

Canada blames Shah

OTTAWA, Oct 30: Canada's Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister David Morrison has alleged that Indian Home Minister Amit Shah ordered a campaign of violence, intimidation and intelligence-gathering targeting Sikh separatists inside Canada.

Morrison told Parliament members of the national security committee Tuesday that he had confirmed Shah's name to 'The Washington Post', which first reported the allegations.

"The journalist called me and asked if it was that person. I confirmed it was that person," Morrison told the committee.

The minister did not say how Canada knew of Shah's alleged involvement.

DIWALI greetings to all our readers, advertisers and well-wishers

HOLIDAY NOTICE

The offices and press of **Orissa POST** will remain closed October 31 (Thursday) on the occasion of Diwali. Hence, there will be no edition of the paper November 1 (Friday). However, web edition will be available to the readers.

— EDITOR

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Not Diwali gambling, sir, I just took a last-minute flight home to celebrate



LET THERE BE LIGHT: Earthen lamps (diyas) sell like hot cakes at Exhibition Ground, ahead of Diwali celebrations in Bhubaneswar

Sundargarh clash leaves 5 dead

Rourkela, Oct 30: In a horrific incident, five people, including three women, were killed in a group clash at Karamdihi in Sundargarh district late Tuesday night, over a suspected extramarital affair while one woman and two children were abducted by the attackers.

Police said two groups of nomads from Wardha in Maharashtra, who had been staying in the village for the past few months, clashed over the affair.

The gruesome attack was triggered after Abinash Pawar from one group brought a woman from the other group, following his wife's extramarital relationship with a man from the same group, with whom she had eloped. When Pawar's group was asleep, members of the other group attacked them with deadly weapons, killing five people. Abinash, a woman, and two children were critically injured in the incident. Abinash's second wife and two children were kidnapped by the attackers. A probe is underway.

NZ city waves goodbye to this giant hand sculpture

Wellington, Oct 30: Perched on two fingers on the roof of an art gallery at Wellington in New Zealand, the giant sculpture of a hand has loomed over the city for five years. However, as criticisms flew thick and fast, the authorities have decided to lift the unique 16-ft high artwork from the roof by a helicopter Saturday and shift it to an undisclosed location in Australia.

Named Quasi, the creation of Australia-based sculptor Ronnie van Hout bears an unsmiling human face — because why not?

Some found it disturbing, and now, after five years of provoking controversy and myriad emotions — from horror and revulsion to delight — among residents of New Zealand's capital, Quasi will be removed from the roof of City Gallery this week.

It will be taken to a new home, the gallery said Wednesday.

"This is either a great day or a terrible day for Wellington and there's not much view in between," said Ben McNulty, a Wellington city council member.

Personally, McNulty said he felt "devastated" by the sculpture's departure.

Quasi is made of steel, polystyrene and resin, and was based on scans of famous artist and musician van Hout's hand and face. It was named in part for Quasimodo, the bellringer in Victor Hugo's 1831 novel "The Hunchback of Notre-Dame."

Hence the male gender some have attributed to Quasi.

Quasi first graced — or haunted — an art gallery at Christchurch, New Zealand, in 2016 but proved polarising. It was the subject of an op ed in the local newspaper listing reasons the sculpture "must go," including claims that one of its outstretched fingers "appears to be inappropriately and beligerently pointing at pedestrians and office workers."

"Perhaps the monster just wants to be loved?" van Hout responded at the time.



LOSING LUSTRE

With just a few hours left for Diwali celebrations when colourful crackers will light up an otherwise dark sky, the economic horizon of the country seems to be gloomy; if some of the vital factors like eroding investors' confidence, huge pullout of stocks by FIIs from the Indian markets, high unemployment rate, rising debt burden, uptick in gold imports and depreciating rupee are any indication. With the skyrocketing price of gold, the yellow metal seems to be out of bounds for common man. Consumer demand is also not upto the mark while producers are reluctant to manufacture more goods, when sectors like automobile are a laggard owing to weak consumer sentiment and inadequate disposable income. Significantly, Rs 79,000-crore worth 7.90 lakh unsold cars are parked at dealerships. In August 2024, Maruti Suzuki India reported a 3.9% decline in sales. Amidst this, when Modi 3.0 dispensation is struggling to bring the economy on track, the Opposition Congress launched a scathing attack on the Centre, saying India is in its "most precarious and difficult" economic situation in many years. Ramesh said the reasons for this slowdown are clear — stagnant wages, high inflation and inequality



PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 30: At a time when the recent pulling out of stocks of around ₹1 lakh crore from Indian markets by FIIs shows eroding investors' confidence, the key manufacturing sectors witnessing a contraction by 1.6 per cent in August have further cast a gloomy outlook for Indian economy.

Till the end of June 2024, India's external debt was \$682.3 billion, which is 2 per cent increase from March 2024 and an 8.5 per cent increase from June 2023. The external debt to GDP ratio was 18.8 per cent at the end of June 2024.

According to data from the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), an independent think tank, unemployment rate in India stood at 7.8% in September 2024. Though this is

a decline from 8.5 percent in August 2024, the joblessness is one of the crucial issues which is haunting the Modi government, said sources.

India's gold imports, which have a bearing on the country's current account deficit, rose by 21.78% to USD 27 billion during April-September due to strong domestic demand, says govt data.

The current scenario has prompted the Congress to take a dig at the Centre as the party Wednesday asserted that India is in its "most precarious and difficult" economic situation in many years. Cong general secretary in-charge, communications, Jairam Ramesh said in last 10 years, India's consumption story has now gone in reverse swing and emerged as the biggest pain point for the economy.

He said the reasons for the slowdown are clear — stagnant wages, high inflation and inequality. Citing the recently released Annual Survey of Industries 2022-23 data, Ramesh said it shows a clear evidence that workers can buy less now than they could 10 years ago. He attributed the price rise to government's cronyism and patronage of 'big conglomerates'.

SHORT TAKES

Five MKCG students suspended for ragging

Berhampur: MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Ganjam district Wednesday decided to suspend five fourth-year MBBS students from hostel for six months for allegedly ragging their juniors, an official said. The decision was taken on the recommendation of the anti-ragging committee, said the Dean of the medical college Suchitra Dash. A second-year MBBS student in a complaint alleged that he was traumatised physically and mentally due to ragging by senior students. The action was taken after four such complaints were lodged at National Medical Council (NMC).

Winter Session from Nov 26 to Dec 31

Bhubaneswar: The Winter Session of the Assembly will begin November 26, according to a notification issued Wednesday. CM Mohan Charan Majhi, also in charge of Finance department, will present the Supplementary Budget for 2024-25 on the first day, while the Appropriation Bill will be tabled December 5. Demands for grants will be discussed from December 2 to 4. The session, which would continue till December 31, will have 30 working days. While 20 days will be allocated for official business, five days will be scheduled for private members' business.

ସତ୍ୟମେବ ଜୟତେ

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସହସ୍ରାକ୍ଷୀ

ପବିତ୍ର ଦୀପାବଳି - ୨୦୨୪ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ମାନ୍ୟବର ରାଜ୍ୟପାଳଙ୍କ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ଦୀପାବଳି ପର୍ବ ଆମ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ ସାଂସ୍କୃତିକ ଅସ୍ଥିତା ଓ ଆଧ୍ୟାତ୍ମିକତାର ପ୍ରମୁଖ ଅଂଶ ଓ ଅଙ୍ଗ । ଐତିହ୍ୟର ଆବାହନ ଓ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତର ପଥ ନିର୍ମାଣର ମହାନ ଅବସର ।

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(ରଘୁବର ଦାସ)

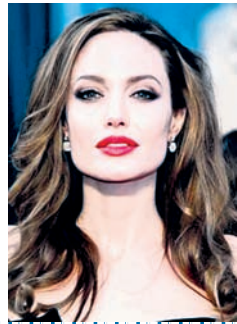
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(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ)
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

leisure



ANGELINA DATING RAPPER AKALA

An insider revealed that Angelina Jolie is reportedly dating rapper Akala after her divorce. "Angie is ready to date again, although it's unknown if she and Akala are really an item," said the confidant adding, "Whoever she dates next will have to adhere to her rules."

DEPP TO TEAM UP WITH PENELOPE FOR NEXT

Hollywood stars Johnny Depp and Penelope Cruz are set to reunite for *Day Drinker*. Marc Webb, the director of *500 Days of Summer* and two *Amazing Spider-Man* films starring Andrew Garfield, is on board to helm the upcoming movie.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
You are edgy today. Something may be bothering you, and this keeps you cautious for most part of the day. Ganesh suggests that you make the most of your evenings if invited to parties and other social events. Things may turn around for the good.

TAURUS
You are likely to remain unconquerable and unassailable throughout the day. Caution: Stay focussed and avoid frittering away your time and energy. You may face stress at work or in some ongoing project. Expect a relatively serene evening with your beloved, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
A great evening with your sweetheart will be the highlight of the day. It will be one of the better days in business; you will be able to earn enough money to save for the future. In the evening, you may have to spend a little extra, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will remain watchful for most part of the day. There may be times when your colleagues may think that you are being overcautious and paranoid. So be it. Ganesh advises you to stick to this approach; soon, the same people will appreciate it at the end of the day. You may have to attend certain social engagements in the evening.

LEO
You will find success only after putting in hard work in every task, says Ganesh. On the other hand you will be in the mood to throw a party and enjoy with friends. You will incur expenses on entertainment. You need to carefully watch your finances, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You don't find it altogether too difficult to understand the importance of a happy family life. Your partner will try to work up the excitement in your relationship in the afternoon. So Ganesh advises you to do your best to keep fanning the fires of love, which is not always such a bad thing.

LIBRA
Some things on the personal front may undergo a turning point today, predicts Ganesh. Now is the time for change. Changes are good and maybe even needed, although you may not see it that way at the moment. Expect monetary gains that will help you go a long way in life (a handsome bequest perhaps!). Think with your heart, and attach importance to relationships.

SCORPIO
For a change, matters of finance will gnaw at your mind today. You may take steps to invest in new business ventures. Social reputation will get a boost late in the day, and people will, in all likelihood, pay due respect for your high values, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
It's a profitable day for the all the businessmen today. You are likely to crack major deals. You will be appreciated for your professionalism at work. It's high time you take risk and launch new products in the market, tips Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
You will be chased by people harbouring malicious intents. Like a lone, naive soul among a bunch of brats, you could be bullied by those having political and social clout, says Ganesh. But worry not. Your fate is too powerful to let anyone do any harm to your reputation or health. In fact, much to the disappointment of your foes, novel ideas will guide you through hard times.

AQUARIUS
It is not everyday that work is rewarding. So, if your boss praises you, feel good about it. You may even begin something new. A joint venture? Go ahead, says Ganesh. You are exceptionally talented. There is no need to blow your own trumpet, your work will speak for itself.

PISCES
Remaining dispassionate and being cold and clinical is the way to achieve success for you today, says Ganesh. Do not let your sentiments interfere in matters of business, lest you regret it later. The evening may see you feel blue. Find something to do to cheer you up!

Samantha's latest wish

Mumbai: Samantha Ruth Prabhu and Naga Chaitanya personal life has always been a topic of discussion for public. The actors got married back in 2017, and it was after a few years of their marital life that they called it quits in 2021. While Chaitanya has largely remained silent about it, Samantha had stated it was a bitter separation.

Now, Samantha's latest wish has sparked intrigue. In a recent chat, she said she wishes she had "spied" earlier in life, which has left her fans wondering if she alluding to her marriage to Naga.

A clip from her latest interview while promoting her upcoming web series, *Citadel: Honey Bunny*, has emerged. In the video, the actor is seen talking about her desire to become a spy in her real life.

During a conversation, Samantha is asked if she has ever spied in her real life

To which, the *Kushi* actress responded, "No, not a spy... I don't have those traits (in me)".

The interviewer prodded further by asking if she attempted to spy on someone in real life.

"To be a spy... In the show, I have tried definitely. Otherwise no.... Thinking back, I should have," she added.

Netizens were quick to react to Samantha's comment, with discussions across social media platforms speculating about her remarks. Some fans felt they could relate to her sentiment, while others focused on her past relationship with Chaitanya.



Mumbai: Ananya Panday's rumoured boyfriend, Walker Blanco, seems to have confirmed his relationship with the actress.

He penned a romantic birthday wish for Ananya on her 26th birthday. In his post, Walker professes his love for Panday, calling her "special." Wednesday, he took to his Instagram handle and shared a candid photo of the birthday girl, where she is seen sitting and smiling with her hand resting on her face. Alongside it, he wrote, "Happy birthday, beautiful. You are so special. I love you, Annie!"

The post sparked frenzy among Ananya's fans, who see Walker's birthday message as an official declaration of his love for her. Walker Blanco has often expressed his admiration for Ananya on social media. He gave her a shout-out when her Netflix film *CTRL* was released. He shared the trailer on his Instagram Stories with the message, "Can't waitttt, Annie!" along with a surprised face and a red heart emoji. Not to forget, Ananya was spotted wearing a 'W' necklace, further fuelling speculation about their relationship.

Ananya finds love again

According to several reports, Ananya first met Walker at the Ambani family's cruise party during the pre-wedding celebrations of Anant Ambani and Radhika Merchant, and since then, the duo has fostered a great friendship.



Nimrat turns 'Bhartiya Bhoot'

Mumbai: Ahead of Halloween, actress Nimrat Kaur decided to celebrate the spooky season in a unique way by embracing the spirit of the 'Bhartiya Bhoot.' Kaur took to her Instagram handle to share a hilarious video of herself dressed in a white saree.

In the clip, she is seen zipping around, feeling a bit restless, before finally curling up for a nap. Sharing the video, the *Airlift* actress wrote in the caption, "Breaking News. Indian ghosts are upset with Halloween, feeling excluded from festival vibes... Be it a hairy or bald witch, they just want to be included on the 'party ghost list'!! #happyhaloween #bhootchaturdashi #sensitivebhoot."

Shortly after Nimrat shared the video, fans inundated the comments section with hilarious remarks. One user wrote, "Future ki Monjolika," while another said, "Typical Indian bhoot aap biti." She also added Ali Zafar and Shweta Pandit's song *Madhubala* to the video.

Meanwhile, Nimrat Kaur has been making headlines due to her dating rumours with her *Dasvi* co-actor Abhishek Bachchan. She recently

dump which includes pictures from her husband Saif Ali Khan's ancestral home, the Pataudi Palace in Haryana. She wrote in the caption, "A little piece of my world". One of the pictures also shows Saif dressed in a white kurta pyjama standing atop the balcony of the Pataudi Palace.

The Pataudi Palace was built by Saif's grandfather, the last ruling nawab, Iftikhar Ali Khan after his high-profile wedding with the begum of Bhopal, when he felt the old family home was not grand enough to house his new bride in the manner she was accustomed. The building was designed in the style of the colonial-era mansions of Imperial Delhi. Many Hindi movies like *Veer-Zara* have been shot in the palace. The palace is currently held by Saif, who is the current patriarch of the Pataudi family. Meanwhile, Kareena is gearing up for her upcoming theatrical movie *Singham Again* which integrates Rohit Shetty's fabled cop universe.

addressed these link-up rumours, stating that it's impossible to stop gossip. On the work front, Kaur, who started her career as a model, was last seen in the 2023 mystery thriller *Sajini Shinde Ka Viral Video*, where she portrayed Inspector Bela Barot

Kareena shares a piece of her world

Mumbai: Bollywood star Kareena Kapoor Khan, who recently

graced the streaming comedy sketch show *The Great Indian Kapil Show*, has shared pictures from her Diwali festivities.

