

**Sweet gesture**  
Actor Shradha Kapoor, who recently amazed audiences in Stree 2, is once again winning hearts for her down to earth nature

LEISURE | P2

**Israel hits Gaza Strip**  
Israeli military strikes kill at least 45 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip as efforts to secure a ceasefire resumes in Qatar

INTERNATIONAL | P10

**FPIs withdraw ₹85,790cr**  
Foreign investors continue selling in Indian market, pulling out a massive ₹85,790 crore from equities this month due elevated pricing of domestic equities.

BUSINESS | P11

**Barca dominate**  
Robert Lewandowski scores 2 goals as Barcelona rout Real Madrid 4-0 in the Clasico, their first win in 5 meetings

SPORTS | P12

**SHORT TAKES**

**Tigress from Maha brought to Odisha**

**Baripada:** A tigress has been brought from Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in Maharashtra to be released in Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj district. The tigress was captured in TATR Saturday morning and will be released in an enclosure inside the core of Similipal Tiger Reserve Sunday night, STR field director Prakash Chand Gogineni said. Forest officials said the enclosure has been created in the core area within the Similipal south division. The wild animal will be kept in the enclosure for observation for at least one to two weeks before its release in the core area of Similipal. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has given the nod to the proposal for translocation of two felines from TATR to STR, of which one animal has been translocated, officials said.

**Elderly man held for 'raping' minor girl**

**Jajpur:** A 57-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly raping a minor girl in Jajpur district, Sunday. The accused was well known to the eight-year-old girl. Though the incident took place October 23 and her mother filed an FIR at Bari-Ramachandrapur PS on the same night, police managed to arrest the accused in the early hours of Sunday. According to the complaint, the accused lured the girl on the pretext of showing her mongoose at his house and committed the crime. She is currently undergoing treatment at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. "We have also conducted his medical examination at hospital," Jajpur SP Yashpratap Shirmal said.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



We should've 8-10 kids—one each for our religion, our borders, Russia, Israel, the US, and the rest for delimitation

**WEATHER**

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	31.6°C	30.0°C
Min Temp	23.0°C	22.0°C
Humidity	86%	89%
Rainfall	62mm	1.0mm

**FORECAST**

PARTLY CLOUDY SKY

## Kashmir on edge

■ The Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir has seen an uptick in terror attacks ever since the BJP-led NDA started its third straight term in Delhi following the general elections this year. And the incidents suggested that the epicenter of the terrorist activities has shifted to Jammu. However, despite the Centre repeatedly saying 'all is well in the Valley', two back-to-back attacks have laid bare the fact that Kashmir is on the edge. Probe into the incidents has uncovered significant gaps in intelligence gathering and in the anti-infiltration apparatus for the last one year and the army has been denying reports of infiltration due to lack of corroboration. The involvement of local youth in the attacks indicates that 'radicalisation' of Kashmir youths is ongoing and online platforms such as Telegram and Mastodon are being used for recruitment and covert communication. Furthermore, conservation and consolidation tactics are being used by the infiltrators who lie low among the locals till their handlers from across the border order them to carry out the attack. It remains to be seen whether the Centre will somehow devise a strategy to rein in the situation or will act like the proverbial ostrich only to sell the so called 'normalcy in Valley' story.



of the Indian Army, there is a renewed focus on enhancing HUMINT to prevent local youths from slipping into terrorism.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar/New Delhi, Oct 27:** An investigation into the October 20 terrorist attack in Gagangir in Jammu and Kashmir's Ganderbal district has indicated significant gaps in intelligence and undetected infiltration since last one year along the Line of Control (LoC), officials said Sunday.

The attack, which claimed the lives of seven individuals, including a local doctor and two labourers from Bihar, has raised concerns about the unreported trend of local youths joining militant groups in Kashmir during this period.

The attack on the Z-Morh tunnel construction site involved two terrorists, one identified as a local youth from Kulgam in South Kashmir who joined a terrorist group in 2023, while the other is believed to have come from Pakistan.

Security officials expressed alarm at the rapid radicalisation of local youths, underscoring the need for improved human intelligence (HUMINT) capabilities to identify them.

In light of recent changes in leadership of the Jammu and Kashmir police and the XV Corps

December last year, but the army has been denying them due to lack of corroboration.

Similarly, the terrorists involved in the incident at Bota Pathri in the Gulmarg region Thursday that left two soldiers and two Army porters dead are believed to have been holed up in the higher reaches of Arawat since early August, the officials said.

Previously, security agencies have struggled against what they refer to as the hidden threat posed by terrorists employing conservation and consolidation tactics.

This strategy involves infiltrators remaining dormant within the local population until they receive orders from their handlers in Pakistan.

Officials believe that the recent month-long Assembly elections in the Union Territory may have prompted these groups to remain low-profile due to heightened security measures and increased international scrutiny.

The shift in terrorist operations has highlighted the urgent need for enhanced surveillance to thwart foreign mercenaries from executing their plans.

Security forces have noted that the infiltration and recruitment of local youths have increasingly taken place through online platforms.

## CM takes stock of Dana damage



35.95 lakh impacted by cyclone Dana, subsequent flooding in 14 districts: Pujari

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Sunday undertook an aerial survey of the areas affected by cyclone Dana.

Majhi was accompanied by Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari and Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja.

He undertook the aerial survey of coastal areas of Paradip in Jagatsinghpur district, Rajnagar, Mahakalpara and Rajkanika of Kendrapara district, and Chandbali of Bhadrak district this afternoon, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a statement.

After making the aerial survey, the Chief Minister has asked concerned departments to assess the damage caused by the cyclone and subsequent heavy rainfall as soon as possible so that relief can be provided to the affected people, it said.

A total of 35.95 lakh people in Odisha have been impacted by cyclone Dana and subsequent flooding in 14 districts, Pujari said while speaking to mediapersons earlier in the day.

The worst-hit districts include Kendrapara, Balasore and Bhadrak, while the human casualty still stands at zero, he said.

Cyclone Dana, which struck the Odisha coast early Friday, has affected people in 1,671 gram panchayats under 108 blocks spread over 14 districts, the minister said.

## Pregnant woman taken to hospital in sling, dies

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Mohana, Oct 27:** A six-month pregnant woman died after she failed to reach hospital in time due to bad road condition at Nirladikia village under Dambaguda panchayat of this block in Gajapati district.



Moreover, trouble seemed to follow her even after death as the body had to be carried in a sling for over 2km to the village. The deceased has been identified as Mamata Mallick, 31, wife of Balaram Mallick.

Family members decided to take a se-

riously ill Mamata to the nearest hospital October 23. However, with no proper road, they had to carry her in a sling for a rough 2-km journey to Adaba Hospital. There the doctor administered her primary treatment and referred her to the Mohana CHC. However, her parents chose to take her back to Nilada village after failing to get an ambulance.

She was rushed to Mohana CHC October 25 after her health condition deteriorated. However, doctors shifted her to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur where she succumbed during treatment, Saturday. The woman is survived by her husband and a four-year-old son.

Mohana BDO Rajiv Das said that her family has been provided with ₹3,000 financial assistance under Harishchandra Yojana and rest of the assistance will be provided as per government norms.

Villagers have long appealed to the local authorities to improve road condition in the area, citing multiple incidents when poor infrastructure hindered emergency healthcare access. Yet, these appeals have gone unaddressed.

## Thousands of kindergartens shut in China amid sharp fall in birth rates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, Oct 27:** Hit hard by China's deepening demographic crisis, thousands of famed kindergartens have been closed as enrolment of children dropped sharply across the country due to a significant decline in birth rates, according to an official report.

In 2023, the number of kindergartens fell by 14,808 to 274,400, the annual report by the Chinese education ministry stated. It is the second consecutive annual decline in the latest indicator of China's falling birth rates.

The number of children enrolled in kindergarten declined for a third consecutive year - dropping by 11.55 per cent, or 5.35 million, last year to 40.9 million, the Hong Kong based South China Morning Post reported Sunday, quoting the ministry's report.

The number of primary schools also dropped by 5,645 to 143,500 in 2023, a 3.8 per cent fall.

The decline reflects a broader demographic shift in China - where



both birth rates and total population continue to dwindle - posing a serious threat to future economic growth, which is already slowing, the Post report said.

Last year, China's population dropped for the second year in a row, to 1.4 billion, a decline of over two million. Only nine million births were reported in China in 2023, the lowest figure since records started in 1949.

As a result of declining birth rates,

China last year conceded its long-held status as the most populous country to India, whose population has overtaken that of China's.

China faced a twin crisis. While on one hand the birth-rates and fertility rates dropped, there is also a sharp rise in the old age population.

China's population aged 60 years and above approached 300 million by the end of 2023. Projections suggest it will exceed 400 million by 2035 and reach 500 million by 2050, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported early this month.

An increasing number of kindergartens have been converted into care centres for senior citizens and many of their staff members have switched jobs to care for the elderly, according to the Post report.

The rising numbers of the Chinese elderly, who had to endure the strictly enforced decades old one-child policy are mostly dependent on state social security support putting pressure on the state finances amid the flagging economy.

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# leisure



## LOPEZ 'AUDITIONING' YOUNG MEN FOR 'REVENGE DATING'

After her split from Ben Affleck, Jennifer Lopez is ready to turn the page. Reports suggest she is auditioning a lineup of hot young men to help her feel fabulous again and maybe give Ben a little nudge of jealousy.

## JOHNNY DEPP'S CRYPTIC MESSAGE TO EX AMBER HEARD

In a recent interview, *The Pirates of the Caribbean* star, Johnny Depp shared that despite the incessant media attention towards his personal life and how 'everybody was against me' in that time, he is not keeping any ill feelings toward anyone.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You may want to meet up with friends you haven't met in a long time, and the stars indicate that you will have great fun. Your enthusiasm will add a glow to whatever you do. Your sincerity in approach is what makes it special, says Ganesh.

**TAURUS**  
You will focus on nurturing the positive aspects of your life today, says Ganesh. You might exhaust yourself mentally trying to set things straight. It would be better to brainstorm with someone close to you or approach people whom you have differences with.

**GEMINI**  
You will let your personal likes and dislikes cloud your judgement today. Don't let that happen, or you may lose a worthy friend. You are likely to have a chance meeting with your soul mate or maybe even your ex-sweetheart. A romantic evening is on the anvil. But it remains to be seen whether it will be your past, present or future lover.

**CANCER**  
Today may not be a productive day for you. Though there may not be any major loss, you may feel a little lost and would like to be left alone. If you have kids, you may suffer from the empty nest syndrome with your kids not at home.

**LEO**  
You may wear the trendiest suit, drive the swankiest car and dine at the costliest restaurant, but if luck is not on your side, you can forget becoming a business tycoon. Fortunately, that is not the case with you today. With a favourable alignment of the cosmos, you are set for a day where your business proposals will be the hardest thing to overlook.

**VIRGO**  
Family matters. And matters of family matter more. Your negotiation skills are supreme and you shall bring harmonious ends to disputes today. Life has taught you to be balanced and level-headed, and you strongly believe that there is progression in opposition.

**LIBRA**  
It's a full platter today, and you have to manage it all somehow. The day promises to be full of activities, especially those that involve writing letters and reviving old contacts. Expect a call to appear for an interview for a better job. Also, look forward to being put in charge of organising events at work, says Ganesh.

**SCORPIO**  
In all probability, you are set to shine out as a man of care and kindness. Ganesh advises you to shut the doors on worries and open the windows to let merrymaking and happiness sweep you off your feet today. The social bug will bite you hard, says Ganesh.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Providence smiles upon you today, predicts Ganesh. Catching a film with your beloved today is a very good idea. Chances are you may have a nice outing along with your friends or family. In either case, the load in your wallet is likely to lessen, steadily if not dramatically.

**CAPRICORN**  
Not many can match you when it comes to living a healthy lifestyle, and as Ganesh says, health won't be an issue today either. On the work front, you are likely to complete pending projects successfully and your boss, who may be furious because of the delay caused, will reluctantly admit that you did justice to the work and that it was worth the wait.

**AQUARIUS**  
Today, you will wish there were two of you! You are deluged with pending work, and even doubling up efforts will not seem enough. You may even cancel your movie date, deciding to deal with your sweetheart's tantrums later. It's your boss you are worried about, says Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
Bright prospects will greet whatever new ventures you decide to focus on today, says Ganesh. It is a good time to implement your plans. Apart from short-term monetary gains, you may also find yourself pursuing activities which bring you intangible rewards, like goodwill for example.

## Shraddha wins hearts

**Mumbai:** Shraddha Kapoor who recently amazed audiences with her brilliant performance in *Stree 2*, is once again winning hearts and this time off-screen.

In a viral video, Shraddha was seen leaving from an event when she heard a female fan calling out to her. She immediately turned back and warmly embraced her. Shraddha took few pictures with her, making her fan's day extra special. As soon as the video was shared, fans reacted by dropping heart emojis and praising her for her down to earth attitude.

This is not the first time when the *Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar* actress has been loved in the virtual world for her sweet gestures. Recently, the actress was seen at the airport, sweetly helping a fan capture the perfect selfie with her. She didn't stop there, Shraddha made sure to pose with every fan present, earning even more praise from her admirers.

On work front, Shraddha's recent release *Stree 2* was a blockbuster. Directed by Amar Kaushik, *Stree 2* also features Rajkummar Rao, Pankaj Tripathi, Abhishek Banerjee, and Aparshakti Khurana.

AGENCIES

## Sharvari's desi avatar

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actress Sharvari has shared a quirky post about how she loves the "desi flavour" in the outfits she wears and the banana wafers she likes to gorge on.

Sharvari took to Instagram, where she shared few pictures of herself dressed in a gorgeous gold and colourful lehenga by Abu Jani and Sandee Khosla and also gorging on banana chips.

"Desi Masala is my favourite flavour for Diwali looks & Kela Wafers! Thank you @abujanisandeepkhosla for making me feel amazing last evening! This truly is my favourite look ever!" she wrote as the caption.

Sharvari has maintained her successful streak in 2024, starting with the hit film *Maharaj*, followed by a

stellar performance in Nikhil Advani's *Vedaa*. Currently, she is busy shooting for the upcoming project, *Alpha*, leaving no stone unturned to fully immerse herself in her role.

In this film, she stars opposite Alia Bhatt, directed by Shiv Rawail of *The Railway Men* fame. Both Alia and Sharvari have been filming in the scenic landscapes of Kashmir.

Bobby Deol is reportedly set to play the antagonist in the film, while Anil Kapoor will portray the head of RAW. *Alpha* is slated for release December 25, 2025.

IAN S

## Palak channels her inner swan

**Mumbai:** Actress Palak Tiwari, who is the daughter of Shweta Tiwari, turned into a beautiful white swan as she shared a few glimpses of herself in a saree.

Palak took to Instagram, where she shared a string of pictures of herself in an ivory shaded organza saree with scalloped borders. She completed her look with a choker and some bangles. For the makeup, she went for a subtle look. The daughter of actress Shweta Tiwari kept her hair open adding an extra oomph to the beautiful look.

The actress, who is reportedly dating Saif Ali Khan's son Ibrahim, captioned the post with a swan emoji.

Palak made her Bollywood debut with the Salman Khan starrer *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan* in 2023. The film, which is an action comedy, was a remake of the 2014 Tamil film *Veeram*. The film also stars Pooja Hegde, Venkatesh, Bhumiika Chawla, Jagapathi Babu, Vijender Singh, Raghav Juyal, Jassie Gill, Siddharth Nigam, Shehnaaz Gill, Vinali Bhatnagar and Satish Kaushik.

She will next be seen in *The Virgin Tree*, a sci-fi horror-comedy film. It is directed by debutant Sidhaant Sachdev. The cast also includes Sanjay Dutt, Sunny Singh, Mouni Roy, Aasif Khan and debutant Beyounic.

IAN S

## Kartik's mystery woman

**Mumbai:** Apart from being a good actor, Kartik Aaryan has always made headlines for romancing with his co-stars like Sara Ali Khan, Janhvi Kapoor and Ananya Panday. Now once again, *The Chandu Champion* star has grabbed limelight after his *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* co-star Vidya Balan hinted that he was dating someone during the shoot.

In the latest promo for *The Great Indian Kapil Show 2*, Vidya accidentally mentioned that Kartik was dating someone during the shoot of *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*. She didn't reveal her name or if he is still in a relationship with her or not. The actress said, "He was always on the phone. 'Love you, me too. Love you, me too.'" leaving Kartik speechless. *The Kahaani* actress further questioned Kartik, "What's her name?" which left the actor blushing.

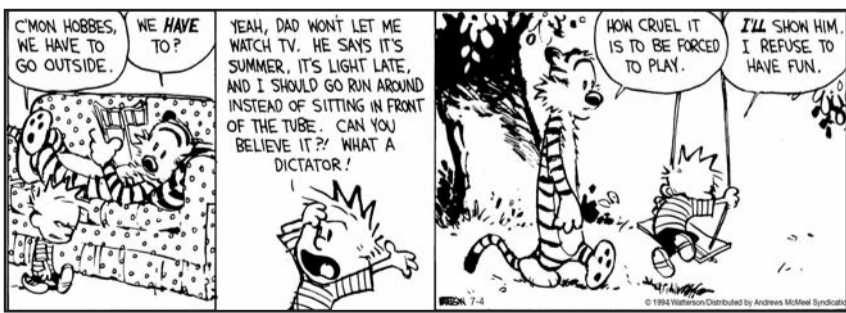
Meanwhile, Kartik and Vidya along with Triptii Dimri and Madhuri Dixit Nene are preparing for the release of *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*. Set to release November 1, on the occasion of Diwali. It will have a clash with Rohit Shetty's multi-starrer *Singham Again*, featuring Ajay Devgn, Kareena Kapoor, Arjun Kapoor, Akshay Kumar, Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh, and Tiger Shroff. The film also has a cameo by Salman Khan as Chulbul Pandey.

