



## SINGHAM DEEPIKA

Actor Deepika Padukone will be seen in Rohit Shetty's cop universe *Singham Again*

LEISURE P2



## 'WEEK OF SILENCE'

Australian Indigenous leaders call for a week of silence and reflection after referendum fails

INTERNATIONAL P10



## EXPERIENCE HELPED BUMRAH

Jasprit Bumrah says that experience gained as junior helped him in Pak game

SPORTS P12

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### MAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT

## Jumbo electrocuted; farmer trampled

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Dhenkanal, Oct 15:** In two separate incidents, an elephant trampled a farmer to death in Odapada block of Dhenkanal district, while an elephant was electrocuted in Sundargarh district Sunday.

The deceased Ranjit Rout was a resident of Mangalpur village under Kantabania police limits in Dhenkanal.

"A herd of wild elephants has been destroying the crops in the village and surrounding areas for the last couple of days. Sunday morning, the 48-year-old farmer was going to his paddy field located near his village to assess the damage caused by the elephant herd. Meanwhile, an elephant suddenly attacked Rout and trampled him to death. An unnatural death case has been registered in this regard," said a local police official.

In another incident, the carcass of a tusker was found in Koira forest range in Sundargarh district Sunday. The actual reason behind the death is yet to be ascertained. The forest department officials said that the post-mortem report will shed light on the cause of the death.

The state continues to witness an increase in casualties due to human-elephant conflicts. Recently, Forest and Environment Minister Pradip Kumar Amat informed the state Assembly that a total of 602 people were killed in elephant attacks in the last five years. As per information, 688 elephants have died for different reasons in the state between 2015 and 2023.

# Ground invasion looms



A convoy of Israeli armoured personnel carriers (APC) heads towards the Gaza Strip border in southern Israel Sunday

AGENCIES

**Gaza, Oct 15:** Israeli tanks have begun positioning themselves on the border fence with Gaza as the military build-up continues amid relentless bombardment of the besieged Palestinian enclave ahead of an imminent ground invasion,

media reports said.

Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been displaced after Israel ordered 1.1 million residents of northern Gaza to evacuate to the south amid a looming ground offensive.

At least 2,329 Palestinians, including 724 children, have been killed in Israeli air raids. The

number of Israelis killed in Hamas's military operation stands at 1,300 including 286 soldiers.

The Israeli military says it is striking targets in Lebanon after a missile attack by Hezbollah fighters killed a person in its territory. It comes as Iran warned Israel to cease its 'war crimes' against Gaza, Al Jazeera re-

ported. Hundreds of thousands of Gaza residents sought to heed Israel's order to evacuate roughly the northern half of the territory, while others huddled at hospitals in the north Sunday.

Gaza's 2.3 million civilians faced a deepening struggle for food, water and safety, and braced for a looming invasion more

than a week after Hamas militants launched a deadly assault on Israel. Israeli forces, supported by a growing deployment of US warships in the region, positioned themselves along Gaza's border and drilled for what Israel said would be a campaign by air, land and sea to dismantle the militant group.

## NAVEEN TURNS 78



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who turns 78 Monday, will not celebrate his birthday owing to the demise of his elder sister Gita Mehta last month, a CMO statement said.

Patnaik also requested his well-wishers not to visit his official residence 'Naveen Niwas' to greet him on the occasion, it said. "Due to the demise of his elder sister Gita Mehta last month, the Chief Minister has decided not to celebrate his birthday this year," a communication from the Chief Minister's Office said Sunday.

Patnaik, the five-time Chief Minister of the state, did not celebrate his birthday last year as he went to Hyderabad to attend a business meeting. He had chosen not to celebrate his birthday for four years in a row - in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and also in 2018 and 2019 owing to cyclones 'Titli' and 'Fani'. He also did not celebrate his birthday in 2016 due to the Uri attack.

MORE P3

## Moitra took 'bribes' to ask questions in Parl: BJP MP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** BJP MP Nishikant Dubey Sunday accused TMC's Mahua Moitra of taking 'bribes' from a businessman to ask questions in Parliament and urged Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to constitute an 'inquiry committee' to look into the charges against her.

Moitra hit back, saying she "welcomes any move against her after the Lok Sabha Speaker is finished dealing with pending charges against him (Dubey)."

The two MPs, known for their fiery parliamentary speeches and belligerent attacks on adversaries, have often exchanged blows over a host of issues over the years.

Sunday, Dubey wrote to Birla under the subject "Re-emergence of nasty 'Cash for Query' in Parliament, Direct involvement of Smt. Mahua Moitra, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) for serious 'Breach of Privilege', 'Contempt of the House' and a



'Criminal Offence' under Section 120-A of IPC." Citing a letter he has received from an advocate, Dubey said the lawyer has shared 'irrefutable' evidence of bribes exchanged between the Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader and a businessman.

Hitting back, Moitra said on X, "Am using all my ill gotten cash & gifts to buy a college/university in which Degree Dubey can finally buy a real degree."

Tagging the Lok Sabha Speaker, she said, "Finish the enquiries against him for false affidavits & then set up my enquiry committee."

## Won't contest next Assembly polls: Narasingha

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Senior Congress leader Narasingha Mishra Sunday said that he will not be contesting next year's Assembly elections due to his age. Mishra, who is the leader of the Congress legislative party, said he has made up his mind about it.

"I have made up my mind not to contest any election as I am 83 years old now, and suffering from various diseases. However, the party will take the final call," he said.

Mishra, the MLA of Bolangir, said he has been convincing his party to accept the decision. He said his younger son Soumendhra will contest his seat in the next Assembly election, subject to the approval of the party.

"Till now, no other eligible candidate in the constituency has come to my notice. With the hope that Soumendhra will be getting the ticket, campaigning has already started," he said.

## INDIA bloc to protest across state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Opposition bloc INDIA leaders and supporters will stage protests across the state next month against the 'anti-people' policies of the Odisha and central governments. Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Sarat Pattanayak said here Sunday.

At least 17 non-BJP and non-BJD parties including the Congress will hold mass demonstrations at four places across the state in November, he added.

Speaking to reporters, Pattanayak said the protests will be held in Rayagada, Sambalpur, Rourkela and Balasore next month soon after the Durga puja festival.

Senior leaders from all the 17 parties will participate in the agitations against the 'anti-people' policies of the state and the Centre, he said.

Alleging both the BJD and BJP are running 'dictatorship' governments at the state and the Centre, the Congress leader

*At least 17 non-BJP and non-BJD parties including the Congress will hold mass demonstrations against the 'anti-people' policies of both the state and central governments at four places next month*

fare schemes.

Pattanayak alleged both the governments were not making any efforts to conduct the OBC census.

"No steps have been taken to resolve the issues of tribal and backward communities," he said.

To a query on seat-sharing among the 17 parties for the upcoming polls, he said, "No discussion was held on the subject. Our aim is to win maximum number of seats."

Pattanayak also informed that the OPCC will stage demonstrations in Puri October 16 to demand the reopening of all the four gates of Jagannath temple for devotees.

The party has also demanded the reopening of the 'ratna bandar' of the temple for repairs and inventory of ornaments stored in the shrine's treasury, he said.

The party will submit a memorandum to the Governor through the chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration in this regard, he added.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



For me, the World Cup ended the day India defeated Pakistan. We won the Cup

WEATHER	
BHUB	CTK
MAX 34.7°C	34.5°C
MIN 23.8°C	24.5°C
Humidity 76%	71%
Rainfall Nil	Nil
Forecast MAINLY CLEAR SKY	

## MP polls: Congress fields TV's Hanuman against Shivraj

The grand old party has apparently fielded Vikram Mastal to counter the BJP's Hindutva ideology

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhopal, Oct 15:** The Congress has fielded young television actor Vikram Mastal, who is popular for his portrayal of Hanuman in Anand Sagar's 'Ramayan', against Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in the upcoming Madhya Pradesh elections.

Vikram hails from Salkanpur village in Budhni Assembly constituency in Sehore district. He belongs to a Brahmin family (Sharma), but he adopted the surname 'Mastal' due to television serials he worked with.

Notably, state Congress president Kamal Nath, who has pre-

sented himself as a devotee of Lord Hanuman, apparently fielded Mastal to counter the BJP's Hindutva ideology. Political observers also say that the Congress has played an ideological stroke with fielding Mastal against Chouhan.

"Vikram Mastal may not be a big political face against Shivraj Singh Chouhan, but his reel life character has a large canvas which will help the party to create an impression across the state. Any political attack against Mastal will be presented as an attack on his reel-life character - Lord Hanuman and that perception may help to corner the BJP's Hindutva ideology," a Congress worker from Budhni said.

The political observers also said that Mastal has the tough job of taking on Chief Minister



Vikram Mastal (R) as Lord Hanuman in 'Ramayan'

Chouhan from the Budhni seat in Sehore district, which is Chouhan stronghold.

He joined the Congress in July, and was one among many who condemned the language used by

the character of Hanuman in the Bollywood movie 'Adipurush'.

"I am thankful to the Congress for showing trust in me. I would go to the people of Budhni with local issues. I would ask people what they have gained after supporting the Chief Minister Chouhan for nearly two decades. Will ask people why Sehore's youths did not get jobs despite the fact that the Chief Minister belongs to their district," Mastal told IANS.

Mastal, who appeared alongside Gurmeet Choudhary and Debina Bonnerjee in Ramayan, has featured in the movie 'Top Gear' (2022), web series 'Battle of Saragarhi' (2017) and 'Ashram' (2020). Chief Minister Chouhan has won five Assembly elections (1990, 2006, 2008, 2013 and 2018). Importantly, Budhni Assembly is one of the strongest seats of the

ruling BJP for more than 20 years. The Congress won the Budhni seat last time in 1980 when KN Pradhan contested on Congress ticket.

In the last election, the Congress had fielded former MP Arun Yadav, the son of former minister and strong OBC leader of his time Subhash Yadav. However, Chouhan won the election with a margin of around 59,000 votes.

The only positive note for the Congress was that the winning percentage of Chouhan declined by around 9.7 per cent in comparison to his victory in 2013. In 2018, Chouhan got 1,23,492 votes, while Arun Yadav got 64,493 votes.

In the 2013 assembly election, Chouhan got 1,28,730 votes, while Congress' Mahendra Singh Chouhan got 43,925 votes.

## Afghan valour too strong for England

AGENCIES

**Chennai, Oct 16:** Displaying the valour that best epitomises the people of the strife-torn nation, Afghanistan caused one of the biggest upsets in the history of ODI World Cup as they outclassed defending champions England by 69 runs here Sunday. Rahmanullah Gurbaz (80) gave early impetus while Ikrım Alikhil (58) provided the final flourish to guide Afghanistan to a competitive 284 all out.

The Afghan bowlers then thrived under lights, dishing out a collective effort to bundle out England for 215 runs in 40.3 overs and register just their second World Cup win, eight years since their last against Scotland in Australia. Afghan spinners Rashid Khan (3/37) and Mujeeb Ur Rahman (3/51) decimated England. P12

# leisure



## CHRIS EVANS CONFIRMS HIS MARRIAGE WITH ALBA BAPISTA

Actor Chris Evans, has officially confirmed his marriage to Alba Baptista during his first public appearance, one month following reports of his union with the 26-year-old actress, reports [aceshowbiz.com](http://aceshowbiz.com).

## MICHAEL CAINE ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT FROM ACTING

Actor Michael Caine has officially retired from acting, with the film *The Great Escaper* being his ultimate undertaking, has shared his decision to retire, citing his advanced age as the primary reason.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

Today, you may set out to please your beloved, and maybe even woo him/her all over again. There may be a bit of dissatisfaction regarding friends and relatives, but you can look forward to partying and new friendships this evening, says Ganesh.

#### TAURUS

Today, you are likely to pay attention to your health issues and eating habits. Fortune may not favour your efforts. However hard you may try, you may still find yourself back to square one at the end of the day. Try until you taste the sweet fruit of success, suggests Ganesh.

#### GEMINI

You will lend your innovative and imaginative spark to your initiatives, which will be quite a few, says Ganesh. Love will bring you immense satisfaction. And you will develop a special bond with your spouse or beloved. You, however, are likely to be dragged into a conflict and will be forced to pick a side.

#### CANCER

Today, every word coming out of your sweetheart's lips will be music to your ears. Your relationship with your relatives will be harmonious. You may steer clear of your troubles, if you learn to restrain. The best way to deal with criticism is to take them constructively.

#### LEO

One way to assure success is by believing in oneself and one's abilities. Let this confidence and your high spirits take you to newer heights today, says Ganesh. Remain cheerful all day long, and you will see your hardships disappear as you tackle them with consummate skill. But more importantly, Ganesh foresees the day leading you to a fulfilling evening.

#### VIRGO

A medley of good and bad awaits you today. Emotional people will find you immature and inconsistent. But your bag of jokes is never empty, and you remain the jester as always. Ganesh advises you to meditate and engage in spiritually rich activities to channel and focus all your talents.

#### LIBRA

There is no end to work, so buckle up, as it is highly probable that work pressure will take up most of your time today. This leaves precious little for your family, but as always, they fully understand. Ganesh expects you to be both hard-working and conscientious today. You may also launch a new business scheme, especially if you are self-employed.

#### SCORPIO

The spectre of financial instability will keep haunting you. But there can be a brighter side to life too, says Ganesh. Long overdue payments might get encashed today. And those blind bluffs you call sometimes in business might pay handsome rewards, predicts Ganesh.

#### SAGITTARIUS

You may have women swooning over you today; such is your charm and way with them, says Ganesh. But friends are highly valuable to you, and you shall spend much time with them cherishing their company and reliving amazing times spent together.

#### CAPRICORN

It may seem to be an unusual combination, but you will experience pain and pleasure in equal measure today, says Ganesh. The errands you may have to run for at home will leave you exhausted, so conserve some energy for the rest of the day. Your wit can get you whatever you want, but it's important that you use it in the right way and not just to meet your selfish interests.

#### AQUARIUS

Good news may hit home today. Promotion, profit, scholarship, anything you've been working for will probably materialise. You are ingenious, and will crack the toughest of problems with consummate ease. Ganesh sees money lenders and brokers doing well.

#### PISCES

Being a friend in need is what today will be about, says Ganesh. Making new acquaintances and associations is also on the cards. Try not to let jealousy mar your better judgement while you are at it.

## SUHANA TAKES INTERNET BY STORM IN BLACK

**Mumbai:** She is yet to make her debut but has already become a star! Suhana Khan has been grabbing headlines for the past several years owing to the grand stardom of her father Shah Rukh Khan. While her brother Aryan Khan is gearing up for his directorial debut, daddy's beloved daughter Suhana too is making her big acting debut this year. With the release date of her film *The Archies* nearing, Suhana has been making some stylish appearances which has been creating quite a buzz on social media.

Among the many photoshoots shared by the upcoming actress on social media, it is her recent post that has been garnering love from many including her BFF Ananya Pandey and cousin Alia Chhibba. The photo features Suhana Khan in a glamorous black cutout dress and she posed it on her Instagram with only a black heart emoji in the caption.

Followed by the post, she received a lot of comments from her fans and close ones including Ananya



Pandey who dropped a comment saying "Ufffff (heart-eye emoji)". Among them was also Maheep Kapoor, mother of her Suhana's other BFF Shanaya Kapoor, who dropped fire and heart eye emojis. Apart from them, Suhana's aunt Namita Chhibba, her cousin Alia Chhibba, Ananya's mother Bhavana Pandey, among others couldn't stop praising Suhana in the photo. AGENCIES

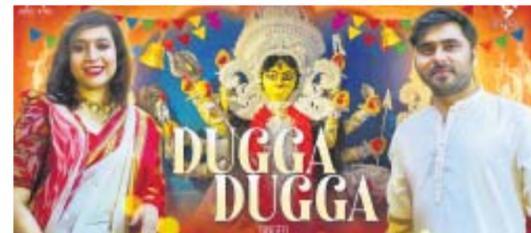


## Rupali's precious life lesson

**Mumbai:** Actress Rupali Ganguly has garnered widespread admiration for her unparalleled talent and elegance, continuously redefining standards in the entertainment realm, recently, she shared a video on her social media, imparting a significant life lesson to her followers.

Amidst her heightened fame from *Anupamaa*, Rupali Ganguly pleasantly surprised her Instagram followers with a captivating video, where she not only exuded charm but also shared a crucial life lesson emphasizing self-love. Accompanying the video, Rupali penned, "Don't be afraid to walk alone....Believe in the strength that lies within u. To each and every person who gave me love and supported me... lots of love back at you #walking#selflove#blessed#gratitude#instagood#anupamaa#rupaliganguly#jaimatadi#jaimahakal." The choice of the serene *Chal Chalein* song for the video infused a profound sense of tranquility, perfectly complementing her empowering message of self-love and inner strength. AGENCIES

## Abhijeet teams up with Poulami for Dugga Dugga



**Kolkata:** Popular Odia singer Abhijeet Mishra has collaborated with Bengali singer Poulami Ganguly to offer a treat to music aficionados ahead of Durga Puja.