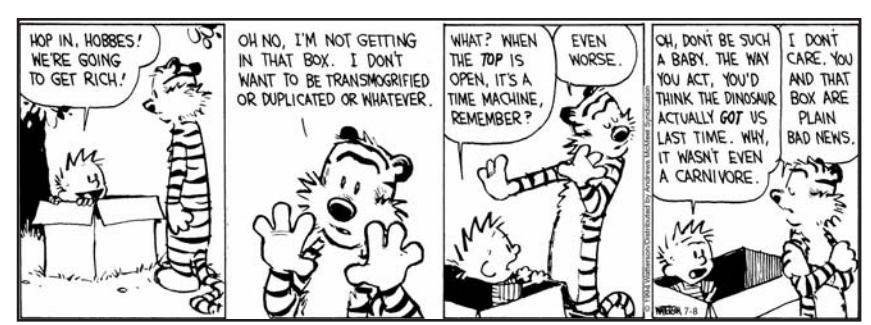
Tuesday, the actress took to her Instagram to share a photo



PEANUTS



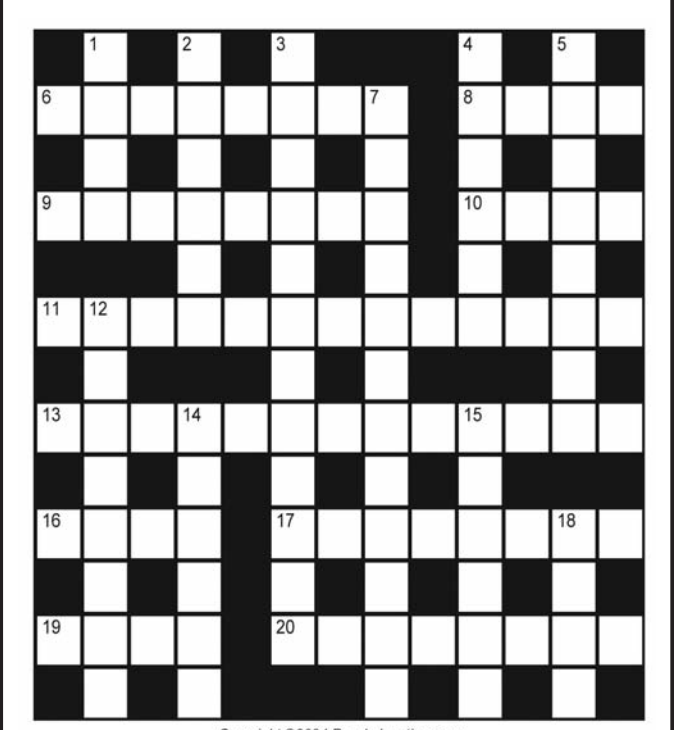
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



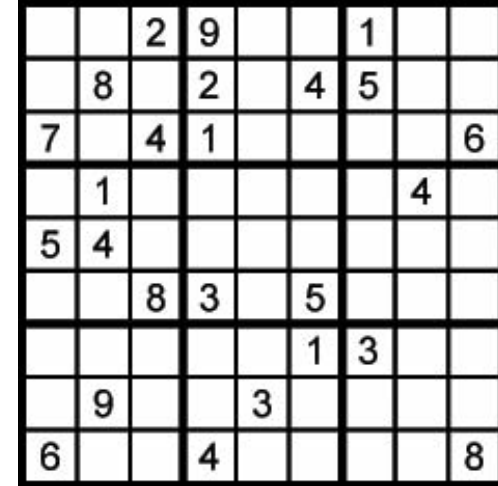
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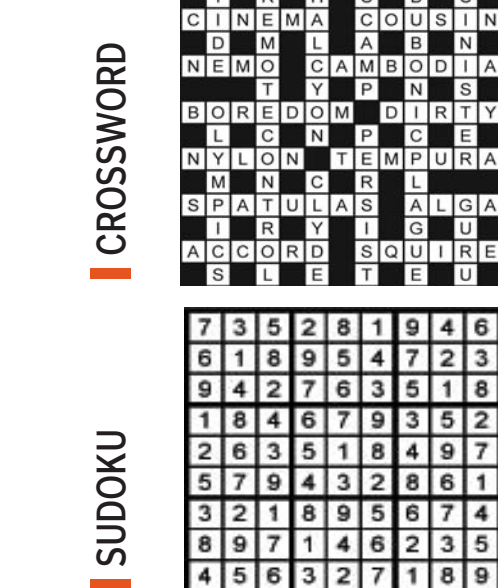
- Across
- 6 Sweet-talk (4-4)
 - 8 In use
 - 9 Potato dish (2,6)
 - 10 Historic periods
 - 11 Change radically
 - 13 Clumsy person
 - 16 Rum-soaked cake
 - 17 Ocean occurrence (4,4)
 - 19 Colourful salamander
 - 20 Precious stones
- Down
- 1 Vegetarian staple
 - 2 Sound system
 - 3 Haitian capital (4-2-6)
 - 4 Acquire
 - 5 Taxing bureaucrat
 - 7 Speaks pompously
 - 12 Enlightened
 - 14 Nice and warm
 - 15 Rich and elaborate cake
 - 18 Extinct pigeon relative

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

PATNA MISHAP: CM ANNOUNCES ₹6L EX-GRATIA FOR ODISHA VICTIMS

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday announced an ex-gratia of ₹6 lakh each to the family members of two labourers from Odisha who died in an accident at a metro rail construction site in Bihar's Patna. The deceased were identified as Manoj Behera and Bijay Behera, both hailed from Nayagarh district. "The CM expressed grief over the deaths and announced the compensation amount," the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a statement. The incident took place inside a tunnel dug close to the Patna University campus late Monday night, when a pick-up van ploughed into a group of construction workers following a brake failure, officials said.

Govt committed to enhancing urban mobility: H&UD Minister

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: The state government is committed to enhancing urban mobility, Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Minister Krishna Chandra Mahapatra said here, Wednesday.

While flagging off 12 new electric buses under the 'Mo Bus' service - regulated by the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) - during an event organised at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bus Terminal here, Mahapatra said, "The government of Odisha is committed to enhancing urban mobility in the state. The expansion of bus services symbolises our commitment to building a sustainable future under Viksit Odisha vision."

Of the 475 buses running between cities, 95 are now electric and operating on 97 routes, he said.

The H&UD Minister also inaugurated Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bus Terminal, city bus stand near Bhubaneswar railway station and Puri bus stand.

The ATVMs will facilitate seamless ticketing for 'Mo Bus' passengers, the minister said.

The machines are equipped with advanced features to issue tickets with a choice of pay-



- The H&UD Minister inaugurated Automatic Ticket Vending Machines (ATVMs) at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bus Terminal, city bus stand near Bhubaneswar railway station and Puri bus stand
- The minister also unveiled the logo of 'Odisha Yatri' and inaugurated a kiosk at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bus Terminal for drivers' registration and passenger assistance

ment modes, including cash, UPI and coins, and provide detailed route information.

"The installation of these ATVMs will not only streamline the ticketing process but also enable the authorities to effectively monitor count and increase digital footprint," he stated.

On the occasion, Mahapatra

announced the introduction of 'Mo Bus' service on two new routes (65 and 66) connecting Master Canteen to Wonderla water park- Khurda new bus stand and Bhubaneswar airport to Pathargadia via Master Canteen respectively to enhance accessibility and convenience for commuters.

The minister also unveiled the logo of 'Odisha Yatri' and inaugurated a kiosk at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Bus Terminal for drivers' registration and passenger assistance.

Speaking about the mobile app, the H&UD Minister said, "Odisha Yatri app was developed aiming at both empowering drivers and improving customer experiences. The app will operate on zero commission."

CRUT is the first service provider to obtain aggregator license in Odisha.

Govt relieves CDPO from duty for impartial probe

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: The state government Wednesday relieved a Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) from duty to ensure an impartial probe into allegations that she denied a pregnant employee leave, resulting in the loss of her unborn child due to severe labour pains.

In a post on X, Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida said Snehalata Sahoo, the CDPO of Derabish block in Kendrapara district, has been relieved of her duties for an impartial investigation into allegations made by Barsha Priyadarshini, a 26-year-old clerk in the Women and Child Development (W&CD) department.

Speaking to reporters Tuesday, Barsha, who was in her seventh month of pregnancy, alleged that she lost her child in the womb after being denied leave despite experiencing labour pains at her office October 25.

She alleged that the CDPO and other officials ignored her pleas for assistance to go to a hospital. Barsha also claimed that the CDPO mistreated her.

Eventually, Barsha's relatives took her to a private hospital in Kendrapara, where an ultrasound confirmed that her baby had died.

Accusing Sahoo of 'mental harassment and gross negligence', Barsha filed a written complaint with the district Collector, calling for strict action against her.

Pharmacist kills wife with help of 2 female friends

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: A pharmacist, along with his two female friends, allegedly killed his wife by injecting an overdose of anaesthesia under Bharatpur area here, police said Wednesday.

The incident took place October 28, but came to light only after the post-mortem examination revealed foul play, they said.

Pradyumna Kumar, 24, and Roji Patra, 19, and Ejita Bhuyan, 22, both nurses, have been arrested for killing Subhashree Nayak, City Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Pinak Mishra said.

Pradyumna married Subhashree in 2020, and since then he had been torturing her. Unable to bear the suffering, Subhashree had been living with her parents in Khurda for the last six months, Mishra said.

Amid his problems with Subhashree, Pradyumna met Ejita last year and got close to her. He met Roji in March this year, and the three got along well.

They allegedly conspired to kill Subhashree and at about 2 pm October 27, Pradyumna brought his wife to Roji's house in Sampur area where she was overdosed with anaesthesia, police said.

An unconscious Subhashree was taken to the Capital Hospital October 28 where Pradyumna told doctors that she tried to die by suicide. She was later declared 'brought dead'.



Pradyumna Kumar, 24, and Roji Patra, 19, and Ejita Bhuyan, 22, both nurses, have been arrested for killing Subhashree Nayak

the post-mortem examination, we got the clue that it was not just an unnatural death and there was some foul play involved. We interrogated the accused, who confessed that they had forcefully injected anaesthesia drugs into the deceased," he said.

55-year-old man hacked to death

The City Wednesday woke up to the chilling murder of a 55-year-old man allegedly by his colleague over a trivial issue at an eatery near Damana Square under Chandrasekharpur police limits.

Chandrasekharpur inspector in-charge (IIC) Prakash Chandra Majhi said they have arrested Binod Sahu, 40, who works as a cook at Maa Taradei Hotel, on charges of hacking his colleague Pitambar Jena to death as the latter didn't serve him extra fish curry late Tuesday night.

"Binod, who hails from Dhenkanal, asked Pitambar to give him extra fish curry while having dinner late in the night. When Pitambar declined, an infuriated Binod picked up a sharp edged weapon and hacked Pitambar multiple times, leading to his death on the spot," the IIC said.

The post-mortem examination revealed high dose of anaesthesia was the reason behind her death, which prompted the police to further investigate the case, Mishra said.

"After discussing with the medical officer, who conducted

A special team has been formed to conduct a detailed investigation into the sensational case, the DCP said.

"If required, we will take the prime accused on remand and recreate the crime scene," he said.

HC upholds ex-MLA's life sentence for killing wife



PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, Oct 30: The Orissa High Court Wednesday upheld the life sentence awarded to former legislator Ram Murti Gomango who was convicted by a special MP-MLA court of murdering his wife five years ago.

The charred body of Gomango's wife Sashirekha was recovered from the washroom of the MLA's official residence in Bhubaneswar in August 2019 and he had claimed that she died by suicide.

The special court had convicted the politician under IPC Sections 302 (murder) and 201 (causing disappearance of evidence) and sentenced him to life imprisonment. The court also slapped a fine of ₹10,000 on him.

Gomango challenged the ruling before the High Court.

"The conviction stands firmly

substantiated," said a High Court division bench comprising Justices SK Sahoo and Chittaranjan Dash.

The bench observed that the prosecution has established that the convict intentionally caused death to his wife, who was reportedly pregnant at that time.

The forensic findings, including ante-mortem injuries on the head of the deceased, negate any hypothesis other than intentional homicide, the court said.

"Since the sentence awarded is absolutely in accordance with law, there is nothing to interfere with," the bench said dismissing the appeal of Gomango, who is now out on bail.

The High Court directed the convict to surrender before the trial court and deposit the fine amount. "In case the convict fails to surrender, the trial court shall proceed in accordance with law," the bench said.

Gomango had first won the Gunupur (ST) Assembly seat in Rayagada district in 1990 on the then Janata Dal ticket.

When Janata Dal merged with Biju Janata Dal (BJD), he joined the Bharatiya Janata Party. As a BJP candidate, he won the Gunupur seat again in the 2000 elections. He had unsuccessfully contested the 2004, 2009 and 2014 elections.

6 children rescued in Jajpur

Jajpur: Six children, who were allegedly forced to work as 'bonded labourers' in various units under the jurisdiction of Vyas Nagar Municipality in Jajpur district, were rescued Wednesday, an official said. The children, aged between 12 and 14, belong to the Scheduled Tribe (ST) community and are school dropouts, he said. They were forced to work in fish scaling and meat shops for wages of ₹150-200 per day, the official said. Collector P Anvesha Reddy asked the Jajpur district administration to conduct the rescue operation. Acting on a tip-off, the authorities formed a special task force, comprising the district child protection officer (DCPO), local police, revenue officials and Child helpline coordinator. The task force conducted raids at several fish and meat shops in Nahaka and Chorda areas under the Vyas Nagar Municipality and rescued the children, the official said.



MUSIC FEST: Artistes perform during the closing ceremony of 9th Debaprasad Utsav at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

₹6.28CR FRAUD

CB arrests 24 cyber fraudsters from 3 states

PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, Oct 30: The Crime Branch (CB) of Odisha Police has arrested 24 interstate cyber fraudsters on the charge of duping a corporate employee of ₹6.28 crore, an official said, Wednesday.

Addressing media, CB Additional Director General (ADG) Vinaytosh Mishra said Kuntal Majumdar approached them September 24 alleging that he was automatically added to a WhatsApp group, KOTAK INVESTMENT CLUB, where he was lured into investing ₹6.28 crore with promise of high returns.

"The complainant invested ₹6.28 crore between August 1 and 7 to purchase shares at ₹19 each, which quickly inflated to ₹110, raising the fund value to ₹25



crore," Mishra said.

When the complainant wanted to withdraw the money, the group admin allowed him to withdraw ₹23 crore August 21. However, when he made an attempt to withdraw his funds, he was removed from that WhatsApp group and the application used

for transactions was deactivated," the CB ADG said.

Mishra said the Cyber Crime Unit of the CB followed the money trail and found that the entire fraud amount of ₹6.28 crore was transferred to 100 different bank accounts across the country between August 1

and 7.

"The cops froze all the 100 accounts with a balance of ₹16.85 lakh, while ₹6.80 lakh was returned to the account of the victim," Mishra said.

Mishra also said that after getting the details of bank account holders, seven teams of the CB were sent to different parts of the country.

The teams have so far arrested nine accused from Tamil Nadu, eight from Gujarat and seven from Rajasthan. While six of the accused were produced before a court October 28 and 11 will be produced before a local court.

Another seven accused are being brought to Odisha from Rajasthan on transit remand and they will be produced before a court Thursday, Mishra said, adding that the investigation is in progress.

Puri seer condemns ISKCON's plan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: Shankaracharya of Govardhan Peeth, Swami Nischalananda Saraswati, Wednesday disapproved of ISKCON's plan to hold 'untimely' Rath Yatra in the US, and asserted that such "stunt" would not help them in any manner.

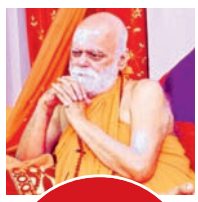
The seer's statement came in wake of the outrage among Lord Jagannath's devotees

over the decision of ISKCON's Houston unit in the USA to observe 'Snana Yatra' (bathing ritual) and 'Rath Yatra' November 3 and 9 respectively,

deviating from the normal practice at Srimandir in Puri, where it is held a few months back at a stipulated time period. "They (ISKCON) know the ritual. Holding untimely rituals of Lord Jagannath is just a stunt to gain popularity. This is not going to benefit them in any manner. They are deliberately violating the tradition. This will only lead them to failure," he said.

Meanwhile, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan said that earlier the ISKCON had committed that all their programmes related to the Jagannath Culture and festivals will be observed following the guidelines issued by the authorities of the Srimandir.

Several socio-cultural organisations had met the Law Minister and expressed concern over the plan of ISKCON's Houston unit. Srimandir falls under the jurisdiction of the state government's Law department.



'UNTIMELY' RATH YATRA IN US

Two MoUs to bolster disaster preparedness

Odisha State Disaster Management Authority inks MoUs with the Council on Energy, Environment and Water and the World Food Programme



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: The state government has signed two MoUs to deal with natural calamities in future with rising vulnerability and frequency of cyclones, an official said Wednesday. "The Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) has inked the MoUs with the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) and the World Food Programme (WFP), an autonomous joint subsidiary programme of the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)," he said. The MoUs were signed on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Super Cyclone of 1999, which killed thousands and impacted millions. The OSDMA's agreement with the WFP is "for the online, self-paced, learning management and to strengthen capacities that will build greater preparedness

to reduce the impact of disasters," the official said. "The WFP will design e-modules as a learning management system on disaster risk reduction for government officials, elected representatives, and citizens of the state for awareness creation on disaster management," said OSDMA executive director Kamal Lochan Mishra. The second MoU was signed between OSDMA and CEEW, a non-profit policy research institution, to establish a framework of activities on heat wave management, he said. Under the agreement, both will work for research, analysis, technical assistance and policy advisory aimed at preparing the state administration for efficient management of resources for building resilience against climate risks such as

MISSION SHAKTI IN COLLABORATION WITH OSDMA WILL PROVIDE BASIC TRAINING TO SHG MEMBERS IN 14 DISASTER-PRONE DISTRICTS

floods, monsoon variability, and cyclones with a special focus on extreme heat, Mishra said. "CEEW will lead research and advisory on the policy, scientific and technical front with joint support from OSDMA," he said. Both OSDMA and CEEW also agreed to consult each other prior to any release or publication of data generated through jointly conducted research or activities undertaken as part of this MoU. CEEW will partner with OSDMA to formulate a heat-wave action plan (HAP) for Angul, Boudh, Baripada, Cuttack, Jharsuguda, Parlakhemundi, Rourkela, Sudargarh, Sambalpur and Titlagarh, the official said. As Odisha has been experiencing calamities like cyclones, floods, and heatwaves frequently, the state government has now decided to train women members of the self help groups (SHGs) under the 'Mission Shakti' scheme. "Mission Shakti in collaboration with OSDMA will provide basic training to SHG members in 3,922 panchayats of 14 disaster-prone districts," he said. At least 50 SHG members of every panchayat will be imparted training to reduce casualties and quick recovery during natural disasters, the official said. The 'Mission Shakti' is planning to train as many as 1.81 lakh SHG members in the next one year, the official said, adding that 200 SHG members of Ganjam and Chhatrapur have so far been trained in the rescue and evacuation process.

Writer Sarojini Sahoo gets Sarala Puraskar

ILA-BANSIDHAR PANDA KALA SAMMAN FOR SUDARSHAN SAHOO AND TANSEN SINGH



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: Notable fiction writer Sarojini Sahoo Wednesday received the 45th Sarala Puraskar for her novel 'Asthira Pada', instituted by Ila-Bansidhar Panda Kala Samman, offered annually for the best literary achievement. Poet and writer Devdas Chhotray presented the award to Sahoo in a ceremony Thursday. The award comprises a copper plaque and ₹7 lakh. Sculptor Sudarshan Sahoo and playback singer Tansen Singh were also conferred with the 'Ila-Bansidhar Panda Kala Samman'. Both the artistes received a citation plaque and ₹2.5 lakh each. Presiding over the function, IMPACT trustee Paramita Panda said, "A deserving writer or artist should not turn away from creativity due to financial constraints. This is the underlying objective of this award." The 'primary recommendation' is the foundation of this prestigious award in a three-tiered judging process. For the development and prosperity of Odia language and literature, Bansidhar Panda and Ila Panda introduced the 'Sarala Puraskar'. Their vision and relentless efforts to recognise state's

art and literature have succeeded today, said the organisers. On the occasion, Chhotray shared personal anecdotes, recalling how his father, play writer Gopal Chhotray received the Sarala Puraskar in 2000 but couldn't attend the ceremony. He praised the humility of Ila Panda and Bansidhar Panda, who personally visited his home and presented the award to his father. "Most of the fiction readers throughout the world live outside of fiction. A writer is the only person who ably connects them by composing a story," he said. Speaking at the ceremony, Sahoo said that after the announcement of the Sarala Puraskar, I felt connected to the rest of the world. "For the friends and relatives of my teenage years, I seemed to rise again. This is a strange life force. What a wonderful awakening from deep sleep," she said. The event drew writers and literature enthusiasts from across the state. IMPACT, founded in 1974 by Bansidhar Panda and his wife Ila Panda, has been instrumental in promoting Odia literature through the Sarala Puraskar, instituted in 1980, Ila-Bansidhar Panda Kala Samman, and Ekalabya Puraskar.

