



WARM WELCOME: Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Deputy CMs KV Singh Deo and Pravati Parida, Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Jual Oram and Ashwini Vaishnaw and other BJP leaders at a gathering in Bhubaneswar, Friday. **PIG: BIKASH NAYAK**

Oppn crushing spirit of Constitution: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: Slamming Opposition parties for propaganda against the BJP-led NDA, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday asserted that they have 'crushed' the spirit of the Constitution and rejected all norms of democracy. Modi, addressing party workers here, also said that the Opposition has only one aim, "to somehow capture power by misleading people." "Those who consider power as their birthright have not been in power at the Centre for the last decade... The spirit of the Constitution is crushed (by them), all the norms of democracy are rejected," he said in an apparent dig at the Op-

position parties. The PM said it is quite natural that there would be ideological differences among political parties on different issues, and that they have the right to express their views and resort to agitations. "But now, one can feel, there has been a big change as attempts are being made to tarnish the image of our democracy and the Constitution," said the PM. "Denied of power for the last decade, such parties are now filled with so much anger that they do not hesitate to conspire against the country and its people. They are misleading people with lies and rumours," he said. Modi noted that such false

propaganda is a big challenge for people of India, and BJP workers and "those who love the country and respect the Constitution should foil such attempts and expose the lies." The PM said that the BJP dedicatedly worked for the development of Odisha, even when the party was not in power in the state. "The Odisha poll results surprised many big political experts, who had completely rejected the idea of BJP forming government in the state... BJP's election success in Odisha, Haryana and Maharashtra shows the strength of our party workers," Modi asserted. The BJP respects and gives priority to the rich culture and tradition of Odisha, he said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Why worry about trivial matters like the economy when the judiciary can easily shift public focus?

Growth slows to 2-year low

India's GDP growing by just 5.4 per cent, its slowest pace in the last seven quarters, has dampened the country's economic outlook at a time when it has already been witnessing a flight of foreign capital. The disconcerting macroeconomic data coming on top of high inflation of over 6 per cent could potentially lead the country to stagflation, an economic condition characterised by slow growth and rising prices. The shocking numbers are also likely to pressurise the Reserve Bank of India, which had been predicting a 7.2 per cent growth for the full year, to ease the high interest rates in its next monetary policy meeting December 6. While the poor performance in the September quarter has been due to a slump in manufacturing and mining sectors, private consumption, which accounts for 60 per cent of the GDP, has also been a drag. Higher food prices, high borrowing cost and weak real wage growth have squeezed urban spending, even as there was some rural recovery on account of the above-average monsoon.

AGENCIES
New Delhi, Nov 29: India's economic growth slowed to near two-year low of 5.4 per cent in the July-September quarter of this fiscal due to poor performance of manufacturing and mining sectors, data showed Friday. The GDP had expanded by 8.1 per cent in the July-September quarter of 2023-24 fiscal. The previous low level of GDP growth at 4.3 per cent was recorded in the third quarter


of financial year 2022-23. However, India remained the fastest-growing major economy as China's GDP growth in the September quarter this year was at 4.6 per cent. According to the National Statistical Office (NSO) data, the growth of agriculture sector GVA (Gross Value Added) accelerated to 3.5 per cent from 1.7 per cent a year ago. The GVA in manufacturing sector slowed to 2.2 per cent in the second quarter of the current fiscal compared to an

expansion of 14.3 per cent in the year-ago period. As per the data, the output (GVA) in the 'mining and quarrying' contracted to 0.01 per cent in the second quarter against a growth of 11.1 per cent a year ago. The expansion in financial, real estate and professional services' GVA was 6.7 per cent, up from 6.2 per cent in the year-ago quarter. Electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services grew by 3.3 per cent, slower than 10.5 per cent a year ago.

Snakebites made 'notifiable disease'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, Nov 29: The Centre has urged all states to make snakebite cases and deaths a 'notifiable disease' under relevant provisions of the State Public Health Act or other applicable legislation making it mandatory for all government and private health facilities to report all suspected, probable snakebite cases and deaths. Snakebites are an issue of public health concern and in certain cases, they cause mortality, morbidity and disability, Union Health Secretary Punya Salila Srivastava said in a letter.

DADLS-58



PEOPLE OF ODISHA
WELCOME

PRIME MINISTER
SHRI NARENDRA MODI

We are honoured to host you
on this sacred soil of Lord Shree Jagannatha.

OIPR-15001/13/0301/2425

leisure



ED SHEERAN TO BRING HIS + - = ÷ X TOUR TO INDIA

Four-time Grammy Award winner Ed Sheeran is all set to bring his iconic + - = ÷ x tour to India and will cover six places including Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai, Bangalore, Shillong and Delhi NCR in 2025. The tour kicks off in Pune January 30.

JUSTIN BIEBER FACING FINANCIAL TROUBLES

Pop sensation Justin Bieber is set to go on tour again, despite his poor health. The reason behind this decision is that his expenses have reportedly surpassed his income, and he's now struggling to pay his bills.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
 accuracy • reliability • trust
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ARIES
 If you are related in any way with the media, Ganesh predicts that you will taste success today. Since all the focus is on you, it is a great time to exhibit your skills. Your talents will get recognition and your short-term goals will come to fruition.

TAURUS
 This day there could be a lot of surprises in store for you. Be prepared for sudden and unexpected twist and turns in the flow of events. This is not a day for taking up meaningful activities. Ganesh advises you to postpone all major programmes and decisions for tomorrow. You are likely to encounter stiff challenges where compromising your principles may seem to be the only way to face them.

GEMINI
 Today, luck is on your side. In the afternoon, you will remain reserved and subdued. But as the day progresses, you will be a different person altogether. You will transform into an enterprising and outgoing person. At work, you will impress your bosses with your brilliance, predicts Ganesh.

CANCER
 Your day will revolve around your spouse and matters related to him/her. Thanks to the love and warmth that he/she will shower on you, you may not want to go to work, and you would expect the same from him/her. Don't push it, unless both of you can take a break from work without any harm done to your day's tasks.

LEO
 Everything comes with a price tag, and the price of success is hard work. So sweat it out, says Ganesh; it is in your stars today. You may feel as if you are being made to work extremely hard in order to meet your targets, and the dividends you get may not seem to justify the efforts. But that should not cause you anxiety and trouble.

VIRGO
 You are most likely to hit the mark and accomplish what you set out to do today. Work pressures will have no bearing whatsoever on you. The secret, says Ganesh, is in being patient.

LIBRA
 'Wait and watch' is always a good policy. You have been doing the same, and today, there is every possibility that the talents you have displayed for so long finally get the deserved recognition at work. For the businessman, Ganesh once again advises patience if one wants better future prospects.

SCORPIO
 You will gain new admiration as a manager of human resources. In business, long overdue financial arrears may return. At the end of the day, you shall be satisfied with the way you balanced work and home, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
 Actions speaking louder than words could never have been truer for you than it is today. Let the force of your actions do the talking. You may find yourself working on personality development and self-improvement later in the day. While some of your actions will be channelled to renovating your abode, still others may initiate constructing your dream home.

CAPRICORN
 It is time again for that once-in-blue-moon mood swing. You will be easily irked by everyday activities and may let small, less important things bother you too much, foresees Ganesh. But the darkest hour is just before dawn. Things should start looking up later in the day. You enjoy doing things others won't dare, and for all you know, you may have already won millions of hearts with your impressive personality.

AQUARIUS
 If you're a boss — at work or at home — you may not feel like one today. Your workload will be back-breaking. However, Ganesh says it will pay off very soon. Your competency will inspire subordinates, and your reputation will be augmented by your committed approach.

PISCES
 It is a good day for you, since all the projects you take up today will reach a satisfactory conclusion. However, this does not mean that you will not be strung out, a fact you would do well to keep hidden, lest your competitors try to take advantage of it, says Ganesh.

TAMANNAAH'S REAL HUSTLE

HYDERABAD: Tamannaah Bhatia made her South cinema debut with the Telugu film 'Sree' in 2005, and her journey in the South made her popular as the 'girl next door' figure for fans and audiences.

In a recent interview with a news portal, the *Baahubali* actress opened up about her real struggle.

The real hustle started when she had back-to-back commercial successes in both Tamil and Telugu, she said. Despite having huge box office success, she was hungry for roles where she could perform. "When an actor is doing commercially well, there is a notion that moving away from it and experimenting with roles is unnecessary. But my funda was hatke," Tamannaah shared.

She admitted that *Baahubali* changed everything for her. The movie became a game-changer in the industry as it introduced the concept of 'pan-Indian' to everyone. But in contrast, the movie broadened Ta-

mannaah's perspective. "How do you do something bigger than *Baahubali*? What should I do next? Do I do something bigger? Or do I reinvent?" recalled Tamannaah and added that these mountains of thoughts were popping up in her head.

She believes that she is starting a new phase with her upcoming movie *Sikandar Ka Muqaddar*, where she will play a role her audience has never seen her in before.



AGENCIES

MUMBAI: Amid her ongoing legal dispute with actor Dhanush, Nayanthara shared a cryptic post about karma always finding its way back.

The actress took to her Instagram stories Friday, and shared a note that read, "Karma Says!!! When you destroy someone's life with lies Take it as a loan, it will come back to you with interest."

The post comes days after Dhanush filed a lawsuit against Nayanthara and her filmmaker husband Vignesh Shivan for the unauthorized use of clips from *Naanum Rowdy Dhaan* in their Netflix documentary *Nayanthara: Beyond The Fairytale*.

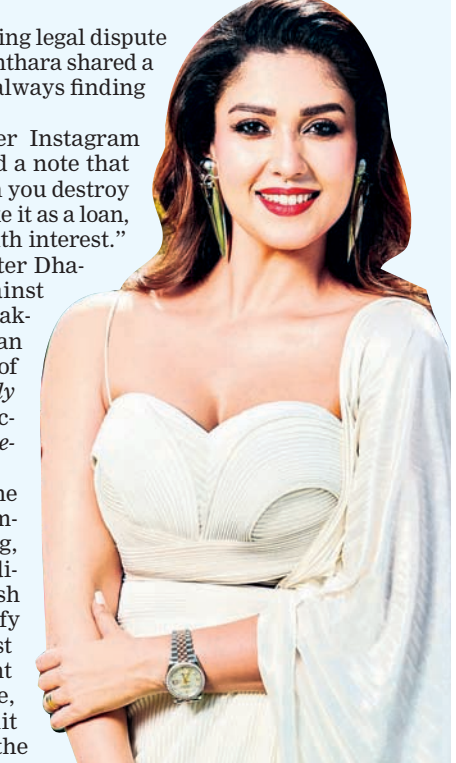
The case was heard in the Madras High Court November 27. During the hearing, Justice Abdul Quidhdose directed Nayanthara, Vignesh Shivan, and others to clarify the allegations made against them. Dhanush has also sent a legal notice to the couple, warning them of a lawsuit for using BTS visuals in the documentary.

