

Secret of success
Actor Shradha Kapoor speaks about what makes her one of the most loved stars in Hindi film industry

LEISURE | P2



Putin praises BRICS bloc

Russian President Vladimir Putin praises BRICS' role as a counterbalance to what he calls the West's 'perverse methods'

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Rise in biz activities

India's business activities witness a marginal growth in October after softening last month

BUSINESS | P11



Sundar shines

Washington Sundar picks up career-best figures to put India in the drivers' seat in the 2nd Test against New Zealand

SPORTS | P12

SCBA objects to 'radical changes' in 'Lady Justice'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 24: In a unanimous resolution, the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) has raised objections to the 'radical changes' made to the statue of Lady Justice and the top court's emblem without consultation with the Bar.

The Supreme Court has a new 'Lady Justice' - a six-foot-tall sculpture in the judges' library holding scales in one hand and the Constitution in the other sans the sword. Dressed in white traditional attire, the 'Goddess of Justice' is without her blindfold and sword. She is also wearing a crown on her head. The resolution, signed by SCBA president Kapil Sibal and other members of the executive committee, has also objected to a proposed museum at a location where they had demanded a café-cum-lounge for the members of the Bar.

"It is observed by the Executive Committee of Supreme Court Bar Association that recently some radical changes have been brought in by the Supreme Court unilaterally like change of its emblem, change in the statue of Lady Justice without consultation with the Bar. We are equal stakeholders in the administration of justice but these changes when proposed, were never brought to our attention. We are totally clueless on the rationale behind these changes," the resolution said.

The SCBA said it unanimously opposes the proposed museum in the high security zone and pressed the demand for a library and a café-cum-lounge.

"Now a museum has apparently been proposed in the erstwhile judges' library whereas we had demanded a library, café-cum-lounge for the members of the Bar as the present cafeteria is inadequate to cater to the needs of the members of the Bar. We are concerned that despite our objection raised against the proposed museum in the erstwhile judges' library, work has started for the museum," the resolution stated.



CLEARING ROADS: NDRF personnel remove an uprooted tree that blocked a road at Jaleswarpur panchayat in Balasore district, Thursday, as state braces for 'Dana'

PIB PHOTO

Justice Sanjiv Khanna appointed new CJJ, to take oath Nov 11

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 24: Justice Sanjiv Khanna was Thursday appointed as the 51st Chief Justice of India (CJI).

He will take oath November 11, a day after incumbent Justice DY Chandrachud demits office on attaining the age of 65.



Justice Chandrachud took over as the CJI November 8, 2022. Justice Khanna will have a tenure of a little over six months as CJI and would demit office May 13, 2025.

"In exercise of the power conferred by the Constitution of India, Hon'ble President, after consultation with Hon'ble Chief Justice of India, is pleased to appoint Shri Justice Sanjiv Khanna, Judge of the Supreme Court of India as Chief Justice of India with effect from 11th November, 2024," Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal posted on X.

Use 'clock' in polls with disclaimer, SC tells Ajit Pawar

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 24: The Supreme Court Thursday directed Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar to use the 'clock' symbol in its publicity material in the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly elections with a disclaimer that the matter was sub-judice before it.

Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan passed the order on a plea filed by the rival Sharad Pawar-led NCP faction as it issued a notice to the Ajit Pawar-led faction. The top court March 19 and April 4 had directed the Ajit Pawar-led faction to issue a public notice in the newspapers in English, Hindi and Marathi editions notifying that the allocation of 'clock' symbol was sub-judice. The apex court had further said the Ajit faction was permitted to use the symbol subject to the case's final outcome.

During the proceedings Thursday, the bench took note of the submissions of senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who appeared for the Sharad Pawar faction.

Singhvi submitted the opponent group should be restrained from using the 'clock' symbol as it didn't use the disclaimer in their campaign materials and 'misled' voters.

'DANA' BRINGS HEAVY RAIN

As 'Dana' prepares to make landfall between Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapara and Dhamra Port in Bhadrak early Friday with wind speeds of up to 120 kmph, the administration raced against time to execute a massive evacuation plan aimed at shifting around 3.62 lakh people in vulnerable areas to 7,285 cyclone shelters, Thursday. People in many coastal districts woke up to overcast skies in the morning. The midday drizzle gradually intensified and by evening, it poured heavily with bursts of wind as the severe cyclonic storm barreled towards the coast. Otherwise busy roads in most parts of coastal Odisha wore a deserted look as people preferred to stay indoors, while several trains and flights were cancelled owing to rough weather condition. Reiterating the state government's motto of ensuring 'zero casualty' due to the natural calamity, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said the Centre has assured him of all possible assistance during this hour of crisis.

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: Severe cyclonic storm 'Dana' lay within 200 km of the state coast Thursday afternoon, as several parts of the state experienced heavy rain and squally winds, with the sea condition remaining rough, the IMD said.

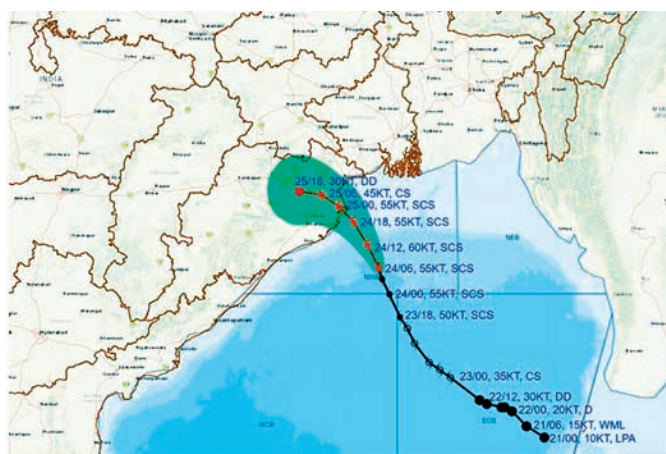
The state government also expedited evacuation efforts in the coastal districts, as Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi held a review meeting and directed officials to ensure 'zero casualty' due to the natural calamity.

The cyclone is likely to make landfall between Bhitarkanika

National Park and Dhamra Port early Friday with wind speeds of up to 120 kilometres per hour (kmph), the weatherman said.

The weather system over the Bay of Bengal moved north-northwestwards with a speed of 12 kmph during past the six hours, and lay centred about 210 km southeast of Paradip, 240 km south-southeast of Dhamra and 310 km south of Sagar Island (West Bengal), the IMD said its latest bulletin.

"It is very likely to move north-northwestwards and cross north Odisha and West Bengal coasts between Puri and Sagar Island close to Bhitarkanika and



Dhamra in the early hours of 25th October as a severe cyclonic storm with a wind speed of 100-110 kmph gusting to 120 kmph," it said.

Reports about uprooting of trees have been received from some areas of Balasore, Bhadrak, Bhitarkanika and Puri, leading to blocked roads, officials said.

Majhi said about three lakh people have been shifted to various cyclone shelters and the operation is continuing.

A total of 7,285 cyclone centres have so far been set up, and 91 medical teams deployed.

The authorities have also engaged 19 teams of the NDRF, 51 teams of the ODRAF and fire services personnel in shifting people and clearing blocked roads, the officials said.

The highest rainfall of 62 mm was recorded at Paradip, while Rajnagar in Kendrapara district received 24 mm rain, in the last four hours, the Met office said.

Moderate to intense rain and thunderstorms with wind speeds of 30-40 kmph are likely to lash some parts of Bhadrak, Balasore, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara and

PM dials CM twice

Prime Minister Narendra Modi called over phone Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi twice Thursday and enquired about the state's preparedness for 'Dana'. During their conversation, the CM provided detailed information about the relocation of people and the deployment of response forces like NDRF and ODRAF for public safety, according to the CMO. The PM expressed satisfaction with the state's preparedness. Union Minister Amit Shah also discussed the situation with the CM and promised to provide all necessary assistance and support, the CMO said.

Puri districts, it said.

Director of the Regional Meteorological Centre here, Manorama Mohanty, said, "The severe cyclonic storm is likely to re-curve slightly towards west and west-southwards after landfall, triggering rain in southern Odisha. However, the landfall and wind speed predictions remain unchanged." Meanwhile, the IMD issued a 'red warning' (take action) for heavy to very heavy rainfall in seven districts - Mayurbhanj, Cuttack, Jajpur, Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Countrymen love to see you overseas. They say you change completely and act like a decent person there

Chinese firm sells space tourism tickets for 2027

AGENCIES

Beijing, Oct 24: Chinese startup Deep Blue Aerospace sold its first two tickets for seats on a rocket that will take passengers to space in 2027, charging 1.5 million yuan (\$211,000) for the experience, the 'Global Times' reported Thursday.

Deep Blue Aerospace plans to make more tickets available next month. Passengers will be taken on a suborbital flight, meaning the rocket will reach outer space but not enter orbit, according to 'Reuters'.

The commercial passenger flight industry is in its nascent stages, with US companies such as Blue Origin and SpaceX taking an early lead. Deep Blue Aerospace said reusable rockets are crucial to reducing high launch costs that prohibit large-scale commercialisation of space



Commercial passenger flight industry is in its nascent stages, with US companies such as Blue Origin and SpaceX taking an early lead

tourism. It said it plans to recover a carrier rocket from orbit in the first quarter of 2025.

Other Chinese companies have announced plans to enter the space tourism sector. In May, state-backed CAS Space said it would launch space tourism flights by 2028.

2 Odisha flights among 80 get bomb threats

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: More than 80 domestic and international flights, including one at Bhubaneswar and another at Jharsuguda, of various Indian airlines Thursday received bomb threats but those later turned out to be a hoax, according to sources.

Around 20 flights each of Air India, Vistara, and IndiGo got bomb threats while Akasa Air got the threats for 13 flights. Besides, around five flights each of Alliance Air and SpiceJet received the threats, they added.

In 11 days, more than 250 flights operated by Indian carriers have received bomb threats.

Bhubaneswar's Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) Director Prasanna Pradhan said, "We received a hoax threat on 'X' that bombs have been fixed on an Akasa Air flight. Following SOP, we have cleared the flight and it



departed for its destination." Security has been tightened at BPIA, Pradhan added.

Similarly, the authorities of Veer Surendra Sai Airport (VSSA) in Jharsuguda got information about the presence of bombs on a Bengaluru-Jharsuguda IndiGo flight.

"After getting information, we followed the procedure and declared it as a hoax call," VSSA Director Sandeep Kumar Tiwari told reporters. The flight de-

parted after conducting necessary examinations, he said.

An IndiGo spokesperson said it received security-related alerts for 20 flights. The flights are 6E 362 (Hyderabad to Goa), 6E 334 (Kolkata to Bengaluru), 6E 236 (Bengaluru to Kolkata), 6E 11 (Delhi to Istanbul), 6E 17 (Mumbai to Istanbul), 6E 58 (Jeddah to Mumbai) and 6E 125 (Bengaluru to Jharsuguda). Others include 6E 133 (Pune to Jodhpur), 6E 135

(Kolkata to Pune), 6E 149 (Hyderabad to Bagdogra), 6E 196 (Kochi to Bengaluru), 6E 304 (Kochi to Hyderabad), 6E 201 (Guwahati to Kolkata), 6E 282 (Delhi to Aizawl) and 6E 277 (Ahmedabad to Lucknow).

An Akasa Air spokesperson said 13 of its flights operating Thursday received security alerts and that after thorough inspections, all the aircraft concerned were released for operations.

"The service teams at all impacted airports coordinated with local authorities to ensure efficient handling of the situation including safe deplaning of passengers, assistance and refreshments as required," said the statement.

A Vistara spokesperson said that a few of its flights received security threats on social media. At least six flights to and from Kochi airport received bomb threats Thursday. It included one SpiceJet flight from Dubai to Kochi, airport sources said.

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	80065.16	↓ 16.82
NIFTY	24399.40	↓ 36.10
DOLLAR	84.07	↑ ₹0.01
EURO	90.81	↑ ₹0.24
GOLD	₹78,291	↑ ₹479
SILVER	₹97,742	↑ ₹782

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	26.7°C	27.2°C
Min Temp	23.6°C	23.0°C
Humidity	76%	80%
Rainfall	11.2mm	12.2mm
FORECAST		
CLOUDY SKY WITH HEAVY RAIN		

leisure



BILLIE EILISH FALLS OFF STAGE DURING CONCERT

Singer-songwriter Billie Eilish recently had a mighty fall off stage while performing in New York. The singer showed an enormous bruise in the light of the injury. The 22-year-old lost her footing and crashed to the floor in Madison Square Garden.

CHRIS HEMSWORTH COULD BE DISNEY'S PRINCE CHARMING

Chris Hemsworth, who is best known for his role as Thor in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, is in talks to take on the iconic role of Prince Charming in Disney's upcoming movie of the same name, which has Paul King on board to direct.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You've finally realised that diet and exercise are a must, and you especially need to take good care. Today, you may wish to eat something different. Tried Mongolian cuisine? Ganesh suggests that you go out with some friends who you've not been paying attention to.

TAURUS
You will spend your day in the company of near and dear ones, says Ganesh. Family and friends might gather at your place and you will leave no stone unturned in welcoming them to your nest. In all probability, home makers will be able to shine in cooking as well as hosting, foresees Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today, you may be busy purchasing food supplies or penning an inventory. In your spare time, which you are likely to have in plenty today, you will try to befriend strangers or tread into unfamiliar territories. Such activities will not bring you any harm. A stroll with your sweetheart will nicely conclude a fairly eventful day, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You are feeling lucky today. The problem is that your feelings have nothing to do with the ground reality. So, while you may get busy trying your luck at risky speculative markets, Ganesh may get increasingly worried about the losses you may incur because of your foolishness.

LEO
Today, the force is with you. Well, at least part of the force that deals with being a smooth talker, says Ganesh. It is your power of expression that comes to the fore and stands you in good stead. Having mastered the art of communication, you now are a wizard of words who conjures showers of pearls with a mere twist of the tongue.

VIRGO
Take a break today, says Ganesh. Replace the mundane with something exotic. Attend private dos and social meets and be gregariously gregarious.

LIBRA
No matter what you do, some days are just not happening. Considering the random mood swings that affect you today, it's in the best interest of others that you put up a 'Beware of me' sign. By being forewarned about it, you should be capable of handling your erratic behaviour.

SCORPIO
The day today is riddled with minor, nagging ailments. Adopt a two-pronged strategy, advises Ganesh. One - change your lifestyle, and two - visit your doctor for regular examinations. Ominous at his best, Ganesh counsels to take care of your health.

SAGITTARIUS
Be set to capture the flag and sing the victory song in whatever task you take up today. Your subordinates will be the ones needing your support and motivation. At the end of the day, the icing on the cake would be the smile you take to bed.

CAPRICORN
Your intuition will get the better of you today, bagging you respect and recognition, says Ganesh. But it's not every day that you get so lucky, so try and make the most of what's on the platter, for all you know, intuitions could have a mood swing too. Besides, if winning hearts is like a once-in-a-blue-moon thing, be on your best behaviour and wear your best suit - it's a blue moon day for you today.

AQUARIUS
Your mood will swing by the hour today! Naturally, you leave your friends stumped. But unpredictability does not mean that you take unnecessary risk. Ganesh suggests you complete all pending projects, and bear in mind that it is only fools who rush in where angels fear to tread.

PISCES
A hectic day of socialising awaits you. You will discover hidden talents and unnoticed traits about yourself. Either that, or whoever brought them to your notice was only lying to get some socialising action of their own. You are a person of action, as well as of words, and hence, will go on to act on what you have planned, says Ganesh.

Alia turns makeup artist

Mumbai: Alia Bhatt is not only a talented actress but also a style icon. Recently, she showcased a new talent that left her fans excited. In a fun and candid moment on social media, the actress turned makeup artist and playfully asked her followers, "Kisko tutorial chahiye?" (Who needs a tutorial?), hinting at sharing her beauty skills with her fans. Taking to her Instagram stories, the *Raazi* actress posted a gorgeous photo where she is seen flaunting her flawless makeup. She wrote in the caption, "Makeup by me. Kisko tutorial chahiye???" In the selfie, Alia is seen striking a perfect pose with her makeup and hair looking on point.

On the professional front, Bhatt will next be seen in the highly anticipated film *Alpha*, which she's been filming with Sharvari in the scenic landscapes of Kashmir. Directed by Shiv Rawail, the film is produced by Aditya Chopra. *Alpha* is scheduled for a Christmas release December 25, 2025. She was last seen in Vasan Bala's film *Jigra*, alongside Vedang Raina and Manoj Pahwa. Recently, the film found itself in the midst of controversy when a heated argument erupted between Divya Khosla Kumar and Karan Johar, with Divya accusing Alia of manipulating the box office figures for *Jigra*.

IAN S



Shraddha's success mantra

New Delhi: Actress Shraddha Kapoor, who is currently riding high on the success of her latest release *Street 2*, has spoken about what makes her one of the most loved stars in Hindi film industry.

Speaking to this agency, Shraddha said: "I believe my growth in the industry is attributed to a combination of factors. Choosing diverse roles has allowed me to showcase my versatility and connect with a wide audience."

Authenticity is the key ingredient, says the actress, who walked the runway for the label Kalki at the Lakme Fashion Week recently. "Maintaining authenticity in my performances and in-

teractions has helped build a genuine rapport with fans. Additionally, my dedication to continuous learning and self-improvement has enabled me to evolve both as an actor and an individual," added the actress, who is the daughter of actor Shakti Kapoor.