Their new song, *Dugga Dugga*, was unveiled on YouTube Saturday. Composed by Devasish Saha under the direction of Pratap Ghosh, the music video was shot against the stunning backdrop of Srirampur Rajbari in Kolkata. Pralay Sarkar has written the lyrics to the song, recorded and mixed at Studio Vibration by Goutam Basu.

The video tells the heart-warming story of Abhijeet,

who portrays Poulami's friend visiting Kolkata from Odisha. Through the lens of this song, the artistes beautifully highlight the rich traditions and heritage associated with Bengali culture during the auspicious Durga Puja.

Speaking about the song, Poulami shared, "This song will bring a different dimension to this year's festival. It is written for everyone who loves Maa Durga, and we think the song will be well received."

Abhijeet added, "While I've contributed to Odia culture, *Dugga Dugga* allowed me to delve into West Bengal's heritage. Collaborating with Poulami and the team was a unique experience." PNN

## Manoj Pattanayak new President of Odisha Natya Sangh

Bhubaneswar: Eminent theatre personality Manoj Pattanayak, who received the Sangeet Natak Akademi award earlier this year, has been elected as the President of Odisha Natya Sangh (ONS), an assembly of over 150 drama troupes in Odisha. The general body meeting and biennial election of the outfit were held in Bolangir, Sunday. Elections were held for the posts of other office bearers also. While Subhakanta Padhi, who was the Secretary for the last two years, retained his position, the four vice-presidents elected for the next two years are Pradeep Biswal (East), Satyaranjan Behera (West), Ratikanta Behera (North) and Manoj Dandpat (South). Similarly, Laxmidhar Pujapanda, Alok Bose, Ashis Bardhan and Samir Mohapatra were elected as joint-secretaries for East to South respectively. Sushil Pattanayak has been elected as the new cashier for the next two years, it was learnt. PNN



## Deepika Rohit's Lady Singham

**Mumbai:** Actress Deepika Padukone, who was recently seen in an extended cameo appearance in the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer *Jawan*, has shared her look of a cop from her upcoming film *Singham Again* and also revealed the name of her character - Shakti Shetty.

On Sunday the actress took to her Instagram to share two pictures from the film. Captioning it with, "Introducing...Shakti Shetty". The first picture shows the actress holding a goon by his hair as he lies at her feet. The actress while stick-

ing the barrel of the gun in the goon's mouth can be seen staring into the camera with a sinister laugh on her face and blood stains on her uniform.

Since the picture was shared on the first day of Navratri, it also gives a strong reference to goddess Durga slaying Mahishasur at her feet. The other picture shows Deepika laughing with the barrel of the gun resting on her forehead. She can also be seen wearing bandages on her hands.

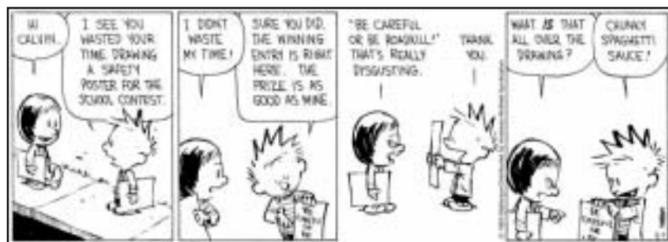
The *Singham* franchise, helmed by superstar director Rohit Shetty is part of Shetty's cop universe which stars actors Akshay Kumar, Ajay Devgn and Ranveer Singh in the role of cops. IANS



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



### FUN post

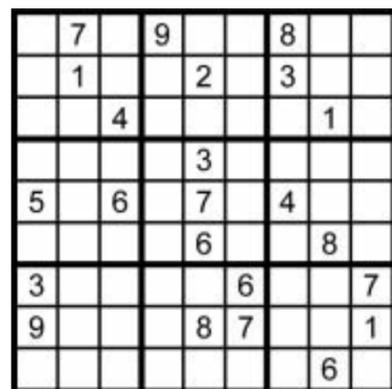
### CROSSWORD



- Across
- 5 Manservant
  - 7 Churn
  - 9 Deficit
  - 10 Pith helmet
  - 11 Garish
  - 13 Musical interval
  - 15 Spiritualist
  - 17 Banded stone
  - 20 Desist
  - 21 Subject to change
  - 23 Vessel holder
  - 24 Antiquated property site
  - 4 Cargo
  - 6 Sensational
  - 8 Bonus
  - 12 Ticket words (5,3)
  - 14 Drainpipe
  - 16 Profundity
  - 18 Bearded animals
  - 19 Literary genre
  - 22 Noisy

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS

#### CROSSWORD



#### SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# UNPARALLELED LEADERSHIP

The charismatic leadership of Naveen Patnaik, who is serving as the 14th Chief Minister of Odisha and has lately become the second longest-serving Chief Minister of India, has transformed Odisha from a starvation economy to a self-sustaining one. When he took charge of Odisha in March 2000, the state's finances were in tatters due to financial profligacy of the previous regimes. By the end of 2001-02, the state had a revenue deficit to the extent of over six per cent of its gross state domestic product. However, those days have faded into oblivion, thanks to the efficient fiscal management of Naveen administration. Some of his recent flagship initiatives like Mission Shakti, 5T school and college transformation programmes, Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY), Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA), Mamata, renovation of shrines and mobility boost measures have caught the attention of many. As Naveen turns 78 Monday (October 16), **OrissaPOST** takes a close look at his success story

Naveen Patnaik was born October 16, 1946 in Cuttack to former Odisha Chief Minister Biju Patnaik and his wife Gyan Devi. He attended Welham Boys' School in Dehradun and The Doon School. After completing his primary education, he studied at St Stephen's College of Delhi University (DU) and gained a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree.

Initially seen as a reluctant heir to his father's illustrious political career, Naveen returned to Odisha after Biju Patnaik's death in 1997 and founded the Biju Janata Dal (BJD).

Subsequently, he was elected to the 11th Lok Sabha from Aska Parliamentary constituency in the byelection and became a member of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Steel and Mines, a member of the Standing Committee on Commerce, and a member of the Library Committee of Parliament.

Later, he represented the same seat in the 12th Lok Sabha and was subsequently made the Union minister for mines in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government.

BJD allied with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Odisha Assembly elections in 2000, following which Naveen Patnaik became CM for the first time. The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance lost the Lok Sabha elections in 2004. However, the coalition led by Naveen Patnaik won the state legislative elections and he became CM for a second time.

BJD quit the NDA in 2009 but won a huge victory in the Assembly polls that year. Patnaik became CM for a fourth time in 2014.

In 2013, the United Nations (UN) felicitated Naveen Patnaik by presenting a citation for his government's handling of Cyclone Phailin which hit Odisha in October that year. Patnaik was also invited by the UN to attend the 2015 Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) held in Japan.

In 2019, the UN complimented Naveen for his government's proposal of reserving 33 per cent of seats for women in the National Parliament as well as in the state's Legislative Assembly.

Now, let's take a glance at his flagship initiatives which caught the attention of many including the leaders of other states.

The contribution of Naveen's government towards hockey is immense as he has announced that his government would sponsor the Indian hockey teams till 2033.

"We are already committed to sponsoring the teams till 2033. And we will continue to host the major tournaments so that our teams get the home advantage and improve their rankings," Naveen had said.

Odisha had hosted Men's Hockey World Cup in 2018 and 2023, Champions Trophy 2014, Men's FIH Series finals 2018-19, FIH Olympic qualifiers 2019 and Men's Pro League 2021.

Patnaik said his government is 'investing a lot in hockey'.

Naveen's sponsorship bore fruit when India men's hockey team out-classed 2018 champions Japan in the final of the Asian Games 2023 to win the Gold medal for the 4th time in the country's history. India also secured a direct berth for the Paris Olympics next year.

Taking a step forward in women empowerment, Naveen's government launched another flagship initiative - Mission Shakti - which provided the spark that has unleashed the hitherto untapped entrepreneurial talents of women in the hinterland. In all, 7 million women have benefitted, helping them to live with financial security.

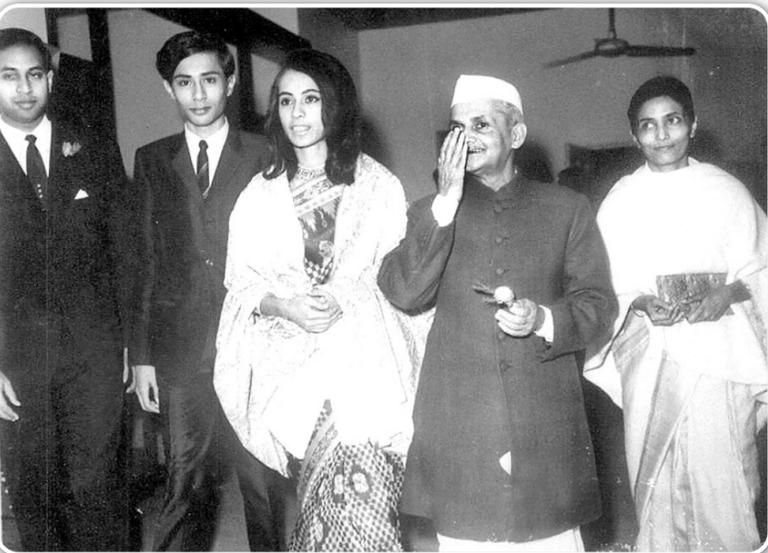
Moreover, his government October 12, 2023 rolled out 'Location Accessible Multimodal Initiative' (LAccMI), a forward-looking public transportation system connecting gram panchayats to the state capital. The scheme was launched in Malkangiri where as many as 36 buses will connect 111 gram panchayats. Mission Shakti self-help groups (SHGs) will be engaged in various operation and maintenance-related activities within the blocks in the first phase of LAccMI bus services, which will be implemented in Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Gajapati and Kandhamal. The government plans to spend Rs 3,178 crore in the first three years of the bus operation and 1,000 buses would ply connecting interior pockets with urban centres.

October 11, 2023 the government announced to bear Rs 528 crore towards interest for the loan which members of women SHGs would take for buying scooter.

The biggest populist programme could be the Ama Odisha Nabin Odisha (AONO), under which all 6,794 panchayats in the state will receive Rs 50 lakh each.

The KALIA scheme which provides financial, livelihood, cultivation and insurance support to small, marginal and landless farmers of Odisha has emerged as one of the biggest popular schemes as it benefitted a huge number of farmers.

Moreover, BSKY has emerged as a revolutionary health coverage scheme, benefitting over 70 lakh families in the state.



# NSDC launches Retailer Skill Development Prog



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** To empower the retailer community in the state, the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), announced a partnership with Coca-Cola India Sunday to launch the Super Power Retailer Programme under the Skill India Mission.

The partnership was announced at an event in Bhubaneswar in presence of the Union Minister for Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Dharmendra Pradhan, NSDC COO Ved Mani Tiwari, and Coca-Cola India & Southwest Asia President Sanket Ray.

The initiative focuses on enabling the retailers by focusing on building their capacity and capability in today's modern retailing sector.

It aims to provide retailers with skills, tools and techniques

that are required to succeed in the constantly changing retailer ecosystem and to spread knowledge of best practices, equipping traditional retailers with the right skill set necessary to make their business more profitable, as well as build their business skills.

The Super Power Retailer Programme will offer industry-specific skills such as customer management, inventory and stock management and financial management.

As part of the program, the participants will undergo a 14-hour training which will comprise two hours of classroom session and 12 hours of digital training.

The training will include physical classroom sessions along with an app-based Learning Management System (LMS) that is accessible on mobile and handheld devices for online modules. The modules will be hosted

The initiative aims at enabling the retailers by focusing on building their capacity and capability in today's modern retailing sector

Retailers will be trained on how to plan and implement business strategies, and utilise the vast opportunities extended by digital platforms

on Skill India Digital's platform (SID) and the trainings will be executed through a multimedia approach with a blend of videos, texts, by experienced trainers facilitating learning. The participants will receive a certificate upon completion of classroom, online training, and assessment modules.

Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister said, "The initiative will play a pivotal role in strengthening India's economy by skilling, reskilling, and upskilling the retailers by paving the way for their growth."

Retailers will be trained on how to plan and implement business strategies, and utilise the vast opportunities extended by digital platforms, Pradhan, the Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, said.

Pradhan also asked the officials concerned to make available training modules in multiple languages. We acknowledge the effort to enable a retail ecosystem that will exceed customer expectations, embrace the future of work, and provide exponential growth to the industry," he added.



MARKING EMPOWERMENT: Visually-impaired individuals take part in an awareness rally in City on International White Cane Day organised by State Institute of Special Education and Research (SISER), Bhubaneswar, Sunday

## INT'L WHITE CANE DAY

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Social Security and Empowerment of PwD (SSEPD) Minister Ashok Chandra Panda flagged off an awareness rally here Sunday to celebrate the achievements of visually-impaired individuals on the 'International White Cane Day'.

Starting from the State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), the rally saw participation of visually impaired stu-

dents and the general public. As per sources, 500 white canes were distributed among the visually-impaired persons as the rally progressed towards Master Canteen.

The participants of the rally used placards to circulate the messages on the importance of white-sticks. In his address, Panda underlined importance of the day and said that white stick with red stripes makes it more noticeable and helps in easy and free movement of vi-

sually-impaired persons. "The state government has successfully implemented 'Accessible India' scheme for better mobility of PwDs," said the minister.

Department principal secretary Bishnupada Sethi emphasised on collective effort to enhance safety, security and independence of visually-impaired individuals. Among others, Dillip Kumar Ray, director-cum-special secretary, SK Pradhan, additional secretary, Rashmi Mishra, deputy secre-

tary along with officers of the department and representatives of different NGOs were present in the programme.

To celebrate the day, 'Odisha Association for the Blind,' in collaboration with SVNIR-TAR, Ananda Charitable Trust, Sight Savers India, Shantidham Foundation organised an awareness meeting. White cane is a tool of safety and independence of blind persons which is recognized by UN, agreed the experts.

# Awareness rally by SSEPD dept

## CSIR-IMMT HOLDS FOUNDATION DAY

**Bhubaneswar:** The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) IMMT celebrated the 82nd CSIR Foundation Day in Bhubaneswar Sunday. The occasion was aimed at commemorating and showcasing the technologies developed and scientific and technical contributions made by the institute in past six decades. The event organised on the occasion was graced by NITI Aayog member Padma Bhushan VK Saraswat as the chief guest. In his speech, Saraswat highlighted the role of CSIR, in the science and



development sectors, particularly emphasizing the rising demand for lithium in G20 countries. NITI Aayog Deputy Advisor (Minerals) R Saravanabhavan and CSIR-IMMT Director Ramanuj Narayan also addressed the gathering. On this occasion, retired employees who have completed 25 years of service and a number of outstanding students were felicitated. Ramanuj Narayan extended his best wishes for Mahalaya and welcomed dignitaries, staff, and students.

## CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

Myself Haris Chandra Sahoo, S/o Bhikari Charan Sahoo, Address- Village-Balarampur, PO-Begunia, Dist-Khordha, Odisha, Pin-752062. I have lost my saleded No.367/07 on dt.6.10.2023 at 2 P.M. when I was going to Begunia Tahasil on the way I have lost the document. If anybody found please contact my advocate. Adv. Deepak Kumar Sahoo, Mob:9937058785, D22864

# 'Bhub AIIMS has gained public trust'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Be it medical education, research, treatment of patients or institutional collaborations, AIIMS Bhubaneswar has gained public trust and has excelled on multiple fronts, said Union Health and Family Welfare joint secretary Aradhana Patnaik while on a two-day visit to the national institute.

Patnaik visited different departments and interacted with patients and their attendants. "AIIMS Bhubaneswar has been providing quality healthcare services to people of Odisha and of neighbouring states. Daily patient footfall in the national institute proves the trust of the public," she said.

Joining the joint secretary on her visit, AIIMS executive director Ashutosh Biswas highlighted work on the ongoing developmental projects and future plans. Biswas informed the sec-



retary that liver transplant surgeries are now offered at the institute. "AIIMS has been able to change the perception of the public towards public healthcare facilities through dedication and empathetic effort of the medical professionals and staff," said Biswas.