Konark wheel's replicas at Rashtrapati Bhavan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: Four sandstone replicas of the Konark wheel have been installed at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre and the Amrit Udyan, an official statement said. As many as four replicas of the Konark wheels, made of sandstone, have been installed. Installation of Konark wheels aims to showcase and promote the rich heritage of the country among visitors, the President's office said in a statement. "The initiative is part of several steps being taken to introduce traditional cultural and historical elements in the Rashtrapati Bhavan," it said. The Konark Sun Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is the culmination of Odisha temple architecture. It was built in the shape of a colossal chariot carrying the Sun god. The Konark wheel is a symbol of India's cultural legacy, it added. Last year, the replica of the Konark wheel was displayed at Times Square in New York.



CUO celebrates Diwali

BHUBANESWAR: The department of Education at Central University of Odisha (CUO) in Koraput celebrated Diwali Utsav on campus, embracing the festive spirit with traditional ceremonies. On the occasion, CUO Chakradhar Tripathi extended his warm wishes to all present, highlighting the significance of the festival. Faculty members, including department of Education head Bharat Kumar Panda and associate professor Ashok Erigala, department of Sociology head Kapila Khemundu and department of Business Management head Padma Charan Mishra graced the event. School of Languages dean and acting Registrar of the institute NC Panda also conveyed his heartfelt wishes to the gathering. Students from the department of Education marked the occasion by crafting clay lamps, which were lit in the evening, symbolising the triumph of light over darkness. In his inaugural address, Panda reflected on the cultural importance of Diwali, noting that it encourages individuals to stand against evil and pursue the path of righteousness. The celebration saw an enthusiastic participation from students and faculty alike, making the event a memorable and meaningful experience for the university community.

Awareness drive on breast cancer by Vedanta's BMC



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: To mark breast cancer awareness month, Vedanta's BALCO Medical Centre (BMC) launched an awareness initiative titled 'Sharm Chodho, Gaanthe Pe Bolo.' The initiative was aimed at encouraging early detection and removing the stigma surrounding breast cancer. Throughout the month, the BMC offered free digital mammography screenings to promote early detection and awareness of the disease to women. A breast cancer aware-

ness bike rally was also organised with participation from 10 biking groups, followed by a tree plantation drive. Medical director of BMC Bhawna Sirohi said, "We aim to break the silence around breast health, empowering women to recognise early signs and take action without hesitation." "By fostering open discussions and providing accessible screenings, we try to help communities understand that early detection can be life-saving for those affected by breast cancer," she added.



AGAINST CORRUPTION: Students take out an awareness rally from Jobra Anicut, Wednesday, organised under the aegis of Cuttack Vigilance department, as part of the ongoing 'Anti-corruption week'

ECOR TO FACILITATE PASSENGERS DURING PUJA RUSH

Train facility for Kalipuja & Urs celebrations at Bhadrak

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: For the convenience of passengers, East Coast Railway (ECoR) has decided to provide stoppage of four trains and increase the stoppage time of seven trains, temporarily at Kenduapada station, near Bhadrak in view of Kali Puja and Urs festival. 12892/12891 Bhubaneswar-Bangiriposi-Bhubaneswar Express, 12822/12821 Puri-Howrah-Puri Dhauli Express and 18046/18045 Hyderabad-Howrah-Hyderabad East Coast Express will have stoppage at Kenduapada railway station,

temporarily November 8 and 9. 18022/18021 Khurda Road-Kharagpur-Khurda Road Express, 18038/18037 Jajpur Keonjhar Road-Kharagpur-Jajpur Keonjhar Road Express, 08556/08555 Nayagarh Town-Bhadrak-Nayagarh Town MEMU Passenger Special, 08412/08411 Bhubaneswar-Balasore-Bhubaneswar MEMU Passenger Special, 08416/08415 Puri-Jaleswar-Puri MEMU Passenger Special, 08454/08453 Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack MEMU Passenger Special and 08438/08437 Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack MEMU Passenger Special will stop at Kenduapada for five minutes instead of two minutes, temporarily November 8 and 9.

NEW PASSENGER HALT OPENS AT ATRI

BHUBANESWAR: A new passenger halt (PH) has opened at popular tourist destination Atri on the Khurda-Bolangir rail line, Wednesday. The inaugural ceremony, held on the occasion, was graced by Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi in presence of Begunia MLA Pradeep Kumar Sahu, Khurda MLA Prashant Kumar Jagadev and the divisional railway manager of Khurda Road HS Bajwa. The first train to have stoppage at Atri (PH) is Daspalla-Bhubaneswar Special. In her speech, Sarangi expressed her gratitude to the Prime Minister and the Union railway minister for fulfilling aspirations of the public in the area. The construction of the passenger halt, which cost approximately ₹58 lakh, features a 467-meter platform, equipped with six small passenger shelters and six benches with a seating capacity of 30 people. Additionally, the facilities include 14 light posts, a tube well and a booking counter, enhancing the overall travel experience for passengers. Three trains-- Bhadrak-Daspalla-Bhadrak MEMU Passenger, Bhubaneswar-Daspalla-Bhubaneswar MEMU Passenger and Puri-Daspalla-Puri MEMU Passenger Special-- will have stoppage at Atri with immediate effect.

Jan Sadharan Express from Bhub and Visakhapatnam

Bhubaneswar: Keeping in view the demands of passengers and to facilitate the passengers of outlying areas between Bhubaneswar and Visakhapatnam, Ministry of Railways has decided to run a Jan Sadharan Special Train between Bhubaneswar and Visakhapatnam from October 29 to November 15, 08536 Visakhapatnam-Bhubaneswar Jan Sadharan special train will leave Visakhapatnam at 12am and will arrive at Bhubaneswar at 7:45pm, via Vizianagaram and Berhampur. In the return direction, 08535 Bhubaneswar-Visakhapatnam Jan Sadharan special train will leave Bhubaneswar at 10:30pm and will arrive at Visakhapatnam at 8:45am.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	79942.18 ↓ 426.85
NIFTY	24340.85 ↓ 126
DOLLAR	84.09 ↑ ₹0.04
EURO	91.29 ↑ ₹0.37
GOLD	₹79,636 ↑ ₹403
SILVER	₹97,863 ↓ ₹867

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	34.7°C	32.0°C
Min Temp	24.9°C	25.5°C
Humidity	79%	77%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST	PARTLY CLOUDY SKY	

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22-yr jail for rape of minor

IN A FIRST IN STATE, POCSO COURT DELIVERS VERDICT IN 4 MONTHS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Oct 30: A POCSO court here Wednesday sentenced a youth to 22 years of imprisonment after convicting him of raping a four-year-old girl under Ranpur police limits in Nayagarh district June 9.

The judgement assumes significance as for the first time in the state the judge has delivered the verdict in record breaking span of four months after completing the trial. Moreover, police also submitted the chargesheet in the shortest period of 15 days.

The convict was identified as Rabindra Nayak, 24, alias Jogi of Godimada village under Ranpur police limits. The POCSO Court Judge Manas Kumar Panda delivered the order after examining the statements of 12 witnesses, documentary evidences



and the arguments put forth during the trial by the government pleader and the defendant's lawyer.

The judge also directed the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) to give away ₹6 lakh financial assistance to the survivor. Government Advocate Dasharathi Nayak pleaded the

matter on behalf of the state government in the case.

According to the case diary, Nayak fractured his hand in Godimada village, following which his son Rabindra took him to a bone and fracture clinic in Ranpur area for treatment. During the course of treatment, Rabindra raped the four-year-

old daughter of the physician June 9 evening.

Rabindra not only raped the teenager but also shaved the motorcycle key in her private parts. Police registered a case after the family members of the survivor lodged a complaint at the Ranpur police station, June 10.

Police launched an investigation and arrested Rabindra after it found clinching evidences indicting his involvement in the case. Police took Rabindra and the survivor for a medical examination and later produced him in the court.

Sensing the sensitivity of the matter, a police officer Hemant Rao of the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) was assigned the investigation in the case. The Nayagarh SP also personally monitored and supervised the case.

10-yr jail in POCSO case

Balasure: A 37-year-old man was sentenced to 10 years in jail by a court in Balasure district for raping a girl. The incident happened in the Khaira area in October last year when the 13-year-old girl was alone in her home. Her mother along with her two siblings had gone out to collect firewood, according to the prosecution. After returning home, the mother learned about the incident and lodged a police complaint, following which the man was arrested, Special Public Prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda said.

RSP blast furnace-1 breaks own record

Rourkela: The blast furnace-1 (BF-1) 'Parvati' of SAIL, Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) produced 3.625 tonne of hot metal October 25 to register the highest ever single day production record. The previous best single-day production of 3,610 tonne was achieved March 27 in 2021. The furnace also reached the best BF productivity of 2.43 tonne per cubic meter per day (T/m³/day) October 25.

Child labourer electrocuted during Diwali decoration

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barbil, Oct 30: A child labourer was electrocuted after accidentally coming in contact with an 11KV overhead transmission wire while spreading decorative lights on the terrace of a house ahead of Diwali festival at Station Road under this police limits in Keonjhar district, Wednesday.

The deceased was identified as Narendra Munda, 15, son of Jagabandhu Munda at Serenda area, and an employee of a tent house at Mohanta slum in Barbil. He died on the spot. Police registered a case and conducted a post-mortem after the deceased's mother Pinky Munda lodged a complaint at the police station.

Meanwhile, the tent house owner agreed to provide ₹1 lakh compensation to the deceased's family and gave away ₹50,000 immediately, police ASI Tulsa



Kariali said. The tent house owner also agreed to give away rest ₹50,000 before the last rites of the deceased.

Residents have demanded action against the tent house owner for employing child labourer in violation of labour laws. They have also demanded action against the electricity department for keeping high voltage transmission wires in unsafe condition endangering lives.

Memories of 1999 Super Cyclone still haunt Kendrapara villagers

It has been 25 years since the Super Cyclone, yet the images of Panikhia Santalipada's flood-stricken village remain vivid. While quality education, healthcare, and safe drinking water yet remain a distant dream, over 60 poor residents of the village have migrated elsewhere in search of livelihood opportunities



POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapara, Oct 30: Around 25 years ago, a powerful cyclonic storm in Bay of Bengal struck the coastal districts of the state and devastated the region. That dark Friday night of 1999 in the month of October unleashed a reign of horror as the sea wild waves brought large-scale devastation and deaths.

A kilometre away from the sea in Kendrapara district lies the neglected village of Panikhia Santalipada under Mahakalapara block. The tribal dominated village, which is home to 50 households having over 300 people, still awaits government aid for basic amenities.

The village lacks even an all-weather road, while access to quality education and healthcare is a far cry. During emergencies, villagers carry patients

in slings for around 1 km to reach an ambulance that ferries the patient to a nearby hospital.

Owing to lack of livelihood opportunities, more than 60 poor Santali people of the village have migrated outside the state in search of jobs.

Among those affected by the Super Cyclone, 12 villagers were swept away in the furious waves of the sea.

Village elders said the Bay of Bengal lies to the east of their village while the mangrove forest is to the north of their village. On that fateful night, high tidal waves surged into their village and in no time 12 persons, who had taken shelter in a thatched house, were swept away by the sea waves. The victims include two elderly men, three women and seven children.

Recounting the horror, villagers Suna Tudu, Gurubha Hansda, Suna Marandi, Purnachandra Tudu,

Gajendra Marandi, Ramesh Marandi, Nugur Soren, Laba Marandi and Charan Tudu said the sea surged in the afternoon and the tides reached up to 10 feet by the evening of October 29 (Friday), 1999.

Villagers gathered on their roofs, holding hands as powerful winds blew from the east. They were chanting the name of their presiding deity 'Marang Buru' praying to protect them on that stormy night.

In the chaos, hands slipped as people screamed for help, only to be swept away by the merciless waves. The cyclone brought with it indescribable tragedy and devastation.

Years after the cyclone, basic road access still eludes the villagers, and daily life remains tough. The area remains surrounded by saline and mangrove forests, while the fear of wild animals and reptiles sneaking into their village adds to their distress.

Not only Panikhia Santalipada, the powerful storm also brought devastations in Tentulikandha village under this block where the surging waves claimed 25 persons. The storm caused significant damage to Batighar, Kharinis, Jambu, Suniti, Ramnagar and Petchella panchayats under this block and several other pockets in the region.

Environment activist Subash Chandra Swain suggested that the impact of future cyclones can significantly be reduced if government, private, and voluntary organisations come forward to restore and expand the region's mangrove forest cover.

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Authorized Signatory information for Baleswar branch, including name and signature.

IIFL FINANCE logo and contact information for Balangir branch.

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- Gold Loan A/C No.: GL21430396, GL28837201, GL23602162, GL23829612, GL29388990, GL26973429, GL26964716, GL28590405, GL28615496, GL28608610, GL28697481, GL28793568, GL28777562, GL29049537, GL29029198, GL29049393, GL30857897, GL29039521, GL29131216, GL29115532, GL29158386, GL29178959, GL29204461, GL29184143, GL29354500, GL29333425, GL29363091, GL29381997, GL29994587, GL30010444, GL30486479, GL30470892, GL30545157, GL30523783, GL30566882, GL30552191, GL30611413, GL30628890, GL30762342, GL30745148, GL30903525, GL30886749, GL31062926, GL30951809, GL30929604, GL30946060, GL30973353, GL31005870, GL31015282, GL32727562, GL32778788, GL32767962, GL32815447, GL32837469, GL32897233, GL23883307, GL23735983, GL27148405, GL27162590, GL30932310, GL27781456, GL29033434, GL29050699, GL29073167, GL29058194, GL29080572, GL29097046, GL30391331, GL30517004, GL30521629, GL30893322, GL30900981, GL30910786, GL30975954, GL30915577, GL31038974, GL31091693, GL32829874, GL32820771, GL26630459, GL26646738, GL26896640, GL26871508, GL26904852, GL27539664.

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- Gold Loan A/C No.: GL26497375, GL22393941, GL23272251, GL23344921, GL29305413, GL26900234, GL27350761, GL28671073, GL28665030, GL28994674, GL27367835, GL29045991, GL29138234, GL29153870, GL29234329, GL29117553, GL29902805, GL29876953, GL30606085, GL30629942, GL30744137, GL30761965, GL30778765, GL30797285, GL30801363, GL30779549, GL30876711, GL30983286, GL30969657, GL30980538, GL31497122, GL32351536, GL32366042, GL32874272, GL22288655, GL26149444, GL26871093, GL26846543, GL28652946, GL26948813, GL26973724, GL33866763, GL26987058, GL27002147, GL27590241, GL28098508, GL28871053, GL28935072, GL30781791, GL30807836, GL30825965, GL31410562, GL31770783, GL32586794, GL32599809, GL32594808, GL32838114, GL32859826, GL21791163, GL22344344, GL33153278, GL28103371, GL22349689, GL26043593, GL26704681, GL26685417, GL26962940, GL27065020, GL27068120, GL27105094, GL27168518, GL27580547, GL27563519, GL27825677, GL27804435, GL28715606, GL28853872, GL28860123, GL29001072, GL28983084, GL28998836, GL29014715, GL29047736, GL29027314, GL29096684, GL29091098, GL29112461, GL29129051, GL29211504, GL29523308, GL29507454, GL29530145, GL29545523, GL29636767, GL29630032, GL29790758, GL30525920, GL30907483, GL30484115, GL30456518, GL30668181, GL30685621, GL30799334, GL30799138, GL30857889, GL30890316, GL30901592, GL30941029, GL30945462, GL30975327, GL30975449, GL30988713, GL31109922.

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Authorized Signatory information for Kendrapara branch, including name and signature.



Witness and stand back from Nature, that is the first step to the soul's freedom.

SRI AUROBINDO



Coastal Resilience

Roughly 40 per cent of the world's population inhabit coastal areas. In addition to being home to 12 of the world's 15 largest cities, these regions serve as an essential lifeline for countless small villages and towns. With around 80 per cent of international trade passing through seaports, coastal regions also play an outsize economic role, accounting for 60-70 per cent of global GDP.

With global temperatures rising at an alarming rate, coastal communities find themselves on the front lines of the climate and biodiversity crises. In the past year alone, Hurricanes Beryl, Helene, and Milton battered the Caribbean and the US Gulf Coast, while Storm Daniel claimed thousands of lives in Libya, underscoring the growing vulnerability of those living along the world's shorelines.

As the climate crisis escalates, so do the threats posed by rising sea levels and an acidifying, warming ocean. These dangers are compounded by habitat destruction, overfishing, and pollution, which erode the health and biodiversity of marine ecosystems. The resulting loss of mangroves and coral reefs is expected to cause enormous economic losses and displace numerous coastal communities, particularly in small island developing states where every aspect of life is linked to the sea.

Given the stakes, strengthening the resilience of coastal communities, and protecting their inhabitants' lives, livelihoods, and economies, is not just a regional or national priority but a global imperative. Meeting it will require a coordinated effort by both the public and private sectors, particularly financial institutions capable of generating the investments necessary to support sustainable, long-term solutions.

To this end, the United Nations Biodiversity Conference is exploring ways to advance the 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework, which aims to protect 30 per cent of all land and ocean areas by 2030. The upcoming UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) in Azerbaijan will focus on financing solutions. And next year's UN Ocean Conference, along with the inaugural Blue Economy and Finance Forum, could help catalyze the urgent, coordinated action needed to safeguard our planet's most vulnerable ecosystems.

Encouragingly, private financial institutions are also starting to recognise the need to bolster climate resilience. An astounding \$1 trillion in green, social, and sustainability-linked bonds were issued in 2023, reflecting investors' growing interest in projects aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. But investment in ocean regeneration and coastal resilience remains well below the hundreds of billions of dollars required annually to protect vulnerable communities and cities.

While closing this funding gap is crucial, engaging with local communities is equally important. By incorporating indigenous peoples' perspectives, policymakers could craft measures that protect nature, promote sustainable development, and ensure that investments in infrastructure and community resilience are both equitable and effective.