Street 2, which crossed the ₹600 crore benchmark, is the fifth instalment from the Maddock Supernatural Universe and is the sequel to the 2018 blockbuster *Street*, which also stars Rajkumar Rao, Pankaj Tripathi, Aparshakti Khurrana and Abhishek Banerjee.

IAN S



MANISHA SETS FITNESS GOALS

Mumbai: Manisha Koirala has taken her fitness game a notch higher as its "health first" for the actress. She says there's nothing quite like the rush a workout brings and that every drop of sweat is a step closer to becoming stronger.

Manisha took to Instagram Thursday morning, where she shared a picture of herself along with her friends after a good workout. In the photograph, the actress is seen flaunting her biceps.

"There's nothing quite like the rush a workout brings! The adrenaline surges, happy hormones flood in, and the pride that comes from breaking a sweat is truly priceless. Every drop of sweat is a step closer to a stronger me. Here's to embracing the grind and celebrating every victory, big or small! #bff #gymmotivation #healthfirst," she wrote as the caption.

On the professional front, the actress last essayed the role of a brothel madam, Mallikajaan in *Heeramandi: The Diamond Bazaar* directed by Indian auteur Sanjay Leela Bhansali. The show, which tells the story of the eponymous district in British India, marked the OTT debut of Bhansali with whom Manisha worked in *Khamoshi: The Musical*.

The show, which also stars names such as Sonakshi Sinha, Richa Chaddha, Aditi Rao Hydari and Sharmin Segal, has been renewed for a second season, and will soon drop on Netflix.

IAN S

Nawazuddin in a soup

Mumbai: Actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui has found himself at the center of controversy following the release of a recent advertisement.

In the commercial, the actor is seen dressed as a Maharashtra police officer, encouraging people to play poker on the app. According to the latest reports, a Hindu organization claims that this depiction harms the reputation of the Maharashtra Police by linking law enforcement to gambling. The Hindu Janjagruti Samiti has sent a letter to the Mumbai Police Commissioner and the Maharashtra Director General of

Police, urging them to take action against Siddiqui and Ankur Singh, the owner of Big Cash Poker. In a formal complaint, Abhishek Murukate, the Maharashtra state coordinator for the organization's social welfare campaign, Surajya Abhiyan, raised the issue in a letter to the Mumbai Police Commissioner and the Maharashtra Director General of Police.

The letter demands strict action against both Siddiqui and Singh under the Maharashtra Civil Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules of 1979 and the Maharashtra Police Act of 1951. The letter states,

In its statement, the Hindu organization emphasized that the advertisement is "harmful and disrespectful to law enforcement." The Hindu Janjagruti Samiti has also urged Maharashtra's Home Minister, Devendra Fadnis, to take action on this issue. Nawazuddin has yet to release a statement regarding the matter.

IAN S



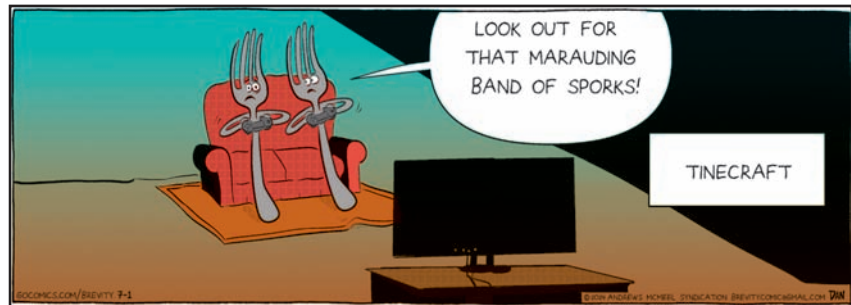
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

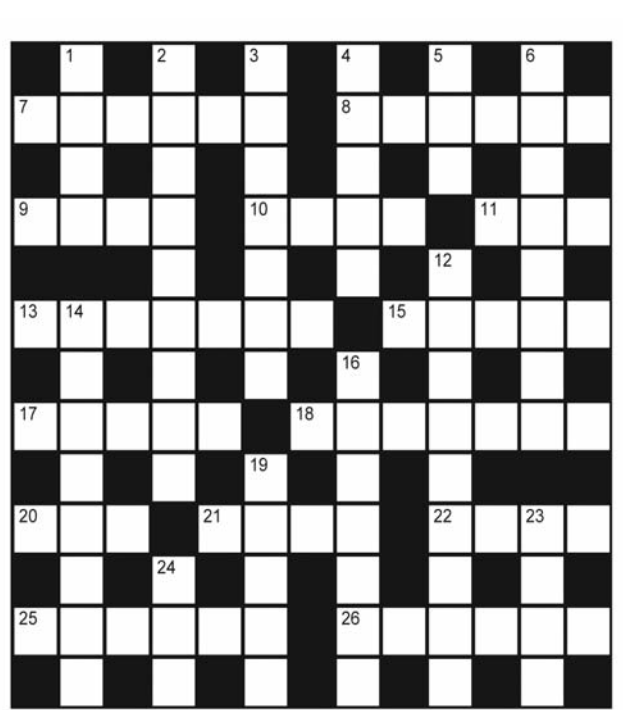


BREVITY



FUN post

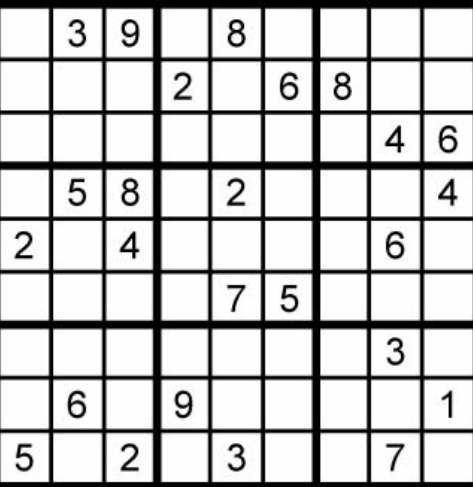
CROSSWORD



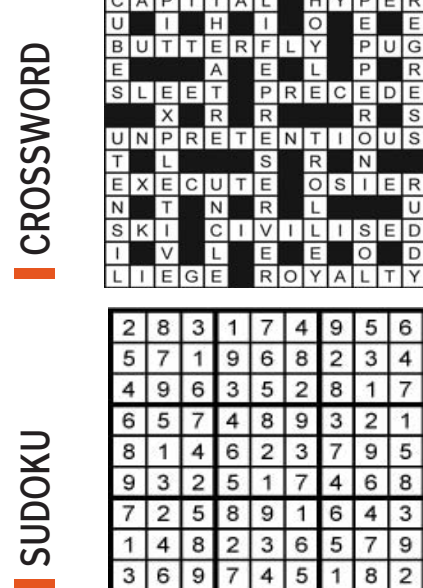
- Across
- 7 Unmask
 - 8 Anatomical ring
 - 9 Goya's "Duchess of ..."
 - 10 Restaurant handout
 - 11 Egg cells
 - 13 Kind of cocktail
 - 15 Bedlam
 - 17 Santa Claus feature
 - 18 Angelic
 - 20 Withdrawn
 - 21 Handouts
 - 22 Film part
 - 25 Former British gold coin
 - 26 Kestrel
 - 4 Mountain lakes
 - 5 Pilar cyst
 - 6 Salad
 - 12 Place of bliss (7-2)
 - 14 Retrofit
 - 16 Fudge
 - 19 Implore
 - 23 Predatory feline
 - 24 Serengeti grazer
- Down
- 1 After dinner or cow
 - 2 Criticises at length
 - 3 Confound

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

TAKING STOCK

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi chairs a review meeting of Collectors of the likely affected districts and various department secretaries at Lok Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar as cyclone 'Dana' approached Odisha coast Thursday



'Dana' hits life in City

Ministers fan out across dists to review measures



Satya Nagar over-bridge wears a deserted look



Empty platforms at Bhubaneswar railway station as the Railways cancelled more than 200 trains



Volunteers pack food and relief material at Red Cross Bhawan



Vendors at Market Building desperately wait for customers

The state government closed all educational institutions in Bhubaneswar from October 23 to 25.

Government offices, banks, shops, malls and commercial establishments remained open but there were fewer crowds than normal days.

Even the state-run Capital Hospital here witnessed "very minimal footfall" during the day, an official of the health facility said.

"As per the prediction made by the IMD, the cyclone will make landfall during Thursday midnight. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has also predicted strong wind and heavy rainfall in Bhubaneswar, which is not safe for flight operations," said Prasanna Pradhan, director of Bhubaneswar airport.

According to the forecast made by the IMD, the cyclonic storm will make landfall between Bhitarkanika in Kendrapara district and Dhamra in Bhadrak early Friday with a wind speed up to 120 kmph.

The weather office also predicted wind speed up to 80 kmph to prevail in Bhubaneswar along with isolated heavy rain Thursday and Friday.

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) authorities also made arrangements to tackle any situation arising out of the cyclone.

The BMC along with the fire-fighting team deployed pumps to suck rainwater from several low-lying vulnerable locations in the city.

In view of the cyclone, the high mast lights at several places across the city have also been lowered, officials said.

"As a precautionary measure, we have opened 85 shelter homes with basic amenities. We hope that people will not face any difficulty," said Bhubaneswar mayor Sulochana Das.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: Several ministers of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's Cabinet, including Deputy Chief Ministers Pravat Parida and KV Singh Deo, fanned out to the vulnerable districts to oversee the evacuation and relief measures aimed at ensuring public safety as cyclone Dana came hurtling towards the coast Thursday.

Parida visited several areas in Puri district and reviewed the preparedness by holding discussions with local officials and people's representatives. She also interacted with people in Kakatpur, Astaranga areas and asked them not to panic. She briefed them about the measures taken by the government to deal with the situation while urging them to strictly adhere to the guidelines issued by the state government.

Puri Collector Sidharth Shankar Swain said around 7,226 persons have been shifted to 162 cyclone shelters across the district.

Similarly, Singhdeo visited Pattamundai, Rajnagar, and Pentha areas in Kendrapara district and took stock of the preparations on the ground. He held discussions with officials and inspected the shelter centres. He addressed local concerns, ensuring that all safety protocols and essential services were in place.

He said the well-being of people by guaranteeing them with secure shelters, food supplies, and medical aid during the crit-

ical period remains the priority of the government. "The strength and unity of our community are truly inspiring, and together, we will rise above these challenges. Let's continue to stand by one another with resilience and hope," he said.

Urging people to desist from panicking, Singh Deo said the government has taken all necessary precautionary measures to ensure public safety. "Our dedicated teams are on high alert, and we have adequate resources in place to handle any situation," he said.

Minister of Higher Education, Sports and Youth Services, and Odia Language, Literature and Culture Suryabanshi Suraj visited Bhadrak to review the cyclone preparedness measures through administrative meetings, followed by a review at the Dhamra Port area.

He visited several cyclone shelters in Guasol, Dhira Sahi, Nachipur, Bijayapatna, Karuna panchayat and Kuamara to oversee the arrangements for public safety, food supplies, drinking water, medical facilities and sanitation. He interacted with the shelter residents, advising them not to panic and assured them that the government would provide all necessary assistance and support to them.

He appealed to People not to panic and asked them to adhere to the administrative guidelines.

Minister Bibhuti Bushan Jena visited Gopalpur, Markandi, Ramyapatna, Khalikote, Subalia, Chatrapur, areas of Ganjam district and directed officials to be alert and active.

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: Normal life was affected in the Capital City Thursday with many people preferring to stay indoors in view of cyclone 'Dana' that barreled towards the state's coastal region, threatening to impact nearly half of its population.

A low-density vehicular movement was noticed in the state capital, while a few people were spotted in the Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar

A few passengers in the busy Bhubaneswar railway station were spotted as the East Coast Railway (ECoR) cancelled 203 trains

The Bhubaneswar airport authorities decided to suspend flight operations from 5pm of October 24 to 9am of October 25 in view of the cyclone

Government offices, banks, shops, malls and commercial establishments remained open but there were fewer crowds than normal days

Bus Terminal in the city, airport and railway station.

A few passengers in the busy Bhubaneswar railway station were spotted as the East Coast Railway (ECoR) cancelled 203

trains. Some tourists were seen taking shelter in the station.

"We have visited Jagannath temple in Puri and are scheduled to return to our home through a train. But, we got a

message that our train had been cancelled. So, we are taking shelter here," said a tourist from Maharashtra.

The Bhubaneswar airport authorities decided to suspend flight operations from 5pm of October 24 to 9am of October 25 in view of cyclone 'Dana'. During the 16-hour flight suspension, about 40 flights, both domestic and international, will be affected, disrupting travel plans for many passengers, another official said.

Steps taken for safety of Srimandir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, Oct 24: With cyclone 'Dana' rolling towards Odisha coast, the authorities Thursday advised devotees against visiting the Srimandir here and expedited preparations to minimise the impact of the calamity on the 12th-century shrine.

Puri Collector Siddharth Shankar Swain said that devotees, including those undertaking a month-long 'Kartik Brata' ritual, should also be discouraged from visiting the temple as a safety measure.

In a statement, Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) said that all measures were being taken to protect the shrine located in the seaside town while keeping the daily rituals intact.

The administration said that



measures have been taken to ensure that loose materials like GI sheets, scaffolding tubes and others do not get affected in the gale.

According to the forecast by India Meteorological Department (IMD), Puri district is likely to experience wind at the maximum speed of 80 km per hour during the landfall of the severe cyclone 'Dana' early Friday morn-

ing. The district will also receive heavy rainfall.

To protect the temple from the wind and water, the administration has checked its windows and doors to avoid them getting blown away.

All the makeshift tents have been removed and sandbags were placed atop asbestos roofs to add weight and save them from getting blown away during the cyclone.

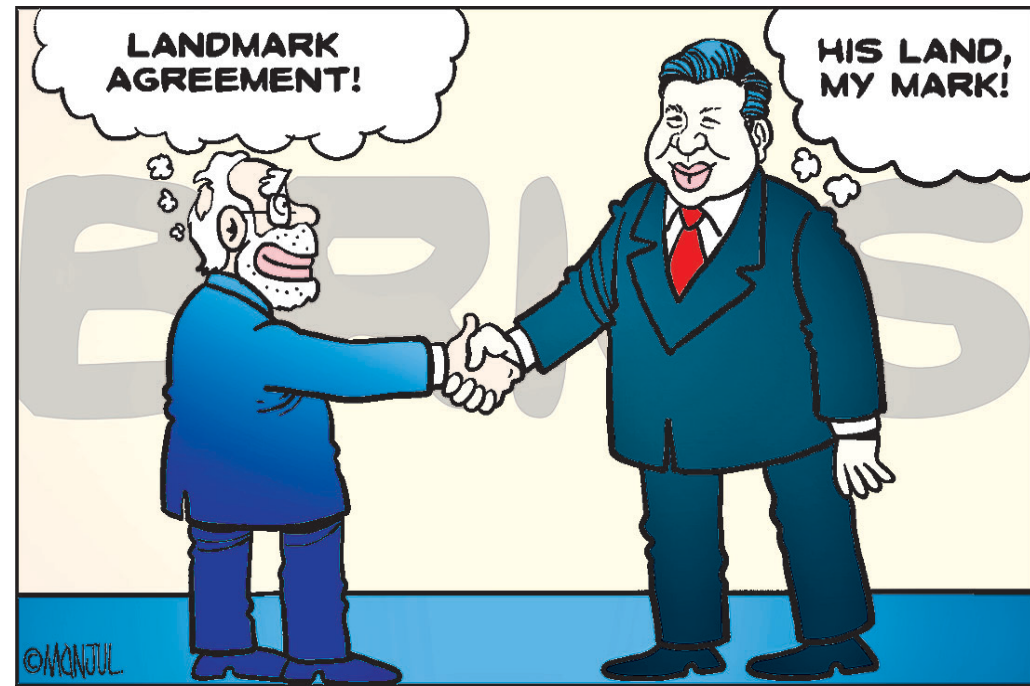
The administration has also ensured that the regular devotees from outside Puri are housed in a safe place. Special measures have also been taken for elderly women and those who perform 'Kartik Brata'.

The administration has also taken steps to prevent CCTV cameras from getting damaged by the storm. Pump and generator sets have been kept ready with other equipment in case of a power outage, an official release said.

Apart from SJTA, the district administration and ASI have also taken measures to protect the tourists visiting the 13th-century Sun Temple at Konark.

The ASI has closed the Konark Temple for two days while the district police prevented all tourists from visiting sea beaches.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Man kills brother-in law, held

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: Residents of Capital City woke up to a spine-chilling murder Thursday as a 59-year-old man killed his brother-in-law at Mendhasal under Chandaka police station over a dispute. The deceased was identified as Pravat Biswal, 55, and the accused Laxmidhar Das.

Three family members - two sons of the deceased and the son of the accused - who tried to intervene when the two fought violently, also sustained grievous injuries.

A senior officer at Chandaka police station said the injured persons, identified as Rabi Das, 33, Basudev Biswal, 26 and Subham Biswal, 13, are currently battling for life in a local hospital. Meanwhile, accused Laxmidhar was arrested under Sections 103 (murder), 109 (attempt to commit murder) and 118 (2) (voluntarily hurting an individual) of BNS.

Chandaka IIC Pradeep Kumar Jena said Pradeep was at odds

with accused Laxmidhar since long as the latter assaulted his sister under the influence of alcohol.

Laxmidhar used to stay at his in-laws' house and was working as an electrician with the Railways. He was splurging his monthly earnings on alcohol. Owing to his drinking habits, Laxmidhar recently had a violent altercation with Pradeep following which he moved to his paternal home in Gangapada.