AGENCIES

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

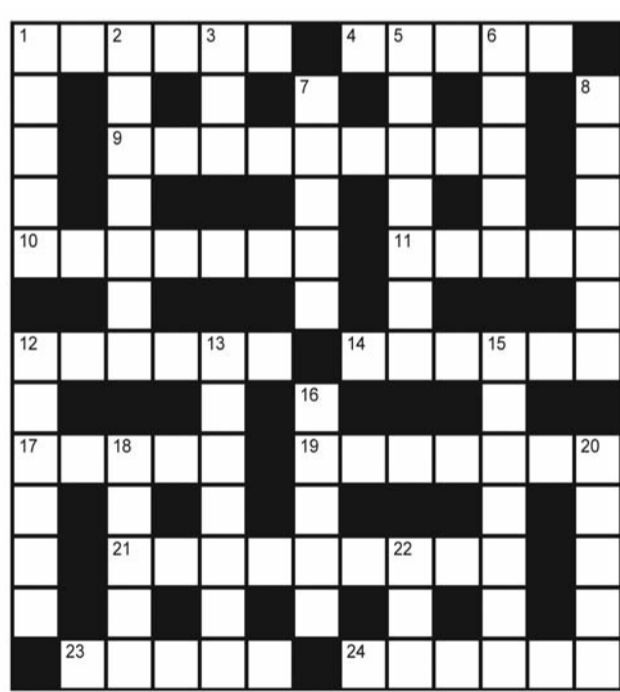


### BREVITY



### FUN post

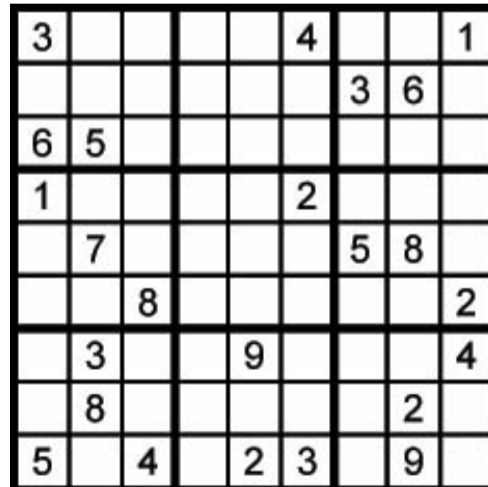
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Quick bread
  - 4 Restive
  - 9 Compliment to a chef
  - 10 Recipe
  - 11 Tennyson poem
  - 12 Gambler's downfall, at times
  - 14 Connected
  - 17 Floor covering
  - 19 Unfavorable
  - 21 Wallflower's problem
  - 23 Bored
  - 24 Diamond covered sock
  - 6 Aggressive
  - 7 Plaudits
  - 8 Unemotional
  - 12 Relish, as the moment
  - 13 Earliest tools
  - 15 Dictatorship
  - 16 Ribald
  - 18 Handrail post
  - 20 Chill-inducing
  - 22 It's mostly nitrogen
- Down**
- 1 Recurring theme
  - 2 Certain lids
  - 3 Not in the pink
  - 5 Perfect in every way

### 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





Schoolchildren take part in a drawing competition in Buxi Bazaar area of Cuttack, Sunday

# downtown

## 35.95L in 14 dists affected by Dana



Whenever there is a disaster like cyclone, people lose their houses and get compensation. This time, we want to bring a permanent solution to the problem and provide pucca houses to them in a phased manner

SURESH PUJARI | R&DM MINISTER

Around 5,840 houses have been fully or partially damaged due to the cyclone and subsequent flooding, according to preliminary reports

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** A total of 35.95 lakh people in the state have been impacted by cyclone Dana and subsequent flooding in 14 districts, Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) Minister Suresh Pujari said Sunday.

Pujari also said as many as 8,10,896 people were evacuated to 6,210 cyclone relief centres. The worst-hit districts include Kendrapara, Balasore and Bhadrak, while the human casualty still stands at zero, he told reporters here.

“By 10.30 am of Sunday, evacuated people were sheltered in 1,178 cyclone relief centres and they are being provided cooked food and other essential items,” the R&DM Minister said.

Polythene sheets are being given to people who lost their houses in the calamity. He said the cyclone has affected people in 1,671 gram panchayats under 108 blocks spread over 14 districts.

According to preliminary re-

ports, around 5,840 houses have been fully or partially damaged due to the cyclone and subsequent flooding, Pujari said.

“Whenever there is a disaster like cyclone, people lose their houses and get compensation. This time, we want to bring a permanent solution to the problem and provide pucca houses to them in a phased manner,” he said.

The Odisha government was also planning to undertake a survey of kutcha houses located in cyclone and flood-prone areas of the state.

Pujari said there has been

huge crop loss in the aftermath of the cyclone that triggered torrential rain and high-speed winds.

Referring to the swollen Budhabalanga river, which has affected Balasore district, he said the water level in the river has remained static and below the danger level, “but above the warning sign”.

“As the rainfall has reduced in the region and the upper catchment area, the water level in Budhabalanga will not increase further: We hope the situation will improve by this evening,” Pujari said in the morning.

The minister said Kansabansa river in Balasore district is also in spate and affected some villages under Soro block.

A Central team is likely to visit Odisha to assess the damages, he said.

Pujari said the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) has asked officials to submit damage assessment reports at the earliest so that the state government can seek assistance from the Centre.

Replying to a question referring to Opposition BJD’s claim that four people died due to the cyclone, he said the deaths had nothing to do with the calamity.

### 24 rescued from Bhadrak village

A team of Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) personnel late Saturday night rescued at least 24 individuals trapped at Tala Gopabindha village under Tihidi police limits in Bhadrak district, which was flooded after cyclone Dana triggered heavy rainfall, causing several rivers to swell, officials said Sunday. The trapped people, including children, women and senior citizens, were rescued with the help of motorboats and taken to a nearby cyclone shelter, an official statement said. They were left stranded as the village was flooded due to rising waters of the swollen Salandi river, it said. Satyajit Naik, DIG (Eastern Range), monitored the rescue operation. “The state’s preparedness and response to natural disasters have once again saved lives and mitigated the impact of the swollen Salandi river,” the statement added.

### No electricity in 50K households

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** About 50,000 households in cyclone-hit areas of Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Balasore districts are yet to get back power supply, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Sunday.

Briefing media here in the evening after reviewing the post-cyclone situation, Majhi said the restoration work has reached the last stage and obstructions on roads have been completely cleared.

Power supply has been restored in 98 per cent of the affected areas. Out of 22.84 lakh power consumers affected by the cyclone, power supply was restored in 22.32 lakh households. Nearly 50,000 households of Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Balasore districts are yet to get back power supply as the villages remained marooned, he stated.

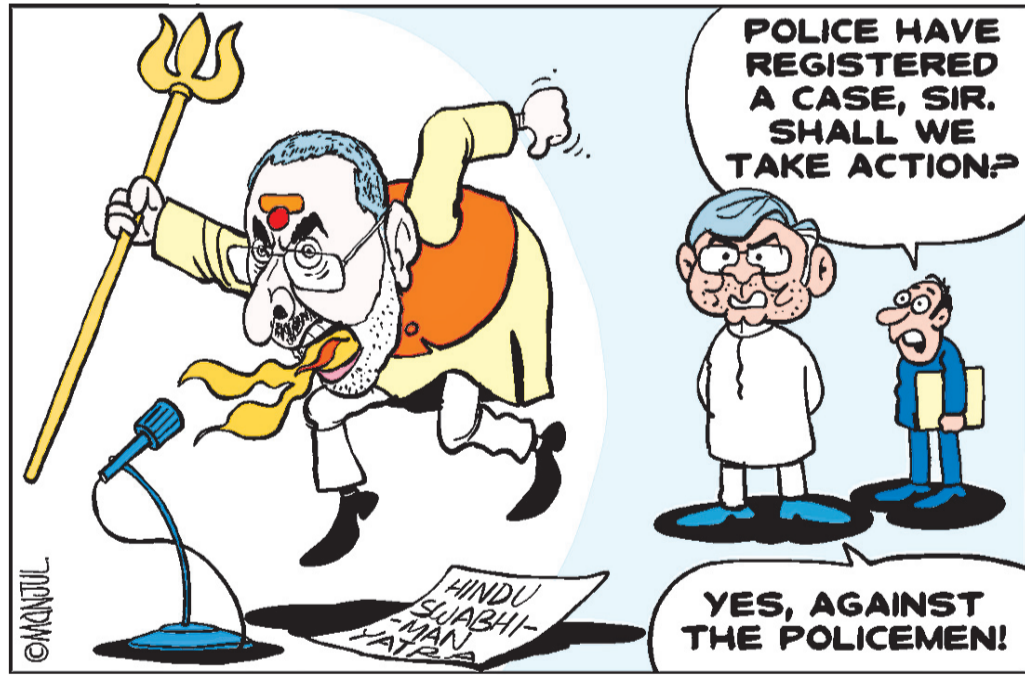
For restoration of power supply in the affected areas, about 7,000 workers have been engaged and they are working hard to restore power in those areas too, Majhi said. The CM undertook an aerial survey of the coastal areas of Paradip in Jagatsinghpur district, Mahakalapada, Rajnagar and Rajkanika area of Kendrapara district and Chandbali area of Bhadrak district in afternoon.

### Advocate Sanjay Sen advisor to Energy dept

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** The state government has appointed senior Supreme Court advocate Sanjay Sen as advisor to Energy department, sources said Sunday. “Government has been pleased to appoint Sri Sanjay Sen, Sr. Advocate, Supreme Court of India as Advisor to Energy Department with immediate effect,” a notification issued by the Energy department said Saturday.

### POLITICKLE by MANJUL



### Pat for City’s public transport system

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Bhubaneswar was adjudged the ‘City with the Best Public Transport System’ at the 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference and Exhibition 2024 organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs at Gandhinagar in Gujarat, Sunday.

Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra received the award from Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar.

Speaking at the conference, Mahapatra said, “This honour symbolises our collective commitment for building a sustainable future under ‘Viksit Odisha’ vision. Our commitment to enhance public transport system has transformed the way citizens of Odisha commute. We



have implemented innovative technologies, expanded our network and prioritised safety as well as accessibility of passengers.”

On the occasion, Khattar announced Gurugram in Haryana as the venue for 18th UMI Conference and Exhibition 2025.

The UMI has 12 categories of awards in the field of transport, especially urban transport. The awards are given to the state/city authorities for ‘excellence/best projects in transport’.

The public transport system in Bhubaneswar is being regulated by Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) which manages technology-driven and citizen friendly ‘Mo Bus’ and ‘Mo E-Ride’ services.

Earlier during the day, CRUT inked a pact with Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) for the launch of ‘Odisha Yatri’, a transformative mobility app, in the presence of the H&UD Minister and CRUT managing director N Thirumala Naik.

### Govt effects mass transfer of BDOs, 44 get new posting

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** The state government Sunday effected mass transfer of Block Development Officers (BDOs) across districts, shunting 44 of them from their present places of posting.

According to the Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water (PR&DW) department, Sundargarh’s Tangarpali BDO Ranajit Kumar Mohanta was transferred to Saharpada in Keonjhar district, while Manas Kumar Dandapat, BDO of Bangiriposi in Mayurbhanj, was posted at Patna in Keonjhar.

Binod Chandra Panda, who was the BDO of Jaleswar in Balasore, was transferred to Sadar Keonjhar, while Binita Bijayeeeni was transferred from Dhenkanal’s Hindol to Ghasipura in Keonjhar. Kendrapara Mahakalapada BDO Sagar Kumar Nanda was transferred to Puri Sadar; Malkangiri Podia BDO Abhimanyu Kabisatpathy to Koraput Boipariguda, Kandhamal Baliguda BDO Achyutananda

Jani to Ganjam and Kendrapara Garadpur BDO Pradyumna Kumar Nayak to Karanja in Mayurbhanj.

Phulbani BDO Pratik Kumar Sahoo was transferred to Cuttack Sadar, while Kandhamal Kirmira BDO Jagadish Chandra Mahananda was posted as BDO of Kuanmunda in Sundargarh.

Abinash Lakra, who was the BDO of Sinapali in Nuapada, was transferred and posted as BDO of Kirmira in Jharsuguda. While Mayurbhanj Bisoi BDO Karmi Oram was transferred to Nuapada’s Sinapali, Sonepur’s Durguripali BDO Bipin Bihari Deep was transferred to Narla in Kalahandi.

“Soumyakanta Bangola, who was the BDO of Gudvela in Bolangir, was transferred to Chandrapur in Rayagada, Sundargarh Kuanmunda BDO Gangaram Budek to Tarva in Subarnapur, Rasgopindpur BDO Satyajit Rout to Patrapur in Ganjam, Karanja BDO Sushanta Kumar Sutar to Golamunda in Kalahandi and Patna BDO Shiv



Shankar Murmu to Bangiriposhi,” the PR&DW department notification read.

Jagannathprasad BDO Aswini Kumar Mohapatra was transferred to Podia in Malkangiri, Jhargar BDO Prita Kumar to Chitrakonda and Chitrakonda BDO Tanmay Patra to Kashipur in Rayagada.

While Korkunda BDO Sujit Kumar Mohapatra was transferred to Rayagada, Amulya Kumar Sahu, who was the Rayagada BDO, was transferred

and posted in Korkunda.

Sukinda BDO Abhisek Swain was transferred to Kendrapara, Komna BDO Hitanshu Sekhar Samal to Binjharpur, Binjharpur BDO Dibyendu Kumar Dash to Nischintakoli, Khunta BDO Gouranga Charan Ghosh to Jaleswar and Pallahara BDO Dilip Kumar Bara to Durguripali in Sonepur.

“While Koksara BDO Snehaprabha Majhi was transferred to Mathili, Bari BDO Panchanan Mallik was trans-

### Wild cat spotted during search for leopard

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Personnel of the Forest department spotted a wild cat near the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here Sunday, a day after a woman claimed to have sighted a leopard near the facility’s dump yard area, an official said.

The Forest department had launched a search operation Saturday following the claim, the official said.

“Till now, we have not found any tiger or leopard in the area. In the early morning, we sighted a wild cat moving around in that area,” Forest Ranger, Bhubaneswar, Radhakanta Hota, said.

Trap cameras have also been installed in the airport area. Wildlife experts will examine the visuals and confirm further details, he said.

Earlier Saturday morning, the woman, a worker at the dump yard, claimed to have spotted a leopard there, Hota said.



# KIIT SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY INAUGURATED

Institute to offer one-year master's programme from the coming academic session



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla inaugurated the KIIT School of Public Policy here Sunday.

In his address, Birla emphasised the importance of public policy in shaping the future of the country. "India is the world's largest democracy, and its diversity is its strength. A well-drafted public policy is the foundation of a strong nation," he stated.

The Speaker lauded KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta for his vision and efforts in empowering tribals and the marginalised.

Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy highlighted the critical role the new school will play in shaping future leaders and creating policies for a prosperous Odisha. "For a 'Vikshit Odisha', good policy and strong leadership are essential. This school is the need of the hour," she said in her address.

The School will offer one-year master's programme from the coming academic session. The

knowledge partners are Indian Council of World Affairs and United Nations System Staff College.

Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo commended Samanta's contributions to education. "Public policy is for the people, not individual goals. Odisha is fortunate that Samanta is working for the cause of education," he noted.

Law, Works and Excise Minister Prithviraj Harichandan called the new public policy school 'another feather in KIIT's crown'. Former Vice-President of Ecuador Otto Ramon Sonnenholzner Sper stressed the importance of trust and respect for diversity in building strong institutions.

Director of the United Nations System Staff College in Turin, Italy Jafar Javan called the launch of the school 'a milestone for KIIT and India'.

He highlighted the ongoing partnership between the UN and KIIT, including future collaboration on the Nelson Mandela

Project for Social Change.

Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi emphasised the extraordinary achievements of Samanta. "He has demonstrated that every moment in life is important," she said, lauding Samanta's humility and dedication to education.

Praising Samanta's leadership, UN Resident Coordinator in India Shombi Sharp underlined the global impact of the new school. "This institution will contribute to global knowledge and foster the leaders of tomorrow," he said.

Additional Secretary at the Indian Council of World Affairs Nutan Kapoor Mahawar described the school as a timely initiative that would shape both Indian governance and international relations.

Padma Shri and filmmaker Chandraprakash Dwivedi said that public policies should be one that is committed to the welfare of the nation while Professor Emeritus, KIIT School of Law LN Mitra said the school will produce the future policy makers who will shape the destiny of the nation.

Samanta expressed his gratitude for the recognition of his institutions. He reiterated his commitment to social upliftment through education, which has been acknowledged by various leaders, including in the Parliament.



**DIWALI PREP:** An artisan busy preparing clay crafts ahead of festival of lights at Kumbhar Sahi in Puri, Sunday

OP PHOTO

## Odia diaspora in Belgium holds pre-Diwali gathering

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** The Odia Cultural Association of Belgium (OCAB) organised a pre-Diwali gathering in Brussels, bringing together over 100 members of the Odia diaspora community from Belgium and Luxembourg recently.

The event celebrated the cultural heritage of Odisha, with traditional rituals and festive performances.



The celebration started with lighting the ceremonial lamp and worshipping Lord Jagannath, embodying the spirit of unity and devotion.

Attendees enjoyed a line-up of cultural performances, fea-

turing Odishi and Sambalpuri dances, performed by a skilled group of women, which captivated the audience.

"We are thrilled to see such a wonderful turnout for our pre-Diwali celebration," a spokesperson from the association said. "Events like this not only strengthen our bonds as a community, but also keep our cultural heritage alive, especially for younger generations," he added.

Established in 2022, OCAB

has worked to create a sense of community among Odias in Central Europe.

This year, the association also celebrated other major events, including Utkal Divas and Raja, furthering its mission to unite the diaspora and showcase Odisha's rich cultural legacy. "The association will continue organising cultural gatherings and initiatives, helping to preserve and promote Odia culture in Europe," an OCAB member said.

## PM to inaugurate Ayurvedic hosp

**BHUBANESWAR:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the Ayushman Bharat Yojana across the country October 29, while inaugurating a Centre of Excellence (CoE) Ayurvedic hospital and a Central Drug Testing Laboratory. The two projects along with a critical healthcare unit in Barghar district will be launched on the Ayurveda Day. State Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling informed that the Prime Minister will inaugurate the Ayurvedic and Naturopathy hospital, the Central Drugs Testing Laboratory and the Barghar healthcare unit through video conference. Under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana, elder persons aged above 70 will get medical treatment free of cost. The Ayurvedic and Naturopathy Hospital has been set up in 21 acres area in Jatni, whereas the Central Drug Testing Laboratory has come up in Gothapatna.

## OPF urges CM to rein in private coaching centres

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Odisha Parents' Federation (OPF), through a letter, urged Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to bring strong guidelines for coaching centres practicing unfair means to lure students to join their institutions in the state.

The Federation alleged that some renowned coaching institutes are using photographs of some students with high ranks at national level examinations in their advertisements though these students were never admitted to their centres.

In the letter, Federation president Basudev Bhatt said that due to the concept of private coaching centres, the attendance of students is getting affected in schools and colleges.

"The day-long classes in some coaching centres are disrupting the schedule of students in their schools and colleges," he said.

Bhatt said the worst sufferers are students of Class X to XII who are taking admissions to different coaching centres for various entrance and com-

petitive exams. "At least 50 students in BJB College, Bhubaneswar faced attendance issue last year. A probe should be launched into this."