The notice states that he will seek Rs 10 crore in damages if they proceed with using the clips.

In a recent development, Nayanthara's lawyer has responded, stating that their clients have not violated any copyright laws. Rahul Dhawan, representing the actress, clarified that the footage used in the documentary was from the actor's "personal library" and was not owned by Dhanush's Wunderbar Films Private Limited.

On November 16, the Jawan' actress posted an open letter on Instagram wherein she criticized Dhanush for stooping to 'an all-time low' after he demanded a compensation of Rs 10 crore from her. The demand stemmed from a 3-second clip from Nayanthara's film *Naanum Rowdy Dhaan*, produced by Dhanush, which was used in the docuseries trailer.

IAN S



Nayanthara's cryptic post about 'karma'

all how to study in MBBS. I mean No. That goes on in the country.. one generation works and the other generation definitely benefits from it, but will they last well.. they will last only if they work hard enough.. ultimately you will last only if you deliver."

For the unversed, Rakul too started off her journey without any prior backing in the industry. The actress has often shared about her middle-class upbringing and values which continues to be a part of her life even today.

AGENCIES



Rakul's thoughts on nepotism

MUMBAI: Rakul Preet Singh, who is a known face in both Bollywood and South Indian cinema, has been captivating audiences with many performances in the past years. As she traces her journey in the Indian film industry, Rakul decided to address the subject of nepotism and insisted that eventually 'talent' wins the race.

During a masterclass session at IFFI 2024, the *De De Pyaar De* actress responded to a question on nepotism and said, "We make too much of it. Today if you have worked for so many years and tomorrow for my kids, will I not give them that access? It's like saying, that my dad is a top surgeon.. but he is like, I won't tell you at

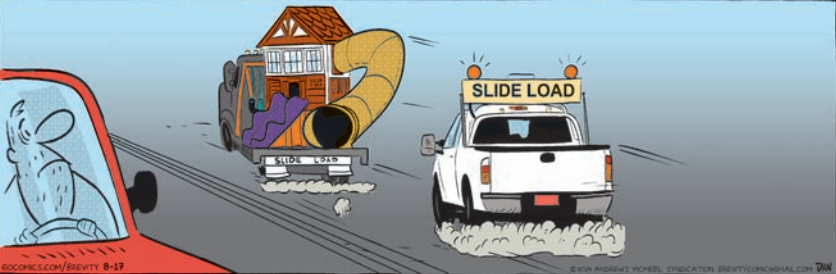
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

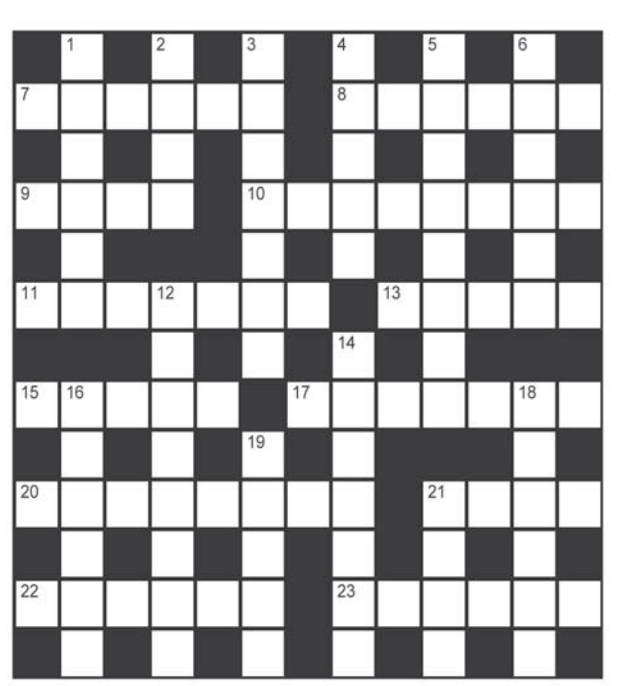


BREVITY



FUN POST

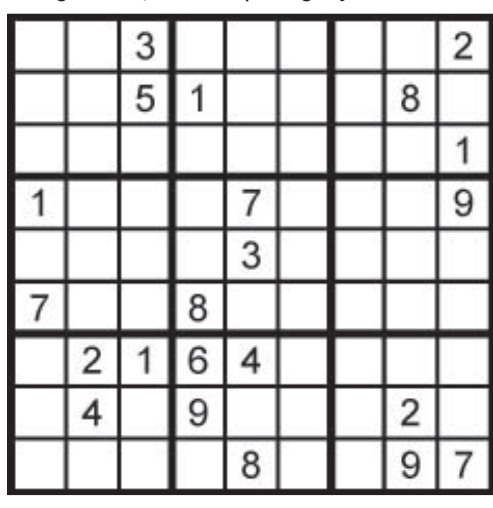
CROSSWORD



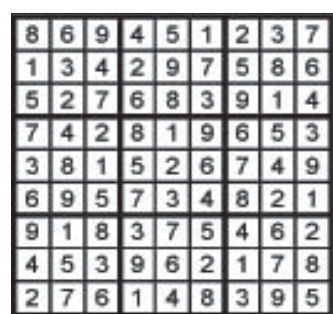
- Across**
- 7 Cargo ship
 - 8 Tracked down
 - 9 Petite marmite, e.g.
 - 10 Held up
 - 11 Baseball divisions
 - 13 Metric unit of capacity
 - 15 Rapsallion
 - 17 Delicate
 - 20 Eave, for one
 - 21 Pickle barrel
 - 22 Empty
 - 23 Pull up stakes
- Down**
- 1 Old World monkey
 - 2 Cut, like a class
 - 3 Gifted young person
 - 4 Snapshot
 - 5 Tempting
 - 6 Type of shower
 - 12 Undying
 - 14 Disaster
 - 16 Salted roe
 - 18 Sheen
 - 19 Ballroom dance
 - 21 Supergarb

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

DANCE & MUSIC FEST

Young artistes perform during 28th Gunjan Dance and Music Festival 2024 at Kala Vikash Kendra in Cuttack, Friday



DGPs/IGPs CONFERENCE

Shah hints at challenges along eastern border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: Union Home Minister Amit Shah Friday said security agencies should focus on emerging security challenges along the eastern border, immigration and trends in urban policing.

Inaugurating the annual DGPs/IGPs conference here, which will be discussing a host of emerging national security challenges, including counter-terrorism and left-wing extremism (LWE), Shah congratulated the police leadership for the smooth conduct of 2024 general elections and the seamless rollout of the three new criminal laws.

The focus should be on emerging security challenges along the eastern border, immigration and trends in urban policing, Shah was quoted as saying in an official release.

The Home minister's statement bears significance as India's eastern neighbour Bangladesh has seen unrest following the ouster of its then prime minister Sheikh Hasina and an interim administration taking charge in August.

There have been reports of attacks on Hindus and



PROUD MOMENT FOR STATE: Union Home Minister Amit Shah, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and Ministers of State for Home Nityanand Rai and Bandi Sanjay Kumar among other dignitaries on the first day of the three-day all-India DGP/IGP conference at state convention centre in Bhubaneswar, Friday. (Top left standing) Sabyasachi Malla, IIC of Ganjam's Pattapur PS which was awarded the 'Second Best Police Station' in India, is also seen with the trophy

other minorities in Bangladesh, an issue New Delhi has raised strongly with Dhaka.

Shah expressed satisfaction at the significant achievements leading to improvement in the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, the northeast and states affected by LWE.

He said the three new criminal laws have transformed the ethos of the country's criminal justice system from punishment-oriented to justice-oriented. He em-

phasised that the spirit of the new laws is rooted in Indian tradition.

Shah also called for taking the initiative towards a zero-tolerance strategy against terrorism.

"Under the leadership of PM Modi, Bharat is building its police force as an apparatus capable of both securing the nation against new-age challenges and addressing the root causes of crime and terrorism. The DGPs/IGPs conference serves as a knowledge-sharing platform to

fortify policing in every state through collaboration," he said.

The 59th three-day DGPs/IGPs conference will also be attended by the Prime Minister and provide a platform for senior police officers to freely discuss and debate diverse national security-related issues besides various operational, infrastructural and welfare-related problems faced by the police.

In the next two days of the conference, the top brass of police leadership

would chalk out a roadmap to counter existing and emerging national security challenges, including left-wing extremism, coastal security, narcotics, cybercrime and economic security.

The Prime Minister's Office said the three-day conference will include deliberations on critical components of national security, including counter-terrorism, left-wing extremism, coastal security, new criminal laws and narcotics.

Modi discusses ways to strengthen party



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the BJP headquarters here Friday and discussed ways to strengthen the party in the eastern state.

Modi spent around two hours at the party office during which he interacted with its leaders and workers. "Went to the @BJP-4Odisha HQ and interacted with Party leaders and Karyakartas. We discussed how to keep strengthening the Party across the state and ways to keep working towards improving the lives of people," the PM wrote on X.

The PM also dined with the party leaders at the BJP office here before heading to the Raj Bhavan, where he will spend the night.

"There was no discussion on the state government or any other related

matter... We interacted as family members do," state BJP president Manmohan Samal said.

BJP MP Rudra Narayan Pany said Modi patiently listened to what the party leaders and workers had to say. "It was a great opportunity for the state BJP leaders as the PM came to the party office and listened to them," he said.

Besides Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Jual Oram and Ashwini Vaishnav were also present at the party's state headquarters here.

A party source said though the BJP formed government in Odisha, its vote share was less than that of Opposition BJD. "Therefore, the PM talked of ways to increase the party's strength across the state," he said.

Newborn girl rescued from Acharya Vihar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: A newborn baby girl was found abandoned near Maharaja Cinema Hall in Acharya Vihar area here in the wee hours of Friday.

"The condition of the infant is normal," said Saheed Nagar police station inspector in-charge (IIC) Dilip Kumar M Bhuyan, adding that she has been admitted to Capital Hospital.

The cops, however, are yet to trace the parents of the baby girl. Footage of the CCTV installed in the vicinity is being scanned to identify the culprit behind the incident.

