

Candid confession
 Actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu says she has been a bad actor for half her life

LEISURE | P2

Jaishankar on terrorism
 External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar highlights how terrorism is holding back regional cooperation initiatives

INTERNATIONAL | P10

Trade deficit narrows
 Merchandise exports rise marginally by 0.5% in September while trade deficit narrows to a five-month low at \$20.78 billion

BUSINESS | P11

Unique feat
 Ashlata Devi will become the 1st woman footballer to play 100 international games when India face Pakistan Thursday

SPORTS | P12

SHORT TAKES

Centre hikes DA by 3% for employees, pensioners

New Delhi: The Union government Wednesday increased the dearness allowance (DA) by 3 percentage points effective from July 1 this year, benefitting more than 1 crore employees and pensioners ahead of the Diwali festival, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said after the Cabinet meeting. The minister also offered Diwali greetings to all Central government employees and pensioners. The DA/DR hike will be effective from July 1, 2024, the minister said.

Over 100 killed in Nigeria tanker blast

ABUJA, NIGERIA: More than 100 people were killed and 50 others injured in northwestern Nigeria as they tried to scoop up fuel from an overturned petrol tanker, causing the vehicle to explode in flames, the emergency services said Wednesday.

No NSG security for 9 VIPs, including Rajnath

NEW DELHI: The Union government has ordered complete withdrawal of counter-terrorist commando force National Security Guard (NSG) from VIP security duties and handing over its nine 'high-risk' VIPs to the CRPF by the next month, official sources said Wednesday.



SAND, SAND EVERYWHERE: Tourists wearing shoe protectors climb up a dune with the overlook view of Crescent Spring at Mingsha Mountain, during an organised media tour to Dunhuang in Gansu province of China

Omar J&K CM; Saini to take oath today

AGENCIES
New Delhi, Oct 16: National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah assumed the office of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Chief Minister at the Civil Secretariat at Srinagar Wednesday, while Haryana's Nayab Singh Saini staked claim to form the government, hours after he was unanimously elected as the leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) legislature party in the state. Abdullah was given a grand reception by officers and employees, and also accorded a ceremonial guard of honour. "I'm back," Abdullah posted on X with photographs of him in his office chair. In Haryana, which also went to polls along with J&K, Nayab Singh Saini will take oath as the CM Thursday for the second time. In a departure from tradition, the BJP had declared that Saini would remain CM if the party returned to power in Haryana after the Assembly polls. At a meeting of newly-elected Haryana BJP MLAs in Panchkula, Saini was unanimously picked as the leader of the BJP legislature party.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The EC should announce elections 3-4 days before polling. That way, we'll get less noise and more freebies

BLINDFOLD REMOVED

The statue of Lady Justice, in the judges' library of the Supreme Court, now holds a copy of the Indian Constitution, instead of a sword, and the blindfold has come off to leave her with open eyes. Traditionally, the blindfold suggested equality before the law, meaning that the dispensation of justice should not be influenced by the status, wealth, or power of the parties. The sword historically symbolised authority and the capacity to punish injustice. Regarding the change, it is being said that the country's justice system is not blind and justice is delivered as per laws enshrined in the Constitution. However, the change indicates that justice will now be served on a 'pick-and-choose' basis. At the same time, the Indian Constitution is not a living document as it is manmade. For example, homicide has been a crime since ages and a Constitution is not required to deliver justice in case of such crimes. If the Constitution is sacrosanct, where is the need to amend it time and again? The answer is that amendments are necessary as per the need of the time. As of September 2023, the Constitution of India has been amended 106 times. For instance, Right to Property was a Fundamental Right since the Constitution was adopted in 1950. However, its interpretation and impact have undergone a sea change. Article 19 (1) (f) ensures that any person's right against his property remains protected. But in 1978, changes were made to it in



the 44th Constitutional Amendment wherein the term 'fundamental' was replaced with 'Constitutional or legal'. As a result, no one can deprive a person of his right to property, except for provisions under law. At that time, it was being said that such amendments were made in view of changing socioeconomic scenario. This change indicates that government can acquire private property for public purposes, as per provisions in law. Even now, the term 'government' is mentioned in the slot meant for owner's name in the land patta. The question arises as to who would wish to hand over their property to the government in the present times.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, Oct 16: In an initiative shedding the colonial imprint and traditional attributes, the statue of Lady Justice, in the judges' library of the

Minor detained over bomb threats

AGENCIES
New Delhi, Oct 16: Hours after a Bangalore-bound Akasa Air flight, with more than 180 people on board returned to the New Delhi following a bomb threat, and more than a dozen flights receiving similar hoax calls during the last couple of days, Mumbai Police Wednesday took into custody a minor boy who has been sent to a remand home. According to a report by NDTV, the minor, a school dropout from Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh, and his father were summoned by Mumbai Police Tuesday. While he has been taken into custody and is being taken to a remand home, his father is still being questioned, police sources said. The teenager allegedly had



created a handle on X in the name of the friend with whom he had a dispute and posted bomb threats from it. Meanwhile, Delhi Police has registered an FIR in connection with bomb threats to several domestic and international flights in the last two days and launched a probe into the matter, official sources said Wednesday. A Bangalore-bound Akasa Air flight with more than 180 people on board returned to the national capital Wednesday afternoon following a bomb threat.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (IG) Usha Rangani said, "Airport police has responded to eight incidents involving reported bomb threats this month. After thorough verifications and inspection, all threats were confirmed to be hoaxes." "Legal action has been initiated against those responsible for these false alarms to ensure strict measures against misuse and to maintain the safety and security of passengers and airport operations," she said. She said an FIR under Sections 217 and 351(4) of BNS, as well as section 3(1)(d) of the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982, has been registered in connection with the recent hoax bomb threat concerning Akasa Air flight.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	81501.36 ↓ 318.76
NIFTY	24971.30 ↓ 86.05
DOLLAR	84.04 ↓ ₹0.01
EURO	91.37 ↓ ₹0.17
GOLD	₹76,673 ↑ ₹313
SILVER	₹92,247 ↑ ₹624

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	35.2°C	33.6°C
Min Temp	25.2°C	24.4°C
Humidity	76%	80%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST
PARTLY CLOUDY SKY

Entry curbs at Srimandir

PNN & AGENCIES
Puri, Oct 16: Keeping in view the possible massive congregation of devotees on the occasion of the holy month Kartik, Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Wednesday announced a restriction on entry into the 12th Century shrine from October 18. From that day, the devotees would be allowed entry only through the Singhadwara (Lion's Gate) and the Western Gate. At present, the devotees enter the temple through all four gates of the shrine. Except for the Lion's Gate, the other three gates

can be used by the devotees to leave the temple, according to an order issued by the SJTA. "The restriction won't apply to the temple servitors and their family members. The SJTA has urged all to adhere to these rules so that darshan becomes smooth and organised. Taking to X, SJTA chief administrator Arabinda Padhee said: "The auspicious month of Kartik is knocking on the door. Along with performing several important rituals of Lord Jagannath, it is our duty to ensure that darshan arrangements for devotees and those keeping the fast are well-planned."

State to constitute Law Revision Commission



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan Wednesday said that a Law Revision Commission will be formed within next 45 days to review the old laws which have become obsolete, and suggest ways to bring in reforms. He said that irrelevant and obsolete laws need to be amended and this could only be done by constituting a Law Revision Commission. "We will bring necessary amendment to the Right to Information (RTI) Act. Odisha will be a model state in the country for implementation of the RTI Act," said the Law minister. Attending the workshop on RTI Act, Harichandan said the state government will take decisions regarding the cases registered against RTI activists to intimidate them. "We will bring in amendments to Odisha RTI Act and will change the rules such as withdrawal of mandatory forms and fees, renewal and publication of self-disclosed information, review of all the false cases lodged against RTI activists," the minister asserted.

Canada-India standoff seen as image booster for Modi, Trudeau

- Trudeau and Modi both facing domestic challenges
- Expulsions could boost Modi's image as a hawk, say analysts
- Canadian media paying less attention to Trudeau challenge

REUTERS
New Delhi/Ottawa, Oct 16: At a time when diplomatic ties between Canada and India have hit a new low following expulsion of six Indian diplomats by Canada and a tit-for-tat move by India, foreign affairs experts are

of the view that the current escalation would rather benefit both Modi and Trudeau in their image makeover, even as both the leaders face domestic challenges. Canada kicked out six Indian diplomats Monday, linking them to the murder of a Sikh separatist leader and alleging a broader effort to target Indian dissidents in Canada. India retaliated by telling six Canadian diplomats to leave. Although the tit-for-tat move sent bilateral relations skidding to a new low, Narendra Modi and Justin Trudeau are unlikely to mind too much. Both leaders are in their third terms and face political challenges. Analysts suggested the move



could bolster Modi's image as a hawk on national security. "I think people will see the government of India standing up to intimidation and coercive measures applied by a developed country," said Harsh Vardhan Shringla, India's former foreign secretary. "The public will strongly back Prime

No hard proof of India's involvement: Trudeau

Ottawa: Canadian PM Justin Trudeau Wednesday acknowledged that he had only intelligence and no "hard evidentiary proof" when he alleged the involvement of Indian government agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar last year. Testifying before the public inquiry into foreign interference in federal electoral processes and democratic institutions, Trudeau claimed the Indian diplomats were collecting information on Canadians who are in disagreement with the Narendra Modi government and passing it to the highest levels within the Indian government and criminal organisations. Minister Modi and the government," he said. In a June election, Modi suffered a setback when the BJP unexpectedly lost its majority. In his weakened position, Modi is forced to rely on regional allies to form a coalition government. Canada is home to the highest population of Sikhs outside their

home state of Punjab, or about 2 per cent of Canada's population. Demonstrations in recent years to carve a separate homeland have irked India's government, which regularly accuses Canada of harboring separatists. Harsh Pant, foreign policy head at the New Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation

leisure

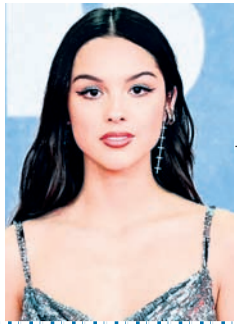


AL PACINO'S REVELATION ABOUT THE GOD FATHER

In his memoir *Sonny Boy*, Al Pacino has opened the closet of near-firing from *The Godfather*. He revealed that the studio did not even believe he was good enough to play the role. Despite earning an Oscar nomination from his role, it was not smooth sailing initially, he says.

OLIVIA FALLS THROUGH HOLE IN STAGE FLOOR

Some days you own the stage, some days it's a miss. It was not one of the best days for actress-singer Olivia Rodrigo on stage as she suffered an injury while performing. Olivia had a terrifying fall through a huge hole in the stage floor in her latest show.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You are in a mood to meditate or be alone. It may have arisen from some disappointment, says Ganesh, but you should honour it. It may even be a dynamic session of meditation involving painting, dancing, humming, or simply watching the world pass by.

TAURUS

This day you could be wasting your time and energy in thankless activities. You are not likely to get the result you seek, says Ganesh. This is mainly because you will be trying to play the good guy and going out of your way to make everyone happy at the same time. That is not likely to happen. You should not waste time and energy and, instead, concentrate on doing things that are useful and beneficial for you.

GEMINI

Emotions and love will be the keywords in your life today. You will be easily swept away in a flow of feelings. You will trust others easily, and this could be harmful to you later. You are likely to be betrayed by someone close to you. You need to be wary of hidden enemies, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Will be fruitful to adopt the middle path today. Or else, you tend to take a hasty decision with your heart and not mind. That will throw up many riddles in the future. A fruitful day for artists and creative people. At the end of the day, you will be happy and jovial.

LEO

You will open your heart to someone special today, and spill all your hidden desires and feelings. You will say everything you feel truthfully. Your love and attention is likely to be reciprocated. It is a good day, for romance is in the air, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

Ganesh says that in all likelihood, today will see a lot of action on all fronts. Regarding business matters, it will be a fruitful day. Later in the evening, you may want to go into seclusion and refuse to meet people.

LIBRA

Ganesh says that you will finally get ready to propose to your beloved today. To attract your future life partner you will try to improve your appearance too. You will try to get emotionally closer to your loved one by sharing your past happy memories with them.

SCORPIO

Ganesh foresees that you make many positive changes in your attitude and behaviour today. And you are happy to realise that your new avatar has definitely proved to be a boon for you. In case of any doubts, ask your family and friends, who are all praises for the new you!

SAGITTARIUS

Pack your travel bags; business trip on the cards. Money make the world go around and so it does for you. Consider financial matters as your priority today. In the evening, sit back, relax and bask in the glory of success, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN

You get up from the bed today with a strong desire to prove your metal to the world, feels Ganesh. Enthusiastic and jovial, you are in your best possible mood. You will seek approval of your family members for actions. The hard work you will do at work will surely get appreciated and rewarded by the end of the day.

AQUARIUS

You have set your eyes firmly on your goal and the support of your friends and family members will help you stay motivated. At work, pressure may be mounting but you are not complaining as you have all the fire and energy it requires to deal with the load of work, feels Ganesh.

PISCES

It is best to avoid speculating in the stock market today, as the risks you take today are unlikely to bear fruit. On the contrary you could end up having to face heavy losses. On the personal front, you will be busy entertaining and being entertained and will have some of the best moments of your life, says Ganesh.



Pankaj to turn radio host

Mumbai: Actor Pankaj Tripathi, who is known for *Mirzapur*, *Gangs of Wasseypur*, *Masaan* and others, is set to turn a new leaf in his chapter of life. The actor is turning into a radio host for an FM channel.

The actor has a certain rhythm to his speech pattern, and his vocal texture makes him a good fit to narrate stories while entertaining the listeners on radio.

He will be seen serving as the radio host for the first time for BIG FM's show *Dhun Badal Ke Toh Dekho* - Season 3.

Sharing his excitement, the actor said, "I am thrilled to don the hat of a radio host for the first time for BIG FM's *Dhun Badal Ke Toh Dekho* - Season 3, a show that presents varied perspectives on important topics."

He further mentioned, "As an actor, I've always believed in the power of screenplay, but as a host for the radio network, I'm excited to explore the power of storytelling in an audio format."

The first season of the show was led by Vidya Balan who discussed an array of topics which may be considered taboo, while Season 2 was hosted by Sadhguru focussing on mental well-being and spirituality.

The show is expected to go on air in the last week of October.

SAMANTHA'S CANDID CONFESSION



Hyderabad: After conquering the south, Samantha Ruth Prabhu is now set to stamp her authority throughout the country. She took her first steps with Raj and DK's *The Family Man 2*, and now she's back with them once again for *Citadel Honey Bunny* with Varun Dhawan.

In the show, before becoming a spy, she plays an aspiring actress who has to go through multiple rounds of auditions to land a role, a clip of which is shared in the trailer.

Now in a recent interview with an entertainment portal, the actress shared if that audition clip reminded her of her first audition that she gave to Gautam Vasudev Menon for her first film *Ye Maaya Chesave* back in 2010. Before she could answer, her director Krishna DK mentioned that the then audition would have been very different, because in *Citadel* she plays a bad actress and in there, she would have been a very good actor.

"But I have been a bad actor for half my life (laughs). I would say that sometimes, I can be bad even now. It all depends actually, I don't think I will give myself all the credit, when you are with the right team and in the right hands, everything just falls in place. So I'm very capable of being as bad as Honey, even today (laughs)," said the actress.

Shraddha in love again!

Mumbai: Shraddha Kapoor is a fan favourite, not just because of her on-screen work but also for the way she interacts with her social media followers. But the one thing that Shraddha has always kept private is her love life. Earlier this year when she made her first public appearance with Rahul Mody fans were convinced that she will soon make her relationship official. But that didn't happen. Instead, rumours of their break up began doing the rounds when Shraddha unfollowed the writer of *Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar*.

However, recently the *Street 2* actress confirmed being in a relationship when she told a leading magazine that she 'loves spending time with her partner'. This left fans speculating and a new *Reddit* thread suggests that the actress may have found love again.

The post read: "I have some confirm reports that she is dating someone who is from Sindhi family and is not related to bollywood but is a businessmen." It went on to add, "He was with her during stree promotion in delhi. He seems to younger than her for sure. And the main part they might be getting married very soon."

On the work front, latest buzz suggests that Shraddha might be roped in for *Dhoom 4*. This would mark the actor's reunion with her *Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar* co-star Ranbir Kapoor who is reportedly taking the *Dhoom* franchise forward.

Alaya on staying relevant

Mumbai: Actress Alaya F recently opened up about the changing dynamics of the digital age, emphasizing how crucial it is for actors to stay relatable and relevant as trends shift.

Sharing her thoughts on the same, Alaya, who made her Hindi film debut with *Jawaani Jaaneman* alongside Saif Ali Khan and Tabu shared, "I'm really excited to find a project that speaks to our generation—Gen Z and even the Alpha generation. We live in such a dynamic time where everything is evolving so quickly, especially with social media, technology, and the way we communicate."

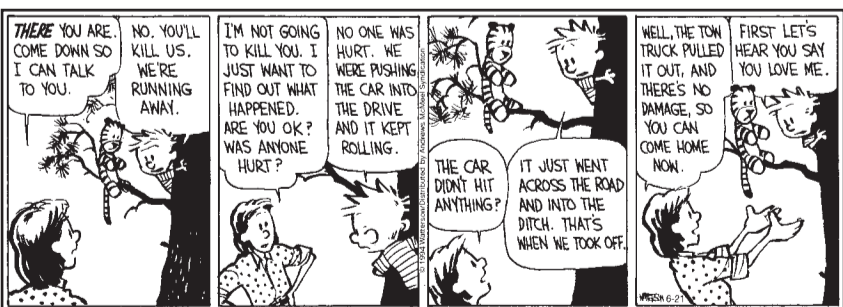
The actress also spoke about being a part of fresh and relative content that are based on personal and life experiences, "I think it's important to be part of stories that reflect how we're navigating all of this. I want to be involved in projects that not only entertain but also show the reality of our experiences and aspirations. Something fresh, relatable, and meaningful that really resonates with the youth," she concluded.