The parents also alleged that some centres have set up hostels for students to coach them in the manner of a dummy school without proper compliance to safety norms. Steps should be taken to regulate and monitor such centres and check their hostel facility, food and study atmosphere, he said.

He emphasised on the need for regulating the timing of coaching centres so that it does not clash with school or college schedules. "The timing needs to be regulated to reduce pressure on children. It should be compatible with the students' timetable as well as their school or college schedule," he added.

The Federation requested the chief minister to regulate the coaching centres through strong guidelines.

We request your kind attention to take immediate steps to protect parents' rights, failing which the Federation will take the matter to street, the letter said.



## Odia pilgrim's body from Kedarnath reaches home

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Following the unfortunate demise of an Odia pilgrim—Ranjan Kumar Sahu, a resident of Manisahu Chowk in Cuttack, during his visit to Kedarnath in Uttarakhand, the directorate of 'Odisha Paribar' extended full assistance in order to return the dead body to the state.

As per reports, Sahu, accompanied by friends, had traveled to Kedarnath. During their return after darshan, he unexpectedly fell ill. Observing his condition, he was rushed to a nearby medical camp, where doctors declared him dead.

With the combined efforts of the directorate of Odisha Paribar, the Cuttack district administration, and the Uttarakhand government, Sahu's mortal remains arrived at Biju Patnaik International Airport late Saturday night.

The body was subsequently returned to his village in Cuttack, where final rites were performed.



## Outfit's efforts to enhance beauty of traditional diyas

RESHMI YADAV, OP



**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Ahead of Diwali, Youth for Seva, Bhubaneswar, a nationwide volunteering movement, organised a unique 'diya painting' programme at Satyabhama Devi College for Hearing Impaired here Sunday.

The founder of College Niroja Lakshmi Mahapatra graced the occasion, lending her support to Youth for Seva's mission. Bhubaneswar Chapter coordinator for Youth for Seva Gyanaranjan Das explained that the initiative not only promotes cultural heritage but also aids local vendors and potters, who struggle to compete with mass-produced and often expensive LED lamps and other decorative lighting. "Our aim is to bring awareness to the beauty of tra-

ditional clay diyas and encourage people to choose them over synthetic alternatives," he shared.

Children participating in the event had the opportunity to express their creativity by painting clay diyas, resulting in beautifully designed lamps that exuded joy and enthusiasm. The diyas will be used to decorate the college premises, orphanages and homes for the elderly on the Diwali day.

A total of 72 students from the College, along with Youth for Seva members, took part in the initiative. Das led the event, ensuring its success and promoting a spirit of service and cultural preservation.

By decorating these diyas with intricate designs and vibrant colors, Youth for Seva and the College hope to rekindle people's appreciation for the tradition, the organisers said.

## 'Unhealthy diets driving abdominal obesity'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Oct 27:** Unhealthy diets and physical inactivity are the main reasons for rising abdominal obesity in India, said Soumya Swaminathan, former WHO Chief Scientist.

Swaminathan, who is currently the Principal Advisor for the Health Ministry's tuberculosis programme, called for expanding access to healthier diets and spaces for exercise in the country to fight against obesity, which is already a global health concern.

Obesity is a known precursor to diabetes, hypertension, and cancer -- the non-communicable diseases rising significantly both in India and worldwide.

"Abdominal obesity - unhealthy diets and physical inactivity are driving this unhealthy trend," Swaminathan said in a post on X.

"More awareness, nutrition literacy, expanded access to healthier diets, spaces for exercise needed," she added, citing a recent study on abdominal obesity, published in the journal The Lancet Regional Health.

The study led by researchers from IHMR University in Jaipur and Johns Hopkins University's Bloomberg School of Public Health in the US, is based on data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) conducted in 2019-21. The results showed that abdominal obesity is more prevalent among women (40 per cent) than men (10 per cent). About 5-6 out of 10 women between the ages of 30 and 49 are abdominally obese.

The association of abdominal obesity in women is stronger in elderly women and non-vegetarians. While abdominal obesity is more prevalent among people living in urban areas, the study showed that it is also on the rise in rural areas and is penetrating lower and middle socioeconomic sections of society.

In India, BMI has conventionally been used to measure obesity.



## Power restoration efforts on by Tata Power discoms

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** In response to the damage caused by Cyclone 'Dana' in parts of northern Odisha, a comprehensive restoration initiative has been coordinated by Tata Power-led four discoms to restore power swiftly across the affected areas.

Under the guidance of the state government and the Special Relief Commissioner, the four discoms are actively engaged on ground and are mobilising extra resources for full service restoration, with safety ensured in all operations.

With 92 per cent power restoration achieved across affected



areas, the discoms have deployed additional teams to accelerate full restoration. Skilled engineers,

linemen, and support staff from TP Western Odisha Distribution Ltd (TPWODL), TP Southern

Odisha Distribution Ltd (TP-SODL), and TP Central Odisha Distribution Ltd (TPCODL) are on the ground, working closely with government agencies and local authorities. The teams, experienced in managing 33kV, 11kV, and LT networks, are stationed in heavily impacted areas like Bhadrak and Soro.

24x7 Power System Control Centre (PSCC) setup in Balasore, along with local control rooms are playing a very critical role in monitoring grid stability in real-time, managing load distribution, and remotely coordinating repairs to reduce further risk to the network. Teams are working around

the clock to restore damaged infrastructure, deploy mobile substations, repair power lines and crucial electrical equipment to expedite the recovery of critical infrastructure amidst blocked roads and waterlogged areas. They are fully equipped with essential tools and PPE, to restore network stability swiftly and safely.

Through sustained efforts and proactive measures, Tata Power-led Odisha Discoms remain dedicated to restoring reliable electricity to affected areas, reinforcing their commitment to resilience and dependable service even in adverse conditions.

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# Joda flyover caves in 2nd time in 7 months

THE BRIDGE WAS HURRIEDLY UNVEILED AND DEDICATED TO PEOPLE BY THE PREVIOUS BJD GOVT JUST BEFORE THE ELECTIONS IN MARCH THIS YEAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Joda, Oct 27:** Barely seven months after it was dedicated to people, the 2.9km-long Joda flyover caved in for the second time during a drizzle induced by cyclone Dana Saturday, risking the lives of hundreds of commuters.

Earlier in August, chunks of concrete had fallen off the flyover, said to be the longest of its kind in Keonjhar district. The repeated sinking of the bridge which was constructed during the tenure of the previous BJD state government has raised serious question marks on its construction quality, stability and durability. The bridge was built using district mineral foundation (DMF) funds.

Like on the previous occasion, engineers from the maintenance agency - Chevrox Constructions Private Ltd - repaired the damaged portion of the bridge. However, the barricades put up at the repaired spot is causing serious traffic issues and preventing the smooth plying of vehicles, commuters complained.

With a view to resolve the burgeoning traffic problems and the corresponding pollution in the industrial township of Joda,



the previous BJD government had decided to construct the flyover. The 2.9km-long flyover was built at a cost of Rs 250 crore which was allotted from the DMF funds. Sources said the government had hurriedly unveiled the flyover in March this year and opened it for traffic though the constructions were still to be fully completed.

As a result, multiple cracks appeared and portions caved in on multiple occasions even before the structure completed one year, leaving commuters apprehensive while using the bridge.

Sources said the flyover was constructed under the supervision Narasingh Mohanta, general manager of Odisha Bridge and Construction Corporation Ltd (OBCC). The information plaque

on the bridge mentions that it was constructed using the latest and modern technology.

Truck drivers Santanu Giri, Shibaram Majhi, Deepak Kumar and a biker Shibabrata Das alleged that shoddy and sub-standard works were the reasons behind the caving in of the bridge which was hurriedly unveiled before the elections. They also demanded a fair probe into the quality of construction.

Meanwhile, when contacted, Chevrox engineer Anand Kumar said they carried out PQC (Pavement Quality Concrete) on the portion on the flyover which sunk Saturday due to "regular plying of heavy vehicles". He however, failed to reply satisfactorily when asked to explain what it actually meant by 'PQC'.



**CULTURE FEST:** Artistes perform a traditional tribal dance at the inauguration of district-level cultural festival Parab in Dudhari panchayat near Sunabeda of Koraput district, Sunday

## Last rites of labourers killed in Pune mishap held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Berhampur, Oct 27:** The last rites of the two migrant labourers, who died in a water tank collapse in Maharashtra's Pune, were held in their native villages in Ganjam district.

The bodies of Rabi Mahankuda, 50, and Sudam Behera, 33, reached their native villages, Kalyanpur and Palur, respectively, in an ambulance Saturday afternoon, officials said.

They were among the five people killed in the accident that



occurred in the Bhosari area of Pimpri Chinchwad township around 6.15 am Thursday. The accident happened when some labourers were bathing under the water tank.

Ganjam's District Labour Officer (DLO) Barsha Jena said the administration was in touch with family members of the deceased labourers.

"We will take all necessary steps to get their families benefits under government schemes," she said.

The company for which the labourers were working has given Rs 11 lakh to each of their families, she added.

Both the deceased labourers went to Maharashtra through a contractor October 1, their families said.

## 3 critical after inhaling smoke

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Tihidi, Oct 27:** Three persons were rendered critical while sleeping after they inhaled smoke emanating from a burning mosquito repellent at Dakshinapari village in Kanpada panchayat of this block in Bhadrak district, late Saturday night. They have been identified as Sasmita Das, 30, her daughter Pritiprabha Das, 10 and a 13-year old girl from the neighbourhood, Liza Mallick. The three had gone off to sleep lighting a mosquito repellent in the room.

The matter came to the fore after family members found them sleeping till late in the morning. They grew apprehensive and informed local sarpanch Kuntala Mallick who in turn informed the police. Later, villagers broke the window and brought them out unconscious. Initially all the three were rushed to the Tihidi hospital. Later in the day, doctors shifted Sasmita to the Bhadrak headquarters hospital after her health condition deteriorated.

## Tigress from Tadoba arrives in Similipal



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baripada, Oct 27:** A Royal Bengal Tigress, from the Tadoba forest in Maharashtra arrived Sunday at the Smilipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj district, informed PCCF Sushant Nanda. He added that a special team and a vehicle were involved in the tiger transportation.

Similipal is considered an ideal region in Odisha for breeding of tigers. The National Tiger

Conservation Authority (NTCA) had earlier recognised Similipal as an excellent place for breeding of tigers. Efforts are on now to boost the number of tigers in STR. It is the main reason why the tigress has been brought from Maharashtra.

Officials said that before being released in the forest, the tigress will undergo a series of medical and health checks. It will then be released in the core area of STR, fitted with a radio col-

lar to monitor its movements, they added. It should be stated that a special team had been formed for transportation of the animal from Tadoba.

The Odisha government had previously planned to introduce tigers from other states in STR to increase population. In July 2024, NTCA approved the mission to bring two tigresses to Similipal, keeping in mind that an infusion of genetic diversity could help control mutation. According to the 2023 tiger census report, Similipal is home to 27 adult tigers and eight cubs. Recently, using trap cameras of officials have found 12 new cubs in the STR increasing the tiger population to 39.

However, conservationists like former wildlife warden Bhanumitra Acharya and animal enthusiasts have expressed concerns over the impact of introducing tigers from other states in Similipal's existing wildlife diversity. However, the Forest department is hopeful that introducing these two tigresses will help control genetic diversity and increase the tiger population.

## ₹20 to charge mobiles in Bhadrak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhadrak, Oct 27:** People in many villages in Basudevpur block of this district are seen making a beeline before vehicles carrying power generators to charge their mobile phone batteries as the power supply has been disrupted by 'Cyclone Dana'.

People are being forced to pay Rs 20 per hour to recharge one mobile phone battery and Rs 300 to lift ground water to overhead tanks in houses, said Santilata Panda, sarpanch of Bishnupur panchayat.

The local tent houses and other traders who have petrol and diesel-run generator sets are providing

the paid services to the people in the locality, Panda informed.

"I have paid Rs 20 per hour to charge my mobile phone. We request the administration to restore the power supply as soon as possible," said a youth of Nuagaon village of the district.

Meanwhile, Tata Power, which provides electricity across Odisha, said that electricity has been restored in around 92 per cent of the affected areas and it has deployed additional teams to accelerate full restoration. Engineers, linemen, and support staff are working closely with government agencies and local authorities, the company said in a statement.

It said that teams are working round the clock to restore damaged infrastructure, deploy mobile sub-stations and repair power lines and crucial electrical equipment to expedite the recovery of critical infrastructure amidst blocked roads and water-logged areas.

Severe Cyclonic storm Dana struck the eastern coast in the early hours of Friday, triggering torrential rain and high-speed winds that uprooted trees and electric poles and caused significant damage to infrastructure and crops in Odisha. It made landfall between Bhitarkanika in Kendrapara district and Dhamra in this district.

## Firecrackers worth ₹8 lakh destroyed

**Rourkela:** Rourkela police Sunday destroyed firecrackers worth Rs 8 lakh by consigning those to flames near the BPUT dumping yard here. The firecrackers had been seized Saturday at an area under the Plant Site police station. One person had been arrested also in this regard. Police had said earlier this month that a drive will be launched against illegal selling of firecrackers and it will continue till the New Year. SDO Zone 1 Nirmal Chandra Mohapatra personally supervised the destruction of the firecrackers. "We are keeping a strict watch on illegal sale of firecrackers. People indulging in such activities will not be spared," Mohapatra said. "This drive will continue. Only a fortnight back we had destroyed firecrackers worth Rs 18 lakh. It was a message to all those who are illegally selling firecrackers. Today's action is another reminder to them," Mohapatra added. The Plant Site daily market and its nearby localities are the hub of firecracker shops. Both licensed and unlicensed sellers operate from this market. A large number of wholesalers also have their shops in the market, officials said.

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, BARGARH**  
Email : rd\_bgh@yahoo.co.in, Gmail : rwd.bgh@gmail.com  
e-Procurement Notice No. ONLINE-BGH-04 OF 2024-25

1	Name of the Work	Road works during 2024-25 in the district of Bargarh			
2	EMD	@ 1% of the estimated cost put to tender			
3	Other details	As per DTCN			
	Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding	Last Date & Time of Seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender
1		2	3	4	5
	Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Bargarh	ONLINE- BGH-04 of 2024-25	30.10.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	11.11.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.	11.11.2024 upto 4.00 P.M. 12.11.2024 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

Sd./- Executive Engineer  
R.W. Division, Bargarh

OIPR-25062/11/0004/2425

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, BARGARH**  
Email : rd\_bgh@yahoo.co.in, Gmail : rwd.bgh@gmail.com  
e-Procurement Notice No. ONLINE-BGH-05 OF 2024-25

1	Name of the Work	Road works during 2024-25 in the district of Bargarh			
2	EMD	@ 1% of the Estimated Cost put to tender			
3	Other details	As per DTCN			
	Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding	Last Date & Time of Seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender
1		2	3	4	5
	Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Bargarh	ONLINE- BGH-05 of 2024-25	06.11.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	16.11.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.	16.11.2024 upto 4.00 P.M. 18.11.2024 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

Sd./- Executive Engineer  
R.W. Division, Bargarh

OIPR-25062/11/0005/2425

**GOVT OF ODISHA**  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,  
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, NAYAGARH**  
At/PO - Nabaghanpur, Dist - Nayagarh, Ph - 06753-252049 E-mail : nayagarhrw2006@yahoo.in  
No. : Tender-Online-NayagarhDivn. - 05/2024-25 Date : 15.10.2024

**e-Procurement Notice**

1. Name of the work : Road works	2. Total No. of Projects : 28 (Twenty Eight)	3. Nos. of projects	4. Class of contractor		
Estimated cost above Rs. 20.00 Lakhs & up to Rs. 3.00 Crore	B Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities (b)				
Estimated cost up to Rs. 40.00 Lakhs	C Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities (c)		Estimated cost up to Rs. 20.00 Lakhs : D Class (of Odisha PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities		
4. Estimated cost put to tender : Rs. 5.05 Lakhs to Rs. 33.65 lakhs	5. Time for completion : 02 (Two) calendar months				
6. Other details					
	Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding	Date & Time of opening of tender	
1		2	3	4	5
	Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nayagarh	No. : Tender - Online - Divn. Nayagarh - 05/2024-25	29.10.2024 at 10.00 A.M.	11.11.2024 upto 5.30 P.M.	12.11.2024 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

Sd./- Executive Engineer  
Rural Works Division, Nayagarh

OIPR-25106/11/0007/2425

**STEEL AUTHORITY OF INDIA LIMITED**  
Rourkela Steel Plant  
Rourkela - 769 011, Odisha, India

**ABRIDGED VERSION OF CIRCULAR NO. CSR/2024-25/289 Dtd. 09/10/2024**  
**LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION - 30/11/2024**

**SUB: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS FOR PURSUING PROFESSIONAL STUDIES (AY 2024-25 JOINING)**

Applications in the prescribed format are invited for grant of the above financial assistance from the eligible students as per details given below.

**Eligibility criteria for application:**

- The student should belong to Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe/ others, and should be a resident of Sundargarh district, Odisha.
- The applicant should have taken admission in academic year 2024-25:
  - % Graduation course in Engineering, Medical or Agriculture (including integrated/dual degree M.Tech. Course) OR
  - % Post Graduation course of at least two years duration in Engineering/ Medical/ Agriculture/ Business Administration.
- Details of professional course, in the academic year 2024-25 in a recognized institution should be as follows-:
  - i. For Graduation Courses of at least four years duration (B.Tech./ B.Sc (Engg.)/B.Sc (Ag)etc.).
  - ii. For Graduation Courses of less than 4-years duration (e.g. Lateral entry in B.Tech./B.Sc (Engg.) after Diploma in Engg.).
  - iii. For Graduation courses of more than 4-years duration (e.g. 5 yrs MBBS, 5-yr integrated/dual degree M.Tech.).
- OR
- iv. For Post Graduate course of at least two years duration (e.g. M.Tech./MD/MS/M.Sc.(Ag)/MBA etc.)

The student, whose parents (taken together) are having annual income from all sources not exceeding Rs.2,50,000/- (Rupees Two Lakhs Fifty Thousand), shall be eligible for the financial assistance.

**Basis of Selection:** The best twenty students (10 boys and 10 girls) separately for the graduation courses including 5-yr MBBS/5-yr integrated/dual degree M.Tech.) and best 10 students (5 boys and 5 girls) for Post-graduation courses will be selected from amongst the eligible applicants. In case there is a shortfall in number of selected candidates in either of the categories i.e Boys or Girls for which merit lists are prepared separately, then the applicants from the merit list of the other category may be additionally selected for the scholarship keeping the total number of scholarships as 20 in case of Graduation courses and 10 in case of Post-Graduation courses.