Cross-sector partnerships will be key to building a pipeline of investable projects. The Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance (ORRAA), where I serve as Executive Director, seeks to mobilise financing for ocean resilience. By working with committed partners, we aim to equip bankers and insurers with the tools to account for the value of natural assets on their balance sheets while harnessing the ingenuity and entrepreneurial spirit of local leaders, many of whom are women.

To be sure, there is much more to be done. To build truly resilient coastal communities, climate risks must be factored into every infrastructure project, policy proposal, and investment decision that affects climate-vulnerable regions. Moreover, by promoting nature-based solutions, such as the restoration of mangroves and coral reefs, policymakers could bolster natural defenses against storms and erosion while supporting biodiversity and local economies. Initiatives like the Coastal Risk Index – an interactive platform that leverages data to help investors, insurers, and policymakers assess coastal risks – will be vital to this effort.

Given that public financing alone cannot generate the capital needed to protect coastal communities, greater public-private cooperation will be essential to close the current funding gap. This will require developing innovative financial instruments to reduce risk and incentivise private-sector participation. With this in mind, ORRAA has partnered with the Development Guarantee Group, a guarantor backing climate adaptation and mitigation projects, to create a mechanism aimed at de-risking sustainable investments in "blue economy" sectors.

Next year's UN Ocean Conference in France and the Blue Economy and Finance Forum in Monaco present a unique opportunity to unite these various efforts. By bringing together business leaders and policymakers, these gatherings could unlock large-scale financing for ocean conservation and resilience, ensuring that coastal communities benefit from a comprehensive, sustainable approach to the complex challenges posed by the climate crisis.

But to seize this opportunity, investors, policymakers, and local leaders must align their efforts. Through decisive, coordinated climate action, we can direct targeted investments toward ocean resilience and secure a sustainable future for coastal communities – and for the global economy that relies on them.

The writer is Executive Director of the Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance.

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WISDOM CORNER

Once conform, once do what other people do because they do it, and a lethargy steals over all the finer nerves and faculties of the soul. She becomes all outer show and inward emptiness; dull, callous, and indifferent.

VIRGINIA WOOLF

A man's delight in looking forward to and hoping for some particular satisfaction is a part of the pleasure flowing out of it, enjoyed in advance. But this is afterward deducted, for the more we look forward to anything the less we enjoy it when it comes.

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

No man knows till he has suffered from the night how sweet and dear to his heart and eye the morning can be.

BRAM STOKER

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1922: Benito Mussolini became prime minister of Italy; he was the first of Europe's fascist dictators in the 20th century.

1941: After nearly 15 years of work, the Mount Rushmore National Memorial in the Black Hills of South Dakota was completed; the colossal sculpture features the heads of Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, and Abraham Lincoln.

1992: Catholic church regrets its handling of Galileo Galilei's case. Then Pope John Paul II acknowledged the errors committed by the Catholic Church while dealing with Galileo Galilei in the 17th century.

FOCUS WORLD THRIFT DAY

THRIFT, THREAT, THEFT

Thrift, the ancient virtue of careful financial management, has long been ingrained in Indian culture. For generations, Indians have been taught to live within their means, save for future, and use resources judiciously. The well-known adage "cut your coat according to your cloth" embodies this principle of moderation and financial prudence. However, in today's rapidly changing world, saving has become more complex, and with this complexity comes new threats. As we observe World Thrift Day on 31 October, it is important not only to remember the value of thrift but also to understand the growing dangers that threaten our financial security.



Bruhaspati Samal

THE PRACTICE OF THRIFT HAS EVOLVED DRAMATICALLY IN MODERN TIMES, AND THE ACT OF SAVING MONEY IS NO LONGER AS SIMPLE AS IT ONCE WAS

In recent decades, as India's economy transformed, so did its saving patterns. With liberalization of the economy, people began exploring new investment avenues like the stock market, mutual funds, insurance products, and real estate. The younger generation, especially millennials and Gen Z, has embraced investments that promise higher returns. This shift is evident in data: household financial savings as a percentage of GDP fell from 23.6% in 2011-12 to 18.2% in 2020-21, reflecting a growing consumer-driven economy. Younger generations, enticed by easy credit and attractive investment opportunities, have moved away from the traditional habit of saving first and spending later. The rise of fintech platforms has made investing and saving more accessible, but it has also made people more vulnerable to fraud and theft.

One of the biggest threats today is cybercrime. As more people use online banking, digital wallets, and payment apps, cybercriminals have developed numerous methods to exploit these systems. Phishing attacks are among the most common, where fraudsters impersonate legitimate financial institutions to trick people into revealing sensitive information like passwords or PINs. According to the Indian Computer Emergency



While new financial tools and technologies offer convenience and the potential for higher returns, they also expose people to unprecedented risks

Response Team (CERT-In), phishing attacks surged by 600% between 2019 and 2023. The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) reported that a large proportion of cybercrimes in recent years have been related to UPI, as scammers exploit the convenience of digital payments to deceive users into authorising fake transactions.

Bank frauds have also been on the rise. Even though banking institutions are considered safe havens for savings, they are not immune to attacks. Fraudulent transactions, ATM card cloning, and unauthorised access to bank accounts are just a few of the ways criminals exploit vulnerabilities in the banking system. The infamous PNB fraud in 2018, in which jeweller Nirav Modi defrauded the bank of ₹13,000 crore, is a stark reminder of how even large institutions can fall prey to sophisticated scams. In 2023, the number of reported banking fraud cases in India surpassed 11,000, showing how pervasive these threats have become. Even traditional savings options like postal savings schemes are not entirely safe.

The stock market, another popular avenue for savings and investment, is also rife with risks. Market manipulation and insider trading have caused significant financial losses for investors. A prime example is the Harshad Mehta securities scam of 1992, in which Mehta ex-

ploited loopholes in the banking system to manipulate stock prices, leading to a market crash and losses of ₹5,000 crores. In recent years, the rise of unregulated financial instruments, such as cryptocurrencies, has led to a new wave of scams. Between 2017 and 2022, Indian investors lost over ₹1,000 crore to fraudulent cryptocurrency schemes. Ponzi schemes and multi-level marketing (MLM) scams have long been a menace for savers. These schemes lure people with promises of extraordinarily high returns, but they are unsustainable and collapse when new investors stop joining. The Rose Valley scam, one of the largest Ponzi schemes in India, defrauded investors of more than ₹17,000 crore.

The rise of identity theft in the digital age poses yet another serious threat. Criminals steal personal information such as Aadhaar numbers, PAN details, or bank account credentials to open fraudulent accounts or make unauthorised transactions. This growing concern underscores the importance of safeguarding sensitive information and staying alert to suspicious activities.

Despite these growing threats, there are ways to protect savings. Educational programmes on financial literacy, cyber safety, and investment risks should be integrated into school and college curricula to empower young

people with the knowledge they need to protect their savings. Regular awareness campaigns by financial institutions can also help educate the public about common frauds and safe financial practices. Stronger regulatory frameworks are essential to safeguarding savings. The RBI has introduced mandatory two-factor authentication for online transactions, which has helped reduce instances of unauthorised access. SEBI enforces strict rules against insider trading and market manipulation, but enforcement must be rigorous to prevent exploitation by unscrupulous traders. At an individual level, adopting secure digital practices is vital. People should regularly monitor their bank accounts and financial statements for any suspicious activity. Using strong, unique passwords and enabling two-factor authentication can prevent unauthorised access to accounts. Avoiding public Wi-Fi networks for financial transactions, staying cautious of unsolicited emails or messages, and being mindful of phishing attempts can further minimise risks. Diversification of savings and investments is another key strategy for reducing risk.

The practice of thrift has evolved dramatically in modern times, and the act of saving money is no longer as simple as it once was. While new financial tools and technologies offer convenience and the potential for higher returns, they also expose people to unprecedented risks. As we celebrate World Thrift Day, it is crucial to not only embrace the value of thrift but also stay vigilant against the growing threats that imperil our savings. Financial security today requires a combination of awareness, secure practices, regulatory oversight, and institutional vigilance. Only by working together can we protect our hard-earned savings and ensure a secure financial future for all.

The writer is General Secretary, Confederation of Central Govt. Employees and Workers, Odisha State Coordination Committee.

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

An eco-friendly manufacturing sector

The recent Nobel laureates in economics have underscored the vital role institutions play in shaping national wealth. Strong institutions, deeply committed to their vision, can profoundly impact society. Unfortunately, inequality often emerges from unequal institutions. In the realm of policy discussions, institutional roles have consistently been central to socio-economic development. The gravels of institutional roles have always formed the pavement for socio-economic development. This brings us to the most significant institution: the government. The governments, both at the Centre and in states in India, have been diligently working to create wealth by harnessing the demographic dividend. Their approach focuses on reviving Nehruvian principles, which draw on the Lewis model of development, aiming to transition surplus labour from agriculture while simultaneously enhancing agricultural productivity through technological advancements. Another key aspect is the upskilling of workforce, aligning labour capabilities with the evolving needs of various in-



Pratyush Satpathy

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ABOUT ITS IMPACT ON HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT IS A FOUNDATIONAL ISSUE

dustries. Thirdly is the focus on manufacturing. Take any classic book on economics or read any standard model of growth trajectory, manufacturing is touted as the runway for taking off.

However, the runway never got built in the past, rather vetoed to destruction by the exploitative policy of British colonial rule. The Keynesian efforts post-independence, with all good intentions of the governments across party lines, have seen peripheral improvements only. Through subsequent industrial policies followed by LPG reforms and Make in India initiative, we have been aiming for 25% GDP contribution by the manufacturing sector alone. Despite our aspirations, we have been stagnating at around 14-15%. This stagnation is compounded by geopolitical tensions exacerbated by COVID-19. This raises concerns that in their hurry to deliver, future reforms may neglect crucial elements, particularly human and natural capital. The signs of this were already evident in the draft Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of 2020.

We are days away from COP29 where discussions around our

shortcomings in meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will become increasingly urgent. Before we set out to bring order into the world it is imperative that we start with the core issues in our own backyard. Industrial development with special focus about its impact on health and environment is a foundational issue. It is not today that this reality has hit us for the first time, not long ago there was one loud knock on our door - the 1984 Bhopal Gas Tragedy. In fact, the Environment Protection Act (EPA) 1986 was our moment of awakening - it sowed the legal provision for EIA. The factories Act 1948 was amended to consider the safety of the larger public and not just workers on the premises. Additionally, the Supreme Court has played a pivotal role in advancing environmental justice in India. These are signs that the institutions of India are striding in tandem on right path.

This progress can be furthered through schemes like the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) programme, which can integrate environmental monitoring into its framework. Currently, it

spreads across 14 major sectors. Amongst them, the semiconductor industry is responsible for effluents like sulphur hexafluoride (used to make circuit breakers) and perfluorocarbons. In addition to being GHGs, they affect the endocrine system. Compounds like beryllium (used in motherboards) and cadmium (used in resistors and semiconductors) have carcinogenic and neural damaging potentials. Manufacturing, quarrying and construction sees a major case of silicosis causing bluish skin and pneumoconiosis-caused due to inhalation of dust. The margin for incentives should include factors of monitoring and marginal reduction in such effluents.

The journey toward socio-environmental justice is a continuous process that necessitates collaboration across sectors and stakeholders. Addressing these complex challenges begins with foundational issues—ensuring the safety of workers and their environments. The path forward is not simple, but it is achievable.

The writer is a student at Indian Institute of Forest Management.

Unity is strength

Sir, Nothing can be dearer to the nation's citizens than its unity, integrity and security. People united can lead to a harmonious blend of peace and tranquility. An eclectic boost to a country's economic fortunes can also be a reality through unity. Unity is in itself a power because it brings a host of nation-preserving qualities with it. These lead to other nation-building endeavours. Individually we are a drop, but together we are an ocean. The splendid "unity in diversity of the country" slogan says it all. The slogan essentially means cultural, social, religious, linguistic, physical and ideological differences cannot act as obstacles in fostering a country's unity. Unity in diversity ultimately leads to peace because peace is conciliation of differences. Top leaders know that inasmuch as there is unity in diversity, there is diversity in unity. National Unity Day or Rashtriya Ekta Diwas is celebrated on 31 October to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Social evil

Sir, Repeated efforts to stop child marriages in India have still borne fruit. Policies and laws, social awareness programmes and administrative intervention have not worked. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights has suggested that around 11 lakh minors were married off in 2023-24 – and 2024 is not over yet. Against this backdrop, the Supreme Court has provided strict guidelines to states and Union territories to prevent child marriage. Apart from ordering that every district should have a child marriage prevention officer, the court also tasked police officers and collectors to intervene whenever they received a message that a minor marriage was about to take place, even if it were just a suspicion. Judicial magistrates, too, would have to be alert, especially on so-called auspicious days when mass weddings take place; these were the ideal sites for minor marriages. Anyone conducting, promoting or blessing a child marriage would be prosecuted as would be any government official who did not prevent a minor marriage even after knowing it was taking place or who was present on the occasion. The question is whether all the officers made responsible would do their duty.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

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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B-15, Russagarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

King Charles pays private visit for wellness treatment

THE ENTIRE SCHEDULE, WHICH INVOLVED THE KING AND QUEEN UNDERTAKING UP TO 10 ENGAGEMENTS A DAY, HAD BEEN TAILORED SPECIFICALLY ON MEDICAL ADVICE TO ACCOMMODATE PERIODS OF REST AND INCLUDED ONLY ONE EVENING EVENT



The royal couple stayed at the holistic health centre, known for rejuvenative treatment, including yoga and meditation sessions and therapies, near Whitefield

During the three-day stay, they also took a tour of the organic farming and medicinal garden, visited a cow shed, engaged in eco-friendly practices and walked on the grasses -- felt connected to nature as the campus is home to butterflies, dragon flies, frogs and wild rabbits

It was like a typical day for them just like for any other guest who visits the facility. "Their day began with morning therapeutic yoga which is taught by a specialised doctor knowing the medical condition or any health issue if any. This was usually a one-on-one session. After breakfast, then treatment started which was followed by lunch," he said.

Food was prepared from fresh organic produce from the farm at the campus and the evenings were more about meditation, he said. "That's how his days were here. This is done for every guest. The only difference is with each person's medical condition or their health issue, we fine tune it accordingly," the official told PTI.

During the three-day stay, they also took a tour of the organic farming and medicinal garden, visited a cow shed, engaged in eco-friendly practices and walked on the grasses -- felt connected to nature as the campus is home to butterflies, dragon flies, frogs and wild rabbits.

Delhi's air quality plummets to 'very poor' on Diwali eve

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: Delhi's air quality slipped into the "very poor" category on the eve of Diwali, with pollution levels expected to go up Thursday, even as authorities said strict action will be taken against those violating the firecracker ban.

The city's 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 307 at 4 pm, up from 268 Tuesday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

The Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune said the air quality in the national capital is likely to be in the "very poor" category (AQI 300 to 400) Thursday and Friday.

The air quality may also reach the severe category on these two days in case of additional emissions from firecrackers and stubble or waste fires.

According to the Decision Support System (DSS) for Air Quality Management, if stubble burning occurs at levels similar to the last five years, it could contribute 15-18 per cent to Delhi's pollution on these dates. This is exacerbated by winds from the northwest, which may carry smoke into the city.

Under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), a set of emergency measures to curb air pollution in Delhi-NCR during winter, the air quality is categorized into four stages: Stage I - "Poor" (AQI 201-300), Stage II - "Very Poor" (AQI 301-400), Stage III - "Severe" (AQI 401-450) and Stage IV - "Severe Plus" (AQI above 450).

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said 377 teams have been formed to enforce the ban on firecrackers across the national capital. He said authorities are in touch with resident welfare associations (RWAs), market associations and social organisations to spread awareness.

Delhi to boost independent food outlets

The new policy introduces a pioneering approach to support the growing segment of independent food businesses, including cloud and ghost kitchens, and other non-dine-in delivery outlets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: Delhi government will establish affordable and modern infrastructure facilities to boost independent food outlets, streamline licensing, and expand employment opportunities, a statement said Wednesday.

Spearheaded by former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's vision, the initiative will ease regulations and offer affordable, modern infrastructure through the Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC), fuelling growth for local food outlets, cloud kitchens, and delivery-only services, it stated.

A new policy has been proposed to boost the growth of independent food outlets and enhance employment opportunities in the sector on the occasion of Diwali. This initiative is expected to take effect within the next 15 days, it said.

Delhi Industries Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said, "The policy introduces a pioneering approach to support the growing segment of independent food businesses, including cloud kitchens, ghost kitchens, and other non-dine-in delivery outlets."

"Designed to simplify business operations and promote sustainable growth, the policy will be effective from 2024 to 2029. It aims to reduce regulatory hurdles, streamline licensing processes, and create opportunities for job growth and skill development throughout the National Capital Territory," he said.

In response to the growing demand for food delivery services, the Delhi government's new pol-



icy provides a robust regulatory framework that addresses the specific needs of non-dine-in food outlets, currently numbering over 20,000 in the capital, the statement said.

This initiative aims to enhance ease of doing business, streamline compliance, and improve operational efficiency, fostering an environment that supports entrepreneurial growth, skill enhancement, and employment opportunities, it said.

The policy introduces a dedicated single window portal for licensing, facilitating hassle-free approvals and simplifying compliance. This portal is designed to make it easier for independent food outlets to establish and operate efficiently, it said.

Outlets with a floor area under 250 square meters are exempt from requiring a Fire department NOC, provided they meet essential fire safety standards through self-certification. The Labour department will permit approved food outlets to operate around the clock, process-

ing applications within 30 days for swift approvals, the statement said. "Through DSIDC, the city government will establish affordable and modern infrastructure facilities within industrial areas. These will include shared kitchens, food testing labs, temperature-controlled warehouses, and co-working spaces, all aimed at supporting small businesses and start-ups," the statement said.

The Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University (DSEU) will be instrumental in delivering targeted training and skill development programs for both entrepreneurs and employees, offering a 75 per cent subsidy on training costs for recognised outlets, it said.

To drive excellence and encourage best practices, the policy introduces an annual awards program. Independent food outlets demonstrating exemplary standards in hygiene, compliance, and safety will be acknowledged with top awards, including cash prizes of up to ₹2 lakh, it added.