On the work front, Alaya also won the Filmfare Award for Best Female Debut. She has continued to take on diverse roles in various projects.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

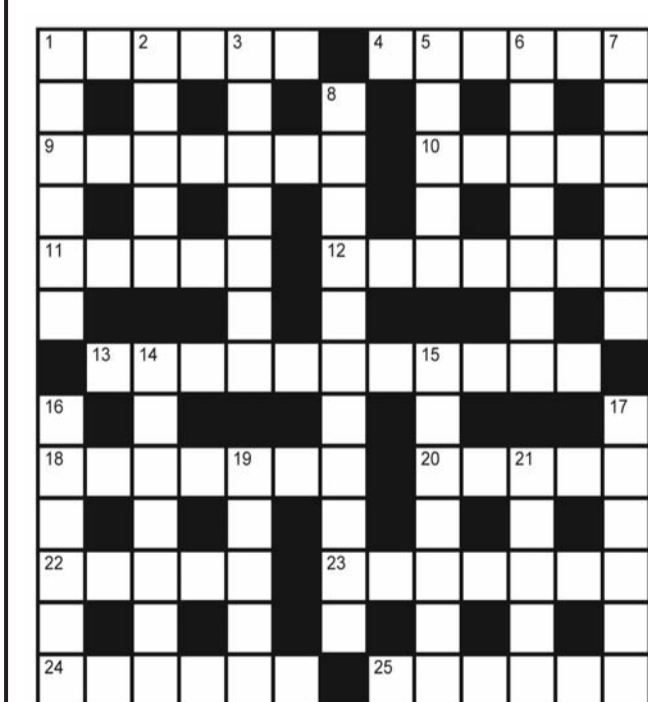


BREVITY



FUN post

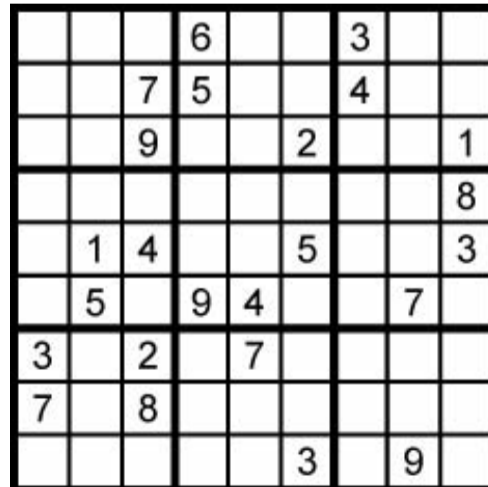
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Shade provider
 - 4 Gofer's job
 - 9 Rich Middle Eastern pastry
 - 10 Kitchen apparel
 - 11 Roundup need
 - 12 Suppress
 - 13 Slapshot necessity (6,5)
 - 18 Fishing boat
 - 20 Persona
 - 22 Waters the lawn?
 - 23 As a group (2,5)
 - 24 Fortified wine
 - 25 Caerphilly, e.g.
 - Down**
 - 1 Silver-white metallic element
 - 2 Warheads
 - 3 European butterfly or fancy bird
 - 5 Attain
 - 6 Type of exercise
 - 7 Be generous
 - 8 Generations of kin (6,5)
 - 14 Iridescent
 - 15 Victory
 - 16 Gawks
 - 17 Erase
 - 19 Modern surgical tool
 - 21 Bridal path

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

Cuttack Collector Dattatraya Bhausaheb Shinde presides over a preparatory meeting for the upcoming Bali Yatra, in Cuttack, Wednesday



downtown



An idol of Goddess Laxmi in Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

PICT: BIKASH NAYAK

Prez on 3-day visit to state from Oct 23

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: President Droupadi Murmu is scheduled to visit Odisha for three days from October 23 during which she will lay the foundation of several key railway and development projects in the state, an official statement said.

The President will land at Bangriposi helipad in Mayurbhanj district at 9.55 am October 23. From there, she will proceed to Bangriposi railway station by road and lay the foundation of three new railway lines - Bangriposi-Gorumahisani, Buramara-Chakulia and Badampahar-Kendujhargarh, it said. Murmu is also scheduled to virtually lay the foundation of three projects - tribal research centre, an airport, and a sub-divisional hospital. Later in the day, the President will fly to Ranganathia and visit Uparbeda Government Upper Primary School in her village.

On October 24, the President will visit Srimandir in Puri and seek the blessings of the sibling deities. She is scheduled to attend the 75th anniversary celebration of Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, the release said. Later that afternoon, she is scheduled to return to Bhubaneswar and attend the 40th convocation of Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology. In the evening around 6 pm, she will attend the grand opening of the newly-constructed judicial court complex in the state.

The President will spend the night at Raj Bhavan October 24 and is slated to unveil a statue of Pandit Raghunath Murmu in Bhubaneswar's Niladri Vihar October 25.

FAKE CALL CENTRE BUSTED

6 CYBER CROOKS HELD

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: The Commissionerate Police Wednesday busted a fake call centre running from a rented accommodation in Sundarpada area under Airfield police limits here and arrested six Kolkata-based youths. The fraudsters were using the illicit 'mail bombing' method and sending a huge number of emails to netizens, especially those based in the US, who have taken subscriptions of anti-virus software.

The police seized six laptops, 11 mobile phones, internet routers, cables, and other incriminating materials from them during the raid, said a senior officer of Cyber police station.

Bhubaneswar Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Pinak Mishra said on the receipt of reliable inputs, a team of six officials from Cyber police station swung into action around 8 am and raided the apartment. "As of now, we have not found any evidence of their links with any anti-national activity. However, assistance has been sought from cyber experts for more investigation into the case," said the DCP, adding that the police would seek an extra remand of the accused after producing them in the court Wednesday.

According to a source at the Cyber police station, the accused were identified as Sameer Mobin, 26, Md Javed Hussain, 26, Md Tosif, 23, Faizan Alam, 24, Sueb Raza, 22, and Md Haider Ali, 34.

"They were staying in Block A-205 of Kanchan Towers at Balabhadrapur on rent. They were not having regular interactions



What is mail bombing?

'Mail bombing' is a form of a denial-of-service attack which can fill a user's mail inbox by sending a number of emails. It targets to overwhelm the recipient's disk space on the server or overload a server to stop it from functioning. It is worth mentioning that the incident has come close to the heels of a 'fake sim box setup' that was busted by City police in August this year. Raids were conducted at multiple places including Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Ranchi.

(involvement in organised crime) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) provisions, alongside Section 66 (C) and 66 (D) of IT Act.

Sharing details about their modus operandi, he said the accused persons used the illicit practice of 'mail bombing', and sent huge volumes of emails to American netizens (who have taken subscriptions of anti-virus software). "Those were phishing mails used by scammers to steal users' data and credentials used under the guise of anti-virus service providers," he added.

"As the users opened these mails, it re-directed them to a page, which asked them to contact a toll-free number. On receiving the calls, the accused would ask the users to connect over Skype calls to resolve the issues. In the meantime, they would hack the system, and take control of their passwords and other important bank credentials to swindle money," he added.

with neighbours and maintained a low-cover during their stay," he said, adding that the landlord will soon be interrogated to find out whether any 'document verification' was undertaken before renting out the property.

The accused have been booked under Sections 318 (4) (grab a property through fraudulent means), 319 (2) (cheating through impersonation), 336 (2) (forgery), 61 (2) (criminal conspiracy), 112 (2) (B)

NHRC issues notice to Delhi govt over Odisha woman rape

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Wednesday issued notices to the Chief Secretary, Government of NCT of Delhi, and the Commissioner of Police, Delhi, calling for a de-

tailed report within two weeks on the rape of a 34-year-old woman from Odisha October 10.

Hearing a plea filed by human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy, the NHRC has also asked for a report on the victim's health status, the progress of police investigation, and the

steps taken to provide relief and rehabilitation to the victim, who is currently under medical treatment.

It sought information on measures being taken or proposed to prevent such incidents, which violate the dignity of women, from recurring in the future.

CM to meet biz barons in Mumbai

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi is scheduled to meet industrialists like Kumar Mangalam Birla and Sajjan Jindal during his two-day visit to Mumbai, seeking investments for Odisha.

Industries Minister Sampad Chandra Swain said the programme will be held in Mumbai Friday and Saturday.

The CM will attend the Centre's 'India Chem 2024' on the first day, where stakeholders of the chemical industry will participate.

"There are opportunities for developing chemical industries in Paradip, Gopalpur and Dhamra," Swain said.

"On Saturday, there will be a roadshow in which leaders of various sectors, such as textiles, garments, apparel, and renewable energy will participate. Heads of banks have also been invited to support the improvement of the banking sector in the state," he said.



"This will be the second roadshow for the Utkarsh Odisha - Make in Odisha Conclave 2025, scheduled to be held January 28 and 29 in Bhubaneswar next year. Earlier, a similar programme was organised in New Delhi.

"During the Mumbai event, Majhi is also scheduled to attend the CEO's Forum - a significant platform for engagement with top leaders from the chemical industry. His presence will highlight Odisha's strategic focus on expanding its industrial footprint in key sectors like chemicals and petrochemicals," the state govern-

ment said in a statement.

The event has been planned to generate awareness and foster engagement among Mumbai's business leaders about the vast investment opportunities available in Odisha and to attract new companies from diverse sectors to explore the state's potential for growth, it said.

"Throughout the day, Majhi will hold high-level meetings with leading business figures, focusing on strengthening partnerships and showcasing Odisha's investment opportunities in key sectors," the statement said.

"Business leaders such as Kumar Mangalam Birla, Sajjan Jindal, Manish P Kiri, Vivek Bhatia, Amit Kalyani and Balkrishan Goenka will participate, solidifying Odisha's growing influence on the national industrial stage," it added.

Majhi went to Chandigarh to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the new BJP government Thursday. From there, he will travel to Mumbai for the programme, officials said.

Wishes pour in for Naveen on birthday

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: Governor Raghubar Das, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, DMK leader Kanimozhi and veteran actor Kamal Haasan were among the dignitaries who wished Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president and former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on his birthday, Wednesday.

The party organised blood donation camps and other programmes on the occasion. Patnaik was the CM of Odisha for five consecutive terms from 2000 to 2024 and is at present the Leader of Opposition in Assembly.

"Hon'ble Governor of Odisha @dasraghubar wished former chief minister and Leader of Opposition

@Naveen_Odisha on his birthday. He also prayed before Lord Jagannath seeking a good and healthy life for Patnaik," a post from the Governor's X handle read.

"Wishing former Chief



Minister of Odisha and Leader of Opposition @Naveen_Odisha on his birthday and wishing him good health and a healthy life," Majhi said in a post on X.

Senior BJP leader and Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, in a post on X, said, "Happy birthday to former Chief Minister of Odisha and Leader of Opposition @Naveen_Odisha. Praying Mahaprabhu and wishing him a long and healthy life."

DMK leader and MP Kanimozhi, in a social media post, said, "Birthday greetings to Thiru @Naveen_Odisha, senior statesman, acclaimed writer, and a former chief minister who uplifted millions out

of poverty and illiteracy in Odisha. During his tenure as chief minister, Odisha was transformed into the Hockey capital of India... He is admired for his relentless efforts and inspirational leadership. I wish him good health and many more years of dedicated service to our country."

Veteran actor Kamal Haasan said, "My best wishes to Thiru Naveen Patnaik Ji on his birthday. You have dedicated your life for the people of Odisha and have transformed the state. I wish you continued good health and may you continue to serve with your distinctive leadership and integrity @Naveen_Odisha." BJD media coordinator

Saurabh Srivastava, in an X post, also called him an 'extraordinary statesman and a beacon of visionary leadership'. Among others, senior BJD leaders, Debi Prasad Mishra, Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak, Shreemayee Mishra and Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das visited Patnaik's residence and wished him on his birthday.

The regional party organised blood donation camps across the state. A special camp was organised at 'Sankha Bhawan', the headquarters of the party in Bhubaneswar.

In 35 such camps, 3,000 units of blood were collected, according to the BJD. Born in Cuttack in 1946, Patnaik studied at Welham School and Doon School in Dehradun and graduated in Arts from Delhi University. Later he lived abroad and remained away from politics in India till the age of 50.

He entered politics after the demise of his father Biju Patnaik in 1997 and formed regional outfit BJD, which ruled the state from 2000 to 2024.

"We are working steadfastly towards ensuring an inclusive, accessible and equitable future for our Divyang sisters and brothers."

- Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

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REPORT CARD ON INFORMATION COMMISSIONS

OIC FUNCTIONING WITHOUT CHIEF

The report says that the estimated waiting period for an appeal/complaint to be disposed by Odisha Information Commission is 3 years and 11 months



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: The Odisha Information Commission (OIC) is one of the five commissions in the country which were functioning without a chief information commissioner (CIC), said a report on performance of Information Commissions (ICs) released here by Satark Nagrik Sangathan at the state-level workshop organised by Odisha Sookhana Adhikar Abhiyan (OSAA) Wednesday.

The workshop was held on the topic on RTI Act—Reshaping Indian Democracy.

The chief of Odisha Information Commission (OIC) demitted office October 4 and since then the post has been lying vacant, the report said.

The report card revealed a troubling rise in the backlog of appeals and complaints, with over 4 lakh cases piling up across the 29 information commissions nationwide as of June 30, 2024.

The situation underscores the increasing delays in citizens' access to information, with many commissions facing waits of over a year to resolve cases.

As per report, OIC is functioning with two commissioners despite having a large pendency of more than 20,000 appeals and complaints. The assessment shows that the estimated waiting time for an appeal/complaint to be disposed by the OIC is three years and 11 months.

The Central Information Commission (CIC) is made up of a chief information commis-

sioner (CIC) and up to 10 information commissioners (ICs) as per the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

The RTI Act was enacted in 2005 to provide a practical regime for people to exercise their fundamental right to information by accessing information from public authorities.

Unfortunately, nineteen years after the RTI Act was implemented, experience in India suggests that the functioning of information commissions is a major bottleneck in the effective implementation of the RTI law.

Large backlog of appeals and complaints in many commissions across the country have resulted in inordinate delays in disposal of cases, which render the law ineffective.

"One of the primary reasons for the backlogs is the failure of Central and state governments to take timely action to appoint information commissions to the CIC and state information commissions, respectively," OSAA convener Pradeep Jena said.

Attending the workshop, Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan said, "We will bring amendments in Odisha Right to Information Act and will change the rules such as withdrawal of mandatory forms and fees, renewal and publication of self-disclosed information and review of all false cases against RTI activists."

Strict action will be taken against those who bring false cases against RTI activists, he warned.



ENCHANTING MOVE: Artistes perform during Kalakunja Festival organised by Sriradha Kalakunja Trust at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

Statues of personalities to be installed across state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: Statues of eminent personalities will be installed at various locations across the state, Odia Language, Literature and Culture (OLL&C) Minister Suryabanshi Suraj said Wednesday.

A meeting chaired by the OLL&C Minister was held to discuss the proposals received from various public representatives, distinguished individuals and district administrations.

"Accordingly, a list was prepared for the construction and installation of the statues in different parts of the state and it will be formally taken up by the department," the minister said.

According to the plan, statue of Bhanja Samrat Bhikari Bal will be installed in Kendrapara, Dharam Singh Mandhata Majhi



in Bolangir, Kuntala Kumari Sabat and Kabi Sekhar Chintamani Mohanty in Bhubaneswar, Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja in Berhampur and Gokulananda Mohanty in Bhadrak.

"While Ratna Nayak's statue will be installed in Keonjhar, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Veer Surendra Sai's statues will be installed in Sambalpur, Cuttack will have statues of Netaji Subhas

Chandra Bose, Madhusudan Das and Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Similarly, statue of Gangadhar Meher will be installed in Bargarh, Fakir Mohan Senapati and BaghaJatin in Balasore, Buddhist scholar Diganaga in Puri's Delang, Tama Dora in Malkangiri and Baji Rout in Bhuban," an official of OLL&C department said.

Moreover, statues of Swami Lakshmanananda Saraswati and

first Odia Shankaracharya Sridhara Swami will also be installed.

"These great personalities have played a pivotal role in shaping our independence and identity. Through their writings, they have enriched the Odia language and literature, while also upholding the values of Odisha's culture and heritage. Their contributions, whether in the fight for independence or the preservation of language and culture, are invaluable and a source of perpetual respect. These personalities are an enduring inspiration for the youth," Suraj said.

"The state government has thus prioritised the construction and installation of these statues in various places across the state, ensuring their legacy remains alive for future generations," added the Minister.

Netaji's niece Roma Ray dies

KOLKATA: Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's niece Roma Ray died Wednesday at her south Kolkata residence due to old age ailments, her family said. She was 95. She is survived by a son, two daughters and five grandchildren, her son Ashis Ray said in a statement.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Mahendra Kumar B. Parekh, S/o Babulal Parekh, Plot No.112/A, Flat No.202, Aditya Mansion, 2nd Floor, Surya Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Dist.- Khordha, PIN-751008 declare by this Affidavit No.14AA619142 dtd.15.10.2024 that now onwards I shall be known as Mahendar Kumar Babulal Parekh for all future Govt. & Pvt. use purposes.

LOST

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Notary Public, Bargarh, I, Gopal Sharma son of Late Chaturbhuj Sharma resident of Saraswati Enclave, A-6, Ward No.- 16, Bargarh, P.S./Dist.- Bargarh do hereby affirm and state that I am a consumer of TPWODL beating Consumer No.- 512001111157. That at the time of connecting 3PH line to my unit, I was deposited security amount vide bearing No.- 45680 and service charges bearing No.- 3050, in Memo No- B1-1978046 Dt.25.02.2017. That said deposit Money Receipt has been lost.

KVK-Khurda, ICAR-CIFA observe World Food Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA), in collaboration with Krishi Vigyan Kendra-Khurda (KVK-Khurda) observed World Food Day Wednesday on the theme 'Right to food for a better life and a better future.'

ICAR-CIFA director PK Sahoo attended the event as the chief guest and emphasised the importance of food in leading a healthy life. He prioritised food security for all as adequate nutrition is vital for individual health and the overall well-being of communities and societies. Besides, he stressed on consumption of fish, a vital source of high-quality protein, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins and minerals.

"Farmers should adopt organic farming practices for enhancing yield and better health. These methods boost soil fertility, biodiversity and ecosystem balance, ultimately leading to more nutritious food and a healthier environment," Sahoo said.

Senior scientist and head of KVK-Khurda Harapriya Nayak welcomed the participants. Speaking on the occasion, she emphasised the importance of ensuring access to safe and nutri-



tious food to meet the dietary needs, promoting an active and healthy lifestyle.

A drone demonstration in aquaculture was also conducted for participants, showcasing innovative technology for monitoring water quality, fish health

and feeding efficiency.

The cutting-edge approach enhances farm management, improves productivity and promotes sustainable practices, highlighting the potential of drones to revolutionise aquaculture and boost overall effi-

FARMER-SCIENTIST INTERFACE ON FRESHWATER AQUACULTURE

BHUBANESWAR: ICAR-CIFA organised farmer-scientist interface programme on freshwater aquaculture at Sarakana village in Khurda Wednesday. Scientists from ICAR-CIFA GS Saha, CK Misra and Husne Banu discussed the importance of aquaculture and utilisation of latest technology from ICAR-CIFA for maximising productivity in ponds. Deliberating on fish breeds and shrimps like Amrit Catla and Jayanti Rohu, Misra encouraged farmers to take up scientific fish farming and to adopt different technologies to increase the production. Saha discussed the benefit of scientific aquaculture alongwith advanced technologies developed by ICAR-CIFA. He made farmers aware about Matsya Setu app and ICAR-CIFA WhatsApp group. He also appreciated the work of WSHGs in aquaculture. Husne Banu talked about soil and water testing for good growth of fish. She touched upon issues like proper oxygenation, application of iodine and salt for prevention of disease. She suggested the farmers to regularly check fish health status.