Patnaik visited different facilities of the institute like state-of-the-art burn centre, CSSD,

MRD, PET-CT, radiation oncology and the other high-end services. She commended the institute for maintaining a clean and hygienic environment. She congratulated AIIMS for climbing up year by year in the NIRF and India Today rankings.

The joint secretary was accompanied by deans PR Mohapatra, Satyajit Mishra, Soubhagya Kumar Jena, med-

ical superintendent Dillip Kumar Parida, and DDA (I/c) Rasmi Ranjan Sethy, conducted meetings with department heads and faculties, where she assessed the progress of newly coming critical care facilities like CCHB, trauma and emergency care.

Patnaik was particularly impressed with the students of the institute, praising their vision and compassion for society. She also recognized AIIMS Bhubaneswar's efficient handling of the Bahanaga train tragedy, especially for managing bodies of the deceased.

## Khimji unveils 3rd showroom in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Khimji Jewellers inaugurated its 3rd showroom in Bhubaneswar and 8th in the state here at Soubhagya Nagar Sunday.

The showroom was inaugurated by Khimji Jewellers chairman Dinesh Khimji and MD Kishore Khimji in presence of directors Mitesh Khimji and Sumeet Khimji. "Spread across 5,000 square feet it is the largest jewellery showroom in the Soubhagya Nagar area.

It offers an enviable collection of hallmarked gold, diamond and platinum jewellery apart

from a wide collection of silver jewellery. Exchange facility of old gold jewellery is also available," informed a Khimji employee. Speaking on the occasion, Mitesh Khimji said, "We are overjoyed to open our 8th store in Odisha and the 3rd in Bhubaneswar. Our goal is to bring our stunning jewellery and top-notch customer services closer to the people in Soubhagya Nagar and the surrounding areas and make our brand even more accessible to our beloved customers of Bhubaneswar."

"This expansion reflects our commitment to providing the best for our customers," he said.



## 'Meri Saheli' opens outlet at BJB Nagar



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** The cosmetics and salon supply store 'Meri Saheli' opened another outlet at BJB Nagar here, Sunday. The store was opened in presence of friends and family members.

Speaking on this occasion, Kamal Sethia, the store owner said, "The purpose of opening the branch is to get closer to the customers and make their shopping experience hassle-free.

'Meri saheli' will be running special discounts on all the brands available and will be offering up to 20 per cent off on all brands."

"With decent exposure in wholesaling, 'Meri saheli' wants to reach people with Shopping Experience Retail ka, Rate Wholesale ka", Sethia added.

Those present at the event were Santosh Sethia, Jugal Sethia, Pratik Jain, Bikash Sethia, Renuka Jain, Jitendra Baid and Dillip Manot.

# Women prefer humour for long-term relationship

Affiliative or benevolent humour is a more attractive trail for success at long-term relationships, according to the findings, published in Personal Relationships.

"Our data indicate that strength and humour are independent in their influence on women's preferences, though we continue to show that women prioritise men's strength in short-term relationships and affiliative humour in long-term contexts," said Mitch Brown, psychology instructor in the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas in the US.

"These data provide evidence for how women navigate mating markets through various fitness cues."

The research focuses on the use of evolutionary perspectives in understanding motives that shape social perceptions and interpersonal preferences.



It shows how people prioritise physical features and behaviours in determining preferences for short-term and long-term mates.

The study sampled the preferences of 394 women, identifying as either heterosexual or bisexual, at a large public university.

With a mean age of 19 years, 251 participants identified as single and 143 as partnered.

Historically, reproductive success has been dependent on the identification of a mate with physical and psychological traits that satisfy relevant reproductive goals.

The ideal has been to select a mate who is both physically attractive and possesses positive behavioural attributes. However, the improbability of finding this mate has necessitated prioritisation of one set

of traits over another. The researchers sought to determine how women evaluate the desirability of strong men employing affiliative and aggressive humour across short-term and long-term contexts.

Affiliative humour was defined as benevolent, a type of humour that attempts to connect or associate rather than offend or alienate. This latter type of humour, aggressive, was emphatically undesirable for women in long-term contexts.

The researchers found no interactive effects between physical strength and humour. In other words, strength and humour operated independently in their influence on women's preferences.

Overall, Brown said, their results indicated that women's choices in a male partner are varied and "frequently involve evaluating the costs and benefits of various constellations of traits."

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# Industrialisation takes a backseat in Ganjam

Not a single industry has been set up in the district during the last five decades

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Oct 15:** Industrial development has taken a backseat in Ganjam district as lakhs of labourers continue to migrate to other states in search of work to earn a livelihood, a report said Sunday.

What is worrisome is that not a single industry has been set up in the district during the last five decades. Moreover, the existing sick industries have been fighting for their survival during this period. The district has remained neglected during the Congress and non-Congress regime.

The Aska Cooperative Sugar Mill that was established during the British rule has now turned sick and the cotton mill is lying defunct. Lakhs of residents, failing to get work in the district, still migrate to other states in search of livelihood.

Locals lament that the government has also turned a blind eye to establishment of agro-based industries in the district where the mainstay of people is agriculture. The proposed rail wagon plant could not be established in the district due to sheer negligence of the Union government. It is alleged that the Centre has shelved the rail wagon plant project.

The Indian Rare Earths Ltd (IREL) is fast turning sick while the Tata Company has withdrawn from the establishment of a mega steel project which it had planned 26 years back.

Notably, former prime minister late PV Narasimha Rao had contested as Congress can-



didate from Berhampur Lok Sabha seat in the 1995 Lok Sabha elections. He lured the people with attractive promises while contesting from Berhampur. To win the trust of the people, he laid the foundation stone of a mega steel plant proposed to be built by Tata group, December 30, 1995.

The state was then ruled by Chief Minister Janaki Ballabh Patnaik of the Congress party. Over 3.5 acre private land was acquired in Chhatrapur and Gopalpur areas at throwaway prices. As a result, hundreds of families were displaced from their homeland and farmlands.

The promises made to the displaced residents are yet to be fulfilled. They feel let down and neglected as no jobs were also given to them.

The Gopalpur transit and minor port which was built at a cost of ₹140 crore by the state government was destroyed during the Super Cyclone-1999.

The port was the rice bowl for scores of residents providing them opportunity to earn but the state government instead of rebuilding the port handed it

over to a private entity in 2006. Years have passed since then, but the district is yet to witness any development.

An announcement was made for establishment of ship breaking yard near the port around 25 years back. An old foreign ship was brought to the yard but many precious items of the ship were allegedly stolen during breaking of the ship. A private industry established in Ganjam block is battling on a sticky wicket due to frequent labour unrest.

It was hoped that the establishment of Tata group's steel plant and the Centre's rail wagon manufacturing plant will usher in employment for thousands of local residents. However, people now feel frustrated as the two proposed projects never materialised.

With many of the pre-existing industries going sick, Ganjam district has been virtually devoid of industrialisation. Trade unions and labour leaders have demanded the ruling BJD government to intervene and take steps for establishment of industries in the district.



**SOUVENIR RELEASE:** Dharitri and Orissa POST editor Tathagata Satpathy flanked by Karmeshwar Swain, advisor, Paradip Press Media; Baba Lalatendu Keshari, editor, Paridarshak; Basant Biswal, chairman, Paradip Municipality; lecturer Pradipt Satpathy, chief speaker (to his right) and Chitta Swain, advisor, Paradip Press Media; Basant Sahu, president, Paradip Press Media and Bata Das, secretary, Paradip Press Media (to his left) releasing the annual issue 'Mukta Prushtha' at the 8th annual function of Paradip Press Media at Paradip, Sunday

OP PHOTO

## Body of missing youth found; kin allege foul play



**Sukanta was reportedly missing since last Friday. His family members have alleged that Sukanta has been murdered**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chandbali, Oct 15:** The body of a missing youth was recovered from Natia creek, a tributary of Salandi river here Sunday. The deceased was identified as Sukanta, 22, son of Ramesh Das of Anakhasahi village under Madhapur panchayat and Chandbali block in Bhadrak district.

Sukanta was reportedly missing since last Friday. His family members have alleged that Sukanta has been murdered.

As per reports, Sukanta was untraceable since 8pm Friday and even after a frantic search, the family members were not able to find him. A written missing complaint was lodged by his family members at Chandbali police station Saturday. Acting on the complaint, Chandbali PS IIC Panchanan Mohanty along with a police team reached the spot and launched an investigation.

After tracking the mobile of Sukanta, police found the mobile lying on a nearby field. Some villagers spotted a body floating in Natia creek and informed the police, Sunday. Informed, Matto outpost police reached the spot, fished out the body from water and sent the body to Chandbali community health centre for post-mortem. A case (No-323/23) was registered at Chandbali police station and one person has been detained at the police station for enquiry in this regard.

## BJD's Lok Sampark Yatra in Rourkela

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Oct 15:** The BJD Sunday staged a 'Lok Sampark Yatra' led by Labour Minister Sarada Nayak from Bisra Chowk to Uditnagar here. Though the attendance went down in comparison to the previous year, its significance cannot be put aside as elections approach.

Over a few thousand people participated in the rally and despite the complaints of mismanagement the rally was regarded as a success.

The rally holds importance for Rourkela because former BJP MLA candidate Nihar Ray organised a massive 'Tiranga Rally' August 15 which gathered a relatively bigger crowd. In the last election, Ray had given a tough fight to BJD and the margin was very low, barely above ten thousand.

A political observer said that



the margin was definitely low for Sarada as everybody was expecting the margin would have been much higher. Furthering his argument, he said, "In India, headcount is certainly a big factor. But, he is a master player because he learned the game at the grassroots level and knows how to turn the table."

Both opponents and supporters of Sarada were waiting to see where his political fortune was moving. First came his ministerial berth a few months back, even as many thought his chances were very slim. Then he shut the mouth of his detractors when his candidate Halu

Mundari became the district president of BJD and Binay Topo another of his associates was appointed as the chairman of the district board. Both the posts were being held by Sarada before his elevation as minister.

Even some of his opponents agree to the point that despite the fall in number, he is still a face to reckon with. "We are in opposition to him still this number in no way goes against him. Unfortunately for the party, he is the leader here but he remains the force, which no one can deny," one of them said.

Meanwhile, Sarada said, "Look at the crowd and that gives you the idea the kind of support my party has here and in the district. Voters believe in our Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and the crowd is just a testimony to that because they came and participated despite the sun for him."

## Traditional rural sports held for girl students



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Oct 15:** Competitions on the traditional rural sports, which are almost extinct, were organised Sunday among girl students of schools and colleges in Ganjam district, functionaries of an organisation said.

The competitions were organised to revive the traditional rural sports, which were once considered the best form of entertainment for girls, they said.

The winners will be awarded in the 'kumar punei janha lo' cultural show to be organised by the Madhumaya Panigrahi Foundation (MPF) on the day of Kumar Purnima October 28.

The competitions for at least seven rural sports were held at Khallikote stadium here.

These sports included Khapara Dian, Kaudi Khela, Daudi Dian (skipping), Sankha Nada (blowing of conch shells), 'Thia Puchi', 'Basa Puchi' and Huluhuli in two categories-senior and junior.

More than 300 students from different schools and colleges of Berhampur, the Silk City, and its adjoining areas participated in the competitions, said an officer of the organisation.

Khallikote Unitary University Vice Chancellor Prafulla Mohanty and Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) Mayor Sanghamitra Dalei attended the event as the guests.

## 2 held for smuggling seized firecrackers

**Bhubaneswar:** Two persons including a home guard were arrested for illegally transporting seized firecrackers and liquor in Khurda district, police said Sunday. The home guard identified as Prakash Muduli and another person were caught by locals of Begunia while illegally transporting liquor and firecrackers in a car Saturday late at night. After detaining the vehicle, the locals informed Khurda SDPO Dilip Das. Later, the police arrested the duo for illegally transporting the seized items. The items were seized by the officials of Begunia PS Saturday and stored in the police station premises. "We have registered a case under relevant sections of IPC, Odisha Excise Act and Indian Explosives Act, and arrested a home guard and a civilian. The accused will be forwarded to court," Das said.

## 2,160 bottles cough syrup seized; 2 held in Bargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bargarh, Oct 15:** Town police here Sunday seized 2,160 bottles of cough syrup from an auto-rickshaw and arrested two persons during a raid near Krushak Bazaar on Gurudwar Square-Railway Station road in the town while it was being

smuggled outside, Sunday.

Police also seized four litre of liquid sedatives, two strips of nitrogen tablets, plastic glass, a mobile phone and auto-rickshaw during the seizure. The accused persons were identified as Ganesh Nag, 40, and Shambhu Luha, 35, both residents of railway station area under ward no-19 in the

town. A third person managed to give the police a slip and escaped.

Town police registered a case under sections-274, 275 and 34 of Indian Penal Code and 21(B)/29 of NDPS Act. Later, the accused were produced in the court. This was stated here by ASP Tapan Kumar Mohanty in a presser held at the SDPO office in the

town, Sunday.

The bank accounts of the accused persons will be frozen while efforts are on to nab the third person and trace the origin of procurement, the ASP said. SDPO Padarbinda Tripathy and Town police station IIC Satyajit Kandankel were present during the press meet.

## Global Handwashing Day at Anchalika Science HSS



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bellaguntha, Oct 15:** Global Handwashing Day was observed at the Anchalika Science Higher Secondary School at Kshatriyabarapur under Bellaguntha block in Ganjam district, Sunday.

The programme was observed on the college campus in the presence of Principal Bishnu Prasad Pattanayak and under the guidance of P Deepak Rao, rover leader, Snigdharani Gouda, ranger leader of Bharat Scouts & Guides units and attended by volunteers, students and other staff.

The aim of the programme was to sensitise students to motivate and mobilise people in the locality to improve their

hand washing habits and the necessity to wash hands by soap from time to time during the day.

The students were asked to drive home the message of hand washing hygiene and how it influences our daily lives. They were also asked to raise awareness on the importance of hand washing to prevent the spread of infections and demonstrate proper method of hand washing to all participants.

KC Mahapatra, SK Lenka, Deepu Bhunya, Maheswar Raut, Gangadhar Rana, Swarupa Biswal, Padma Charana Nayak, Simanchal Biswal, Budhiram Biswal, Maheswar Gouda, Ramesh Chandra Bishoyi and Balam Gouda participated in the programme.

## Cured leprosy patients in their 60s get hitched

**DESERTED BY THEIR NEAR AND DEAR EVEN AFTER RECOVERING, THEY PREFERRED TO REMAIN TOGETHER FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIFE**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Balasure, Oct 15:** A man and a woman in their 60s, who were cured of leprosy, decided to stay together as life partners and married as their respective families abandoned them years ago. Dasa Marandi (63) and Padmabati (65), both afflicted with leprosy, were under treatment in a government-sponsored leprosy treatment centre at Bampada under Remuna block in Balasure district.

Both recovered from the disease. Dasa Marandi stayed for four years and Padmabati for about 10 years in the leprosy treatment centre. They found

themselves abandoned by their respective family members since they were diagnosed with the disease.

The families did not accept them even after doctors declared them fully cured.

The disease, once considered to be a taboo in the orthodox rural society, still continues to haunt the mindset of people and many are unable to cope up with the changed situations, says Niranjan Parida, a lawyer and social activist from Balasure.

Dasa Marandi, who was under treatment for four years was admitted to the male ward, as his family members deserted him since the detection of the disease, says a villager in Sartha under Sadar block.

Similar was the situation in Padmabati's case. She had to remain alone in the treatment centre for 10 years as her husband and other family members left her alone though she claims that she has a small house in her village under Oupada block in Balasure district.

Both, deserted by their near



and dear, preferred to remain together for the rest of their life. As per their wishes, inmates and staff of the leprosy treatment centre had arranged a marriage ceremony as per Hindu marriage rituals, said Dasa Marandi.

He said, "We were close for years and first I proposed to her to remain together and she agreed."

They would stay in a rehabilitation centre near the leprosy treatment centre.

The chief district medical officer (CDMO) and additional district medical officer (ADMO) of Balasure congratulated the newlywed senior couple along with staff and other inmates of the leprosy treatment centre who arranged the ceremony in the

temple Friday.

A simple feast was also arranged followed by the marriage ceremony and all costs were borne by the staff of the centre, said a staff member Durga Mani Upadhyay.

Dr Mrutyunjay Mishra, ADMO, Balasure said, "Both are fully cured and can lead a happy and normal life like others."

FOCUS POLITICS

# XENOPHOBIC POPULISM



Much like the Republican Party in the US, the Tories, who once considered themselves the champions of middle-class centrism, are now being pulled to the right by populist agitators

the Panthéon-Sorbonne University with an EU scholarship. But the grievances she is exploiting are not entirely unfounded. Historically, both left and right-leaning elites have encouraged immigration – the right motivated by the prospect of cheap labour; the left by multicultural idealism. It is also true that the global free-trade policies embraced by Western leaders sometimes harmed the interests of workers in many developed countries. The EU itself is widely seen as a product of European elites.