The policy introduces a dedicated single window portal for licensing, facilitating hassle-free approvals and simplifying compliance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore/London, Oct 30: Britain's King Charles III and his wife Queen Camilla paid a private visit to Bangalore for wellness treatment at a sprawling integrative medical facility here, local sources said Wednesday, with the Buckingham Palace confirming the couple made a city stopover enroute to the UK from Samoa after attending a Commonwealth meeting.

The royal couple stayed at the holistic health centre, known for rejuvenative treatment, including yoga and meditation sessions and therapies, near Whitefield here, an official said.

They made a short restful stopover in the country to break their long journey back to the UK from the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Samoa, Buckingham Palace said in London Wednesday.

The 75-year-old monarch made the private visit that the palace indicated was not health related or linked with his ongoing cancer treatment. It was reportedly

Motorists penalised ₹47 cr for pollution certificate violations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: Amid a rise in air pollution levels in the national capital, the traffic police have imposed penalties to the tune of ₹47 crore on motorists between October 1 and 24 for pollution certificate violations, an official said Wednesday.

The traffic police have issued over 47,000 challans to motorists. A fine of ₹10,000 is imposed on motorists for not having a valid pollution under control (PUC) certificate. These challans get released from courts.

According to the data provided by the Delhi Traffic Police, a special drive was launched this month in which 47,363 challans for PUC violations were issued to motorists between October 1 and 24.

An official said the number of vehicles has increased significantly



in the city, causing pollution. "Special drive was conducted at different locations, including ITO Chowk, Peeragarhi, Ashram Chowk, Anand Vihar and Mehrauli this month by traffic personnel and around 47,343 motorists were caught without pollution or expired PUC certificates till October 24," the official said.

He said the drive is underway and the officials have been asked to keep conducting surprise checks of vehicles.



Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah flags off new luxury Volvo buses named Airavat Club Class 2.0, at Vidhana Soudha premises in Bangalore, Karnataka, Wednesday

6 water and sanitation startups win ₹25L each

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Oct 30: For 29-year-old Shilpa K Nayana, nothing, not even her four-month-old baby son, Rio aka Rayan Nayana Arjun, could come in the way, as she pitches her already award-winning project Jalam, at Karnataka Water and Sanitation Sustainability Summit held in Bangalore.

She was among the 20 startup social entrepreneurs shortlisted from 119 applications to pitch their project at the summit October 29.

As the summit wound up late in the evening, six of the 20 were announced as winners of a grant of ₹25 lakh and a chance to pilot their innovations in collaboration with the Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR).

Nayana's project Jalam, a low-cost water filtration technology that can be used at household level as well as community level, was among the six chosen projects. "The working cost for decantation of water with my filter that uses nanotechnology is as low as ₹2 per litre," said the social entrepreneur who envisioned Jalam as her final year project when she was doing biotechnology and bio-chemical engineering in Thiruvananthapuram, almost



Nayana's project Jalam, a low-cost water filtration technology that can be used at household level as well as community level, was among the six chosen projects

six years ago. "The award at the summit came at a time when I am in a way battling postpartum depression. Besides the money, recognition is working wonders, and I know I am not going to be in this slump anymore," said Nayana, who came to the summit with Rio nestling on her shoulders. Her product is all set to be marketed under her company - Dime Klear Pvt Ltd - that she has floated with a partner. One of the other winners of the startup battle is an 18-year-old

at the summit. With the help of the Karnataka government, they now plan to conduct a domestic unit trial.

"We have chosen Yadgir, Raichur and Gulbarga, which are among the 16 districts in Karnataka that were identified with traces of arsenic in their water. These three are the worst affected," said Kumar, who is the Chief Technology Officer of Navmarg Research and Innovation, the company that the four of them have floated to market their product.

The other winning projects are Biome Environment Trust's managed aquifer recharge project; REVY Environment Solutions' waste management solutions; Oeco Water Private Ltd's water purification system and Krishi Hrudya Pvt Ltd's technology platform for farmers to improve yields through efficient water usage and soil health.

Mentioning that it was encouraging to see over 100 entrepreneurs come together specifically for water and sanitation, Minister for Rural Development, Panchayat Raj, and Information Technology & Biotechnology, Priyank Kharage said at the valedictory event Tuesday evening, that the summit proves if doors are opened wider, a thousand more would likely to join.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 41/ET/ISBP/ENGG/2024-25, Dated : 24.10.2024

(1) e-Tender No.41-eT-DENS-SBP-24
NAME OF WORK: CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD UNDER BRIDGE/LIMITED HEIGHT SUBWAY IN LIEU OF LEVEL CROSSING-RV 205, RV-217 & 220 IN THE BLOCK SECTION BETWEEN NORLA ROAD-MUNIGUDA OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION BY AIR PUSHING TECHNIQUE.

Approximate Cost of the Work : ₹ 16,85,421.09, Bid Security: ₹ 9,92,800/-

(2) e-Tender No.42-eT-DENS-SBP-24
NAME OF WORK: CONSTRUCTION OF ROAD UNDER BRIDGE/LIMITED HEIGHT SUBWAY IN LIEU OF LEVEL CROSSING-RV 228 & RV-230 IN THE BLOCK SECTION BETWEEN MUNIGUDA-BISSAMCUTTACK OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION BY AIR PUSHING TECHNIQUE.

Approximate Cost of the Work : ₹ 11,86,77,340.20, Bid Security: ₹ 7,43,400/-

Completion Period for the Work : 12 (Twelve) Months (for Sl. No. 1) and 10 (Ten) Months (for Sl. No. 2).

Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1500 Hrs. of 22.11.2024 (for both Tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in

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

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg./PR-680/P/24-25 Sambalpur

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, GHUMSUR SOUTH DIVISION

Bhejiput, Bhanjanagar, Ganjam, Odisha, Pin - 761126
 Phone No. - 06821-241015, Fax No. - 06821-241014,
 E-mail : dfo.ghumsursouth@odisha.gov.in
 Letter No. 6139 Dated : 24.10.2024

Invitation For Bids (IFB)
E-Procurement Bid Identification No. GH (S)-BN- F.E & C.C-01/2024-25

1	Name of work	: Construction of Buildings
2	No. of works	: 03 Nos.
3	No. of covers	: Single Cover
4	Estimated Cost	: Rs. 11.31 to 11.52 Lakhs
5	Period of Completion	: Three Calendar Months
6	Date & Time of availability of Bid documents in portal	: From 10.00 A.M. of Dated 28.10.2024 to 05 P.M Dated 11.11.2024
7	Last date/time for receipt of Bids in the portal	: Up to 5.00 P.M. of Dated. 11.11.2024
8	Date of opening of Bid documents	: At 11.30 A.M. of 14.11.2024
9	Class of Contractor	: "D" & "C" Class Contractor
10	Name and address of officer Inviting Bid	: Divisional Forest Officer, Ghumsur South Forest Division, Bhejiput, Bhanjanagar

Further, details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal www.tenderodisha.gov.in. The Addendum/corrigendum if any will be hosted in the website only.

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer,
 Ghumsur South Division
 OIPR-08051/11/0002/2425

IIFL FINANCE

CIN: L67100MH1995PLC093797
 Regd. Office: IIFL House, Sun Infotech Park, Road No. 16V, Plot No.B-23, Thane Industrial Area, Wagle Estate, Thane - 400604
 Tel: (91-22) 41035000 • Fax: (91-22) 25806654
 E-mail: reach@iifl.com • Website: www.iifl.com

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR AUCTION OF GOLD ORNAMENTS

It is hereby notified to all concerned borrower(s) in specific and the public, in general, that we, IIFL Finance Limited ("IIFL") are auctioning gold ornaments of defaulted customers who neither regularized their loans nor paid the outstanding amount despite being informed through registered auction notices and repeated reminders. Public auction of the gold ornaments pledged in the following loan accounts will be conducted on **07.11.2024 from 10 AM** at following district Centre **BHAWANIPATNA-BHAWANIPATNA GL, IIFL FINANCE LTD, AT-1ST FLOOR, PLOT NO-1077, MAHAVEER PADA ,BHAWANIPATNA,KALAHADI,PIN-766001** Any change in venue or date (if any) will be displayed at the auction centre. If for any reason the auction cannot be held on the date mentioned herein or the auction does not get completed on the same day, IIFL reserves the right to conduct or proceed with the said auction on any subsequent date with same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased, then all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to nominee/legal heir.

Gold Loan A/C No.: GL22464970, GL28588356, GL28613854, GL28751880, GL28761816, GL28867940, GL28853841, GL29042345, GL29049323, GL29084079, GL29100178, GL30040703, GL30060901, GL31548894, GL32909441, GL32627218, GL32640009, GL32682997, GL32704656, GL32713832, GL32710703, GL32713077, GL32746002, GL32736558, GL32824630, GL32828256, GL32966946, GL29120308, GL22880787, GL27706012, GL23804031, GL23846737, GL26844495, GL26863251, GL29126479, GL29114335, GL29234782, GL29254495, GL31148539, GL31300017, GL31709673, GL32351901, GL32366020, GL32443206, GL32423279, GL32870458, GL28902004, GL28877705, GL29010766, GL29021283, GL30878987, GL30904196, GL32364806, GL32355774, GL32675414, GL32685354, GL28528744, GL28522044, GL31260131, GL31304107, GL32913854, GL32927095.

The Auction shall be conducted on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis and IIFL does not make any representation or warranties regarding quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. IIFL, at its absolute sole discretion, may either postpone or remove, any of accounts from auction list and any proceedings without prior notice and without assigning any reason therefor and to reject any or all the bids or offers without assigning any reason for the same. Details of defaulting borrower(s) pledged ornaments and other details have been displayed at the respective branch. The defaulting borrower(s) have an option to repay the entire dues including up to date interest and all applicable charges and close or regularize their loan account even after publication of this notice but in any case, till the date of auction, failing which the pledged gold ornaments will be sold and balance dues (if any) will be recovered with interest and costs. However, the defaulting loans which are closed or regularized on or after this publication, will have to bear the proportionate publication charge. Borrowers are requested to submit/update their latest bank account details to enable timely refund of excess auction proceeds, if any.

For detailed information, terms and conditions, contact the concerned branch office of IIFL Finance Limited.

Place: KALAHANDI
 Date: 31.10.2024

Sd/
 AUTHORISED SIGNATORY
 IIFL FINANCE LIMITED

national

of the day quote

Recently, Congress minister Irfan Ansari made derogatory remarks against Sita Soren, the sister-in-law of Chief Minister Hemant Soren, but yet no action has been taken because it might upset infiltrators

Nobody will be spared and action will be taken against each one involved in fleeing people under the pretext of providing government jobs. Some people paid money to such fraudsters in the hope of getting government jobs even as no advertisements were published for such positions

Encounters will keep taking place. Terrorists will keep coming, and we will keep eliminating them

Encounters will keep taking place. Terrorists will keep coming, and we will keep eliminating them

SHORT TAKES

Kannur Collector under scanner

Kannur: Kannur District Collector Arun Vijayan has pointed fingers against Additional District Magistrate Naveen Babu in the controversial suicide case involving the CPI-M leader PP Divya. The Collector, in his statement to the police, has said that Babu confessed to him of having done a "wrong".

JD-U criticizes Pappu Yadav

Patna: JD-U Wednesday criticised the Purnea MP Rajesh Ranjan, also known as Pappu Yadav, after he received threatening calls, saying he has a contradictory stance. "On one hand, Pappu Yadav claims to be a Bahubali leader, but on the other, he behaves like a coward after receiving phone calls. I cannot say whether the calls were fake or genuine, but he is now demanding security from the government," said Bihar PHED Minister Neeraj Kumar Bablu.

1 dead in chemical factory blaze in WB

Kolkata: One person died and seven others were injured after a fire broke out at a chemical factory where crude oil was distilled in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district Wednesday afternoon, a police officer said. The fire broke out inside two oil tankers inside the factory at Badu in Duttapukur Police Station jurisdiction at around 1 PM.

Fire breaks out

Noida: A fire erupted in a pillow-manufacturing unit in Greater Noida and three fire tenders had to be rushed to douse the flames, police said Wednesday. No casualties were reported in the incident. The fire started due to a short circuit in an air conditioner around 10 pm Tuesday at Udyog Kendra-1 of Ecotech-3 police station area, they said.

5 Naxalites surrender

Bijapur (Chhattisgarh): Five Naxalites, including a woman carrying a cash reward of ₹5 lakh and wanted for attacks on police, have surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, a senior official said Wednesday. They turned themselves in before senior police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officials here Tuesday citing they were disappointed with the atrocities committed by senior cadres and the "inhuman and hollow" Maoist ideology, the official said.



Fadnavis showed the file to Ajit Pawar and broke the oath of confidentiality. How can these issues be discussed in public? The governor should order registration of a case against Fadnavis and Pawar for breaking the oath

SANJAY RAUT | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

FREE LPG CYLINDER SCHEME FROM TOMORROW IN ANDHRA

The Andhra Pradesh government is all set to launch free distribution of three cooking gas cylinders annually under Deepam-2 scheme to eligible beneficiaries from November 1



Deepotsav: Ram Lalla fever grips Ayodhya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ayodhya (UP), Oct 30: Ayodhya was all about festivities Wednesday as a procession with vibrant tableaux bearing characters from Ramayan made its way through the temple town as part of the eighth Deepotsav celebration.

At its conclusion, the procession carrying the mythical characters was received with an 'aarti' by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who also pulled the chariot on which artists playing Lord Ram, Sita, Lakshman, and Hanuman were seated. The characters were brought to Ayodhya earlier in a helicopter, in a nod to the mythical Pushpak Viman re-

ferred to in Ramayan. Eighteen tableaux depicting episodes from Ramcharitmanas were showcased during the procession which moved stately from Saket Mahavidyalaya to Ram Katha Park to the sound of firecrackers and bursts of gulas.

The floats were inaugurated by Culture and Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh, MLA Ved Prakash Gupta, and Mayor Girish Pati Tripathi. Saket College students illustrated the 'Putrayeshi' Yagna and Shri Ram's coronation, taken from Ramcharitmanas, in their tableaux. Folk artists narrated the depictions live.

For this year's Deepotsav, Saket Mahavidyalaya has crafted 18 stunning tableaux, 11 by the Information Department and



seven by the Tourism Department. The Tourism Department's tableaux depicted scenes from Bal Kand, Ayodhya

Kand, Aranya Kand, Kishkindha Kand, Sundar Kand, Lanka Kand, and Uttar Kand, taken from Tulsidas's Ramcharitmanas.

Special displays illustrating key episodes in Lord Ram's life - his education and marriage to Sita, the forest exile, Bharat Milaap, Shabri's devotion, Ashok Vatika, Hanuman's journey to Lanka, Laxman's injury from Shakti arrow, Ravana's defeat, and his grand return to Ayodhya - were also mounted during the procession. The Uttar Pradesh government is aiming to create a new world record this year by lighting over 28 lakh diyas along the banks of the Sarayu River later this evening.

Two Guinness World Records - most people performing aarti simultaneously and the largest display of oil lamps - were set at the eighth edition of Deepotsav here Wednesday.

Darshan gets bail on medical grounds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ballari, Oct 30: Actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, arrested more than four months ago in a murder case, walked out of jail here Wednesday, hours after the Karnataka High Court granted him interim bail on medical grounds, to undergo spine surgery.

The 47-year-old, arrested June 11, was lodged in Ballari prison. His friend Pavithra Gowda and 15 others are co-accused in the Renukaswamy murder case. The bench of Justice S Vishwajith Shetty Wednesday morning granted interim bail to Darshan for a period of six weeks.

And he was released from prison this evening after jail authorities completed formalities on receiving the court order.

According to police sources, Darshan will take a route via neighbouring Andhra Pradesh to reach Bangalore, and security is being provided to him.

The court has laid down certain conditions, as per which he should execute a personal bond for a sum of ₹2 lakhs with two sureties for the like sum, and surrender his Passport before the Trial Court.

It has also said that he is "at liberty to get himself operated and treated in a Hospital of his choice at Bengaluru and he shall report to the said Hospital forthwith after his release and get himself medically examined and a report from the said Hospital mentioning the probable date of admission of petitioner in the Hospital for the proposed treatment and follow-up treatment if any, shall be filed before this Court within one week from the date of release."



Ayushman Bharat a failed scheme: AAP



THE PRIME MINISTER TUESDAY CRITICISED THE DELHI AND WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENTS FOR FAILING TO IMPLEMENT THE AYUSHMAN BHARAT SCHEME OUT OF "POLITICAL INTERESTS"

PM MODI SAID HE WAS DISAPPOINTED WITH THE STATE OF FREE HEALTHCARE FOR THE ELDERLY IN THE TWO STATES AND CALLED IT A MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE THE SENIOR CITIZENS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: The AAP Wednesday intensified its attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his remark on non-implementation of Ayushman Bharat scheme in the national capital, with Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj terming the central health insurance scheme a "failed" initiative.

At a press conference Wednesday, Bharadwaj said, "The Ayushman Bharat is a failed scheme due to its restrictive eligibility criteria. Whereas, the Arvind Kejriwal model of Delhi gives free healthcare ir-

respective of the fact that you own a refrigerator, motorcycle, or anything." The health minister further questioned the viability of the scheme in the BJP-ruled states.

"You go to government hospitals in Delhi like GB Pant and GTB, and you will find so many people from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Haryana getting their surgeries done there."

"People come to Delhi's government hospitals from as far as 300 kilometres away. I want to ask the CM of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Haryana, if the Ayushman scheme is such a success, then why are people not getting surgeries done in their states," he said.

The minister further claimed that the Delhi government even provides money to the central hospitals like AIIMS, Safdarjung, and RML for the treatment of the needy people. Earlier, AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal also raised the issue in a press conference alleging that the Ayushman scheme is riddled with scams, citing CAG data.

He also said the scheme does not require to be implemented in the national capital as health services here are provided free of charge by his government. "This is not my opinion, this is what the CAG says...there are many scams in the Ayushman Bharat Scheme. Treatment under this scheme will only happen when the patient is hospitalised, but there are no conditions regarding hospitalisation in Delhi," Kejriwal said.