**Financial assistance amount:** The amount of financial amount is Rs.1,20,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Twenty Thousand Only) for the graduation courses of 4-yr duration, Rs. 90,000/- (Rupees Ninety Thousand only) for the graduation courses of less than 4 years (e.g. lateral entry in B.Tech./B.Sc(Engg.)after Diploma in Engg., Rs. 1,50,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Fifty Thousand Only) for courses of 5-yr duration and Rs. 60,000/- (Rupees Sixty Thousand Only) for the post-graduation courses, per student for entire duration of the course. The amount will be released in equal yearly installments @ Rs. 30,000/- (Rupees Thirty Thousand Only) per Academic Year based on documentary evidence of admission and continuation in the course.

For further details on the basis of selection, financial assistance amount and mode of payment, application format etc., the main circular as referred above may be referred to. The details along with application format are available in the 'News' section of 'Career' page at our company's website [www.sail.co.in](http://www.sail.co.in) or [www.sailcareers.co.in](http://www.sailcareers.co.in). The duly completed application along with required documents are to be submitted in a sealed envelope at the office of the General Manager I/c, CSR Department, IPD Building, Sector-20, Rourkela - 769 005 latest by 30/11/2024(4.00 PM).

**General Manager I/c (CSR)  
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There is no greater courage than that of recognizing one's own mistakes.

THE MOTHER



## Shrinking Middle Class

One of the key indicators of the health of an economy is the size of its middle class. A burgeoning middle class means a robust economy where consumption keeps pace with the economy's growth. In India, that is Viksit Bharat, amid all the tall claims about the fastest GDP growth and the ambitious projections of a five trillion dollar economy this middle class appears to be shrinking. Suresh Narayanan, Chairman and Managing Director of FMCG giant Nestlé India, recently flagged the stagnating income and consumption of the middle class, while releasing the company's quarterly results. "There used to be a middle segment – the middle-class – where most of us FMCG companies used to operate in. That seems to be shrinking," Narayanan said as the company reported its slowest quarterly growth in eight years. The market has become polarised, with premium consumption staying relatively robust, while the middle segment—where the majority of FMCG companies operate—is contracting, he went on to add.

The shrinking middle class comes on top of an ever widening income inequality which has been highlighted by numerous studies of national and international repute. Consider the case of car sales. While on the one hand there is a growing demand for SUVs and other premium vehicles, the demand for entry-level cars is lacklustre. This indicates that the two-wheeler owner, a part of the country's middle class, is finding it difficult to upgrade to a four-wheeler.

Another clear indication that the middle class is holding off on purchases ahead of the festive season is the huge and unprecedented inventory of 700,000 vehicles worth ₹86,000 crore with the auto dealers of the country. The stock of passenger cars with dealers has surged by 75 per cent compared to the same period last year, implying a significant drop in demand.

A Pew Research Center analysis of 2021 found that the middle class in India is estimated to have shrunk by 32 million in 2020 as a consequence of the economic downturn on account of the COVID-19 pandemic. This accounted for 60 per cent of the world wide retreat in the number of people in the middle-income tier (people with incomes of \$10.01-\$20 a day). The Pew study also revealed that the number of people who were poor in India (with incomes of \$2 or less a day) is estimated to have increased by 75 million because of the pandemic-induced recession, accounting for nearly 60 per cent of the global increase in poverty.

The years following the pandemic saw India registering the fastest GDP growth among the major economies. However, it was a K-shaped recovery in growth where the rich thrived, while the poor and middle income segments struggled and went down. This resulted in a K-shaped trend in consumption, with premium segments flourishing while middle segments remaining sluggish or declining. It should also be noted here that the high GDP numbers were a result of massive government spending on infrastructure and other sectors and not because of consumer spending.

Yet another indicator of the plight of the middle class is the declining savings rate of the economy. India has always been a nation of savers, with families setting aside a considerable portion of their income for future security, often at the cost of immediate consumption requirements. However, recent trends indicate a troubling shift. According to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), net household savings have reached their lowest level in 47 years. In financial year 2022-23, savings fell to 5.3 per cent of the GDP, a decline from 7.3 per cent in 2021-22, the RBI noted.

All these point to a sagging economy where incomes remain stagnant and prices of essentials spiral out of control. Unless these economic issues are addressed, these may well lead to unforeseen misery. Unfortunately there is none who has the political will to address this current situation.



Hailemariam Desalegn

**IT IS ESTIMATED THAT TACKLING THE BIODIVERSITY CRISIS WILL REQUIRE AN ADDITIONAL \$700 BILLION PER YEAR BY 2030**

Our long-term prosperity and the well-being of future generations are in jeopardy, as biodiversity loss and the collapse of critical ecosystems not only threaten our environment, but also raise risks for the economy, public health, national security, and global stability. At the 2024 United Nations Biodiversity Conference, currently taking place in Cali, Colombia, leaders must finally meet this crisis with the level of political commitment and funding that it warrants.

Biodiversity is often understood in terms of the variety of life on Earth – the number of species of plants, animals, and microorganisms. Its significance cannot be overstated. Biodiversity underpins the ecosystem services that sustain human life, such as water purification, flood control, and climate regulation. The rapid decline of species and ecosystems – one million plant and animal species are on the brink of extinction – thus amounts to an existential threat.

If left unaddressed, biodiversity loss will accelerate climate change and amplify its consequences, contributing to more natural disasters and market shocks. It will also leave our agricultural systems increasingly vulnerable to hazards – from pests and pathogens to extreme weather – and deplete the ocean of critical fish stocks. This will affect both the price and availability of food, causing scarcity in the Global South and compounding insecurity in already-fragile societies.

These trends will leave a growing number of people with little choice but to flee their homes in search of better living conditions. According to the Institute for Economics and Peace, natural disasters and other ecological threats could displace as many as 1.2 billion people by 2050. These "envi-



**If left unaddressed, biodiversity loss will accelerate climate change and amplify its consequences, contributing to more natural disasters and market shocks**

ronmental refugees" could destabilize destination countries, strain international relations, and challenge security frameworks. As the planet's total habitable area shrinks, and competition for resources grows, conflict will become all but inevitable.

Biodiversity loss also threatens public health, which is inextricably linked to the ecosystems that surround us. Many diseases – including emerging infectious diseases such as mpox – can be tied directly to changes in biodiversity. As the destruction of habitats forces wildlife into closer contact with human populations, the risk of zoonotic diseases like COVID-19 rises.

To prevent such a future, all countries must recognize biodiversity loss as a security issue. This means integrating biodiversity considerations into defense and foreign policymaking. And it means financing the response – including investments in practices that protect ecosystems, and ambitious measures to address the root causes of biodiversity loss, such as habitat destruction and climate change – as robustly as they

would for any other security crisis.

It is estimated that tackling the biodiversity crisis will require an additional \$700 billion per year by 2030. Fortunately, at the 2022 UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15), world leaders agreed to close this gap by phasing out or repurposing harmful subsidies worth \$500 billion and raising the remaining \$200 billion. Financing from developed economies to their developing counterparts is supposed to reach at least \$20 billion per year by 2025 and at least \$30 billion per year by 2030.

That might seem like a lot, but it is peanuts compared to the cost of inaction. According to projections by the Environmental Change Institute at the University of Oxford, the shocks to the global economy caused by biodiversity loss and ecosystem damage could cost as much as \$5 trillion over just five years. The world's biodiversity-financing needs are also dwarfed by its current defense spending, which totaled \$2.24 trillion in 2022. Since investing in nature amounts to one of the most cost-effective long-term

defense strategies, it should be embraced by the world's major defense spenders, beginning with the United States.

As with any good security strategy, finance must be paired with international cooperation. The consequences of biodiversity loss know no borders. Countries must work together to protect critical habitats, enforce environmental regulations, and promote sustainable development practices.

As such, multilateral groups, such as the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, should continue to take the lead in forging international agreements and action plans that establish biodiversity conservation as a cornerstone of global security. Policymakers must continue to focus on working to meet the biodiversity framework's "30x30" target, by encouraging and facilitating government action to protect 30 per cent of the planet's land and ocean by 2030. Furthermore, members from the Global North should increase financial support for countries in the Global South to implement necessary designations, specifically by meeting their commitment to deliver at least \$20 billion of nature finance annually by 2025.

Finally, we must engage and inform the public. Education and awareness campaigns that explain the importance of protecting biodiversity can empower individuals and communities to advocate for policies that protect our natural resources, thereby helping to generate the necessary political will.

If an enemy state threatened the economy, public health, national security, and global stability, we would throw everything we had at it to defend ourselves. The biodiversity crisis is no different.

*The writer is a former prime minister of Ethiopia.*  
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## WISDOM CORNER

The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter - 'tis the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning.

MARK TWAIN

Rightful liberty is unobstructed action according to our will within limits drawn around us by the equal rights of others. I do not add 'within the limits of the law' because law is often but the tyrant's will, and always so when it violates the rights of the individual.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child.

CARL JUNG

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1636: Harvard University, the oldest institute of higher learning in the United States, was founded by the Great and General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.
- 1726: Anglo-Irish author Jonathan Swift anonymously published *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World* (later called *Gulliver's Travels*), a keystone of English literature that helped give birth to the novel form.
- 1886: Statue of Liberty dedicated. On this day in 1886 U.S. President Grover Cleveland officially dedicated the Statue of Liberty—a gift from the people of France to the people of the United States—on Bedloe's (later Liberty) Island in Upper New York Bay.
- 1918: Tomáš Masaryk, Edvard Beneš, and other leaders issued a proclamation announcing the formation of an independent Czechoslovakian state. The Central European country had been a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire since the late 1700s. At the end of the First World War, with the end of the Empire on the horizon, nationalists under the leadership of Thomas Masaryk pushed for independence. Masaryk became the country's first president in November 1918. On January 1, 1993, Czechoslovakia peacefully broke up into two countries – the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.
- 1919: US Congress Passes the Volstead Act. The act enumerated ways to enforce Prohibition. Prohibition was put in place in the country by the 18th Amendment to the Constitution. The amendment made it illegal to produce, sell, or transport alcohol in the US except for medical or religious purposes. The act was named after Andrew Volstead, the Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee who was one of the sponsors of the bill. Prohibition ended with the ratification of the 21st Amendment in December 1933.
- 1962: Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev capitulated to U.S. demands to halt delivery of nuclear-armed missiles to Cuba, bringing to an end the Cuban missile crisis.

## SPECTRUM ECONOMY

# The Sensex in a free-fall

The economy is slowing down! Indications include creeping severe sourness in the stock market, ₹26 lakh crore loss to investors and withdrawal of ₹90,000 crore by foreign funds during a month leading to the worst crash on 25 October. In October, Sensex recorded its worst monthly fall since the COVID-19 crash with a 5% drop. The fall is likely to continue amid dismal performance of various companies in the second quarter (Q2) worsening the mood during the peak festive season, according to stock expert firm CLSA, erstwhile Credit Lyonnais Securities Asia.

Among the major global markets, India has emerged as the biggest loser over the last one month. Between September 26 and October 25, major global indices that witnessed a fall include Sensex (7.5%), FTSE (0.25%), Nikkei (2.41%) and Bovespa of Brazil (2.21%). On the other hand, indices that have surged in the last month are Shanghai (9.99%), Hang Seng (3.85%), German DAX (1.21%) and Dow Jones (0.55%).

The largest single-day drop of this year occurred on 4 June, the day the general election results were announced, with the Sensex falling by 5.74%. On that

day, FPIs sold shares worth ₹12,436 crore, highlighting the significant influence they have on Indian equity markets. Domestic institutional investors (DIIs) also contributed to the sell-off, recording net sales of ₹319 crore.

After roaring growth in recent years, the economy seems to be losing momentum. According to the latest official figures, the annual GDP growth rate eased to 6.7% between April and June, down from 7.8% in the previous quarter. That is the slowest expansion in more than a year, says The Economist. The recent data released suggest that the slowdown continues. An index tracking output in eight core industries, such as coal, oil and electricity, fell in August for the first time in more than three years. In September car sales, a proxy for consumption, fell by 19% year-on-year. Growth in collections from the GST, another indicator of economic health, also fell to its lowest level in more than three years.

According to experts, the Indian market is falling due to five reasons — the US presidential elections, geopolitical tensions, Maharashtra elections, below-par Q2 results, and weakness in the rupee that came

down below ₹84.07 to a dollar.

Additionally, the growth of companies is expected to decline to 5-7% due to 16 months' stagnation in construction, decline in industrial commodities and sluggish investment leading to slowdown. Agricultural sector experienced 22% revenue drop.

Some factors that the market participants point to for the fall are money flowing from the secondary market to the primary market and the possibility of FPI funds flowing from India to China in the wake of a significant rise in Chinese markets. The recent sharp up move in Chinese markets after a period of significant underperformance could lead to FPIs diverting flows from India in the near term. The selloff by foreign investors is also attributed to booking profits after Sensex and Nifty touched all-time highs and as the rupee depreciated to an all-time low of 84.07 on 14 October.

The foreign fund outflows stood at a record ₹85,790 crore in October so far — the highest in a month in calendar year 2024. DIIs pumped in ₹97,090 crore, but despite such strong support, the indices plummeted in October. The small and mid-cap stocks also tanked over the last

one month by over 8% on concerns over higher valuation and as retail investors pulled out money from the secondary market to invest in IPOs.

The growth in factory output is declining. Manufacturing activity has slumped to its lowest in eight months. The weak private investment, stagnant manufacturing and falling real wages are the bane. The situation could get worse if the conflict in the Middle East escalates and oil prices keep rising. Estimates suggest that a \$10 increase in the price of an oil barrel could save up to 0.4% of India's GDP. The inevitable rise in fuel subsidies would also crowd out other government spending.

The Union Finance Ministry has acknowledged these developments, describing them as "incipient signs of strains." Nevertheless, few policymakers believe that the new data are more than temporary blips in India's trajectory. At its latest meeting on 9 October, the Reserve Bank of India retained its growth forecast of 7.2% for the current fiscal and Governor Shaktikanta Das insisted that "India's growth story remains intact." Living in a make-believe world?

INFA



Shivaji Sarkar

**AMONG THE MAJOR GLOBAL MARKETS, INDIA HAS EMERGED AS THE BIGGEST LOSER OVER THE LAST ONE MONTH**

## 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)

**OrissaPOST**  
B-15, Rasulgur Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

## Simmering disagreement

Sir, This refers to "Seat-sharing deal eludes Opposition," *Orissa POST*, October 27. The simmering disagreement among the partners of the INDIA bloc on seat-sharing for the Assembly elections in Maharashtra despite the electoral process being set in motion points to the inability of the Opposition front to make a fair assessment of the political challenge it faces and its failure to form an essential strategy to make it a winnable exercise. In Maharashtra, the three main parties of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) — the Congress, the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Nationalist Congress Party (SP) — have come to a broader understanding of contesting 85 seats each with the remaining seats being allotted to the minor partners of the alliance. The Congress has been accommodative of the demands of the other two partners the way it was during the seat-sharing talks for the last Lok Sabha elections. The experiences of the Assembly elections in the last year and the 2024 Lok Sabha elections should have been the guiding light for the Opposition bloc during the seat-sharing talks. The elections to the Maharashtra Assembly have a special role in the matrix of Opposition politics in that the state sends the second largest contingent of MPs to the Rajya Sabha. On the other hand, the energised BJP, fresh from its victory in Haryana, will go with full throttle in the elections with its alliance partners.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

## Champion Kiwis

Sir, Team India suffered yet another crushing defeat against New Zealand in the second Test in Pune. Indian batters, once considered the best players of spin bowling, succumbed to the guiles of Michel Santner who took a match haul of 13 wickets. With this victory, New Zealand also became the first visiting side to win a Test series in India after 12 years. With back-to-back two defeats, India's World Test Championship (WTC) standing is in jeopardy. The Indian team needs to rethink its strategies to come up with a solution to beat the Kiwis in the third and final Test.

S Sankaranarayanan, CHENNAI



WAYANAD LS  
BYPOLL

## Landslide survivors' rehab key issue

DISPLACED LOCALS  
WANT LAND  
ACQUISITIONS TO BE  
COMPLETED PROMPTLY,  
IN THE FACE OF THE  
CHALLENGE FROM  
RELUCTANT  
ESTATE OWNERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wayanad (Kerala), Oct 27: The issue of rehabilitation of the survivors of the July 30 landslides has taken centre stage in Kerala's Wayanad ahead of next month's Lok Sabha bypoll, with the Congress-led UDF and CPI(M)-headed LDF raising the matter in response to concerns from the affected families.

According to the government, the deadly disaster has claimed 231 lives while 47 people are still missing.

Bypoll to Wayanad constituency is being held November 13 and the election was necessitated due to the resignation of local MP and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as he emerged victorious from Uttar Pradesh's Rae Bareilly as well, in this year's general elections.

Local residents have stressed that land acquisition for rehabilitation must be completed promptly, as it has been delayed after estate owners challenged it in the Kerala High Court.

The land, meant for new townships under the Disaster Management Act, includes the Harrison Malayalam Estate in Nedumbala, Meppadi grama panchayat, and Elston Estate in



Amidst the political blame games and gestures of support from leaders, the survivors are gearing up to stage protests to demand attention from all candidates regarding their rehabilitation

Kalpetta, all designated for housing survivors.

Besides, demands for loan waivers, immediate relief assistance, and increased rent support for those displaced and living in rented accommodations remain unmet, they added.

LDF candidate Sathyan Mokeri visited several landslide survivors in their rented accommodations Saturday and claimed that the rehabilitation efforts by the ruling Left government in the state were a model for the world. He also blamed the BJP-ruled Centre for not providing any help for rehabilitation of the landslide-affected people of the hill district.

Congress leader Priyanka

Gandhi, who is the UDF candidate, in an emotional open letter, recalled her visit to Chooralmala and Mundakkai with her brother and Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi where she saw the devastation wrought by the landslide and the depth of the loss they suffered.

Congress MLA from Kalpetta in Wayanad T Siddique, who moved an adjournment motion in the Assembly, said that despite the Prime Minister's assurance not even a single penny was given by the Centre for relief and rehabilitation of the landslide-hit people of Wayanad.

According to Navya Haridas, the BJP candidate, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had

personally consoled the landslide survivors.

She alleged the Kerala government has so far not given even the relief aid granted by the Union Government to the survivors.

Kerala Revenue Minister K Rajan expressed disappointment over the Central government's "negative approach" towards providing aid for rehabilitation efforts.

"It has been 100 days since the disaster, and we are still waiting for a special relief package," he said. The state government has submitted a memorandum to the Centre under the Disaster Management Act, seeking support.