IIC Jena said the scuffle ensued in the wee hours of Thursday after Laxmidhar arrived at his in-laws' house in a drunken state and created a ruckus. When Pradeep objected to his behaviour, Laxmidhar stabbed him with a knife multiple times. Hearing Pradeep's muffled screams for help, his nephew and both sons came to his rescue. Laxmidhar also attacked them repeatedly with the knife and fled the spot.

Laxmidhar was produced before a local court in the evening for remand.

Puri most ravaged by 4 cyclones in 6 yrs

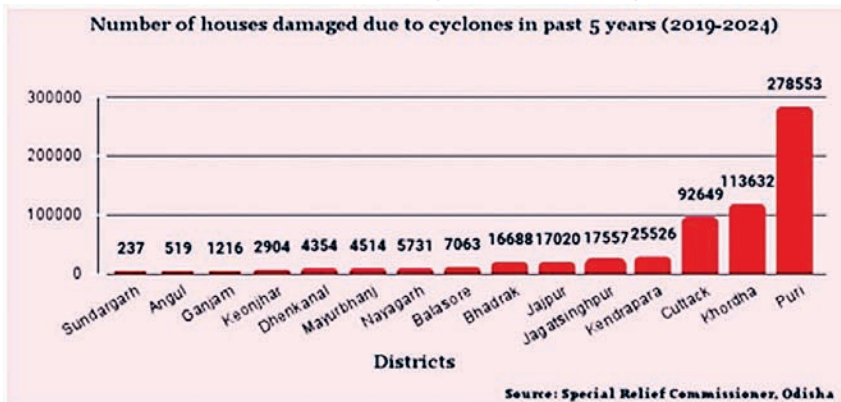
DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: Puri district bore the maximum brunt of the four cyclones that hit the state in the past six years in terms of damage and destruction of properties.

Of the four cyclones in the past six years, 'Fani' and 'Bulbul' occurred in 2019, while 'Amphan' and 'Yaas' hit the state in 2020 and 2021, respectively.

According to the data shared by the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), a total of 2,78,553 houses were damaged in the densely populated Puri district during the cyclones, followed by Khurda (1,13,632 houses), Cuttack (92,649 houses), Kendrapara (25,526 houses) and Jagatsinghpur (17,557 houses) during the period. The damaged houses were a combination of kutcha and pucca structures.

According to the data, 'Fani' in 2019 impacted the state the most in the last



five years. Puri district was the most affected in that cyclone where 2,78,492 houses had been damaged.

Interestingly, Khurda district did not report any damage to houses in three cyclones that occurred between 2020 and 2024. The 1,13,362 damaged houses were reported only during 'Fani', the data revealed.

However, Cuttack and Kendrapara districts which were spared by 'Fani' reported damage to 92,649 and 18,092 houses, respectively, during subsequent cyclones till 2024. However, the damage caused in

Jagatsinghpur district (17,136 houses) occurred during 'Fani'.

The data revealed that Sundargarh (237) and Angul (519) districts reported the least number of damaged houses in cyclones in the past five years. Southern districts such as Koraput, Malkanagiri, Gajapati, Rayagada, Kalahandi and Nabarangpur were completely spared by the cyclones in terms of losses to properties during the period.

It is pertinent to note that in the event of any calamity the State Disaster Response

CYCLONE DAMAGE ALLOCATIONS IN 5 YRS

DISTRICTS	NDRF and SDRF funds
Puri	₹395.50 crore
Khurda	₹176.04 crore
Cuttack	₹139.16 crore
Kendrapara	₹96.20 crore
Ganjam	₹95.54 crore

Force (SDRF) and the Union Government (which makes contributions to NDRF), share a funding ratio of 75:25 for compensation to people. Following the post-assessment survey conducted by the Inter-Ministerial Central Team as well as state representatives, a fixed amount of Rs 95,100 to Rs 1,01,900 is allocated for severely damaged houses, while for partially damaged houses, Rs 5,200 is disbursed.

Accordingly, Puri district received the highest allocation of Rs 319.50 crore for cyclone management from NDRF and SDRF, while Khurda, Cuttack, Kendrapara and Ganjam received Rs 176.04 crore, Rs 139.16 crore, Rs 96.20 crore and Rs 95.54 crore, respectively.

United effort required in fight against polio: Majhi

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar/Kolkata, Oct 24: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday called for a collective effort in combating polio to eradicate the viral disease completely from the country.

Taking to his social media account on World Polio Day, the CM said, "Let's continue to unite in the fight against polio and work towards a future where every child is protected."

Echoing the sentiment, Health and Family Welfare department said, "Ensure to immunise your children timely with recommended polio vaccination to protect them from the highly risky virus."

Despite the complexities of poliovirus that make it difficult to stop from spreading, the disease is 'gassing' and is on the verge of eradication from the global map, said Ananda Sankar Bandyopadhyay, who is the deputy director of Technology, Research, and Analytics, Polio Team, with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Heaping praise on India for playing an exemplary role in dealing with polio, Bandyopadhyay sounded caution that any complacency could help the disease make a comeback.

"The fact that India can maintain its polio-free status is really an amazing feat and we should be proud of that and celebrate that. It has huge im-



Polio Vaccine

lications in terms of other public health delivery programmes," Bandyopadhyay said.

"Polio has three serotypes - type 1, type 2 and type 3. Type 2 and 3 were eradicated from the world. Poliovirus type 1 remains mainly in two countries - Pakistan and Afghanistan. So, about the global situation, we can say that polio is on the verge of eradication," he said.

"So, it's really good news that polio does not exist in most of the countries," Bandyopadhyay said.

Asked whether it is possible to permanently eradicate polio from the world, the expert said, "From a scientific perspective, polio as a virus is gassing. In Pakistan and Afghanistan exists the wild type poliovirus whereas in a few countries in the African region, the variant poliovirus type exists."

"Based on this, you can say that eradication is feasible because most countries have decisively stopped polio but of

course, challenges remain." Explaining the problems in eradicating the disease completely, he said that in certain countries it is difficult to vaccinate all the children all the time.

"These are areas affected by wars, civil unrest, and insurgencies in parts of these countries. So the children are unfortunately vulnerable and are not receiving the vaccination that they deserve," said the expert who had earlier worked with the World Health Organisation (WHO).

If all children of all communities can be inoculated in these countries, the spread of polio could be stopped decisively, he said.

About the reasons behind the resurgence of polio in Gaza almost after a quarter of a century, the expert said, "There is one single reason: children in places like Gaza unfortunately have no access to vaccination. On top of that, they do not have access to clean drinking water. Sanitation system and hygienic practices were also disrupted due to the war."

Besides polio, other life-threatening diseases could also emerge because of the situation there, Bandyopadhyay said.

On whether polio could reappear at a place where it was once eradicated, he said that resurgence is possible in case of a dip in the vaccination coverage and relaxation of surveillance on the disease.



ALERT MODE: Life guards carry out a flag march on Puri beach, Thursday, advising tourists not to enter the sea in view of impending cyclonic storm 'Dana'

Nat'l Wikimedia workshop held in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: Recognising the need to fortify the Wikipedia communities in the country and train its dedicated volunteer leaders, the Centre for Internet and Society-Access to Knowledge (CIS-A2K), based out of Bangalore in Karnataka organised the 9th edition of Train the Trainer (TTT) workshop here recently, with support from Odia Wikimedians User Group (OWUG).

The two-day national workshop saw participation of over 35 enthusiastic Wikimedians, representing various linguistic



communities, including Odia, Assamese, Punjabi, Santali, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Bengali, Tulu, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, and other Wikimedia projects like Wikimedia Commons and FOSS.

The programme started with a City tour to the Kalabhumi museum here. A series of di-

verse sessions, panel discussions and thematic training was also conducted at a City hotel here.

The CIS team, including executive director Tanveer Hasan, A2K - programme manager Pavan Santosh, programme officers Nitesh Gill, Nivas Ramishetty, Subodh Kulkarni, Medini Subhu, and Christina,

participated actively.

Key contributors from the OWUG included Mrutyunjaya Kar, Jnanaranjan Sahu, Chinnmayee Mishra, Sangram Keshari Senapati, Gayatri Tripathy, Sailesh Pattnaik, and Abhijit Patro, who played pivotal roles in organising and managing the event.

The event spotlighted the efforts and achievements of the Odia Wiki community, along with sister projects like Wikidata, Wikisource, Wiktionary, Commons Wikimedia, Lingua Libre, with notable contributions by Subash Chandra Rout, Subhasis Panigrahi and Pritiranjana Tripathi.

Vedanta Aluminium enhances logistics efficiency SHAS delists erring hospitals

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest aluminium producer, has introduced BOBRN Bogie Open Bottom Rapid discharge railway wagons, equipped with pneumatic door-opening actuators, into its coal transportation logistics at its plants in Jharsuguda and Korba in Chhattisgarh.

The initiative, part of the General Purpose Wagon Investment Scheme (GPWIS) by Indian Railways, aims to enhance efficiency and promote sustainability in logistics.

The BOBRN wagons are specifically designed to carry large quantities of coal to locations like

thermal power plants and ports. Their unique bottom-discharge mechanism allows for quick unloading directly into hopper pits, significantly reducing turnaround times.

The company, which operates the world's largest aluminium plant in Jharsuguda and the renowned BALCO smelter in Korba, relies on a continuous power supply for its operations. The new BOBRN rakes will ensure a steady and efficient coal supply, optimizing supply chains and reducing production costs.

The expansion will not only further boost operational efficiencies but also contribute towards the company's efforts to integrate sustainable practices.



Vedanta Aluminium chief operating officer Sunil Gupta said, "The induction of the BOBRN rake is a significant milestone in our operations. It will improve our rail coefficient, reduce turnaround times, and help ensure more reliable coal transportation, while significantly reducing costs and emissions."

BALCO CEO and director Rajesh Kumar said, "The step reinforces our commitment to enhancing operational efficiency while staying aligned with our sustainability goals. The inclusion of BOBRN rakes has been instrumental in establishing a more robust supply chain while progressing towards the goal to become net zero by 2050."

Vedanta Aluminium has adopted a two-pronged approach of both reducing and offsetting its carbon footprint. Its smelters have been certified by the Aluminium Stewardship Initiative's (ASI) performance standards, a globally acknowledged indicator of sustainable operations.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: The grievance redressal and internal vigilance mechanism (IVM) of Sate Health Assurance Society (SHAS), the nodal agency of the state for implementation of Gopabandhu Jana Arogya Yojana, has delisted five empanelled private sector hospitals recently by orders of SHAS chief executive officer. Out of these, four are from outside Odisha and one from inside the state.

The delisted hospitals are Mittal Hospital, Banthia hospital, Soni hospital and Babuji care hospital in Raipur district of Chhattisgarh and Samaleswari Nursing home in Deogarh dis-



trict of Odisha.

Sources said that the IVM of SHAS from its regular watchful analysis of the grievances received from people, claims submitted by the hospitals and feedback received through 104 call centres detected irregularities like use of false referral slips in name of government hospitals for admission of patients under referral packages, submission of fabricated documents in claim

folders, demand of cash from the poor innocent patients, and adoption of fraudulent means for instigating beneficiaries to take admission in their hospital.

Health and Family Welfare department said that all kinds of irregularities and complains are being enquired into thoroughly, and frauds are being dealt mercilessly. It warned that any fraudulent activity will be dealt with severely in coming days.

AMARAVATI DRONE SUMMIT BonV Aero wins big in drone tech

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: One of the country's leading aerial mobility manufacturing firm, BonV Aero won the largest Drone Hackathon at the Amaravati Drone Summit recently. The event attracted over 500 participants, presenting innovative solutions to challenges in drone technology.

Organised by Andhra Pradesh Drones Corporation, the hackathon aimed to encourage the development of drone-based applications across various sectors. Odisha based BonV Aero distinguished itself by focusing on drone delivery solutions for remote and hilly regions where conventional transport faces significant limitations. Recently, the company set a world record at Umring La Pass, executing a high-altitude hover flight at 19,024 ft, carrying a 30 kg payload. As a key supplier of heavy-lift UAVs to the Indian Army, BonV Aero continues to push the boundaries of drone technology.

BonV Aero CEO and co-founder Satyabrata Satapathy expressed his happiness over



the achievement and said, "Our mission is to develop drone-based solutions for delivering critical goods to regions where traditional transport is inefficient. This recognition validates our efforts and reinforces our commitment to revolutionising logistics through drone technology."

The summit featured keynote addresses from Andhra Pradesh (AP) Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu, who highlighted AP's ambition to become a leader in drone innovation. They urged drone manufacturers to use the state as a testing ground for new use cases and proofs of concept.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kandhamal, Oct 24: In a concerted effort to address the pressing issue of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in Kandhamal, Unicef, in collaboration with the district social welfare department organised a media roundtable here Wednesday.

The event, held at the Zilla Parishad conference hall, brought together a diverse group of media professionals, policymakers, and health experts, with an aim to highlight media's crucial role in raising public awareness and fostering community engagement to combat malnutrition in the region.

Speaking on the occasion, District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) Bijayalaxmi Behera emphasised the importance of media collaboration in reaching wider audiences with important information about SAM management. "Malnutrition poses one of the most pressing health challenges in Kandhamal. By fostering partnerships and raising awareness, we are committed to substantially reducing the prevalence of SAM in our district," she said.



Behera presented the in-depth strategies implemented in Kandhamal district to reduce SAM cases, including community-based interventions, strengthening Anganwadi centres, and leveraging local health networks to ensure that nutrition programmes reach the most vulnerable children.

"Our goal is to ensure that every child in Kandhamal has access to the nutrition and care

they deserve. We are striving to ensure that SAM no longer poses a threat to our children in the future," she added.

Unicef's nutrition specialist Sourav Bhattacharjee delivered a keynote address on malnutrition and the importance of SAM management. He said, "Effective SAM management extends beyond addressing hunger, encompassing improvements in overall health, sanitation and

education. In Kandhamal, the immediate objective is to save lives and foster healthier, stronger communities. It not only contributes to physical well-being but also cognitive development."

The role of the media in raising awareness and disseminating accurate information was the central theme of the roundtable.

Unicef representatives emphasised the importance of re-

sponsible reporting and the transformative potential of media engagement in combating malnutrition.

An interactive open discussion and Q&A session provided an opportunity for participants to share insights and discuss challenges related to malnutrition and child health in Kandhamal. Media representatives expressed their commitment to supporting awareness campaigns and keeping the issue of SAM a priority in public discourse.

The media roundtable set the stage for future initiatives, reinforcing the importance of multi-sectoral collaboration to create sustainable health outcomes in Kandhamal.

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3 SIBLINGS AWARDED LIFE TERM FOR KILLING COUSIN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Oct 24: A local court Thursday sentenced three siblings to life imprisonment after convicting them for killing their cousin in 2023 over property dispute at Basudevpur village under Patapur police limits in Ganjam district.

The convicts were identified as Budu, 35, Santosh, 32, and Mithun, 30, alias Landa, sons of late Prakash Pradhan. The victim was their cousin Kulu Pradhan, 28, son of their elder paternal uncle late Kansa Pradhan.

Additional District and Sessions Judge (ADJ-1) Indu Sharma pronounced the verdict after examining the statements of 12 witnesses and the police chargesheet, Public Prosecutor Trilochan Parida said.

The judge also slapped a penalty of Rs 1,000 each on the three convicts. In default, they



have to undergo an additional year of rigorous imprisonment (RI), the judge observed while delivering the order.

On the other hand, the judge acquitted the siblings' mother Ahalya Pradhan, 57, Budu's wife Kaberi Pradhan, 22, and Santosh's wife Pinky Pradhan (20) for want of sufficient evidence.

According to the case diary, the two families were not on good terms as the convict Budu was at loggerheads with the victim Kulu over sharing of paternal properties.

The incident occurred when a truck was unloading bricks for house construction in the backyard of Kulu Pradhan July 28 in 2023. Some of the bricks fell down during unloading following which some plants on Budu's side of the property were destroyed. An angered Budu and his siblings picked a fight with Kulu. After their neighbours intervened, they relented and went back to their house.

However, the siblings later ganged up and again squabbled with Kulu when he was standing outside his house at around 9pm. They quarreled with him and launched an organised attack on him with weapons like axe, crowbar and wooden planks. Profusely bleeding, Kulu succumbed to his injuries.

Patapur police registered a case and arrested the three siblings after Kulu's elder brother Santosh Pradhan lodged a complaint at the police station.



WILD WAVES: Tidal waves pounding the shore at Digha beach in West Bengal adjoining the seaside Bhogra block in Balasore district as the sea remained rough due to severe cyclonic storm 'Dana', Thursday

'Love birds' found murdered; honour killing suspected

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, Oct 24: In a shocking incident, police recovered the bodies of a youth and a girl with their throats slit from Patra jungle on the roadside of Tandamunda village under Puntala police limits in Bolangir district, Thursday.

The deceased who are yet to be identified are assumed to be aged within 25. The matter came to the fore after locals spotted the bodies and informed the police. Police rushed to the spot and launched an investigation with a scientific team, dog squad and Cyber police station officials.

The two bodies bore critical injury marks on the necks, while one of the hands of the girl also bore a cut mark. The body of the youth was found lying two feet away from where the girl's body was recovered.

Circumstantial evidences suggest that miscreants might have dumped the bodies here after murdering them elsewhere. Police seized and sent the bodies for post-mortem to Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital in Bolangir. Locals claimed that miscreants dumped the bodies late Wednesday night as they had not spotted any bodies till Wednesday evening.