BJP files writ petition

New Delhi: The Delhi BJP MPs have filed a writ petition in the High Court against the AAP government's decision to not implement the Ayushman Bharat health insurance scheme in Delhi, state president Virendra Sachdeva said Wednesday. In a press conference, Sachdeva slammed the AAP and its convener Arvind Kejriwal for depriving lakhs of eligible people in Delhi of the Centre's health insurance scheme. Addressing the issue in a press conference earlier in the day, Kejriwal alleged that the Ayushman Bharat scheme is riddled with scams according to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG).

India, China complete troop disengagement

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 30: Indian and Chinese troops have completed disengagement at two friction points at Demchok and Depsang Plains in eastern Ladakh and patrolling is set to commence soon at these points, Army sources said Wednesday.

Exchange of sweets between the two sides will take place on Diwali, they said.

Chinese Ambassador to India Xu Feihong, who attended an event in Kolkata, in response to a question on the troops disengagement said, "I hope that under the guidance of this consensus, relations will be moving forward smoothly in the future and not be restricted and interrupted by specific disagreements between the two sides." "The most important thing is how to handle the differences," he said.

The process follows the agreement firmed up between the two countries on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the LAC in eastern Ladakh, a major breakthrough to end the over four-year standoff.

The move marks a significant development in the pursuit of reduced tension along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh since the fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades.



The process follows the agreement firmed up between the two countries on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the LAC in eastern Ladakh, a major breakthrough to end the over four-year standoff

The move marks a significant development in the pursuit of reduced tension along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh since the fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades

was likely to get completed by October 28-29.

Asked about the planned exchange of sweets between the two sides on Diwali, a source said this was a "big win" from both military and diplomatic perspectives. It was, however, immediately not known at which places this confectionary exchange would happen. As a traditional practice, Indian and Chinese troops have in the past exchanged sweets and greetings at several border posts along the LAC, including in eastern Ladakh, to mark festivals and other important occasions.

Sources earlier had said the areas and patrolling status were expected to be moved back to pre-April 2020 level.

Patrolling would begin at these points once the disengagement that began last week is completed and both sides will move their respective troops and dismantle temporary structures, they had said.

The patrolling will be done by armed personnel and structures to be dismantled include temporary sheds and tents, the sources had added. The agreement framework was signed first at the diplomatic level and then military-level talks took place, they had said, adding the nitty-gritty of the agreement was worked on during the Corps Commander-level talks which was signed last week.



An artist gives final touches to an idol of the Goddess Kali ahead of the 'Kali Puja' in Agartala, Tripura

'Kids, elderly exposed to more heatwave days in last decade'

IN 2023 ALONE, PEOPLE IN INDIA WERE FOUND TO BE EXPOSED TO A MODERATE OR HIGHER RISK OF HEAT STRESS FOR ABOUT 2,400 HOURS OR 100 DAYS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: In India, over the last decade, infants and adults aged 65 or above were exposed to about eight heatwave days each year on average, increases of 47 per cent for infants and 58 per cent for older adults, compared to 1990-1999, according to a new report of The Lancet Countdown on Health and Climate Change.

In 2023 alone, people in India were found to be exposed to a moderate or higher risk of heat

stress for about 2,400 hours or 100 days, while performing light outdoor activities such as walking, the eighth annual report, reflecting the work of 122 experts from 57 academic institutions and UN agencies globally, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), found.

Published ahead of the 29th UN Conference of the Parties, or 'COP29', the report revealed a country-wise assessment of how climate change is affecting peo-



ple's health. It showed that 10 of the 15 indicators that help track

health threats to people around the world due to global warming,

including rising nighttime temperatures and extreme precipitation, reached concerning new records.

Further, estimating economic impacts of heat in India, the report found that the agricultural sector was the worst hit from potential income loss due to a reduced capacity of labour in 2023 - to the tune of over \$71.9 billion in potential losses. Overall, in 2023, about 181 billion labour hours were potentially lost due to exposure to heat in India - an increase of 50 per cent from

those lost during 1990-1999.

The report provides the most up-to-date assessment of the links between health and climate change, the authors said. With health threats due to climate change reaching concerning levels, the authors are calling out governments and companies who continue "fuelling the fire" by investing in fossil fuels, all-time high greenhouse gas emissions, and years of delay in adapting, thereby endangering survival of people around the world.

of the day quote

It's not that we are doing any favour to others. We are doing favour to ourselves because ultimately we and our small kids will suffer from the pollution caused (by bursting crackers)

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP CONVENER

Today, we reaffirm our commitment to the principles of unity and integrity that Sardar Patel championed. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that our actions and policies reflect the spirit of inclusiveness and diversity that makes India unique

J P NADDA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

Lalu and Nitish kept the whole of Bihar trapped in 'jaat' for 35 years. For the past 10 years, Modi has been short-changing you in exchange for five kgs of bhaat

PRASHANT KISHOR | JAN SURAJA FOUNDER

X POST OF THE DAY

The poor would always be treated like animals, or worse, as long as they stayed loyal to politicians. You make them god, they make you expendables.

@NarundarM

SHORT TAKES

CBI gets 3-day custody of Sumi

Guwahati: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) took three days custody of controversial Assamese actress Sumi Borah, her husband Tarkik Borah and another prime accused in the multi crore online trading scam - Bishal Phukan Wednesday. The trio was lodged in jail since the huge scam surfaced in September that shocked the entire state. Sources said that the central probe agency has planned to interrogate Sumi Borah, Tarkik and Bishal Phukan together to get more clues how the entire trading fraud took place in Assam for the last few years.

Wayanad bypoll: ₹16L cash seized

Malappuram (Kerala): Unaccounted cash to the tune of ₹16 lakhs and banned narcotics worth ₹1.16 lakh were seized by the police from this district during raids carried out ahead of the upcoming Wayanad Lok Sabha polls. Three Assembly segments- Eranad, Vandoor and Nilambur-in Malappuram fall under Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency where Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi, CPI's Sathyan Mokeri and BJP's Navya Haridas seek their electoral luck in the November 13 polls.

IAF chief visits Jammu

Jammu: Indian Air Force (IAF) Chief Air Marshal A P Singh Wednesday visited Jammu and some of the forward locations where the air warriors of the force are deployed, an official spokesperson said. The visit of the Chief of the Air Staff comes on the eve of Diwali festival. He took a detailed overview of the operational readiness at these locations and interacted with the air warriors and Agniveers posted there, the spokesperson said.

New rules to check hoax bomb threats

The new set of guidelines for civil aviation security and intelligence agencies have been issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation (BCAS) in view of the "evolving security challenges", especially the "emerging trend" of issuing hoax bomb threats through various social media platforms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: Pseudonymous or anonymous nature of the social media handle, analysis of the geopolitical situation and presence of VIPs onboard are some of the new criteria that agencies will keep in mind while considering the seriousness of a bomb threat made to Indian airlines.

The new set of guidelines for civil aviation security and intelligence agencies have been issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation (BCAS) in view of the "evolving security challenges", especially the "emerging trend" of issuing hoax bomb threats through various social media platforms.

In the past two weeks, more than 510 domestic and international flights have received bomb threats that later turned out to be hoaxes. The threats were issued mostly through anonymous handles on social media platform X. This has caused "major" operational and financial distress for the airlines.

As per the current practice, a Bomb Threat Assessment Committee (BTAC) is convened at a designated airport to analyse a bomb or security threat issued against an airline, airport or any part of the aviation ecosystem that decides to declare it "specific" or serious or "non-specific" or hoax.

The committee comprises officials from the BCAS, CISE, local police, airport operator and airline officials and repre-



sentatives of some other agencies.

The BTAC is part of the Bomb Threat Contingency Plan (BTCP) of 2014 put in place by the Union Civil Aviation Ministry to deal with bomb, sabotage and hijack threats to the Indian aviation sector, its assets and human resources.

PTI had first reported October 22 that the protocols for the BTAC were tweaked by Indian aviation security regulators and agencies to better tackle the spate of the ongoing "random" internet-based bomb threats being made to various Indian airlines.

IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS, MORE THAN 510 DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS HAVE RECEIVED BOMB THREATS THAT LATER TURNED OUT TO BE HOAXES

THE THREATS WERE ISSUED MOSTLY THROUGH ANONYMOUS HANDLES ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM X

THIS HAS CAUSED "MAJOR" OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL DISTRESS FOR THE AIRLINES

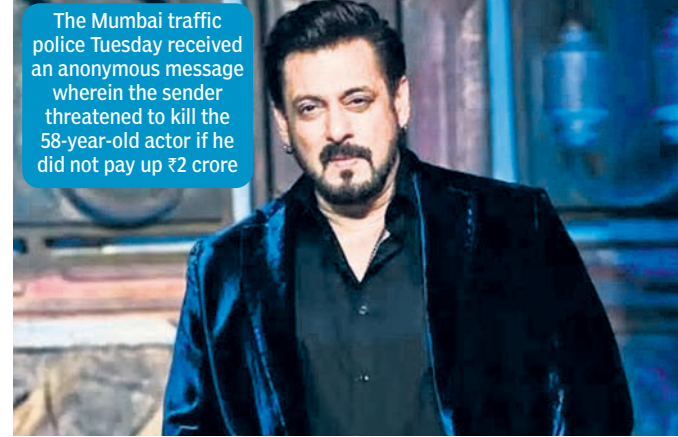
The BTAC, as per the new guidelines notified on October 19, will adopt a "multi-layered" approach to assess threats and determine the "credibility and seriousness" of such threats issued on social media and satisfy themselves about the "credibility" of the source of information. Some additional questions will now be answered by the BTAC before categorising a threat as specific, that would lead to triggering of established security protocols of diverting an aircraft, sending it to an isolation bay upon landing or just before taking off, and conducting fresh anti-sabotage checks of passengers and their be-

DELHI COURT ORDERS FRESH PROBE AGAINST GAMBHIR

Directing a fresh investigation, a Delhi court has set aside the discharge of former cricketer and current head coach of the Indian cricket team Gautam Gambhir, and others in a case where flat buyers were reportedly cheated



Salman Khan gets death threat again



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 30: Bollywood superstar Salman Khan received yet another death threat along with demand to pay up ₹2 crore, prompting police to launch a probe and arrest a resident of Mumbai's Bandra Wednesday, an official said.

The Mumbai traffic police Tuesday received an anonymous message wherein the sender threatened to kill the 58-year-old actor if he did not pay up ₹2 crore, the official said.

The Worli police registered a case against the unidentified person and launched an investigation.

Police Wednesday arrested a man, identified as Azam Mohammed Mustafa, a resident of Bandra (East), for allegedly issuing the latest death threat to Khan and demanding ₹2 crore from him, he said.

The superstar resides at Galaxy Apartments in Bandra (West), a posh locality of Mumbai, where two motorbike-

borne assailants had opened fire in April. Earlier this month, the Mumbai traffic police's WhatsApp helpline desk had received a threat message demanding ₹5 crore from the actor. The police had then arrested a man from Jharkhand in connection with the threat message.

The Mumbai police Monday arrested a man from Noida in Uttar Pradesh for allegedly issuing a death threat to Khan and NCP leader Zeeshan Siddique, whose father Baba Siddique, was shot dead by three gunmen October 12 in Bandra (East).

Notably, Khan had earlier received death threats from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. Suspected members of the dreaded gang had opened fire outside the actor's Bandra home in April this year.

A few months back, the Navi Mumbai police uncovered a plot by the Bishnoi gang to kill Khan after which his security was stepped up.

Gujarat: PM inaugurates projects worth ₹280cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ekta Nagar (Gujarat), Oct 30: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday inaugurated or laid foundation stones for various projects as well as tourist attractions worth ₹284 crore during his visit to the iconic Statue of Unity at Ekta Nagar in Gujarat's Narmada district.

Modi is on a two-day Gujarat visit, his second this week, and will participate in Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations during his stay in the state. The birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is celebrated as Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day) October 31.

After his arrival at Ekta Nagar, around 200km from Ahmedabad, in the evening, Modi inaugurated several new projects, including a sub-district hospital, smart bus stops, a 4 MW solar project, and two ICU-on-wheels.

The PM inaugurated a newly constructed 50-bed sub-district hospital built at a cost of Rs 22 crore.

The hospital is equipped with a trauma centre, gynaecological operating theatre, minor operating theatre, CT scan facility, an ICU, labour room, special and physiotherapy wards, medical store, and an ambulance, said a state government release.

Other facilities inaugurated on the occasion included 10 smart bus stops and as many pick-up stands for tourists at Ekta Nagar, push-button pedestrian crossings, car charging points, and a running track for State Reserve Police Force personnel.

The PM opened traffic circles constructed at different junctions in Ekta Nagar and nearby areas at a cost of ₹2.58 crore to improve traffic management and enhance the aesthetics.



An LPG cylinder delivery man caught in a sudden rain, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu

PTI PHOTO

BELGIAN PARAGLIDER KILLED AFTER MID-AIR COLLISION

SHIMLA: A Belgian paraglider was killed after colliding with another paraglider mid-air in Himachal Pradesh's Bir-Billing as his parachute failed to open after the crash, officials said Wednesday. The accident took place Tuesday, four days ahead of the week-long paragliding World Cup 2024 commencing in Bir-Billing in Kangra district November 2. The two paragliders collided mid-air, leading to the death of Feyarets, a Belgian, while the other paraglider from Poland sustained injuries. Feyarets was a free-flying paraglider in his mid-60s, the officials said. Ten paragliders were flying simultaneously and two of them crashed with each other mid-air. Feyarets died as his reserved parachute did not open after the crash, Vinay Dhiman, Deputy Director, Tourism, Kangra, told PTI.

BSF to hold all-women river rafting expedition in Nov

A team of 20 women personnel from the country's largest border guarding force have joined hands with the National Mission for Clean Ganga under the Jal Shakti Ministry to undertake the 53-day long voyage from Devprayag in Uttarakhand to Gangasagar in West Bengal, a senior BSF officer said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: The Border Security Force (BSF) will hold a first-ever all-women river rafting expedition traversing more than 2,500 km with "female empowerment" and "clean Ganga" as the theme.

A team of 20 women personnel from the country's largest border guarding force have joined hands with

the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NNCG) under the Jal Shakti Ministry to undertake the 53-day long voyage from Devprayag in Uttarakhand to Gangasagar in West Bengal, a



senior BSF officer said. After being flagged off from Devprayag November 2, the journey will be handed over the ex-

pedition flag by Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Paatil at Haridwar November 4. It will complete its journey

December 26 at Diamond Harbour in West Bengal. "This is the first time that an all-women team of the BSF is undertaking a river rafting expedition. The squad will also have some members of the support staff and those from the NMOG during their journey," the officer said.

BSF Inspector General (Training) Raja Babu Singh said the 20 participating women have been trained in flood water rescue operations, riverine border domination course and basic kayaking at the BSF Institute of Adventure and Advance Training (BIAAT) in Dehradun. The team which will spread

the messages of women empowerment and clean Ganga will be facilitated by BSF Director General Daljit Singh Chawdhary on completion of the journey, Singh said.

The team will halt at eight cities along its route and hold public awareness campaigns on the banks of the Ganga, including at Prayagraj, Varanasi and Patna.

The BSF with a strength of about 2.65 lakh personnel is primarily tasked with guarding the borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh. The force has deployed women personnel for these tasks apart from a variety of duties in the internal security domain of the country.

international

of the day quote

We will leave no stone unturned to protect the lives and properties of Chinese in Pakistan. These suspects will face justice after due process

ISHAQ DAR | DEPUTY PM, PAKISTAN

Whether it is within our borders or beyond, no one can prevent us from eliminating any threat we detect against our country

RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN | PRESIDENT, TURKEY

It is a very important decision. The interim government agreed over the establishment of the UN human rights office in Dhaka

SHARMEEN S MURSHID | INTERIM GOVERNMENT'S SOCIAL WELFARE ADVISOR, BANGLADESH

SHORT TAKES

Georgia begins investigation

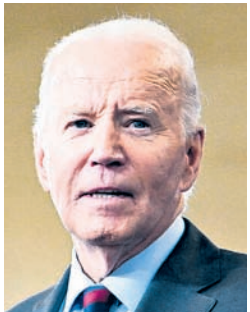
Tbilisi: The Prosecutor's Office in Georgia said Wednesday it has launched an investigation into alleged vote rigging in last weekend's parliamentary election, which officials said was won by the ruling party and the Opposition denounced as illegitimate. The Opposition immediately raised objections that the Prosecutor's Office would not conduct an independent investigation because its head was appointed by parliament, which is dominated by the Georgian Dream ruling party. Georgian Dream, which has deepened the South Caucasus nation's ties with Russia, was declared the winner of Saturday's election with about 54 per cent of the vote. The balloting was seen by many Georgians as a choice between continuing to support the ruling party or seeking closer integration with the European Union.

PIO jailed in Singapore

Singapore: An Indian-origin Singaporean was sentenced to four months imprisonment Wednesday after he pleaded guilty to one count of criminal breach of trust by using a corporate credit card for personal use. Raul Randhawa, 44, was a risk and controls officer with an insurance firm with a monthly salary of more than SGD 11,000 (Rs 7 lakh approximately). He used the company's corporate credit card to make 27 unauthorised transactions involving SGD 29,674 (Rs 18.8 lakh approximately) for personal expenses. He has since made full restitution. Randhawa's bail was set at SGD 10,000 and is expected to begin serving his sentence on November 13, The Straits Times reported.

New restriction on Afghan women

Islamabad: Afghan women are forbidden from praying loudly or reciting the Quran in front of other women, according to a Taliban government minister. It's the latest restriction on women following morality laws that ban them from raising their voice and baring their faces outside the home. They are already excluded from education after sixth grade, many public spaces and most jobs. Nobody from the Vice and Virtue Ministry was immediately available Wednesday to clarify the official's remarks or confirm if the prohibition would also become part of the morality laws. During an event in eastern Logar province Sunday, Vice and Virtue Minister Khalid Hanafi said: "It is prohibited for a grown woman to recite Quranic verses or perform recitations in front of another grown woman. Even chants of takbir (Allahu Akbar) are not permitted."