Amidst the political blame games and gestures of support from leaders, the survivors are gearing up to stage protests to demand attention from all candidates regarding their rehabilitation.

Another major demand is the

release of the official list of those who died and are still missing in the disaster.

According to official records, 47 people remain unaccounted for, and locals are urging authorities to issue death certificates to their relatives.

There is also a demand for authorities to provide adequate treatment facilities for those still residing in the Chooralmala region, which remains isolated after the catastrophic disaster.

JMJ Manoj, another survivor, pointed out that while the government provides ₹6,000 as monthly rent assistance, many families need more as they are living in houses with higher rent.

"We are demanding that the monthly rent assistance be increased to ₹10,000," said Manoj, who is also the convenor of Janakeeya Samiti.

Currently, around 800 displaced families are residing in rented houses following the disaster. The Kerala government sought ₹2,000 crore in Central assistance for compensating and rehabilitating the victims of the Wayanad landslide. However, only ₹291.2 crore has been received so far, disbursed in two installments of ₹145.6 crore each.

As part of its rehabilitation plan, the state government aims to build one or two townships for the survivors, featuring single-storey houses of approximately 1,000 square feet, designed with the option for future expansion to two storeys.

The disaster, which struck July 30, devastated large parts of three villages—Punchirimmattam, Chooralmala, and Mundakkai—along with sections of Attamala in Wayanad.

NEW DAWN FOR POTTERS

## Diwali sparks hope for next generation



Deepotsav celebrations became popular after the Yogi Adityanath government started celebrating them on a grand scale with lakhs of diyas in Ayodhya

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow (UP), Oct 27: The resurgence of earthen lamps or diyas, in recent years, has ignited a new hope for young potters, breathing life into a tradition that was once on the brink of decline.

The growing demand, fuelled by the popularity of large-scale Deepotsav celebrations being organised in various cities in line with the grand event in Ayodhya and the increasing trend towards sustainable living, has empowered a new generation of artisans to embrace pottery as a viable and promising career.

Sachin Prajapati, an engineer-turned-potter, exemplifies this shift. After a decade in the tech industry, he returned to his roots and established a workshop focused on producing clay-based products, including diyas, kulhads and cups.

"I aim to make a significant impact in the market with our clay-based daily use products," Prajapati shared. He is actively working to establish a cooperative with other local potters, fostering skill development and ensuring the sustainability of the craft.

Based out of Mankapur, a small town on the outskirts of Gonda district and the bordering Ayodhya, Prajapati runs a small pottery workshop. "I lost my job in the first wave of Covid-19 in 2020 and returned home. That is when I started looking at pottery as a business," he said.

"My village belongs to Prajapatis, people who are associated with the tradition of Pottery. One can still find a chaak (Potter's wheel) in every second household and the youngsters

have started looking at it as a viable profession," he added.

Rajesh Kumar Prajapati of Barabanki, another engineer-turned-potter, has also embraced his family's heritage. He now runs a workshop employing 20 potters during peak seasons, supplying diyas to various regions in Uttar Pradesh.

Both Sachin and Rajesh Prajapati sell diyas for Deepotsav which is celebrated a day before Diwali.

Deepotsav celebrations became popular after the Yogi Adityanath government started celebrating them on a grand scale with lakhs of diyas in Ayodhya. Now similar celebrations are organised in almost every district providing a huge market for clay artisans.

In Basti district, Kapil Prajapati and Sarthak Singh, both in their thirties, have established a successful workshop specialising in artisanal diyas and single-use clay cutlery. They have leveraged online platforms to expand their reach and cater to a nationwide market.

The duo said they get a major boost from the consistent rise in diya sales over the last few years.

The duo aims to set up a self-help group by partnering with pottery artisans to make quality products.

These young entrepreneurs are not only reviving the tradition of pottery but are also modernising the craft by using technology.

From upgrading the old hand-powered wheel and shifting to ones powered by electricity to standardising the manufacturing process, these entrepreneurs are disrupting the sector for good.

Besides the rise in demand, the government's 'Mati Kala' Board have also helped the new-age entrepreneurs.

"The board helps local potters get electric wheels and organise artisan 'melas', where they can showcase and sell their products. This provides an opportunity for the artisans to get good value for their item," Singh explained.

## CM Yogi launches scholarship scheme for Sanskrit students

HIGHLIGHTING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SANSKRIT AND INDIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE, CHIEF MINISTER ANNOUNCED PLANS TO REINTRODUCE THE GURUKUL EDUCATION SYSTEM ACROSS UTTAR PRADESH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Varanasi (UP), Oct 27: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Sunday launched a scholarship scheme at the Sampurnanand Sanskrit University here for all students of Sanskrit across the state, a statement said.

**Sanskrit is not just the 'Dev-Vani', but also a scientific language that can be applied to modern fields like computer science and artificial intelligence**

YOGI ADITYANATH | CM, UTTAR PRADESH

He also announced plans to revive residential Gurukul-style Sanskrit schools across Uttar Pradesh.

The chief minister, according to a statement, highlighted Sanskrit's potential as a language for science and technical education, urging students to embrace it seriously.

He said, "Advocating for Sanskrit is akin to advocating for humanity" and pointed out that previous governments had neglected its education.

Addressing the gathering, Adityanath said, "Sanskrit is not just the 'Dev-Vani', but also a scientific language that can be applied to modern fields like computer science and artificial

intelligence."

He explained its unique characteristics which make it simple and technically adaptable, underscoring the government's commitment to its preservation and promotion.

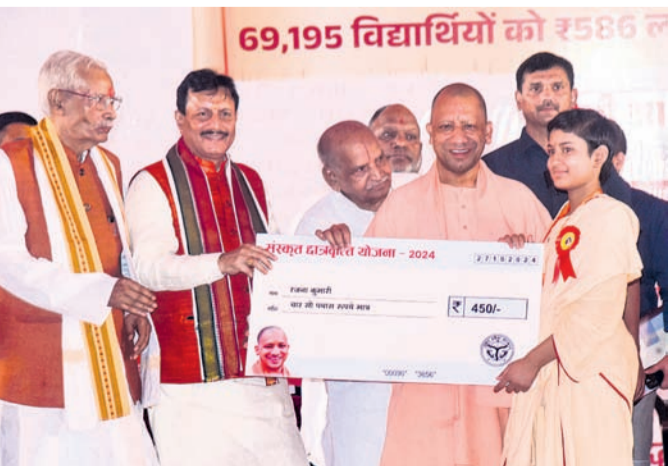
Explaining the scholarship scheme's significance, the chief minister said that previously, only 300 Sanskrit students were eligible for scholarships, and even then, there were age restrictions.

The new initiative aims to extend the benefits to all eligible students. He also instructed all students to open bank accounts to ensure the direct and secure transfer of scholarship funds. He initiated the distribution of ₹586 lakh scholarships to 69,195 students across the state.

Highlighting the significance of Sanskrit and Indian cultural heritage, he announced plans to reintroduce the Gurukul education system across Uttar Pradesh.

He said, "This traditional system is the country's true strength and can propel India to global leadership."

Gurukul institutions would receive additional support, with special assistance provided to those offering free accommodations and meals for students. These institutions will also have the autonomy to recruit qualified Acharyas.



Labourers build a pontoon bridge on the Ganga river during preparations for the upcoming 'Maha Kumbh Mela' festival, in Prayagraj

PTI PHOTO

## Theyyam: The living folk art of Kerala's pluralistic tapestry

ONE OF THE HIGHLY CAPTIVATING FOLKLORE ARTS AND TRADITIONS OF INDIA, THEYYAM IS A COLOURFUL AND RELIGIOUSLY DEEP-ROOTED DRAVIDIAN RITUAL AND PANTHEISTIC FORM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

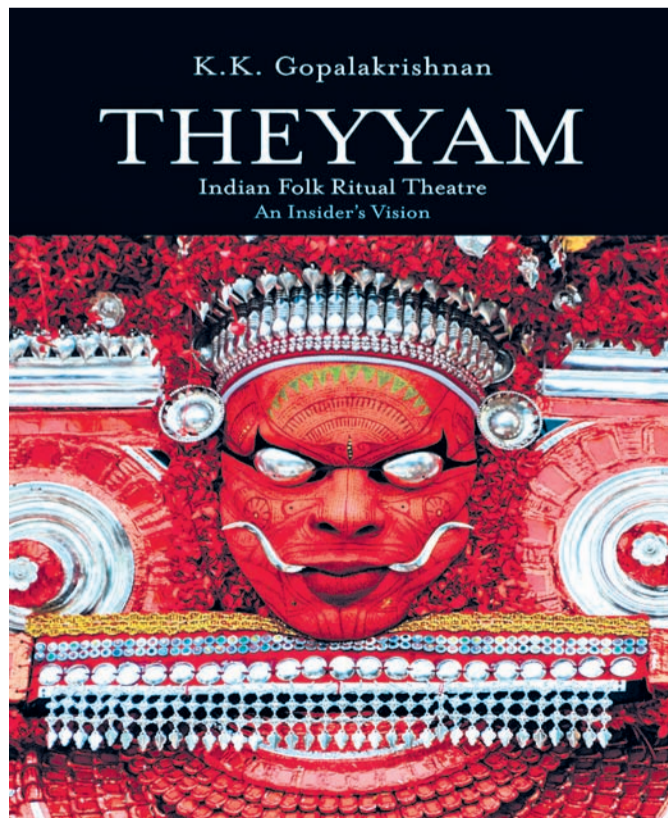
New Delhi, Oct 27: A new book delves into the folk art tradition of Theyyam, tracing its journey and also explaining how it highlights the pluralistic nature of Kerala's society.

One of the highly captivating folk art traditions of India, Theyyam is a colourful and religiously deep-rooted Dravidian ritual and pantheistic form. It is derived from and still sustained in the northern villages of Kerala, the present-day Kasaragod and Kannur districts.

While a temple festival places the Brahmin (in Kerala, the Namputiri) at the centre and reinforces the existing social order, Theyyam in total contrast places the lower caste as the main performer and worshipped as a manifestation of a temporarily incarnated divine power, perhaps providing an outlet for protest in the name of god.

Both interestingly co-exist. Irrespective of caste or creed difference, all of them attend Theyyam performances and pay their obeisance.

KK Gopalakrishnan looks at this folk-art tradition with all the experience and expertise of an insider. He hails from the Hindu



matrilineal family Kamballore Kottayil which has patronised Theyyam for over three centuries, including a Muslim Theyyam.

He points out that when lower-

castes any impropriety they had committed earlier, showing re-creation. On the other side, the devotees enjoy the mighty presence of their favourite god or goddess communicating with them directly in the ecstasy of delivering oracles.

"During those fleeting moments, it is not the performance of a physical body but the former's soul identifying with the form's spirit. It transports the devotees to a blissful cosmos; they can feel it as if they have got bound to the performer. Such rare instances make the performer feel out of sorts, physically, for a longer time on his return, as he too feels transported to another space," the author says.

Concepts such as mother, nature, fertility and agriculture, spirit and ghost, ancestors, animal, reptile and warrior; among others, are worshipped as Theyyam which refers to both the form and the performance. Interestingly, while it is men from a few particular communities who hereditarily perform,

most Theyyams are women worshipped as mother goddesses.

The author also introduces readers to Muslim Theyyams, highlighting the tradition of religious harmony in northern Kerala.

"These Theyyams are either the spirit of someone who was extraordinarily virtuous and devout or someone who is known for his wickedness and brazen taunts aimed at women and hence got killed by God's will," he says. With the help of extensive photos, the author draws attention to all the components of attire and costume including moustaches, fangs, artificial eyes, masks, headgears, and standard requirements such as weapons and musical instruments.

Theyyams traditionally take place in 'kavs' or sacred groves but of late, kavs are fast disappearing in Kerala.

This means the deity is gradually deprived of its province and performance space. And rituals are becoming performative for the sake of entertainment, Gopalakrishnan says.

Theyyams traditionally take place in 'kavs' or sacred groves but of late, kavs are fast disappearing in Kerala





For a long time, I didn't even realise which festival belonged to which religion  
ATISHI | DELHI CM

ASSAM CABINET APPROVES 3% DA HIKE FOR GOVT EMPLOYEES

The Assam Cabinet Sunday approved 3-per cent dearness allowance (DA) hike for state government employees, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said. The increase will be effective from July this year, he said



of the day quote

Bring change in West Bengal in 2026 and BJP will stop illegal infiltration in the state totally  
AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER



The forest department claims certain areas of land on either side of the highway as roadside reserve forest, which is true. On the other hand, some people claim that they also legally owned the plots as they pay taxes and possess valid documents  
LALDUHOMA | MIZORAM CM



When Bharat is rising, some people are bound to be hurt. Some are within the country and some outside...the youth will answer these people through the knowledge you have acquired and utilise for the nation  
JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT



SHORT TAKES

Flood alert issued in 15 TN villages

Chennai: The Tamil Nadu Water Resources Department (WRD) has issued a flood alert for 15 villages along the banks of the Thempennai River after 1,000 cusecs of water was released from the Sathanur Dam in Tiruvannamalai district. Tiruvannamalai District Collector D Bhaskara Pandian in a statement Sunday asked the residents in the affected villages to relocate to safer areas. The Collector announced that local panchayat and revenue officials have been directed to take necessary steps to evacuate residents from low-lying areas.

257 grams of gold seized at airport

Kochi: Customs sleuths seized 257 grams of gold from a person who arrived at the international airport here from Dubai. On the basis of profiling, the officers of the Air Intelligence Unit (AIU) batch of Customs department, intercepted the passenger at the exit gate on Saturday, officials said. Muhammed, a native of Muvattupuzha near here was detained, the Customs Department said.

Naxalite injured in encounter

Bijapur: A Naxalite was injured in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district Sunday, a police official here said. A gunfight broke out in the forest of Kummameta village under the Bhairamgarh police station area when a team of District Reserve Guard of the state police was out on an anti-Naxal exercise, he said.

UP: Man dies in police custody

Lucknow: The police Sunday lodged an FIR against an inspector and others, a day after a 30-year-old man died while in custody of the Chinhat police station in Lucknow, officials said. A resident of Jainabad in the Chinhat area, Mohit Kumar (30) was arrested in connection with a case Saturday.

15-year-old girl sexually harassed

Muzaffarnagar (UP): A 15-year-old girl was allegedly sexually harassed and threatened by two juvenile schoolmates in a village here, police said Sunday. The incident occurred Saturday when the girl was returning home from school, police said.

50 flights get bomb threats

In 14 days, more than 350 flights operated by the Indian carriers have received hoax bomb threats. Most of the threats were issued through social media



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 27: At least 50 flights operated by Indian airlines received bomb threats and two of them were diverted Sunday, according to sources.

In 14 days, more than 350 flights operated by the Indian carriers have received hoax bomb threats. Most of the threats were issued through social media.

Akasa Air Sunday said 15 of its flights got security alerts and after thorough inspections, all aircraft were released for operations. The sources in the know said IndiGo received threats for 18 flights and Vistara for 17 flights.

At least two IndiGo flights were diverted following threats. Its flight 6E 133 (Pune to Jodhpur) was diverted to Ahmedabad and 6E 87 (Kozhikode to Dammam) was diverted to Mumbai, an official said. According to an IndiGo statement, the flights that received security-related alerts include 6E 11 (Delhi-

Istanbul), 6E 92 (Jeddah-Mumbai), 6E 112 (Goa-Ahmedabad), 6E 125 (Bangalore-Jharsuguda), 6E 127 (Amritsar-Ahmedabad) and 6E 135 (Kolkata-Pune).

Among others are 6E 149 (Hyderabad to Bagdogra), 6E 173 (Delhi to Bangalore), 6E 175 (Bangaluru to Delhi), 6E 197 (Raipur to Hyderabad), 6E 248

(Mumbai to Kolkata), 6E 277 (Ahmedabad-Lucknow), 6E 312 (Bangaluru to Kolkata), 6E 235 (Kolkata-Bangalore) and 6E 74 (Riyadh-Mumbai).

Union Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu Sunday said the Centre is mulling steps to ban perpetrators, who resort to hoax bomb threats, from flying. The minister also said besides taking support from international agencies, law enforcement wings and the Intelligence Bureau to prevent these fake threats, the union government is also mulling to amend two Civil Aviation Laws.

Against the backdrop of a spate of hoax bomb threats to airlines, the IT Ministry has asked social media platforms to observe due diligence obligations and promptly remove or disable access to misinformation within the strict timelines prescribed under IT rules.

Hotels in Lucknow get bomb threats

LUCKNOW: At least 10 major hotels in the Uttar Pradesh capital received bomb threats via email Sunday. The Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS) did not find anything suspicious, officials said. The email threatened that explosions would take place if a ransom demand of \$55,000 (Rs 46,24,288) was not met. "Bombs are hidden in black bags on the grounds of your hotel. I want \$55,000, or I will detonate the explosives and blood will spill everywhere. Any attempt at defusing the bombs will detonate them," read the threat email, a copy of which is with PTI. Brajesh Kumar, the manager of one of the hotels, told PTI Videos, "We received the threat mail in the morning. As a precaution we reported the matter to the local police station and a team has come to look into the matter." When contacted, a senior police official told PTI, "The issue has been taken up with the cyber crime unit. BDDS unit checking was done in three hotels, nothing suspicious was found."

Govt floats draft Bill to amend arbitration law

The draft Bill comes months after an expert committee headed by former law secretary and former Lok Sabha secretary general T K Vishwanathan submitted its report on proposed reforms in the arbitration sector to the law ministry



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 27: Seeking to provide "further boost" to institutional arbitration and reduce court intervention in such cases, the government has come out with a draft Bill seeking views on the proposed amendments.

The Department of Legal Affairs in the law ministry has invited comments on the draft Arbitration and Conciliation (Amendment) Bill, 2024, saying "the aim and purpose is to provide further boost to institutional arbitration, reduce court intervention in arbitrations and ensuring timely conclusion of arbitration proceedings".

The draft Bill comes months after an expert committee headed by former law secretary and former Lok Sabha secretary general T K Vishwanathan submitted its report on proposed reforms

in the arbitration sector to the Law Ministry. The draft Bill proposes the concept of "emergency arbitrator".

The proposed amendment says arbitral institutions may, for the purpose of grant of interim measures, provide for appointment of "emergency arbitrator" prior to the constitution of an arbitral tribunal. At the same time, the draft Bill also omits some of the clauses of the present law.

The omitted clause read: "A copy of every notification proposed to be issued ... shall be laid in draft before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of 30 days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in disapproving the issue of the notification or both Houses agree in making any modification in the notification, the notification shall not be issued or, as the case may be, shall be issued only in such modified form as may be agreed upon by the both Houses of Parliament".