Locals suspect that the two might have been killed over love affair while some termed it as honour killing.

When contacted, Bolangir SP Rishikesh Dyandeo Khilari said the actual reason behind the murder can only be ascertained after availability of the post-mortem report.

5th meeting of 6th Zilla Parishad held

ROURKELA: The 5th meeting of the 6th Zilla Parishad was held at Bikash Bhawan, Sundargarh. This was chaired by Chairman Sushri Kunti Pradhan. Union Minister Jua Oram, Odisha Assembly deputy speaker Bhabani Shankar Bhoi, and other elected representatives and officials were present in the meeting. A review of all the developmental work being done in the district was done. At the beginning of the meeting the chairman stressed that all officials and elected representatives should come together and cooperate to carry forward all developmental works in the district. She urged all the people's representatives to share their opinions about how to carry forward the developmental work and also asked them to give their views.

Cyclone Dana: Kendrapara on toes

VILLAGERS SCURRY FOR COVER AS CYCLONIC SYSTEM BARRELS TOWARDS COAST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhitarkanika, Oct 24: As severe cyclonic storm Dana approaches the Odisha coast, anxious residents in Kendrapara district are desperately rushing to relief camps, finally heeding the urgent calls of authorities, an official said.

Intermittent rain and gusty winds have taken control of seaside villages since Thursday morning as the storm threatens the coastal areas of Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Balasore districts.

The cyclone is likely to make landfall between Bhitarkanika National Park and Dhamra Port early Friday with wind speeds of up to 120 kilometres per hour (kmph), the Met department said.

"More than the wind velocity, we are deeply concerned about the tidal surge, which could wreak havoc in the region. The IMD has forecast a tidal surge of at least one to two metres. As the sea has become turbulent with massive waves crash-



ODRAF personnel evacuating a pregnant woman to safety at Talachua under Rajnagar block in Kendrapara district, Thursday

ing on the shore, we rushed back to the cyclone centre this morning," said Rabintra Maity, a local from Talchua village near Bhitarkanika National Park.

Himanshu Rout, a resident of Dhamra, reflected on past cyclones and ex-

pressed concern. "From our experience, it seems imminent that this cyclone will not spare us this time. We pray for minimal damage in the area," he said. Nishant Mishra, the Block Development Officer of Rajnagar block in Kendrapara district, highlighted

the potential danger of the storm surge.

Though there was initial reluctance among residents, they eventually recognised the imminent threat and voluntarily decided to evacuate. The evacuation process is nearly complete, he added.

Shelter centres are equipped with essential provisions, including food, drinking water, baby supplies, and women police officers. The official noted that trees have been uprooted in several areas.

"We fear tidal ingress into our villages as sea waves batter the shorelines. The advancing sea may cause more damage than the storm itself," said Arjun Mohanty, a resident of Okilopala village in Rajnagar.

Chandan Manna, a native of Kansarabadandua, echoing similar concerns said, "We are frightened by the possibility of tidal waves. It's better to move to a safer place. Why should we wait for the government to act?"

RSP agrees to transfer Rourkela airport land to state government

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

Rourkela, Oct 24: Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has agreed to transfer the Rourkela Airport land to the state government after a prolonged discussion between the steel major's management and the Government of Odisha (GoO) represented by Sundargarh Collector and Rourkela ADM.

With this development, it is now clear that the airport here will get a few necessary provisions, which will make it a fully viable airstrip. Once the land is transferred to the state government, it will be handed over to the Airport Authority of India (AAI).

It is pertinent to mention that BJP state president Manmohan Samal, during a visit to Rourkela before the 2024 elections, had said, "RSP needs to hand over the land to the state government. The state government should ask for the land then only it will be possible to hand it over to the AAI." When the matter was raised with local MLA Sarada Nayak, he had said, "We have no problem. Let RSP make the move and the Centre should talk to the state in this regard."

Rourkela Airport needs 3C-4C license and night landing facility along with instrument landing system (ILS) in order to be fully functional. A review meeting in this regard was held recently. Earlier RDC Sambalpur had instructed the Sundargarh Collector to expedite the entire process after discussions with RSP. In the review meeting, the Collector finally asked RSP to hand over the land in the presence of local MP Jua Oram and the Rourkela ADM assured that everything would be expedited for smooth transition.

A source in the AAI said it was very happy about the entire development. "Now we will have no problem in undertaking the required development of the airport. Once this process is over and the land comes to us we will immediately undertake all the steps to ensure that the required installations are there to ensure the smooth functioning of the airport," the source said on condition of anonymity

RSP is paying a hefty sum of Rs 5 crore per year for the maintenance of the airport. This burden will also ease from the steel major.

19 RSP workers feted under Subash Scheme

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Oct 24: Nineteen employees from different departments of SAIL, Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) were felicitated under Subash Scheme in a function organised at the conference hall of ED (Works) Office by Alok Verma, ED (Mines) with Additional Charge of ED (Works) who presided over the function and handed over the appreciation letters.

Present on the occasion were concerned CGMs, HODs and other senior officers of the plant. Two employees from Design department were given appreciation letters for playing a facilitating role in upgradation of design portal of RSP.

Twelve employees from Crane maintenance, RCM, Safety, FMM, SMS-II departments were felicitated for successful and safe execution of repair work in main girder of converter charging Crane No 2021 of steel melting shop (SMS)-II.

Five employees from SMS-II received the appreciation for recording longest sequence of 380 heats from caster-III October 12 with a cast tonnage of 60,200 tonne.

Cyclone likely to make landfall between Bhitarkanika National Park and Dhamra Port early Friday with wind speeds of up to 120 kmph

Advertisement for EAST COAST RAILWAY assets, including descriptions of various units and stations, with a table of completion costs and tariffs.

Advertisement for PANCHAYAT SAMITI, SUBDEGA, Govt. of Odisha, including tender call notice details for a civil work under BDO, Subdega of Sundargarh District.

Advertisement for POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED, including a notice for determination of tariff and a table of asset details.

18 small cold storages to come up in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhanjanagar, Oct 24: As many as 18 small cold storages will be built in Ganjam district soon to help farmers and traders store vegetables and fruits.

The matter came to the fore Wednesday during the inauguration of solar powered cold storage of 10 metric tonne capacity on the premises of the Regulated Market Committee (RMC) here, established at an expense of Rs 24 lakh.

Chief guest and Bhanjanagar MLA Pradyumna Kumar Nayak



inaugurated the facility. Guest of honour and Bhanjanagar Sub-Collector-cum-Chairman of the RMC Anil Kumar Sethy said that a large cold storage will be built here for the benefit of farmers and traders under the sub-division and preparations are underway

with the help of the local MLA.

Project coordinator Deepak Kumar Tudu said that the construction of small cold storages was taken up on experimental basis in Rourkela.

Following its success, construction of 18 small cold storages was taken up under various RMCs in the district. One of the cold storages was inaugurated at Bhanjanagar while another at Buguda will soon be launched. The rest of the cold storages will

be constructed at Berhampur, Aska and other places of the district, Tudu said.

Another guest of honour, NAC chairman Gopabandhu Mohapatra, said that vegetables can be stored in the cold storages for a minimum of seven days to a maximum period of seven months. RMC secretary Kasturi Sanayasi Raju coordinated the meeting. North Ghumusar DFO Himanshu Sekhar Mohanty, Regional Transport Officer Subhendu Ranjan Ray and ADPRO Gouri Shankar Satapathy attended the function.

FOCUS POLITICS OF FREEBIES

STAGGERING HYPOCRISY



The lines between 'bribing' voters and 'empowering' them is a thin one, especially when a scheme is pushed through just months ahead of an election with the sole purpose of enticing voters to switch sides

is it to be seen for what it has become: a blatant attempt to 'buy' votes? When is a beneficiary extolled as a 'labharti' and when does she become a burden on the exchequer? In Tamil Nadu, for example, the original state where a freebie culture was almost institutionalised, successive governments were criticized for their laundry list of free offerings: from cell-phones to colour televisions, attractive consumer goodies were offered in every election. Paradoxically, the 'freebies' didn't prevent Tamil Nadu from having one of the fastest growing economies in the country. Maharashtra too still attracts the most foreign direct investment in the country.

The socio-economic fallout of a freebie culture is contestable: should governments only waive off loans of influential corporates and not of distressed farmers? Why shouldn't poor women get income support in tough times? The real issue though is of misplaced priorities. Truth is the cash hand-outs being doled out in states like Maharashtra are only designed to compensate for a larger governance deficit that stares governments across parties. For five years, those in power fail to invest in genuine welfare projects that matter – be it quality education or health facilities – but then faced with a tough election, offer direct cash benefits to offset mounting anger against unkept promises.

The voter too is increasingly transactional: why should she vote for a specific party nominee if she isn't certain that the candidate will be loyal to the party post-election? Better then to simply avail of 'cash and carry' politics. As one Ladli Bahin beneficiary woman in a Mumbai slum told me rather bluntly: "Irrespective of who I vote for or whoever comes to power in Maharashtra, at least no government will be able to stop the Ladki Bahin scheme now." If the netas thought they were being wily, the canny voters may well outsmart them in the end!

The writer is a senior journalist and author: His new book, 2024: The Election That Surprised India is now available for pre-order.

programme must be seen as another worrying sign of a 'whatever it takes' power-grab mindset. The last five years have seen Maharashtra become the country's most politically unstable state. Three governments in five years, a CM being sworn in by stealth at the crack of dawn, two regional parties being split, MLAs switching sides with the lure of ministerial perks, Maharashtra has come to symbolise the complete moral collapse of Indian politics. Terms like 'washing machine' and 'khokhe chi sarkar' (one 'khokha' is equivalent to one crore) are now part of the common political lexicon in the state, a reflection of how money power and backroom deal-making has totally corroded the politics of the state. There are no ideological divides left: around one-third of the state's legislators have been in more than one party over the last 15 years.

The third, and perhaps most logical way to look at the cash hand-out schemes is through the prism of competitive 'revadi' politics that can be potentially economically ruinous. In 2022, Prime Minister Modi had cautioned voters against a 'freebie' culture, saying it was "very dangerous" for the country. "People of 'revdi' culture feel that by distributing free revdis to people, they can buy them. Together we need to defeat this thinking. Revdi culture needs to be removed from the country's politics," insisted Modi.

Then, the prime minister's attack was on the Congress and

its promised cash 'guarantees' in states like Karnataka and Himachal Pradesh and the AAP's claims of providing free electricity and water in states like Delhi and Punjab. Just two years on, the BJP, which is part of the ruling alliance in Maharashtra, is seeking credit for the Ladki Bahin initiative by claiming that its cash benefits will empower women. But the lines between 'bribing' voters and 'empowering' them is a thin one, especially when a scheme is pushed through just months ahead of an election with the sole purpose of enticing voters to switch sides.

Women in particular have become the core constituency for cash-driven welfare schemes. In 2023, Shivraj Singh Chouhan was seen to have turned around the Madhya Pradesh election with his Ladli-Behma scheme, providing cash benefits similar to those offered now by the Maharashtra government. In its 2024 manifesto, the Congress promised an annual ₹one lakh deposit to poor women's accounts across the country. "If you are below the poverty line, then every year ₹1 lakh 'khatakhat khatakhat aata rahega,'" assured Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

Then, the 'khatakhat' promises of Gandhi were lampooned by the BJP as an example of irresponsible political behavior; now, the 'phataphat' delivery of cash by the Shinde government is being hailed as a political 'game-changer'. The hypocrisy is staggering. When does a 'revadi' become a 'master-stroke' and when

In the next month, as the high-stakes Maharashtra elections takes centre-stage, two words will dominate most conversations: 'Ladki Bahin'. The flagship government scheme which provides ₹1500 per month to women in households whose annual income is less than ₹2,50,000 has become a major talking point and raises the crucial political question: will the monies that have been put in the bank accounts of more than 2 crore women since August this year be enough to shake off any anti-incumbency against the ruling Maha-Yuti alliance in the state?

This isn't the first time governments at the state or Centre across parties have offered pre-poll sops in the form of cash hand-outs to specific groups. But never before have the payout deliveries been so sudden, brazen and unmindful of financial consequences just before an important election. By the time, voting is done next month, a majority of the beneficiary women will have received ₹7,500 in their account, including a pre-Diwali 'bonus' announced just before the election code of conduct came into effect, with a monthly price tag of approximately ₹3,700 crore or around ₹46,000 crore annually. Maharashtra's debt projection has shot upto ₹7.8 lakh crores as a result of what a senior bureaucrat calls, 'tjori kholo' (open the treasury) politics.

There are three ways to look at the Ladki Bahin Yojana. The first is to see it as clever politics designed to catch the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi completely off guard. The defeat in the Lok Sabha elections, where the ruling alliance won just 17 of the 48 seats, prompted the Eknath Shinde government to look for new ways to attract key groups. Women and youth were the two target vote banks, one given cash hand-outs, the other a 'Ladka Bhau' cash assistance stipend for unemployed youth needing financial help. If in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the Opposition made 'samvidhan khatre main hai' (Constitution in danger) its calling card, now the Shinde government has managed to at least temporarily reset the narrative around its cash-driven schemes.

Alternately, the Ladki Bahin



Rajdeep Sardesai

IF THE NETAS THOUGHT THEY WERE BEING WILY, THE CANNY VOTERS MAY WELL OUTSMART THEM IN THE END!

Financing Food Security

Although enough food is produced to feed the global population, hunger and malnutrition due to conflict, poverty, economic slow-downs, and climate change still threaten millions of lives. In 2023, around 2.3 billion people faced moderate or severe food insecurity and more than 730 million people suffered from hunger, with undernutrition linked to almost one-half of deaths of children under age five.

Beyond the profound human toll, hunger costs developing countries billions of dollars in lost productivity and consumption. With such staggering costs, food insecurity was at the top of the agenda at this month's World Food Forum in Rome.

We urgently must address the roots of hunger and malnutrition, and one of the most effective ways to do that is to invest in making our agrifood systems more efficient, fair, and sustainable. That means improving their infrastructure and services that help farmers access markets; mobilizing investments to enhance storage and port facilities, irrigation systems, and other sources of productivity; and expanding the use of climate-conscious production techniques. Each would have a huge impact on food security, both now and in the future.

But every component of this agenda requires more financing. According to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World, a regular report produced by the five leading UN agencies working on this issue, trillions of dollars are needed to end hunger and malnutrition. Given the complex links between hunger, poverty, and development, the latest report calls for a more efficient use of innovative financing tools such as green or social bonds, and for reforming how we finance food security more broadly. We must do more to ensure that marginalized groups – such as women, indigenous peoples, and small-scale farmers and agribusinesses – have access to finance.

The European Investment Bank, the bank of the European Union, has deep experience in financing investments all the way down the agriculture and bioeconomy value chain. Each year, it lends about €5 billion (\$5.5 billion) to the sector globally.

For example, the European Investment Bank recently invested in infrastructure in Tunisia to strengthen food-storage systems and mitigate the risk of cereal shortages triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It works with local banks to support smallholder farmers and provide microfinance in countries such as Uganda. It has deployed risk-sharing facilities in Malawi and Zambia, and provided guarantees to financial institutions that lend to companies sourcing raw materials from smallholders. And it is supporting a social enterprise in Madagascar that will help promote environmental sustainability and food security, while ensuring that farmers get decent incomes.

The problem is that countries with the highest levels of food insecurity often have the hardest time accessing financing. Among the biggest obstacles are high transaction costs, fragmented agriculture markets, insecure land rights, poor administrative capacity, weak governance, and political instability.

One of the keys to overcoming these hurdles is to pursue stronger international partnerships. That is why the European Investment Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and other international organizations are working together closely to promote food security, environmental sustainability, and climate resilience. By pooling resources and experience, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, we can overcome the chronic financing challenges.

For example, by drawing on the expertise and convening power of FAO, we can provide more funding for agrifood and bioeconomy activities. In 2023 alone, the FAO Investment Centre helped mobilize \$6.6 billion in new investment by designing 38 public investment projects backed by financing partners in 26 countries. And this came on top of implementation support to ongoing projects, representing a total of around \$46.7 billion.

But scaling up such financing requires the right kind of tools, not least financial products that reduce risk for the private sector. For example, blended finance – which combines public and private funds – and innovative financing mechanisms like climate bonds can make these investments more attractive to capital that is still sitting on the sidelines.

Feeding the world is not just a moral responsibility; it is a strategic imperative. Hunger is an immediate global crisis that demands massive investments. Fortunately, the potential rewards are well worth it. Sustainable agrifood systems do far more than simply reduce poverty and hunger. They also create jobs, promote economic growth, reduce gender inequality, improve health, and build stronger communities. The return is enormous, and the cost of doing nothing is even greater.

Gelsomina Vigliotti is Vice President of the European Investment Bank. Maurizio Martina is Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

WISDOM CORNER

- Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning. ALBERT EINSTEIN
- Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships. STEPHEN COVEY
- Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired, and success achieved. HELEN KELLER

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1415: English triumph at Agincourt. On this day in 1415, the English army, led by Henry V, scored a decisive victory over the French at the Battle of Agincourt during the Hundred Years' War, paving the way for further English conquests and successes.
- 1936: Germany and Italy established the Rome-Berlin Axis.
- 1940: American military officer Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., became the first African American general in the U.S. Army when he was promoted to brigadier general.
- 1950: China entered the Korean War on the side of North Korea against South Korea and the United Nations (UN), the United States being the UN's principal participant.