The only garbage I see floating out there is his (Trump's) supporters, his demonisation of Latinos is unconscionable, and it's un-American. It's totally contrary to everything we've done, everything we've been

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

ARTEMIS PROGRAMME

South Korea's national space agency Wednesday said it will join hands with the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration to conduct studies related to the Moon exploration Artemis programme



Indian-Americans tilt towards Harris

A SURVEY BY THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOUND THAT 61 PER CENT OF REGISTERED INDIAN AMERICAN VOTER RESPONDENTS PLAN TO VOTE FOR HARRIS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Atlanta, Oct 30: As the US presidential election heads for a photo finish, Democratic nominee Kamala Harris, the daughter of Indian and Jamaican immigrants, has been counting on groundswell of support from the Indian-American community in most of the pivotal battleground states.

For a sizable number of Indian Americans, Vice President Harris's race to the White House is a momentous occasion as it is propelling the community into a notable force in the American political discourse.

"It is a matter of pride that a leader of Indian-descent is fighting the US presidential election," said Dr Vasudev Patel, general secretary of the Federation of Indian-American Association of Georgia.

Georgia is one of the seven key battleground states and Patel says the Indian-American

community could play a significant role in swinging the election in Harris's favour. "I voted for Trump last time. But this time, I am going to support Kamala Harris," said Saurabh

"I voted for Trump last time. But this time, I am going to support Kamala Harris"

SAURABH GUPTA | INDIAN-AMERICAN

The number of Indian Americans residing in the US is around 5.2 million, forming the second-largest immigrant community, and out of them around 2.3 million are eligible to vote.

Gupta, a technocrat who grew up in Delhi and is now a resident of Montgomery County in Maryland. If Harris wins the race, then it will be the first time in the US history that a candidate of Indian heritage would occupy the top office of the most powerful country on the planet. After Harris received the Democratic presidential nomination in August, various

Indian-American and South Asian American groups have been engaged in mobilising support for her including through raising funds.

The number of Indian Americans residing in the US is around 5.2 million, forming the second-largest immigrant community, and out of them around 2.3 million are eligible to vote.

spondents plan to vote for Harris while 32 per cent intend to vote for Trump.

It said 67 per cent of Indian American women intend to vote for Harris while 53 per cent of men, a significantly smaller share, say they plan to vote for her. Twenty-two per cent of women intend to vote for Trump while a significantly larger share of men, 39 per cent, plan to cast their ballots for him, it said.

With just seven days left for Election Day, the presidential race remained very tight with both Harris and Trump locked in a dead heat for the popular votes in most swing states.

The final nationwide CNN poll found this week that 47 per cent of likely voters support Harris and an equal 47 per cent would endorse Trump in the elections.

In the final New York Times/Siena College national poll from October 20 to 23, the two aspirants are tied at 48 per cent. The remaining four per cent are yet to decide on their preference.

A separate poll conducted by the Financial Times and the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business, showed that 44 per cent of respondents trust Trump to handle the economy as opposed to 43 per cent for Harris.

The seven key swing states which are seen to be crucial to determine the election results are Georgia, Michigan, Arizona, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Nevada.

Spain's worst flood in decades kills 73



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, Oct 30: At least 73 people have died in eastern Spain after flash floods swept away cars, turned village streets into rivers and disrupted rail lines and highways in the worst natural disaster to hit the European nation in recent memory.

Emergency services in the eastern region of Valencia confirmed a death toll of 73 people Wednesday. Another two casualties were reported in the neighbouring Castilla La Mancha region.

Rainstorms Tuesday caused flooding in a wide swath of southern and eastern Spain, stretching from Malaga to Valencia. Mud-coloured floods sent vehicles tumbling down streets at high speeds, while pieces of wood swirled in the water mixed with household items. Police and rescue services used helicopters to lift people from their homes and rubber boats to reach drivers trapped on the roofs of cars.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said dozens of towns had been flooded and warned that the danger is not over.

"For those who are looking for their loved ones, all of Spain feels your pain," Sanchez said in a televised address. "Our priority is to help you. We are putting all the resources necessary so that we can recover from this tragedy."

Authorities reported several missing people late Tuesday, but the following morning brought the shocking announcement of dozens found dead.

"Yesterday was the worst day of my life," Ricardo Gabaldon, the mayor of Utiel, a town in Valencia, told national broadcaster RTVE. He said several people were still missing in his town.

"We were trapped like rats. Cars and trash containers were flowing down the streets. The water was rising to 3 metres," he said.

Over 1,000 soldiers from Spain's emergency response units were deployed to the devastated areas. Rescue services were also rushing eastwards from other parts of Spain. Spain's central government set up a crisis committee to help coordinate rescue efforts.

One elderly couple was rescued from the upper story of their house by a military unit using a bulldozer, with three soldiers accompanying them in the huge shovels.

Television reports showed videos shot by panicked residents documenting waters flooding the ground floors of apartment buildings, streams bursting their banks and bridges giving way.

Spain's national weather service called the rainfall "extraordinary" with 491 litres per square metre accumulated in eight hours in the Valencian locality of Chiva.

Spain has experienced similar autumn storms in recent years. Nothing, however, compared to the devastation over the last two days, which recalls floods in Germany and Belgium in 2021 in which 230 people were killed.

The death toll will likely rise with other regions yet to report victims and search efforts continuing in areas with difficult access.

Spain government said it will declare three days of mourning.

Spain's government said it will declare three days of mourning for dead from devastating flash floods starting Thursday.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said dozens of towns had been flooded and warned that the danger is not over.

SMOG EMERGENCY

Pak's Punjab CM seeks India's help

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lahore, Oct 30: Chief Minister of Pakistan's Punjab province, Maryam Nawaz Sharif stated Wednesday that she plans to write a letter to Bhagwant Mann, the CM of Indian Punjab, seeking cooperation to tackle the issue of smog, which has engulfed the whole region, especially Lahore which has become the most polluted city in the world with AQI even going past 900 earlier this week.

The air knows no borders. The issue of smog is hurting both sides of Punjab. I intend to write to Indian Punjab's CM and emphasise that this is not a political matter. Smog is affecting both sides severely and we need to work together to handle this matter, Maryam Nawaz said during a Diwali celebration ceremony in Lahore.

We need to work together on humanitarian grounds. Our people are getting affected, she added.

Lahore continues to remain the world's most polluted city with the Air Quality Index (AQI) peaking to 708 Monday night, prompting medical experts and the provincial government to issue guidelines for the citizens, asking them to stay indoors or not move out without wearing masks. Local media reported that the AQI touched 708 at 11 pm Monday with PM 2.5 concentration being 431µg/m³, 86.2 times more than the WHO annual air quality guideline value.

The AQI at CERP (Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan) office in Gulberg was a shocking 953, followed by 810 at Pakistan Engineering Services Ltd and 784 at Syed Maratab Ali Road, reported Pakistan's leading daily Dawn on Tuesday.

The provincial government has issued an emergency alert for Lahore citizens, appealing to citizens to wear masks and also keep windows and doors of their homes closed. The school timings have also been changed with the government requesting parents and management of educational institutions to follow all safety measures for the safety and convenience of children.

The authorities have passed an order that any vehicle found to be emitting smoke will be clamped immediately and all brick kilns operating without zigzag technology will be demolished.



A Long March rocket with a Shenzhou-19 spacecraft atop takes off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in Jiuquan, northwestern China in the early hours of Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

Sunak bows out as UK Oppn leader

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Oct 30: Rishi Sunak bowed out as UK Opposition Leader in Parliament Wednesday with a reference to his career's Diwali milestones, being appointed the country's first Prime Minister of Indian heritage two years ago during the Festival of Lights.

The 44-year-old, who has been serving as interim leader of the Conservatives until a new Tory leader is elected after the party's general election defeat in July, used his final Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the House of Commons for a light-hearted exchange with Prime Minister Keir Starmer.



"I became leader of my party during Diwali and I now stand down during that same festival," said Sunak.

"I'm proud to have been the first British Asian Prime Minister, and I am even prouder that it was not that big a deal, and that speaks volumes about the values of the British people, of our country and of this

Parliament. So will the Prime Minister join me in applauding the kindness, decency and tolerance that has always been the British way," he said.

It was during Diwali in October 2022 that Sunak, joined by wife Akshata and daughters Krishna and Anoushka, entered 10 Downing Street and went on to adorn its steps with diyas and rangoli for two consecutive years.

"I wish everyone celebrating in the UK and around the world a joyful Diwali, a time to come together to celebrate and focus on a brighter future," said Starmer. "Last Diwali, the Leader of the Opposition (Sunak) and his family lit the diyas outside 10 Downing Street," added Starmer.

British Treasury chief Rachel Reeves told lawmakers Wednesday that taxes will rise by 40 billion pounds (\$52 billion) in order to plug a hole in the public finances and investment projects to boost growth.

In the Labour Party's first budget since returning to power earlier this year for the first time in 14 years, Reeves said she will use the money to "invest, invest, invest" and get the economy growing.

Reeves said the tax increases are needed because of the economic "black hole" left by the previous Conservative government.

"I am restoring stability to our public finances and rebuilding our public services," she said.

Israeli strikes kill 30 Gazans



REUTERS

Cairo, Oct 30: Israel pummeled the Gaza Strip with new bombardments that killed at least 30 people Wednesday, Palestinian medics said, a day after one of the deadliest single strikes of the year-old war killed scores in the north of the enclave.

Eight of Wednesday's victims were killed in a strike on the Salateen area of Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza. The area is near where medics said at least 93 people were killed or missing Tuesday in an Israeli strike Washington called "horrifying".

The Israeli military assault that has laid waste to the Gaza Strip and killed tens of thousands of people shows no signs of slowing as Israel wages a new war in Lebanon and its backer the United States tries after a year of failed attempts to broker ceasefires for both.

Northern Gaza, where Israel said in January it had dismantled militant group Hamas' command structure, is currently the focus of the military's assault.

Reuters that bodies and injured people remained trapped under rubble.

He said the destruction of hospitals and lack of medical supplies meant doctors and nurses mostly had no chance of saving people who came in with injuries from airstrikes and gunfire.

"Whoever is injured, just lies there on the ground and whoever is killed can't be transported, except by mule-drawn cart," he said.

Israel's decision this week to ban the UN relief agency UNRWA from operating on its territory could have a disastrous impact on humanitarian efforts in Gaza, UN officials said.

The Gaza war began after Hamas, the Palestinian militant group that for years ruled the territory, attacked Israeli towns and villages October 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, according to Israeli authorities.

NO END IN SIGHT

Israel's military and intelligence operations have decapitated the leadership of both Hamas and Hezbollah, including Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, one of Iran's most important allies in the Middle East.

Yet Israel's wars show no signs of slowing.

Israel presses on with assaults on Gaza despite the killing this month of Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, a mastermind of the October 7 attacks whose death was a key aim of the war. Several Israeli soldiers have been killed this month in northern Gaza, the military said Tuesday.

business

of the day quote

India is not looking at the ongoing US-China trade tensions as an opportunity for its own benefit and the country stands on its strengths such as democratic institutions, robust rule of law, and talented youth

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

Suzuki will supply our first BEV (Battery Electric Vehicle) to Toyota globally. I am grateful that the collaboration between the two companies has further deepened in this way

As we look to 2025, businesses are increasingly prioritising AI adoption, alongside meaningful investments in upskilling and reskilling their people. Embracing AI is not just about keeping pace; it's about empowering teams, fostering innovation, and creating resilient workforces ready to thrive

RUCHEE ANAND | HEAD, LINKEDIN TALENT SOLUTIONS

Q2 RESULTS

ABCL profit zooms

New Delhi: Aditya Birla Capital Ltd (ABCL) Wednesday reported a 42 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to ₹1,001 crore in the second quarter ended September 2024. The financial services arm of Aditya Birla Group earned a net profit of ₹705 crore in the same quarter in the previous financial year. The consolidated profit after tax includes a gain of ₹167 crore on sale of entire stake of 50 per cent in Aditya Birla Insurance Brokers Limited, ABCL said in a regulatory filing.

Dabur profit drops

New Delhi: Homegrown FMCG major Dabur India Ltd Wednesday reported a decline of 17.65 per cent in its consolidated net profit to ₹417.52 crore in the September 2024 quarter. The company had posted a net profit of ₹507.04 crore in the July-September quarter a year ago, Dabur India said in a regulatory filing. Its revenue from operations slipped 5.46 per cent to ₹3,028.59 crore during the quarter under review. It was ₹3,203.84 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal.

Tata Power net up

New Delhi: Tata Power Wednesday posted nearly 8 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to ₹1,093.08 crore for the September quarter, mainly on the back of higher revenues. The company had reported a net profit of ₹1,017.41 crore in the quarter ended September 30, a BSE filing showed. Its total income rose to ₹16,210.80 crore in the quarter from ₹16,029.54 crore a year ago.

Meesho loss dips

New Delhi: Softbank-backed Meesho Wednesday said it has narrowed adjusted losses to ₹53 crore in the financial year ended March 31, 2024 mainly on account of reduction in general and administrative expenses. The company had reported an adjusted loss of ₹1,569 crore in the fiscal year 2022-23. Meesho became the first horizontal Indian e-commerce company to achieve profitability during the year and the first to generate positive free cash flow for the full year, the statement said.



Given the present trends and the likelihood of several new members joining the BRICS+ group being strong, the share of BRICS+ in global merchandise exports can overtake that of the G7 group by 2026

DK SRIVASTAVA | CHIEF POLICY ADVISOR, EY INDIA

PLANE CRUNCH HITS AIR INDIA

Non-availability of aircraft due to maintenance issues has forced Tata Group-owned Air India to cancel some 60 flights on the India-US routes between November and December this year, according to an airline source. The flights, which have been cancelled during the peak travel period, include services to San Francisco and Chicago, among others, the source said



DIWALI DEMAND

GOLD BREACHES ₹82K-MARK

In a first, the yellow metal jumped ₹1,000 to breach the psychological level

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Delhi, Oct 30: Gold prices saw a steep surge of ₹1,000 and breached the psychological ₹82,000 per 10 grams-mark for the first time in the national capital Wednesday, amid robust buying by jewellers ahead of Diwali.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity soared by ₹1,000 to hit a fresh peak of ₹82,400 per 10 grams in Delhi.

The precious metal of 99.5 per cent purity also climbed ₹1,000 to hit an all-time high of ₹82,000 per 10 grams in the local markets.

In the previous session, gold of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity had closed at ₹81,400 and ₹81,000 per 10 grams, respectively.

Traders attributed the sharp jump in gold prices to massive buying by local jewellers in order to meet the rising demand during Diwali as well as firm global trend due to uncertain geopolitical situation ahead of the US presidential elections.

At ₹82,400 per 10 gram, gold price has recorded a 35 per cent surge since October 29 last year when it was at ₹61,200 per 10 grams. Meanwhile, extending the gains for the fifth straight day, silver also jumped ₹1,300 to ₹1.01 lakh per kg against the previous close of ₹99,700 per kg.

At ₹1,01,000 per kg, silver price has recorded a jump of 36 per cent since October 29 last year when it stood at ₹74,000 per kg.

Additionally, in futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for December delivery jumped ₹444 or 0.56 per cent to trade at



Bullions had a slow start to the week as a less severe than feared attack by Israel on Iran pushed up some hopes of easing tensions in the Middle East. But safe-haven demand remained underpinned by anticipation of a tight 2024 US Presidential election, with voting set for November 5

MANAV MODI | ANALYST (COMMODITY RESEARCH), MOTILAL OSWAL FINANCIAL SERVICES

₹79,677 per 10 grams. During the day, the yellow metal had bounced ₹542 or 0.68 per cent to hit a record high of ₹79,775 per 10 grams.

"Gold remains buoyant on festive demand in India, with added momentum from market bets anticipating a Trump victory in the upcoming US election. This optimism has led to a surge in liquidity in gold markets," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities, said.

Gold shows a significant desire for additional gains during festive season purchases, Trivedi added. However, silver contracts for December delivery slipped ₹45 or 0.05 per cent to trade at ₹98,685 per kg on the MCX.

In the international markets,

Comex gold futures was traded 0.60 per cent higher or USD 16.80 per ounce to \$2,797.90 per ounce. Market participants also monitor US macroeconomic data, such as private sector employment figures and the advance GDP print to be released on Wednesday, which will provide directions for the US Federal monetary policy interest rate path, Gandhi said.

According to Manav Modi, Analyst, Commodity Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, gold prices hit a record high as safe-haven demand was boosted by increased political uncertainty in the US and Japan, as well as anticipation of more cues on interest rates.

Comex silver futures was trading flat at \$34.45 per ounce in the Asian markets.

Fiscal deficit at 29.4% of full-year target

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: The Centre's fiscal deficit at the end of the first half of financial year FY25 touched 29.4 per cent of the full-year target, government data showed Wednesday.

In absolute terms, fiscal deficit - the gap between government's expenditure and revenue - was at ₹4,74,520 crore at September-end, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA). The deficit stood at 39.3 per cent of the Budget Estimates (BE) in the corresponding period of 2023-24.

In the Union Budget, the government projected to bring down the fiscal deficit to 4.9 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the current 2024-25 financial year. The deficit was 5.6 per cent of the GDP in 2023-24.

In absolute terms, the government aims to contain the fiscal deficit at ₹16,13,312 crore during the current fiscal.

The revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for the first six months of 2024-25 showed that the net tax revenue was ₹12.65 lakh crore or 49 per cent of BE for the current fiscal. The net tax revenue collection was 49.8 per cent at September-end 2023.

Duty slash bolsters gold demand in Q3

India's gold demand witnessed an 18 per cent on-year growth during the July-September quarter of this year to 248.3 tonnes, as the reduction in gold import duty resulted in a revival in jewellery demand, the World Gold Council (WGC) said in a report Wednesday. The overall gold demand during the corresponding quarter of last year stood at 210.2 tonnes, according to the WGC's Q3 2024 Gold Demand Trends report. However, with gold prices ruling at all-time highs, there might be an increased trend for investors to wait for price corrections. The full-year gold demand is likely to be in the range of 700-750 tonnes, slightly less than last year, as Dhanteras and wedding season is likely to boost overall gold demand. In 2023, India's gold demand stood at 761 tonnes. In terms of value, gold demand went up by 53 per cent to ₹1,65,380 crore during the third quarter of this calendar year, compared to ₹1,07,700 crore in the same period of 2023. Total jewellery demand during the July-September period increased by 10 per cent to 171.6 tonnes, compared to 155.7 tonnes in the same period in 2023.