Mostly, however, these resentments are driven by real or perceived loss of status in a fast-changing world. Industrial workers and miners may have faced harsh working conditions, but they could take pride in their unions, social groups, and cultural activities. Many of these have vanished.

Similarly, just as many Americans grew up believing that the US was the world's greatest country, Britons were once the proud subjects of a global empire. In the US, there is sometimes a racial element in popular anger as well; white people, especially in the southern states, sense that their dominance over people of colour is waning. And it is often liberal elites, not immigrants, who are blamed for diminishing "our" stature, looking down on "us," and destroying the values and traditions that "we" hold dear.

The sense of loss fuels today's politics of resentment. It hardly matters whether the demagogues who exploit such feelings are the children of Indian immigrants from Africa, or crooked businessmen and fraudsters. People will support them, as long as they manage to articulate a shared rage.

*The writer is the author, most recently, of The Collaborators: Three Stories of Deception and Survival in World War II.*

PROJECT SYNDICATE

If she was not already the bête noire of British liberals, UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman's recent string of statements has cemented her image as a nationalist bigot. Despite facing criticism from within her own party, she has doubled down on her anti-immigrant, anti-refugee rhetoric.

In a recent speech in Washington, Braverman claimed that multiculturalism in Europe had failed, that uncontrolled immigration poses a threat to Western civilisation, and that the United Nations' 1951 Refugee Convention – which the United Kingdom ratified under Winston Churchill – is outdated. Braverman went on to claim that refugees facing persecution in their home countries for their gender or sexual identities are "bogus asylum seekers" who should no longer be allowed to enter Britain.

This is a mixture of callousness, straw dogs, and nonsense. In some countries, people can be executed for being gay. In other countries, women are not even allowed to go to school. Few serious people advocate "uncontrolled" immigration. And the British Refugee Council issued a report claiming that 74% of people arriving in Britain by boat in 2023 would be recognised as asylum seekers. This figure is based on statistics compiled by Braverman's own Home Office.

Braverman herself was born in the UK to immigrant parents of Indian descent. Her Christian father migrated from Kenya in the 1960s, and her Hindu Tamil mother arrived in the UK from Mauritius. Given her own family's history, one might have expected Braverman to avoid stoking an anti-refugee panic.

But this is not the first time a second-generation immigrant has sought validation through hypocritical displays of chauvinistic nationalism, and Braverman went a step further in her speech to the Conservative Party Conference on October

3, invoking her family's immigration story to promote an anti-immigrant agenda. "The wind of change that carried my own parents across the globe in the twentieth century was a mere gust compared [with] the hurricane that is coming," she warned.

The prevailing belief among British political analysts is that Braverman is simply courting the hard-right factions within her party in a quest to become its next leader. Much like the Republican Party in the US, the Tories, who once considered themselves the champions of middle-class centrism, are now being pulled to the right by populist agitators.

While it is possible that Braverman is just a political opportunist, her anti-immigrant diatribes resonate far beyond Britain's borders. In portraying immigrants and asylum seekers as criminals and threats to Western civilisation, she is tapping into the same right-wing populist current that has propelled Germany's Alternative für Deutschland, Marine Le Pen's National Rally in France, and former US President Donald Trump's GOP.

But does the rise of xenophobic populism mean that Western populations are becoming increasingly racist? The data suggest otherwise. More

than 70% of Britons believe that a wide variety of ethnicities and cultures is part of British identity, and 75% support mixed-race relationships. Such sentiments were not common in the UK 50 years ago.

Moreover, most British people who fear a "hurricane" of refugees have likely never encountered any, given that asylum seekers are confined to designated camps and not allowed to work or interact with the general public. And citizens of cities with the largest number of non-Western immigrants tend to be more accepting of them than people in areas where there are relatively few.

But today's populist revolt is not really about refugees. The greatest resentment among supporters of the hard right is reserved for the so-called "liberal elites," the highly-educated urban folks who Braverman, in her conference speech, called "the privileged woke minority, with their luxury beliefs." These elites are generally blamed for everything from the loss of industrial jobs and uncontrolled immigration to the alleged "tyranny" of international institutions such as the World Health Organisation and the European Union.

Braverman herself, incidentally, is a Cambridge-educated King's Counsel who studied at



Ian Buruma

**HISTORICALLY, BOTH LEFT AND RIGHT-LEADING ELITES HAVE ENCOURAGED IMMIGRATION – THE RIGHT MOTIVATED BY THE PROSPECT OF CHEAP LABOUR, THE LEFT BY MULTICULTURAL IDEALISM**

## Middle East Madness

A week after Hamas unleashed unprecedented attacks on Israel raining down thousands of rockets, massacring Israeli youth and children and taking several Israelis hostage it is now becoming clear that there is a method in the madness. The horrific barbarity came in the wake of the far-right-controlled Benjamin Netanyahu-government's provocative acts of aggression against the Arabs, including the Palestinians, living in land occupied and expanded by Israel. The attacks seem to be intended to be an answer to the new policies of the government geared to cornering and hounding out the Palestinians with impunity. The ultra-right partner of the coalition ruling Israel appears to have been over-confident about its anti-Arab rhetoric and attempts to displace Palestinians from their homes. This also emboldened the government to go ahead with its judicial reforms to make the Supreme Court subservient to the executive so that it could implement its bigoted policies without any checks and balances. This alone explains the reaction from the wider Arab world. Despite its brutality, Hamas' attacks have been celebrated by the Arab public across the region. At the same time Israel's bombing of Gaza in retaliatory strikes has predictably brought even more support for the Palestinian cause. This has also brought to the fore the contradiction of regional governments, including Saudi Arabia, expressing their keenness on pursuing closer ties with Israel and Arab public remaining sympathetic to the Palestinians.

Hamas appears to be cashing in on this pan-Arab sentiment in order to project itself as the rallying point for the Palestinians' cause of getting their own homeland. The whole thing seems to have been carefully planned beforehand. The social dynamics is such that Hezbollah - the powerful Lebanese militia operating on Israel's northern border - launched its attack on Israel immediately following that of Hamas. Experts calculate Hezbollah may join Hamas' side depending on the extent to which the war between Israel and Hamas spreads.

There is also a general assumption that Iran is involved in the planning of Hamas' attack on Israel. This is only natural given the fact that Iran is known to provide Hamas with weapons and finance since long.

Similarly, the conflagration is getting traction from President Vladimir Putin of Russia. He has already expressed his disapproval of Israel's action in Gaza on the ground of the humanitarian cost of Israel's ultimatum to the Palestinians to run for safety from their homes to safer zones in 24 hours. This has also brought condemnation from the United Nations chief for the patent cruelty involved in Israel's threat to innocent people to leave their home and hearth overnight.

In a bizarre twist to the macabre dance of death in Israel and Gaza, a propaganda war has started to mobilise public opinion in favour of either of the warring sides. This is also something never before witnessed. Propaganda or disinformation campaigns have always been part of war strategies to confuse the rivals and get more support. But, this time around the information or disinformation war has assumed unprecedented proportions taking advantage of the new communication tools. Since launching the massive cross-border attack into Israel, Hamas has been seeding violent videos and graphic images of its attacks on social media, particularly on Telegram and X. The matter has reached such a stage that X owner Elon Musk has received a warning letter from an EU commissioner regarding disinformation being spread on the platform in violation of the EU's Digital Services Act, while the UK's technology secretary has summoned social media executives to demand the removal of violent content from their platforms.

The propaganda offensive is but natural in all warfare. Hamas' seeding of violent content on social media is a military tactic designed to batter Israeli morale and increase the deterrent leverage of the Israeli hostages the group is holding. The ingenuity of Hamas is its ability to take advantage of the lack of content moderation on X and Telegram so as to weaponise social media. Israel's security forces too have long used social media to mould global perceptions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to demoralise its adversaries and maintain support from its allies. It is using exactly the same ploy, it appears, regarding its airstrikes and operations in Gaza.

Hamas, in a sense, is paying Israel back in the same coin. That is the truth and the savagery by both sides cannot possibly hide it.

It is interesting to note how Indians too are reacting to the Hamas-Israel conflict. Many Right wing social media handles are supporting Israel and baying for the blood of Hamas. They presume all Palestinians are Moslems so Israel is doing their work. Little do they realize that war in the Middle East could cost India dearly in the coming days.

### WISDOM CORNER

Your visions will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes. CG JUNG

I don't want to spend my life explaining myself. You either get it, or you don't. FRANK ZAPPA

Patience is the strength of the weak, impatience is the weakness of the strong. IMMANUEL KANT

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1758: American lexicographer Noah Webster, who was instrumental in giving American English a dignity and vitality of its own, was born. Known for his American Spelling Book (1783) and his American Dictionary of the English Language, 2 vol. (1828; 2nd ed., 1840), Webster was instrumental in giving American English a dignity and vitality of its own. Both his speller and dictionary reflected his principle that spelling, grammar, and usage should be based upon the living, spoken language rather than on artificial rules. He also made useful contributions as a teacher, grammarian, journalist, essayist, lecturer, and lobbyist.

1793: Marie-Antoinette guillotined. After the French Revolution began, Marie-Antoinette, queen consort of Louis XVI, was targeted by agitators who, enraged by her extravagance and attempts to save the monarchy, ultimately guillotined her on this day in 1793. Her name is associated with the decline in the moral authority of the French monarchy in the closing years of the ancien régime, though her courtly extravagance was but a minor cause of the financial disorders of the French state in that period. Her rejection of reform provoked unrest, and her policy of court resistance to the progress of the French Revolution finally led to the overthrow of the monarchy in August, 1792. Louis XVI was executed on orders from the National Convention in January 1793, and in August the queen was put in solitary confinement in the Conciergerie. She was brought before the Revolutionary tribunal on October 14, 1793, and was guillotined two days later.

1978: First non-Italian to win the papacy since 1523. Karol Józef Wojtyła, the Archbishop of Kraków, won the papal elections that were held after his predecessor Pope John Paul I died after only 33 days in office. As Pope, Wojtyła took on the name of John Paul II. He was the second-longest serving pope in modern history, after Pope Pius IX, who was in office for over 31 years.

1986: First person to scale all eight-thousanders. Italian mountaineer, Reinhold Messner, scaled the Lhotse, in Nepal. It is the world's 4th tallest peak, and it is one of the 14 eight-thousanders - mountains that are more than 8000 meters above sea level.

### SPECTRUM DISASTER MITIGATION

## Building resilience imperative

The worst-ever recent flood in Sikkim due to the outburst in the South Lhonak Lake located at 17,000 ft was predicted by researchers about 20 years back. Experts feel that this was triggered because of dam building and unplanned construction along the Teesta's downstream. Even lately, the 2021 study, published in journal Geomorphology, highlighted that the South Lhonak Lake witnessed a significant growth in the past decades due to glacial retreat, thereby increasing its chances of glacial lake outburst floods. According to estimates, over 60 people have died and 130 are still missing due to the floods.



Dhurjati Mukherjee

**THE MONSOON HAS BECOME MORE ERRATIC AND UNPREDICTABLE, BRINGING EXTREME RAIN ON ONE HAND AND DROUGHT ON THE OTHER**

Today the challenges of floods are of a different magnitude altogether. The monsoon has become more erratic and unpredictable, bringing extreme rain on one hand and drought on the other. Worryingly, India's drought-prone area has increased by 57% since 1997 while instances of heavy rainfall have risen by almost 85% since 2012. This can have far-reaching impacts, affecting several generations. The other factor is the occurrence of floods and landslides in the Himalayan region.

On the question of mitigation of floods and droughts, India

has launched many policies and programmes to improve water security and build climate resilience - several with World Bank support. This includes advances in technologies such as flood forecasting models, hydromet services and early warning systems, greater dam safety, and a national plan for disaster management. Even so, these measures, although laudable, have not been able to address the scale of India's water woes.

Experts believe that floods and droughts don't need to become disasters and it depends on how society and local self-government manages these climate extremes. While governments tend to deal with these in a slipshod manner, what is needed is a paradigm shift in the way these events are managed altogether. Given the urgency of staying ahead of the changing climate, the World Bank, with support from Deltares, a Netherlands-based research institute, has put forward a new perspective to better manage these risks - the EPIC Response framework (Enable, Plan, Invest, Control).

At a recent workshop of the World Bank with states such as Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala and Odisha, it was pointed they face many common challenges

though they have different climatic, economic, and social conditions. In Karnataka, for instance, around 20,000 water bodies have dried up and, in many districts, groundwater is depleting by the day. In Assam, where the mighty Brahmaputra flows, floods, riverbank erosion, and encroachment of riverine areas are major challenges. In Bihar, too, where many rivers flow down from the mountains of Nepal carrying large sediment loads, more than 70% of the land is flood prone.

The newly developed EPIC Response framework emphasises that floods and droughts be addressed as different ends of the same spectrum, and the whole of society be involved in the response, including government, private sector, local government, academia, and civil society. The framework is now being piloted in Assam, along with a new tool that enables various agencies to assess the status of their flood and drought protection programmes, identify where collaboration can be enhanced, and track progress over time. It enables various agencies to assess the status of their hydro-climatic risk management systems, identify areas where programme components can be strength-

ened, ascertain where collaboration can be enhanced, and track progress over time. More than any natural disaster, it's a well-known fact that floods and cyclones cause the greatest loss, and the poorer and weaker sections are greatly affected. Even the IPCC suggested that increasing storm events and floods will frequently occur and the urban poor will be the most affected community. This is known to all planners and government officials but even then, tackling them before the occurrence, which has become quite a frequent phenomenon, has not been undertaken in an organised manner. Obviously, the segment of population affected does not have a loud voice and there is nobody to take up their cause in right earnest.

It is quite unfortunate that in such a situation, climate-resilient structural and non-structural solutions for effective water governance have not taken place despite a lot of talk by political leaders and technocrats. It remains to be seen how long floods would continue to cause huge loss of lives and property and when the government would seriously tackle this disaster.

INFA

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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### Story of contrasts

Sir, The contrast between India's 'growth story' and its rising inequality appears to be playing out year after year; as the country ranks 111 out of a total of 125 countries in the Global Hunger Index 2023 - a clear four rankings low from its position of 107 in 2022. It is all the more disturbing that India's GHI score of 28.7 this year on a 100-point scale puts it in the "serious" category. The ruling BJP calls the ranking's methodology as 'shocking' and 'unscientific.' But the bitter and painful truth is that hunger and malnourishment tracks with growing inequality in India, which is something inexplicable and shows the extent of disparity of incomes and callousness towards the poor. In terms of human rights, Universal Basic Income guarantees each person the right to food. The seriousness of the problem of hunger and malnourishment should be highlighted and tackled at the national level, since states alone cannot handle a problem of such enormity.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

### Social justice

Sir, The recently released caste survey data in Bihar, spearheaded by the Nitish Kumar government, is a significant step toward promoting social justice and inclusive development. This initiative, coming less than a year before the general elections, emphasises the growing influence of caste-based politics as a tool for political empowerment. The survey reveals that the Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs) and the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) constitute a substantial portion of the state's population, totalling over 63 per cent of the 13.07 crore residents. While the ruling JD(U) and RJD are likely to advocate for an enhanced OBC/EBC quota, the BJP, which has gained ground in the EBC vote bank in northern India, has a nuanced stance. The caste survey is integral to Nitish Kumar's political strategy, not only to maintain relevance in state politics but also to play a leading role in the national opposition against the BJP. Remarkably, the Bihar caste survey enjoys support from all political parties including the state BJP unit. However, the BJP's central leadership is hesitant due to its ideological positioning. Caste counting clashes with the party's Hindutva agenda, which aims for the integration of all castes under a single umbrella.

Bishal Kumar Saha, MURSHIDABAD

# Traffic tips aid drivers negotiate HP roads

Traffic plans like "One Minute Traffic Plan" and "Apple transportation Plan" were successful in ensuring road safety as well as in decongesting the capital city though over 50 lakh tourists vehicles had visited Shimla this year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, Oct 15:** The apple transportation period in Shimla this year has witnessed a 44 per cent decline in road accidents as compared to last year, with authorities imparting skills on hill driving to drivers with a focus on halting of vehicles at accident prone spots and not over applying brakes on slopes.

The period from July to mid October in Shimla is the peak period when apples are transported and it is also a time when the number of road accidents increase as many drivers are not proficient in hill driving.

Superintendent of Police, Shimla, Sanjeev Kumar Gandhi

told PTI that an analysis of factors leading to loss of life and property due to accidents during the apple season was done and it was found that overloading, over speeding and lack of proficiency in hill driving led to frequent accidents.