According to sources, locals of the nearby slum said they heard the baby's wailing around 3am Friday. "Initially, we mistook it for a stray animal's howl. But when the sound grew louder, we rushed to the spot to see the abandoned baby on the roadside and informed the PCR," said a woman of the slum. The child has been handed over to Child Welfare Committee, the sources added.

Rabi potato in 15,023ha: Dy CM

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: The state government has set an ambitious target of cultivating potato in 15,023 hectares during 2024 Rabi season. The decision comes in the wake of a surge in potato prices in the state after West Bengal government imposed restrictions on supply of the kitchen essential.

Chairing a high-level review meeting on cultivation potato for 2024 Rabi season held at Krushi Bhavan here Friday, Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo emphasised the importance of the initiative in achieving self-sufficiency in potato production while simultaneously enhancing farmers' income during Rabi season.

He reiterated the state government's dedication to extensive potato cultivation as a critical step towards ensuring food security and strengthening rural economy.

The government has undertaken this initiative



AS OF NOW, 1,28,391 QUINTALS OF SEED POTATOES HAVE BEEN DISPATCHED TO VARIOUS DISTRICTS

under state scheme - Development of Potato, Vegetable, and Spices - setting an ambitious target of cultivating 15,023 hectares of potato during Rabi 2024. In order to meet this target, 1,95,299 quintals of certified seed potatoes are required. Odisha State Seeds Corporation (OSSC) Ltd has been entrusted with the responsibility of supplying the certified seeds, with 1,79,476 quintals have already been source-verified from suppliers.

To ensure smooth implementation of the programme, Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment department has taken several proactive measures.

District-level coordination meetings have been conducted under the chairmanship of Collectors-cum-District Magistrates to align efforts at the grassroots level.

Additionally, sensitisation meetings in selected

clusters have helped raise awareness among farmers. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, including television advertisements, leaflet distribution, social media promotion and farmer engagement meetings, have further bolstered the outreach efforts.

As of now, 1,28,391 quintals of seed potatoes have been dispatched to various districts, of which around 1,03,000 quintals have been distributed to farmers. This has facilitated the planting of the tuber seed in approximately 5,949 hectares across the state.

The Deputy CM called for sustained efforts to expedite seed distribution and planting to achieve the set targets while ensuring timely availability of inputs and technical support to farmers.

The review meeting was attended by Principal Secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Horticulture Director Nikhil Pawan Kayan, senior officials from the department and district-level officers.

Spl teams to check illegal paddy inflow

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: The state government has deployed special enforcement teams in various districts to curb illegal inflow of paddy from neighbouring states during the procurement season, the state government said Friday.

So far, 84 enforcement teams have been deployed in various districts, including 10 in Bargarh and 21 in Sambalpur, it said. While the Centre's MSP for paddy

is Rs 2,300 per quintal, the state government has announced an additional Rs 800 per quintal as assistance to farmers. This has triggered concerns that some traders may attempt to bring paddy from other states to sell it in Odisha at a higher price.

The government has set a target of procuring 80 lakh tonne paddy during the current Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2024-25.

The Kharif paddy procurement process began November 20 and will con-

tinue until March 2025.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi will begin distributing the bonus to paddy farmers from December 8.

Meanwhile, registered farmers are getting the MSP within 48 hours of selling paddy at the mandis. The government has taken important decisions in this regard. Officials have been appointed at various stages at government level to transfer the MSP directly to the accounts of the farmers. Prompt action is being taken in case of any complaints.

In a first, 2 new Mahseer species found in S Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: In a first, researchers from the Central University of Odisha (CUO) have found two Mahseer species - Tor putitora and Tor tor - in Indravati River, a tributary of the Godavari River, in southern Odisha.

According to the team, led by CUO's School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources (SBCNR) Dean Professor Sharat Kumar Palita, Mahseer fish species have earlier been reported from the Mahanadi, Brahmani, and Similipal regions of the state.

"It is for the first time they have been reported from any river in southern Odisha, with Tor putitora being a new record for the entire Godavari Basin in India," Palita said.

These two new Mahseer fish species belong to the Cyprinidae family, which are large-bodied and big-scaled carps, often called 'King of the Indian aquatic system' and are included



under 20 mega fishes of the world.

"They inhabit fast-flowing cold, clear, hilly riverine water with pebbly, stony, and rocky bottoms and intermittent rocky pools. They are sacred and worshipped in many Hindu temples in India," he said.

Palita said he began research on Mahseer fish soon after joining CUO around six years ago.

"These fishes were initially documented from Indravati Market at Khatiguda in Nabarangpur district. Later, they were found from Indravati Reservoir at Mukhiguda in Kalahandi and Kapur Dam in Nabarangpur," he said.

CUO laboratory identified those as Mahseer fishes and later, the Zoological Survey of India in Kolkata confirmed those as

two Mahseer species— Tor putitora (ZSI Registration No. FF8623, 30cm) and Tor tor (ZSI Registration No. FF8624, 33.6cm).

"Tor tor has earlier been recorded from Similipal, Mahanadi River System and Brahmani River," he said.

CUO Vice-Chancellor Professor Chakradhar Tripathi and The Vice-Chancellor (I/c) Professor NC Panda congratulated the team, comprising researchers Alok Kumar Naik and Anirban Mahata, for the feat.

The findings were published in the Asian Journal of Conservation Biology.

Globally, Mahseer species belong to three genera - Tor, Neolissochilus, and Nazirtor. Members of the Tor genus are regarded as 'True Mahseer.' There are 17 valid Tor species globally, found in countries like India, China, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

India now hosts nine species of Tor Mahseer.

With this discovery, Odisha has four recognised Mahseer species - Tor tor, Tor mahanadicus, Tor putitora, and Tor khudree.

Locally, these fish are known as 'Kainsari' or 'Khaiser' in Khatiguda area of Nabarangpur, while Bengali communities refer to them as 'Mahasol.'

In India, Mahseer are prized both as game fish and for their culinary value. The Golden Mahseer can grow up to 275cm in length and weigh up to 54kg.

Mahseer is increasingly considered a candidate species for aquaculture due to its sport fishing appeal and excellent flesh quality. However, various human activities such as untreated sewage discharge and pollution have significantly altered the natural habitats of Mahseer in India, including Odisha.

The IUCN has classified Tor putitora as 'Endangered' and Tor tor as 'Near Threatened,' emphasising the need for conservation efforts.

Advertisement for LIC insurance with text: Full time. Part time. Any time! Earn, Learn and Grow with India's largest Life Insurance Company. Includes images of people and LIC logo.

139 customised vehicles to guard forest divisions



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: In a significant step to enhance forest fire management and wildlife protection, Forest department deployed 139 specially designed vehicles equipped with advanced features to various forest divisions across the state here Friday. Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) Susanta Nanda flagged off the vehicles in presence of forest officials. These vehicles are intended to combat forest fires, facilitate rescue operations, and patrol remote and inaccessible areas.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Conservator of Forest (Administration) Samyak Samantara said that a total of 51 All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs), 41 customised fire fighting vehicles, and 47 fire support units will be engaged at different forest divisions. "These vehicles are specifically designed to navigate difficult terrains, including hilly and forest regions, where conventional vehicles struggle to reach and carry out emergency operations."

The customised vehicles are equipped with modern technologies, including communication systems like VHF radios and VSAT, to facilitate effective coordination during emergencies. The fire fighting vehicles aim to reduce the spread of forest fires along roadsides and within forest areas. Additionally, the vehicles are designed for swift movement to reach affected areas promptly.

The deployment ceremony was held at the State Botanical Garden here. Senior officials from Tata Motors and Mahindra, along with high-ranking forest officials, were present to hand over the vehicles to for-

est divisions across 18 districts. Speaking on the occasion, Samantara highlighted that the initiative aims to strengthen fire control measures, ensure better communication, and rescue wildlife in distress.

Joining the event, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force Debidutta Biswal, along with Nandankanan Director and additional charge of CCF Wildlife Manoj V Nair emphasised that the vehicles are a crucial part of the department's preparedness for forest fires during the dry season.

The vehicles, provided by Tata Motors and Mahindra, were customised after considering the challenges faced in forest areas. They are equipped to operate in sandy, muddy, and rocky terrains even in 60 degrees inclination. Additionally, the ATVs and fire units are tailored to enhance patrol efficiency and reduce response time during fire incidents.

This deployment marks a significant stride in state's efforts to protect its rich biodiversity and manage forest resources effectively.



WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	24.9°	25.0°
Min Temp	21.6°	19.6°
Humidity	75%	75%
Rainfall	0.3	1.8

FORECAST
Dry weather very likely to prevail over the districts of Odisha

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	79802.79 ↑ 759.05
NIFTY	24131.10 ↑ 216.95
DOLLAR	84.60 ↑ 0.13
EURO	89.22 ↑ 0.06
GOLD	₹76,219 ↑ ₹486
SILVER	₹88,778 ↑ ₹776

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Khireswari Bagh, W/o. Umashankar Bagh, R/o. Village/ P.O.- Chhatamakhan, P.S.- Puintala, Dist.- Balangir, Odisha declared that prior to my marriage my name was Ahalya Bagarty, but after marriage my name is now Khireswari Bagh. That both the names is the name of one and same person. That by this affidavit No.890 dt.22.10.2024 sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Bolangir I have correction of my name as Khireswari Bagh for all future purposes.

YUVA SANGAM Odisha students to explore historical sites in Maha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: A delegation of 50 students from various higher education institutions from the state, who reached Maharashtra Friday will have the opportunity to interact with the Governor of the western state and explore significant cultural and historical sites there.

Students from various higher education institutions, including IIT-Bhubaneswar, have embarked on a journey to Maharashtra as part of the Central government's 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' Yuva Sangam programme, an initiative aimed at fostering cultural and educational exchange among states.

IIT-Bhubaneswar is serving as the nodal institute for Odisha, while IIM-Mumbai is the nodal institute for Maharashtra. The students' delegation



was flagged off at a special ceremony held recently by IIT-Bhubaneswar director Shreepad Karmalkar, who interacted with the students and expressed support for their journey.

Senior officials present at the ceremony included student affairs dean Rajesh Roshan Dash, registrar Bamadev Acharya, as well as deans from other schools, senior faculty members, and officials from IIT-Bhubaneswar. During their visit,

five themes: Paryatan (Tourism), Parampara (Traditions), Pragati (Development), Paraspar Sampark (People-to-people Connect), and Pradyogiki (Technology).

In a reciprocal exchange, 50 students from Maharashtra are hosted by IIT-Bhubaneswar here. Their itinerary includes tours of the Governor House, industrial and corporate hubs here, and key cultural sites such as Puri, Konark, Raghurajpur, Ravenshaw University, the Maritime Museum, and the House of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Other highlights include visits to Lingaraj Temple, Rajarani Temple, Khandagiri and Udayagiri caves, Dhauligiri, and the Tribal Museum in the Capital.