Beyond elections, tensions in the Middle East also remained in play, given that Iran still vowed retaliation for Israel's recent strike. Consumer confidence data reported on Tuesday were better than expectations. However, no major impact was seen on market as major uncertainties are driving the prices, he added.

Infra sectors' growth contracts in Sept YoY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 30: The output of eight key infrastructure sectors expanded by 2 per cent in September, though the growth was slower than the 9.5 per cent registered in the same month last year, according to official data released Wednesday.

The output of these sectors had contracted by 1.6 per cent in August.

Out of the eight key sectors, three - crude oil, natural gas and electricity - recorded negative growth in September.

Growth rate of the production of coal, fertiliser, and steel has moderated to 2.6 per cent, 1.9 per cent and 1.5 per cent, respectively, as against 16 per cent, 4.2 per cent and 14.8 per cent in September last year. However, cement and refinery products output rose to 7.1 per cent and 5.8 per cent, respectively, in the month under review.

The growth of core sectors - coal, crude oil, natural gas, re-

finery products, fertiliser, steel, cement and electricity - was 4.2 per cent during April-September this fiscal. It was 8.2 per cent in the same period last fiscal.

The eight core sectors contribute 40.27 per cent to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) which measures overall industrial growth.

Commenting on the data, ICRA Ltd Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said that the easing of the disruption related to rainfall on sectors like mining and electricity contributed to the turnaround in the core sector's performance in September from the mild contraction in August.

The growth, she said, in cement production improved to a six-month high. "ICRA projects the IIP to grow by about 3-5 per cent, amid a narrower contraction in electricity and mining output, as well as a favourable base, and a sharp uptick in the growth in GST e-way bills, supported by pre-festive stocking," Nayar said.

INFRA SECTORS EXPANDED BY 2% IN SEPT FY24 VS 9.5% IN SEPT FY23
OUTPUT OF KEY SECTORS HAD CONTRACTED BY 1.6% IN AUGUST

Shares drop on weak global trends

MARKETS REMAIN CAUTIOUS DUE TO AGGRESSIVE SELLING BY FIIS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 30: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty declined Wednesday, as selling pressure in banking and financial stocks amid a bearish trend in global markets unnerved investors.

Besides, weak earnings numbers and persistent foreign fund outflows hit market sentiments, traders said.

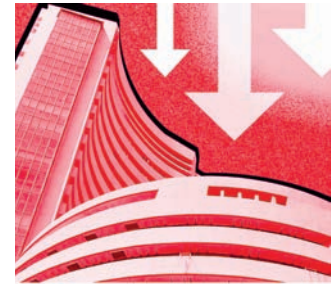
The BSE Sensex tumbled 426.85 points or 0.53 per cent to settle at 79,942.18. During the session, the index hit a high of 80,435.61 and low of 79,821.99.

The NSE Nifty dropped 126 points or 0.51 per cent to 24,340.85.

A moderation in FII selling and a slight correction in the valuation of the domestic equities are positive signals for the Indian market, traders said.

From the 30-share Sensex pack, Infosys, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, State Bank of India, HCL Technologies, Axis Bank, NTPC and HDFC Bank were among the laggards.

In contrast, Maruti, IndusInd Bank, Adani Ports, ITC and UltraTech Cement defied broader market trends and ended in positive territory.



Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets Tuesday, as they offloaded shares worth ₹548.69 crore, according to exchange data.

The BSE smallcap gauge jumped 1.54 per cent and midcap index ended marginally up

by 0.04 per cent. Among sectoral indices, consumer durables fell by 1.21 per cent, bankex (1.04 per cent), teck (0.76 per cent), IT (0.67 per cent) and oil & gas (0.62 per cent).

In Asian markets, Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled lower, while Tokyo ended in the positive territory. European markets were trading lower. The US markets ended on a mixed note Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.63 per cent to \$71.57 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark climbed 363.99 points or 0.45 per cent to settle at 80,369.03 Tuesday. The Nifty rose 127.70 points or 0.52 per cent to 24,466.85.

NSE surpasses 20cr total client accounts

NEW DELHI: The National Stock Exchange (NSE) Wednesday said the total number of client accounts registered with the bourse surpassed 20-crore mark primarily due to digital transformation and technological innovation. This includes all client registrations done till date. "The total number of client codes at the exchange (accounts) surpassed 20 crore, an impressive growth in eight months, having been 16.9 crore just eight months earlier," NSE said in a statement. Among states, Maharashtra leads with the highest number of accounts at 3.6 crore, followed by Uttar Pradesh (2.2 crore), Gujarat (1.8 crore), Rajasthan and West Bengal at 1.2 crore each. Together, these states account for nearly 50 per cent of total client accounts, while the top ten states account for approximately three-fourths of the total. Additionally, the unique registered investor base stood at 10.5 crore, having crossed the 10-crore mark August 8, 2024.

MORE THAN GLOBAL GDP

Google fined astronomical \$2.5 decillion by Russia

The bizarre sum, calculated after a protracted four-year legal battle, far exceeds the global GDP, estimated by the World Bank at around \$100tn

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 30: A Russian court has imposed an unprecedented fine of approximately \$2.5 decillion, or two undecillion rubles, on Google for its refusal to reinstate the accounts of pro-Kremlin media outlets. An undecillion is one followed by 36 zeros.

In 2020, Google-owned YouTube banned the ultra-nationalist Russian channel Tsargrad in response to US sanctions, sparking a significant

legal battle. Now, 17 Russian media stations, including Zvezda, which is owned by Putin's Ministry of Defence, are suing Google for blocking their content.

The court has imposed a daily fine of 100,000 rubles (\$1,025) for this action, with the amount doubling every week, leading to an astronomical total that underscores the ongoing tensions between Russia and major Western tech firms.

Lawyer Ivan Morozov, speaking to state media TASS, ex-



plained that the court held Google accountable under Article 13.41 of the Administrative Offences Code for removing channels from its platform. The court has mandated the company re-

store these channels, setting the daily fine at 100,000 rubles (\$1,025), which doubles every week due to compound interest. The penalties could escalate indefinitely if not addressed

within nine months.

"This case involves many, many zeros," remarked the presiding judge, highlighting the astonishing nature of the ruling. As of now, Google has reported quarterly revenues of \$88 billion, a figure that underscores the surreal financial burden imposed by the court.

Google vs Russia
Despite the enormity of the fine, which many analysts deem uncollectible, the ruling highlights ongoing tensions between Russia and major Western tech companies. Google has largely ceased operations in Russia since 2022, citing governmental actions that included the seizure of its bank accounts. The com-

pany had more than 200 employees in Russia before transitioning many abroad or laying them off.

Legal experts predict a drawn-out battle in courts worldwide, as Russia attempts to seize Google's global assets. However, Alphabet, Google's parent company, remains confident. In its latest earnings statement, the company downplayed the potential impact of ongoing legal disputes, asserting they do not foresee any material adverse effects from these challenges.

As the situation develops, Google has yet to publicly comment on the court's ruling or its next steps in response to the mind-boggling penalty.

'Kohli, Rohit need some time'

ASSISTANT COACH SAYS NOTHING WRONG WITH THE TWO AND THEY WILL SOON REGAIN FORM

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Oct 30: India's assistant coach Abhishek Nayar said Wednesday that people must have patience with skipper Rohit Sharma and senior batter Virat Kohli to give them space and time to return to form. Both Rohit and Kohli have just got one half century each in the four innings of the two Tests played against New Zealand so far.

Nayar said there is nothing wrong with the modern-day greats and all they need is just a bit of time and backing. "I've seen nothing but love for them all over. When a top player, when someone who's been through the journey, goes through a lull, a lot of times it's about giving them their space and trusting that they will come back. They will put in the work," he said.

"Everyone's worked really hard, everyone wants to do well, whether you're Virat Kohli or Rohit Sharma or even someone as young as Shubman Gill. The effort is there. Sometimes, you've got to be a little patient, even with the greatest of players, and they can have tough times," Nayar added.

Nayar also insisted that they do not ask for tailor-made pitches in Tests. Playing on a track that assisted spinners, India lost the Pune Test by 113 runs and with it the series. It is being speculated that the pitch at Wankhede Stadium here could again favour the spinners. The game starts Friday.

Nayar refuted suggestions that turning tracks are being made at the behest of the team. "I wish we could curate pitches, but we don't. The curators do. Whatever we're provided with, we go on and play (whether) that'd be a pitch that seems or one that turns. We don't try and get conditions

according to what we want," Nayar said.

Nayar asserted it would be 'harsh' to say the current Indian batters do not play spin as well as those in the past. "That's a bit of a harsh statement. When you're trying to achieve something, there's always going to be a time when you take a certain dip because you're trying to play cricket in a different way and you're trying to push yourself out of the comfort zone," Nayar pointed out.

"We're hoping that the transition that we're trying to have in terms of the mindset and the approach of the players in Team India, (given) that we're facing this dip now, but once we start hitting the upward curve, it'll be a long curve," the assistant coach added.

India have played 26 Tests at the Wankhede winning 12 and losing 7 while the remaining games have been drawn

In 5 Tests Kohli has played at the Wankhede, he has scored 469 runs with 1 century and 3 half centuries

Ravi Ashwin has 38 wickets in 5 Tests at the Wankhede, the highest by an Indian bowler

Nayar said the dressing room atmosphere hasn't changed over the last two matches. "There are going to be times when you don't do so well. When India lost the World Cup (final) in India, it was a low point in Indian cricket for everyone," Nayar said.

"In the same breath, a couple (eight) of months later, we were world champions. Coming back is always a great journey. That's how stories and legacies are made," Nayar added.

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Ravi Ashwin has 38 wickets in 5 Tests at the Wankhede, the highest by an Indian bowler



SEARCHING FOR FORM: Both Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli will need to come good for India in the game against New Zealand at Wankhede Stadium PTI PHOTO

Focus on Easwaran during India A game

Selectors will also watch the performances of all-rounder Reddy and fast bowler Krishna

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mackay (Australia), Oct 30: The outings of opening batter Abhimanyu Easwaran, all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy and pacer Prasidh Krishna will be the primary focal points of India A's four-day match against their Australian counterparts, starting here Thursday.

Easwaran, Nitish and Prasidh have been included in India's squad for the five-Test Border-Gavaskar Trophy series, beginning November 22 at Perth, and the think tank will be eager to see how they fare in Australian conditions.

Easwaran's performance will, however, have far more significance as the 29-year-old opener could potentially be Rohit Sharma's replacement if the captain skips a match or two against Australia for personal reasons.

Easwaran, who is also the vice-captain of India A, is a vastly experienced campaigner having played 99 first class matches scoring 7,638 runs with 27 centuries and 29 fifties. He has also been part of the Indian squad in the past but what inspires confidence is his recent form in domestic games.

The right-hander struck 157 and 116 for India B in the Duleep Trophy before making 191 against Mumbai for Rest of India in the Irani Trophy and made another hundred in his final red ball game before flying out to Australia – an unbeaten 127 against Uttar Pradesh in the Ranji Trophy. So, he has the body of work to feel in fine fettle ahead of the match against Australia A, though the conditions here will be vastly different from what he has experienced so far this season in India.

On the other hand, Nitish does not boast of such impressive first class numbers, as



In limelight: Abhimanyu Easwaran's performance will be keenly watched during the game against Australia A

he has been drafted into squad for his perceived ability as a pace-bowling all-rounder and, even in that, batting is his stronger suit. In the Duleep Trophy earlier this year, Nitish made two ducks with a high-est of 40 in five matches while grabbing just two wickets.

However, the selectors have backed him ahead of senior names such as Shardul Thakur, who has resumed playing domestic matches after recovering from an injury. So, this will be a good opportunity for the selectors to check how the Andhra man measures up to a very capable Australia A side that includes the likes of Camrean Bancroft, Marcus Harris, Michael Neser, Cooper Connolly and Scott Boland.

Other than this aforementioned trio, the likes of skipper Rituraj Gaikwad, top-order batter B Sai Sudharsan, pacers Yash Dayal and Navdeep Saini and middle-order batter Devdutt Padikkal can look forward to churn out some good efforts to keep themselves on the periphery of selection in case of an eventuality in the senior side.

ALCARAZ EASES PAST JARRY

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Oct 30: Carlos Alcaraz overcame some rusty moments on his serve to beat Nicolas Jarry 7-5, 6-1 and reach the third round of the Paris Masters tennis tournament here Tuesday night. The second-seeded Spaniard was troubled by Jarry's strong forehand at times. The Chilean broke Alcaraz's serve in the ninth game and held for 5-5. But Jarry double-faulted in his next service game to lose the first set.

"It was a little bit complicated, really happy to get through the first set," Alcaraz said. "I have to get used to the speed of the court. It's really fast for me."

Alcaraz saved a breakpoint in the third game of the second set with an ace and broke for a 4-1 lead with a crisp forehand winner. Serving for the match, Alcaraz saved another breakpoint with an ace to make it deuce and won the next two points, clinching victory when the erratic Jarry's two-handed backhand clipped the net and went out.



Carlos Alcaraz is all pumped up after his win Tuesday PHOTO X

Tenth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece beat Alejandro Tabilo 6-3, 6-4 to stay in contention to reach the season-ending ATP Finals for the top eight players. It is being held in Turin, Italy, next month.

Seventh-seeded Casper Ruud of Norway, a three-time Grand Slam runner-up, started well before losing 7-6 (7-3), 3-6, 6-4 to unseeded Australian Jordan Thompson.

In an earlier second round match, eighth-seeded Andrey

Bopanna, Ebden in quarterfinals

PARIS: Veteran Indian tennis player Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner Matthew Ebden advanced to the quarterfinals of the men's doubles event of the Paris Masters here. The Indo Australian pair eked out a 6-4, 7-6 (7-5) win over the Brazilian-German combine of Marcelo Melo and Alexander Zverev in 76 minutes. Bopanna and Ebden won 91 per cent of their first serve and hit four aces in the course of the match.

Rublev lost two tie-breakers and his temper as his hopes of qualifying for the ATP Finals took a hit. Rublev lost 6-7 (6-8), 6-7 (5-7) to Francisco Cerundolo and was so frustrated at one point in the second set that he smashed his racket against his left knee at least seven times in succession and made it bleed. The Russian player held the eighth and final qualifying place in the race for the ATP Finals and could be overtaken by rivals after this loss.

Knights to release Iyer, Starc, Russell

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 30: With the deadline ending October 31 for IPL franchises for submitting the list of players they want to retain hectic parleys are on.

According to a report in ESPNcricinfo, defending champions, Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) are unlikely to retain their title-winning captain Shreyas Iyer and star all-rounder Andre Russell ahead

of the IPL 2025 mega auction. Sunil Narine, Rinku Singh, Varun Chakravarty and uncapped fast bowler Harshit Rana are set to be the franchise's four retained players. They are also unlikely to retain Mitchell Starc, who they had bought for the record price of Rs 24.75 crore at the IPL 2024 auction.

Meanwhile Gujarat Titans

(GT) captain Shubman Gill has decided to take a pay cut and will be the second player retained by the IPL franchise.

Gill led Titans for the first time this season and both he and the management are now keen to retain the core group of players. The first retention for the franchise would be star spinner Rashid Khan, followed by Gill, Sai Sudharsan and two uncapped players in Rahul Tewatia and Shikhar Dhawan.

Titans will also have the option of retaining another squad member via the right to match card at the mega auction next month. Gill is seen as a future leader in the Indian cricket setup.

"Gill has decided to take a pay cut to ensure the core players are retained and build a stronger team," an IPL source said Wednesday.

KIIT emerge champs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 30: The men's and women's teams of KIIT emerged champions in the East Zone Inter-University tennis tournament which ended Wednesday at the Leander Paes Tennis Stadium inside the KIIT complex. In the process both the men's and women's team qualified for the All India Inter-University tennis championships and the Vth Khelo India University Games.

The players of the KIIT men's

team were Kabir Hans, Atharva Sharma, Anshuman Singh, Pratyush Mohanty and Debasis Sahoo while the women's team were represented by Rutuparna Choudhury, Abhilasha Bista, Riya Mardaraj and Akritee.

In the finals played Sunday the KIIT men's team defeated their counterparts from Manipur University 2-1 in a thrilling encounter. The women's final however, was a bit one-sided affair with KIIT defeating Pandit Ravishankar Shukla University 2-0.



RIDERS TO EMBARK ON A GRUELLING 3,320KM JOURNEY SPANNING 23 DAYS

'God of evil' awaits Tour cyclists

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Oct 30: The Tour de France will have a more traditional look next year. After a rare finish outside the French capital this past July, cycling's biggest race is getting back to basics for the 2025 route which was unveiled Tuesday night. A mostly flat first week is followed by a lot of climbing in the last 10 stages that will pave the way for another duel between defending champion Tadej Pogacar and his best rival Jonas Vingegaard.

"Jonas Vingegaard couldn't be here today (Tuesday), but I imagine he'll be pleased with the route," said Grischa Niermann, the head of racing for Vingegaard's Team "Visma-Lease a Bike". "But the same likely goes for riders like Tadej Pogacar, Primož Roglič and Remco Evenepoel," he added.

The race starts from the city of Lille July 5 and stays in cy-



cling-mad northern France for three stages. The peloton will then head south, via Brittany and the Massif Central. Riders will tackle a second individual time trial in the Pyrenees mountains, and the final week of the race will feature three mountain-top finishes at the Mont Ventoux, the Col de la Loze — the highest point of the race at 2,304 metres — and the ski resort of

Tours (GT) captain Shubman Gill has decided to take a pay cut and will be the second player retained by the IPL franchise.

Last year's final stage was held outside Paris for the first time since 1905 because of a

clash with the Olympics, moving instead to Nice.

Because of security and logistical reasons, the French capital did not have its traditional Tour finish on the Champs-Élysées. The world famous avenue is back on the programme and will host the final stage for the 50th time at the conclusion of the 3,320-kilometre (2,063-mile) odyssey.

Among the highlights of the men's route is a trio of Pyrenean stages including the race against the clock to Peyragudes on Stage 13 and a return to Luchon-Superbagneres.

The climbing of the Mont Ventoux, the punishing ascent on which British rider Tom Simpson died in 1967, promises to test tired legs during Stage 16. Ventoux is a huge moonscape of rock in Provence with little shade or grass. French philosopher Roland Barthes called it 'a god of evil'.