Over application of brakes on slopes by drivers leads to loss of pressure and heats up the wheel which impacts the brake system and results in accidents.

Imparting knowledge and skills on hill driving especially not applying brakes frequently, use of heavy gears and holding and halting of vehicles at accident prone spots to coordinate traffic and speed helped in reducing the number of accidents, he added.



According to police data, 32 people were killed and 130 were injured in 79 road accidents during the apple season from July 1 to October 13 this year as compared to 65 deaths and injuries to 255 persons in 142 accidents in the corresponding period in 2022 which implies that accidents, deaths and injuries reduced by 44 per cent, 50 per cent and 49 per cent respectively.

Despite challenging conditions following heavy damage to roads infrastructure caused by landslides and flash floods triggered by torrential rains in the months of July and August, the road accidents count during the apple season has significantly come down in the district, police officials said Sunday.

About 1.91 crore apple boxes crossed Shoghi, Gumma, Fagu, Kuddu and Balog barriers in the district this season, according to police.

As many as 1,12,571 vehicles, including 78,819 pickups, 29,958 trucks and 3,804 trolleys (big trucks), were used for transportation of apples.

Reduction of road accidents during the apple season has also reflected in the total accidents reported in 2023 and the road accidents from January 1 till October 13 decreased from 283 last year to 233 this year; a decline of 17 per cent while number of deaths and injuries reduced from 140 to 99 (29 per cent) and 579 to 366 (36 per cent) respectively.

About 70,000 less challans were issued but the number of accidents reduced which means there is no direct correlation between high numbers of challans and road accidents, the police said and added that voluntary compliance to traffic norms is our new initiative and traffic schooling on roads yield much better results in hill area like Shimla, the police said.

# Kerala CM welcomes 1st ship to Vizhinjam



**CONGRESS ATTRIBUTES CREDIT TO OOMMEN CHANDY**

The Vizhinjam port is being constructed under the public-private partnership model. The Adani Group is the private partner in the development of what will become one of the largest ports in the world, once commissioned

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 15:** Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Sunday welcomed the first ever ship at the Rs 7,700 crore international deep-water port at Vizhinjam here at an event which saw the Congress attribute credit for the project to late party stalwart Oommen Chandy.

As Vijayan said the scope of development that the port would bring to the state was beyond imagination and the arrival of the first ship shows nothing was impossible for Kerala, the Congress said it was all possible only due to the initiatives taken by Chandy when he was the CM.

Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the state assembly VD Sathesaran said Chandy bravely took the decision to make Vizhinjam port a reality even when he was accused of piracy and selling real-estate worth Rs 6,000 crore to the Adani group.

"He did not flinch or back down or give up in the face of such accusations," the LoP said while speaking at the event.

Congress MP from Thiruvananthapuram Shashi Tharoor, who too spoke at the event, said it was thanks to the initiative taken by Chandy that the project -- which was stagnant from 2004 to 2010 -- moved forward.

Chandy ensured all studies were carried out and all approvals were received from the Centre during his tenure.

Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief K Sudhakaran, in a statement, slammed Vijayan for not commemorating Chandy as was done by state Ports Minister Ahamed Devarkovil.

Sudhakaran alleged that Vijayan was "unlucky" as he was destined to inaugurate projects initiated by the former CM.

Union Minister of State for External Affairs V

Muraleedharan, on the other hand, attributed credit for the project to the Narendra Modi government. He said the project was an outcome of the good governance of the Modi government.

Muraleedharan said new life was breathed into the port project in 2015 only after the Modi government came to power.

Meanwhile, Karan Adani -- CEO of Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd -- in a post on social media platform X said that the project journey began in 2015 and the momentous occasion was due to the trust and love shown by all.

"Our journey began in 2015 when the people of Kerala and Thiruvananthapuram entrusted us with their dream of this port. Today, as the 1st vessel berths at #VizhinjamPort, the trust & love shown by all have brought us to this momentous day. My heartfelt salutation to each one of you," he said.

The CM, in his speech on the occasion, said the arrival of the first ship at the deep water port indicates "nothing is impossible for Kerala" and that the state "will survive any crisis".

"The scope of development in Kerala due to Vizhinjam port is beyond our imagination. Therefore, we should all take an approach conducive for it," he said.

He said that with the coming of the first ship at the port, "we are at the threshold of our dream project becoming a reality".

"This port is a major contribution to the country from Kerala," he added.

Earlier, Vijayan waved a green flag signalling the tugboats to push the huge Chinese ship -- Zhen Hua 15 -- from the wharf to the docking yard. The tugboats pushing the vessel, which carries huge ship-to-shore and yard cranes, also gave it a water salute.

# Devotees flock to Himachal temples as Navratri arrives

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Shimla, Oct 15:** Braving rains, crowds of devotees from across the region thronged temples in Himachal Pradesh Sunday on the first day of the nine-day-long Shardiya Navratri, one of the largest auspicious Hindu festivals dedicated to Maa Durga and her nine manifestations.

The popular temples of Naina Devi in Bilaspur; Chintpurni in Una; Baba Balak Nath in Hamirpur; Brajeshwari Devi, Jwalaji and Chamunda Devi in Kangra; and Bhimakali and Hateshwari in Shimla district were tastefully decorated and witnessed huge rush to seek the blessings of the Goddess.

A majority of the pilgrims came from Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and Delhi.

"We are expecting over 20,000-25,000 devotees at the temple daily," an official at the hilltop Naina Devi shrine told IANS over phone.

Devotees would be able to watch online live "darshan" of Brajeshwari Devi, Naina Devi, Chintpurni and Jwalaji temples. They would also be able to offer online offerings.

Security has been beefed up to manage the crowd in all the prominent shrines, a senior police official told IANS.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu extended warm greetings and best wishes to the people on the occasion.

In a message, the Chief Minister said, "May this holy festival bring happiness, prosperity and new enthusiasm in everyone's life and may the Goddess give strength to the people to overcome the aftermath of the catastrophe that hit the state during the monsoon."

The festival, which marks keeping fast, offering puja to the goddess and observing rituals, will conclude October 24 with Dussehra.



Commuters move through the waterlogged Attukal road following heavy rain in Thiruvananthapuram

# Heavy rains lash Kerala

ORANGE ALERT DECLARED IN 4 DISTRICTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 15:** As heavy rains continued to batter Kerala, landslides and flooding were reported from many parts of the state, especially its southernmost district of Thiruvananthapuram, which was severely affected by waterlogging in several areas Sunday.

According to visuals shown on TV channels, the heavy rains since Saturday led to waterlogging and flooding of streets, roads and low-lying areas of Thiruvananthapuram district.

The Technopark colony in Kazhakoottam, a suburban area in the district, saw water entering homes leading to people being evacuated from homes, as per the visuals.

Water entered hundreds of homes in the district and in some areas there were also in-

cidents of landslides, according to the visuals.

Visuals also showed cars almost submerged while rescuers evacuated people from homes in inflatable boats to camps in some parts of Thiruvananthapuram.

State General Education Minister V Sivankutty, who visited the flooded areas, said in a Facebook post that the rains since the previous night have created an unusual situation in the city of Thiruvananthapuram.

He said there was waterlogging in many places and the non-receding of the rising sea water has also aggravated the situation.

The minister said the district administration was conducting relief operations on a war-time basis and all kinds of the aid and assistance would be

provided to those affected.

State Revenue Minister K Rajan also visited some of the flood affected areas, according to his Facebook post.

After a ministerial level meeting was held, Sivankutty, at a press briefing, said many parts of Thiruvananthapuram, especially the capital city, have been seriously affected by floods and waterlogging.

Rajan said that over 100 mm of rainfall was received in the capital city and nearly double that in the area around the international airport since Saturday night.

Meanwhile, Sunday, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued an orange alert in four -- Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha -- and yellow alert in 8 districts of the state for the day.

LANDSLIDES, FLOODING

# For 4 centuries, Kullu Dussehra has celebrated divinity, royalty

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kullu, Oct 15:** The countdown has begun for the world-famous Kullu Dussehra celebrations that are believed to have started in the 17th century when the ruler, Raja Jagat Singh, installed an idol of Lord Raghunath to remove a curse and seek his blessings.

Kullu Dussehra celebrations -- which begin on Vijaya Dashami, the day Dussehra ends in the rest of the country -- last for a week. This time the festivities, an amalgamation of Hindu and local 'pahari' traditions, are being held from October 24 to 30.

Organisers told IANS that this time there will be a departure from tradition. For the first time apart from the annual Rath Yatra that is taken out throughout Kullu town, there will also be a colourful carnival and magnificent tableaux showcasing the traditions and culture of the region. However, the annual Rath Yatra which is a time-honoured tradition will still be held with the same fervour and pomp and show with which it has always



been held.

Each year, Lord Raghunath's idol is placed on a beautifully-decorated chariot and then there is a grand procession in which the chariot is taken on a yatra throughout Kullu town amid the mandatory presence of the erstwhile Kullu royal family. Also visitors will get an opportunity to witness the spiritual significance of Lahri, a traditional dance.

As per the programme, the Rath Yatra that is a gathering of nearly 300 deities from across

the Valley of Gods, will be carried out on the first day i.e. October 24.

This will be followed by a cultural parade October 25, the Lahri dance October 29 and the Kullu Carnival with tableaux exhibiting the traditions and culture of the region, October 30.

**Why Kullu Dussehra is unique?**

First, it is mandatory for the erstwhile Kullu royal family to be present in the Rath Yatra on the first day and perform Vedic rituals and indigenous customs

during the celebrations.

Second, the famous idol of Raghunath was brought from Ayodhya to Kullu during the reign of Raja Jagat Singh who ruled Kullu from 1637 to 1672. The king brought the idol in order to remove a curse which a Brahmin had cast upon him.

Raja Jagat Singh was freed of the curse after he installed the idol on the throne and proclaimed himself to be merely the first servant of the temple.

After that, the royals of Kullu ruled the state in the name of Raghunath, who became the principal deity of Kullu Valley. The Lankadahan ceremony, which began at the time of Raja Jagat Singh, is still performed on the last day of the Kullu Dussehra on the banks of the Beas River.

Unlike other places, effigies of Ravana, Meghnad and Kumbhakaran are not burnt here during Dussehra.

According to a reference book compiled by the Kullu administration, there are 534 'living' gods and goddesses in the Kullu Valley, which is also known as Devbhoomi or the land of gods.

# HP to notify trek routes to improve safety

RECENTLY, THE BODY OF A 35-YEAR-OLD TREKKER WAS RECOVERED AFTER HE WENT MISSING IN THE FORESTS OF MANALI. PRELIMINARY PROBES SUGGESTED THAT HE HAD LOST HIS WAY AND FELL FROM A CLIFF IN THE DARKNESS



The recurring problem of trekkers getting lost or facing unexpected incidents leads to resource-intensive rescue efforts. Notifying the trekking routes will enhance their safety and convenience

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, Oct 15:** The Himachal Pradesh government will notify trekking routes to ensure the safety of trekkers and make carrying tracking devices mandatory to lower cases of climbers going missing, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said Saturday.

A new initiative has been taken under which the Forest department has been directed to designate and notify the trekking routes, he said in a statement.

These routes will be meticulously planned, taking into consideration local weather condi-

tions and the availability of essential facilities. Comprehensive packages will be offered to the trekkers through the Ecotourism Society, thus streamlining the trekking experience and bolstering safety, he added.

Under the proposed regulations, the trekkers will be required to register with the authorities before embarking on their journeys. They will also be provided with tracking devices as a mandatory safety measure to enable swift tracking in the event of an emergency.

According to the statement, the forest department will offer the services of trained guides to the trekkers to further increase their safety. These guides will be registered and provided with specialised training. This will not only improve the trekkers' safety but also create employment opportunities for local youngsters.

"This initiative aims to mitigate the incidents of missing trekkers and ensure a more secure trekking experience," Sukhu said.

Emphasising the economic importance of tourism in Himachal Pradesh, the chief minister reiterated the state government's commitment to promote religious, adventure and ecotourism.



Clay idol of Goddess Durga being transported ahead of Durga Puja in Kolkata



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during a ceremony for the unveiling of a bust of Rabindranath Tagore at the International Friendship Park, in Bac Ninh province, Vietnam



People participate in the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon 2023, at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi



Helicopters of the Indian Air Force's aerobatic team 'Sarang' during the 91st Air Force Day celebrations at Air Force Station, Borjhar, in Guwahati



President Droupadi Murmu pays homage to former President APJ Abdul Kalam on his birth anniversary at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi



A 19-foot tall statue of BR Ambedkar during its inauguration, in Maryland, USA. This is the tallest statue of Ambedkar outside India



Shiv Pratishtan supporters during celebrations of 'Navratri' festival in Sangli, Maharashtra



Indian Air Force personnel rescue civilians from a flood-affected area of Sikkim

## of the day quote

As Adani group's skeletons tumble out of the closet on a daily basis, the government is desperately trying to save face by switching to a PR mode to show that it is taking action against PM Modi's favourite business group

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

The number of medical colleges in the country has doubled in the past nine years, and the government is coming up with one critical care unit in every district in the nation

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION MINISTER

The ticket distribution process for the upcoming assembly polls is going on smoothly

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

## SHORT TAKES

### 7 killed in TN

**Tiruvannamalai (TN):** Seven persons, including two children, were killed and a woman was seriously injured after a car and truck collided head-on near here on Sunday, police said. While the cause of the accident is being probed, initial enquiries reveal that the car had swerved to the opposite direction of the road, a Chengam police official said. Chief Minister M K Stalin, in a statement, condoled the deaths of seven persons and said he has ordered a solatium of ₹2 lakh to the families of each of the deceased. Also, he has ordered an assistance of ₹1 lakh to the injured woman.

### MS Gill dies

**New Delhi:** Former chief election commissioner Manohar Singh Gill died at a south Delhi hospital Sunday after a brief illness, according to people close to him. He was 86. Gill will be cremated here Monday, they said. A former bureaucrat, Gill served under Parkash Singh Badal as a young officer when the Shiromani Akali Dal patriarch was the Punjab chief minister. He served as the chief election commissioner (CEC) between December 1996 and June 2001. Gill and GVG Krishnamurthy were made members of the Election Commission when TN Seshan was heading the poll panel. It was then that the poll panel became a multi-member body, a former government functionary said.

### 4 dead in collision

**Muzaffarpur:** Four persons were killed in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district on Sunday after their autorickshaw collided head-on with a bus, police said. Two other occupants of the autorickshaw, which was heading to Samastipur, were also seriously injured in the accident that took place at Sujawalpur, said Raju Kumar Pal, the SHO of Sakra police station.

### 471 Indians return from Israel

**New Delhi:** Two flights from Tel Aviv carrying a total of 471 Indians landed in the national capital Sunday morning. One flight was operated by Air India and another by SpiceJet. A total of four flights have been operated under Operation Ajay, which was launched by the government to facilitate the return of Indians who wish to come back from Israel, where an intense conflict is going on with militant group Hamas. External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi on Sunday said the third flight with 197 passengers landed at the Delhi airport in the morning.

## ASSEMBLY POLLS

# Cong releases first list of candidates for 3 states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The Congress Sunday announced its first list of party candidates for the Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Telangana assembly elections.

While the party announced 144 party candidates for Madhya Pradesh elections, it announced 30 candidates for the Chhattisgarh polls and another 55 for Telangana assembly polls slated next month.

In Madhya Pradesh, the party fielded former chief minister and PCC chief Kamal Nath from his Chhindwara assembly constituency. Former chief minister Digvijaya Singh's son Jaivardhan Singh has been fielded from Raghogarh seat. He was a minister in the last Kamal Nath government.

Another former minister in the state, Vijay Laxmi Sadho, who has been a former Rajya Sabha member, has been fielded from the Maheshwar-SC assembly seat. Former cabinet minister Jitu Patwari has been fielded from Rau assembly constituency.

In Chhattisgarh, the party fielded its Chief Minister



IN MADHYA PRADESH, THE PARTY FIELDED FORMER CHIEF MINISTER AND PCC CHIEF KAMAL NATH FROM HIS CHHINDWARA ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY

IN CHHATTISGARH, THE PARTY FIELDED ITS CHIEF MINISTER BHUPESH BAGHEL FROM HIS PATAN ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY

Bhupesh Baghel from his Patan assembly constituency and deputy chief minister T S Singh Deo from Ambikapur assembly seat. Another senior minister Tamradhwaj Sahu has been fielded from Durg Rural assembly seat while Chhattisgarh assembly Speaker Charan Das Mahant has been fielded from Sakti assembly seat.