Patnaik congratulates new J&K CM

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president and Leader of Opposition in Assembly Naveen Patnaik Wednesday congratulated National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah on being sworn in as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir.

Abdullah was sworn in as the Chief Minister of J&K Wednesday, the first elected government in the Union Territory since 2019 when Article 370 was abrogated.



Taking to X, Patnaik said, "Congratulate @OmarAbdullah ji on being sworn in as the Chief Minister of #JammuAndKashmir. I wish under your leadership Jammu and Kashmir develops further with the support of people. Best wishes."

ECOR INSTALLS 96-STONE RAIL GRINDING MACHINES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 16: In order to enhance track safety, improve ride quality, and extend the lifespan of railway tracks, East Coast Railway (ECoR) recently commissioned 96-stone rail grinding machines, RG196-5.

ECoR sources said that RG196-5, a highly advanced and one of the largest rail grinding machines used globally, stretches over a length of 165 meter with eight coaches and features 96 grinding stones. These stones are angled strate-

gically to eliminate rail surface defects, to check irregularities, and restore the rails to their optimal profile.

This process not only extends the life of the rails but also ensures safer and more comfortable train journeys, ECoR officials said.

With the ability to operate at speed up to 22 kmph, the machine is capable of covering large sections of track efficiently, reducing downtime and minimising disruption to train operations. It has already been successfully deployed in the



Waltair and Sambalpur divisions and is currently rolling in the Khurda division.

The ECoR has also commissioned a twenty stone special rail grinding machine January 2023.

The machine is specifically designed to handle intricate track elements such as switches, crossovers, and level crossings, areas that require special attention for safety and operational efficiency.

The addition of these advanced rail grinding machines underscores ECoR's commitment to railway safety and adaptability to innovative technologies. By investing in cutting-edge track maintenance technology, ECoR ensures reliable, smoother and safer journeys for millions of passengers across its network.

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Sans local body, 8 villages left in lurch



GROWING DISCONTENT DUE TO INORDINATE DELAY IN INCLUSION OF 8 VILLAGES INTO PANCHAYAT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Oct 16: In a glaring example of administrative apathy, non-inclusion of eight villages into any local body in Sundargarh district has deprived their residents of constitutional recognition and democratic right of self-governance.

The eight revenue villages -- Tunkela, Hamirpur, Luakera, Tangarpali, Rengadi, Badasuna Parbat, Jharmunda, and Bankia -- come under Rourkela and Raghunathpali Assembly con-

situencies but have not been included in any panchayat or the Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC). Election after election, the villagers cast their valuable votes and elect representatives with the hope of receiving constitutional recognition and benefits. However, they have been left in the lurch for many decades in the absence of local self-government.

The tribal communities residing in these villages have repeatedly demonstrated in front of the offices of Rourkela Sub-Collector, RMC, and also the Rourkela Additional District Magistrate pressing for their demands, but there has been no progress in this regard.

Residents say they have been living in the eight villages since pre-independence times. The tribal population has been the original inhabitants of these villages. However, neither the

administration nor the elected representatives have paid any attention to their demands for inclusion in a local body. Their votes in every election go to waste, they lamented.

Moreover, the state's Panchayati Raj department has not extended any kind of grants or benefits to these villages owing to the non-inclusion. The tribal villagers had met the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) in Delhi September 26, 2018 to bring their issues to its attention. The NCST then ordered a ground survey and asked the Panchayati Raj department and the district administration to submit a report on the matter.

As per the order, a boundary survey of these eight villages was conducted August 20 in 2022. The survey showed that Tangarpali, Rengadi, Badasuna Parbat, and Jharmunda are closer to Suidi panchayat in

Lathikata block, while Bankia, Luakera, Tunkela, and Hamirpur are near Jhirpani panchayat under Bisra block.

However, even after the survey, these villages have not been included in the panchayats. Frustrated with the situation, the tribals are now planning to resort to protests if their demands are not met.

On the other hand, efforts are being made to bring these villages under the RMC, despite the Orissa High Court's interim stay order issued March 27, 2015 regarding the municipal elections.

The tribals have protested such efforts to include the villages in the RMC area without their consent. They argue that they are indigenous people and should be included in the panchayat. They wish to live a free life without the burden of various municipal taxes such as house tax, road tax, and electricity tax, which would be a hardship for them, said local tribal leaders like Lachhu Oram, Mangra Oram, Ramchandra Sahu, Gajendra Tanti, Sonu Madak, Pyari Kerketa, and Jashenta.

Questioned in this regard, Rourkela Ashutosh Kulkarni said all the necessary reports regarding these eight villages have already been submitted to the Odisha Panchayati Raj department. The MLA of Raghunathpali has also made considerable initiative in bringing these issues to the attention of the department. The decision is expected to come after a hearing, he added.

Villagers attack police team in Binika; 22 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur/Binika, Oct 16: Binika police Wednesday arrested 22 persons from Papi (Anandnagar) village in Subarnapur district on charge of attacking and injuring three police personnel while they were trying to rescue three minor boys held captive by the villagers since Tuesday night.

According to reports, three minor boys from Rampur village allegedly attacked a villager and attempted to loot his mobile and bike near Singhjuba-Khairamal road Tuesday night. However, they were caught, brutally thrashed and held hostage by the villagers inside the club house.

When police Wednesday morning tried to take the trio into their custody, they were opposed by the villagers. Binika police then sought the help of Rampur police and deployed a platoon of force in front of the club house. While a discussion was going on between the police and the villagers, police tried to rescue the accused from the club house which irked the villagers.

The angry villagers attacked the accused along with the police team injuring Sub Inspector Sujata Budek, ASI Trinath Sahu and constable Gopinath Sahu of Binika PS. The villagers also ransacked the police van, broke its windshields and punctured its tyres.

Later, more police personnel rushed to the spot and rescued



the minors. They were detained at the Binika PS after a medical examination. Following a complaint lodged by the villagers, police registered a case against the three accused and arrested them. Similarly, Binika police also registered a case (357/24) against the villagers for attacking police personnel as per a written complaint lodged by injured SI Sujata Budek. Police arrested 22 villagers and forwarded them to the court. The number of arrests may increase, informed the police.

On the other hand, hundreds of villagers from Singhjuba, Papi and Anandnagar area gathered in front of Binika police station. Meanwhile, Northern Range IG Himansu Kumar Lal reached the police station and took stock of the situation. Subarnapur SP Ram Prasad Sahu, Sonepur SDPO Pratap Tripathy and IIC Sarangadhar Panigrahi along with a police team rushed to the spot and launched an investigation.

Elderly woman dies, youth critical in train accident

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, Oct 16: In a tragic incident, a 78-year-old woman was killed after she was hit by a train at Angaragadia level crossing in Balasure district Wednesday. A youth who tried to save the elderly woman was critically injured in the mishap.

The deceased has been identified as Padmabati Das, 78, a resident of Sambalpur district, and the critically injured youth is a resident of Armala village in Balore district.

The incident occurred when the Shatabdi Express was coming on the down line track and commuters had been stopped on both sides of the tracks at Angaragadia level crossing.



However, Padmabati was trying to cross the railway tracks when the train hit her leading to her death on the spot. In the mean time, a youth from Armala area attempted to save the elderly woman and was hit by the train. The injured youth was immediately rescued and rushed to the district headquarters hospital at Balasure for treatment. However as his condition deteriorated he was later shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. After the accident, the train was halted for a while at the level crossing.

Informed, GRP personnel rushed to the spot, seized the body and sent it for post-mortem. Police, after registering a case (92/24) of unnatural death, initiated an investigation into the incident. The body was handed over to her family members after post-mortem. As per their statement, the deceased was mentally challenged.

Youth dies in wild honeybee attack

Tikiri: A youth died in wild honeybee attack while he was collecting firewood at a jungle near the Bandhamandi Colony village under Kashiipur police limits in Rayagada district, Wednesday. The deceased, identified as Surendra Jhodia, had gone inside the jungle adjoining his village Tuesday morning to collect firewood. A swarm of wild honeybees suddenly attacked and stung him profusely. Jhodia ran back home to save his life. Family members rescued and rushed him to Sikarpai Primary Health Centre. Doctors there shifted him to the Rayagada district headquarters hospital (DHH) after his condition deteriorated. He, however, succumbed while undergoing treatment at the DHH, Wednesday morning. Police registered a case and handed over the body to his family members after conducting a post-mortem. Villagers have demanded financial assistance for the poor family members of the deceased.



SEASONAL SAVOUR: People buy custard apples from women vendors, in between Areda Square and Padmapur on Khariar-Kantabanji state highway in Nuapada district, Wednesday

Steel City girl's innovation set to revolutionise diabetes care

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Oct 16: Komal Panda, 22, a resident of Rourkela and a fourth-year industrial and product design student at the National Institute of Design (NID), Haryana, has been named the national winner of the James Dyson Award-2024 for her innovative design project named 'Novocarry'.

Announced September 11, 2024, the award recognises her design of a portable cooling solution for medications like insulin, which require refrigeration during transport. The device addresses the need for discreet, convenient, and reliable storage for users.

From a young age, Panda has passionately pursued drawing and attended art classes. While she initially had no exposure to industrial design, her journey of exploration ultimately led her to discover the field and the NID. Notably, product and industrial design applies creativity to solve real-world problems by creating practical, appealing, and efficient products for everyday use.

The young designer notes that her father, a diabetic patient, was the first user and test subject for the project. She actively sought his feedback to refine and enhance her product design.

"My father, a diabetic who works at Rourkela Steel Plant, faces a daily challenge during lunch breaks—he rushes home to take his insulin shot before eating because there's no refrigerator at his workplace to store insulin at the required temperature," she said.

Panda said that ice packs to store the insulin vial proved impractical, melting quickly and requiring con-



The James Dyson Award winning device, about the size of a power bank, is designed as a portable cooling solution for medications like insulin, which require refrigeration while being carried

stant replacement. She also said that shared refrigerators often posed the risk of tampering or spoiling of vials due to improper storage.

She discovered that many people shared similar struggles, especially those managing conditions like arthritis, diabetes, and undergoing growth hormone therapy. Motivated by these insights, Panda designed 'Novocarry'.

"My goal is to empower users to carry their medications confidently, knowing those will stay effective regardless of their surroundings," she said.

The device uses bullet-shaped heatsinks to cool two vials of medicine, such as insulin, maintaining a consistent temperature of around 5 degrees Celsius. It's designed to be compact and portable, about the size of a power bank, with space for diabetic supplies. The dual-battery system ensures reliability, and the design eliminates the need for a fan to cool the vials, making it more efficient.

Panda recalls that she came to know about the James Dyson Award -- one of the most prestigious awards in industrial design -- during her second year at NID. By the end of her third year, she decided to apply for the award and ultimately emerged as a winner.

Reflecting on her achievement, Panda expressed her joy and said, "I was thrilled that my product caught the attention of my inspiration, James Dyson. This recognition has validated the viability and necessity of my design. Having struggled with self-confidence, this award has provided me with a significant boost."

While being open to whatever the future holds for her, Panda intends to continue improving Novocarry and explore other projects. When asked if she plans to focus on healthcare design, she shared, "I've had unpleasant experiences in healthcare in general and especially after recently losing my mother. Healthcare often focuses on the disease rather than the quality of life of the patient. Through design, I believe I can bring a new perspective and improve the patients' experience."

EAST COAST RAILWAY

ENGAGEMENT OF COMMISSION AGENT FOR CHATRAPUR COURT (CAPC), SRI JHADESWAR (SJDR) & SARPEWAR (SPSR) PASSENGER HALT

No. G.51/P.H/CAPC, SJDR & SPSR/Notification Dated : 07.10.2024

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM INTERESTED CANDIDATES FOR ENGAGEMENT AS COMMISSION AGENT TO SELL TICKETS AT (1) CHATRAPUR COURT (CAPC) PASSENGER HALT IN BETWEEN GANJAM (GAM) AND CHATRAPUR (CAP) STATIONS, (2) SRI JHADESWAR (SJDR) PASSENGER HALT IN BETWEEN BYREE (BYR) AND KAPILAS ROAD (KIS) AND (3) SARPEWAR (SPSR) PASSENGER HALT IN BETWEEN NARAJ MARTHAPUR (NQR) AND GHANTIKHAL NIDHIPUR (GNH) STATIONS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION. COMMISSION PAYABLE TO THE HALT AGENT WILL BE AS UNDER:

Amount of Sale of tickets per month & Commission payable :
 * ₹ 1/- to 15,000/- : 15%, * ₹ 15,001/- to 50,000/- : 12%, * ₹ 50,001/- to 1,00,000/- : 9%, * ₹ 1,00,001/- to 2,00,000/- : 6%, * ₹ 2,00,001/- and above : 3%.
 Security deposit for above halts is ₹ 2,000/- (Rupees Two thousand only).
 N.B. : All photostat copies enclosed with the application must be self-attested without which the application will be summarily rejected.

How to Apply : Candidates may apply in prescribed format for the above Passenger Halt to the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, P.O. : Jatni, Dist: Khurda, Pin-752050 and applications should be dropped in the Box kept for this purpose in the office of the Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, P.O. : Jatni on any working day. Application sent through postal service or by any other means shall not be entertained. Application duty filled in should reach this office by 1500 hrs. on or before 05.11.2024 (Tuesday). If the last day i.e. 05.11.2024 happens to be or is declared to be a holiday, applications will be received by the same time on the next working day. All the received applications will be opened on 1530 hrs on 05.11.2024.

For complete details, application format and other terms & conditions please visit our website www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in

PR-625/P/24-25 Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/Khurda Road

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, UPPER KOLAB IRRIGATION DIVISION, BORIGUMMA, DIST : KORAPUT

No.A-428

e-Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No. SEUKID-03/2024-25 Dated : 14.10.2024

Bid Documents consisting of work, Estimated Cost, Cost of bid document, Time of completion, Class of Contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. Website i.e www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

1 Name of the work	: Civil Works
2 No. of Works	: 15 Nos.
3 Estimated Cost	: Rs. 4.71 Lakhs to Rs. 21.78 Lakhs
4 Period of completion	: Two calendar months
5 Date & Time of Bidding	: From 11.00 hours of 18.10.2024 up to 17.00 hours of 28.10.2024
6 Last date & time for receipt of bids in portal	: 28.10.2024 up to 17.00 hours
7 Bids received online shall be opened on	: 11.00 hours of 29.10.2024
8 Name and address of the officer inviting Bid	: Superintendent Engineer, Upper Kolab Irrigation Division, Borigumma (K)

Further details can be seen from the www.tendersodisha.gov.in

Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Upper Kolab Irrigation Division, Borigumma (K)

OIPR-32482/11/0005/2425

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REQUIREMENT OF PREMISES

Detailed notification inviting offers for premises for our STPI Branch is available in our website www.bankofindia.co.in. Prescribed format for submission of offer may be obtained up to 1.00 P.M. of 23.10.2024 from our office at above address. Alternatively, the format can be downloaded from our website. Last date for submission of offer is up to 3.30 P.M. on 23.10.2024 at Zonal Office, Bhubaneswar.

Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone

पावरग्रिड POWERGRID

- Petition for determination of tariff under Section 62 read with Section 79 (1) (d) of Electricity Act, 2003 and under the Regulation 15 (1) (a) and Regulation 23 of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (Conduct of Business) Regulations, 2023 read with Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (Terms and Condition of Tariff Regulations) 2024 for assets under "East Coast Energy Pvt. Ltd. and NCC Power Projects Ltd. LTOA Generation Projects in Srikakulam Area Part-B" in Eastern, Western and Southern Region India.
- The beneficiaries of the above mentioned Transmission system are: (i) Bihar State Power (Holding) Company Ltd, (ii) West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd., (iii) Grid Corporation Of Orissa Ltd., (iv) Damodar Valley Corporation, (v) Power Department, Govt Of Sikkim, Gangtok, (vi) Jharkhand Bijli Vitran Nigam Ltd., (ix) Electricity Department- GOA, (x) DNHDD Power Distribution Corporation Limited, (xi) Chhattisgarh State Power Distribution Company Limited, (xii) Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd, (xiii) Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Ltd, (xiv) Kerala State Electricity Board Ltd, (xv) Electricity Department, Govt of Pondicherry, (xvi) Eastern Power Distribution Company of Andhra Pradesh Limited, (xvii) Southern Power Distribution Company of Andhra Pradesh Ltd, (xviii) Andhra Pradesh Central Power Distribution Company Limited, (xix) Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited, (xx) Northern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited, (xxi) Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Ltd, (xxii) Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Ltd, (xxiii) Hubli Electricity Supply Company Ltd (xxiv) Mangalore Electricity Supply Company Ltd and (xxv) Chamundeswari Electricity Supply Corporation Ltd.
- Tariff details:

Asset Detail		E_COD	Completion Cost as on 31.03.2024	Tariff	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Asset-1	13.11 2018	301286.96	Revised AFC based on trailing up	49244.33	48151.74	47044.56	46263.19	45588.12	

Asset Detail		E_COD	Completion Cost as on 31.03.2024	Tariff	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Asset-1	301286.96	AFC	44560.07	43287.65	42059.89	40862.67	39691.60		

4. A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of the applicant at www.powergridindia.com.

5. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the application be filed by any person, including the beneficiary before the Secretary, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, 3 & 4th floor, Chandralok Building, Janpath, New Delhi - 110 001 (or other address where the office of the Commission is situated), with a copy to the applicant at the address of its corporate office within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place: GURGAON Sd/ Date: 16.10.2024 General Manager (Commercial)

POWER GRID CORPORATION OF INDIA LTD
 (A Government of India Enterprise)
 Registered Office: B-9, Qutab Institutional Area, Katwaria Sarai, New Delhi-110 016
 Corporate Office: "Saudamini", Plot No.2, Sector-29, Gurugram, Haryana - 122 001
 A MAHARATNA PSU



In order to see, you have to stop being in the middle of the picture.

SRI AUROBINDO



Destructive Legacy

In the year since Hamas' 7 October, 2023, terrorist attack, Israeli forces have killed an estimated 41,200 Palestinians, including 16,700 children, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. But a recent letter in The Lancet puts the true death toll in Gaza much higher; at more than 186,000, when counting those killed as an indirect result of the conflict.

Severe food shortages are certainly a contributing factor: Israel's blockade and devastating bombing campaign have prevented the entry and delivery of humanitarian aid. As a result, the United Nations World Food Program found that 96 per cent of Gaza's population is facing acute food insecurity, with more than two million people at crisis levels of hunger or worse. This is forced starvation, a well-known tactic of genocide - and one with which Americans are all too familiar.

Many Americans first learn about such cruelty in elementary school. Textbooks explain how, in the early nineteenth century, the US military began systematically displacing indigenous people to steal their land. That effort involved tactics intended to cause starvation - from slaughtering millions of buffalo to forcing these communities onto tiny plots of land - to weaken their resolve. Even so-called safe zones were attacked, such as when the US military massacred about 300 Lakota people at Wounded Knee in 1890.