Gelsomina Vigliotti & Maurizio Martina

Hunger is an immediate global crisis that demands massive investments. Fortunately, the potential rewards are well worth it. Sustainable agrifood systems do far more than simply reduce poverty and hunger. They also create jobs, promote economic growth, reduce gender inequality, improve health, and build stronger communities

SPECTRUM DEVELOPMENT

Poverty and conflict zones



SN Tripathy

APPROXIMATELY 40 PER CENT OF THE GLOBAL POOR, OR 455 MILLION PEOPLE, RESIDE IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS

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

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The recent Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2024, released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), reveals that over 1.1 billion people worldwide live in acute poverty, with India accounting for the largest share of poor people, followed by Pakistan. The report identifies India as home to 234 million individuals living in poverty, making it the country with the highest number of poor people. It is followed by Pakistan with 93 million, Ethiopia with 86 million, Nigeria with 74 million, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo with 66 million. These five countries account for nearly 48.1 per cent of the world's poor population.

The findings highlight that poverty remains widespread in regions with low Human Development Index (HDI) scores. India is categorised as a medium-HDI country, while the other

four are low-HDI countries. The report underlines that children are disproportionately affected, with approximately 584 million children under the age of 18 living in extreme poverty, representing 27.9 per cent of all children globally. In contrast, 13.5 per cent of the world's adult population faces extreme poverty. Remarkably, 83.2 per cent of the world's poorest people reside in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, regions long recognised for their persistent development challenges.

The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index also examines the distribution of poverty across income groups, showing that low-income countries, which make up only 10.2 per cent of the global population, are home to 34.8 per cent of the world's poor – around 400 million people. Meanwhile, middle-income countries, which account for a more significant portion of the global population, host 65.2 per cent of poor people, or about 749 million individuals.

The report places particular emphasis on the link between poverty and conflict. The year 2023 witnessed the highest number of ongoing conflicts since World War II, leading to widespread displacement and heightened vulnerability. More than 117 million people were forced to flee their homes due to violent conflict, natural disasters, or other crises. Approximately 40 per cent of the global poor, or 455 million people, reside in conflict-affected areas. This includes 218 million individuals in active war zones, 335 million in fragile or conflict-affected regions, and 375 million in areas characterised by low levels of peace.

One of the most alarming examples of this phenomenon is the ongoing conflict in Gaza, which has caused severe internal displacement. By the end of 2023, an estimated 83 per cent of Gaza's population had been internally displaced, exacerbated by the destruction of over 60 per cent of its housing stock. This has left millions of individuals with-

out access to necessities and further deepened the region's poverty crisis.

Since 2010, the UNDP and OPHI have published the Multidimensional Poverty Index annually, gathering data from 112 countries, covering a total population of 6.3 billion. The index is based on multiple indicators, including inadequate housing, sanitation, electricity, cooking fuel, nutrition, and school attendance. These indicators provide a comprehensive measure of poverty beyond income alone, offering a nuanced understanding of the diverse challenges faced by the world's poorest populations.

The 2024 report's findings highlight the urgent need for global action to resolve the root causes of poverty, particularly in conflict-affected regions, and to protect vulnerable populations, especially children.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.

Citizenship & identity

Sir, The issue of Bangladeshi immigrants in Assam has been a deeply rooted and long-standing problem, stemming from the migration that followed Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971. Thousands of people fled to India, particularly Assam, to escape the conflict. Over the years, this influx of people significantly altered the demographic composition of Assam, creating tensions among the local population who feared losing their cultural and linguistic identity. The concern grew over time as more migrants continued to settle in the state, many without proper legal documentation, raising the question of their citizenship status. To address this, the Indian government introduced the Assam Accord in 1985, which sought to resolve the citizenship issue. Under this agreement, Section 6A was added to the Indian Constitution, which granted citizenship to those who had entered Assam before January 1, 1966, and allowed those who came between 1966 and 1971 to apply for citizenship after a period of registration. However, those who arrived after March 24, 1971, would be considered illegal immigrants and subject to deportation. The Assam Accord aimed to balance the rights of indigenous people while providing a framework for regularising migrants, but it left several issues unresolved. The Supreme Court of India recently upheld the validity of Section 6A, stating that it did not violate the Constitution's core principles of protecting linguistic and cultural heritage. The court ruled that there was no substantial evidence to prove that the migrants had significantly harmed Assam's language or culture.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

Let secularism prevail

Sir, This refers to the Supreme Court's recent remark that secularism is one of the basic features of the Constitution and that it brooks no change, is most welcome. This should be music to all right-thinking Indians. We need secularism not only in our Constitution as a legal bulwark against right wingers, but we need secularism in all walks of life, in our interactions with other human beings. As Manuel Valls, the French-Spanish politician, has rightly said: "Secularism must be applied everywhere, because that is how everyone will be able to live in peace with each other."

Avinash Godbole, DEWAS (MP)

Parties give chance to kin of leaders

ALL IN THE FAMILY MOST OF THE PROMINENT POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE STATE HAVE SO FAR DECLARED AT LEAST THE FIRST LIST OF THEIR CANDIDATES FOR THE NOVEMBER 20 ELECTIONS TO 288 ASSEMBLY SEATS

Mumbai, Oct 24: While political parties often accuse rivals of dynastic politics, during elections, they do not shy away from fielding relatives of their established leaders - as the lists of candidates for the next month's Maharashtra Assembly polls show.

Most of the prominent political parties in the state have so far declared at least the first list of their candidates for the November 20 elections to 288 Assembly seats. From the ruling side, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena, Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party have declared the first list of candidates, while from the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) has come out with the first list so far. Their lists show that a significant number of contenders are closely related to the current ministers, legislators or MPs, including their sons or daughters, wives and brothers or sisters. Sreejaya Chavan, the daughter of former chief minister and Congress turncoat Ashok Chavan who joined the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, is among the kin of a political heavyweight picked by the saffron party for the November 20 contest. She will contest from the family's traditional constituency of Bhokar in Nanded district. Vinod Shelar, the brother of Mumbai BJP chief Ashish Shelar, has been fielded by the party from the Malad West constituency, while Ashish himself has been re-nominated from the Bandra West seat in Mumbai. The BJP has replaced its sitting MLA Babanrao Pachpute from the Shrigonda Assembly constituency (in Ahilyanagar district) with his wife, Pratibha Pachpute, due to his health issues. The saffron party has dropped the name of Ganpat Gaikwad, its

MAHARASHTRA POLLS



MLA from Kalyan East constituency in Thane district, and instead nominated his wife, Sulabha, to contest from the same constituency. Gaikwad is currently in jail for opening fire on a Shiv Sena worker inside a police station a few months ago. Former Union minister and Lok Sabha member Narayan Rane's son, Nitesh, currently represents the Kankavli Assembly segment. His elder brother, Nilesh, a former Lok Sabha member, has now joined the ruling Shiv Sena and is set to contest from the Kudal constituency, which falls under the family's home district of Sindhudurg. In Chinchwad constituency in Pune district, the BJP replaced sitting MLA Ashwini Jagtap, the wife of late party leader Laxman Jagtap, but gave ticket to his brother Shankar Jagtap. This is his first election.

Candidate lists show that a significant number of contenders are closely related to the current ministers, legislators or MPs, including their sons or daughters, wives and brothers or sisters

Shinde-led Sena has nominated Kiran Samant, the brother of state minister Uday Samant, from the Rajapur seat in Ratnagiri district. The family members of Shiv Sena leaders Sandipan Bhumare and Ravindra Waikar, who became members of the Lok Sabha after this year's general elections, have also been given a chance by the party from the respective constituencies that the two former MLAs represented. While Bhumare's son Vilas will contest from the Paithan in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district, Waikar's wife Manisha will test electoral waters from the Jogeshwari East Assembly seat. The ruling NCP already nominated Pankaj Bhujbal as the party MLC earlier this month. He is the son of senior party leader Chhagan Bhujbal, who is contesting from the Yeola Assembly segment in Nashik district. But since Bhujbal's nephew Sameer is keen on contesting the election, he will fight as an

independent candidate against Sena's incumbent MLA Suhas Kande from Nandgaon constituency in Nashik. Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena (UBT) has renominated sitting MLA Aaditya Thackeray from the Worli seat in Mumbai, while his cousin Varun Sardesai will contest his maiden election from Bandra East. The Sena (UBT) also decided to give ticket to sitting MLA Sunil Raut, brother of the party's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut from Vikroli seat in Mumbai. Although the NCP (SP) has not announced its list of candidates so far, Rohit Patil, son of former home minister late R R Patil, filed his nomination as an NCP (SP) candidate from Tasgaon-Kavathe Mahankal constituency in Sangli district Thursday. According to party insiders, Rohit Pawar, the grandnephew of Sharad Pawar and sitting MLA from Karjat Jambhed Assembly seat in Ahilyanagar, is most likely to be renominated from the constituency. Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray, who never contested election, has fielded his son Amit from Mahim Assembly seat in Mumbai. It will be his maiden election.

BANGALORE BUILDING COLLAPSE

K'taka CM announces ₹5L ex-gratia



THE BUILDING COLLAPSE INCIDENT, WHICH CLAIMED EIGHT LIVES, WAS NOT DUE TO THE IMPACT OF RAIN, BUT OWING TO SHODDY CONSTRUCTION WORK, THE CM SAYS

Bangalore, Oct 24: Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Thursday announced an ex-gratia of ₹5 lakh each to the next of kin of each deceased in a building collapse here, and said the government will bear the full medical expenses of those injured. Faced with criticism over his government's handling of the situation in the rain-battered city, he said the worst-hit Yelahanka received 170 mm rainfall on a single day. It was the first time such a very heavy rain lashed the area in 125 years, but his government is not shedding responsibility citing record rains, and efforts are on to restore normalcy. The building collapse incident, which claimed eight lives, was not due to the impact of rain, but owing to shoddy construction

work, the CM said, adding, the building was constructed in a revenue layout unauthorisedly without taking any licence, and officials are being held responsible for it. Siddaramaiah said eight people have been rescued. Three of the six injured are in a serious condition but all of them are out of danger. Speaking to reporters after visiting the building collapse site at Babusapalya near Hennur, he said next of kin of those killed would be given an ex-gratia of ₹5 lakh each -- ₹two lakh by the Labour Department and ₹3 lakh by the city civic body Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). The government is also thinking about giving ex-gratia to those injured, he added. The Chief Minister also visited the hospital where they are being treated. "The money is not equivalent to the lives lost, but compensation has to be given as the deceased are labourers. All necessary arrangements will be made to send the bodies to their native places," he said.

The Chief Minister noted that the concerned Assistant Executive Engineer of the area has been suspended after the building collapse. "I have said the notice should be given to the zonal officer -- an IAS officer and also to the Executive Engineer of the area," he said. Siddaramaiah appealed to the citizens to construct the houses in accordance with the law and not by violating it. Also, constructions should be stopped once notice is issued by the authorities. "In this case the work was not stopped, which has led to this unfortunate incident." "This (building) collapse is not due to rain, but due to shoddy construction," he said. The Chief Minister said he has instructed the BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath that no unauthorised constructions should be allowed for any reason, and in case unauthorised constructions are undertaken the Assistant Executive Engineers, the Executive Engineers and the Zonal officers would be held responsible.

The money is not equivalent to the lives lost, but compensation has to be given as the deceased are labourers. All necessary arrangements will be made to send the bodies to their native places

SIDDARAMAIAH | CM, KARNATAKA

HC halts destruction of seized artworks by Souza, Padamsee

Mumbai, Oct 24: The Bombay High Court has restrained until further orders the Customs department from destroying artworks by renowned artists FN Souza and Akbar Padamsee seized last year on the ground of being "obscene material". A division bench of Justices MS Sonak and Jitendra Jain Monday reserved its order on a petition filed by a firm, BK Polimex India Pvt Ltd, owned by city-based businessman and art connoisseur Mustafa Karachiwala. The petitioner claimed the impugned order confiscating the artworks, which had been acquired by him, was arbitrary and illegal and deserves to be quashed. The HC said, "The respondents (Customs department) are restrained from destroying the artworks confiscated pursuant to the impugned order dated July 1, 2024 until further orders."



The plea said the seized goods order contained artworks of renowned artists FN Souza and Akbar Padamsee, who have been awarded prestigious awards by the Indian government. The petition, filed through advocates Shreyas Shrivastava and Shradha Swarup, questioned how the Customs department could consider their artwork as obscene. "The subject work of art is a national treasure of modern art which needs to be given its due recognition. However, the Customs officials have failed to understand the significance of

the art and failed to differentiate between art and obscenity," the plea said. It said the order for seizing the artwork was violative of fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of India. The Customs ought not to have passed such an order when its officials have no understanding or qualification on art, it contended. "The Customs officials having no understanding or expertise in the field of art, have failed to differentiate between a work of art and obscene work. Every nude drawing or painting do not come under the ambit of obscene material," the petition said. The plea sought that the confiscation order be quashed and the artwork be released. Both Souza and Padamsee were part of the Progressive Artists' Group that introduced European modernism to Indian art, and their works are among the most coveted by collectors in India.



People use a makeshift raft, made from a PVC door, to cross a waterlogged area after Doddabommasandra lake overflowed following heavy downpour, at Sai Layout in Bangalore

IIT Bombay set for ₹2,000-crore infra development plan

Mumbai, Oct 24: The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay Thursday said it is planning to expand its built-up area by over 75 per cent to 16 lakh sq metres to accommodate increasing number of students and introduce flipped classrooms to maximise learning. The institute has also procured world-class instruments worth ₹500 crore for research and development, it said. In line with the observation made in the IIT Bombay Institute Review 2018-2022, conducted between October 2023 and January 2024, the institute has been expanding its space, IIT Bombay director Prof Shireesh Kedare told reporters. "The expansion will be vertical due to space restraints and we aim to keep the trees and maintain ecology. We are planning to increase our built-up area from the current 9 lakh sq metres to 16 lakh square metres, which is an increase of over 75 per cent, to accommodate the increasing number of students, faculty and programs. We expect to overcome all the bottlenecks that we are facing in the next 3-5 years," he said. This includes expansion of the students' accommodation from the current 12,000 rooms to 16,000 rooms in 2-3 years, Prof Kedare stated. "With rapid expansion and increased diversity, there have been infrastructural constraints. These expansions are in line with the recommendations outlining a comprehensive roadmap for IITB's continued growth and leadership in academia, research, and societal impact," he added. Besides, IIT Bombay has procured instruments and equipment worth ₹500 crore, including liquid helium, high performance computing (HPC), nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), among others, to provide world class facilities in order to enhance application-related research.

BEACH & BOOZE

DISTRICT OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO IDENTIFY GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE LANDS NEAR BEACHES TO PROMOTE TENT TOURISM IN THE STATE

Mangaluru (Karnataka) Oct 24: Now, the Karnataka government wants to go the Goa way and relax rules when it comes to alcohol consumption. Insisting that beach and booze equal more tourists, the officials are considering proposals to put up shacks selling alcohol as well as tented accommodations on the beaches in an effort to boost tourism. Karnataka's coastline is about 320km and has nearly 90 sandy beaches. Although some, like Om beach in Gokarna and Malpe beach in Udupi are popular among tourists, they are not as famous as Goan beaches because of various restrictions. People are not allowed to drink alcohol as freely as in Goa and, on top of

that, they are not allowed to linger past 9 pm. Speaking at the 'Connect 2024', an interactive session with the various stakeholders of travel, tourism and hospitality industry of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts, Rajendra KV, Tourism department's director, emphasised that it is necessary to keep up with changing times and demands to attract tourists. Connect 2024 was held in Mangaluru Wednesday. "We need to relax restrictions on alcohol consumption along the beaches of Karnataka. This may bring more tourists just like in Goa," he added. According to him, to enhance safety and encourage people to spend more time at the beaches during the night, the department is contemplating installation of additional lights along the coast. District officials have also been instructed to identify government and private lands near beaches to promote tent tourism



in the state. Rajendra also revealed that a facilitation centre would soon be established to expedite approvals for tourism projects, including CRZ (Coastal Regulation

- Karnataka considers allowing tents and alcohol sales on beaches to boost tourism, similar to Goa
- Officials plan to relax alcohol consumption rules and extend beach access hours to late night
- Efforts include enhancing safety with additional lights, identifying land for tent tourism, and expediting project approvals
- New guidelines for coastal tourism will be set in the upcoming policy

include specific guidelines for coastal tourism. Deputy Commissioner of Dakshina Kannada, Mullai Muhilan, said tourists should be allowed access to beaches late at night. "Restaurant and licensed business operating hours in Mangalore city have already been extended to 1am and the same should apply to beach-side properties as well," he added. He further stated that discussions would be held with the Police department to resolve issues regarding the current restrictions on beach access after 9pm and appropriate action would be taken.

Karnataka's coastline is about 320km and has nearly 90 sandy beaches

Zone) permissions. He added that the new tourism policy will

national

of the day quote

I seek your cooperation. Be alert. If the police or the administration ask you to evacuate a place, please pay heed to their advice. Do not venture into the waters. Fishing is prohibited now

India progressed rapidly on the path of development in the past five years, while Jharkhand moved backwards during the same period

Delhi burns unnecessary fuel for hours at traffic signals, and we are working to reduce this through public participation

SHORT TAKES

Jamia Millia Islamia gets new VC

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu Thursday appointed Mazhar Asif as the vice chancellor of the Jamia Millia Islamia, according to Union Ministry of Education officials. Asif is currently a professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University's (JNU) School of Languages. "The president, in her capacity as the visitor of Jamia Millia Islamia, has appointed Professor Mazhar Asif, School of Languages, JNU, as the vice chancellor of Jamia for five years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier," a ministry official said. Asif, a JNU alumnus, was a member of the drafting committee for the new National Education Policy, 2020. The Jamia vice chancellor post fell vacant in November 2023 when previous VC Najma Akhtar's tenure came to an end.