Pradesh Congress chief Deepak Baij has been fielded by the party from the Chitrakot-ST assembly seat. He is currently the sitting Lok Sabha MP

There is crop loss of 42 lakh hectares in the state. The farmers have incurred a loss of ₹30,000 this year. As per the National Disaster Response Fund norms, we have sought ₹4,860 crore from the Union government and the Central team has visited the drought-hit areas

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

# 12 killed, 23 injured in Maharashtra crash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Oct 15:** At least 12 people were killed and 23 others injured when a speeding mini-bus hit a container truck on Samruddhi Expressway in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district in the early hours of Sunday, police said.

As many as 35 passengers were travelling by the private bus. They were returning to Nashik after visiting the Sailani Baba dargah in Buldhana district, an official said. President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in a post on X said an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) would be given to the next of kin of each deceased and the injured persons would be given Rs 50,000.

The accident took place shortly after midnight on Sunday in Vajapur area of the expressway, located nearly 80 km from the district headquarters and 350 km from state capital Mumbai, as per officials. The bus driver lost control over the wheels. As a result, the bus hit the stationary container truck from the rear side near Jambargaon toll plaza, police officials said.

Prima facie, the mini-bus was overloaded. It had the capacity



As many as 35 passengers were travelling by the private bus. The bus driver lost control over the wheels. As a result, the bus hit the stationary container truck from the rear side near Jambargaon toll plaza, police officials said

to carry 17 people, but nearly 35 passengers were travelling on it, an official from Vajapur police station said. Twelve passengers were killed. The deceased include five men, six women and a minor girl, inspector Shyamsundar Kavthale from Vajapur police station said.

The official said 23 others received injuries and they were admitted to hospital. The bus driver was among those hurt. He received a head injury, the official said.

A control room of the Samruddhi Expressway received a call about the accident through the RTO at 12.07 am. An assistance team and ambulance reached the location in a few minutes, an official from the Samruddhi Expressway control room said.

# QUAKE STRIKES FARIDABAD NEAR DELHI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** An earthquake of magnitude 3.1 struck Faridabad in Haryana at 4:08 pm Sunday, the National Centre for Seismology said.

It said the epicentre of the quake was nine kilometres east of Faridabad and 30 kilometres southeast of Delhi. The quake triggered panic among people, with many in Delhi and the National Capital Region reporting vigorous shaking of furniture.

Several social media users shared visuals of people rushing out of residential buildings. The tremors woke up some people in Noida from their afternoon slumber. "I was sleeping. Suddenly, I felt as if someone had climbed on my bed. I woke up only to find that it was an earthquake. A lamp and the fan in the room were swinging," Ashwin Saxena, a resident of Prateek Wisteria in Noida, said.

Several people who were in crowded places also felt the tremors. Sangeeta Sharma, who has put up a stall at the ongoing Handicrafts Exhibition at the India Expo Mart in Greater Noida was among them.

"I felt as if the floor of the exhibition area was shaking. I was told by those nearby that it could be because of activities on the upper deck or outside our hall. But soon we got to know of the earthquake," Sharma said.

Previously on October 3, strong tremors reverberated through parts of north India, including the Delhi-NCR, after a series of earthquakes, the strongest being of magnitude 6.2, jolted Nepal in quick succession.

India is located in a seismically active region. But with a lot of microearthquakes occurring every day, the stored-up energy gets released, according to Director O P Mishra of the National Centre for Seismology, Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Experts say the impact of a large-scale earthquake can be reduced if people and institutions strictly comply with the bylaws and codes to build resilient structures. They say the resonant frequency of a building can play a critical role in determining the level of damage that it experiences during an earthquake.

Buildings have natural frequencies of vibration, also known as resonant frequencies, which are determined by their mass, stiffness and size. The ground motion during an earthquake can excite these natural frequencies, causing the building to vibrate at its resonant frequency.

## Telangana polls: BRS releases manifesto

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, Oct 15:** Raising social security pension amounts, increasing financial assistance given under the 'Rythu Bandhu' investment support scheme for farmers and providing LPG cylinders at ₹400 each are some of the promises made by the ruling BRS for the upcoming assembly elections in Telangana.

Releasing the party manifesto for the November 30 assembly polls, BRS chief and Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao said all 93 lakh families living below the poverty line (BPL) in the state would be provided life insurance cover of ₹5 lakh and that the government would bear the cost of the premium. Rao, also known as KCR, said the social security pension, which currently stands at ₹2,016, will be increased to ₹5,000 per month gradually over the next five years.

According to the manifesto, it will be increased to ₹3,016 in the first year after the BRS returns to power, and then be raised incrementally up to ₹5,000 in the next four years.

Similarly, pension for Divyang people (persons with disabilities) will be enhanced to ₹6,016 in the coming five years, from the existing ₹4016.

Under the 'Rythu Bandhu' scheme in which farmers get ₹10,000 per annum per acre, the payments will be enhanced gradually to ₹16,000 per annum over the next five years.

The BRS, after returning to power, will give each gas cylinder at ₹400 to 'eligible beneficiaries' and the remaining cost will be borne by the state government, the manifesto said, alleging that "the BJP-led government at the Centre has put an unbearable burden on the common man with a sharp rise in the prices of LPG cylinders."



Security personnel detain Delhi BJP OBC Morcha workers during their demonstration against the Telangana government at Telangana Bhawan, in New Delhi

# Show solidarity with Palestine: Owaisi to PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, Oct 15:** Amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to show solidarity with the Palestinian people saying the Palestine issue is not just of Muslims alone, it is a humanitarian issue and it is a matter of all those who want justice.

Addressing a gathering here Saturday night, the Hyderabad MP citing media reports said the "zaalim" Israeli government has bombarded Gaza with 6,000

bombs in the last six days and due to which over 1,500 Palestinian people including children and women were killed and several thousands are injured.

He alleged that whatever is happening in Gaza is "ethnic cleansing" and wanted the Indian government and the country to condemn "the war crimes" Israel is doing. Owaisi said he stands with Palestine and will continue to do so, adding the poor people of Gaza, with a population of 21 lakh, 10 lakh have been rendered homeless. He alleged the "zaalim" Israeli government



ASADUDDIN OWAISI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

wants all people of Gaza to be removed and the world which talks of human rights is silent today. Owaisi said for 70 years Israel has been the "occupier" and Palestine

**You cannot see the occupation, you cannot see the cruelty...We condemn violence whoever does it. This is ethnic cleansing of Palestinian people. Cruelty is being done on the people of Gaza. America, Britain, Europe have become mute spectators today**

has been occupied territory. "You cannot see the occupation, you cannot see the cruelty...We condemn violence whoever does it. This is ethnic cleansing of

Palestinian people. Cruelty is being done on the people of Gaza. America, Britain, Europe have become mute spectators today," Owaisi said.

Owaisi said "We would like to tell our Prime Minister...Modi ji stop the atrocities being committed against the Palestinians in Gaza...Show solidarity with Palestine people. 10 lakh people out of the 21 lakh have been rendered homeless. That Netanyahu (Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu) is a devil, he is a war criminal. Houses are being destroyed and 6,000 bombs were used."



## BJP's mounting problems

The BJP high command may have fallen back upon regional satraps in the key states of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh by fielding Shivraj Singh

Chouhan and Raman Singh respectively. But it held back the name of Vasundhara Raje Scindia in Rajasthan for some strange reasons. The BJP high command had told her that she will not be the face of the party for the post of Chief Minister. It is yet not clear whether she will be given a ticket or not. But some of her key supporters have already been denied the ticket in the first list. There is considerable speculation in the BJP whether Vasundhara will accept this humiliation and take it lying down. She has not uttered a word in public and even her family members including four-time Lok Sabha MP Dushyant Singh was heard saying, we are all here because of her and justice must be done. However, she has not given up and is travelling across the state and seeking blessings of prominent Hindu religious leaders.

## Indian agencies on alert

Indian security and intelligence agencies are on high alert after the terrorist attacks in Israel. While the unprecedented attacks on Israel by hundreds of Hamas armed soldiers is considered a massive intelligence failure of its agencies, it has made many countries across the globe to go into a huddle. Since India is a strategic partner of Israel, it has all the more reason to be on alert as it has estranged neighbours on her borders. India has also unequivocally condemned and denounced the terrorist attack and PM Modi was among the first to take to social media, posting on X (formerly Twitter) expressing solidarity with Israel.

## Clamour grows

Even as the Prime Minister accused the Opposition of playing with the

emotions of the poor and divided the country on caste lines clamour is gaining ground in states to release caste surveys of the OBCs. But the Congress is unruddled and moving fast to grab the opportunity and directed state leaders to act fast on the issue before the notification of elections is issued by the Commission. There is extreme pressure on the Karnataka government to release the caste survey report conducted during the first stint of the Siddaramaiah tenure in 2013-2018. In Madhya Pradesh, state Congress chief Kamal Nath said that his party will conduct a caste survey if it comes to power. It was the Kamal Nath government which increased the OBC reservation quota from 14% to 27% in 2019. In Chhattisgarh, a similar survey of the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) is being conducted. The Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission (MSBCC) has

started the process for a socio-economic and caste census in Maharashtra.

## BJP's imported talent

There is considerable resentment in the BJP cadre over the growing dominance of imported talent from other parties and making them its face. It is the world's largest political party and has a dedicated, loyal and committed force of millions of workers. Yet, the party leadership has been banking on imported leaders who have been made spokespersons of the BJP. It has been brought to the notice of the leadership that such converts cannot carry credibility with the cadre and the people when they vociferously defend the BJP and accuse their parent parties in which they served for years. The resentment resurfaced when the BJP inducted two new faces as party's spokespersons.

# international



Washington has come forward to preserve the statue and puppet of Israel  
HOSSEIN AMIRABDOLLAHIAN | IRAN FOREIGN MINISTER

## POLAND VOTES

Poland is holding a high-stakes election Sunday that has energised many voters, with the ruling conservative nationalist party pitted against opposition groups that accuse it of eroding the foundations of the democratic system



## Thousands march in Morocco's capital

**RABAT:** Thousands took the streets of the Moroccan capital Sunday to rally in support of Palestinians in Gaza and denounce Israel's actions in the latest war with Gaza's militant Hamas rulers. Waving Palestinian flags, the rally also marked a major showing for the banned Islamist movement Al Adl Wa Ihsane, which supports Hamas. After Hamas's unprecedented and deadly October 7 incursion into Israel, Morocco issued a statement condemning the violence. Royal Air Maroc, temporarily cancelled flights from Casablanca to Tel Aviv - a route that began in 2021. Demonstrators marched in central Rabat and threw smoke bombs and fireworks as riot police stood between them and the Parliament building and other landmarks.

## Pope renews call for release of hostages

**ROME:** Pope Francis Sunday renewed his call for the release of Israeli hostages held by Gaza's militant Hamas rulers and called for humanitarian corridors to help those under siege in Gaza. "I continue to follow with much sorrow what is happening in Israel and Palestine," Francis said during his Sunday's Angelus prayer in St Peter's Square. "I think back to the many people, especially the little ones and the elderly." The Pope reiterated his appeal for the release of scores of Israeli hostages snatched during Hamas' deadly incursion into southern Israel last weekend and taken to Gaza.

## No escape from danger

**GAZA:** As Israel intensified air strikes on the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip and told residents to move south towards the border with Egypt, some like father of six Fadi Daloul thought that would be a safe option and gathered up his belongings. Palestinians are desperate to find a safe hiding place as the Israeli military prepares for what is expected to be a ground offensive in Gaza accompanied by relentless air strikes. Many Gazans have refused to leave their homes for the south, fearing a repeat of the "Nakba" or "catastrophe", when many Palestinians fled or were forced from their homes during the 1948 war that accompanied Israel's creation. Some 700,000 Palestinians, half the Arab population of what was British-ruled Palestine, were dispossessed and displaced, many spilling into neighbouring Arab states where they or many of their descendants remain. Many still live in refugee camps.



Pro-Palestinian demonstrators march towards the White House in Washington



Palestinians queue as they wait to fill cans with fuel, amid shortages of fuel, at a petrol station in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip

# CRISIS DEEPENS



**BLINKEN TO HEAD BACK TO ISRAEL MONDAY**  
**EGYPT INTENSIFIES EFFORTS TO DELIVER AID TO GAZA**  
**SAUDI ARABIA SAYS IT IS WORKING HARD TO STOP CONFLICT ESCALATING**  
**ISRAELI MILITARY SAYS WILL CONTINUE TO ALLOW GAZANS TO EVACUATE SOUTH, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS HAVE ALREADY RELOCATED**

Palestinians in the besieged coastal enclave struggled to find food, water and safety ahead of an expected Israeli ground offensive in the war sparked by Hamas' deadly attack.

Israeli forces, supported by a growing deployment of US warships in the region, positioned themselves along Gaza's border and drilled for what Israel said would be a broad campaign to dismantle the militant group.

A week of blistering airstrikes have demolished entire neighbourhoods but failed to stem militant rocket fire into Israel.

The Gaza Health Ministry said 2,329 Palestinians have been killed since the fighting erupted, more than in the 2014 Gaza war, which lasted over six weeks.

That makes this the deadliest of the five Gaza wars for both sides. More than 1,300 Israelis have been killed, the vast majority of them civilians killed in Hamas' October 7 assault. An estimated 150 others, including children, were captured by Hamas and taken into Gaza. This is the deadliest war for Israel since the 1973 conflict with Egypt and Syria. The US State



Palestinian carries a child killed in Israeli airstrikes in Deir el-Balah Gaza Strip

## MEDICS IN GAZA WARNED SUNDAY THAT THOUSANDS COULD DIE AS HOSPITALS PACKED WITH WOUNDED PEOPLE RAN DESPERATELY LOW ON FUEL AND BASIC SUPPLIES

Department said Secretary of State Antony Blinken would return to Israel Monday after completing a frantic six-country tour through Arab nations aimed at preventing the fighting from igniting a broader regional conflict.

Hospitals in Gaza are expected to run out of generator fuel within two days, endangering the lives of thousands of patients, according to the UN. Gaza's sole power plant shut down for lack of fuel after Israel completely sealed off the 40-kilometer (25-mile) long territory following the Hamas attack. In Nasser Hospital, in the southern town of Khan Younis, intensive care rooms are packed with wounded patients, most of them children under the age of 3. Hundreds of people with se-

vere blast injuries have come to the hospital, where fuel is expected to run out by Monday, said Dr Mohammed Qandee, a consultant at the critical care complex. Shifa hospital in Gaza City, the territory's largest, said it would bury 100 bodies in a mass grave as an emergency measure after its morgue overflowed, with relatives unable to bury their loved ones. Tens of thousands of people seeking safety have gathered in the hospital compound.

Gaza was already in a humanitarian crisis due to a growing shortage of water and medical supplies caused by the Israeli siege. With some bakeries closing, residents said they were un-

able to buy bread. Israel has also cut off water, forcing many to rely on brackish wells.

Israel has ordered more than 1 million Palestinians — almost half the territory's population — to move south. The military says it is trying to clear away civilians ahead of a major campaign against Hamas in the north, where it says the militants have extensive networks of tunnels, bunkers and rocket launchers.

Hamas urged people to stay in their homes, and the Israeli military released photos it said showed a Hamas roadblock preventing traffic from moving south. The UN and aid groups say the mass exodus within Gaza, along with Israel's complete siege, will cause untold human suffering. The World Health Organisation said the evacuation "could be tantamount to a death sentence" for the more than 2,000 patients in northern hospitals. Meanwhile, across Gaza, families rationed dwindling water supplies, with many forced to drink dirty or brackish water. Many resorted to going to dirty wells and the sea, increasing the risk of dehydration, water borne diseases and more deaths.

AGENCIES

**Netanyahu vows to "demolish Hamas" as his military prepared ground operations in Gaza to root out the militant group**

## Strong earthquake shakes west Afghan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Islamabad, Oct 15:** A powerful 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck western Afghanistan Sunday, just over a week after strong quakes and aftershocks killed thousands of people and flattened entire villages in the same province.

The US Geological Survey said the latest quake's epicentre was about 34 kilometres (21 miles) outside Herat, the provincial capital, and eight kilometres (five miles) below the surface.

Save the Children said four people have died and that Herat Regional Hospital has received 153 injured.

Everything in the Baloch area of Rabat Sangi district has collapsed. Several villages have been destroyed, according to the aid group. Authorities have given lower casualty numbers.

Sayed Kazim Rafiqi, 42, a Herat city resident, said he had never seen such devastation before with the majority of houses damaged and "people terrified." Rafiqi and others headed to the hospital to donate much-needed blood. "We have to help in any way possible," he said. The earthquakes October 7 flattened whole villages in Herat, in one of the most destructive quakes in the country's recent history.