Shah slams TMC govt for 'state-sponsored infiltration' in Bengal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 27: Union Home Minister Amit Shah Sunday accused the TMC government in West Bengal of aiding "state-sponsored infiltration" and corruption, claiming that incidents of assault on women in Sandeshkhali and the rape and murder of a doctor at RG Kar Hospital are evidence that women are "not safe" in the state.

Shah also said that the next big target for the BJP is winning the West Bengal Assembly polls in 2026 with a two-thirds majority, asserting that this is the only way to address corruption and infiltration. He launched the party's membership drive in West Bengal, setting a target of enrolling one crore members from the state.

"In Bengal, where Rabindra Sangeet (Tagore songs) used to be heard in the morning, sound of bombs is heard everywhere now. In Bengal, state-sponsored infiltration is going on. Corruption in hiring process, health sector and rations along with cut money and syndicates, is rampant."

"To get rid of it and build a Sonar Bangla (Developed Bengal) as envisioned by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the people of Bengal need to elect a BJP government in 2026," he said in a statement.



Women compete in a boat race at the Dal Lake in Srinagar

PTI PHOTO

There was no response to 26/11 attack: Jaishankar



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 27: In a veiled attack on the erstwhile UPA government, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Sunday said there was no response from India to the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, asserting this would not be the case if such an incident happened again.

Reflecting on the terror attack, Jaishankar said double standards on terrorism are not acceptable and India will "act where it has to act" to expose terrorism. Jaishankar fielded questions on issues ranging from terrorism to the India-China stand-off and from investment to politics at a press conference held in Mumbai.

Without naming China, the EAM said the disengagement of troops at Dapsang and Demchok in Ladakh is the first step, and it is expected that India will return to the 2020 patrolling status. He, however, stressed the next step of de-escalation won't be taken until India is assured of reciprocity from the other side as well, obviously referring to China. Speaking on India's response to terrorism and what changed after 2014, the EAM said India is the leader in fighting terrorism.

"We should not have a repeat of what happened in Mumbai. That there was a terror attack and there was no response," Jaishankar said. Mumbai is a symbol of counter-terrorism for India and the world, he said.

"There are different views from political parties. When this city (Mumbai) was attacked, nothing was done," he added. He said when we talk of zero tolerance against terror, it is clear that when somebody does something, there will be a response. "We also have to expose. It is

Reflecting on the terror attack, Jaishankar said double standards on terrorism are not acceptable and India will "act where it has to act" to expose terrorism

Jaishankar fielded questions on issues ranging from terrorism to the India-China stand-off and from investment to politics at a press conference held in Mumbai

not acceptable that you are doing business during daytime and indulging in terror during the night and I have to pretend that everything is okay," he added. When India was a member of the UN Security Council and chairing the counter-terrorism committee, the counter-terrorism panel's meeting was held in the same hotel that was hit by the terror attack, he said.

Speaking on Manipur strife, Jaishankar said there are complex reasons for what is happening in the northeastern state, noting that some factors are historical and the rest concern the border situation.

"Claims like the rest of the world would have a problem with India because of Manipur are a political agenda and anti-national agenda. It is not right to damage India's image in the name of Manipur," the EAM said.

Speaking on Bangladeshi infiltrators, Jaishankar said the last decade saw a transformation in the border fencing which has been strengthened.

"The ease (with which illegal migrants used to enter India) and the number of infiltration has reduced. The Modi government is absolutely clear on what needs to be done to secure borders."

Not just Bangladesh, Myanmar is also taken care of. We reviewed the open border policy. Border security is being tightened, the EAM said.

Delhi HC transfers over 200 judicial officers in subordinate courts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 27: The Delhi High Court has transferred several judicial officers in its subordinate courts within the national capital, including the judge hearing the cancellation report filed by the Delhi Police in a minor wrestler's sexual harassment case against former BJP MP and ex-Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

Besides identifying new postings for 233 judicial officers in Delhi Judicial Services, the high court also issued a separate notification for the posting of 23 judicial officers in Delhi Higher Judicial Service.

The registrar general of the high court issued the list of transfers Friday with immediate effect.

Special Judge (POCSO) Chhavi Kapoor of the Patiala House court, who was hearing the matter against Brij Bhushan Singh, has been transferred to the Rouse Avenue court as a special judge.



Additional Sessions Judge Gomti Manocha will now hold the court in place of Kapoor who had reserved the order on the police report.

Additional Session Judge Jitendra Singh has been transferred to Rouse Avenue to fill the court left vacant by the recent retirement of special judge Rakesh Syal.

Syal was holding special court to try cases against lawmakers, including the alleged Delhi excise policy scam against former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the alleged Waqf board scam case against AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan, and a 1984 anti-Sikh riots related case against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler.

Besides transfers, these postings also included the induction of around 70 judicial officers in various districts upon completion of their training.

PM warns of 'digital arrest' scams, urges cyber safety

MODI SPOKE ABOUT "DIGITAL ARREST" IN HIS "MANN KI BAAT" RADIO ADDRESS, NOTING THAT IT HAS HIT ALL SECTIONS OF THE SOCIETY, AS HE REQUESTED PEOPLE TO ADOPT THE MANTRA OF "STOP, THINK AND TAKE ACTION" WHEN FACED WITH SUCH A SCAM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 27: Indian cyber-security agency CERT-In Sunday shared a list that talks about more than a dozen ways in which online scams are being perpetrated by fraudsters in the country, including "digital arrest" to dupe people by stealing their money and private data.

The public advisory has been accessed by PTI and it came on a day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi too cautioned people against such frauds in his monthly "Mann ki Baat" radio broadcast.

The Computer Emergency

Response Team of India (CERT-In) advisory said "digital arrest" is an online scam as "government agencies do not use platforms like WhatsApp or Skype for official communication". "Verify their identity by directly contacting the relevant agency," it recommended.

The advisory said in a case of "digital arrest", victims receive a phone call, e-mail or message claiming that they are under investigation for illegal activities, such as identity theft or money laundering.

The scammer threatens the victim with arrest or legal consequences unless he takes immediate action. They often cre-



ate a sense of panic to prevent rational thinking, the advisory said.

Under the guise of "clearing their name", "assisting with

the investigation" or "refundable security deposit/escrow account", individuals are coerced into transferring large sums of money to specified bank ac-

counts or UPI IDs, it added.

The advisory asked people, who get contacted by such cyber criminals, to "not panic as scammers use fear and urgency to manipulate victims". "Take a moment to assess the situation calmly before responding. Avoid sharing personal information and never disclose sensitive personal or financial details over the phone or video calls, especially to unknown numbers," the CERT-In said.

It stressed that people should not transfer money "under pressure" as legitimate law-enforcement agencies "will never pressure you into sending money immediately". "If someone de-

mands money over the phone or online, it's most likely a scam," it said.

The advisory said staying "vigilant and informed" is crucial to protect oneself from this "emerging cyber threat".

Modi spoke about "digital arrest" in his "Mann ki Baat" radio address, noting that it has hit all sections of the society, as he requested people to adopt the mantra of "stop, think and take action" when faced with such a scam.

He said probe agencies are working with the states to deal with the issue but added that awareness is essential in protecting oneself from this crime.

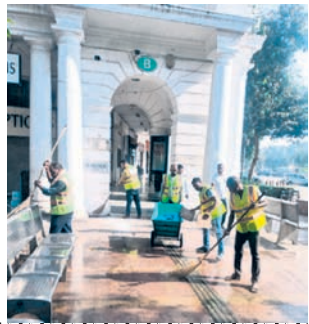




In Lucknow, UP Police detained two youths and one died the next morning. This is the second death in UP police custody in a fortnight. The family alleges that police killed their son  
PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

## NDMC GIVES CONNAUGHT PLACE PRE-DIWALI WASH

Nearly 3,000 workers of the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), the civic agency that maintains the heart of the national capital, have been deployed for a special cleanliness drive ahead of the Diwali festival season focused on extensive wet cleaning of commercial centres like Connaught Place, said an official Saturday



### of the day quote

If any dispute ends by apologising to the Bishnoi community, then what is wrong in it? If a mistake has been made knowingly or unknowingly, then what does Salman Khan lose in apologising?  
RAKESH TIKAIT | Biju LEADER

The elections are due in February. I will get these ('inflated' water) bills waived in March  
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP CHIEF

The issue of urban mobility is not just about moving people from Point A to point B. It is about creating systems that are sufficient, efficient, sustainable, and most importantly, equitable  
MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR

## X POST OF THE DAY

India, a country where you pay taxes like an American and get treated worse than a Somali. This is just heartbreaking  
@RoshanKrRaii

### SHORT TAKES

#### DEMU train engine catches fire

Indore: The engine of a Diesel Electrical Multiple Unit (DEMU) train caught fire Sunday in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district, though no one was hurt in the blaze, an official said. The incident occurred at 5:30pm between Runija and Nagaon stations when the train was on its way to Ratlam from Dr Ambedkar Nagar (Mh) station, Western Railway public relations officer Khemraj Meena said.

#### Japanese Navy ship calls at Kochi

Kochi: Enhancing maritime cooperation and strengthening Navy-to-Navy ties between the two nations, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Ship J S Murasame has made a port call at Kochi. The Japanese ship made the port call in Kochi from October 25 to 27, according to a defence statement here Sunday.

#### 4 minors among 5 held for killing teen

New Delhi: Delhi Police has nabbed five people, including four minors for allegedly killing a 16-year-old boy and injuring another in the Kishangarh area of southwest Delhi, officials said Sunday. One of the victims was found dead with multiple stab wounds while the other was under treatment for a bullet injury, they said.

#### Police raid KTR's kin's farmhouse

Hyderabad: Police here raided a farmhouse allegedly owned by BRS working president K T Rama Rao's brother-in-law and booked one person, who tested positive for cocaine at the party organised there. A police official said Rao's brother-in-law, Raj Pakala, was absconding following the raid at his farmhouse. The incident triggered a political row in Telangana with leaders of the ruling Congress demanding a thorough investigation over the matter.

# Bandra stampede leaves 10 injured

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 27: At least ten persons were injured in a stampede at Mumbai's Bandra railway station Sunday when hundreds of people attempted to board a Gorakhpur-bound train to head to their native places for the upcoming Diwali and Chhath festivals, civic officials said. The Western Railway, however, stated two persons were injured in the incident. The figures cannot be reconciled immediately. The condition of one of the injured persons is critical, a civic official said.



## CR-WR impose platform ticket sale restrictions

MUMBAI: Central Railway Sunday imposed a temporary restriction on sale of platform tickets at major stations to reduce festival crowding, the move coming hours after 10 people were injured at Western Railway's Bandra Terminus while trying to board a train to Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. Ten persons were injured at 2:45am while trying to enter the unreserved Bandra Terminus-Gorakhpur Antyodaya Express when it was entering platform number 1 from the yard ahead of its scheduled departure at 5:10am. Videos of the incident went viral on social media.

trying to navigate the space between two coaches, railway sources said. "Ideally, the doors of the coaches are opened only after the train comes to a complete stop at the platform, allowing passengers to board in an orderly queue," a WR official stated. Some passengers on the platform attempted to board the moving train, leading to an accident wherein two passengers fell and sustained injuries, said the WR's statement issued

around 10.30 am. "The on-duty Railway Protection Force (RPF), Government Railway Police (GRP), and Home Guard personnel quickly responded, taking the injured to Bhabha Government Hospital," a WR statement said. While the majority of the injured are reported to be in stable condition, two individuals are said to be in critical condition. However, as per the Mumbai disaster control cell and a civic

## Delhi's air quality deteriorates due to calm winds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 27: After a two-day gap, Delhi's air quality turned 'very poor' again Sunday as calm winds prevented dispersion of pollutants. Some areas in the national capital recorded 'severe' pollution levels. Delhi's 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 355 at 4 pm as against 255 Saturday, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data showed.

Data from 37 of the city's 40 monitoring stations was shared by the CPCB. It showed that three stations - Bawana, Burari and Jahangirpuri - recorded 'severe' air quality. The air quality was also 'very poor' in Delhi's neighbouring areas like Greater Noida, Ghaziabad and Noida and 'poor' in Faridabad and Gurugram.

Under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), a set of emergency measures to control air pollution in the Delhi-NCR region during winter, air quality is categorised into four stages: Stage I - "Poor" (AQI 201-300); Stage II - "Very Poor" (AQI 301-400); Stage III - "Severe" (AQI 401-450); and Stage IV - "Severe Plus" (AQI above 450). According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), wind speed in the city was recorded at 0 kmph.



The 12th Aacharyakulam Annual Celebrations 2023-24 took place at the Acharyakulam Auditorium of Patanjali Yogpeeth University Sunday. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini participated in the event alongside Yoga Guru Swami Ramdev. During the programme, Swami Ramdev announced plans to establish an Acharyakulam campus in Haryana that will be larger than the one in Haridwar. On the occasion, Swami Avadheshanand, Finance Minister Premchand Agarwal, Swami Ravindrapuri, Swami Harichetanand, and numerous revered saints and dignitaries were present

## In maiden public speech, Vijay targets DMK & NEET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Villupuram (Tamil Nadu), Oct 27: Forces dividing the country on various lines and corrupt entities are his party's enemies, TVK leader and top Tamil actor Vijay said here Sunday, and announced his party has been based on secular social justice ideologies with leaders like EVR Periyar and K Kamaraj as its guiding lights. The latest entrant to Tamil Nadu politics, Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam founder Vijay took an



apparent dig at the DMK and its first family, saying its leaders were calling the "anti-people government as Dravida model government." The Dravida model government is a reference to DMK president and Chief Minister M K Stalin's oft-repeated statement

that such a model of governance was an inclusive one ensuring the well-being of all sections of Tamil society. In his maiden public speech eight months after announcing the launch of TVK, Vijay said the late veterans MG Ramachandran and NT Ramarao were ridiculed as mere cinema actors when they made their political plunge "but they continue to remain in the hearts of the people" of the respective states, i.e Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. TVK's principle is everyone is equal by birth. "Should I

need to say who is opposed to this," he asked. While the divisive forces could be identified and even reveal themselves, a corrupt entity was like a virus and elusive. TVK's one enemy was the divisive forces, while such corrupt hypocrites were the other. Recalling his deceased sister, he said that just like her death had impacted him, the alleged suicide of medical aspirant, S Anitha from Ariyalur in the state who could not clear NEET, also had a profound impact on him.

## CROSS-BORDER SMUGGLING

# 105 KG HEROIN SEIZED, 2 HELD



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Oct 27: The Punjab Police Sunday said it has busted a cross-border smuggling racket with the arrest of two associates of a Turkey-based drugs smuggler and seizure of 105 kg of heroin, one of the biggest drug seizures in the state. Six weapons were also seized during the operation, police said. "#Biggest Heroin seizure in #Punjab: In an intelligence-led operation, @PunjabPoliceInD busts a cross-border smuggling racket and apprehends two associates of foreign-based drug smuggler Navpreet Singh @ Nav Bhullar and recovers 105 Kg Heroin, 31.93 Kg Caffeine Anhydrous, 17 Kg DMR, 5 foreign made Pistols and 1 Desi Katta," Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said in a post on X. "Water-route was used to transport drugs from #Pakistan, big rubber tubes of tyres have also been recovered, indicating that narcotic contrabands have been smuggled through water way," he added.

Colony in Baba Bakala, Amritsar, and Lovepreet Kumar, a resident of Kala Sanghian in Kapurthala, the DGP said. He said apart from heroin, police have also seized a huge quantity of scheduled drugs, including 31.93 kg of caffeine anhydrous and 17 kg of dextromethorphan (DMR), from the possession of the arrested duo. "Investigations revealed that the accused persons were using these scheduled drugs as multiplying agents to increase the heroin quantity by four times," Yadav said. Sharing details of the operation, he said a team of the Punjab Police's Counter Intelligence (CI) in Amritsar received an intel-input that Bhullar is operating a Pakistan-backed cross-border smuggling racket using his associates camped at a rented accommodation at Colony Lady Road in Baba Bakala. Acting swiftly, an intelligence-led operation was launched and a special checkpoint was established under the supervision of Deputy Superintendent of Police, CI, Amritsar, Babir Singh in the Baba Bakala area, leading to the arrest of the duo and seizure of 7 kg of heroin from their car, the DGP said. Police have also impounded the vehicle, he added. The DGP further said on the basis of the disclosure statements of the arrested accused, police seized the remaining 98 kg of heroin along with the weapons, caffeine anhydrous and DMR from their rented premises. The route used to smuggle the narcotics consignment is being investigated, he said.

SIX WEAPONS WERE ALSO SEIZED DURING THE OPERATION. AN FIR HAS BEEN LODGED AND INVESTIGATIONS ARE UNDERWAY

An FIR has been lodged and investigations are underway to establish the backward and forward linkages to nab other members of the drug cartel, the DGP said. In a statement issued later, the DGP said police have busted a cross-border smuggling racket with the arrest of two associates of Bhullar, a Turkey-based drugs smuggler. Those arrested have been identified as Navjot Singh, a resident of Guru Tegh Bahadur

need to say who is opposed to this," he asked. While the divisive forces could be identified and even reveal themselves, a corrupt entity was like a virus and elusive. TVK's one enemy was the divisive forces, while such corrupt hypocrites were the other. Recalling his deceased sister, he said that just like her death had impacted him, the alleged suicide of medical aspirant, S Anitha from Ariyalur in the state who could not clear NEET, also had a profound impact on him.

## First C-295 plane to roll out of Guj plant in Sep 2026

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 27: Ahead of the inauguration of a manufacturing facility for C-295 planes in Vadodra, official sources Sunday said of the 40 military aircraft to be made in India, the first C-295 is likely to roll out of the plant in September 2026.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez will inaugurate the Vadodra plant Monday for manufacturing C-295 aircraft by Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL). Prime Minister Modi had laid the foundation stone of the Final Assembly Line (FAL) plant of C-295 aircraft in Vadodra in October 2022.

The Ministry of Defence in September 2021 signed a ₹21,935-crore contract with Airbus Defense and Space SA, Spain for supply of 56 aircraft.

Of these 56 aircraft, a total of 16 will be brought in flyaway condition directly from Spain, and 40 will be built in India by Tata Advanced Systems.

First C-295 medium tactical transport aircraft was delivered in September 2023, and inducted into the Indian Air Force in presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at an induction ceremony held at the Hindan airbase in Ghaziabad.

As on date, the IAF has "already inducted six C-295 aircraft" in its Vadodra-based 11 Squadron.