Soren file nominations

Ranchi: Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren of the JMM, Leader of the Opposition Amar Kumar Bauri of the BJP and other Assembly poll candidates filed their nomination papers Thursday. The CM filed his nomination from the Barhait constituency, while his MLA wife Kalpana Soren submitted the documents for the Gandey Assembly seat. "I got the great privilege of filing my nomination papers from Barhait Assembly constituency, the revolutionary land of immortal martyrs Sido-Kanu, Phulo-Jhano and Chand-Bhairav," Soren said in a post on X.

MP: SUV turns into ball of fire

Morena (MP): Three persons travelling in a Sports Utility Vehicle got out in the nick of time before the SUV burst into flames on a busy road in Morena city of Madhya Pradesh Thursday, police said. The incident took place at around 2.30 pm when the SUV was on its way to Morena from Gwalior, they said.

Farmers to block roads

Chandigarh: Kisan Mazdoor Morcha (KMM) leader Sarwan Singh Pandher Thursday said farmers will resort to a road blockade at a few places in Punjab for an indefinite period from October 26 to protest against the "tardy" paddy procurement and other issues. Pandher said the "chakka jam" for an indefinite period will be held at one place each in Sangrur and Moga districts and at Paghara and Batala.



In the next 20 years, we might need another 4,000 aircraft to cater to the demand of the Indian aviation sector
K RAMMOOHAN NAIDU | UNION MINISTER

ATISHI KICKS OFF DELHI STATE SCHOOL GAMES

Chief Minister Atishi Thursday inaugurated the Delhi State School games at the Chhatrasal Stadium, with a message of hope and encouragement for young athletes. Addressing the event, Atishi expressed her belief that the participating students have the potential to compete in the Asian Games and Olympics



Omar Abdullah meets PM Modi

New Delhi, Oct 24: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday during his first visit to the national capital after assuming office last week, officials said.

In a remarkable victory in the recent Assembly polls in the union territory, the first in 10 years, Abdullah's National Conference won 42 of the 90 Assembly seats. In its first Cabinet meeting, the new government passed a resolution urging the central government to restore the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir.

This restoration, according to the officials, is seen as a crucial step towards initiating a healing process, reinstating constitutional rights and safeguarding the unique identity of the region's residents. The Chief Minister has been authorised by the cabinet to engage with the Prime Minister and the central government to advocate for the reinstatement of Jammu and Kashmir's statehood.



This resolution was also approved by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. Abdullah's meeting with Modi comes four days after terrorists of banned Lashkar-e-Taiba gunned down seven people - a local doctor and six non-local labourers - in Ganderbal district's Gagangir. Earlier in the day, Abdullah met Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari at his office. During the meeting, Abdullah apprised Gadkari about the road connectivity projects in Jammu and Kashmir, the officials said. The chief minister presented Gadkari with a traditional Kashmiri shawl. Abdullah had met Union Home Minister Amit Shah Wednesday and the meeting lasted nearly 30 minutes.

Govt asks Meta, X to identify those behind bomb hoaxes

Sources in the know said the government has also asked top multinational technology conglomerates to cooperate with it in helping identify those behind such hoax calls, saying this involves public good



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 24: The government has asked social media platforms Meta and X to share data about hoax bomb threat messages to airlines and has started identifying those behind such activities, even as more than 80 flights received the threats Thursday.

Sources in the know said the government has also asked top multinational technology conglomerates to cooperate with it in helping identify those behind such hoax calls, saying this involves public good.

In 11 days, more than 250 flights operated by the Indian carriers have received bomb threats. Most of the threats were issued through social media.

According to the top government sources, the government has traced some of the culprits and that action is being taken accordingly.

However, they did not provide specific details like from where these hoax messages came from and who were behind them.

"The government has told social media companies Meta and X to share data pertaining to such hoax calls and messages

"The government has told social media companies Meta and X to share data pertaining to such hoax calls and messages made on their platforms targeting several airlines and asked them to cooperate," sources said

made on their platforms targeting several airlines and asked them to cooperate," one of the sources said.

The source also said "they will have to cooperate and provide data since this involves public good at large".

This was in response to a query on whether the social media companies are cooperating with the government or not on the issue.

More than 80 domestic and international flights of various Indian airlines received bomb threats Thursday, sources

said. The sources said around 20 flights each of Air India, Vistara, and IndiGo got bomb threats while Akasa Air got the threats for 13 flights. Besides, around 5 flights each of Alliance Air and SpiceJet received the threats, they added.

An IndiGo spokesperson in a statement Thursday said it received security-related alerts for 20 flights.

As many as 13 flights of Akasa Air operating Thursday received security alerts and that after thorough inspections, all the aircraft concerned were released for operations, an airline spokesperson said.

"The airport services teams at all impacted airports coordinated with local authorities to ensure efficient handling of the situation including safe deplaning of passengers, assistance and refreshments as required," the spokesperson said in a statement.

In a statement, a Vistara spokesperson said that a few of its flights Thursday received security threats on social media.

At least six flights to and from Kochi airport received bomb threats Thursday. It included one SpiceJet flight from Dubai to Kochi, airport sources said. An unidentified caller Wednesday threatened to blow up the Dumna airport at Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, which turned out to be a hoax, a police officer said.

Earlier this week, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoohan Naidu said the government plans to take legislative actions to deal with instances of bomb threats to airlines, including placing perpetrators of such threats in the no-fly list.

SNIPPETS

SAD to stay away from Punjab Assembly bypolls

Chandigarh: The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) Thursday said it will not contest the November 13 Punjab Assembly bypolls. The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the SAD's working committee and district presidents here. The development comes a day after SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal failed to get any temporary relief from the Akal Takht, which has declared him "tankhaiya" (person guilty of religious misconduct), for the "mistakes" committed by his party and government from 2007 to 2017.

UP bypolls: Congress not to field candidates

New Delhi: The Congress announced Thursday that it would not field candidates in the nine Assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh where bypolls are being held and would support INDIA bloc nominees. Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here along with the Congress' Uttar Pradesh chief Ajay Rai, AICC general secretary Avinash Pande said party workers and leaders would unconditionally work to ensure the victory of Samajwadi Party candidates or that of other INDIA bloc parties. He said the prevailing political circumstances were not about strengthening the organisation or the party but about protecting the Constitution. He asserted that it was not about seats but victory on these seats.

J&K: Two Army porters killed in terror attack

Srinagar: Two porters working with the Army were killed Thursday while four people, including three soldiers, were injured as terrorists attacked a vehicle of the force six kilometres from tourist hotspot Gulmarg in north Kashmir, officials said here. They said the terrorists opened fire on the Army vehicle in the Bota Pathri area in the evening, when it was headed for the Nagin post in the Afrawat range. Citing initial reports, the officials said two porters were killed while another porter and three soldiers were injured. The condition of two of the injured soldiers was stated to be critical and additional troops have been rushed to the area, they said. The officials said the soldiers who were in the vehicle opened retaliatory fire when they came under attack.



A security personnel keeps vigil after the recent spate of terror attacks in the valley in Srinagar

Majority in survey support smoke-free public places in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 24: Nearly 93 per cent respondents in a survey have favoured making public spaces completely smoke-free while 97 per cent have pitched for declaring airports completely smoke-free, similar to railway stations.

A recent poll conducted by the citizen-led initiative "Tobacco Free India", which garnered more than 65,000 responses, highlights the growing concern among Indians about the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. The survey has revealed that an astounding 92.72 per cent respondents are in favour of making public spaces completely smoke-free.

Conducted in both Hindi and

English, the poll included six key questions about smoke-free public places and the health risks associated with second-hand smoke. Across all questions, the majority supported stricter measures to protect women, children and other vulnerable groups from exposure to toxic tobacco smoke in public areas, such as restaurants, hotels and airports.

"While the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003 bans smoking in public places, it still permits designated smoking areas in airports, hotels with 30 or more rooms and restaurants with seating capacities above 30," said Dr Uma Kumar, head of the rheumatology department at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) here.



"This situation continues to pose a significant public health threat. Scientific evidence has unequivocally demonstrated that second-hand smoke can easily penetrate these designated areas, exposing non-smokers to harmful toxins and increasing their risk

Launched October 2, coinciding with the 15th anniversary of India's smoke-free rules, the poll comes at a pivotal time

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has proposed amendments to the COTPA to remove smoking zones altogether -- a move strongly supported by the public, as evidenced by the poll results

of various diseases," she said. The poll was conducted between October 2 and October 19 on X, involving 65,272 participants. While India has made significant strides in tobacco control -- strictly prohibiting smoking on trains, platforms and station

premises as well as banning carrying or sale of tobacco products in railway campuses -- the continued presence of smoking areas in airports remains a concern, said international wrestler Sangram Singh.

"These designated areas, often placed in prominent and attractive locations, seem to invite people to smoke. The presence of smoking zones in places like airports often sends an inviting message to smoke, undermining public health efforts," emphasised Singh, a "Fit India" brand ambassador.

"The overwhelming support for smoke-free public places demonstrates a growing awareness among Indians about the dangers of second-hand smoke. It is a powerful message that re-

flects our nation's commitment to protecting public health," Kumar said. Dr Colonel Shekhar Kashyap, a renowned cardiologist, said, Nicotine is a highly-dangerous and addictive substance that poses serious risks to cardiovascular health and overall well-being. Consumed first hand or second hand, nicotine is equally harmful and can lead to a range of debilitating diseases."

Launched October 2, coinciding with the 15th anniversary of India's smoke-free rules, the poll comes at a pivotal time. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has proposed amendments to the COTPA to remove smoking zones altogether -- a move strongly supported by the public, as evidenced by the poll results.

national

of the day quote

The Hemant Soren coalition government is deadlier than 'Dana'. While the severe cyclonic storm will disappear after two days, the Hemant Soren government, if voted to power again, will wreak havoc and destruction

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | UNION MINISTER

Works for various on-going infrastructure developmental projects and 15 Final location surveys in South Central Railway (SCR) jurisdiction has been undertaken with a cost of around ₹83,000 crore

G KISHAN REDDY | UNION MINISTER

Each one of you is gifted in unique ways and I am confident that, with the right support, guidance and opportunities, you will achieve great things in life

SHIV PRATAP SHUKLA | HP GOVERNOR

X POST OF THE DAY

Putin used Shah Jahan's Taj Mahal to represent India in a special symbolic BRICS Currency. Bhakts wont be able to digest this

@RoshanKrRai

SHORT TAKES

Man stabbed to death in Delhi

New Delhi: A 38-year-old man was stabbed to death while trying to stop a snatcher from taking his friend's phone in the Karol Bagh area here, police said Thursday. The incident occurred on the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday, police said.

Arunachal govt hikes DA

Itanagar: The Arunachal Pradesh government has announced a 3 per cent increase in Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR) for its regular employees and pensioners, respectively, with effect from July 1. There are 68,818 regular employees in the northeastern state. With the revision, the DA and DR will rise from 50 per cent to 53 per cent, providing enhanced financial support.

J'khand: 4 killed in road accident

Medininagar (Jharkhand): At least four persons died and three others were injured after a four-wheeler overturned in Jharkhand's Palamu district, police said Thursday. The incident occurred Wednesday night near Urur forest under Manatu police station area, around 165 km from Ranchi. "The vehicle overturned, killing four persons and injuring three others. The injured have been admitted to a local hospital," a police officer said.

Railways to run 7K special trains

New Delhi: The Indian Railways will run 7,000 special trains for Diwali and Chhath Puja this year to facilitate two lakh extra passengers daily, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said at a press briefing here Thursday. According to railway officials, 4,500 special trains were run during Diwali and Chhath Puja last year to cater to the festive rush.



Even after the passage of one year, the Delhi government has neither undertaken any exercise for their engagement nor come up with a scheme for their re-engagement as per law

VK SAXENA | DELHI LT GOVERNOR

SIDDARAMAIAH LAUNCHES 'GRUHA AROGYA' INITIATIVE

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Thursday launched the "Gruha Arogya": "Healthcare at Your Doorstep" initiative, aimed at providing free health check-ups and treatment to citizens at their homes



SEBI chief skips PAC meeting

SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch's absence leads to adjournment of PAC meeting, BJP members complain to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 24: SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch skipped a Parliament's Public Accounts Committee meeting Thursday, prompting panel head K C Venugopal to postpone the sitting, with NDA members accusing him of taking unilateral decisions and lodging a protest with the Lok Sabha Speaker.

The committee's proceedings remained deadlocked even during its second sitting, where the TRAI chairperson appeared briefly, amid the NDA members' persistent demand that Venugopal allow a vote on agenda items like summoning the heads of regulatory bodies, an idea opposed by the MPs from the Congress and its allies.

Venugopal, a senior Congress member, insisted that there cannot be any voting on the subjects already approved by the committee, keeping open the possibility of calling Buch again, sources said.

Buch, the sources said, in one of her communications to the PAC chairperson also referred to the Hindenburg issue and made some points. Some members of the committee were left surprised as the panel has so far made no official mention of the contentious issue.



During the afternoon sitting, BJP member Nishikant Dubey cited parliamentary rules to move a motion to drop five of the 161 subjects selected by the committee for its annual agenda, and called for a vote. He said these subjects fell outside the PAC's remit.

With the BJP-led NDA members in majority in the panel, the chairperson did not allow the motion, citing his powers and called the waiting Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Chairman Anil Kumar Lahoti to appear. He then called off the meeting amid continuous protests by the ruling alliance members.

As the committee met first at 11 am, heated words were exchanged between the two sides. Venugopal

charged him with acting in a "suo motu" manner, suggesting that his decision to summon Buch and even some other regulatory bodies established by the acts of Parliament was his own and guided by partisan politics.

PAC member and BJP MP Ravi Shankar Prasad told reporters that there are many standing committees that review the performance of various bodies e.g. the panel on finance scrutinises the work of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and the Reserve Bank of India. The Communication and Information Technology panel scrutinises the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, he added.

"Your (Venugopal) own words are 'suo motu'. How did you decide? The PAC's job is to consider CAG reports. We have this information from reliable sources that the CAG has made no mention of SEBI. This entire conduct is unconstitutional. The conduct of chairperson in the way he adjourned, did not allow us to speak. And (he) walked out (which) shows he has extraneous political considerations," Prasad said.

The former Law Minister said the ruling National Democratic Alliance was in a majority at Thursday's meeting.

SC: AADHAAR CARD NOT VALID DOCU TO DETERMINE AGE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 24: The Supreme Court Thursday set aside an order of the Punjab and Haryana High Court which had accepted Aadhaar card for determining the age of a road accident victim to grant compensation.

A bench comprising Justices Sanjay Karol and Ujjal Bhuyan, therefore, said the age of the deceased had to be determined from the date of birth mentioned in the school leaving certificate under Section 94 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

"We find that the Unique Identification Authority of India, by way of its circular number 8 of 2023, has stated, in reference to an office memorandum issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology dated December 20, 2018, that an Aadhaar Card, while can be used to establish identity, is not per se proof of date of birth," noted the bench.

When it came to determining the age, the top court accepted the contention of the claimant-appellants before it and upheld the judgment of the Motor Accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) which calculated the deceased's age on the basis of his school leaving certificate.

The top court was hearing an appeal filed by kin of a man who died in a road accident in 2015. MACT, Rohtak awarded a compensation of ₹19.35 lakh which was reduced to ₹9.22 lakh by the high court after noting the MACT had wrongly applied the age multiplier while determining the compensation.



A Delhi Police band performs during the All India Police Commemoration Day

Cyclone Dana: Over 2.5L evacuated in Bengal

Cyclone 'Dana' is the latest in a series of severe storms to impact India's eastern coastline in recent years, posing a significant risk to coastal communities and infrastructure

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 24: Heavy rains and gusty winds battered southern West Bengal Thursday as the state administration evacuated over 2.5 lakh people to safety in anticipation of the impending severe cyclonic storm 'Dana,' which is set to make landfall in

Odisha after midnight. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast that the cyclone is likely to make landfall between Bhitarkanika National Park and Dhamra Port late Thursday night or early Friday morning.

At 4.30 pm, the storm was located 150 km southeast of Paradip (Odisha) and 250 km south-southeast of West Bengal's Sagar Island.

In anticipation of the cyclone, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced that the state had identified more than 3.5 lakh people for evacuation from low-lying areas. As of Thursday, 243,374 people had already taken shelter in relief camps. "For evacuation from low-



lying areas, we have identified 356,941 people," Banerjee told reporters, adding that she would remain at the state secretariat overnight to monitor the situation. Chief secretary Manoj Pant and home secretary Nandini Chakraborty are also overseeing

the evacuation and relief operations. "I seek your cooperation. Be alert. If the police or the administration ask you to evacuate, please heed their advice," Banerjee said. "Do not venture into the waters. Fishing is prohibited now." South Bengal

districts, including Kolkata, Howrah, Hooghly and the 24 Parganas, have already begun experiencing moderate to heavy rains and gusty winds, with weather conditions expected to worsen. The IMD has warned of "heavy to very heavy rainfall" in these areas, with isolated places likely to see "extremely heavy downpours" over the next 48 hours.