More than 90 per cent of the people killed a week ago were women and children, UN officials reported Thursday. Taliban officials said the earlier quakes killed more than 2,000 people across the province.

## Indigenous Australians vow silence after referendum fails

REUTERS

**Sydney, Oct 15:** Australian Indigenous leaders called Sunday for a week of silence and reflection after a referendum to recognise First Peoples in the constitution was decisively rejected.

More than 60% of Australians voted "No" in the landmark referendum Saturday that asked whether to alter the constitution to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people with an Indigenous advisory body, the "Voice to Parliament", that would have advised parliament on matters concerning the community.

Australia's first referendum in almost a quarter of a century needed a national majority and majorities in at least four states to pass. All six states rejected the proposal. "This is a bitter irony," the Indigenous leaders said in a statement. "That people who have only been on this continent for 235 years would refuse to recognise those whose home this land has been for 60,000 and more years is beyond reason."

They said they would lower the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flag to half-mast for the week and urged others to do the same. The outcome is a major setback for reconciliation efforts with the country's Indigenous community and damages Australia's image in the world re-



- AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS LEADERS CALL FOR A WEEK OF SILENCE
- RECONCILIATION IS DEAD, SAYS ONE INDIGENOUS LEADER
- MORE THAN 60% OF AUSTRALIANS VOTED 'NO' IN REFERENDUM

garding how it treats First Nations people. Unlike other nations with similar histories, such as Canada and New Zealand, Australia has not formally recognised or reached a treaty with its First Peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people make up 3.8% of Australia's 26 million population and have inhabited the country for about 60,000 years. But they are not mentioned in the constitution and the country's most disadvantaged people by most socioeconomic measures.

Reconciliation Australia, an Indigenous body, said the community was left to grapple with the "ugly acts of racism and disinformation" that they said were a feature of the debate.

Australian Indigenous leader and former national rugby union player Lloyd Walker said the path to reconciliation seemed difficult now but the community needed to keep fighting.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese staked significant political capital on the Voice referendum, but his critics say it was his biggest misstep since coming to power in May last year. Opposition leader Peter Dutton said it was a referendum "that Australia did not need to have" and that it only ended up dividing the nation.

One of the biggest reasons for the loss was a lack of bipartisan support, with leaders of the major conservative parties campaigning for the "No" vote.

## Putin to visit China

REUTERS

**Moscow/Beijing, Oct 15:** Russian President Vladimir Putin will meet Xi Jinping in China this week in a bid to deepen a partnership forged between the United States' two biggest strategic competitors.

Putin will attend the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing October 17-18, his first trip outside the former Soviet Union since the Hague-based International Criminal Court issued a warrant for him in March over the deportation of children from Ukraine.



China and Russia declared a "no limits" partnership in February 2022 when Putin visited Beijing just days before he sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine, triggering the deadliest land war in Europe since World War Two.

The United States casts China as its biggest competitor and Russia as its biggest nation-state threat while US President Joe Biden argues that this century will be defined by an existential contest with between democracies and autocracies.

## Ecuadorians vote

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Caracas (Venezuela), Oct 15:** Frightened by unprecedented violence on the streets and within prisons, Ecuadorians have a universal demand for the president they are choosing Sunday — safety.

The runoff election in the South American country pits an heir to a banana empire, Daniel Noboa, against an attorney, Luisa González. Both have limited governing experience and will undoubtedly have their work cut out. The election comes as more Ecuadorians become victims of drug-related violence that erupted roughly three years ago and intensified in August, when a presidential candidate was assassinated in broad daylight. People continuously watch their backs and limit how often they leave home. The uneasiness even pushed Noboa to add a bulletproof vest to his daily outfit. Whoever wins with a simple majority of votes will govern

for only 15 months, until May 2025, which is what remains of the tenure of President Guillermo Lasso.

He cut his term short when he dissolved the country's National Assembly in May as lawmakers carried out impeachment proceedings against him over alleged improprieties in a contract by a state-owned company.

Lasso, a conservative former banker, clashed constantly with lawmakers after his election in 2021 and decided not to run in the special election.

Minutes before polls opened, Lasso called on Ecuadorians to have a peaceful election and think about what is "best for their children, their parents and the country."

He said voters have the wisdom "to banish demagoguery and authoritarianism as they look toward a tomorrow of peace and well-being for all." He added that the government would ensure security, transparency and respect for the election results.



## of the day quote

**Indian Biogas Association** has received a commitment of investment worth Rs 2,755 crore during the Renewable Energy India Expo 2023

**GAURAV KEDIA** | CHAIRMAN, IBA

We plan to start the trial production of head hardened rails, used in metro rail and freight corridor projects, by month-end

**AMARENDU PRAKASH** | CHAIRMAN, SAIL

Our investment is happening on infrastructure, technology (upgrade) development as well as building technology team. And this investment, possibly, will not be less than Rs 100 crore this year

**SUBHASISH CHAKRABORTY** | CHAIRMAN AND MD, DTDC EXPRESS

## SHORT TAKES

### IOC, NTPC ink JV

**New Delhi:** Indian Oil Corporation, the nation's biggest oil firm, will invest Rs 1,660.15 crore as equity in a newly set up joint venture (JV) with energy major NTPC Ltd for setting up renewable power plants. In June, IOC and NTPC had formed a 50:50 joint venture company, IndianOil NTPC Green Energy Pvt Ltd, to set up renewable energy projects to meet round-the-clock power requirements of refineries of the oil company. In a stock exchanging filing, IOC said its Board in a meeting on October 13, "has accorded approval to the investment plan of the joint venture company for setting up of renewable energy power plants and approved the equity contribution of up to Rs 1,660.15 crore towards Indian Oil's share of 50 per cent in the equity share capital of the JVC."

### Adda247 axes 300

**New Delhi:** Google-backed edtech platform Adda247 has laid off around 250-300 employees across verticals, media report said Saturday. According to Entrackr, citing sources, about 100 to 150 employees were laid off from StudyIQ, a UPSC-focused edtech platform acquired by the company for about \$20 million in December 2021. About 150 employees were laid off in major verticals, including sales and content. It is the first layoff in a few years at the company. As per the report, the laid-off workers were asked to resign without any prior notice.



**We see an eventual splitting of ICE (internal combustion engine) and EV, which is simply driven by the platform. If EV has to carry over an ICE architecture, it will always be handicapped in terms of its full potential, in terms of range, in terms of battery layout**

**MARTIN UHLARIK** | GLOBAL HEAD OF DESIGN, TATA MOTORS

## FINAL CALL FOR SUGAR STOCKHOLDERS

The government has given a final call to all legal entities engaged in sugar trade to declare their stocks on a food ministry website by October 17, and warned that strict action will be taken against those for violation



## Centre mulls review of basmati rice minimum export rate of \$1,200/T

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The government Sunday said it is actively considering the review of the minimum export price of \$1,200 per tonne of basmati rice, amid the industry's concern that outward shipments have been affected due to high value.

Rice exporters associations have been demanding that this rate should be brought down to around \$850 per tonne.

In late August, the government decided not to allow exports of basmati rice below \$1,200 per tonne to restrict possible "illegal" shipment of white non-basmati rice in the garb of premium basmati rice.

On August 27, the ministry directed trade promotion body APEDA not to register export contracts below \$1,200 per tonne.

In a statement Sunday Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution said the Central Government has taken various steps to boost domestic supply of rice and check prices.

Based on the representations received from the rice exporter associations that the high FOB value is adversely affecting the export of basmati rice from India, Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal had attended a consultative meet with the basmati rice exporters, the statement said.



The present arrangement will continue until an appropriate decision is taken by the government, it asserted.

According to official sources, India had exported around 45 lakh tonne of basmati rice during the last fiscal year. In the first half of this fiscal, the country has exported 18 lakh tonne.

The average export prices of basmati rice stood between \$850-900 per tonne in 2021 and 2022. This year, it was around Rs 1050 per tonne before the government's August 25 decision not to register contracts below \$1200 per tonne, they said.

## INDIA-PAK CRICKET CLASH

# New viewership record for Disney+Hotstar

**THE EPIC CLASH BETWEEN THE ARCH-RIVALS WAS SEEN BY A RECORD 3.5CR PEOPLE**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The India-Pakistan match of the ICC Cricket World Cup on Saturday created a new viewership record with the peak touching the 3.5-crore mark, according to Disney+Hotstar.

The peak concurrency, which is the highest number of viewers during a live stream, for the India-Pak match on OTT platform Disney+ Hotstar was nearly 3.5 crore.

With this, it has surpassed the peak concurrency of 3.2 crore in the IPL final of Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans, played earlier this year.

In the Asia Cup, the peak concurrency in India-Pakistan match was 2.8 crore, while in the semi final match between India and New Zealand of ICC Cricket World Cup 2019, the peak concurrency was 2.53 crore.

The India-Pakistan match Saturday was also live telecasted by Disney Star on Star Sports net-



**We look forward to many more such experiences as the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup unfolds**

**SAJITH SIVANANDAN** | HEAD, DISNEY+ HOTSTAR

work but viewership numbers will be released only a week later by the television audience measurement body Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC).

Disney Star has exclusive broadcast and media rights for

both linear and digital platforms.

The India-Pak match was also screened by leading multiplex operator PVR INOX at its select cinema halls, where it reported a large number of visitors coming to watch the match. Several PVR INOX screens were com-

pletely sold out, it said.

Disney+ Hotstar India Head Sajith Sivanandan told PTI: "We would like to thank all the fans who tuned in to watch the India-Pakistan match on Disney+ Hotstar. Your love for the game is what made it possible for Disney+ Hotstar to break all the previous records across all cricket formats and hit a peak concurrency number of 3.5 crore viewers."

As the cricketing rivalries continue, Disney+Hotstar will continue to honour its commitment towards delivering an unmatched viewing experience to all its users, he said.

## FIRST DISBURSEMENT OF FY24

# Govt okays fresh ₹1K-cr PLI cheque



*The govt disbursed ₹2,900cr till March, out of claims worth ₹3,400cr received under the PLI scheme*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The Empowered committee in PLI (production-linked incentive) scheme has approved Rs 1,000 crore disbursement to beneficiary firms of the electronics sector, a top government official said.

The government disbursed Rs 2,900 crore till March 2023, out of claims worth Rs 3,400 crore received under the scheme, which aims at boosting domestic manufacturing, creating jobs and supporting exports.

"In the recent meeting of the committee, Rs 1,000 crore disbursements were approved under the PLI scheme for the electronics sector. Actual disbursement to the beneficiary companies would take a few more days," the official said.

The scheme was announced in 2021, for 14 sectors including large-scale electronic manufacturing, white goods, textiles, manufacturing of medical devices, automobiles, specialty steel, food products, high-efficiency solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell battery, drones and pharmaceuticals with an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore.

The scheme is doing well in sectors such as electronics, pharma, and medical devices.

As many as 32 beneficiaries had been approved under the

PLI scheme for large-scale electronics manufacturing, including mobile phones and specified electronic components.

The proposal for disbursement of incentives are presented by respective ministries/departments which are implementing the scheme.

It is considered by the Empowered Committee comprising NITI Aayog, department for promotion of industry and internal trade, ministry of electronics and informational technology, and representatives from the Department of Expenditure, Department of Revenue, Department of Economic Affairs and office of DGFT (directorate general of foreign trade).

The committee gives its recommendations for disbursement of incentive to the selected beneficiary under the PLI scheme.

In sectors where PLI disbursement is low or if firms are not able to meet their performance thresholds, in such cases, respective departments are looking at course corrections in the scheme. High-level review meetings have been held in recent times to review the progress of the scheme.

Another official expressed hope that the disbursements will pick up soon.

The sectors where PLI performance is healthy include large-scale electronics manufacturing, pharma, food processing, and white goods.

Sectors which are not picking up well include high-efficiency solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell (ACC) batteries, textile products and speciality steel.

# First chip fab soon

**The government has initially earmarked \$10bn incentive for setting up a semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem in the country including a wafer fabrication plant**

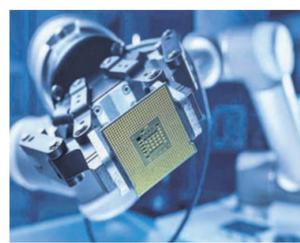
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The country's first electronic chip manufacturing plant is expected to be in place within a year, according to Union Telecom and IT Minister Aswini Vaishnaw.

The government has initially earmarked \$10 billion incentive for setting up a semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem in the country including a wafer fabrication plant. The wafer fabrication plants are the first building block of physical chips that are used in all high-tech electronic products.

"We are focussing on some niche area where we can take global leadership. Telecom and EV (electric vehicles) have emerged as a big segment for semiconductors. If we focus on developing and manufacturing chips used in these segments then we can become global leaders in these two segments," Vaishnaw told PTI in an interview.

He said the work is being done with a focus on these emerging



**With the success of US-based storage chip maker Micron's investment in India, the entire world has become very comfortable about India's capability**

**ASWINI VAISHNAW** | UNION TELECOM AND IT MINISTER

areas. "We should have some good success in the coming months. It will be fab (wafer fabrication), design, manufacturing, complete (ecosystem)," Vaishnaw said.

When asked if it would be in a year, the minister said, "No. We will see success very soon."

Memory chip maker Micron started building a semiconductor assembly plant at Sanand in Gujarat last month. The company in June announced setting up a semiconductor assembly and test plant in Gujarat entailing a total investment of \$2.75 billion (around Rs 22,540 crore).

Micron will invest up to \$825 million in setting up the plant in two phases and the rest of the investment will come from the Centre and the state government.

The minister said that component suppliers of Micron are also in an advanced stage of identifying land in collaboration with the state government.

"As per information shared with me, five companies (Micron partners) have come in. Land identification process is on. One of their (Micron's) biggest ecosystem partners, which makes substrate, is already in the land allocation process," Vaishnaw said.

The government has already set a timeline to commercially roll out the first indigenous chipsets by 2023-24 under the Digital India RISC-V programme.

IIT Madras and the Centre for Development of Advance Computing (CDAC) have developed two microprocessors named Shakti (32-bit) and Vega (64-bit) respectively using Open Source Architecture under the aegis of the Microprocessor Development Programme of the Ministry of Electronics and IT.

Vaishnaw said that the government is working on making some 45 components where India can become a global hub to meet not only domestic requirements but also export to the rest of the world.

## GEOPOLITICAL UNCERTAINTIES

# FPI sell-off continues in Oct

**FOREIGN INVESTORS TAKE OUT ₹9,800CR**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** Foreign investors have pulled out nearly ₹9,800 crore from Indian equities this month so far owing to a sustained rise in US bond yields and the uncertain environment resulting from the Israel-Hamas conflict.

This came after Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) turned net sellers in September and pulled out ₹14,767 crore.

Before the outflow, FPIs were

incessantly buying Indian equities in the last six months from March to August and brought in ₹1.74 lakh crore during the period.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) sold shares to the tune of ₹9,784 crore this month (till October 13).

The recent flow trend points towards FPIs adopting a cautious stance towards investing in emerging markets like India. The sustained rise in US bond



yields was the principal factor driving the FPI selling, VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

In the current scenario, ex-

perts believe that there could be an enhanced focus on safe-haven assets such as gold and US dollars. On the other hand, FPIs invested ₹4,000 crore in the country's debt market during the period under review. With this, the total investment by FPIs in equity has reached ₹1.1 lakh crore and over Rs 33,000 crore in the debt market this year so far.

In terms of sectors, FPIs continued to sell in financials, power, and IT, however, they continued to buy capital goods and automobiles.

# Despite deals' plunge, investment bankers' fee income peak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

## INVESTMENT BANKERS SEE HIGHEST FEE INCOME AT \$968MN IN JAN-SEPT

**Mumbai, Oct 15:** Investment bankers laughed their way to the bank with 41 per cent on-year more fee income at \$967.5 million during the first nine months of 2023, despite a massive fall in deals, according to an industry analysis.

This is the highest fee collection by deal makers since records began in 2000.

According to Refinitiv, which is an LSEG (London Stock Exchange Group) business, completed M&A advisory fee jumped 34 per cent year-on-year during January-September 2023 and totalled \$362 million, while ECM (equity capital market) underwriting fees rose by a steeper 38 per cent to reach \$194.3 million.

Debt capital market (DCM) underwriting fees totalled \$181.7 million, a 41 per cent increase from a year ago, while syndicated lending fees grew 56 per cent to \$229.5 million in the first nine months of 2023, Lucille

Jones, an analyst at LSEG said, adding the total fee income for the sector during the period jumped 41 per cent to \$967.5 million.

