce which New Zealand extracted in Bangalore.

India's free-flowing batters cut a sorry figure when William O'Rourke and the seasoned duo of Matt Henry and Tim Southee

SECOND TEST



Winning the next two Tests will be first priority for Rohit Sharma and his men before they hit the Australian shores for a five-Test affair next month

served a wake-up call which no one saw coming on a pace-friendly track that was admittedly misread by Rohit despite overcast conditions.

Preparing a rank turner could be one way out of the mire but it has backfired on India twice

in the past.

Australia hammered them by a monumental 333 runs here eight years ago while the same team handed a nine-wicket defeat to them in Indore last year.

With Shubman Gill priming for a comeback, one among KL Rahul and Sarfaraz Khan will have to make way. Coach Gautam Gambhir has expressed his desire to give the latter a long rope but Sarfaraz has made a strong case with his second innings 150 in Bangalore.

One could say a big score for each of the two seniors, Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli, is around the corner. The latter, especially, would be keen to draw from his 254 not out here in 2019-20, which paved the way for an innings and 137-run thrashing of South Africa.

By his own lofty standards, Yashasvi Jaiswal endured twin failures in the Bangalore Test and the young batter looked to iron out his flaws when he had multiple stints in the nets.

As much as the Indian camp values Rahul's credentials in Test cricket, the right-handed batter hasn't looked his best and runs haven't come off his bat on a consistent basis.

The establishment of the Sports Regulatory Board is one of the key features of the draft bill, and the body will have the authority to grant, renew and suspend affiliation of the IOA and National Sports Federations among others

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: Greater representation for athletes, better coordination between government and private stakeholders and the mandate for a proposed Sports Regulatory Board were some key issues raised by country's elite athletes during a consultation with Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on the draft National Sports Governance Bill here Wednesday.

The establishment of the Sports Regulatory Board is one of the key features of the draft bill, and the body will have the authority to grant, renew and suspend affiliation of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and National Sports Federations among others.

Its over-riding powers have already been questioned by IOA

President PT Usha, who has warned that its constitution might be construed as government interference by the International Olympic Committee, leading to India's suspension.

As per the draft bill, the national Olympic committee, national sports federations, the national paralympic committee and their affiliates will be annually required to make public disclosure as prescribed by the Sports Regulatory Board.

A source present in Wednesday's meeting with Mandaviya said while several sportspersons and coaches welcomed the move, they demanded more representation in the regulatory body.

The draft bill has provision for just one Khel Ratna and one Dronacharya awardee in the



five-member regulatory body, while secretary (sports) will be its chairman and director-general of Sports Authority of India will be its ex-officio member.

The fifth member will be the vice-chancellor of the National Sports University.

"While the proposal to have a regulatory body was welcomed by several of the 130-odd sportspersons and coaches, who attended the meeting in person and virtually, demanded more representation of sportspersons and coaches in it," a source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

While high jumper Tejaswin Shankar, rifle shooter Sift Kaur Samra, former pistol marksman and Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker's coach Jaspal Rana and Ronjan Sodhi, attended the meeting in person, ace javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, table tennis

This is the first time the athletes' and the coaches' opinion and thought process is asked on the fantastic bill that is proposed. It's a welcome gesture by the government to initiate this process

GAAGAN NARANG | LONDON OLYMPICS BRONZE MEDALLIST

player A Sharath Kamal, weightlifter Mirabai Chanu and woman boxer Nikhat Zareen gave their inputs virtually.

The minister also assured the gathering that the body would be autonomous, the source added.

IOA SGM postponed following Usha's directive

New Delhi: The Special General Meeting of the Indian Olympic Association, scheduled for October 25, was Wednesday postponed with president P T Usha and majority of executive council remaining at loggerheads. The IOA has been grappling with intense infighting since the Paris Olympics with most members of the Executive Council accusing Usha of misgovernance within the association. IOA director George Mathew informed the executive council and other stakeholders about the postponement following a directive from under-fire IOA president P T Usha. "As directed by the President IOA, I am to inform you that the Special General Meeting convened by the President IOA, originally scheduled for October 25 at Olympic Bhavan New Delhi, has been rescheduled to a later date," Mathew wrote in his email. "The new date and time of SGM will be communicated shortly. We apologise for inconvenience caused and appreciate your understanding."

First-ever shooting league announced

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 23: The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) Wednesday announced the sport's first ever franchise-based league in the country christened "Shooting League of India".

The proposal, mooted by NRAI president Kalikesh Narayan Singh Deo, has received approval from the national federation's governing body.

A window for the same is being chalked out, post receiving approvals from the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF), the sport's global governing body.

The first edition of the league will be held in March.

Deo said, "Shooting, particularly after the performance in the recent Paris Olympics has received a huge fillip in its popularity and we thought that this was the right moment to launch a league. We have seen how well organised franchise leagues have



not only helped in popularising the sport even further, but most importantly have brought in new audiences and revenue for them and their athletes. We owe it to our athletes to make the sport self-sustainable."

At Paris Olympics, Indian shooters won three medals in a single sport for the first time.

"Shooting in its purest Olympic form and format is not considered television friendly. However, we have all deliberated upon it extensively and feel that we may have arrived at a winning formula," he said.

"Let's keep our fingers crossed as all is in the interest of the sport and its super athletes, who have brought glory to the country on global platforms consistently over the last few decades," Deo added.

LeBron, son Bronny make NBA history

FIRST FATHER AND SON TO PLAY IN WORLD'S TOP BASKETBALL LEAGUE AT THE SAME TIME, LET ALONE ON SAME TEAM

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Los Angeles, Oct 23: LeBron James and Bronny James became the first father and son to play in the NBA together Tuesday night during the Los Angeles Lakers' season opener.

LeBron and Bronny checked into the game together with four minutes left in the second quarter, prompting a big ovation from a home crowd aware of the enormity of the milestone. The 39-year-old LeBron had already started the game and played 13 minutes before he teamed up with his 20-year-old son to make history.

LeBron James is the top scorer in NBA history, while LeBron James Jr was a second-round pick by the Lakers last summer. "Y'all ready? You see the in-



tensity right? Just play carefree, though," father told son on the bench before they checked in, an exchange captured by the TNT cameras and microphones. "Don't worry about mistakes.

Just go out and play hard." LeBron and Bronny played 2 1/2 minutes on court together, and LeBron missed two perimeter shots before making a dunk. Bronny had an early rebound

It's been a treat. In preseason, the practices, just every day ... bringing him up to speed of what this professional life is all about, and how to prepare every day as a professional

LEBRON JAMES

and missed a tip-in.

Bronny's first NBA jump shot was a 3-pointer that came up just short. He checked out with 1:19 left in the second quarter, getting another ovation.

Bronny didn't play again in the Lakers' 110-103 victory over Minnesota. LeBron, who scored 16 points, did an on-court interview with Bronny before they headed to the Lakers' locker

room together — but not before stopping in the tunnel to hug Savannah James, LeBron's wife and Bronny's mother.

Ken Griffey Sr and Ken Griffey Jr were courtside at the Lakers' downtown arena to witness the same history they made in Major League Baseball. The two sluggers played 51 games together for the Seattle Mariners in 1990 and 1991 as baseball's first father-son duo.

LeBron, a four-time NBA champion and a 20-time All-Star, first spoke about his dream to play alongside Bronny a few years ago, while his oldest son was still in high school. The dream became real after Bronny entered the draft as a teenager following one collegiate season, and the Lakers grabbed him with the 55th overall pick.