Israeli forces are taking a similar approach in Gaza. They bombed - using US-made weapons - a humanitarian safe zone, killing at least 40 people living in tents. The military has also targeted health-care and aid workers, killing more than 1,000 of them, including seven World Central Kitchen team members who were attacked while delivering food.

To understand the consequences of these policies of expansion and domination, one need look no further than the United States. Genocide is a historic trauma - perhaps best understood as a "soul wound" - among indigenous people that still reverberates. The establishment of the reservation system, the scant provision of food, and other acts of ethnic cleansing in the nineteenth century eroded indigenous sovereignty.

That legacy can be seen in today's sub-par housing, inadequate health care, and underfunded education programmes for America's impoverished indigenous communities. Likewise, the Native American boarding school system, spurred by federal assimilation policies, harmed tens of thousands of children, leaving them more vulnerable to depression, suicide, and addiction, which can be passed down from generation to generation.

Moreover, rates of food insecurity among indigenous communities in the US have hovered around 25 per cent for many years, but reached as high as 77 per cent for the Navajo (who call themselves the Diné), and more than 90 per cent for the nations of the Klamath River Basin in southern Oregon. By contrast, 13.5 per cent of US households were food insecure in 2023, according to a report by the US Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, and that rate is even lower among white Americans, at 10 per cent.

While researching food insecurity among women and children in the US over the past quarter-century, I have interviewed many Black women and women of color about their struggles to feed their families. Time and again, they provided insight into not only the previous year, but also their childhood experiences of violence and deprivation. Often, their parents and their grandparents faced poverty; some even reported five generations' worth of hardship. These trajectories are shaped by America's history of slavery and genocide, which triggered cycles of racism and discrimination that continue today. The original harms are woven into American family life through lower wages for people of color and racially discriminatory health-care, welfare, and foster-care policies.

The US government can and should make some immediate fixes, such as reinstating the temporary expansion of the Child Tax Credit and offering universal school meals (both of which provided vital support for American families during the COVID-19 pandemic), as well as improving access to health care. But while these steps can lower overall levels of food insecurity, they cannot address the inequities that lead women and children of color to experience higher rates of hunger.

The mothers I interviewed want policymakers to address the root cause of hunger in the US: the exposure to racialized and gendered violence in the family and community, which can be traced back to America's legacy of slavery and genocide. The US government has not atoned for its past sins, and until it returns land and pays reparations, these original traumas will remain unhealed, and unequal food security will persist.

To witness the starvation and suffering in Gaza today is to be reminded of the enduring consequences of America's divisive history. The unbearable trauma should force US policymakers to ask how to end this cruelty and begin making amends. As in Gaza, an immediate "cease-fire" would be a good start. But then the more difficult and more urgent task is for the US government to divert the money being spent on bombs to social programs that will provide food, education, and health care for all.

The writer, Professor of Health Management and Policy at the Dornsife School of Public Health at Drexel University, is Founder of the Center for Hunger-Free Communities.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

Gratitude is the healthiest of all human emotions. The more you express gratitude for what you have, the more likely you will have even more to express gratitude for.

ZIG ZIGLAR

When a person really desires something, all the universe conspires to help that person to realize his dream.

PAULO COELHO

If you aren't in the moment, you are either looking forward to uncertainty, or back to pain and regret.

JIM CARREY

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1448: The last major effort by Crusaders to free the Balkans from Ottoman rule began with the second Battle of Kosovo in Serbia, in which a Hungarian-Walachian army suffered a crushing defeat.

1854: British and French troops began the Siege of Sevastopol during the Crimean War.

1956: Bobby Fischer wins the Game of the Century. The chess match between 13-year old Fischer and Donald Byrne took place at the Marshall Chess Club in New York City.

1973: OPEC declares oil embargo. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries or OPEC led by Arab countries declared an oil embargo on any country that supported Israel during the Yom Kippur War, which was fought between Israel and a coalition of Arab states. The embargo led to a massive oil shortage and had long-lasting economic effects in the United States and Europe. The embargo was lifted in March 1974.

FOCUS CRIME

SHOCKWAVES FROM MUMBAI

There was a time when Mumbai saw shootings in broad daylight, when gangsters roamed free and took down opponents at will on the city's streets. Some of that atmosphere appears to have returned with the killing on Dussehra night (October 12) in the tony suburb of Bandra of the controversial former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique, who was known for his close connections with Bollywood stars.

Siddique, 66, was shot dead by people who came in a car, kept their faces covered with handkerchiefs, fired from close range at their target and escaped. Police have called it the handiwork of contract killers. The gangland-style killing signals the power, reach and contempt for law and order of a politician-builder-underworld nexus operating with impunity in Urbs Primus in Indus, as Mumbai is known.

Siddique was noted for his glamorous iftaar parties attended by Bollywood stars, and for his closeness particularly to film stars like Salman Khan and Sanjay Dutt, among others. He was more than just a former MLA, a former minister or a representative of the Bandra West suburb, the area that is home to some of the biggest of film stars. A picture dating back to 2013 shows Siddique, then of the Congress, standing in between Salman Khan and Shahrukh Khan, beaming with one arm around each of the celebrities.

A long-standing member of the Congress and a close associate of the former and respected star Sunil Dutt, Siddique left the party earlier this year in the wake of ED investigations against him and joined the Nationalist Congress Party of Ajit Pawar faction - that is currently in power in Maharashtra along with BJP. The ED case never progressed after that. So, the man shot dead was a ruling party worker, with the killing coming in the midst of all the groundwork



Vidyadhar Date

THE STORY HAS EMERGED WITH SUCH SPEED AFTER THE KILLING THAT MANY QUESTIONS REMAIN, NOT THE LEAST SIGNIFICANT OF WHICH IS THAT BISHNOI IS IN CUSTODY IN GUJARAT



Mariana Chilton

To witness the starvation and suffering in Gaza today is to be reminded of the enduring consequences of America's divisive history



The gangland-style killing signals the power, reach and contempt for law and order of a politician-builder-underworld nexus operating with impunity in Urbs Primus in Indus, as Mumbai is known

that is now being done by political parties for the upcoming Maharashtra elections. What is worse, Siddique received a death threat a fortnight ago, and was provided state security described as 'Y' category. The hit men did their job despite all that.

The official story is that the killing is the handiwork of a gang led by Lawrence Bishnoi. The reason: Siddique's reported closeness to Salman Khan, who allegedly hunted a blackbuck way back in 1998, which the Bishnoi community regard as holy. Shots were fired at Salman Khan's home in April. One of the accused arrested in that shooting case, Anuj Thapan, later was said to have killed himself in police custody, adding a new twist to that case. Now, all of Salman Khan's friends and associates are supposedly the targets of the Bishnoi gang. But the story has emerged with such speed after the killing that many questions remain, not the least significant of which is that Bishnoi is in custody in Gujarat. Further, the police made two quick arrests in the Siddique case the same night and have by now arrested one more accused. The third person arrested is the brother of the person who claimed the killing as a part of the Bishnoi gang. Could the case be as simple as that?

Siddique was also known for land and real estate connections, highlighting the role of builders in an emerging side of Mumbai that has changed the landscape, and in many ways contributed to making the city an ugly concrete eyesore with high rises - some in faux gleam, even faux gold and many left incomplete as prices fluctuate and the market for housing waxes and wanes. Most people who have invested in real estate have seen their investments not yield the eye-popping returns that housing projects were said to offer at one time. Yet, the attraction of land and its potential to yield returns is as alluring as ever in a city that remains the riches city of India. Besides, changing market conditions have also put pressure on builders and projects, many of which may have commitments to meet but could have turned less than viable in the evolving market for housing in Mumbai.

In some cases, politicians themselves are closely associated with land deals and builders, as Siddique allegedly was, or politicians are builders themselves, like the BJP's guardian minister for suburban Mumbai, Mangal Prabhat Lodha. Lodha and his real estate business group is probably single-handedly noted for its clout and for reshaping Mumbai, driving up

prices, making it fit for the rich, and distinctly against the average or poor resident.

Siddique was elected MLA from Bandra West, once known as the queen of suburbs, its charm is now dwindling with the onslaught of builders, given that this is seen as a prime area. Formerly simple people represented the constituency, an example of which is Sadanand Varde, a former education minister in the 1970s. Varde was a socialist and an economics lecturer in Bandra's National College. Another representative, Salim Zakaria, a school teacher in the suburb, also became the state education minister. Another man from a humble background from Bandra was Ramdas Nayak, a leader of Mumbai BJP from the days before the Modi-Shah leadership. He was shot dead in August 1994 by members of the Dawood Ibrahim gang at the age of 52, with a volley of bullets from an AK 47 killing him and his bodyguard. Hill road in Bandra, the main artery in the suburb, is now named in his memory. Nayak was the president of the Mumbai unit of the BJP and was a campaigner against corruption, having played a major role in exposing the cement scandal allegations against the former (Congress) Chief Minister AR Antulay Nayak also stood up to some builders.

The picture now is very different. Quick fix solutions are on offer: Cases are deemed solved with ease. This will never allow the people or indeed the authorities to bring out the full magnitude of what really is going wrong, or who is pulling the strings and what really is the motivation behind the Wild West gangland killing that has returned to Mumbai.

The writer is a senior journalist noted for his writings on urban transport, open spaces and rights of common citizens.

THE BILLION PRESS

SPECTRUM FOOD SECURITY

India's serious hunger crisis

India's 105th position out of 127 countries in the 2024 Global Hunger Index (GHI) emphasises the severity of its hunger crisis. Classified under the "serious" category, India joins nations like Pakistan and Afghanistan in confronting persistent food insecurity and malnutrition. The GHI, published annually by Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, tracks global hunger levels by analysing four critical indicators: under-nourishment, child stunting, child wasting, and child mortality. With a GHI score of 27.3, India's performance signals deep-seated nutritional issues that require urgent redress.

The GHI score for each country is calculated on a scale from 0 (no hunger) to 100 (severe hunger). India's score places it firmly in the "serious" category, reflecting substantial challenges across critical indicators. Notably, 13.7% of India's population is underweight, 35.5% of children under five are stunted, 18.7% suffer from wasting, and 2.9% die before their fifth birthday. These alarming figures are a grim reflection of widespread under-nutrition, exacerbated by inadequate healthcare, poor sanitation, and regional disparities in economic development. India's hunger crisis is particularly concerning compared to its South Asian neighbours.

Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, which fall under the "moderate" category, have significantly addressed food insecurity and child malnutrition. Nepal and Bangladesh have implemented targeted nutrition programmes and agricultural reforms, while Sri Lanka's robust public healthcare system has helped maintain better health outcomes despite its economic challenges. Despite being an economic powerhouse, India's lagging performance suggests that its policy interventions must be scaled up and fine-tuned.

Child malnutrition remains one of the most pressing issues in India's fight against hunger. The stunting rate, which affects over one-third of children under five, reveals chronic malnutrition and poor health conditions. Wasting, indicative of acute under-nutrition, affects nearly 19% of children. The high child mortality rate, at 2.9%, signifies the deadly combination of under-nutrition, infectious diseases, and poor access to healthcare.

These statistics reflect the immediate health impacts and foreshadow long-term socio-economic consequences, including cognitive impairment, lower productivity, and perpetuation of poverty. India has introduced various schemes to combat malnutrition, such as the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, and the National Food Security Act (NFSA). These programmes have provided crucial support, especially to low-income households. However, the persistence of high hunger levels reveals significant gaps in implementation and outreach. Corruption, inefficiency, and bureaucratic delays have undermined the effectiveness of these programmes, particularly in reaching rural, tribal, and marginalised populations.

Regional disparities also play a role, with states like UP, Bihar, and MP showing exceptionally high malnutrition rates. These areas, where hunger and poverty are intertwined, need more targeted interventions and better coordination among local authorities.

Resolving India's hunger crisis requires a multifaceted approach beyond short-term interventions. First, improving the efficiency and reach of existing food distribution programmes is critical. This involves strengthening monitoring mechanisms to ensure resources are delivered to the intended beneficiaries. Second, public health and nutrition services must be expanded, particularly in regions with high

rates of malnutrition. Innovations in agriculture, including sustainable farming practices and improved access to markets and resources for farmers are essential for enhancing food availability. Resolving the significant issue of food wastage can also help alleviate hunger in food-insecure households. A decentralised approach tailored to local conditions will more effectively address regional disparities.

The 2024 GHI report underscores that India will likely meet the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger by 2030 with substantial changes. Economic instability, conflict, climate change, and population growth exacerbate global hunger. For India to make meaningful progress, it must prioritise poverty reduction, employment generation, and access to essential services like education and healthcare. At the global level, India must continue collaborating with international organisations like the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organisation to coordinate efforts and build capacity to combat hunger.

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



SN Tripathy

WITH A GHI SCORE OF 27.3, INDIA'S PERFORMANCE SIGNALS DEEP-SEATED NUTRITIONAL ISSUES THAT REQUIRE URGENT REDRESS

Institutional evolution

Sir, This year's Nobel Prize in Economics was awarded to three scholars who have dedicated their careers to answering a simple yet profound question: What makes countries rich? Interestingly, these laureates come from diverse academic backgrounds. Daron Acemoglu is a well-respected economist, while Simon Johnson is a professor of entrepreneurship with a history as chief economist at the International Monetary Fund. James A. Robinson is rooted in political science and public policy. The breadth of their expertise reflects the complexity of the question they tackled - the reasons behind the success and failure of nations. Professors Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, often referred to as AJR, began their research by questioning why some countries that were wealthy during the medieval period are poor today, while others have reversed this trend and become prosperous. Their research aimed to uncover whether a particular mechanism could explain this "great reversal." The answer they arrived at was simple yet profound: institutions. While the term "institutions" is widely used today, often vaguely, AJR defined it more specifically as the enforceable constraints on the exercise of power. AJR's research highlighted the importance of institutional evolution to balance power between different groups, limit the overuse of authority, and ensure the protection of growth-enhancing mechanisms like property rights. They argued that institutions that allowed for the safeguarding of these rights created the environment necessary for investment, entrepreneurship, and long-term economic growth. This groundbreaking perspective provided a lens through which the economic trajectories of

Amarjeet Kumar; HAZARIBAGH

AI to the fore

Sir, The world is going gaga over deep tech start ups. Venture capitalists have been writing big cheques for the deep tech industry since the explosion of demand for Open AI's hugely popular ChatGPT. The artificial intelligence (AI) industry has given wings to the sector which aims to go big on research and development. In India, trackon data shows that funding boomed for deep tech start ups in 2022 but has moderated since as the investors are focusing on exit strategies and writing smaller checks.

CK Ramani, TIRCHY

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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



ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Stubble burning: SC raps Punjab, Haryana govts

Stubble burning is a major contributor to the rising pollution levels in the national capital



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: The Supreme Court Wednesday pulled up the Punjab and Haryana governments over the non-prosecution of violators found guilty of stubble burning while summoning the state chief secretaries to appear before it on October 23 for an explanation.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka, Ahsanuddin Amanullah and Augustine George Masih pointed out "complete insensitivity" on the part of both states, directing the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to take penal action against both the government of Punjab and Haryana governments not taking any steps to implement the directions issued by the CAQM in the national capital region (NCR) in June 2021 to stop stubble burning.

"This is not a political matter. If the chief secretary is acting at somebody's behest, we will issue summons against them as well. Next Wednesday (October 23) we are going to physically call for the chief secretary and explain everything. Nothing has been done, same is with the Punjab government. The attitude is of complete defiance," the bench remarked.

Slamming the Punjab government, the top court said not

even a single prosecution has been carried out in past three years and it was only tolerating breaches.

"Why are you shy of prosecuting people. This is not a political matter. This is a matter of implementation of statutory directions of the commission. No political considerations will apply. There is defiance on your part. You are encouraging people to commit breaches. You are only imposing nominal fines. ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) is telling you the location of the stubble burning and you say fire location is not found," the bench said.

Punjab Advocate General Gurminder Singh submitted it was difficult to implement the directions on the ground and the authorities made "red entries" in the revenue records of the farmers who caused fires at farms.

The apex court also took exception to a purported incorrect statement of the Punjab government of having submitted a proposal to the Central government for the grant of funds to provide a tractor along with driver and fuel to small farmers.

It said no endeavour has been made by the Punjab government to seek funds from the Centre for ensuring tractors to farmers.

On the CAQM, the Supreme Court called it a toothless tiger that only passed directions without any implementation. The

bench noted the Union government was at fault for not choosing renowned experts in the field of pollution as members of CAQM.

"We have great respect for the members and their academic qualifications but they are not qualified or experts in the field of air pollution," the bench said.

The judges subsequently suggested that the CAQM should engage with some expert agency to address the issue of air pollution.

Slamming the Commission for Air Quality Management for failing to control instances of stubble burning in NCR and adjoining areas, the SC had said it had taken no efforts to implement its direction to prevent such incidents.

The apex court had earlier rapped CAQM over its failure to curb air pollution in Delhi due to crop residue burning in the neighbouring states and said it needs to be proactive in its approach. The CAQM needs to exercise its power under the Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021, it added.

On August 27, it termed the pollution control boards of Delhi and NCR states "ineffective" due to staff shortage and asked the body responsible for air quality management in the national capital and adjoining areas to explain how it proposed to tackle pollution and stubble burning which spiked with the onset of winter.

The Supreme Court also sought a response from the Punjab government on a plea seeking directions for the mandatory attachment of a specialised machine to the harvester to curtail paddy straw burning.

The petitioner said that Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, had recently invented the "surface seeding-cum-mulching" machine, which is attached with the combined harvester while harvesting paddy.

Kuki-Zo tribals firm on Pondicherry-type UT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Imphal, Oct 16: The Kuki-Zo tribal community in Manipur remained firm for a separate administration like the Union Territory with a Legislative Assembly exclusively for the tribals similar to the Union Territory of Pondicherry.

Tribal leaders said Wednesday that two Ministers and two MLAs belonging to the Kuki-Zo tribal community during a meeting with the officials of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) told the Centre that a separate administration like that of Union Territory with a legislative assembly for the Kuki-Zo community is a prerequisite for any peace dialogue.

"We want a Pondicherry model of Union Territory in Manipur for the Kuki-Zo tribal community. We have been demanding for a separate administration for the tribals since the ethnic crisis began in May last year," a Kuki MLA, who attended Tuesday's Delhi meeting, told IANS.

A senior official of the Manipur government while talking on condition of anonymity told IANS that the MHA officials in the meeting were "aversed on the separate administration demand of the

CENTRE 'AVERSE' TO DEMAND



17 months after the ethnic violence erupted in Manipur, the MHA held the first meeting with all three major communities -- Meitei, Kuki, and Naga -- in a bid to find a way to a peaceful solution to the protracted unrest

Kuki-Zo Ministers and MLAs".

Union and the state governments have on a number of occasions earlier also rejected the demand for separate administrations or a Union Territory.

17 months after the ethnic violence erupted in Manipur, the MHA held the first meeting with all three major communities -- Meitei, Kuki, and Naga -- in a bid to find a way to a peaceful solution to the protracted unrest.