Fishermen have been advised to stay away from the sea as wind speeds of up to 110 km/h (68 mph) are anticipated over the northwest Bay of Bengal. The storm is expected to strengthen, with winds reaching 120 km/h (75 mph) during landfall before gradually subsiding.

Post hooch tragedy, RJD & JD(U) indulge in name-calling

THE SPAT CAME CLOSE ON THE HEELS OF A HOCH TRAGEDY THAT CLAIMED NEARLY 40 LIVES LAST WEEK ACROSS THREE DISTRICTS, FLYING IN THE FACE OF CHIEF MINISTER NITISH KUMAR'S STRONG PITCH FOR "SHARAAB-BANDI" (BAN ON LIQUOR)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Oct 24: Bihar's main Opposition party RJD and the ruling JD(U) indulged in name-calling Thursday, seeking to put each other on the mat over poorly implemented prohibition law, which had come into force when the two parties were sharing power.

The spat came close on the heels of a hooch tragedy that claimed nearly 40 lives last week across three districts, flying in the face of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's strong pitch for "sharaab-bandhi" (ban on liquor).

RJD spokesman Shakti Yadav came out with a video statement, squarely blaming the Chief Minister's party for the illicit liquor trade continuing unabated despite prohibition.

"It seems JD(U) stands for 'jahaan daaru hai unlimited' (where the supply of alcohol is without limits)...How else can one explain availability of illicit liquor on such a large scale?", asked the RJD leader. Notably, sale and consumption of liquor was completely banned in Bihar in April, 2016, in keeping with an electoral promise the Chief Minister had made to the state's



women ahead of Assembly polls held in the year before.

Although RJD president Lalu Prasad has of late been claiming that he had warned Nitish Kumar

clutching hands at a human chain organised in favour of the liquor ban.

Moreover, Prasad's son and heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav was the deputy CM and his elder son Tej Pratap Yadav was a cabinet minister when the government brought in the prohibition law.

Meanwhile, hearing the RJD's latest jibe, JD(U) spokesman and MLC Neeraj Kumar sought to pay the rival back in the same coin. "If you attempt 'naamkaran' (name calling) then, beware, it may boomerang", the JD(U) leader

said in a video statement, claiming that the "RJD can be called 'rashtriya jahreela dal' (national poisonous party)". "The name would be apt for a party that has been spewing venom in the name of caste and religion and is considered synonymous with crime and corruption," he added.

Days after the death of close to 40 people for allegedly consuming spurious liquor in three districts of dry Bihar, the Patna Police have decided to invoke stringent Crime Control Act (CCA) against those involved in illicit liquor trade, a top officer said Wednesday.

international

of the day quote

We agreed that North Korea's dispatch of troops to Russia is a direct violation of UN Security Council resolutions and the UN Charter and is a provocation that goes beyond the Korean Peninsula and Europe to threaten global security

YOON SUK YEOL | PRESIDENT, SOUTH KOREA

In the immediate term, massive aid is needed for the Lebanese population, both for the hundreds of thousands of people displaced by the war and for the communities hosting them

EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

In a world where everything is bought and sold, people's sense of their worth appears increasingly to depend on what they can accumulate with the power of money

POPE FRANCIS | HEAD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

SHORT TAKES

Two arrested in Lanka over attack on Israelis

Colombo: Two persons have been arrested in Sri Lanka on suspicion of planning a terror attack on Israeli nationals in the country after India provided intelligence on the possible threat, police said Thursday. Security was beefed up in the eastern coast surfing resort of Arugam Bay following information about a possible attack in the area. Two persons have been arrested by the Terrorism Investigation Division of the police. Both arrests have come as a result of Indian intelligence information sharing over the security alert in Arugam Bay, police said. One of the suspects had arrived in the country from Iraq, it said. The police said it had received information October 7 on a possible attack and the security was strengthened in the areas two weeks ago, the police said.

LinkedIn hit with 310mn euro fine

London: European Union regulators slapped LinkedIn Thursday with a 310 million euro (\$335 million) fine for violations of the bloc's stringent data privacy rules. Ireland's Data Protection Commission reprimanded the Microsoft-owned professional social networking site over concerns about the "lawfulness, fairness and transparency" of its personal data processing for advertising purposes. The watchdog said it carried out an investigation that found LinkedIn did not have a lawful basis to gather data so it could target users with online ads, which is a breach of the privacy rules known as General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR.

Security forces kill 9 militants in Pak

Peshawar: Pakistani security forces killed nine terrorists, including two suicide bombers and a "high-value" terrorist, during an operation in the country's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the military said Thursday. The intelligence-based operation was conducted late Wednesday in the Bajaur district of the province, according to the military's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). After a fierce gunbattle, the law enforcement agency personnel killed nine terrorists. Among those killed were two suicide bombers and a terrorist ring leader who was a high-value target, the ISPR statement said.

Putin looks to expand Russia's clout

The three-day summit in the city of Kazan covers the deepening of financial cooperation, including the development of alternatives to Western-dominated payment systems, efforts to settle regional conflicts and expansion of the BRICS group of nations

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kazan, Oct 24: Russian President Vladimir Putin Thursday presided at the closing session of a summit of the BRICS bloc of developing economies, praising its role as a counterbalance to what he called the West's "perverse methods."

The three-day summit in the city of Kazan covered the deepening of financial cooperation, including the development of alternatives to Western-dominated payment systems, efforts to settle regional conflicts and expansion of the BRICS group of nations.

The alliance that initially included Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa has expanded to embrace Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates and Malaysia. Turkey, Azerbaijan and Malaysia have formally applied to become members, and several other countries have expressed interest in joining.

The summit was attended by leaders or representatives of 36 countries, highlighting the failure of US-led efforts to isolate Russia over its actions in Ukraine. The Kremlin touted the summit as "the largest foreign policy event ever held" by Russia.

Speaking at what was dubbed the "BRICS Plus" session, which included countries that are considering joining the bloc, Putin accused the West of trying to stem the growing power of the Global South with "illegal unilateral sanctions, blatant protectionism, manipulation of currency and stock markets, and relentless foreign influence ostensibly promoting democracy, human rights, and the climate change agenda."



West is trying to stem the growing power of the Global South with 'illegal unilateral sanctions, blatant protectionism, manipulation of currency and stock markets, and relentless foreign influence ostensibly promoting democracy, human rights, and the climate change agenda'

VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

"Such perverse methods and approaches to put it bluntly, lead to the emergence of new conflicts and the aggravation of old disagreements," Putin said. "One example of this is Ukraine, which is being used to create critical threats to Russia's security, while ignoring our vital interests, our just concerns, and the infringement of the rights of Russian-speaking people."

Russia has specifically pushed for the creation of a new payment system that would offer an alternative to the global bank messaging network SWIFT and allow Moscow to dodge Western sanctions and trade with partners.

In a joint declaration Wednesday, participants voiced concern about "the disruptive effect of unlawful unilateral coercive measures, including il-

In just the past week, Donald Trump has repeatedly called his fellow Americans the enemy from within, and even said that he would use the United States military to go after American citizens

KAMALA HARRIS | VICE PRESIDENT, US

COMMONWEALTH SUMMIT

The leaders of the Commonwealth grouping of nations meet Thursday ahead of a summit in the South Pacific nation of Samoa that will feature talks on climate change and the question of reparations for Britain's role in transatlantic slavery



Israeli airstrikes in Gaza school kill 17

The Israeli military says it has hit a Hamas command and control centre embedded in a compound formerly used as a school in Nuseirat



REUTERS

Cairo, Oct 24: At least 17 Palestinians, including children, were killed Thursday in an Israeli strike on a school in Nuseirat camp in the central part of the Gaza Strip, where people displaced by the fighting were sheltering, Nuseirat's Al-Awda hospital said.

The Israeli military said it had hit a Hamas command and control centre embedded in a compound formerly used as a school in Nuseirat.

Hopes that the killing of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar might provide an opening for an end to the fighting have so far been disappointed despite an international chorus urging Israel to use the opportunity.

In the northern section of the enclave, where the area around the town of Jabalia has been the target of a weeks-long operation, the military said it had evacuated large numbers of people and detained more than 200 suspected militants.

"Instead of achieving a ceasefire, war has restarted in northern Gaza. We are being besieged, starved, and hunted by the occupation from the air and from tanks," one Jabalia resident told Reuters via a chat app.

On Thursday, medics at the Indonesian Hospital, one of three facilities still operating in the area, said one of their colleagues was killed by Israeli fire and another detained on his way to work.

Health officials at the three hospitals, which say they have

run out of medical, food and fuel supplies, refused Israeli orders to evacuate the facilities or leave patients unattended.

The Civil Emergency Service said Israeli attacks on their staff caused a suspension in their operations. Three of their men were wounded and another five were arrested by the army while their only fire truck was bombed by a tank. Speaking at a new conference Thursday, the rescue service spokesman said people in those areas had been left "without humanitarian, medical or rescue services".

The operation in the north has fuelled fears among Palestinians that Israeli forces are clearing the area in order to create an uninhabited buffer zone for the military after the war or to pave the way for the return of settlers who pulled out of Gaza in 2005.

Israel has denied such plans and accuses Hamas of hindering the evacuation of civilians to provide cover for its own forces, which Hamas, in turn, denies.

As the war moves into its second year, the death toll from the Israeli campaign in Gaza is approaching 43,000, with the densely populated enclave in ruins and almost all of its population displaced.

Israel, which launched the campaign in retaliation for the Hamas-led attack on Israel last year, which killed some 1,200 people and saw more than 250 hostages taken to Gaza, has said it will continue until Hamas is dismantled completely as a military and governing power and the hostages return.

Canada MPs call for Justin Trudeau's resignation

Ottawa: Internal calls for Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's resignation as Liberal leader intensified Wednesday as Liberal MPs convened on Parliament Hill, according to a report by CBC News. During the closed-door meeting, dissenting MPs conveyed their grievances to Trudeau, reflecting growing discontent within the party. Trudeau is facing mounting pressure from within his own party, with dissenting Liberal MPs giving him an ultimatum to decide his future by October 28. Sources speaking to Radio-Canada said that 24 MPs signed an agreement to call on Trudeau to step down as Liberal leader, CBC News reported. The latest political rift in Canada has indeed been fuelled by the escalating tensions between India and Canada. The ties between India and Canada soured after Trudeau alleged in the Canadian Parliament last year that he has "credible allegations" of India's hand in the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.



Boats carrying Rohingya land in Indonesia's North Sumatra

Jakarta: About 146 Rohingya, including children, came ashore in Indonesia's North Sumatra province Thursday, an official said, the second wave of arrivals to the Southeast Asian country within a week. A boat carrying 64 men, 62 women and 20 children landed early Thursday morning, in the Deli Serdang area of North Sumatra, Raphael Sandhya Cahya Priambodo, the head of regional police, told Reuters. "The Rohingya were swimming from the boat to reach the shore," Raphael said, adding they were temporarily placed in a local administration office. "All of them survived and are now in a good condition." Their arrival came after another boat also carrying about 150 Rohingya, a minority group who have faced persecution in Myanmar, had been stranded in Indonesia's Aceh province for a week after local residents refused to let it come ashore.



Turkey strikes on PKK in Iraq, Syria

REUTERS

Ankara, Oct 24: Turkey launched fresh air strikes on Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) militants in northern Syria and Iraq overnight, killing 59 militants, in response to a gun attack that killed five people in Ankara, the Defence Ministry said Thursday.

Two assailants, a man and a woman, carried out Wednesday's assault with automatic rifles and explosives on the headquarters of Turkish Aerospace Industries (TUSAS) in Ankara. Twenty-two people were also wounded.

There has been no claim of responsibility for the attack, during which both militants were killed. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said the male attacker was confirmed to be a PKK member, while the female assailant had

ANKARA ATTACK



not yet been identified. Turkish forces struck 29 PKK targets in northern Iraq and 18 in northern Syria, Defence Minister Yasar Guler said. Later, his ministry said 59 militants, including two believed to be "high level", were "neutralised", a term usually used to mean killed.

The US-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) said Thursday that the Turkish strikes in northern and eastern Syria had killed 12 civilians, including

two children, and wounded 25 people.

Spearheaded by the Kurdish YPG and including Arab fighters, the SDF has been a major partner for the US-led coalition against Islamic State. It holds a quarter of Syria including oil fields and areas where some 900 US troops are deployed.

Turkey says the YPG is a terrorist organisation that is closely tied to the PKK. Turkey's defence ministry said every precaution had been taken to prevent harm to innocent civilians.

"No member of the treacherous terrorist organisation will be able to escape the grasp of Turkish soldiers," Guler said in a memorial ceremony at a defence industry fair in Istanbul.

"It is not a coincidence that this site was targeted," he added, referring to TUSAS.

Europe agency in talks with SpaceX on tackling space junk

THE 22-NATION AGENCY IS SPEARHEADING ONE OF SEVERAL EFFORTS TO ROLL BACK THE MASS OF SPACE JUNK SWIRLING ROUND THE PLANET FROM PAST MISSIONS THAT POSES A RISK TO ACTIVE SATELLITES

REUTERS

Paris, Oct 24: The European Space Agency is in talks with SpaceX about the possibility of Elon Musk's space venture joining an international charter designed to reduce a growing swarm of debris in space, Director General Josef Aschbacher told Reuters.

swirling round the planet from past missions that poses a risk to active satellites.

Aschbacher said 110 countries or entities have joined ESA's Zero Debris charter, which aims to stop any new orbital garbage being generated by 2030.

Asked whether SpaceX, whose satellites now make up some two thirds of spacecraft active in low Earth orbit, had signed up, Aschbacher said: "Not yet, but we are in discussion with them. This is a charter that keeps evolving and we will keep raising the topics because they are so fundamental."

SpaceX did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Of the roughly 10,300 active satellites in orbit, roughly 6,300 are part of SpaceX's fast-growing Starlink constellation, according to the US Space Force.

China has begun to launch constellations of its own to compete with Starlink, as has Amazon, which expects to launch over 3,000 satellites for its Kuiper constellation this decade.

Amazon has signed up to the charter, Aschbacher said.



There are currently 18,897 pieces of trackable space junk in orbit, according to Jonathan McDowell, a Harvard astronomer who tracks such objects.

Space debris and junk are often used interchangeably, but some consider space junk to include inactive payloads and rocket bodies as well as debris, or errant shards of broken satellites. There are no international laws on debris, but countries and space agencies have begun in recent years to devise pro-

posals and national rules for tackling the problem.

"We are not a regulatory body; we are a technical space agency," Aschbacher said.

"But the fact that we have put the charter around the table, which was elaborated with all the other partners, and that they signed up to it is very encouraging."

Commission.

A Starlink satellite is required to deorbit, or burn up in Earth's atmosphere, within five years of the end of its life.

"I think it's very important to have industry publicly commit to this sort of initiative, so I'm glad to know SpaceX is considering it," McDowell said, referring to the charter.

In 2023, SpaceX criticised a Federal Aviation Administration report warning of the risk to people from falling debris from constellations as "deeply flawed", SpaceNews reported.

Although commercial constellations dominate the spotlight, much of the growing tide of space junk is seen as driven by collisions or reports of anti-satellite missile tests.

A Chinese rocket body in August broke apart in an apparent collision with a piece of

space junk, creating one of the largest fields of debris in recent history.

According to NASA, two earlier incidents increased the junk pile by around 70%. These were the destruction of the Chinese Fengyun-1C spacecraft in 2007, which the United States said at the time was caused by a Chinese missile, and the accidental collision of a US and Russian spacecraft in 2009.

In 2021, a Russian anti-satellite missile test added at least 1,500 pieces of debris, some of which have decayed since, US Space Command said at the time.

The US in 2008 and India in 2019 both demonstrated anti-satellite missiles that added to the debris field.

The Biden administration has promoted a moratorium on such tests, with several countries signing on but not Russia or China.

of the day quote

With India's emphasis on education, upskilling and youth employment, investing in high-quality engineering and technical education is vital for our future

Access to high-quality, climate-resilient, and nutritious seeds, along with improved cultivars, is more crucial than ever

We are committed to driving the transition to electric mobility, and this partnership with MTC is a step forward in creating cleaner, more efficient transport systems

Q2 RESULTS

CPIL profit surges
New Delhi: FMCG major Colgate-Palmolive India Ltd (CPIL) Thursday reported an increase of 16.17 per cent in its net profit at ₹395.05 crore in the quarter ended September 2024, led by a broad-based growth across portfolios.

ITC profit zooms
New Delhi: Diversified entity ITC Ltd Thursday reported an 1.8 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to ₹5,054.43 crore for the second quarter ended September 2024.

ATGL profit rises
New Delhi: Adani Total Gas Ltd (ATGL), the city gas joint venture of Adani Group and French energy giant TotalEnergies, Thursday reported 6 per cent rise in second quarter net profit as higher gas price cut gains from handsome rise in CNG and piped cooking gas volumes.

OYO back in black
New Delhi: Travel tech platform OYO achieved a profit after tax of ₹158 crore in the second quarter of the current fiscal ended September, Founder Ritesh Agarwal told employees in a townhall Thursday.

IndusInd net dips
New Delhi: IndusInd Bank Thursday reported a 40 per cent decline in net profit at ₹1,331 crore for the quarter ended September 30, 2024.