# Person days in MGNREGS up 76 pc in last 10 years

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGA) aims at enhancing the livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 27: Rural employment under MGNREGS witnessed a rapid increase in the last 10 years with 2,923 crore person days generated between FY 2014-15 to FY 2024-25, according to the data from the Ministry of Rural Development Sunday. As per government data, this is a 76 per cent increase in the last decade, from 1,660 crore generated between FY 2006-07 to FY 2013-14. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGA) aims at enhancing the livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by provid-



ing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) direct benefit transfer (DBT), all payments to the workers are

to be credited into their bank accounts. The crediting of payments is done using the Aadhaar number of the beneficiary with which the bank account is linked. The major benefit of the Aadhaar Based Payment System (ABPS) conversion in MGNREGA is to minimise the rejection of transactions due to the frequent changing of accounts. Still, it also helps to maximise the performance of DBT. As of 26.10.2024, Aadhaar seeding has been done for 13.10 crore active workers, which is 99.3 per cent of total active workers (13.18 crore). During the FY 2013-14, the Budget allocation was ₹33,000 crore only at BE (Budget Estimates) stage which is ₹86,000

crore during the current FY 2024-25, which is the highest since inception. Further, it is stated that in FY 2024-25 the minimum average notified wage rate has increased by 7 per cent. According to the government, Job card verification is a continuous process under MGNREGS. This exercise is conducted by states/UTs with the help of the Aadhaar number as a tool for de-duplication. Job cards can be cancelled, after due verification, only if it is a fake job card. As per MGNREGSoft, during the FY 2023-24, the total number of job cards deleted by the states/UTs was 1.02 crore, whereas, in the current FY 2024-25 as of 26.10.24, it is 32.28 lakh.



# international



**(The Russian defence ministry) is thinking about how to respond to the possible long-range strikes on Russian territory, it will offer a range of responses**  
VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

## PAK SEEKS ADDITIONAL LOAN FROM CHINA

Pakistan has requested an additional 10 billion yuan (\$1.4 billion) loan from China as the cash-strapped country has already used the existing 30 billion yuan (\$4.3 billion) Chinese trade facility



### of the day quote

If we don't get this election right, your wife, your daughter, your mother, we as women will become collateral damage to your rage

MICHELLE OBAMA | FORMER FIRST LADY, US

We need to make a positive use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Awareness and legal measures need to be taken into account to prevent side effects caused by misusing AI

KP SHARMA OLI | PM, NEPAL

These (Rapid Support Forces shooting at civilians and sexually attacking women and girls) are atrocious crimes. Women, children, and the most vulnerable are bearing the brunt of a conflict that has already taken far too many lives

CLEMENTINE NKWETA-SALAMI | UN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR, SUDAN

### SHORT TAKES

#### Nepal halts Thai AirAsia permit

**Kathmandu:** The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) has taken action against Thai AirAsia Airbus for entering into the Nepali airspace without permission. The Thai AirAsia Airbus, en route to Kathmandu from Thailand, was held in Nepali airspace for about an hour before receiving clearance to land at Tribhuvan International Airport Sunday, according to airport officials. "The CAAN granted a special chartered flight permit to the Airbus and allowed it to land at the TIA considering the passengers' safety and on humanitarian grounds," CAAN spokesman Gyanendra Bhul said.

#### Lanka arrests 12 Indian fishermen

**Chennai:** The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested 12 fishermen from Tamil Nadu, accusing them of crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) while fishing near Neduntheevu. According to officials from the Tamil Nadu Fisheries Department, the fishermen were detained early Sunday morning and taken to a Sri Lankan naval camp for questioning. The Sri Lankan Navy also seized their mechanised boat and fishing equipment. Since June 16, the Sri Lankan Navy has detained 425 fishermen from the state and impounded 58 boats. Approximately 110 fishermen remain in Sri Lankan custody.

## IMMIGRATION STAYS DIVISIVE IN US PREZ RACE

Donald Trump, in his campaign, vowed to carry out the 'largest' domestic deportation operation in American history of undocumented immigrants

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Atlanta, Oct 27:** With just nine days left for Election Day, immigration remained one of the contentious issues in the US presidential campaign, with many immigrants, including from India and other South Asian nations, fearing a backlash if Republican hopeful Donald Trump wins the poll.

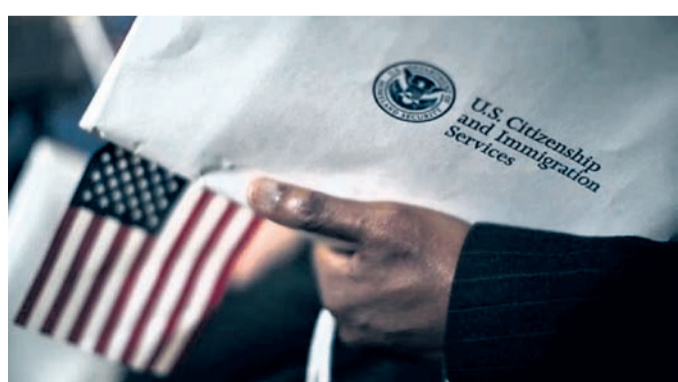
In his campaign speeches, Trump promised a radical shift to tighten Washington's immigration policy and vowed to carry out the "largest" domestic deportation operation in American history of undocumented immigrants and review the existing refugee programmes if he is re-elected.

The Republican leader has even resolved to end birthright citizenship for the children of immigrants living in the US illegally, triggering concerns among various diaspora communities, including from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Various pro-immigration advocacy groups have criticised Trump over his rhetoric on immigration, saying the discontinuation of birthright citizenship is legally questionable as it is enshrined in the 14th Amendment of the US Constitution.

On her part, Vice President Kamala Harris has underlined the need for curtailing illegal immigration and that the US immigration system is broken and requires legislative measures to fix it.

At a recent campaign rally, Trump accused Harris of bringing in "migrant gangs and illegal alien criminals" into the US, adding that "her policy of importing migrant gangs is a crime against our country."

"This is a very sensitive issue and we are worried about the



### Trump has resolved to end birthright citizenship for the children of immigrants living in the US illegally, triggering concerns among various diaspora communities, including from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan

possible fallout of Trump's victory," said Mohammad Iqbal, a Bangladesh-origin green card holder living in Atlanta for over a decade.

"Trump's policy is creating panic among various migrant societies and that is why they are supporting Vice President Kamala Harris," he noted.

Vasudev Patel, general secretary of the Federation of Indian-Americans in Georgia, said the Republican leader is looking at welcoming "educated" and "peaceful" people to the US. A survey report by Pew Research has found that the supporters of Trump and Harris differ on mass deportations but

### SNIPPETS

#### UK lawmakers accuse Starmer of 'colonial mindset'

**London:** Some British Labour lawmakers Sunday accused Prime Minister Keir Starmer of having a "colonial mindset" and trying to silence nations pushing for discussions on reparations for transatlantic slavery at this month's Commonwealth summit in Samoa. Britain has so far rejected calls for reparations but some campaigners hoped Starmer's new Labour government would be more open to it. However, ahead of the Commonwealth heads of government summit in Samoa, where Caribbean and African nations wished to discuss the topic, Starmer said the issue was not on the agenda and that he would like to "look forward" rather than have "very long, endless discussions about reparations on the past".

#### Uzbekistan holds Parl election without real Oppn

**Tashkent:** Voters in Uzbekistan are choosing a new Parliament in an election that features no real Opposition to the Central Asian country's strongman President, despite a recent overhaul of the electoral system and years of reform that have included economic liberalization and easing censorship. Shavkat Mirziyoyev retains a tight grip on power in the country of 37 million. Since taking office in 2016, he has enjoyed broad support for a slew of political and economic reforms that relaxed the harshly repressive policies of his predecessor, longtime dictatorial leader Islam Karimov. Parliament rarely opposes laws drafted by Mirziyoyev's cabinet, while rights groups say thousands of people in Uzbekistan remain imprisoned on false charges.



An insect hovers near flowers decorating the area around the holy remains of Saint Dimitrie Bassarabov, the patron saint of the Romanian capital, at the end of a religious procession in Bucharest, Romania

PTI/PHOTO

### ESCALATING CONFLICT

## Israeli strikes kill dozens in Gaza

**AT LEAST 43 KILLED SUNDAY IN NORTHERN GAZA WHERE HAMAS FIGHTERS WHO ISRAEL SAYS HAVE REGROUPED THERE**

REUTERS

**Cairo, Oct 27:** Israeli military strikes killed at least 45 Palestinians across the Gaza Strip Sunday, most of them in the north of the enclave, Palestinian health officials said, as efforts to secure a ceasefire in the more than year-long war resumed in Qatar.

The directors of the CIA and Israel's Mossad intelligence agency will meet with Qatar's Prime Minister Sunday in Doha, an official briefed on the talks told Reuters.

The negotiations will seek a short-term ceasefire and the release of some hostages being held by Hamas in exchange for Israel's release of Palestinian prisoners, the official said.

The talks aim to get Israel and Hamas to agree to a halt in fighting for less than a month in the hope it would lead to a more permanent ceasefire.

There was no immediate comment from Hamas but a Palestinian official close to the mediation effort told Reuters: "I expect Hamas would listen to the new offers, but it remains determined that any agreement must end the war and get Israeli forces out of Gaza."

The United States, Qatar and Egypt have been leading negotiations to bring an end to the war, which broke out after Hamas



Ceasefire talks to resume in Qatar

Military says troops killed 40 militants in past 24 hours

Israeli airstrike on a house in Jabalia kills 20 people

Death toll in Saturday airstrike in Beit Lahya rises to 40

Over the past year, the security establishment led by the Israel Defense Forces turned the tide of the war and had unprecedented achievements in all arenas of fighting

YOAV GALLANT | DEFENCE MINISTER, ISRAEL

fighters stormed into southern Israel October 7 last year, killing 1,200 people and taking more than 250 hostages, by Israeli tactics.

The death toll from Israel's retaliatory campaign in Gaza is approaching 43,000, Gaza health officials say, with the densely populated enclave in ruins.

It was not clear if Egyptian officials were also joining the talks Sunday.

At least 43 of those killed Sunday were in northern Gaza, where Israeli troops have returned to root out Hamas fighters who it says have regrouped there.

Twenty people were killed following an airstrike on houses in Jabalia, the largest of the Gaza Strip's eight historic refugee camps, which has been the focus of an Israeli military offensive for more than three weeks, medics and the Palestinian of-

ficial news agency Wafa said.

An Israeli airstrike on a school sheltering displaced Palestinian families in Shati camp in Gaza City, killed nine people and wounded 20 others, with many in critical condition, medics said.

Footage circulated on Palestinian media, which Reuters could not immediately verify, showed people rushing to the bomb site to help evacuate the casualties. Bodies were scattered on the ground, while some carried wounded children in their arms before loading them in a vehicle.

The Israeli military said it was looking into the report on the strike on the school.

On Sunday, Israel's military said it had killed more than 40 militants in the Jabalia area in the past 24 hours, as well as dismantling infrastructure and locating large quantities of mili-

### One killed, dozens injured in an apparent truck attack

**Jerusalem:** One person was killed and dozens were injured Sunday when a truck struck a bus stop at a major intersection near Tel Aviv in central Israel in what police said they suspected was a terrorist attack. Israeli police said about 40 people were injured to varying degrees, including some seriously, and were taken to nearby hospitals. Ichilov Medical Center in Tel Aviv said one of the victims succumbed to his wounds. Nearly Sheba Medical Center said it treated eight civilians and soldiers. The attack, in which a truck ran into a bus stop close to a military base, took place around 10 am (0800 GMT), police said, noting the driver, who had Israeli citizenship, was "neutralised" by gunfire from a nearby civilian. "All investigative directions are being examined with an emphasis on the suspicion that this is a terror attack," police said. "Initial investigations suggest that the truck driver, who was traveling near the Gilot base (north of Tel Aviv) from north to south, veered off course and hit a bus and people waiting at the stop with the truck."



tary equipment.

In addition, Israel said its forces had eliminated a militant cell in a clash in central Gaza.

## Japan voters punish PM; Ishiba loses majority



REUTERS

**Tokyo, Oct 27:** Japan's ruling coalition lost its parliamentary majority in a drubbing at Sunday's national election, raising uncertainty over the make-up of the next government and the outlook for the world's fourth-largest economy.

With all but 20 of the 465 seats accounted for, Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which has ruled Japan for almost all of its post-war history, and junior coalition partner Komeito took 209 seats in the lower house of Parliament, public broadcaster NHK reported.

That was down from the 279 seats they held previously and marked the coalition's worst election result since it briefly lost power in 2009.

"This election has been very tough for us," a sombre-looking Ishiba told TV Tokyo.

Komeito's Keiichi Ishii, who took over as that party's new leader last month, lost in his district. The biggest winner of the night, the main Opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan (CDPJ), had 143 seats so far, up from 98 previously, as voters punished Ishiba's party

over a funding scandal and inflation.

The outcome may force parties into fractious power-sharing deals to rule, potentially ushering in political instability as the country faces economic headwinds and a tense security situation in East Asia.

"This is not the end, but the beginning," CDPJ leader Yoshihiko Noda told a press conference, adding that his party would work with other Opposition parties to aim for a change of government.

Ishiba said he would wait until the final results, likely due in the early hours of Monday, before considering potential coalitions or other power-sharing deals.

The Prime Minister had called the snap poll immediately after being elected to head the party last month, hoping to win a public mandate for his premiership. His predecessor, Fumio Kishida, quit after his support fell due to anger over a cost of living crunch and the scandal involving unrecorded donations to lawmakers.

The election also took place nine days before voters in the United States, Japan's closest ally, head to the polls in another unpredictable ballot.

## Indonesia's Marapi volcano erupts

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Padang, Oct 27:** One of Indonesia's most active volcanoes erupted Sunday, spewing thick columns of ash at least three times and blanketing villages with debris, but no casualties were reported.

Mount Marapi, in Agam district of the province of West Sumatra, is known for sudden eruptions that are difficult to predict because they are not caused by a deep movement of magma, which sets off tremors that register on seismic monitors.

It unleashed hot ash clouds that spread for several miles, covering nearby villages and towns with thick volcanic residue, said Ahmad Rifandi, an official with Indonesia's Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Centre at the Marapi monitoring post. It also shot ash columns as high as 2,000 metres.

Rifandi said the nearly 2,900-metre volcano has stayed at the second highest of four alert levels since January, prohibiting climbers and villagers within 3 km from the crater's mouth because of potential lava.

Marapi erupted in December 2023, killing 24 climbers and injuring several others who were caught by its sudden weekend eruption. Two climbing routes in the mountain have been closed since then.

Sunday's eruption came five months after monsoon rains triggered a landslide of mud and cold lava from Mount Marapi, causing rivers to breach their banks. The deluge tore through mountain-side villages and swept away people and dozens of homes, killing 67 people.

"Villagers are still haunted by the flash floods of cold lava as rainy season is coming," Rifandi said, "But they have learned an important lesson on how to avoid the danger of eruption."

Indonesia, an archipelago of 282 million people, is prone to earthquakes and volcanic activity because it sits along the "Ring of Fire," a horseshoe-shaped series of seismic fault lines around the Pacific Ocean.



## of the day quote

We expect the capex this year to be at a similar level as last year, which is about USD 85 million

**NANDINI PIRAMAL**  
PIRAMAL PHARMA CHAIRPERSON

We have a plan of doubling the production to 2 million tonnes... So, I am sure by the end of this quarter, we should be able to make project announcements, which projects, how much and where it is happening

**ARUN MISRA** | HINDUSTAN ZINC CEO

We are enthusiastic about our expansion plans in India. With our strong pipeline and strategic growth initiatives, we are confident that we will achieve the milestone of 100 hotels within the next 5-6 years

**SUNJAE SHARMA** | HYATT HOTELS CORPORATION MD, INDIA & SOUTHWEST ASIA

## Q2 RESULTS CORNER

### IDFC First Bank profit dips 73%

**New Delhi:** IDFC First Bank has posted a 73 per cent decline in its standalone profit to ₹11,746 crore in the second quarter ended in September 2024. The private sector lender had earned a net profit of ₹751 crore in the same quarter a year ago. However, total income increased to ₹10,684 crore during the quarter under review against ₹8,786 crore in the same period last year, IDFC First Bank said in a regulatory filing. The bank reported interest income of ₹8,957 crore during the quarter compared to ₹7,356 crore in the same period a year ago. Provisions for Q2 FY25 stood at ₹1,732 crore, primarily on account of prudent provisioning buffer of ₹568 crore, the bank said in a statement. Net Interest Income (NII) improved to ₹4,788 crore, from ₹3,950 crore in the second quarter of the previous year.

### JK Cement net profit falls 22.5%

**New Delhi:** JK Cement Ltd Saturday reported a 22.52 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit to ₹136.15 crore for the second quarter ended September 2024. The company had posted a profit of ₹175.73 crore a year ago, according to a regulatory filing from JK Cement. Its revenue from operations slipped 7 per cent to ₹2,560.12 crore during the quarter under review. It was ₹2,752.77 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal. JK Cement's total expenses rose marginally to ₹2,597.90 crore in the September quarter. The total income of JK Cement, which includes other income, declined 6.62 per cent to ₹2,597.90 crore in Q2 FY25. JK Cement has an installed Grey Cement capacity of 24 MTPA.

### Mahindra Lifespace posts ₹14cr loss

**New Delhi:** Realty firm Mahindra Lifespace Developers Limited has posted a consolidated net loss of ₹14.01 crore for the second quarter of this fiscal on lower income. The company had posted a net loss of ₹18.93 crore in the year-ago period. Its total income declined to ₹16.96 crore during the July-September quarter from ₹26.70 crore in the year-ago period, according to a regulatory filing Friday. During the April-September period of this fiscal, Mahindra Lifespace posted a net loss of ₹1.27 crore against a net loss of ₹23.20 crore in the year-ago period.



**As India pursues its long-term vision of becoming a high-income economy by 2047, it remains committed to global collaboration**

**NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**  
UNION FINANCE MINISTER

### JOB POSTINGS UP 20% IN FESTIVE SEASON: REPORT

More than 2.16 lakh job postings were reported in this festive season in the country -- a 20 per cent increase compared to 1.8 lakh job postings last year, according to a report. The festive season saw a significant rise in hiring across key sectors like logistics, e-commerce, retail and hospitality. Additionally, the rapid expansion of the quick commerce industry contributed to this hiring momentum, said apna.co, a leading jobs and professional networking platform.



## FPIs withdraw ₹85,790cr from Indian equities in Oct

**THE SUSTAINED FPI SELLING IMPACTED MARKET SENTIMENTS, PULLING THE NSE'S BENCHMARK INDEX NIFTY DOWN BY 8 PER CENT FROM THE PEAK**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 27:** Foreign investors have continued selling in the Indian market, pulling out a massive ₹85,790 crore (around USD 10.2 billion) from equities this month due to Chinese stimulus measures, attractive stock valuations, and the elevated pricing of domestic equities.