The non-tribal Meiteis account for around 53 per cent of

Manipur's around 3.2 million population and live mostly in the valley regions comprising 67 districts while the tribal Nagas and Kukis constitute another 40 per cent of the population and reside in the hill districts, which cover around 90 per cent of the geographical areas of Manipur.

The Valley region has a total of 40 non-tribal Meitei MLAs, while the hills have 19 MLAs divided between the Naga and the Kuki-Zo tribes and one seat reserved for the Scheduled

Caste community.

Jiribam district, a largely plain area adjoining southern Assam beyond the hills, is inhabited by both tribals and non-tribals. After the crucial Tuesday meeting, an official statement said that a group of elected members of the Manipur Assembly, representing Kuki-Zo-Hmar, Meitei and Naga communities, met in New Delhi Tuesday to discuss the current scenario in the state.

"The meeting unanimously resolved to appeal to the people of the state belonging to all communities to shun the path of violence so that no more precious lives of innocent citizens are lost," the statement said.

The ethnic violence between the non-tribals Meiteis and tribal Kuki-Zo broke out in the north-eastern state May 3 last year after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

So far, over 230 people have been killed in the strife. As many as 11,133 houses have been set on fire, out of which 4,569 homes have been completely destroyed. A total of 11,892 cases have been registered in different police stations in connection with the ethnic violence.

Punjab panchayat polls see 77% turnout

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, Oct 16: Seventy-seven per cent voter turnout has been recorded in Punjab as per the data received from Deputy Commissioner-cum-District Election Officers for the gram panchayat elections. State Election Commissioner Raj Kamal Chaudhuri said Wednesday.

He said Mansa district remained at the top with a poll percentage of 83.27 per cent, while Tarn Taran district saw the lowest at 64.40 per cent.

A total of 68.12 per cent polling has been recorded in Amritsar district, 79.43 per cent in Bathinda district, 75.21 per cent in Barnala district, 78.47 per cent in Fatehgarh Sahib district, 70.21 per cent in Faridkot district, 75.14 per cent in Ferozepur district, 82.31 per cent in Fazilka district, 69 per cent in Gurdaspur



district, 69.78 per cent in Hoshiarpur district and 66.30 per cent in Jalandhar district.

Chaudhuri said 66.14 per cent polling has been recorded in Kapurthala district, 67.1 per cent in Ludhiana district, 77.22 per cent in Malerkotla district, 69.91 per cent in Moga district, 76.93

per cent in Mohali district, 78.27 per cent in Sri Muktsar Sahib district, 69.52 per cent in SBS Nagar district, 73.57 per cent in Patiala district, 79.20 per cent in Pathankot district, 77 per cent in Ropar district and 79.45 per cent in Sangrur district.

Two incidents of firing were reported with four being injured in Tarn Taran and two injured in another incident in Patiala during voting Tuesday.

Also, two government employees died owing to poor health as polling for over 13,000 gram panchayats was underway.

The polling for approximately 1.05 lakh candidates contesting for the posts of panch and sarpanch was held from 8 am to 4 pm with voting happening through ballot boxes, officials said. Punjab has 1.33 crore registered voters, including 70.51 lakh men and 63.46 lakh women voters.

Assam to celebrate 'Bhaxa Gaurav Saptah'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: The Assam government will celebrate 'Bhaxa Gaurav Saptah' (language pride week) to express gratitude to everyone who has contributed in enriching Assamese, which has been recently accorded the status of classical language.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who held a video conference from here Wednesday with senior functionaries of the state government, called for celebration of the week from November 3 to 9 in a grand manner by involving civil society organisations, government and private educational institutions, NGOs, clubs, bihu and puja committees, literary organisations among others, according to an official release.

The week will be an opportunity to celebrate Assamese, the lingua franca of Assam, as well as the other languages of the state, the release said.

In state's Barak Valley, Baksa, Chirang, Karbi Anglong districts, Bengali, Bodo, Karbi and other languages will be celebrated too.

In his address, Sarma spelt out that the celebrations should be on all languages of Assam and not confined to Assamese alone, although recognition of Assamese as a classical language by the Modi-led government at the Centre is also a part of the celebration.

The chief minister asked district commissioners to take the initiative to rope in the civil societies for successful celebration of the 'Bhaxa Gaurav Saptah' by holding seminars, workshops, discussions, quiz, essay and other competitions.

TIES HIT ROCK BOTTOM

Punjabis fear Canada dispute endangers work, study plans

Indians have made up Canada's largest group of international students in recent years, mainly from Punjab



REUTERS

Chandigarh, Oct 16: Indians in Punjab, worried that plans to work, study or visit families in Canada will be jeopardised by this week's tit-for-tat expulsions of diplomats over the murder of a Sikh separatist, are urging both governments to reduce the tension.

Canada's nearly 800,000 Sikhs formed the world's second largest community in 2021, after roughly 20 million in India. They have links to the northern granary state of Punjab, where their religion was founded more than 500 years ago.

"Many clients have reached out, worried about how this might affect their plans to migrate to Canada," said an immigration lawyer, Karan S Thukral, who is based in the Indian capital, though adding he had seen no big drop yet in legal inquiries. "Indian students

are among those feeling the impact most acutely."

Indians have made up Canada's largest group of international students in recent years, mainly from Punjab, holding more than 41% of student permits in 2022. International students bring in about \$22 billion (\$16 billion) for its universities each year.

"We want to go to Canada to study and settle there, but now that's not possible because students who want to go there are facing difficulties," said Anita, a student in Punjab's capital of Chandigarh, who gave only her first name.

Canadian study permits for Indians fell sharply late last year and the diplomatic tension was likely to weigh on future numbers, Immigration Minister Marc Miller told Reuters in January.

Ties soured last September when Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said there were "credible allegations" linking Indian government agents to the killing of the Sikh separatist leader, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, on Canadian soil.

India's high commissioner, or ambassador, was among the six diplomats Canada expelled Monday, linking them to the murder, while accusing the Indian government of having undertaken a broad campaign targeting the South Asian community in Canada.

'NE on radar of nation's development'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, Oct 16: Asserting that skilling youth is the need of the time, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar Wednesday said Northeast is on the radar of the nation's development.

Addressing a function in Shillong, he said the Northeast is a significant contributor to the economic progress and cultural essence of the country.

Dhankhar was speaking after laying the foundation stone for the Meghalaya Skill and Innovation Hub in New Shillong. He also launched the 'CM Business Catalyst: Student B-

Plan Challenge', which is supported by IIM-Shillong, and presided over the signing of an MoU between UNDP and the Meghalaya government for promoting entrepreneurship.

The Meghalaya Skill and Innovation Hub will be built on a 6.54-acre plot at Rs 77.5 Cr. It will be developed as a facility for incubation, training, collaboration and industry partnerships.

Dhankhar said the empowerment of youth will boost the economy of the country.

"Skilling youth is the need of the time," he said. "Skill is neither discovered nor innovated, it is in fact the optimal ex-



ploitation of talent of a person in that specified field which gives the human resource a qualitative

cutting-edge," he added, underscoring that skilling is no longer a quality, it is a need.

'GHOST OF THE MOUNTAINS'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, Oct 16: Arunachal Pradesh is home to 36 snow leopards, according to a survey.

The survey by the Department of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (DoEFCC), in collaboration with the WWF-India was released by Arunachal Pradesh Forest Minister Wangki Lowang Tuesday.

The report provides the first-ever scientifically robust estimates of the snow leopard population and density in Arunachal Pradesh. The report provides a baseline of the state of snow leopards in Arunachal Pradesh to establish a long-term monitoring plan for the species.

The snow leopard (Panthera uncia) is the apex predator of the trans-Himalayas. It also has a high significance in the local folklore, culture and traditions of the Himalayan communities that share space with this species.

In 2008, the government of India launched a flagship project called the snow leopard to conserve and safeguard the

Arunachal home to 36 snow leopards



unique natural heritage of high-altitude wildlife populations and their habitats by promoting conservation through participatory policies and actions. This is a significant recognition that the unique cultures, traditions and livelihoods of the mountain communities are closely linked with these landscapes, and they have a stewardship role to play in conserving them.

Cat species hold a special significance across most tribes of Arunachal Pradesh as totemic symbols of spiritual significance, and often most of these tribes have the highest sanctions (in-kind) if they violate the taboo on hunting carnivores. The high-altitude areas of Arunachal Pradesh have largely remained unexplored from a wildlife research and conserva-

tion perspective.

Solitary, almost silent and majestically beautiful, the snow leopard is one of the most enigmatic big cats. It is also one of the most elusive and endangered. Highly adapted to life on the cold, rocky slopes of high Asia, the snow leopard is a master of stealth and camouflage.

Very rarely seen by humans, it has come to be known as the 'ghost of the mountains'. It has also become an icon for these breathtaking and critically important landscapes, which house a diverse array of unique high-

altitude species and provide critical ecosystem services for hundreds of millions of people.

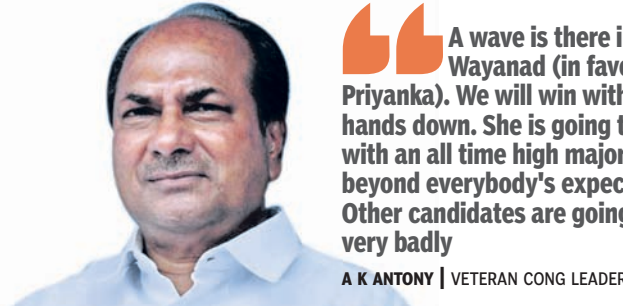
In India, the snow leopard is found in the Union territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir, the states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh in the Western Himalayas and Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim in the Eastern Himalayas.

Even though Arunachal Pradesh has more than 15,000 square kilometre of potential snow leopard habitat, no rigorous assessment of the status of the snow leopards exists so far.

446 BUTTERFLY SPECIES IN KAZIRANGA

GUWAHATI: More than 446 butterfly species have been recorded in Assam's Kaziranga National Park (KNP), famed for the one-horned rhinoceros, making it a habitat with the second highest concentration in the country after the Namdapha National Park in Arunachal Pradesh, a park official said. The long-term observation and records are a culmination of years of work put in by a scientist from Kaziranga, Dr Monsoon Jyoti Gogoi. The survey was conducted in different parts of the Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong landscape, especially in the Panbari Reserve Forest, which is home to a diverse range of butterfly species. A new pictorial guidebook on butterflies, authored by Gogoi, documents 446 species of butterflies recorded in Kaziranga, 18 of which are new in the country.

national



A wave is there in Wayanad (in favour of Priyanka). We will win with all hands down. She is going to win with an all time high majority, beyond everybody's expectation. Other candidates are going to lose very badly
A K ANTONY | VETERAN CONG LEADER

BOOSTING TIES
A delegation from Uzbekistan met officials from India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation and discussed areas of collaboration, including the development of a pharmacovigilance system and reducing adverse effects of pharmaceutical products, officials said Wednesday



of the day quote


I appeal to citizens to take necessary precautions in the wake of the rains. There might be some traffic issues today
D K SHIVAKUMAR | TAKA BY CM



Why did the government not take the decision of the Ladki Bahin scheme and toll waiver earlier? We will not scrap the scheme of Ladki Bahin and toll waiver
AADITYA THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER



Many congratulations to Shri @OmarAbdullah Ji on taking oath as the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. On behalf of the people of Assam, we extend our best wishes for a successful tenure of the newly elected government
HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM



Cabinet approves MSP hike for Rabi crops in 2025-26



AGENCIES

New rail-road bridge
NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Union Cabinet Wednesday approved the Varanasi-Pt Deen Dayal Upadhya (DDU) multi-tracking project with an estimated cost of ₹2,642 crore. The proposed project includes a new rail-cum-road bridge across the Ganga river and the addition of third and fourth railway lines between Varanasi and DDU Junction route, among other infrastructural upgrades. "The proposed multi-tracking project will ease operations and reduce congestion, providing the much-required infrastructural development on the busiest sections across Indian Railways. The project traverses through Varanasi and Chandauli districts in Uttar Pradesh," a government statement said.

New Delhi, Oct 16: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Wednesday approved the increase in the minimum support prices (MSP) for all mandated Rabi crops for marketing season 2025-26.

The absolute highest increase in MSP has been announced for rapeseed and mustard at ₹300 per quintal, followed by lentil (masur) at ₹275 per quintal.

For gram, wheat, safflower, and barley, there is an increase of ₹210 per quintal, ₹150 per quintal, ₹140 per quintal and ₹130 per quintal, respectively, according to the CCEA.

The increase in MSP is in line with the Union Budget 2018-19 announcement of fixing the MSP at a level of at least 1.5 times of the All-India weighted average Cost of Production.

According to the government, the expected margin over the All-India weighted average cost of production is 105 per cent for wheat, followed by 98 per cent for rapeseed and mustard; 89 per cent for lentil; 60 per cent for gram; 60 per cent for barley; and 50 per cent for safflower.

"The increased MSP of Rabi crops will ensure remunerative prices to the farmers and incentivise crop diversification," said the government.

Last month, the Cabinet approved nutrient-based subsidy

(NBS) rates for the Rabi crops on phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilisers with a budgetary outlay of ₹24,475.53 crore. The decision would ensure the availability of fertilisers to farmers at subsidised, affordable, and reasonable prices.

The subsidy on P&K fertilisers will be provided based on approved rates for Rabi 2024 to ensure the smooth availability of these fertilisers to the farmers at affordable prices.

Meanwhile, the country clocked record foodgrain production at 3,322.98 LMT (lakh metric tonnes) in the agriculture year 2023-24 -- higher by 26.11 LMT than the production of foodgrains at 3,296.87 LMT achieved during agriculture year 2022-23. The foodgrain production saw a record increase due to good results with rice, wheat, and millet crops.



Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav during the oath-taking ceremony of Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister-elect Omar Abdullah, in Srinagar

SHORT TAKES

Ex-CBI director P C Sharma cremated

New Delhi: Former CBI director P C Sharma, who died at a hospital here Tuesday, was cremated in the presence of several serving and retired police officers Wednesday, his family said. The 82-year-old former IPS officer, who played a key role in the extradition of underworld don Abu Salem from Portugal in early 2000s, died at a private hospital where he was admitted three days back. His daughter Bihu Sharma lit the pyre as those present including former Delhi Police commissioner Neeraj Kumar and former IPS officer U S Dutt prayed for the departed soul.

Railway cancels several trains

Bangalore: The South Western Railway Wednesday cancelled several trains due to waterlogging over tracks on the up fast line over Bridge number 114 between Basin Bridge Jn.(Chennai) and Veysarpadi stations. Train no. 12657 Dr MGR Chennai Central - KSR Bangalore, 12607 Dr MGR Chennai Central - KSR Bangalore, 12608 KSR Bangalore - Dr MGR Chennai Central, 12609 Dr MGR Chennai Central - Mysore, 12610 Mysuru - Dr MGR Chennai Central and 12027 Dr MGR Chennai Central - KSR Bangalore have been cancelled.

BJP MLA's son booked

Bemetara: Police have registered a case against the son of a ruling BJP MLA in Chhattisgarh for allegedly assaulting a tribal man during the Dussehra celebrations in Bemetara district, an official said Wednesday. The incident took place October 13 in Chechanmeta village located within the Saja police station limits and a case was registered against Krishna Sahu Tuesday, he said. Sahu is the son of MLA Ishwar Sahu, who represents the Saja Assembly segment.

Man ends life

Thane: The Government Railway Police booked some persons for abetting the suicide of a man from Palghar with the investigation revealing that the victim was thrashed recently for allegedly stalking a girl, an official said. One Roshan Patel from Palghar district was run over by a goods train going towards JNPT in Thane district September 24, following which police launched a probe, he said Wednesday. "Days before Patel's death, he was thrashed in his locality by some people who accused him of stalking a girl. Since then, he has been depressed," said GRP senior inspector Kiran Undre.

SNIPPETS

Spurious liquor claims six lives in Bihar

SIWAN/SARAN (BIHAR): At least six people died and 14 others were hospitalised after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in dry Bihar's Siwan and Saran districts, officials said Wednesday. Four deaths were reported in Siwan and two in Saran. Speaking to reporters, Siwan District Magistrate Mukul Kumar Gupta said, "Information was received around 7.30 am Wednesday that three people died under mysterious circumstances in Maghar and Auriya panchayats. A team of officials was immediately sent to the area and 12 more people were sent to the nearest hospital for treatment but of them, one person died on the way." The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination, he said, adding the exact cause of the incident can only be known after receiving the autopsy reports.

Body of woman 'raped, murdered' found in Bengal

KRISHNANAGAR (WB): The body of a young woman allegedly raped and murdered was found in Krishnanagar town in West Bengal's Nadia district Wednesday. Police said that a man, claimed to be the fiance of the deceased, was arrested on the basis of a complaint lodged by the parents of the woman, alleging she was gangraped and murdered. The body, with the face allegedly bearing acid burns and with ruffled clothes, was found lying in a field near a Durga Puja pandal in Ashrampara area of Krishnanagar town. The body has been sent for post-mortem examination, police said. The parents alleged that after the gang rape and murder, the face of their daughter was burnt by acid to destroy evidence.

Seven killed in road accident

HYDERABAD: Seven members of a family, including three girls, were killed and another person was injured after a car they were travelling in fell into a stream in Medak district of Telangana Wednesday, police said. While two people died of injuries sustained in the accident, the others drowned, they said based on preliminary investigation.

ADM's alleged suicide sparks political turmoil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kannur, Oct 16: The alleged suicide of a senior district administration official in Kannur, amid corruption allegations, has sent ripples through the state's political landscape, with Opposition parties mounting pressure on the Left government for accountability.

The Congress and BJP have united in their demands, calling for the immediate resignation and arrest of P P Divya, a CPI(M) leader and district panchayat president, who leveled graft accusations against ADM Naveen Babu at his send-off function organised by colleagues at the Kannur district collectorate.

The Opposition parties allege that Babu took the extreme step after being insulted by Divya at his farewell function.

MUDA chairman Marigowda quits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Oct 16: The Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA) chairman K Marigowda quit Wednesday, amid a row over irregularities in allotment of sites to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi B.M.

He submitted his resignation from the post to the Urban Development Department Secretary. "I have resigned following directions from the CM. Also, as I had health issues, I have resigned...there was no pressure on me, as I had health issues I have resigned," Marigowda, who is considered close to Siddaramaiah, told reporters here. Responding to a question, he said, "Probe is on (in MUDA case allegedly involving CM) and it will continue...it will be known from the



probe whether there were any irregularities." Siddaramaiah is facing the Lokayukta and ED probes into alleged irregularities in the allotment of 14 sites to his wife by the MUDA.

Siddaramaiah's wife, brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy, Devaraju -- from whom Mallikarjuna Swamy purchased land and gifted it to Parvathi -- and others are named as other accused in the case by Lokayukta. Stating that Siddaramaiah is his leader and he has been with

him for 40 years, Marigowda said, "He made me taluk and zilla panchayat president, has never asked to do illegal things, even on the MUDA issue."