The students will also explore tourist attractions like Chilika Lake and Kalinga Stadium, and engage with IIT-Bhubaneswar's adopted villages and start-ups incubated by the Institute.

BAL VIVAH MUKT BHARAT Support pours in for campaign against child marriage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: Extending their overwhelming support to 'Bal Vivah Mukht Bharat' campaign by the Central government, thousands of people thronged the streets, schools, roads and markets across the state to participate in different programmes conducted by Just Rights for Children (JRC) alliance recently.

As many as 4,000 villages in 25 districts witnessed awareness drives, candlelight marches and road shows against child marriage. People showed solidarity for a social cause. Police officials, lawyers and judges, panchayat members, leaders, school children, teachers and

survivors of child marriage took pledge to end child marriage and report the same.

Comprising over 250 NGOs as partners in over 400 districts in the country, JRC alliance has been working with the state government and local administration in 25 districts to eliminate child marriage in the state. JRC alliance partners have prevented more than 2,50,000 child marriages across India through persuasion and legal interventions.

Programmes spread across the state reverberated with different pledges such as, "I pledge to make every possible effort against child marriage. I pledge to ensure that no child marriage takes place in my



FOGGY MORNING: A thick blanket of fog engulfs Netaji Setu at CDA in Cuttack, Friday, even as deep depression forms in Bay of Bengal

OP PHOTO

ODISHA BIGYAN 'O' PARIBESH CONGRESS

'Sc & tech must for devtpt of society'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: Humanity needs to utilise advancements in science and technology in a constructive way that will bring about holistic development of the society and culminate in removal of the inequality and discrepancies in the society, stated Orissa Environmental Society (OES) president Sundara Narayana Patro at the Silver Jubilee celebration of Odisha Bigyan 'O' Paribesh Congress here Friday.

Organised by joint efforts of OES and CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT), the inaugural function of the Congress was attended by former VC of BPUT and chairman of AICTE Damodar Acharya as the chief guest and VC of OUAT Pravat Kumar Roul as the guest of honour. Ramesh Goel from the University of Utah, USA joined as the key-



note speaker, while IMMT chief scientist Laxmidhar Besra presided over the function.

Highlighting on diverse aspects of the theme, 'Fostering science for holistic development', the guests opined that incredible advancements have been made in diverse frontiers of science and technology that have brought about not only lasting solutions to innumerable human predicaments, but also boosted the productivity, efficiency, longevity and ultra-modern lifestyles of human

species. However, lopsided and unsustainable mechanisms adopted for development in the recent times have engendered a plethora of problems not only for the mankind, but also for the whole living world as well as our planet.

"We are confronting several social, economic and environmental challenges that threaten the mankind as well as the living system of the world. In such a scenario, the humanity needs to utilise the advancements in science and technol-

ogy in a constructive way that will bring about holistic development of the society," said the OES president.

On the occasion, OES conferred 'Award for Excellence in Science' on scientists for their lifetime contributions in the field of science education and research.

BPUT former VC Omkar Nath Mohanty, SOA University's B and B research centre director Lala Behari Sukla and N and N centre director Kulamani Parida, KIMS pro-VC CBK Mohanty and Utkal University former emeritus professor Rama Chandra Mohanty received the award.

Over 500 scientists, researchers and academicians from across the state and beyond participated. The event will continue for two days. Several research papers will be presented by the delegates in different technical sessions.

MANGO KERNEL TRAGEDY Cong seeks PM's intervention

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 29: Congress leader and former Union minister Srikanth Kumar Jena Friday drew the attention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is currently in the City for a three-day DGP/IGP conference, to the tragic incident in Mandipanka village of Kandhamal district wherein three young tribal women lost their lives and several others were hospitalised after consuming mango kernel last month.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Jena highlighted the delayed release of food grain under public distribution system (PDS), citing the October-December quota was only distributed November 2. This delay, Jena argued, directly contributed to the tragedy and constitutes a violation of the National Food Security Act (NFSA).

The Congress leader decried the dire conditions



in the region, including the absence of healthcare facilities, mobile connectivity, and employment opportunities through MGNREGA, forcing residents to migrate. He also criticised local and state authorities for their lack of response, noting the District Magistrate's eight-day delay in visiting the village and the Chief Minister's absence.

He appealed to the Prime Minister to visit Mandipanka village during his Odisha trip, emphasising that such a gesture would draw attention to the hardships faced by tribal communities and prompt immediate action to alleviate their suffering.

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Rayagada Railway Div a non-starter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Nov 29: With Prime Minister Narendra Modi expected to lay the foundation stone for the long-anticipated South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone headquarters at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh soon, the development has reignited discussions over the lack of progress in setting up the Rayagada Railway Division in Odisha, announced back in 2019 by the then Railway Minister along with the SCoR headquarters.



BJD concerned over 'Centre's plans'

Bhubaneswar: BJD legislators in the Assembly have expressed concern over the Centre's decision to create the South Coast Railway Zone, a new railway zone with its headquarters in Visakhapatnam, by splitting the East Coast Railway Zone.

Reports stated that while plans are underway for the prime minister's programme, nothing has moved so far towards setting up of the Railway Division in Rayagada. It is alleged that the delay reflects a systemic neglect of Rayagada region, a concern heightened by the absence of concrete steps, such as building a Divisional office or initiating substantial groundwork.

Rayagada at a time when the saffron party is at the helm both at the Centre and the state. Nevertheless, the contentious issue has sparked widespread concern and discontent among the public.

tender. However, delay in the financial bidding process had been reported, triggering public speculations over the likelihood of intentional postponement of the project.

For reference, a tender for the Rayagada Railway Division had been floated in August 2024, with a submission deadline of one month, with the initial phase of the project estimated at Rs 108 crore. Thirteen consulting agencies were deemed technically eligible for the

When contacted, Rayagada MLA Appalawsami Kadra said, "The government's announcement was merely symbolic, aimed at gaining electoral advantage. Despite being in power both in the state and at the Centre, no tangible progress has been made."

DCPU Ganjam stops child marriage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Polasara, Nov 29: Officials of the Ganjam District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) intervened and stopped a child marriage while it was taking place at the Matrushakti Kalyan Mandap, near Block Chhak, under Polasara police station limits Friday.



Anganwadi worker Signa Rani Mishra reached the venue and prevented the marriage from occurring. According to reports, the officials were informed about the wedding between the son of a Bhejiput village resident, under Bhanjanagar police station

limits, and the daughter of a resident of Nayagarh village, about to be solemnised at the Kalyan Mandap. The officials decided to intervene when they learnt that the girl was an under-age minor (below 18 years). Following this, the district team reached the venue before the wedding rituals could begin.

Following this, the girl (bride) and her family members were asked to report at the District Child Protection Unit office at Berhampur, said Polasara Integrated Child Development Project Officer, Tilottama Rout.

Corruption: 4-year jail for Kandhamal headmaster

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baliguda, Nov 29: The Phulbani Vigilance court in Kandhamal district sentenced Bibhunanandan Keshari Nayak, the in-charge headmaster at Dukulamla New Primary School, under Baliguda block, to four years of rigorous imprisonment in a corruption and fund embezzlement case Friday.

He had allegedly diverted the money for personal use without completing the construction. Following the allegations, a Vigilance investigation was conducted, and a case was registered under Sections 13(2), read with 13(1)(c)(d), of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, along with Sections 409 and 120(B) of the Indian Penal Code. A chargesheet was filed after the completion of the investigation.

Meanwhile, the Vigilance department stated that a letter has been sent to higher departmental authorities to dismiss Nayak from service following his conviction.

Retd state employees stage protest in Ganjam

Chhatrapur: The Ganjam district chapter of the Odisha State Retired Employees' Federation staged a protest in front of the Collectorate in Chhatrapur Friday, demanding restoration of suspended facilities specifically given to senior citizen. The federation later submitted a 20-point charter of demands to the Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi through District Collector Dibya Jyoti Parida. The demands include provision of medical facilities and full pension for 25 years, instead of the present 20 years, in accordance with the Central government scheme; reinstatement of railway concessions to the senior citizen as per the pre-Covid era; correction of the errors committed in the 7th Pay Commission in respect to the pension of retired employees; raising minimum pension amount from ₹8,300 to ₹9,000.

the prominence of the latter. Currently, the Visakhapatnam Division oversees 255 km of Odisha's railway network. Upon establishment, the Rayagada Division would take over jurisdiction of railway tracks and stations in districts such as Rayagada, Gajapati, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Malkangiri, and Nuapada.

Nevertheless, the BJP state leadership has allegedly gone silent over establishment of a railway division at Rayagada. Observers pointed out that the dominance of Congress in Koraput district - the MP and MLAs from the six Assembly segments are from the party - might be the reason behind the alleged neglect towards the project.

Meanwhile, various organisations have demanded immediate action over the Union government's announcement of setting up the railway division in Rayagada, a region classified as underdeveloped. When contacted, Rayagada MLA Appalawsami Kadra said, "The government's announcement was merely symbolic, aimed at gaining electoral advantage. Despite being in power both in the state and at the Centre, no tangible progress has been made."

Tribal fest 'Parab' held in Koraput

Koraput: Tribal festival 'Parab', which celebrates the rich cultural heritage of local communities, was organised in Laxmipur block of Koraput Friday. MLA Pabitra Saunta inaugurated the annual festival in the block. Organised by the Block Development Officer (BDO) of Laxmipur, Gueswar Bhoi, with the support of Vedanta Aluminium, it drew over 5,000 tribals and showcased the vibrant tapestry of tribal art, music, dance and culture. Bhoi said it is an annual festival that promotes and preserves the rich culture of Odisha. This initiative also empowers local artisans, self-help groups (SHGs) and students by offering them a platform to exhibit their talent and skills, fostering recognition and growth opportunities within the community, he said.

230 GELATIN STICKS, MAOIST ITEMS RECOVERED IN BOUDH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh, Nov 29: Security forces unearthed a Maoist dump and seized a large cache of explosives, including 230 gelatin sticks, from a forested area near Kanagun village under Manamunda police limits in the district, informed SP Nagaraj Devarakonda Friday.



Addressing a press conference at the district police headquarters Devarakonda said intelligence reports had indicated increasing Maoist activity in the forested areas along the Boudh-Kandhamal border. "Acting on the information, police patrols and search operations were intensified. Information was received Thursday about a substantial stockpile of explosives and Maoist materials near Kanagun village under Gundulia Panchayat in Boudh block," he said.