Technological solutions are essential to achieving a sustainable future, but they must be integrated with the right policies and partnerships to create real-world impact

Business activity picks up slightly

HEADLINE INDEX HAS BEEN ABOVE THE 50-LEVEL SEPARATING GROWTH FROM CONTRACTION FOR 39 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS - THE LONGEST EXPANSIONARY STREAK SINCE JUNE 2013

Bangalore, Oct 24: Growth in India's business activity picked up marginally in October after softening last month, led by stronger demand in the manufacturing sector, according to a survey that also showed job creation rose at the fastest pace since February 2006.



India's flash manufacturing PMI indicated that the manufacturing industry regained growth momentum in October. Several components accelerated after a modest slowdown over the past two to three months

The business outlook over the coming year was mixed with manufacturers at their most upbeat since July, while the sentiment faded somewhat for services companies

rose slightly to 57.9 this month from 57.7. Goods production growth was at a two-month high. That's encouraging news for India's manufacturing sector which accounts for less than one-fifth of the economy.

overall exports. That prompted companies to hire more staff with overall employment generation rising at the fastest pace in around eight-and-a-half years.

HINDALCO BECOMES ICA MEMBER

Global industry body International Copper Association (ICA) has elected Aditya Birla Group firm Hindalco Industries Ltd as its newest member.



DEMAND WANES

Gold, silver retreat from record levels

New Delhi, Oct 24: Gold and silver prices retreated from record levels in the national capital Thursday due to tepid demand from jewellers, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

Taking a breather, gold prices of 99.9 per cent purity declined by ₹300 to ₹81,200 per 10 grams from the record high level of ₹81,500 per 10 grams.



In futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for December delivery appreciated ₹549 or 0.71 per cent to trade at ₹78,361 per 10 grams.

FOURTH DAY OF FALL

Foreign selling weighs on D-St

BSE SENSEX



The major headwind the market is facing now is the massive, unprecedented and sustained FII selling which has touched ₹93,088 crore through 23rd October, as per NSDL data

Mumbai, Oct 24: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty edged lower Thursday, extending their losing run to the fourth straight day due to selling in FMCG and auto shares on disappointing earnings and unabated FII outflows.

The NSE Nifty skidded 36.10 points or 0.15 per cent to 24,399.40 in a volatile trade. From the 30 Sensex pack, Hindustan Unilever fell by nearly 6 per cent after the FMCG major reported a 2.33 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at ₹2,595 crore for the second quarter ended in September 2024.

SNIPPETS

Big boost for space sector startups

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved a Venture Capital Fund worth ₹1,000 crore for the space sector startups, which is expected to support about 40 startups.

Zomato, Swiggy hike platform fee

New Delhi: Online food delivery platforms Zomato and Swiggy have hiked platform fee in certain cities in the midst of festive season.

Telcos face 'double whammy'

New Delhi, Oct 24: Telecom industry body COAI Thursday sought abolition or reduction of AGR-related fees for telcos at the earliest and pitched for lowering licence fee to 0.5-1 per cent of gross revenues.

COAI argued that with the separation of spectrum from the license and its assignment at market price, the justification for imposing licence fee had ceased to exist long back.

AI PUSH

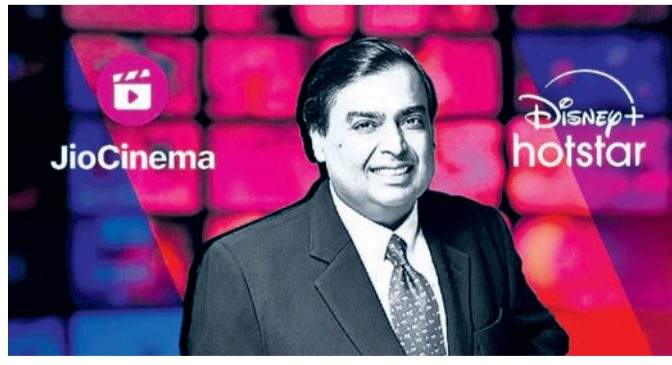
Nvidia to supply chips to Reliance, other Indian cos

Mumbai, Oct 24: Nvidia will supply artificial intelligence processors to Indian companies such as Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries, the chip giant said Thursday.

Techie snags JioHotstar domain, demands Ambani to fund studies

IN THE LETTER, THE DEVELOPER HIGHLIGHTS HIS BELIEF THAT 'JIOHOTSTAR' COULD BE THE IDEAL NAME FOR THE NEWLY MERGED ENTITY BETWEEN RELIANCE'S JIOCINEMA AND DISNEY+ HOTSTAR

New Delhi, Oct 24: A Delhi-based app developer has secured the domain name "JioHotstar.com," after reports of a potential merger between Reliance's JioCinema and Disney+ Hotstar.



after losing the IPL streaming rights and Disney's potential plans to sell or merge Hotstar with an Indian competitor.

The app developer, who prefers to remain anonymous and signed the letter as "a dreamer," explained his reasoning for purchasing the domain.

The request for ₹93,345 was turned down by Ambujesh Yadav, AVP of Commercials at Reliance. According to reports, Yadav hinted at possible legal action against the domain holder

MERGER ON VERGE

The merger between Reliance Industries' Viacom18 and Disney's Star India is expected to be finalized by early November, pending final regulatory approvals.

The lender had earned a net profit of ₹2,202 crore in the year-ago period.

A Sundar show

CAREER-BEST BOWLING FIGURES BY YOUNG ALL-ROUNDER AFTER MAKING A COMEBACK TO THE TEST TEAM

AGENCIES

Pune, Oct 24: All-rounder Washington Sundar justified his selection with a career-best 7/59 to help India bowl out New Zealand for 259, but the hosts lost skipper Rohit Sharma (0) early in their first innings when stumps were drawn on day one of the second Test, here Thursday. India crawled to 16 for one in 11 overs with Yashasvi Jaiswal (6 not out) and Shubman Gill (10 not out) at the crease, trailing by another 243 runs in the first innings. Tim Southee cleaned up Rohit for a nine-ball duck, forcing the hosts to be extra cautious. Prior to Rohit's dismissal, it was a dominating show by the Indian spin duo of Sundar and Ravindra Ashwin (3/64), who did not allow New Zealand to break free. The 25-year-old Sundar, playing his first Test for India

since March, 2021, ran through New Zealand after Ashwin claimed the first three wickets in the innings to move past his Australian peer Nathan Lyon in the list of highest wicket-takers in Tests. Ashwin began by trapping New Zealand captain Tom Latham (15) in front of the wickets and getting Will Young (18) caught behind in the first session, while Sundar took the centre-stage towards the end of the second. From 197 for four, the visitors lost their last six wickets for only 52 runs. Sundar swung the momentum in India's favour with two late wickets in the second session, including the in-form Rachin Ravindra (65, 105b, 5x4, 1x6), as New Zealand stumbled. Ravindra's dismissal close to the tea break proved instrumental as New Zealand could never recover from the blow and folded in the final session without much resistance. Of his seven dismissals in an outstanding spell on a day one wicket, Sundar showed mastery in hitting the off-stump to snare five of his victims bowled, one pinned in front of the wickets while the other caught by fellow tweaker Ashwin. Among those who were cleaned up by the Indian spinner were Ravindra, Tom Blundell (3), Mitchell Santner (33), Tim Southee (5) and Ajaz Patel (4). It was however, Santner's effort that took New Zealand past the 250-run mark. The highlight, however, was the manner in which Sundar cleaned up the in-form Ravindra, who looked good after his efforts of 134 and 39 not out in New Zealand's eight-wicket win in the opening Test. Sundar pitched the ball just perfectly to have it spinning away from Ravindra's bat and crash into the off-



Devon Conway who top-scored for New Zealand, plays a shot on the leg-side

PTI PHOTOS

Ashwin's milestone

Pune: Ravichandran Ashwin became the highest wicket-taker in the history of the ICC World Test Championships (WTC) during the second Test against New Zealand here Thursday. Ashwin achieved the milestone of 189 WTC wickets after dismissing Tom Latham, Will Young and Devon Conway. In the process he surpassed Australia's Nathan Lyon, who has 187 WTC wickets. Australia's Test captain Pat Cummins is in third place with 175 wickets.

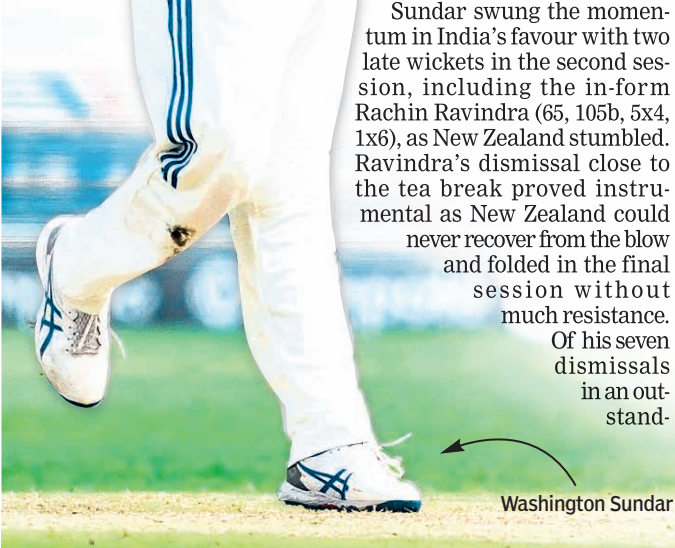
two wickets early on.

New Zealand's woes compounded when off-colour batters in skipper Latham and Daryl Mitchell continued to struggle for runs despite spending considerable time in the middle.

Talking to the broadcasting TV channel after the game, Sundar said that he just planned to bowl in the right areas. "I just focused on hitting the right areas consistently. We knew it would start spinning from day one," Sundar said. He added that he felt particularly pleased after dismissing Ravindra and Mitchell as he considers them to be good players of spin.

Brief scores

New Zealand 259 (Devon Conway 76, Rachin Ravindra 65, Washington Sundar 7/59, Ravichandran Ashwin 3/64) versus India 16 for 1.



Washington Sundar

SHORT TAKES

I-League from Nov 22

New Delhi: The 2024-25 I-League season will kick off November 22, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) announced Thursday. The opening day will feature a double-header with Sreenidi Deccan facing Gokulam Kerala in Hyderabad, and Inter Kashi hosting Sporting Club (SC) Bengaluru at Naihati in West Bengal. The 12-team I-League will run through December, January, February, and March and end April 6, 2025. Sporting Club Bengaluru and Dempo SC are the two new entrants into the country's second-tier club competition after finishing as champions and runners-up in 2023-24 I-League 2.

Record attendance

Dubai: The India-Pakistan clash in the women's T20 World Cup here October 6 set a new record for the highest attendance at a group stage match in the history of the showpiece, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said Thursday. The match at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium, which India won by six wickets, was watched by 15,935 spectators. "The India versus Pakistan match set a new record for the highest attendance at a group stage match in Women's T20 World Cup history," the ICC said in a statement. "This Group A clash in the 2024 edition drew an impressive crowd of 15,935, showcasing the intense rivalry between the two neighbours," the ICC added.

Djokovic withdraws

Paris: Defending champion Novak Djokovic has withdrawn from the Paris Masters tennis tournament, organisers said Thursday. The 37-year-old Djokovic played at the Six Kings Slam exhibition last week. Organisers however, did not give a reason for Djokovic's withdrawal. The former top-ranked player said in an Instagram post he is 'sorry to everyone who was hoping to see me play there'. "I have a lot of great memories winning seven titles there and hope to be back with you next year," Djokovic added. His decision not to play could jeopardise his chances to qualify for the year-end ATP Finals featuring the top eight players of the world.

Bowlers ensure emphatic victory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, Oct 24: The relentless accuracy of bowlers, led by left-arm spinner Radha Yadav (3/35), helped India to achieve a comfortable 59-run victory over New Zealand in the first women's ODI here on Thursday. India now lead the three-match series 1-0, after bowling out the Kiwis for 168 who were chasing a gettable 228. The Kiwis also did not help their cause with three unnecessary run outs.

Debutant pacer Saima Thakor (2/26) was also instrumental in scripting New Zealand's downfall with some early wickets. She inflicted the first blow in only the second ball of her international career, removing Suzie Bates (1), who was caught behind. But that was only the beginning as three more wickets fell while New Zealand reached 79, and the dismissal of skipper Sophie Devine (2) was the most bizarre. Devine forgot to drag her feet back behind the crease as stumper Yastika Bhatia whipped the balls off after bowler Deepti Sharma threw the ball back to her.

New Zealand briefly raised the vision of a comeback through the fifth-wicket partnership between Brook Halliday (39) and



Maddy Green (31) that was worth 49 runs, the highest in their innings. But Thakor returned to dismiss Halliday to break the growing stand, and thereafter the New Zealand innings never recovered.

Before that, India too endured a stifling batting experience of their own as they failed to counter the wily Kerr sisters - Amelia and Jess - as they were bowled out for a slightly under-par 227 after opting to bat first. Leg-spinner Amelia (4/42) and medium pacer Jess (3/49) were at the forefront of the Kiwis' charge with the ball, and they received able support from off-spinner Eden Carson (2/42).

Contributions from Shafal Verma (33), Bhatia (37), Jemimah Rodrigues (35), Tejas Hasabnis (42) and Deepti (41) helped India put up a fighting score.

India beat world champs Germany

HOSTS HOWEVER, LOSE TEST SERIES GOING DOWN 1-3 IN THE SHOOTOUT AGAINST VISITORS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 24: Skipper Harmanpreet Singh and Sukhjeet Singh scored a brace each to hand India a 5-3 win over world champions Germany in the second hockey Test. However, as the series was tied at 1-1, the shootout was implemented. Germany won the shootout to emerge winners in the two-Test series at the Major Dhyan Chand Stadium here Thursday.

Elian Mazkour (seventh, 57th) scored twice for Germany, who took the early lead, while Henrik Mertgens (60th) was the other goal-scorer for the visitors.

But India turned the table in the second half, with goals from Sukhjeet Singh (34th and 48th), skipper Harmanpreet Singh (42nd and 43rd) and Abhishek (45th) to level the two-match series. Germany had won the first Test 2-0 Wednesday.

In the shoot-out, which India lost 1-3, Harmanpreet, Abhishek and Mohammed Raheel missed while Aditya Arjun Lalage was the lone scorer. India custodian Krishan Bahadur Pathak made two fine saves, but couldn't save his side from losing in the shootout.

Germany took the lead through Mazkour, who scored



Sukhjeet Singh (No 34) celebrates with teammates after scoring against Germany, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

with a fierce reverse shot from the right corner. Two minutes later, debutant Aditya came close to scoring his first goal for India but his shot from a Jarmanpreet Singh pass was saved by German goalkeeper Joshua Nnaji Onyekwue.

India earned two quick penalty corners in the ninth and 10th minutes, but failed to convert on both occasions. They had another one in the 13th minute, but Harmanpreet's hit was saved

by Onyekwue.

Trailing by a goal, the Indians came out with more purpose and vigour after the change of ends, and four minutes into the third quarter secured three back-to-back penalty corners but wasted all. However, Sukhjeet made it 2-1 with a fine opportunistic goal.

The Indians finally found the net from penalty corners as Harmanpreet converted two in succession with a minute's gap. He first found the top right cor-

ner of the German goal and then scored a minute later with a powerful grounded flick.

It was raining goals for a pumped-up India, thereafter, with Abhishek finding the back of the net minutes later with a fierce shot from the right corner to hand the home team a 4-1 lead.

The Indians continued with the same intensity in the fourth and final quarter and extended their lead in the 48th minute through an unmarked Sukhjeet.

Raphinha hat-trick sinks Bayern

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, Oct 24: Wednesday was a great night for English clubs, and for Barcelona captain Raphinha.

Premier League leader Liverpool moved level on points with Aston Villa at the top of the Champions League standings Wednesday by extending their perfect record to three wins, and Manchester City set a new record for the most consecutive games undefeated in the history of the competition.

Liverpool edged Leipzig 1-0 with a goal from Darwin Nunez. City routed Sparta Prague 5-0 with Erling Haaland scoring twice. Raphinha scored a hat trick as Barcelona finally beat Bayern



Barcelona skipper Raphinha celebrates after scoring his third goal against Bayern Munich

AP PHOTO

Munich to end a series of six consecutive wins for the German team in their head-to-head meetings that included a humiliating 2-8 loss in the quarterfinals in 2020. This time, Barcelona came out on top of an entertaining

contest with a 4-1 statement win. In Barcelona, the hosts opened the scoring within a minute as Raphinha was found by Fermin Lopez's through ball, who then rounded Bayern's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer with ease.

KIIT win East Zone badminton tourney

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 24: KIIT University emerged champions by winning all their three matches to top the group in the East Zone Inter-University badminton (women's) tournament which ended at the Sambalpur University courts Thursday.

KIIT University defeated Adamas University, Kolkata 2-0 in their final group league match. Harshitaa Rout defeated Gowri Krishna representing Adamas 21-16, 14-21, 21-17 in the first singles. Then in the doubles match, Harshitaa teamed up with Sruti Swain and overcame the pair of Rashika Das and Gowri 24-22, 5-2. The second game could not be completed as Rashika retired from the match with an injury that she had suffered in the first



game. Adamas University emerged runners-up in the tournament. Other than Harshitaa and Sruti, KIIT was represented by Simran Singh. Earlier in other group matches, KIIT defeated Kolkata University 2-0 and followed it up with victory by an identical margin against VBS Purvanchal, Jaunpur. It should be stated here that all the four top teams qualified for the All India Inter-University (W) tournament in Rajasthan and the Khelo India University Games.