Asked whether he was resigning to "save" the CM, he said, "No. I'm resigning on personal grounds. I had a stroke twice. I felt I cannot continue, so I have resigned."

To a question whether there was pressure on him to quit from Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh, Marigowda said, "It is far from the truth." Congress workers and CM's supporters September 27 who had gathered in large numbers in a show of support to Siddaramaiah at the Mysore airport on his arrival there, tried to gherao Marigowda alleging that he was responsible for the CM's "plight."

Siddaramaiah should resign immediately: BJP

NEW DELHI: As the MUDA chairman stepped down from his post Wednesday, the BJP demanded that Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah also resign immediately as he is "deeply embroiled" in the land "scam". "MUDA chairman has tendered his resignation... I call upon Siddaramaiah that if you have the slightest morality left, you should step down immediately. You should not wait for today's sunset," BJP national spokesperson and MP Sambit Patra said at a press conference here. He said Marigowda's resignation and Siddaramaiah's wife "offering" to return the MUDA sites allocated to her make it clear that the chief minister is "deeply involved in the scam from head to toe".

Govt orders withdrawal of NSG commandos from VIP security

The plan to relieve NSG from VIP security tasks has been in the making since 2012 when NSG commanders foresaw an event where simultaneous terror attacks could be witnessed at one time on multiple centres in the country and the commandos would have to be rushed in different directions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: The Union government has ordered the complete withdrawal of the counter-terrorist commando force NSG from VIP security duties and handing over its nine "high-risk" VIPs to the CRPF by the next month, official sources said Wednesday.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has also sanctioned a fresh battalion of specially trained personnel, recently withdrawn from Parliament security duties, to be attached to the CRPF VIP security wing. The 'black cat' commandos of the National Security Guard (NSG) provide 'Z plus' category protection to nine VIPs which include Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, his predecessor and BSP supreme Mayawati, Union defence minister Rajnath Singh, veteran BJP leader and former



Deputy Prime Minister I K Advani, and Union shipping minister Sarbananda Sonowal. The others include BJP leader and former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP)

president Ghulam Nabi Azad, National Conference (NC) president Farooq Abdullah and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu. The transfer of duties between the two forces under the MHA is expected to be completed within a month, they said.



The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), which has six VIP security battalions, has been asked to absorb a seventh battalion for this purpose. The fresh battalion is the one that used to guard the Parliament till a few months back. After a security breach that took place

last year, the Parliament security was handed over to the CISF from the CRPF, a senior officer told PTI. As part of the taking over the new task, a team of Andhra Pradesh Police was in Delhi recently for the change of its Chief Minister's security from the

NSG to the CRPF, the sources said. Two among these nine VIPs will also have the advanced security liaison (ASL) protocol being undertaken by the CRPF-Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and UP Chief Minister Adityanath, as per the sources.

The Union government has decided to "restructure" the NSG and use its manpower to raise and station 'strike teams' of commandos in some high-risk areas like near the Ram temple in Ayodhya and around some critical assets located in the southern part of the country.

Withdrawal of the NSG from VIP security, once done by November, will happen after over two decades since the 'black cat' commandos were drafted in this duty, a task not originally charted for it when the force was conceptualised and raised in 1984. The NSG is celebrating its 40th raising day Wednesday.



Today is a very auspicious day. People of Jammu and Kashmir have got their government after several years. People have elected a stable government. People of Jammu and Kashmir suffered a lot especially after 2019, and we hope that this new government will heal the wounds we got

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

JAYA PRADA ACQUITTED

A special MP-MLA court in Rampur acquitted former MP Jaya Prada Wednesday in a 2019 case of code of conduct violation. Her lawyer Arun Prakash Saxena told reporters that the case was registered against the former MP from Rampur in the Swar police station of the district when she was contesting the Lok Sabha election from the seat



of the day quote

The decision taken by the Union Cabinet today to increase the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of rabi crops wheat, barley, gram, lentil, rapeseed and mustard for the rabi marketing season 2025-26 is highly commendable

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

At a time we brought six policies. We exercised a lot on these six policies (and) we said only one thing in the polls (that creating) 20 lakh jobs is the goal of this government and we will work (towards it)

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | AP CM

Night patrolling by the police has been intensified in the coastal belt. Usually, 20 per cent of the staff of a police station is deployed on the night shift. But in the police stations located in the coastal belt, additional 20 per cent staff, which comes to total 40 per cent, would be on night duty

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

XPOST OF THE DAY

Simplest chronology ever:
- Chandrababu Naidu was accused in 371 crore skill development scam
- He spent 53 days in prison.
- He joined BJP alliance.
- ED gave him clean chit.
- Investigating agencies in this country is a joke.

@Nher_who

SHORT TAKES

NDA CMs to meet today

New Delhi: Chief Ministers and deputy CMs from the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance will attend a conclave in Chandigarh Thursday to deliberate on development issues, the Constitution's 'amrit mahotsav', and the 50th anniversary year of the "attempt to murder" democracy, a reference to Emergency. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh and J P Nadda, who is also the BJP president, will attend the meeting in what is seen as the ruling alliance's renewed attack on Opposition parties, especially the Congress, following the BJP's remarkable win in the Haryana Assembly polls.

16 get rigorous life imprisonment

Hyderabad: A court in Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district Wednesday sentenced 16 people to life imprisonment for killing a 45-year-old man in 2020. The Principal District and Sessions Judge found them guilty under section 302 (murder) and other relevant sections of IPC and sentenced them to undergo rigorous imprisonment for life, a release from Telangana Police said.

Netaji's niece Roma Ray dies

Kolkata: Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's niece Roma Ray died Wednesday at her south Kolkata residence due to old age ailments, her family said. She was 95. She is survived by a son, two daughters and five grandchildren, her son Ashis Ray said in a statement. Ray was the daughter of eminent barrister and freedom fighter Sarat Chandra Bose.

Never called for closure of madrassas: NCPCR

In a recent report, the apex child rights body, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) raised serious concerns about the state of functioning in madrassas and called for stopping the state funding unless they comply with the Right to Education Act

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: NCPCR chairperson Priyank Kanoongo said he never called for the closure of madrassas but recommended state funding to these institutions be stopped as they are depriving poor Muslim children of education. He said that Muslim children from impoverished backgrounds are often pressured into religious schooling over secular education. We advocate for equitable educational opportunities for all children.

In a recent report, the apex child rights body, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) raised serious concerns about the state of functioning in madrassas and called for stopping the state funding unless they comply with the Right to Education Act.

The report received sharp reaction from political leaders, including SP chief Akhilesh Yadav who blamed the ruling BJP for selectively targeting minority institutions. Kerala's Indian Union Muslim League (IUM) said it was the latest display of the communal agenda by the Union government and its agencies.

However, Kanoongo clarified that he never called for the closure of the madrassas. "We



never advocated for the closure of madrassas. Our stance is that while affluent families invest in religious and regular education, even children from impoverished backgrounds should be imparted that," he stated, emphasising the need for equitable educational opportunities for all children regardless of socioeconomic status. Responding to the functioning of the madrassas, Kanoongo criticised certain groups within the country for "fearing" the empowerment of the poor Muslim community.

"There exists a faction in our nation that dreads the empowerment of Muslims. Their fear stems from the anticipation that empowered communities will demand accountability and equal rights," he told PTI in an interview.

This, he suggested, is a primary reason behind the resistance to inclusive educational reforms.

Highlighting the government's responsibility, Kanoongo asserted, "It is the duty of the government to ensure that children receive normal education. The state cannot turn a blind eye to its obligations." He pointed out that impoverished Muslim children are often pressured into religious schooling over secular education, undermining their prospects.

"Why do we constrain our poorest Muslim children to attend madrassas instead of schools? This policy shifts the burden unfairly onto them," Kanoongo remarked.

Reflecting on the historical policies, Kanoongo recalled the post-1950 constitutional mandate for universal education. "After the Constitution was implemented in 1950, Maulana Azad (India's first Education minister) visited madrassas in Uttar Pradesh and declared that Muslim children did not need to pursue higher education in schools and colleges. This led to a significant underrepresentation of Muslim students in higher education, currently hovering around five per cent," he noted. In contrast, he highlighted the participation rates of other marginalised communities, suggesting that systemic biases have hindered Muslim students' academic achievements.

"Look at this situation: around 13 to 14 per cent of students in higher education are from Scheduled Castes (SC), and over 5 per cent are from Scheduled Tribes (ST). Combined, SC and ST students make up 20 per cent of the higher education population, while Other Backward Classes (OBC) account for 37 per cent while Muslims in higher education just remain 5 per cent," he said in a statement.

RG KAR CASE

Bengal govt failed to carry out duties: Guv

EXPRESSING DISGUST OVER THE ONGOING IMPASSE FOLLOWING THE RAPE-MURDER INCIDENT, BOSE SAID THAT THE ARREST OF A POLICE OFFICER AND A SENIOR DOCTOR IN THE CASE AGAIN POINTED TO "INSTITUTIONAL CRIMINALITY", RAMPANT IN VARIOUS SECTORS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 16: Alleging that the West Bengal government headed by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has failed to carry out its basic duties to protect the lives and properties of citizens, Governor C V Ananda Bose Wednesday said that his office is already intervening in the RG Kar impasse under provisions in the Constitution.

Expressing disgust over the ongoing impasse following the rape-murder incident, Bose said that the arrest of a police officer and a senior doctor in the case again pointed to "institutional criminality", rampant in various sectors.

"It is the duty of the state government, particularly of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, to protect the lives and properties of the citizens." "Here (in West Bengal), the government has failed to carry out its basic duties. Who should own up? If the Chief Minister is the chief (head of the administration), the answer lies in itself," Bose told PTI in an exclusive interview on the ongoing stalemate in the state.

On whether his office would intervene in the matter, Bose said, "Raj Bhavan is intervening and cannot be stopped from doing it because the Raj Bhavan



intervenes under the provisions mandated in the Constitution of India."

Incidentally, a group of agitating doctors had met Bose at Raj Bhavan earlier this week and submitted a deputation highlighting their demands for quick investigation into the rape and murder of an on-duty woman doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital besides overhaul of the security infrastructure at the hospitals and removal of Health Secretary N S Nigam.

Bose, in an apparent reference to the Chief Minister's 'Dandiya dance' at Tuesday's Durga Puja Carnival on Red Road, drew parallels to Roman emperor Nero, who "played the fiddle while Rome burned".

"Festivities of Durga Puja should not be embellished with the dance of death. Nero, they say, played the fiddle while Rome was burning. Is history repeating itself in West Bengal? Who is trying to imitate? It is said, 'I am the Roman Emperor; therefore above grammar'. Is there anyone who says, 'I am the ruler; therefore above the law'?" Bose questioned.

On whether the state government was trying to hide something by not addressing the impasse and the demands of the doctors, Bose declined to comment anything citing the ongoing CBI probe into the rape-murder incident. He, however, criticised the role of the state government, stating it could have been more transparent in its approach while dealing with the situation. "I cannot pass judgments on the state government at this stage of investigation," he said.

SC reserves verdict on plea against NCLAT order on Jet Airways

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: The Supreme Court Wednesday reserved its judgement on a plea of State Bank of India (SBI) and other creditors challenging the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) decision that upheld the resolution plan of grounded air carrier Jet Airways and approved the transfer of its ownership to Jalan Kalrock Consortium (JKC).

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra heard submissions of Additional Solicitor General (ASG) N Venkatraman, appearing for the appellant banks and others, and senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing the consortium, before reserving the judgement.

The NCLAT had March 12 upheld the resolution plan of the grounded air carrier and approved the transfer of its ownership to the JKC. The appellate tribunal further directed the Jet Airways monitoring committee to complete the transfer of ownership within 90 days.



Besides, the NCLAT had also directed the lenders of Jet Airways to adjust the ₹150 crore paid by the consortium as performance bank guarantee (PBG). The top court was hearing an appeal of the SBI, Punjab National Bank (PNB) and JC Flowers Asset Reconstruction Private Limited challenging the March 12 verdict of the NCLAT. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, also appearing for the consortium represented by law firm Karanjawala and Company, submitted that the creditors, including the SBI, were unjustifiably seeking to liquidate Jet Airways.

SC pulls up DAA over felling of trees in Delhi's Ridge area

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: The Supreme Court Wednesday directed the Lieutenant Governor (LG) V K Saxena, who also holds the office of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) chairperson, to file his personal affidavit by October 22 on issues concerning alleged felling of trees in the Delhi Ridge area.

A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra was hearing a contempt case against the DDA and others over the alleged felling of trees in the area. After going through the materials on record, the top court noted an ambiguity on certain aspects.

It wanted clarity on whether there was any discussion or intimation to the DDA chairperson on the top court's permission for felling trees during his site

visit February 3. "In the event of the answer to the one above being positive, what steps, if any, were taken to ensure that the permission of this court was taken," it said. The apex court further said if the answer was in the negative, when did DDA chairperson learn of the permission required.

It noted the actual felling of trees had allegedly commenced February 16 even before a plea was moved before the top court and eventually dismissed.

The top court will further be informed about the steps taken for the restoration -- suggested in its orders -- of the ecological damage.

"What steps have been taken against the officers for the willful suppression before this court of the fact that the felling of trees took place before the application was filed," it added.



Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin interacts with sanitation workers during his visit to affected areas following heavy rainfall in Chennai

'Jai Shri Ram' slogan in mosque no offence: HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Oct 16: The Karnataka High Court has dismissed criminal proceedings against two persons from Dakshina Kannada district who were accused of shouting "Jai Shri Ram" slogans inside a mosque.

The case revolved around an incident September 24, 2023, when they allegedly entered a mosque in Aittur village and raised the slogans, following which a person named Hyder Ali CM lodged a complaint.

Justice M Nagaprasanna, presiding over the case, questioned how the shouting of "Jai Shri Ram" could be interpreted as an act that outraged religious sentiments. The judge referred to a Supreme Court



ruling in a case and noted that actions that do not disrupt peace or public order cannot be prosecuted under Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

According to the complaint,

The Karnataka High Court observed that acts that have no effect on bringing about peace or destroying public order will not constitute an offence

and NM Sachin Kumar was charged with criminal trespass and other offences under IPC Sections 447, 295A, 505, and 506.

However, the accused contested the charges, arguing that none of the legal requirements for these offences had been met. The court agreed with the defence's argument, finding no substantial evidence to support the charges. It further stated that entering a mosque, which is a public place, did not constitute criminal trespass under the law. Moreover, the court found that the allegations of intimidation lacked any direct evidence, and the complaint itself did not establish any elements of the charged offences.

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international



China is willing to be a partner and friend with the United States. This will benefit not only the two countries, but the world. China has always handled China-US relations in accordance with the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation

XI JINPING | PRESIDENT, CHINA

MARBURG VIRUS DISEASE

Rwanda has launched the world's first clinical trial for a treatment of Marburg virus disease, the World Health Organization (WHO) announces



of the day quote

I will not hide the fact that we might reach a point that we won't be able anymore to operate (in Gaza Strip). We are very near to a possible breaking point. When will it be? I don't know. But we are very near of that

PHILIPPE LAZZARINI | CHIEF OF UNRWA

This mobilisation of capabilities for ephemeral goals is contrary to the interests of the economic development of these (European) countries, and clearly the capacities of these countries are not designed for such efforts

DMITRY PESKOV | KREMLIN SPOKESMAN, RUSSIA

Disasters are now affecting record numbers of people and threatening their lives and livelihoods. Left unchecked, these disaster risks threaten to derail the development aspirations of the Asia Pacific region and push back progress that has taken decades to achieve

KAMAL KISHORE | UN ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL

'Terrorism holding back regional cooperation'

THE REMARKS COMES AMID INDIA'S STRAINED TIES WITH PAKISTAN OVER CROSS-BORDER TERRORISM AND FROSTY RELATIONS WITH CHINA OVER THE EASTERN LADAKH BORDER ROW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Oct 16: In a thinly veiled reference to both China and Pakistan, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Wednesday highlighted how terrorism was holding back regional cooperation initiatives and that connectivity initiatives must recognise territorial integrity even as he called for introspection if "good neighbourliness" is missing somewhere.

The remarks came amid India's strained ties with Pakistan over cross-border terrorism and frosty relations with China over the eastern Ladakh border row.

The external affairs minister asserted that trade and connectivity initiatives must recognise territorial integrity and sovereignty and it is essential to have an "honest conversation" on lack of trust.

SCO SUMMIT



If activities across borders are characterised by terrorism, extremism and separatism, they are hardly likely to encourage trade, energy flows, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges in parallel

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, INDIA

In remarks that are seen as directed towards Pakistan, Jaishankar also said if activities across borders are "characterized" by terrorism, extremism and separatism, they are hardly likely to encourage trade, energy flows and connectivity in parallel.

Ahead of the deliberations, PM Sharif shook hands with Jaishankar and warmly received him and other leaders of the SCO nations at the Jinnah Convention Centre, the venue of the summit.

"If activities across borders are characterised by terrorism, extremism and separatism, they are hardly likely to encourage trade, energy flows, connectivity and people-to-people exchanges in parallel," the external affairs minister said without naming Pakistan.

Before leaving Islamabad, Jaishankar thanked PM Sharif and Pakistan Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar in a post on 'X' that is being seen as a positive gesture

by senior functionaries in the Pakistan establishment.

"Departing from Islamabad. Thank PM @CMShehbaz, DPM & FM @MishaqDar50 and the Government of Pakistan for the hospitality and courtesies," he said. In his remarks at the conclave, Jaishankar said cooperation must be based on mutual

respect and sovereign equality and that the SCO member nations can benefit immensely if the grouping moves ahead collectively with mutual trust.

He, especially stressed on adhering to the SCO charter, highlighting its underlying essence of strengthening mutual trust, friendship and good neighbourliness.

"It should recognise territorial integrity and sovereignty. It must be built on genuine partnerships, not unilateral agendas. It cannot progress if we cherry-pick global practices, especially of trade and transit," he said, in remarks seen as an indirect reference to China's assertive behaviour.

"But most of all, our endeavours will progress only when our commitment to the Charter remains firm. It is axiomatic that development and growth requires peace and stability. And as the Charter spelt out, this means being firm and uncompromising in countering the 'three evils'."

Jaishankar said there is a need to introspect if "good neighbourliness" is missing somewhere and there is a lack of trust.

Foreign ministers of India, Pak hold casual conversations

Islamabad: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar held casual conversations on two occasions since Tuesday evening and ways to improve India-Pakistan cricketing ties figured in one of them, diplomatic sources said Wednesday. The conversations took place on the sidelines of a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), but there was no indication of any thaw in the frosty bilateral relations, they said.

TENSIONS WITH SOUTH ESCALATES

1.4mn apply to join army: N Korea

REUTERS

Seoul, Oct 16: North Korean state media said Wednesday around 1.4 million young people had applied to join or return to the army this week, blaming Seoul for a provocative drone incursion that had brought the "tense situation to the brink of war".