A joint team comprising anti-Maoist operation personnel, District Voluntary Force (DVF), and bomb disposal units was dispatched for a search operation. The security forces, with the help of the bomb disposal squad, seized a significant quantity of explosives and Maoist materials Friday morning, the SP said.

other supplies, he added. Devarakonda said a case has been registered at the Manamunda police station in connection with the seizures. "The recovery of such a large number of gelatin sticks and Maoist materials clearly highlights the active presence of Maoists in the area," he added.

Meanwhile, a Maoist with a bounty of ₹2 lakh on her head was arrested from Kurti jungle of Malkangiri district Friday. Anti Madvi alias Lakey, 29, a member of the Uday Protection Team, was involved in nine incidents of gunfire with security forces in Odisha, Chhatisgarh and Andhra Pradesh between 2018 and 2021, DIG (South-Western Range) Niti Shekhar said.

Pragat Sanghan Vikas Kendra, Kolkata. Expression of Interest for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Kolkata, an R&D organization under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Govt. of India.

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FOCUS SOIL DEGRADATION

CHANGE FARM PRACTICES



We should redirect public funds currently spent on agricultural subsidies to investments that improve soil health and support farmers as they undertake the transition to a climate-resilient food system

agricultural practices, farmers are unlikely to embrace them. In response, European regulators have opted to make credit generation easier, rather than adjusting price incentives, thus compromising the system's integrity. Beyond methodological challenges, carbon farming can serve as a smokescreen for the livestock industry. Industry groups claim that carbon storage in grasslands can offset methane and nitrous-oxide emissions. But this scenario is unrealistic, given that it would require vast amounts of grassland. It is well established that the most effective way to reduce livestock emissions is to cut livestock numbers and consumption of meat and dairy. The carbon-market approach views maintaining soil health and reducing emissions as an either/or choice. In reality, both are necessary, as healthy soil is essential for food production. The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change has found that sequestering carbon in soils - or anywhere else - cannot replace emissions reductions. Targeting emissions reductions, rather than relying solely on soil credits, could have the additional benefit of weakening the appeal of controversial technologies that aim to remove carbon from the atmosphere. Simply put, a market-based approach to carbon storage cannot deliver the transformative change we need. We cannot offset our way out of the climate crisis. Instead, we should redirect public funds currently spent on agricultural subsidies to investments that improve soil health and support farmers as they undertake the transition to a climate-resilient food system. The writer is Policy Officer for Climate and Agriculture at the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy's European office.

This concept has gained traction in both public-policy circles and the private sector. Fertilizer and pesticide companies like Yara and Bayer have already rolled out their own certification programmes, while major agriculture producers such as Canada and Australia have integrated these credits into their markets. The European Union is also developing a certification programme for carbon farming, and global carbon markets are expected to follow suit. Unfortunately, the newfound popularity of carbon farming risks perpetuating the false notion that emissions reductions and soil carbon storage are interchangeable. Even if we accept this premise, developing a system to offset emissions through carbon storage is extremely difficult. For such a system to be effective, storage must originate from a change in farm practices and be measurable and secure for at least a century. But given that carbon stored in soils is inherently unstable and can easily be

re-released into the atmosphere by droughts, floods, or shifts in farming practices, long-term storage remains highly unreliable. Previous attempts to address this instability in other natural reserves have been unsuccessful. For example, reserve credits set aside to offset unintended carbon releases from forests in California are being depleted faster than anticipated after the intense wildfires there. And there has been little interest in credits with expiration dates, which would require buyers to renew them periodically. While it is possible to measure the carbon stored in soil, doing so is neither simple nor cheap. The accuracy of these measurements depends on several factors, including sampling depth, location, and timeframe. Alternative methods, based on limited sampling or mathematical models, have failed to overcome measurement challenges. Since prices for soil-carbon credits have been too low to cover the costs of changing

Healthy soil is indispensable to life on Earth, sustaining nearly 60% of all living species. As the second-largest carbon reservoir after oceans, soil is also among our planet's most important natural assets in the fight against climate change. But the world's soils are under immense strain. Droughts are increasingly turning fertile land into deserts, while pesticide use drastically reduces soil biodiversity, threatening our ability to produce healthy food. As high-quality agricultural land becomes scarcer, conflicts over shrinking topsoil - critical for crop growth - are intensifying. The Heinrich Böll Foundation's recent Soil Atlas highlights the many ways we are losing the ground beneath our feet. The current industrial agriculture system has been a major driver of soil degradation, accelerating biodiversity loss and depleting vital carbon reserves. Yet despite its impact, the agriculture sector has made little progress in advancing climate goals. Its global greenhouse gas emissions have remained largely unchanged over the past decade. As countries worldwide set new emissions-reduction targets under the 2015 Paris climate agreement, it is clear that achieving real emissions cuts will require developing strategies to reduce the agriculture sector's carbon footprint. One approach touted as a potential solution is 'carbon farming,' which uses market incentives to reward farmers for storing carbon in their soil. By adopting practices like planting cover crops, farmers can earn certificates for increasing carbon storage. These certificates can then be sold as carbon credits in voluntary or government-mandated markets, providing farmers with an additional income stream.



Sophie Scherger

GIVEN THAT CARBON STORED IN SOILS IS INHERENTLY UNSTABLE AND CAN EASILY BE RE-RELEASED INTO THE ATMOSPHERE BY DROUGHTS, FLOODS, OR SHIFTS IN FARMING PRACTICES, LONG-TERM STORAGE REMAINS HIGHLY UNRELIABLE



The true lasting quietness comes from a complete consecration to the Divine

THE MOTHER

Missing Deadlines

The Central Vista project is finally picking up steam, with a buzz around relocating key government ministries to swanky, high-tech offices and repurposing the iconic North and South Blocks for something more grandiose. Sources have informed DKB that the Ministry of Finance will be leading this first phase, trading its North Block address for a spot in the new Common Central Secretariat (CCS) complex, alongside over a dozen other ministries. The goal? A seamless transition by March 2025, which means the clock is ticking for babus to pack up their files.

And while all eyes are on this move, there's another project quietly waiting in the wings: the Yuge Yugeen Bharat Museum (YYBM). This ambitious museum is slated to transform the heritage-rich North and South Blocks, presenting a "timeless India" for future generations. But there's a hitch: the Culture Ministry, tasked with building this museum, has been waiting for the handover of these blocks, now expected by mid-2025. This comes after an October 2019 projection, which aimed for a March 2024 finish for the CCS buildings—a deadline that has come and gone, much like a few others in the Vista project.

In the latest round of meetings, it seems officials got a nudge to step up the pace. Apparently, the target is now January for completing the first CCS buildings to allow the big move. As for North and South Blocks, June 2025 is the current deadline for the handover, with conservation work starting soon after. It's a race against time, given the project's ambitious scope and the looming 2029 election year. Clearly, the Centre wants the Vista facelift finished before the next big polls.

Passing the baton or passing the buck!

The Centre's recent stance on disciplinary authority over IAS and IPS officers is stirring the pot, and it could have some serious ripple effects on Centre-state dynamics. In the Calcutta High Court recently, the Centre made it clear that states, not the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), have the power to take action against officers serving within their borders. This statement came in response to a petition against former Kolkata Police Commissioner Vineet Goyal, who allegedly revealed the victim's name in a high-profile case.

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs' circular last month, the Additional Solicitor General informed the bench that states have jurisdiction when it comes to holding IAS, IPS, or IFS officers accountable for any misconduct. This clarification shifts the burden to states, essentially sidestepping the Centre from the responsibility—a move that some might see as "passing the buck."

But this isn't just about one case or one officer.

It's a reflection of a broader trend, as states increasingly push back on what they see as Centre-led overreach. With this new position, the Centre seems to be inviting states to take on greater responsibility, potentially leading to a fractured approach in the way bureaucratic discipline is enforced across India. For example, some states may be tougher or more lenient than others, setting up a patchwork of standards that could make officers wary about which state they're posted in next. And, let's be honest, it also opens the door for states to exert a bit more political leverage when it comes to "disciplining" officers who may not be playing by local rules.



BABUDOM BYTES Dilip Cherian

As the Centre and states continue this dance over authority, one thing's for sure: the ground rules of Centre-state relations are quietly being rewritten. Whether this ends up fostering more collaboration or leads to more tussles is something to keep an eye on.

Project delays or a play of timing?

In a surprising move, a senior IAS officer, holding a prestigious post since June 2021, was abruptly sidelined just a month before retirement. Officially, his removal was attributed to project delays, but the timing of this bureaucratic shake-up has left many raising their eyebrows. Along with this officer, nine others found themselves reassigned, sparking speculation about what's really behind this shuffle.

Here's where it gets interesting: the key official who could have influenced this decision—a batch mate of the officer in question—was absent on the day it all went down. Many believe that if this individual had been around, perhaps the outcome would've been different, sparing the officer from being placed on a waitlist so close to retirement.

So, was it all about project delays, or did timing play a crucial role here? The officer's abrupt removal right before retirement, combined with the absence of an influential colleague, suggests there's more to the story. It's not uncommon for bureaucracy to be as much about timing and relationships as it is about performance. For now, though, all we can do is wait and watch—until the next chapter in this ongoing saga unfolds.

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WISDOM CORNER

We always question the bonafides of the man who tells us unpleasant facts

RK NARAYANAN

If you want to see the true measure of a man, watch how he treats his inferiors, not his equals.

JK ROWLING

Love, friendship and respect do not unite people as much as a common hatred for something.

ANTON CHEKHOV

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1718: Charles XII, king of Sweden, was killed during a siege of the fortress of Fredriksten, east of Oslo Fjord, ending Sweden's "Age of Greatness."
1908: The United States and Japan signed the Root-Takahira Agreement, which averted a drift toward possible war through the mutual acknowledgment of certain international policies and spheres of influence in the Pacific.
1939: After Finland refused to grant the Soviet Union a naval base and other concessions in the fall of 1939, Soviet troops totaling about one million men attacked Finland on several fronts, initiating the Russo-Finnish War.
1966: Barbados, an island nation in the Caribbean situated about 100 miles (160 km) east of the Windward Islands, had gained internal self-rule in 1961 and achieved its full independence from Britain on this day.

SPECTRUM RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

Diplomacy should win, war must lose

The Ukrainian war has completed one thousand days with horrible deaths and devastation that has been going with it. There is no end to the bloodshed in sight in days to come. On the contrary, it has just been escalated both by Ukraine and Russia. Ukraine was allowed by Joe Biden to use the missiles supplied by the United States in the Russian territory outside the war zone. Russia has responded in Putin's lowering the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons.