Wall Street major Citi's domestic arm took the top position for overall investment banking fees with a total of \$58.6 million, accounting for 6.1 per cent of the wallet share of the i-banking fee pool.

The fees rose despite 56.6 per cent plunge in India-bound Mergers and Acquisitions (M&As) to a three-year low of \$65.6 billion in the first nine months of 2023, but the number of deals saw a 3 per cent on-year growth.

Similarly India target M&As reached \$60.5 billion, down 56.8 per cent from a year ago and the lowest first nine months period by value since 2020. Domestic M&As totalled \$44.1 billion, down 59.7 per cent from the same period in 2022.



Inbound M&As fell 46.6 per cent from a year ago and totalled \$16.4 billion and outbound M&As reached \$4.8 billion, down 46.5 per cent on-year with the US being the most targeted nation with 24.6 per cent market share.

Majority of the deal making activity involving India targeted the financial sector which totalled \$30.6 billion, down 55.9

per cent in value, and accounted for 46.7 per cent market share, followed by industrials at \$7.7 billion, down 32.4 per cent and 11.7 per cent market share.

High technology, which saw the greatest number of deals announced in the period captured 9 per cent market share with \$5.9 billion worth of deals, down 71.7 per cent compared to last

majority of the activity with 19.8 per cent market share or \$3.6 billion, down 6.2 per cent on-year. Industrials captured 18.3 per cent market share followed by high technology and materials with 11.5 per cent and 11.2 per cent market share, respectively.

Jefferies leads the ranking in the ECM underwriting space with \$2.3 billion in related proceeds and 12.4 per cent market share.

In debt capital markets, primary bond offerings saw \$65.1 billion being mopped up during the first nine months, a 39.3 per cent increase in proceeds and making it the highest first nine months period since 2019.

Financial sector issuers captured 78 per cent market share at \$50.8 billion, up 61.6 per cent, followed by industrials with a 5.6 per cent market share worth \$3.7 billion, up 86.3 per cent.

ICICI Bank tops the ranking for bond underwriting, with related proceeds of \$10.96 billion and accounted for 16.8 per cent market share.

## VALUATION OF SIX OF TOP 10 FIRMS JUMPS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** The combined market valuation of six of the top 10 valued firms jumped Rs 70,527.11 crore last week, with Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) emerging as the biggest gainer.

While Hindustan Unilever Ltd, Bharti Airtel, ITC, ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank were the gainers, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), State Bank of India and Bajaj Finance emerged as the laggards.

Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 287.11 points or 0.43 per cent.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries rallied Rs 22,191.43 crore to Rs 15,90,408.31 crore, the most among the top 10 firms. Hindustan Unilever added Rs 17,222.5 crore taking its valuation to Rs 6,04,326.62 crore.

Reliance Industries remained the country's most valued firm followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys, ITC, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, and Bajaj Finance.

# Afghanistan conquer England

IN ONE OF THE BIGGEST UPSETS OF THE ODI WORLD CUP THE DEFENDING CHAMPIONS ARE BEATEN BY 69 RUNS

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** Displaying the valour that best epitomises the people of the strife-torn nation, Afghanistan caused one of the biggest upsets in the history of ODI World Cup as they outclassed defending champions England by 69 runs here Sunday.

The Afghans' epic triumph against the overwhelming favourites, one of the game's traditional heavyweights, was a reflection of the spirit and courage of the battle-hardened tribe from the country ravaged by years of war and internal conflicts. Rahmanullah Gurbaz (80, 57b, 8x4, 4x6) gave early impetus while Ikram Alikhil (58, 66b, 3x4, 2x6) provided the final flourish to guide Afghanistan to a competitive 284 all out after being put into bat.

The Afghan bowlers then thrived under lights, dishing out a collective effort to bundle out England for 215 runs in 40.3 overs and register just their second World Cup win, eight years since their last against Scotland in Australia.

While this was Afghanistan's first win in the ongoing tournament after two losses, England slumped to their second defeat from three games.

Rashid Khan (3/37) and Mujeeb Ur Rahman (3/51) were the pick of the Afghan bowlers. Harry Brook (66, 61b, 7x4, 1x6) was the only shining light in what was



**FLYING HIGH:** Mujeeb Ur Rahman goes airborne in celebration after dismissing an England batter, Sunday. PTI PHOTO

a dismal batting display from England. Some others got starts but failed to make an impact.

"This is a big win for us. This kind of performance gives us the belief that we can beat any side on any day. It will give us the energy for the rest of the World Cup," Rashid said after the game.

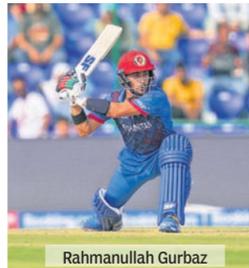
"Cricket is something that brings joy to the people back home. Winning the game against England is big for us. Recently,

we had an earthquake back home. Over 3,000 people lost their lives, many houses were destroyed, so this win will put a little bit of smile on their faces and maybe, they can little bit forget those days," added the leg-spinner.

Credit should also go to former England batter Jonathan Trott, who is the present Afghanistan coach, for having played a key role in the team's rise.

England did not have the best of starts to their chase with Fazalhaq Farooqi inflicting an early blow in the form of Jonny Bairstow, who was caught plumb in front of the wicket in the second over. They went on losing wickets at regular intervals and ultimately were bowled out in a little over 40 overs.

Earlier, opener Gurbaz gave the Afghans a flying start putting on 114 runs for the first wicket



Rahmanullah Gurbaz

with Ibrahim Zadran (28). Off-colour in the first two matches, Afghanistan openers - Gurbaz and Zadran - rose to the occasion, scoring the team's 50 in just 6.3 overs.

With Afghanistan scoring runs thick and fast, Buttler introduced Adil Rashid (3/42) in the 11th over but Gurbaz was in a relentless mood as he swept the leg-spinner for a boundary to bring up his fifty in just 33 balls.

However, after losing the first wicket Afghanistan lost their path in the middle overs and were reduced to 190 for six. Alikhil, then, played a fine knock and decorated his innings with three fours and two sixes to prop up his team.

**Brief scores:** Afghanistan 284 in 49.5 overs (Rahmanullah Gurbaz 80, Ikram Alikhil 58, Adil Rashid 3/42) beat England 215 in 40.3 overs (Harry Brook 61, Rashid Khan 3/37, Mujeeb Ur Rahman 3/51, Mohammad Nabi 2/16) by 69 runs.

# Experience helped Bumrah in Pak game

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ahmedabad, Oct 15:** Star Indian pacer Jasprit Bumrah traced the origin of his fine two for 19 spell that played a big part in India bowling out Pakistan for 191 in their World Cup match Saturday to his ability to read the pitch at a venue where he played a lot of cricket from the junior days. India easily won the match by seven wickets and Bumrah was adjudged as the player of the match.

"I have played a lot of junior cricket on this ground. Since it was a flat wicket, I tried to implement that experience of mine here," Bumrah told Hardik Pandya in a video posted by BCCI. "Before getting hit for more than one boundary, it's vital to realise about the wicket. That's what I was trying to figure out," he added.

As fellow pacer Mohammed Siraj reminded Bumrah about his fiery spell against Afghanistan in Delhi, Bumrah attributed the success at that venue to the IPL. "There I tried to use my IPL experience about how to bowl on flat wickets. I have been playing in the IPL for the past 11 years, so it helps," Bumrah said.



Pandya credited Bumrah for his thinking mind while bowling. "If he gets hammered for a four off a flick, he instantly bowls a slower one. He is a legendary bowler," Pandya said.

Meanwhile, Siraj admitted that he was nervous and under pressure during the match against Pakistan. "It was my first Indo-Pak match in India and my first World Cup stint, so I was highly nervous, along with some pressure," he said.

Siraj then described how he plotted the dismissal of Pakistan opener Abdullah Shafique. "I had a talk with Rohit (Sharma). His inputs helped as the batter was not expecting a full length delivery," Siraj stated.



## Head set to join Australia squad

**Adelaide:** Australia's Travis Head returned to nets Sunday having recovered from a fracture on his left-hand, and the middle-order batter is expected to travel to India Thursday to join his country's World Cup squad. Head had his protective splint removed from his hand Friday. The South Australian had suffered a fracture on his hand after getting hit by South African pacer Gerald Coetzee at Centurion ahead of the World Cup. Although Head might miss Australia's fixture Friday against Pakistan, he could feature against the Netherlands October 25, provided he passes the fitness test. Australia certainly require some solidity at the top of the order.

## Ebenyo, Ayana emerge winners

**New Delhi:** Kenya's Daniel Ebenyo and Ethiopian Almaz Ayana lived up to the expectations as they won the men's and women's elite races respectively at the Delhi Half Marathon here Sunday. The 28-year-old Ebenyo, finished the men's race in 59 minutes and 27 seconds, ahead of fellow Kenyan Charles Matata and Ethiopia's Addisu Gobena. On the other hand, Ayana topped the women's elite race in one hour, seven minutes and 59 seconds. Abhishek Pal and Kavita Yadav were the fastest in the Indian men's and women's elite categories, clocking times of 1:04:08 and 1:17:42 respectively.

## Bid withdrawn

**London:** Qatari banker Sheikh Jassim Bin Hamad Al Thani has withdrawn a bid to buy Manchester United, a source close to the deal said Sunday here. Man United announced nearly a year ago that they were exploring 'strategic alternatives to enhance the club's growth', with a full sale one of the options. Sheikh Jassim and British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe were the front-runners after several rounds of bidding earlier this year, but the process has stalled in recent months despite the anger of supporters towards current owners, the Glazer family. The *Daily Mail* reported that Ratcliffe is now set to secure a 25 per cent stake in the club for around 1.5 billion pounds (\$1.7 billion).

## Title for Railways

**Bangalore:** The Railways team walked away with the overall title with 220 points in their kitty as the National Open Athletics Championships ended here Sunday. The men's team title went to Services with 175 points, while the women's trophy was claimed by the Railways with 156 points. Services' javelin thrower Manu DP was declared the best male athlete with 1,127 points, while Yamuna Ladkat of Maharashtra was named the best female athlete of the meet. She had 1,128 points.

# ITALY CRUISE PAST MALTA

Defending Euro champions set for pulsating encounter against England



**CRUCIAL STRIKE:** Domenico Berardi of Italy celebrates after scoring against Malta, Saturday

AGENCIES

**Rome, Oct 15:** Reigning champions Italy eased to a 4-0 victory over Malta in Euro 2024 qualifying Saturday, while Denmark strengthened their position and dented the hopes of outsiders Kazakhstan.

Giacomo Bonaventura curled in his first Italy goal and Domenico Berardi produced a fine strike of his own to double the lead in Bari to give Italy a commanding 2-0 lead in the first half. Berardi struck again in the second half before Davide Frattesi rounded off a comfortable evening for Luciano Spalletti's side who kept hold of second place in Group C ahead of next week's showdown with England.

"That match is where we will really see how much potential we have," Spalletti told broadcaster

"RAI". Italy, with a game in hand, closed to within three points of England going into their clash at Wembley. "It will definitely be emotional, I have amazing memories from that stadium," said Berardi, who played in Italy's Euro 2020 shoot-out final win over England. "We will certainly try to win that game also," he added.

Ukraine are level with Italy after a 2-0 win over North Macedonia in Prague. Georgiy Sudakov put Ukraine ahead on 30 minutes and substitute Oleksandr Karavaiev sealed victory deep into added on time, ahead of their visit to Malta next week.

Denmark meanwhile avenged their shock loss to Kazakhstan in March as Robert Skov netted twice in a 3-1 win in Copenhagen. Jonas Wind set the Danes, semi-finalists at Euro 2020, on their

way before Skov scored a quick-fire double either side of half time.

Kazakhstan pulled one back via Yan Vorogovskiy but they fell four points off the pace in Group H.

"First of all, we must be happy about a victory in a European qualifier at home. It hasn't been plain sailing in this group," Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand told broadcaster 'TV2'. "It was an extremely important home game, that we needed to win," he added.

Benjamin Sesko's brace powered Slovenia to a 3-0 win over Finland in Ljubljana. His first came from the penalty spot and the RB Leipzig forward added another with a clinical finish, taking him to eight goals in his last 11 international appearances. Defender Erik Janza grabbed a late third for Slovenia.

# Annu contemplated quitting before Asiad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** Indian javelin thrower Annu Rani was so upset with a string of poor performances this year that she had decided to say goodbye to the sport just before the Asian Games. Luckily she did not do that. The 31-year-old from Uttar Pradesh produced a season-best effort of 62.92m to become the first Indian woman to win an Asian Games gold in javelin throw.

"I have struggled a lot this year. I went abroad to practice. I went to learn from a foreign coach but my performance dropped. The whole year had gone to waste. There was poor performance in every

**"The Asian Games gold has been a catalyst for me. Now I am working hard to win a medal at the Paris Olympics"**

ANNU RANI

competition one after the other," Annu said.

"I had decided before the Asian Games that I would leave sports. Despite so much effort, I was not able to win anything. The government and SAI had invested so much money in me but I was not able to perform. After the World Championships in Budapest, I had thought of quitting the sport out of frustration," she added.

# Hurkacz rules Shanghai courts

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Shanghai, Oct 15:** Hubert Hurkacz claimed his second Masters title in a dramatic final at the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament here Sunday, saving a match point before prevailing 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (8-6) against Andrey Rublev. Like he did in his impressive semifinal win over Sebastian Korda, the Polish player's serve was again his strike weapon as he sent down 21 aces and won more than 80% of his first serve points.

Hurkacz struck the first blow of the final with a forehand winner to break Rublev in the sixth game, which proved decisive in taking the opening set.

It was the first set that the 25-year-old Russian player had dropped in the tournament but it seemed to spur him on, as the



No. 7-ranked player found his range in the second, hitting 16 winners to force a decider.

As the match tightened, Rublev saved one match point on serve at 4-5 before taking a 5-2 advantage in the third set tie-breaker. Hurkacz responded by firing back-to-back aces before forcing a Rublev error to level at 5-5.

Rublev then earned a match point at 6-5, which Hurkacz saved, before he converted on his fourth chance to take the title after 129 minutes. "It was such a battle," Hurkacz said. "Especially emo-

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 15:** Top cueists of the state Subrat Das, created history when he won the billiards and snooker titles in the recently-concluded 29th All Odisha Billiards and Snooker State Ranking Championships. The tournament was played at the Cuttack Club. The snooker event was Subrat's 30th career title in Odisha. In the process, he went past Ahsan ul Haque's record of 29 titles in Odisha.

The third career double (both the billiards and snooker titles) once more established Subrat's supremacy on the green beige in Odisha.

In the final of the snooker championship, Subrat defeated old foe Nishant Biswal by six frames to five (56-43, 07-53, 44-66, 53-37, 29-54, 88-42, 35-46, 47-

58, 52-20, 69-21, 63-01). It was a close match in which Subrat held his nerves at crucial junctures to emerge winner. He was down 3-5 in the final, but won three frames in a row to emerge victorious. This was incidentally Subrat's fifth snooker title at the state level.

Earlier, in the billiards final, Subrat defeated Kunal Agarwal 4-3. In the last game of the final, Subrat scored a break of 72 to leave his rival behind and win the title.

Subrat, who has dominated the state scene has represented Odisha at the nationals for 21 years in succession. It can also be called a record of sorts. Subrat who trains at the Cuttack Club attributed his success to his love for billiards and snooker. "I love to perform at crucial times," Subrat said.

# Bopanna, Ebdn finish runners-up

**Shanghai:** Indian ace tennis player Rohan Bopanna and his Australian men's doubles partner Matthew Ebdn finished as runners-up at the Shanghai Masters after losing Sunday to Spain's Marcel Granollers and Argentina's Horacio Zeballos 7-5, 2-6, 7-10 in the final, here at the Qizhong Forest Sports City Arena. Despite winning the first set, the Indo-Australian combo faded away from the beginning of the second and eventually lost the match. This was Bopanna's third ATP Masters 1000 final of the year. Despite losing the final, Bopanna and Ebdn qualified for the ATP Tour Finals.

tionally, I had a match point and Andrey hit an amazing serve and then he had a match point. It was exhausting," he added.

# 3 from Odisha in Indian camp

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 15:** Hockey India (HI) announced Sunday a 34-member core probable group for the national coaching camp to be held in SAI, Bangalore, from October 16. There are three players from Odisha in the list. They are Deep Grace Ekka, Salima Tete and Sunelita Toppo. The national camp will conclude October 22, while the prestigious Women's Asian Champions Trophy will begin in Ranchi, October 27.

The tournament is being held in India for the first time, and it will feature reigning champions China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Thailand. India will open their campaign against Thailand.