The fiery rhetoric comes after North Korea last week accused Seoul of sending drones over Pyongyang that scattered a "huge number" of anti-North leaflets. The North then blew up inter-Korean roads and rail lines on its side of the border Tuesday, and warned that the South would "pay a dear price".

The young people, including students and youth league officials who had signed petitions to



join the army, were determined to fight in a "sacred war of destroying the enemy with the arms of the revolution," the official KCNA news agency said.

"If a war breaks out, the ROK will be wiped off the map. As it wants a war, we are willing to put an end to its existence," the KCNA report said, using the initials of the South's official name, the Republic of Korea.

North Korea has previously made similar claims about young people scrambling to enlist at a time of heightened tensions, though such statements from the isolated state are difficult to verify.

Last year, state media reported on 800,000 of its citizens volunteering to join the North's military to fight against the United States. It also said in 2017 that nearly 3.5 million workers, party members and soldiers volunteered to serve.

According to data from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), North Korea has 1.28 million active soldiers and about 600,000 reservists, with 5.7 million Worker/Peasant Red Guard reservists among many unarmed units.

First brown dwarf found 30 yrs ago is twins circling each other

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Oct 16: A celestial object discovered decades ago is actually twins orbiting each other, a new study confirms.

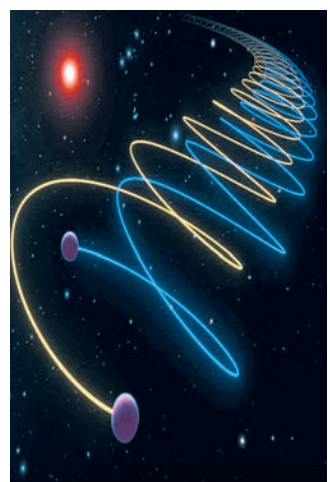
Scientists have puzzled over the object known as Gliese 229B, the first known brown dwarf discovered 30 years ago. Brown dwarfs are sometimes called failed stars because they're lighter than stars, but heavier than gas giant planets.

This object appeared too dim for its mass. Astronomers collected light and chemical clues using the Very Large Telescope in Chile and observed it's a duo circling close to each other.

"It resolves a glaring discrepancy," said Kevin Luhman, an astronomer at Pennsylvania State University who was not involved with the research.

The twins orbit a small star about 18 light-years away. A light-year is 5.8 trillion miles.

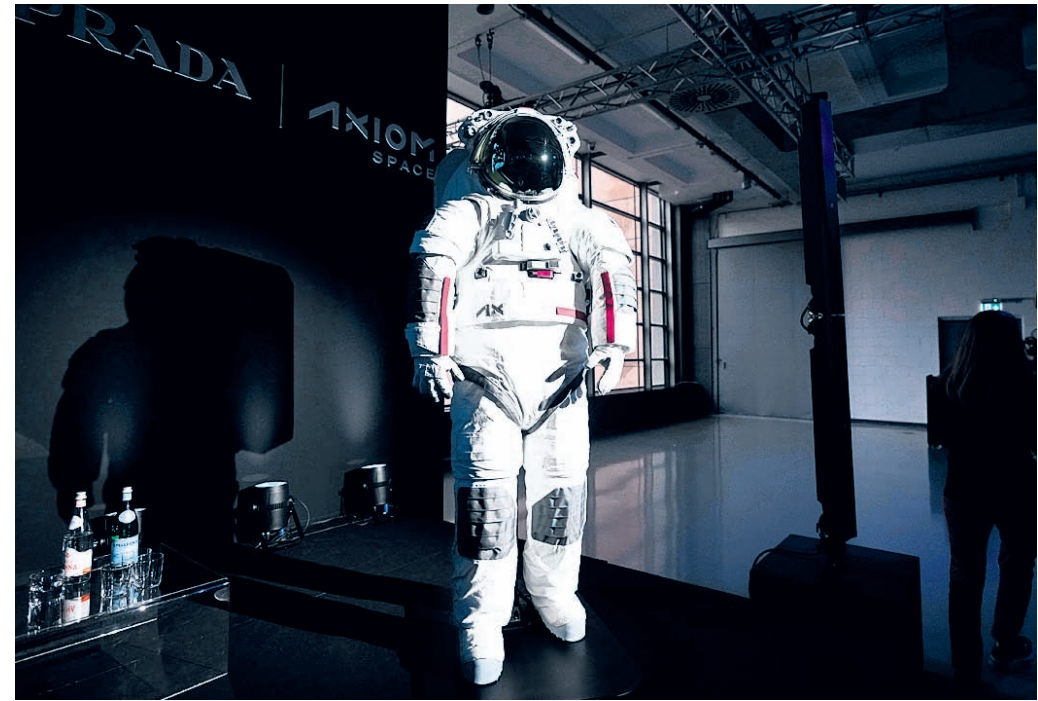
Astronomers have spotted brown dwarf pairs before, but these two whip around at much closer range. They orbit each other every 12 days, less than the time it takes for the moon to circle the Earth.



"It shows how weird the universe is, and how different solar systems are from our own," said study co-author Rebecca Oppenheimer with the American Museum of Natural History.

The research was published Wednesday in the journal Nature.

The twins' discovery means there could be other lurking brown dwarfs with a hidden partner, said co-author Jerry Xuan of the California Institute of Technology.



Axiom Space presents their Prada-designed spacesuit that will be used by NASA from 2026, in Milan, Italy

Zelenskyy sets out 'victory plan'

REUTERS

Kyiv, Oct 16: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy unveiled his much anticipated "victory plan" Wednesday, calling on his allies to take urgent steps to bolster Kyiv at a precarious moment in a bid to end the war with Russia next year.

As Moscow's forces advance in the east and a bleak winter of power cuts looms, he told Parliament his plan contained five main points that were in the hands of his allies, including an unconditional invite to join NATO now and weapons support.

In return, he offered a Western role in developing Ukraine's natural mineral resources and said Ukrainian troops could enhance the security of NATO and replace some of the US forces in Europe.

"Together with our partners, we must change the circumstances so that the war ends. Regardless of what Putin wants. We must all change the circumstances so that Russia is forced to peace," he told lawmakers and top officials.

NATO INVITE

Ukraine needs an unconditional invitation to join the NATO military alliance now, he said.



"We understand that NATO membership is a matter of the future, not the present. But (Russian President Vladimir) Putin can see that his geopolitical calculations are headed for defeat," Zelenskyy said.

BEEF UP UKRAINE'S DEFENCE CAPABILITIES

He said Ukraine's ability to defend itself had to be "irreversibly strengthened" and laid out a number of ways to do this.

They included further arming Ukraine and strengthening its defence industry, boosting air defence capabilities, removing restrictions on weapon use and

a continuation of Ukrainian military operations on Russian soil.

DETERRENCE

Zelenskyy said Ukraine's western allies should deter Russia from any further aggression by showing Moscow that this would have consequences.

"Ukraine proposes to place on its soil a comprehensive non-nuclear strategic deterrence package that will be sufficient to protect Ukraine from any military threat from Russia," he said.

He said there was also a secret addendum to this part of the plan, and did not go into further detail on what the proposed deterrence involved.

STRATEGIC ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

Zelenskyy proposed that Ukraine sign an agreement with the US, EU and other unnamed allies that would allow for joint investments and use of Ukraine's natural resources, which Zelenskyy said were worth trillions of dollars.

"These include, in particular, uranium, titanium, lithium, graphite and other strategically valuable resources that will strengthen either Russia and its allies or Ukraine and the democratic world in global competition," he said.

Russia denounces plan

Russia Wednesday denounced a "victory plan" presented by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, saying he was trying to push NATO into a direct conflict with Moscow. Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told reporters the plan Zelenskyy unveiled to his Parliament would lead to disaster for the Ukrainian people. "He is pushing NATO into direct conflict with our country," Zakharova said, adding that Zelenskyy could not rely on his Western partners. "I can simply tell Zelenskyy, if he is not aware, the partners of the Kyiv regime have already demonstrated how they see Ukraine in the security architecture: they see Ukraine in a coffin and Ukrainian citizens in the grave as well."

UKRAINE STRENGTHENING NATO

Zelenskyy proposed that after the war, Ukraine's armed forces could be used to enhance the security of NATO, and replace some of the US forces currently stationed in Europe.

SHORT TAKES

Bomb blast in Pak injures 5 policemen

Peshawar: At least five policemen were injured Wednesday when a remote-controlled bomb targeting their vehicle went off in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said. Militants targeted the mobile police van in the Kankoi Mandar area of the mountainous district of Buner. The attack injured five policemen, including a sub-inspector, who sustained serious injuries. A heavy police contingent arrived at the scene and cordoned off the area while a search operation was underway. The incident comes two days after terrorists belonging to the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) attacked police lines in the Bannu district of the province, resulting in fierce clashes. Four policemen were killed in the clashes.

Italy delivers first migrants to Albania

Shengjin: A ship carrying the first group of migrants to be processed in Albania under a deal with Italy arrived in the port of Shengjin Wednesday morning, setting in motion Rome's controversial plan to process thousands of asylum seekers abroad. Italy has built two reception centres in Albania, in the first scheme by a European Union nation to divert migrants to a non-EU country. The plan aims to deter irregular arrivals to Italy, but has been criticised by rights groups who say it restricts migrants' right to asylum. The group of migrants taken to Albania comprised 10 Bangladeshis and six Egyptians who were picked up at sea Sunday aboard boats that had set sail from Libya.

12 HC judges barred in B'desh

Dhaka: Bangladesh's Supreme Court Wednesday suspended 12 High Court judges from judicial activities amidst protests by students seeking the removal of pro-Awami League "fascist judges". Ousted premier Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government was toppled following widespread protests against a controversial job quota system in August. Hasina fled the country August 5 amidst student-led mass protests. Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed took the decision after hundreds of protesters participating in the Anti-discrimination Movement besieged the High Court premises Wednesday, calling for the removal of "pro-Awami League fascist judges".

business

of the day quote

Our 6G standards characterised by unprecedented speed, low latency and transformative applications must be for all inclusive and accessible and affordable, and only then will it represent true value for all of humanity

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA | COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER

India is a goldmine for trainable data, and our engineers are perfectly positioned to build industry-specific AI applications

SHEKHAR KIRANI | PARTNER, ACCCEL

GST compensation cess is coming to an end. A discussion needed to be done on what will be the future of the cess. Every state has given their views. This was the first meeting

PANKAJ CHAUDHARY | MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE

SHORT TAKES

Adani defers \$1.2 bn bond sale

New Delhi: Billionaire Gautam Adani's conglomerate deferred a \$1.2 billion bond offering to post US elections due to weak market conditions, sources said. Units of Adani Green Energy Ltd, the conglomerate's clean-energy business, were to offer a 20-year green note Tuesday but deferred it at the last minute. Sources in know said Adani Green launched the IG-rated Hybrid RG notes, but after careful consideration decided to defer it to post US elections, to achieve a much tighter pricing and overall outcome. Some uncertain developments in connection with US elections have led to the deferment of the dollar bond issuance, they said.

Hyundai IPO shines

New Delhi: The initial public offer of Hyundai Motor India Ltd, the Indian arm of South Korean automaker Hyundai, received 42 per cent subscription on the second day of bidding Wednesday. The ₹27,870 crore initial share sale got bids for 4,17,21,442 shares against 9,97,69,810 shares on offer, as per NSE data. Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HML) Monday raised ₹8,315 crore from anchor investors. This is the largest IPO in the country, surpassing LIC's initial share sale of ₹21,000 crore.

Bajaj Auto PAT dips

New Delhi: Bajaj Auto Wednesday said its consolidated profit after tax declined 31 per cent year on year to 1,385 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2024. The company had reported a consolidated profit after tax (PAT) of ₹2,020 crore in the July-September period of last fiscal. Total revenue from operations however rose to ₹13,247 crore in the second quarter compared with ₹10,838 crore in the year-ago period, Bajaj Auto said. On a standalone basis, the company reported a PAT of ₹2,005 crore, up 9 per cent as against 1,836 crore in the second quarter of last fiscal.

BharatPe narrows losses by half

New Delhi: BharatPe Group Wednesday said it has narrowed its consolidated losses before tax by about 50 per cent to ₹474 crore in 2023-24. It had reported losses of ₹941 crore in FY23, according to a company statement. The firm's consolidated revenue from operations rose by 39 per cent to ₹1,426 crore in FY24 compared to ₹1,029 crore in the previous financial year.



Our export competitiveness is not going to come from subsidies or government support. If we are looking at self-reliant India, it can only happen when India will be self-confident and that confidence will only come when we all decide that quality is not our job, it is our duty

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

BLINKIT BRINGS NEW SERVICE

Quick-commerce platform Blinkit has introduced a new service allowing returns and exchanges for clothing and footwear within 10 minutes in select cities across India, addressing the critical problem of size and fit faced by online shoppers



Trade deficit shrinks

Exports in the first six months of this fiscal have recorded positive growth despite global uncertainties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: Snapping the two-month slide, the country's merchandise exports rose marginally by 0.5 per cent to \$34.58 billion in September while the trade deficit narrowed to a five-month low at \$20.78 billion.

According to official data released Wednesday, imports increased by 1.6 per cent to \$55.36 billion in September compared to \$54.49 billion in the year-ago period.

The trade deficit, or the gap between imports and exports, was \$20.8 billion during the same month last year. It soared to a 10-month high of \$29.65 billion in August.

The outbound shipments had declined by 9.3 per cent in August and 1.2 per cent in July compared to the year-ago months. The last month trade deficit was \$19.82 billion in April.

Trade in first half

Exports during April-September this fiscal increased by 1 per cent to \$213.22 billion, and imports grew by 1.6 per cent to \$350.66 billion. The trade deficit during the first half of the fiscal year was \$137.44 billion.

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal told reporters here that exports both in September and during the first six months of this fiscal have recorded positive growth despite global uncertainties.

The important drivers of exports included engineering, chemicals, plastics, pharma,



- Exports in Sept up 0.5% at \$34.58bn from \$34.41bn YoY
- Imports rise 1.6% to \$55.36bn from \$54.49bn YoY
- Trade deficit at \$20.8bn; falls from 10-month high in Aug

2023.

On escalation in the West Asia conflict and its impact on the shipping industry, the secretary said some issues which are temporary in nature were addressed recently in a meeting. "But we are also looking at the long-term solutions... We are looking at how we can improve India's share in shipping transport across the world. So both short-term as well as long-term measures are being taken," he said.

According to the data, the estimated value of service exports during April-September 2024 is \$180 billion compared to \$163.92 billion in April-September 2023. The imports during this period are \$97.39

The world is changing very very fast. So we will be waiting and watching

SUNIL BARTHVAL | COMMERCE SECRETARY

5-MONTH LOW

ready-made garments and electronics. "We have done well despite global difficulties," Barthwal said.

Gold imports edged up to \$4.39 billion in September against \$4.11 billion in the same month last year. During the first half of the fiscal, it rose by 6.9 per cent to \$27 billion.

On the other hand, oil imports in September dipped by 10.44 per cent to \$12.53 billion. During April-September 2024, it, however, rose by 5.91 per cent to \$88.91 billion.

Silver imports in September jumped to \$325.66 million from \$106.64 million in the same month last year. In the first half of the fiscal, it has quadrupled to \$2.29 billion from \$480.65 million in April-September 2023.

During the month under review, cotton raw and waste too

China emerges as top import source in H1

China has emerged as India's top import source with \$56.29 billion worth of inbound shipments during the April-September period of this fiscal, according to the commerce ministry data. During the period, the US emerged as the top export destination for the country with outbound shipments increasing by 5.62 per cent to \$40.38 billion. The imports from China rose by 11.5 per cent during the first half of this fiscal. The imports stood at \$50.48 billion during April-September 2023. During the period, the top 10 import sources of India were China, Russia, the UAE, the US, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Korea, Switzerland and Singapore, the data showed. Imports from Russia rose to \$32.18 billion during April-September this fiscal from USD 30.43 billion a year ago. Similarly, the inbound shipments from the UAE rose to USD 31.46 billion from USD 20.70 billion in the first half of the last fiscal. During the period, the top 10 export destinations of the country were the US, the UAE, the Netherlands, the UK, China, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Germany and South Africa. Exports to the UAE rose from \$15.47 billion during April-September 2023 to \$17.24 billion during April-September this fiscal. Similarly, outbound shipments to China increased to \$6.91 billion from \$7.63 billion in the first half of the last fiscal. In 2023-24, the US was India's largest trading partner, followed by China. China was India's top trading partner from 2013-14 till 2017-18 and in 2020-21. Before China, the UAE was the country's largest trading partner. The US was also the largest partner in 2021-22 and 2022-23.

has soared to \$134.20 million from \$40 million in September

billion against \$88.86 billion in April-September 2023.

Shares drop again on foreign funds exodus

BSE SENSEX OCTOBER 16, 2024



Sensex drops 318 pts, Nifty settles below 25,000 as IT, auto shares retreat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 16: Benchmark Sensex declined by 318 points while Nifty slipped below 25,000 level Wednesday due to selling in IT and auto shares amid unabated foreign fund outflows and weak trends in global markets.

Falling for the second day, the BSE Sensex declined by 318.76 points or 0.39 per cent to settle at 81,501.36. During the day, it slumped 461.86 points or 0.56 per cent to 81,358.26.

The NSE Nifty declined by 86.05 points or 0.34 per cent to close at 24,971.30.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, Infosys, Kotak Mahindra Bank, JSW Steel, Adani Ports, Tata Motors, Adani Ports, ITC and Titan were

the major laggards. HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, Reliance Industries, Asian Paints and State Bank of India were the gainers.

"The market traded range bound with a negative bias due to the fear of a downgrade in FY25 earnings, which could impact the sustainability of premium valuation," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

The BSE midcap gauge dipped 0.10 per cent while smallcap index climbed 0.31 per cent.

Among the indices, IT tanked 1.17 per cent, auto (0.97 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.69 per cent), teck (0.76 per cent) and services (0.51 per cent).

Telecommunication jumped 0.91 per cent, realty climbed 0.64 per cent, energy (0.25 per cent), oil & gas (0.20 per cent) and commodities (0.10 per cent).

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹1,748.71 crore Tuesday, according to exchange data.

BIZ BUZZ

Kruti Coffee opens 7th outlet in City

Bhubaneswar: Kruti Coffee, one of India's fastest-growing specialty coffee chains, opened its seventh outlet in Pal Heights at Jayadev Vihar here Wednesday. The inauguration was done by actress Pihu Mohapatra.



During the event, Kruti Coffee hosted a live brewing session featuring Kendiriguda Naturals, recognised as India's top Arabica Naturals at the 5th World Coffee Conference. "We've come a long way over the past decade, showcasing coffee grown in Odisha's tribal heartlands on global platforms like the World Coffee Conference and Gulf Food Dubai," said Dr Kamakhya Das, Co-Founder of Kruti Coffee and certified coffee roaster by the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA). Tapan Barisal, Business Head of Kruti Coffee, discussed the company's growth plans. "We've already set up six specialties coffee outlets across India and opening the seventh outlet in Jayadev Vihar. We have plans to open 15 more outlets and introduce eight new products over the next year," he said.