DK Giri

NO DIALOGUE IS FEASIBLE IF THERE IS A BIG GAP IN POWER OF DETERRENCE AMONG THE NEGOTIATING PARTIES

As the war rages, Russia launched 188 drones against most regions of Ukraine in a nighttime attack, as reported by the Ukrainian Air Force. As per the available reports, most of the drones were intercepted, but quite a few hit the apartment buildings and damaged the critical infrastructure. Admittedly, it is hard to get authentic data from either sources—Ukraine or Russia. By far the most authentic data available from the Institute for the Study of War in Washington, Mos-

cow has seized 2,700 sq km of Ukrainian land this year compared to 4,65 sq km in 2023. Russia occupies about 28% of Ukrainian land. The question staring at the whole world is how to end this war. On India's perspective on the war, New Delhi has been maintaining from day one that the conflict could not be solved on the battleground; it can only be done through dialogue and diplomacy, in other words, negotiation. But can you negotiate with a lion when your head is in its mouth? That raises a practical question on the efficacy of diplomacy when there is an obvious power disparity.

We will do well to recall that negotiation between two blocs was possible when there was a balance of power between the USA and the Soviet Union. That is how the world experienced several negotiations on arms control and disarmament, etc. In the case of Ukraine, where a full-blown war goes unabated, is there any prospect for negotiation? The terms of negotiation are sub-

ject to negotiation itself. Russia is already using troops from North Korea and Yemen, etc. The United Kingdom is ready to fight on the side of Ukraine at any time. So, it is not out of order for the West to come out openly. It will not lead to a Third World War more than it is now. The Ukrainian war will not draw China, another military and economic power, to make it a world war. Unless Russian President Putin is made to realise that he cannot win and can only self-destruct, he may not agree to the terms set by Ukraine and its supporters. Russia has to vacate the land it has taken from Ukraine after February 2022 if not after the annexation of Crimea.

Coming back to diplomacy, no dialogue is feasible if there is a big gap in power of deterrence among the negotiating parties. A bipolar world is conducive to negotiation between somewhat equal powers. Such a scenario is emerging—the Global West on one side and China-Russia on the other, the Global South choosing either of the sides

formally or on an issue-basis. Let us face some established truths. A multi-polar world is a strategic fantasy. Strategic autonomy is political romanticism. Security overrides other priorities. Collective security is wise and less expensive. In an interdependent world, staying alone is unviable. The habit of going with everyone makes one less faithful. However, when the West begins to club China and Russia, the bipolarity will soon emerge and make diplomacy easier to conduct. If Donald Trump cuts a deal with Putin by throwing Zelenskyy or Poland under the bus, it will have grave consequences for the subsequent world order, particularly in view of the intentions of Putin and Xi-Jinping. Yes, diplomacy should win and war as a strategy must lose. But for diplomacy to succeed, the countries should show the collective capacity that they are ready for a war. The writer is Secretary General, Association for Democratic Socialism

INFA

Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 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



Canine menace on rail platforms

Sir, It has become a common sight to find dogs right on railway platforms, causing untold miseries to rail passengers. The increasing presence of stray dogs roaming on the platforms and the station premises, especially in big cities and towns, is concerning. Just a few days ago, more than twenty-five passengers were bitten by a rabid dog at the very busy Kannur railway station. Stray dogs are found everywhere, on the tracks, under vehicles in the parking area, and right on the platforms. Normally in big stations, platforms see heavy passenger movements. If in this rush someone steps on a dog, it would surely attack and bite the passengers, and such incidents have happened. Rather than blaming one another, the station authority and the concerned municipal corporation in which the stations are located must be alert, plan up strategies, and control the situation. One of the main reasons for dogs staying on platforms is the availability of food, and this can be stopped only if the food stall keepers, vendors, and passengers are vigilant enough to avoid throwing food carelessly. Local body authorities must catch these dogs and put them in stray animal shelters. As the situation is very serious, the authorities concerned will have to take immediate measures and put an end to this grave problem. M Pradyu, KANNUR

Changing chess scenario

Sir, Indian Grand Masters are playing completely unconventional and unorthodox opening setups. D Gukesh won Game 3 against Ding precisely because of an opening that blew Ding Liren's preparation to smithereens, making him waste 33 minutes on move 13 and being more than an hour down by move 20. Ding Liren came up with an extremely innovative opening move with his Nf3, e3, and then a gambit with Ba3. All commentators were discussing what to name this new setup or gambit. Indian GMs and top-level games against Indian GMs have become a whirlpool of innovations in opening theory. Indian GMs are bringing in hypermodern opening innovations in chess. The tightly contested Game 4 of the World Chess Championship between defending champion Ding Liren and India's young sensation Gukesh remains equal after 14 moves, with both players maintaining a balanced position. Dorai Ramani Suresh, GHAZIABAD

AMBASSADORS OF HOPE

AYODHYA RAM TEMPLE

Arunachal govt signs MoU with ITBP

Army's 'Operation Sadbhavana' transforming Arunachal villages

Priests to face entry ban after family death, birth

Itanagar: The Arunachal Pradesh government Friday signed an MoU with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) Force to supply fruits, vegetables, meat, fish, dairy, and millet from local villages to the force's units stationed across the state.

From building schools, providing healthcare, developing sports infrastructure and addressing the locals' concerns, the army, under 'Operation Sadbhavana', is not only securing the borders but also working for people's welfare and easing their day-to-day struggles



Itanagar, the army installed fencing around a government school for the safety of the 50 children who study there.

Bene (Arunachal Pradesh), Nov 29: In the remote villages of Arunachal Pradesh, where the local tribals were once wary of the armed forces, the Indian Army has now become synonymous with hope and trust courtesy of its philanthropic efforts.

"We get continuous support from the army. The army has recently got the school fencing done. We have urged them to adopt our school," Principal of the government upper primary school Tumto Ete said.

asked them to repair the roof of the school building," Moli Ete, a teacher at a government primary school in Darka village, said.

A bridge has been built in Doji Basti of Darka while a compost fertiliser machine has been installed in another village, an army officer said.

Similarly, the Eastern Command of the army constructed a community centre, gifted swings to government schools and built a fence around one of them in nearby Darka village in the district, paying heed to the requests of the local villagers.

"I have been running a homestay for the last four years. Most of the guests are army personnel and their family members. There is immense potential for tourism in this part of the state, which is unexplored. After the army's 15-day course, we have learnt various and slides and other equipment for the students. We have also

According to the guidelines, priests will conduct rituals in all the 18 temples within the complex of Ram Janmabhoomi on a rotational basis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ayodhya (UP), Nov 29: Priests will not be allowed to enter the Ayodhya Ram temple in case of birth or death in their family, member of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust Anil Mishra said Friday.

"A priest's entry in the temple is completely prohibited in a state of impurity, as he turns impure in the event of death or birth in his family," Mishra said while talking about the guidelines for the priests of the Ram temple.

Priests who have completed six months of training will soon be entrusted with the responsibility of conducting rituals at the Ram temple. According to Champat Rai, general secretary of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, the new priests will have to follow the guidelines made by the religious committee of the Ram temple.

According to the guidelines, priests will conduct rituals in all the 18 temples within the complex of Ram Janmabhoomi on a rotational basis. Anil Mishra, a member of the Ram Temple Trust, said a training programme was



conducted recently for the deployment of priests at the Ram temple. A team of highly qualified individuals in Ayodhya provided six months of training to 20 priests.

Giving the details about the dress code of the priests, Mishra said from the waist down, one must wear an 'achala', and on the upper body a 'chaubandi' along with a turban or 'safa'.

Woolen clothes in the same colour (saffron) can also be worn during the winter season. There will be a restriction on carrying mobile phones during worship, especially android phones.

Traditional basic phones can be used if necessary, Mishra said. An idol of the new Ram Lalla was consecrated at the Ayodhya temple January 22, a landmark event led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who also gave a clarion call to go beyond the grand mandir's construction to build the foundation of a "strong, capable and divine" India of the next 1,000 years.

As the inauguration of the temple marked the culmination of a decades-long campaign, mostly under the Hindutva banner, to reclaim a disputed religious site in Ayodhya, Modi said it was the advent of a new era.

Majestic return of rhino in Dudhwa National Park

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP), Nov 29: After four decades of conservation efforts, Dudhwa National Park has marked a significant milestone by releasing its first one-horned rhinoceros into the open forests, with three more likely to follow.

rehabilitation area (RRA-1). Field Director of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (DTR) Lalit Verma said.

This marks a significant step in the park's ongoing efforts to reintroduce the species to their natural habitat, Verma told PTI. Raghu was one of four rhinos selected for release after an extensive evaluation by experts and three female rhinos are expected to be released by Friday evening, he said.

STIPEND BASED INTERNSHIPS BY GOVT. OF INDIA. Under WORK BASED LEARNING PROGRAMME at C-DAC, CERT-IN, CMET, ERNET, NIELIT, SAMEER, & STQC (PAN India). Funded by MeitY, Govt. of India. Registration for Jan 2025 Batch. Duration - 6 months. Stipend - Rs. 10,000/month. Last Date - 30 Dec 2024. Eligibility: B.Tech./B.E./MCA/M.Sc. Last 3 years passed out (relevant disciplines). Final year student of B.Tech./B.E./MCA/M.Sc. SC, ST & EWS category students. Women students.

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INDIA parties formed the government in 2 out of 4 states. But our performance was below expectations. This is a challenge for us in terms of the future

PRIYANKA, RAHUL TO ADDRESS MEETING IN WAYANAD TODAY

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, who took oath as the MP of Wayanad, will be holding a joint public meeting with her brother and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi in the hill constituency November 30, party sources said Friday. This will be her first visit as MP of the constituency



national

Protect all minorities: India to B'desh

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told Parliament that India has taken a serious note of incidents of violence against minorities in Bangladesh and that it is the primary responsibility of Dhaka to protect the life and liberty of all the citizens, including minorities

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: India Friday said the interim government in Bangladesh must live up to its responsibility of protecting all minorities as it expressed serious concern over the "surge" of extremist rhetoric and increasing incidents of violence against Hindus as well as attacks on temples in the neighbouring country.



erty of all citizens of Bangladesh, including minorities, rests with the government of Bangladesh," Jaishankar said, adding that the Indian high commission in Dhaka continues to monitor the situation related to minorities in that country "closely".