10th Bhubaneswar International Trade Fair set to begin Oct 18

Bhubaneswar: The 10th Bhubaneswar International Trade Fair, organised by Gupta Events and Management, is set to take place from October 18 to October 28 at Janta Maidan Ground, Bhubaneswar. Led by Managing Director Sujeet Kumar Gupta and Payal Acharya Gupta, the event aims to provide a dynamic platform for business and culture. The fair is expected to attract significant footfall, offering visitors a unique blend of global and local products. With participation from 23 Indian states and 15 countries, the event promises a diverse showcase of industries, including real estate, start-ups, electronics, automobiles, education and health sectors.

India to become 3rd largest economy by 2028, says IEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: India will over the next decade add more than 12,000 cars a day, expand built space equivalent to the built space in South Africa, and its air-conditioners will consume more electricity than entire power consumption in Mexico, the IEA said.

It is likely to see a rise in demand for all forms of energy - from oil and gas to coal, electricity and renewable energy - through 2035, making it the growth engine for energy demand globally, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said in its World Energy Outlook 2024.

India, the world's third largest oil consuming and importing nation, will see its demand for oil rise by almost 2 million barrels per day by 2035 and become the main source of oil demand growth in the world.

According to IEA projections, the country is on track to become the third-largest economy in the world by 2028.

It was the world's fifth largest economy and the fastest growing major economy in 2023, with



output increasing by 7.8 per cent.

India overtook China in 2023 to become the most populous country in the world, even as its fertility rate dropped below replacement level.

"The population size and the scale of rising demand from all sectors mean that India is poised to experience more energy demand growth than any other country over the next decade," IEA said.

In stated policies scenario (STEPS), "India is on track to add over 12,000 cars every day to its roads over the period to 2035. Built space is set to increase by over 1 billion square metres an-

nually, which is larger than the total built space in South Africa today," IEA said.

"By 2035, iron and steel production are on track to grow by 70 per cent; cement output is set to rise by nearly 55 per cent; and the stock of air-conditioners is projected to grow by over 4.5 times, resulting in electricity demand from air-conditioners in 2035 that is more than Mexico's total expected electricity consumption that year," it said.

IEA projected energy supply in India rising from 45.4 exajoule (EJ) in 2023 to 60.7 EJ in 2025 and 70.5 EJ in 2050 under stated policies (STEPS). This gets tempered to 52 EJ in 2035 and 62 EJ by 2050 under announced pledges (APS).

Oil demand is seen growing from 5.2 million barrels per day to 7.1 million bpd by 2035. Capacity at refineries, to turn crude oil into fuels like petrol and diesel, will rise from 5.8 million bpd to 7.1 million bpd by 2035.

Total energy demand in India is seen increasing by nearly 35 per cent by 2035 in the STEPS, and its electricity generation capacity nearly triples to 1,400 GW by 2035.

Gold hits fresh record high of ₹78,900/10g

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: Gold prices touched a new all-time high of ₹78,900 per 10 grams in the national capital Wednesday, gaining ₹250 due to sustained buying by jewellers, according to the All India Sarafa Association.

The precious metal had closed at ₹78,650 per 10 grams in the previous session Tuesday.

Silver also followed the suit and surged ₹1,000 to ₹93,500 per kg due to fresh buying from industrial units and coin makers. On Tuesday, it had finished at ₹92,500 per kg.

Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity jumped ₹250 to hit a fresh record high of ₹78,500 per 10 grams against the previous close of ₹78,250 per 10 grams.

Traders attributed the rise in gold prices due to strong demand by local jewellers. Besides, the decline in equity markets also aided the rally in the yellow metal as investors moved towards the safe haven assets like gold.

In futures trade on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold contracts for December delivery climbed ₹268 or 0.35 per cent to ₹76,628 per 10 grams.

Gen Z adds \$860bn to India's consumer expenditure

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: India's Gen Z population, now at 377 million, is not just the largest generation in the country's history but also a powerful economic force with a collective spending power of \$860 billion, a report has revealed.

Gen Z is the generation of people born between 1996 and 2010.

The "The USD 2 Trillion Opportunity: How Gen Z is Shaping the New India" report by technology firm Snap (parent company of Snapchat) and Boston Consulting Group (BCG) revealed that Gen Z currently holds a collective spending power of \$860 billion, accounting for 43 per cent of India's total consumer expenditure.

Collective spending consists of direct spending - made by

working Gen Zs with their earnings, and influenced spending - by dependent Gen Zs; these spends are mostly made by families where Gen Zs play an active role in influencing product/brand choice.

Direct spending currently stands at \$200 billion, with 1 out of every 4 Gen Zs in the workforce. The figure is projected to reach \$250 billion by 2025 when every second Gen Z will be working, the report said.

"By 2035, these figures (direct spends) are expected to change dramatically, with direct spending projected to reach \$1.8 trillion, implying that every second rupee of consumer spend in 2035 will be driven by Gen Z," it said.

The report is based on the findings of a survey carried out among around 1,000 parents to evaluate their influence, along-



Gen Zs are poised to play an increasingly vital role with their spending power projected to reach an astounding \$2 trillion by 2035, the report said

side insights gathered from around 1,200 Gen Zs and mil-

lennials to identify their core values and purchasing behav-

Gen Z is already driving 43 per cent of India's consumer spending. Their influence is not limited to select categories -- it cuts across categories ranging from fashion, eating out, to automobiles and consumer durables

NIMISHA JAIN | SENIOR PARTNER AND MD, BCG INDIA

It also took insights from the combined expertise of BCG and Snap in the domain.

Further, Jain said it is important for marketers to take note that this generation is driven by unique values and beliefs, however, it was observed that only 15 per cent of brands surveyed are actively taking steps to tap into this opportunity.

"For businesses, understanding and authentically en-

gaging with Gen Z isn't just good to have; it's necessary for winning today and will be imperative for survival tomorrow," she said.

The report said that while 45 per cent of businesses acknowledge Gen Z's potential, only 15 per cent have actively leveraged these insights - a gap that presents brands with a prime opportunity to forge deeper connections with the generation shaping India's consumer future.

It recommended rapidly innovating in line with trends, integrating social interaction throughout the shopping journey, providing visually immersive experiences both online and offline, and engaging with the right influencers in the right way as initiatives brands should take to capitalise on the opportunity.

Huge milestone awaits Ashalata

AGENCIES

Kathmandu, Oct 15: Captain Ashalata Devi will become the first Indian woman footballer to play 100 international matches when she takes the field in the SAFF Championships opening match against Pakistan here Thursday.

The 31-year-old Manipuri made her India debut in the pre-Olympics tournament in Dhaka against Bangladesh in March 2011, and the star defender has come a long way since then.

"When she pulled on an Indian shirt for the first time... in the pre-Olympics in Dhaka against Bangladesh in March 2011, few would have imagined that Ashalata Devi would take Indian women's football by storm in quite the way she has," the AIFF said while hailing Ashalata's feat. Devi was called up for the India U-17 team in 2008 when she was 15.

Born in Imphal, she began playing football at the age of 13. She was initially with the Indian Railways football team and joined New Radiant Women's Football Club of Maldives in 2015. Later, she played

- Ashalata first donned the Indian jersey in the U-17 squad in 2008
- Ashalata made her senior team debut in March 2011 against Bangladesh
- She was part of the Indian team that won 2 South Asian Games gold and 4 SAFF Championships

for Rising Student Club (Cuttack), KRYPHSA (Imphal), Sethu (Madurai) and Gokulam Kerala in the Indian Women's League. She is currently with East Bengal.

"I am excited and happy that I will play my 100th game against Pakistan. The focus, however, will be on winning all the games and taking the trophy back home. This is the main dream and motivation for coming to Nepal," Ashalata said Thursday.

"I am looking forward to all the matches in the championships because it is an extremely important tournament to us. We already suffered a setback in the last SAFF tournament, but

it will be different this time," Ashalata added. In the 2022 edition, India considered as overwhelming favourites, failed to defend the title. "This is the sixth time I will play in SAFF. We were champions four times.



Ashalata Devi

SHE WILL BECOME THE 1ST INDIAN WOMAN FOOTBALLER TO PLAY 100 GAMES WHEN SHE TAKES THE FIELD THURSDAY AGAINST PAKISTAN

It's a great achievement for Ashalata as well as for women's football. I always tell young players to look up to her and how she has maintained herself for such a long time

SANTOSH KASHYAP | HEAD COACH

I want to win this year's title for us because it's a special championship for me. We are determined to prove ourselves," Ashalata said.

Ashalata stated that it is always exciting to play against Pakistan. And she would like to make her 100th game memorable by winning it against the arch rivals. The last time the two teams clashed, India had won 3-0.

"It's always exciting to face a team like Pakistan. We have a lot of respect for them. They have grown as a unit. Last time, we won against them, but we are not taking them lightly," Ashalata said.

India's head coach Santosh Kashyap is expecting a close contest. "I have watched Pakistan's recent matches, including the one against Singapore, where they put up a tough fight. They have strong physicality and play good football," Kashyap stated.

down relentlessly over the city from morning. There was a smattering of spectators at the stadium despite the inclement weather. But the only moment of excitement for them was the sighting of star batter Virat Kohli and opener Yashasvi Jaiswal, who went for an indoor net session along with assistant coach Abhishek Nayar. They might have to wait further for action even on the second day as the current forecast is for more rain on Thursday at least till noon. The Indian team were naturally disappointed as play was washed out. India are looking for a clean sweep in the series to brighten their prospects of sealing a berth in the World Test Championship final. It remains to be seen whether the team adopt the same aggressive attitude against New Zealand as they did against Bangladesh in the recently-concluded series. At Kanpur more than two days of play were lost due to rains. But the batters adopted a T20 approach and the bowlers rose to the occasion to carve out a facile win against Bangladesh.

India-NZ 1st day's play washed out



Indian skipper Rohit Sharma has a look at the pitch after the covers were removed for a brief while Wednesday

AGENCIES

Bangalore, Oct 16: Unrelenting rain wiped out play on day one of the opening Test between India and New Zealand here Wednesday. The play was called off at 2.34pm as heavy rains lashed the M Chinnaswamy Stadium after relenting for about half-an-hour earlier. Officials said that there are predictions for rain also Thursday and there may be interruptions again.

The match officials came out to inspect the pitch around 2.00pm after outfield and first layer of covers were removed around 1.50pm.

But there were large damp areas on either side of the pitch as hessians were brought out in a last-ditch attempt to get some game time. However, it was a futile effort as extensive damage had already been done by rains of varying intensity from early morning.

Earlier, even the toss, which was scheduled at 9.00 am, could not take place as rains came

down relentlessly over the city from morning.

There was a smattering of spectators at the stadium despite the inclement weather. But the only moment of excitement for them was the sighting of star batter Virat Kohli and opener Yashasvi Jaiswal, who went for an indoor net session along with assistant coach Abhishek Nayar. They might have to wait further for action even on the second day as the current forecast is for more rain on Thursday at least till noon. The Indian team were naturally disappointed as play was washed out. India are looking for a clean sweep in the series to brighten their prospects of sealing a berth in the World Test Championship final. It remains to be seen whether the team adopt the same aggressive attitude against New Zealand as they did against Bangladesh in the recently-concluded series. At Kanpur more than two days of play were lost due to rains. But the batters adopted a T20 approach and the bowlers rose to the occasion to carve out a facile win against Bangladesh.

MET OFFICE SAYS RAINS MAY CONTINUE TILL THURSDAY AFTERNOON

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SHORT TAKES

New Delhi to host 1st-ever Kho Kho WC

New Delhi: The first-ever Kho Kho World Cup (WC) will be held at the Thyagraj Stadium here from January 13 to 19 next year, the tournament organisers said Wednesday. The event promises to showcase India's indigenous sport on the global stage. The World Cup's official logo and tagline #TheWorldGoesKho was also unveiled during the function. A total of 24 countries will participate in the Worlds in both the men's and women's segments. "Kho Kho is a sport of our country's mud. So, we are very proud to bring this sport to the mat. A big thank you to the federation, Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) president Sudhanshu Mittal said.

David inducted in ICC Hall of Fame

Dubai: Former India spinner Neetu David, who still holds the record for the best figures (8/53) by a woman in an individual Test innings, became Wednesday only the second female cricketer from the country to be inducted into the 'ICC Hall of Fame'. David, the current chairman of selectors, enters the ICC Hall of Fame a year after the induction of former captain Diana Edulji. David made more than 100 appearances (10 Tests and 97 ODIs) for India as a prolific left-arm spinner. She has taken 141 wickets in ODIs. "It is truly an honour to be inducted into the ICC Hall of Fame, something that I consider to be the highest recognition available to anyone who puts on their national team jersey," David said in an ICC release.

Tuchel appointed England manager

London: The Football Association (FA) hired Thomas Tuchel as England manager Wednesday. He will take on the challenge of ending the national team's decades-long wait for a trophy. The German, who previously managed PSG, Chelsea and Bayern Munich, will begin his tenure in January ahead of the 2026 World Cup in the United States. Tuchel replaces Gareth Southgate, who stepped down after the European Championship in July. Tuchel won major trophies in Germany, France and England and is England's third foreign coach, after the late Sven-Goran Eriksson and Fabio Capello.

Konark Suryas lose despite Yusuf show



Yusuf Pathan

AGENCIES

Srinagar, Oct 16: Southern Superstars emerged champions in the Legends Cricket League defeating Konark Suryas in a match that went down to the wire here Wednesday. The match was decided in the Super Over after the scores were tied at 163. In the Super Over, Konark Suryas scored 13 for the loss of one wicket which Southern Superstars overhauled with one ball to spare. However, it was a thriller which all the spectators enjoyed at the Bakshi Stadium here.

Yusuf Pathan's (85, 38b, 6x4, 8x6) brutal hitting with the bat helped Konark Suryas come back into the game after all seemed lost for them. Chasing a victory target of 164, Konark Suryas had slipped to 99 for six when the senior of the Pathan brothers

exploded. And the worst to suffer was left-arm spinner Pawan Negi who went for 28 runs in his third over (19th of the innings) with Yusuf hitting him for four towering sixes.

Konark Suryas could have won the match had two of their batters Navin Stewart (0) and Diwesh Pathania (0) batted judiciously. Stewart was the worst of the lot as he wasted eight deliveries without scoring a single run against Negi.

Earlier Southern Superstars put on board 163 for the loss of six wickets thanks to a brilliant knock by Hamilton Masakadza (83m, 58b, 8x4, 5x6). There were useful contributions from Negi (33) and former New Zealand opener Martin Guptill (27). Had Yusuf got the same type of support from the other batters of Konark Suryas, he could have easily taken them over the line.

22-member Odisha team for Sr Nationals



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Oct 16: A 22-member football team from Odisha will participate in the Senior National Women's football championships which will be played at Anantpur in Andhra Pradesh, the Football Association of Odisha (FAO) said in a release Wednesday.

The squad: (Goalkeepers): Susmita Punj, Manju Ganju;

(Defenders): Ranee Bag, Pragnya Kishan, Ambrata Nayak, Sulekha Kanha, Subasini Saha, Shradanjali Panda, Shibani Mundari; **(Midfielders):** Priyasa Sarkar, Jahnabi Kishan, Ipshita Rout, Munika Minz, Deepa Nayak; **(Forwards):** Laxmipriya Lenka, Subhadra Sahoo, Satyabati Khadia, Malati Munda, Manisha Nayak, Pyari Xaxa, Pratima Oram and Rupashree Munda.

Costliest buys Harman, Udita raring to deliver

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 16: Harmanpreet Singh and Udita Duhan can't wait to enthral fans with their dazzling stick-work after walking away with the best bids in the men's and women's categories at the Hockey India League (HIL) auctions. While Harmanpreet was bagged by Soorma Hockey Club, for a whopping Rs 78 lakh on the first day of the three-day auction, Udita was acquired by Shrichi Rath Bengal Tigers for Rs 32 lakh Tuesday.

Expectedly Harmanpreet is ecstatic to witness the HIL's



Harmanpreet Singh



Udita Duhan

grand return. "I am elated that the HIL is back and in marvelous fashion. I was on the edge of my seat when my name came up during the auction, mentally hoping and urging Sardar Singh to bid for me and I get to play for the Haryana-Punjab region. It was a great relief when Soorma Hockey Club finally bought me and I could not have been happier," Harmanpreet said.

The ace drag-flicker was happy with the combination of the squad, insisting that they managed to get the perfect balance.

"We have a very good team at the Soorma Hockey Club. The owners and coaching staff have hit the ball out of the park. We have the perfect balance of experienced, well-renowned players and youngsters with the potential to become big names

themselves," Harmanpreet said. Indian women's team defender Udita too can't hide her excitement of becoming the costliest buy in the women's auction.

"Hockey India is breaking barriers and setting new standards by holding a Women's Hockey India League at the same time, as the men's league. "This will be a good opportunity to showcase our skills and grow as athletes by playing with players from different nationalities. All of us are eager to give our 100 per cent," Udita said.

"I am happy to be the highest buy and I would like to thank the Shrichi Rath Bengal Tigers for putting their faith in me. They have formed an impressive team and I cannot wait to get on the pitch and aim to win the title," Udita added.

Spain in quarters

AGENCIES

Paris, Oct 16: European champions Spain sealed their place in the UEFA Nations League quarterfinals with a comprehensive 3-0 win Tuesday over Serbia Tuesday, while Cristiano Ronaldo and Portugal were frustrated in a 0-0 draw with Scotland.

Spain, the reigning Nations League champions, became the second team to seal the last eight berth after Germany. The La Roja went ahead through Aymeric Laporte's early header and then shook off Alvaro Morata's penalty miss at the start of the second half. Captain Morata made it 2-0 with a lovely finish on 65 minutes and Alex Baena, made it 3-0 from a free-kick.

Akhil redeems himself with bronze

Second medal for India in the ongoing ISSF World Cup Final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 16: In a year marred by disappointments, shooter Akhil Sheoran redeemed himself by winning the men's 50m rifle 3-positions bronze medal even as the other Indian participants failed to make a mark in the ISSF World Cup Final here Wednesday.

On a day when both Ashi Chouksey and Nischal could not make it to the women's 50m rifle 3-positions event and Olympian Rhythm Sangwan



was unlucky to miss out on a bronze in the shoot-off for third place with a Chinese shooter in 25m pistol event, Akhil remained calm to win India's second medal in the year-ending tournament with a score of 452.6. He beat the challenge from China's Liu Yukun, the Paris Olympics gold medalist, who finished fourth.

India had won a silver medal through Sonam Maskar in women's 10m air rifle Tuesday. Akhil later said that the bronze medal has kick-started his preparations for the upcoming competitions, including the Asian Games in 2026.

"I had been training rigorously for the finals. Initially, I wasn't getting good scores in the kneeling position today but I knew I could do much better in prone and standing, my strong positions," Akhil stated.