Separately, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) called upon Bangladesh to take all steps for the protection of minorities and hoped that the case involving arrested Chinmoy Krishna Das will be dealt with in a just, fair and transparent manner.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told Parliament that India has taken a serious note of incidents of violence against minorities in Bangladesh and that it is the primary responsibility of Dhaka to protect the life and liberty of all the citizens, including minorities.

The relations between India and Bangladesh have come under strain after the interim government headed by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus came to power following the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August amid unrest. India has been expressing concern over attacks on minorities, especially Hindus, in that country.

"The primary responsibility for the protection of life and lib-

eration. We once again call upon Bangladesh to take all steps for the protection of minorities," he added. Responding to a question in the Lok Sabha, Jaishankar said India is concerned over incidents of violence against Hindus and other minorities, their homes and business establishments and attacks on temples and religious places.

"The government has taken a serious note of these incidents and shared its concerns with the government of Bangladesh." "Reports of attacks on temples and puja mandaps also came to light during the recent Durga Puja festival in Bangladesh. The government had expressed its serious concerns regarding the attack on a puja mandap in Tantibazar, Dhaka and theft at the Jeshoreshwari Kali temple at Sathkhira during Durga Puja 2024," Jaishankar said.

Jaishankar said that following these attacks the Bangladeshi government had issued instructions for providing special security including deployment of Army and border guards to ensure a peaceful Durga Puja celebrations.

On the arrest of the Das, who was associated with the ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness), Jaishankar said it is India's expectation that a fair and transparent trial will be ensured in the case.

The relations between India and Bangladesh have come under strain after the interim government headed by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus came to power following the resignation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August amid unrest

India has been expressing concern over attacks on minorities, especially Hindus, in that country

the interim government must live up to its responsibility of protecting all minorities," Jaishankar said at his weekly media briefing.

"We are concerned at the surge of extremist rhetoric, increasing incidents of violence and provocation. These developments cannot be dismissed only as media exag-

Delhi school gets hoax bomb threat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: A private school in Delhi's Rohini, located within one kilometre of the site of a low-intensity blast in Prashant Vihar, received a bomb threat via email Friday, Delhi Fire Service officials said.

The threat was later declared a hoax after a thorough search in the school premises, they said. According to an official, a call was received from the Delhi Police about the bomb threat email at Venkateshwar Global School (VGS) at 10.57 am.

The school is located around one kilometre from the site where the low-intensity blast took place Thursday. A team of the Delhi Fire Services (DFS) immediately reached the spot. Police, bomb disposal squad, dog squad, along with DFS personnel checked the entire premises of the school, the officer said.

No suspicious object was found and the threat was declared a hoax, the officer added.

MAHA: 11 KILLED AS STATE TRANSPORT BUS OVERTURNS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Gondia, Nov 29: At least 11 passengers were killed and 23 others injured after a Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) bus overturned in Gondia district of the state Friday afternoon, police said.

The bus, operated under the service name 'Shiv Shahi', was carrying 36 passengers and heading to Gondia district from Bhandara in eastern Maharashtra when it flipped over at Davva village under Sadak Arjuni taluka after its driver applied brakes to avoid hitting a two-wheeler that suddenly came in the front, a senior police official said.

"Eleven passengers were killed and 23 others injured in the accident which took place at around

12.30 pm," he said. The injured passengers were shifted to different hospitals, the official added. The deceased included a 32-year-old woman police personnel, identified as Smita Suryavanshi from Morgaon in Gondia, police said. Of the 11 deceased passengers, nine have been identified so far, while the identity of two others in their 50s is yet to be ascertained, he said. Senior police and district officials visited the accident spot. Caretaker Chief Minister

Eknath Shinde expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident and announced a compensation of ₹10 lakh each to the next of the kin of the deceased. Shinde spoke to the Gondia collector and instructed that all the injured passengers be provided proper treatment and medical care. If needed they should be admitted to private hospitals for specialised treatment and expenses for the same will be borne by the state government, a statement quoted him as saying.

Devendra Fadnavis, deputy chief minister in the outgoing government, described the bus accident as unfortunate and offered his condolences to the bereaved family members. In a post on X, Fadnavis said if needed, the injured passengers must be treated in private hospitals.

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PUBLIC NOTICE OF E-AUCTION OF GOLD ORNAMENTS. Includes text about auction process and contact details for Dhenkanal.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF E-AUCTION OF GOLD ORNAMENTS. Includes text about auction process and contact details for Kendrapara.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF E-AUCTION OF GOLD ORNAMENTS. Includes text about auction process and contact details for Bhadrak.

national



Despite being an acknowledged space power, India's share of global business is just two per cent at \$386 billion. India plans to raise it to \$500 billion by 2030 and hit \$1.5 trillion by 2047

DELHI'S AIR QUALITY REMAINS 'VERY POOR'

Delhi's air quality stayed in the "very poor" category for the sixth consecutive day Friday, while the city experienced its coldest night of the season with the temperature dropping to 9.5 degrees Celsius



SAMBHAL MOSQUE DISPUTE

SC stays survey, calls for peace

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 29: The Supreme Court Friday ordered a Sambhal trial court to halt proceedings in the case over the Mughal-era Shahi Jama Masjid and its survey at Chandausi while directing the UP government to maintain peace and harmony in the violence-hit town.



note of the statement of Additional Solicitor General (ASG) K M Nataraj, appearing for the state administration, in this regard.

It directed the proposed report of the advocate commissioner following the mosque survey be kept in a sealed cover, till the appellate court including the Allahabad High Court heard the appeal of the mosque committee.

"The learned civil judge will not proceed with the matter till the revision petition/appeal/miscellaneous petition to be filed by the petitioner, is listed before the high court/appropriate court/forum."

The apex court further directed the petition filed by the Shahi Jama Masjid Committee against the trial court's survey order be listed before the Allahabad High Court or any other appropriate forum within three working days.

SP, Cong delegations to visit district

Sambhal (UP): Friday prayers at the Shahi Jama Masjid and other places in this district passed off peacefully amid tight security while Internet services were restored here, days after a violent protest against a court-ordered survey of the Mughal-era mosque claimed four lives. The district has been put under a tight security blanket with drones in the air, additional police personnel on the ground and CCTV cameras installed near the disputed mosque for proper surveillance.

tioner, Committee of Management, Shahi Jama Masjid, Sambhal, must challenge the order dated November 19, 2024, before an appropriate court/forum as per law, including the provisions of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, and the Constitution of India," the order said.

The bench further observed, in case any revision petition or an appeal or a miscellaneous petition was filed before the appropriate court or forum, it would be listed within three working days from the filing date.

The order noted the plea of the Hindu side was fixed before the civil judge January 8, 2025.

The bench made clear it hadn't expressed any opinion on the merits of the matter and ordered listing of the case of the mosque committee in the week commencing January 6. It granted liberty to parties to move appropriate applications if necessary.

Pornography case: ED raids Raj Kundra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 29: The Enforcement Directorate Friday raided the premises of businessman Raj Kundra, the husband of actor Shilpa Shetty, and some others as part of a money laundering case linked to alleged distribution of pornographic and adult movies, official sources said. Around 15 locations in Mumbai and some cities in Uttar Pradesh are being searched, including the home and office of 49-year-old Kundra and some other persons, the sources said.



Prashant Patil told PTI that the action was not against the actor and Kundra was "cooperating in the investigation for the truth to come out." This money laundering case of May, 2022 stems from at least two Mumbai police FIRs and charge sheets filed against Kundra and others. The businessman and some others were arrested in the case and later granted bail. This is the second money laundering case

against Kundra. Early this year, the ED had attached assets worth Rs 98 crore of Kundra and Shetty in a crypto currency case. The couple, however, obtained relief from the Bombay High Court against this attachment order.

The businessman told a local Mumbai court in 2021 that there was not even an iota of evidence with the prosecution (Mumbai Police) that would connect the app 'Hotshots', used in the alleged porn films racket, with an offence under law.

According to the probe agency, the 'Hotshots' app was being used by accused persons for uploading and streaming obscene content.

Cyclonic storm 'Fengal' to make landfall near Pondi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Nov 29: Cyclonic storm 'Fengal' over Bay of Bengal is likely to make a landfall November 30 afternoon, close to Pondicherry, with wind speed upto 90 kmph, the India Meteorological Department said Friday.

Under its influence, heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places and extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places is expected in north Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. Earlier in the day, the IMD said the deep depression intensified into cyclonic storm

With Fengal (pronounced as Feinjal) all set to cross coast, the Tamil Nadu government appealed to people to stay indoors and declared November 30 a holiday for educational institutions and IT companies were requested to allow employees to work from home. Public transport has been suspended on the East Coast Road and Old Mahabalipuram Road here, which is close to the shoreline, Saturday afternoon.

by the Shahi Jama Masjid Committee against the trial court's survey order be listed before the Allahabad High Court or any other appropriate forum within three working days.

MAHAYUTI MEETING PUT OFF; SHINDE HEADS TO HIS VILLAGE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 29: A key Mahayuti meeting scheduled Friday was put off and likely to take place on Sunday now as outgoing Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde headed to his native village, delaying government formation a week after poll results.

The ruling alliance's meeting was expected to be convened in Mumbai Sunday, said sources in the Shiv Sena, which is headed by Shinde.

Leaders of the BJP, the largest Mahayuti constituent, said they were awaiting arrival of central observers for the legislature party meeting.

The swearing-in of the new government is expected to take place next week, the sources said.

Shinde, speaking to reporters in New Delhi Thursday night, had said talks with Union Home Minister and senior BJP leader Amit Shah on government formation were positive and the next round of discussions will be held in Mumbai Friday.

However, BJP sources maintained no gathering of Mahayuti leaders was scheduled for Friday.

Adani case legal issue between private firms and US, says India

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 29: India Friday said the indictment of Indian billionaire Gautam Adani by US prosecutors is a 'legal matter' involving private firms, individuals and the US Department of Justice and that New Delhi was not informed about the case in advance.



At this point of time, he said. "We see this as a legal matter involving private firms and individuals and the US Department of Justice. Obviously, there are established procedures and legal avenues in such cases, which we believe would be followed," Jaiswal said.

"The government of India was not informed in advance on the issue. We have not had any conver-

sation with the US government on it," he added. Jaiswal's response at a media briefing came when he was asked whether the American side had kept India in the loop on the matter.

"Any request by a foreign government for service of summons or arrest warrant is part of mutual legal assistance. But such requests are examined on merits. We have not received any request on this case from the US side," he said in a statement.

"This is a matter which pertains to private individuals and private entities, and the government of India is not part of it in any manner at this point of time," he added.

Mumbai, Nov 29: A key Mahayuti meeting scheduled Friday was put off and likely to take place on Sunday now as outgoing Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde headed to his native village, delaying government formation a week after poll results.

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Leaders of the BJP, the largest Mahayuti constituent, said they were awaiting arrival of central observers for the legislature party meeting.

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international



We have recently uncovered a staggeringly reckless campaign of Russian sabotage in Europe, even as Putin and his acolytes resort to nuclear sabre-rattling to sow fear about the consequences of aiding Ukraine

UK PARL VOTES IN FAVOUR OF ASSISTED DYING BILL

Britain's Parliament voted in favour of a new bill to legalise assisted dying Friday, opening the way for months of further debate that has divided the country



of the day quote

If the United States wants to maintain peace in the Taiwan Straits, it is crucial for it to recognise the independence nature of Lai Ching-te and the Democratic Progressive Party authorities (referring to ruling party)

This (filing impeachment complaints against the vice president) is not important. This will not make any difference to even one single Filipino life, so, why waste time on it

We don't argue that its (social media ban for under-16s) implementation will be perfect, just like the alcohol ban for under-18s doesn't mean that someone under 18 never has access, but we know that it's the right thing to do

SHORT TAKES

UK transport Secy quits over fraud case

London: Louise Haigh resigned as Britain's transport secretary Friday after revelations that she pleaded guilty to a criminal offence before becoming a Member of Parliament. Her resignation is the first by a member of Prime Minister Keir Starmer's cabinet since his Labour party won power at a general election in July. She handed in her notice after media reports emerged Thursday evening that she had incorrectly told police her work mobile phone was stolen when she was mugged in 2013. But she found the handset later and did not inform police. British media said she admitted a fraud charge in court in 2014 and was discharged without any further action. In a resignation letter, published by Downing Street, Haigh, 37, said she wanted to avoid being a "distraction" to the government.

Sectarian violence: Toll rises to 122

Peshawar: With two deaths in fresh incidents of gunfire despite a ceasefire between the Shia and the Sunni groups, the toll has increased to 122 in the sectarian violence over last week in different parts of Kurram district in northwest Pakistan, police and hospital said Friday. The clashes in the Kurram district of the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province escalated with fresh gunfire claiming two more lives and injuring six others Thursday prompting Governor Faisal Karim Kundi Friday to extend an offer to Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur to personally visit the disturbed area. The clashes between Alizai and Bagan tribes in the district started November 22, after an attack on a convoy of passenger vans near Parachinar.

China court jails journo for 7 years

Beijing: A Beijing court sentenced veteran Chinese state media journalist Dong Yuyu Friday to seven years in prison for espionage, his family said in a statement, calling the verdict a grave injustice. Police in the Chinese capital detained the 62-year-old former Guangming Daily editor and journalist in February 2022 while he was lunching with a Japanese diplomat, the US National Press Club said in a statement. He was later charged with espionage. "Sentencing Yuyu to seven years in prison on no evidence declares to the world the bankruptcy of the justice system in China," Dong's family said in a statement.

ISRAEL STALEMATE

Saudi abandons US treaty bid

Riyadh has stepped back from pursuing a US defence treaty, citing a lack of progress in normalisation talks between the country and Israel



Saudi softened its position on Palestinian statehood, telling Washington that a public commitment from Israel to a two-state solution could be enough for the Gulf kingdom to normalise relations

- Riyadh wants Israel to first commit to Palestinian statehood
Saudi opts instead for more modest US military pact act
Cooperation pact would expand joint military exercises

Riyadh, Nov 29: Saudi Arabia has abandoned its pursuit of an ambitious defence treaty with Washington in return for normalising relations with Israel and is now pushing for a more modest military cooperation agreement, two Saudi and four Western officials told Reuters. In a drive to get a wide-ranging mutual security treaty over the line earlier this year, Riyadh softened its position on Palestinian statehood, telling Washington that a public commitment from Israel to a two-state solution could be enough for the Gulf kingdom to normalise relations. But with public anger in Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East at fever pitch over Israel's military actions in Gaza, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has again made recognition of Israel conditional on it taking concrete steps to create a Palestinian state, two Saudi and three Western sources said.

unless Riyadh recognises Israel, the six sources said. The pact now under discussion would involve expanding joint military exercises and drills to address regional threats, mainly from Iran. It would foster partnerships between US and Saudi defence firms, with safeguards to prevent collaboration with China, the sources said. But it would not be the kind of binding mutual defence treaty that would oblige US forces to protect the world's biggest oil exporter in the event of foreign attack.

THE TRUMP DILEMMA

The picture is complicated further, however, by the impending arrival of Donald Trump in the White House. While Trump's plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict excludes any provisions for Palestinian statehood or sovereignty, he is a close ally of the Saudi crown prince. Palestinian and some Arab officials worry that Trump and his son-in-law Jared Kushner, architect of the "Deal of the Century" and also a close ally of the crown prince, may ultimately persuade him to support the plan. How the prince reconciles Saudi priorities with this shifting diplomatic landscape will be pivotal, defining both his leadership and the future of the peace process, diplomats said.

SNIPPETS

Chad ends defence agreement with France

Dakar: Chad's government is ending a defence cooperation agreement with France, its former colonial ruler, to redefine the nation's sovereignty. The decision marks a historic turning point after the Central African nation gained independence more than six decades ago, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Aberaman Koulamallah said in a statement Thursday. It said the decision to end the agreement would allow Chad to redefine its strategic partnerships in line with national priorities. There was no immediate response from France's government. Chad was one of the last countries in the region in which France maintained a large military presence, having been ousted in recent years from Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso after years of fighting Islamic extremists alongside regional troops. Those countries have inched closer to Russia, which has mercenaries deployed across the Sahel, the vast expanse below the Sahara desert.

Russian defence min visits North Korea

Seoul: Russian Defence Minister Andrei Belousov arrived in North Korea Friday for talks with North Korean military and political leaders as the countries deepen their cooperation over Russia's war in Ukraine. In announcing the visit, Russia's Defence Ministry didn't say whom Belousov would meet or the purpose of the talks. North Korean state media didn't immediately confirm the visit. Belousov, a former economist, replaced Sergei Shoigu as defence minister in May after Russian President Vladimir Putin started a fifth term in power. Photos released by the Defense Ministry showed Belousov walking alongside North Korean Defense Minister No Kwang Chol on a red carpet at a Pyongyang airport. North Korean military officials were seen clapping under a banner that read, "Complete support and solidarity with the fighting Russian army and people."

Footprints show two ancient human species crossed paths

A new study describes ancient footprints from the species Homo erectus and Paranthropus boisei that were left near a lake in Kenya within hours or days of one another



Kenya, Nov 29: About 1.5 million years ago, individuals of two different species in the human evolutionary lineage trudged on a muddy lakeshore in northern Kenya, leaving behind intersecting trackways alongside the footprints of antelopes, horses, warthogs, giant storks and other animals. These tracks turned into fossils that scientists have now discovered at a location called

Koobi Fora, providing the first evidence that these two species, Paranthropus boisei and Homo erectus, shared the same landscape, literally crossing paths. The discovery raises intriguing questions about the relationship between the two species and any competition for resources. Paranthropus boisei, the more distantly related to modern humans of the two, lived from about 2.3 to 1.2 million years ago, standing up to about 137 cm tall. They had a skull adapted for large chewing muscles, including a cranial crest like those in male gorillas, as well as massive molars. Their feet bore ape-like traits including in the big toe. Homo erectus, an early member of our evolutionary line with body proportions like those of Homo sapiens, lived from about 1.89 million to 110,000 years ago, ranging from about 145-185 cm tall. They had large brow ridges and big-

Dhaka asks India to protect its missions

The country claims its flag burnt during protest in Kolkata

Dhaka, Nov 29: Bangladesh Friday expressed deep concern over the violent protest at the Deputy High Commission in Kolkata and urged New Delhi to ensure safety of all its diplomatic missions in India. A statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also claimed that the Bangladesh flag and an effigy of the interim government chief Muhammad Yunus were burnt during the protest that turned violent Thursday.



Members of Bangiya Hindu Jagaran Manch took out a rally to the office of Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Kolkata to protest attacks on the Hindu community and arrest of spiritual leader Chinmoy Krishna Das in Bangladesh. Das, a former member of International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) of Bangladesh, was arrested in connection with a sedition case Monday and denied a bail Tuesday. It triggered protests by Hindu community members in various locations in Bangladesh, including in the capital Dhaka and the port city of Chattogram. Friday's statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs claimed that the protesters reached the boundary of the Bangladesh Deputy High Commission and set fire to its national flag and burnt Yunus' effigy and said it "strongly condemns the deplorable act."

"Although the situation seems to be under control at the moment, there is a prevailing sense of insecurity among all the members of the Deputy High Commission," the statement said. The statement also called upon the government of India to take necessary measures to prevent occurrences of such incidents in the future. It also urged the government of India to ensure safety and security of the Deputy High Commission in Kolkata and other diplomatic missions in India as well as its diplomatic and non-diplomatic staff. Hindu minority groups in Bangladesh have been frequently reporting atrocities against their community members in different parts of the country. The attacks intensified during and after the violent protest that led to ouster of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August, and have continued even after Yunus took charge. India Friday said the interim government in Bangladesh must live up to its responsibility of protecting all minorities as it expressed serious concern over the "surge" of extremist rhetoric and increasing incidents of violence against Hindus as well as attacks on temples.



The Spider-Man balloon floats in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York

Russian drone attacks damage buildings in Ukraine

Kyiv, Nov 29: Russian drone attacks on Ukraine injured at least eight people and damaged residential buildings in the capital Kyiv and in the southern Odesa region overnight, officials said Friday. Ukraine's air force said in a statement that, of 132 drones launched against the country overnight, it had downed 88 drones, while 41 were "lost", likely due to electronic warfare, and one returned to the Russian territory. Russia has stepped up its nightly drone attacks on Ukrainian cities as it continues to push along the eastern front-line, making some of its largest monthly territorial gains since 2022. It launched a record-high number of 188 drones against the country Tuesday before staging a large-scale attack on Ukraine's power grid Thursday.

Possibly a direct ancestor of Homo sapiens, Homo erectus was the first human species to spread beyond Africa

Project and co-author of the study published Thursday in the journal Science. The researchers reanalysed trackways that were previously discovered nearby, determining that both species were present together on fossilised muddy surfaces over a period spanning roughly 200,000 years. "It is possible that they competed directly, but also possible that they were not in direct competition and both had access to the resources that they needed on this shared landscape," said paleoanthropologist and study lead author Kevin Hatala of Chatham University in Pittsburgh.