October is turning into the worst-ever month in terms of foreign fund outflows. In March 2020, FPIs withdrew ₹61,973 crore from equities. The latest outflow came after a nine-month high investment of ₹57,724 crore in September 2024.

Since June, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have consistently bought equities after withdrawing ₹34,252 crore in April-May. Overall, FPIs have been net buyers in 2024, except for January, April, and May, data with the depositories showed.

Looking ahead, the trajectory of global events like geopolitical developments and interest rate movements will play a crucial role in shaping future foreign investment in Indian equities, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate



Director, Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

On the domestic front, key indicators like inflation trends, corporate earnings, and the impact of festive season demand will also be closely watched by FPIs as they assess opportunities in the Indian market, he added.

According to the data, FPIs made a net withdrawal of ₹85,790 crore from equities between October 1 and 25.

The sustained FPI selling impacted market sentiments, pulling the NSE's benchmark index Nifty down by 8 per cent

from the peak.

The trend of sustained FPI selling is showing no signs of reversal any time soon. The selling was triggered by the Chinese stimulus measures and the cheap valuations of Chinese stocks. Also, the elevated valuations made India the top choice of FPIs to sell, VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said.

This month witnessed significant outflows in FPI as geopolitical tensions and shifting global economic conditions influenced investor sentiment, Akhil Puri, Partner, Financial Advisory,

Forvis Mazars in India, said.

Heightened concerns around geopolitical stability and recent developments in China have led foreign investors to adopt a more cautious stance, reallocating capital to safer markets. This trend highlights the impact of global uncertainties on emerging markets, where volatility can significantly shape investment patterns, he added.

"With US elections looming, a sharp recent rise in US bond yields implying diminished expectations for aggressive rate cuts by the US Fed, lower growth and high inflation expected back home, continued geopolitical issues between Israel-Iran and Russia-Ukraine has led to FPIs pulling out funds from most EMs, including India," Piyush Mehta, smallcase Manager and CIO at Caprize Investment, said.

In addition, FPIs pulled out ₹5,008 crore from the debt general limit and invested ₹410 crore from the debt Voluntary Retention Route (VRR) during the period under review. So far this year, FPIs invested ₹14,820 crore in equities and ₹1.05 lakh crore in the debt market.

## Mcap of most valued firms drops ₹2L-cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 27:** Nine of the top-10 most valued firms together lost a whopping ₹2,09,952.26 crore from market valuation last week, in line with weak trends in equities, with Hindustan Unilever and Reliance Industries Limited taking the biggest hit.

Last week, the BSE benchmark tanked 1,822.46 points or 2.24 per cent.

"The dismal Q2 earnings so far have aggravated the investors' woes while persistent FPI selling continued to create havoc in the market," said Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd.

From the top-10 pack, HDFC Bank emerged as the only winner. The market valuation of Hindustan Unilever eroded by ₹44,195.81 crore to ₹5,93,870.94 crore. Reliance Industries' valuation tumbled ₹41,994.54 crore to ₹17,96,726.60 crore. State Bank of India's market

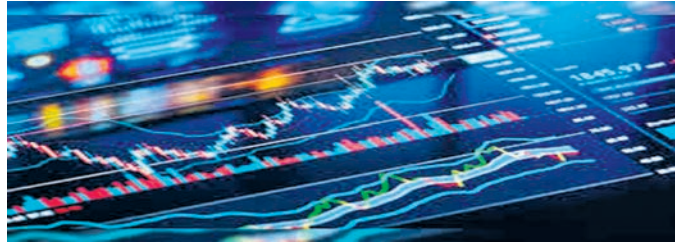
valuation plummeted by ₹35,117.72 crore to ₹6,96,655.84 crore, and that of Bharti Airtel tanked by ₹24,108.72 crore to ₹9,47,598.89 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) dropped by ₹23,137.67 crore to ₹14,68,183.73 crore.

The valuation of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) diminished by ₹19,797.24 crore to ₹5,71,621.67 crore, and that of Infosys declined by ₹10,629.49 crore to ₹7,69,496.61 crore. ITC's mcap fell by ₹5,690.96 crore to ₹6,02,991.33 crore, and that of ICICI Bank went lower by ₹5,280.11 crore to ₹8,84,911.27 crore.

However, the mcap of HDFC Bank jumped ₹46,891.13 crore to ₹13,29,739.43 crore. Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued firm, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys, State Bank of India, ITC, Hindustan Unilever and LIC.

## FII activities, global trends to drive market: Analysts



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 27:** Equity investors will track the trading activity of foreign investors, global trends and ongoing earnings results for further cues, and benchmark indices may continue to witness consolidation in a holiday-shortened week amid the monthly derivatives expiry, analysts said.

Markets fell sharply last week amid massive foreign capital outflows and dismal Q2 earnings so far. Weakness in the markets might continue in the near term amid cautiousness among investors ahead of the US presidential election early next month, an expert said.

Equity markets will remain closed Friday for Diwali, but a special trading window will be open for one hour in the evening. Leading stock exchanges BSE and NSE will conduct a one-hour special 'Muhurat Trading' session on the occasion of Diwali November 1, marking the start of the new Samvat 2081.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said, "We expect the consolidation to continue in the short term. A

reversal in trend will depend on a slowdown in FIIs' selling intensity and the outcome of the US presidential election."

"Going forward, FII flows will play a crucial role in determining market direction, while volatility is expected to rise in anticipation of the October F&O expiry. With the Q2 earnings season in progress, upcoming corporate results will be key indicators for market sentiment," said Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart Ltd. On the global front, geopolitical developments, particularly the Iran-Israel situation, will be closely monitored for their potential impact on crude oil prices, he added.

"Markets worldwide may adopt a cautious wait-and-watch stance ahead of the US presidential election. Key macroeconomic data releases, such as the US jobs report, GDP data, and China's PMI manufacturing data, will be important indicators, alongside the US core PCE prices index release on October 31, the Federal Reserve's preferred inflation gauge. The Bank of Japan is also set to announce its interest rate decision October 31," Meena added.

## Business cycle funds outperform Nifty 500

*These funds have the flexibility to invest across market capitalisations and do not have a restrictive mandate, thus helping them to gain from broader benchmark rallies*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 27:** Business cycle mutual funds have been gaining traction in the investment landscape, delivering robust returns of 32-56 per cent over the past year, with schemes from HSBC, Mahindra Manulife, and Quant generating returns exceeding 50 per cent.

These top three funds have substantially outperformed the Nifty 500 TRI index, which delivered 35.11 per cent returns over the same period, according to the industry data.

Currently, the market hosts only 16 business cycle funds, with just three completing a three-year tenure. The category's assets under management (AUM) have surged to ₹37,487 crore, more than doubling from ₹17,238 crore in September 2021. This stellar growth suggests the rising investor interest in these funds, Peroze Azeed, Deputy CEO, Anand Rathi Wealth, said. Business cycle mutual funds



try to identify the economic cycle and then pick stocks from sectors that could do well in the respective market conditions.

These funds operate by rotating investments across sectors based on the economy's different phases -- recession, early recovery, mid-cycle growth, and late-cycle slowdown.

For instance, during a recessionary phase, defensive sectors like utilities and pharmaceuticals tend to perform well. In contrast, sectors such as automobiles, financials, and infrastructure see gains in the early recovery phase. This strategic sector rotation has paid off handsomely for investors.

Of the 16 business cycle funds currently available, 10 MFs have a track record of over a year, and all but one have outperformed the Nifty 500 TRI over the

past 12 months. These 10 funds have given an average return of 42 per cent, according to industry data.

In the past one-year (till October 17), HSBC Business Cycles Fund has delivered an impressive 56.3 per cent return, closely followed by Mahindra Manulife Business Cycle Fund at 56.17 per cent and Quant Business Cycle Fund at 50.8 per cent.

These three funds have outpaced the benchmark by 15-21 percentage points, delivering robust gains despite economic volatility.

Other performers include Baroda BNP Paribas Business Cycle Fund, which posted a 44.58 per cent return over the past year, followed by ICICI Prudential Business Cycle Fund (42.27 per cent), Tata Business Cycle Fund

(41.26 per cent), Kotak Business Cycle Fund (40.03 per cent), Axis Business Cycles Fund (39.02 per cent), Aditya Birla Sun Life Business Cycle Fund (36.33 per cent), and HDFC Business Cycle Fund (31.97 per cent).

Interestingly, over the last six months, these top performers have continued their momentum, with HSBC Business Cycles Fund returning 26.72 per cent, Mahindra Manulife Business Cycle Fund 20.88 per cent and Quant Business Cycle Fund 17.7 per cent.

Moreover, the top three funds have outperformed the Nifty 500 TRI index, which gave 15.2 per cent returns over the same period.

The remaining seven funds have given a return in the range of 13 per cent to 23 per cent during the same period.

Typically, business cycle funds take a top-down approach to identifying phases of economic or sector cycles, while adopting a bottom-up approach to stock selection.

These funds have the flexibility to invest across market capitalisations and do not have a restrictive mandate, thus helping them to gain from broader benchmark rallies.

Moreover, these schemes can take concentrated bets on segments where fund managers have high conviction, thus enhancing the gains during periods of favourable sector trends. Since the sector rotation is dynamically managed, the prospects of a high-risk, high-reward scenario improve.

## Buoyed by online sales, appliance makers expect 30% growth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Oct 27:** The appliance & consumer electronics industry expects around 30 per cent growth in the festive season sales this year after a double-digit booster from online sale events of leading retailers Flipkart and Amazon and an expected final thrust from offline channels during Dhanteras week.

This festive season, premiumisation is the flavour, where consumers are willing to pay extra for features such as energy efficiency, higher capacity and larger size and even showing interest in the high-end AI & IOT Technology-driven products, industry leaders said.

Companies such as LG Electronics, Panasonic, Sony, Godrej Appliances and Haier started festive sales with a good kick start from the Onam festival and expect to continue the momentum till the remaining week of the nearly 45-day festive period, which concludes after Diwali. To make the premium range

as large screen TV panels above 51" screen size, higher load capacity washing machines and French door refrigerators (with two side-by-side doors), the manufacturers are incentivising with attractive financing schemes, investing in branding and promotion on digital and traditional mediums.

"There is good growth across all categories, especially in premium products like large-capacity washing machines and refrigerators. We are witnessing good demand for products featuring AI & IOT technology," said LG Electronics India, Senior VP-Home Appliances Sanjay Chitkara.

He added that this festive season, demand for premium products has also increased even from the smaller tier II & III markets, which is encouraging.

"Upcoming week is significant for festive sales as generally during Dhanteras there will be a high sell-out across India," said Chitkara. Moreover, this year's festive



season sale also coincides with a strong wedding season this winter.

"There were not many wedding dates in summer this year, therefore wedding purchases are complementing festival sell-out," he said. Godrej Appliances Business

Head and EVP Kamal Nandi said helped by a good monsoon markets have picked up this festive season. The premium leading the charge this season, though mass product segments also have shown significant growth.

"At Godrej Appliances, we

have seen a growth of close to 40 per cent since the start of Onam in September compared to last year. October, driven by a combination of Durga Puja/Navratri and the upcoming Diwali celebrations has delivered close to 45 per cent surge so far," he said.

Over the festive season sales on e-commerce platforms such as Amazon and Flipkart, Nandi said Godrej Appliances has overall "achieved an impressive 70 per cent-plus growth compared to last year".

Panasonic India's e-commerce continued to grow in double digits and during Navratri, it witnessed over 20 per cent growth and hopes to continue momentum till Diwali.

"Consumption remains bullish for premium appliances. Whether it is offline or, online consumers are opting for higher ASP (Average Selling Price) products," said Panasonic Marketing India Managing Director Fumiyaasu Fujimori.

Sony India is also witnessing a surge in demand for large

screen televisions especially 55" and above, with 75" and 85" screen sizes gaining significant traction, said its Managing Director Sunil Nayyar.

"We are offering lucrative bank offers and easy finance schemes to make the purchase easier for our customers both in the offline and online space," he said.

Industry body CEAMA (Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association) projects around 20 growth this festive season.

Both e-commerce platforms and brick-and-mortar stores are witnessing this positive trend, underscoring the significance of the consumer electronics segment during the festive season, said its President Sunil Vachani.

"During this festive season, both online and offline sales have seen a remarkable boost, where we have witnessed online marketplaces alone achieving high sales figures within a week—a 26% rise from 2023," he said.



SHORT TAKES

Batra bows out

**New Delhi:** Star paddler Manika Batra crashed out of the WTT Champions table tennis tournament after a quarterfinal straight game defeat against China's Qian Tianyi in Montpellier, France. The Indian, a World No. 30, went down to Tianyi 8-11, 8-11, 10-12 in just 25 minutes Saturday night. Batra, a multiple CWG medallist, fought well in all three games, but her Chinese opponent played the crunch points better to emerge the winner.

Kiwis square series

**Ahmedabad:** India's batting frailties were once again exposed as New Zealand skipper Sophie Devine's (79 and 3/27) all-round heroics propelled her side to a series-levelling 76-run win in the second women's ODI here Sunday. Opting to bat, New Zealand scored 259 for the loss of nine wickets. The Kiwi bowlers then dismissed India for 183. Lea Tahuhu (3/42) also claimed three wickets, while Jess Kerr (2/49) and Eden Carson (2/32) played the supporting role to perfection. Radha Yadav (48) was the top-scorer for India. Chasing 260 for win India were reduced to 26 for three within the first five overs and they could not recover.

MSD to play IPL

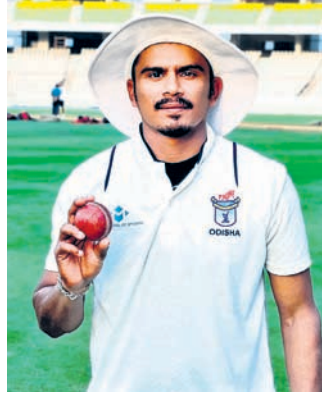
**New Delhi:** Former India and Chennai Super Kings (CSK) skipper MS Dhoni has hinted at a potential return for IPL 2025. He has said he wants to enjoy 'whatever last few years of cricket' he can play, amid speculation regarding his availability for the upcoming season. There has been speculation about Dhoni's future since he handed over the captaincy to Rituraj Gaikwad in the last season. Dhoni could be retained by CSK as an uncapped player this year. "I just want to enjoy whatever last few years of cricket I'm able to play," a report in *ESPNCricinfo* quoted Dhoni as saying a couple of days back.

Baroda batters take command

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Brilliant knocks by three batters, put Baroda in command Sunday against Odisha in their Ranji Trophy encounter being played at the Kotambi Stadium in Vadodara. At stumps on the second day of the game, the hosts were 354 for the loss of six wickets in reply to Odisha's first innings score of 193, already ahead by 161 runs. The only aspect of the game now for Odisha is whether they can save the match and at least get one single point.

Middle-order batter Vishnu Solanki (98, 190b, 14x4), Shivalik Sharma (96, 209b, 10x4, 2x6) and Krunal Pandya (88 batting, 103b, 11x4, 3x6) put Baroda in a commanding position. Both Vishnu and Shivalik were unlucky to miss their centuries, but it looks like Pandya is well-settled to achieve the milestone. None of the Odisha bowlers had any effect on the three even though



Skipper Govind Poddar bowled well to pick up four wickets OP PHOTO

part-time off-spinner and skipper Govind Sharma (4/96) picked up four wickets. Govind bowled 35 overs in the day, a Herculean task considered he is a part-time bowler. The two other Baroda wickets to fall were shared by Harshit Rathod (1/34) and Sumit Sharma (1/51).

Odisha picked up two early wickets on the day to create prob-

lems for Baroda who at that stage were 100 for three. But a 121-run partnership for the fourth wicket between Vishnu and Shivalik took the game away from Odisha. Not only did the two ensure the first innings lead for the hosts, they also batted Odisha out of the game. It was followed up by an 82-run stand for the fifth wicket between Vishnu and Pandya that completely took the game away from Odisha.

Pandya's knock was the more free-flowing one as he hit the bowlers to all parts of the ground. All the three of his sixes cleared the fence with ease. Odisha's main aim should be now to restrict the opposition lead to less than 200 in the first innings when the game resumes Monday. However, they will have to put their heads down and bat if they want to save the game.

**Brief scores:** Odisha 193; Baroda 354 for 6 (Vishnu Solanki 98, Shivalik Sharma 96, Krunal Pandya 88 batting, Govind Poddar 4/96). Match to continue.

Odisha bowlers restrict Kerala

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Oct 27:** Hosts Kerala were 267 for the loss of seven wickets against Odisha in their under-23 men's cricket match being played at the Krishnagiri Stadium in Wayanad, Sunday. Shoun Roger (68, 75b, 8x4, 2x6) and Abhishek J Nair (62, 83b, 9x4) got fine half centuries to take Kerala towards the 300-run mark.

Sambit S Baral (4/57) and Saideep Mohapatra (3/49) shared the seven Kerala wickets to fall on the day. In fact, the two picked up wickets at regular intervals and did not allow the Kerala batters to run away with the game. Baral, who bowls medium pace bowled a nagging length and line and created problems for all the Kerala batters.

Off-spinner Saideep also did a good job restricting the flow of runs and picking up three wickets in the process. He supported Baral well and the two worked in tandem to stifle Kerala batters.

Amrinder saves OFC

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, Oct 27:** Odisha FC (OFC) played out a 1-1 draw with Mumbai City FC (MCFC) at the Mumbai Football Arena here Sunday. Roy Krishna put Odisha ahead in the 14th minute, while Nikolas Karelis equalised for Mumbai in the 23rd. OFC captain and custodian, Amrinder Singh, earned the player of the match award for his outstanding series of saves that kept his team in the game. OFC are currently with eight points from six games and are lying seventh in the table.

In fact Mumbai dominated the match for large stretches. However, most of the shots they took at the opposition met a stumbling block in Amrinder and in the end the defending champions had to remain satisfied with a single point.

OFC had a glorious chance to go ahead in the opening couple of minutes. Ahmed Jahouh's found an unmarked Mourtada Fall in the MCFC box. His header was palmed away the rival keeper



Roy Krishna (21) celebrates after scoring against Mumbai OP PHOTO

and off the rebound, Rahim struck, but his shot went wide.

However, OFC were not to be denied for long. Roy intercepted a mis-pass close to the opposition goal and scored with a powerful shot.

However, MCFC restored parity within nine minutes with Karelis scoring a brilliant goal after a build-up down the middle that caught the OFC defenders on the wrong foot. Prior to that Amrinder made a crucial save.

Shami's absence huge loss for India: McDonald

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Sydney, Oct 27:** Australia head coach Andrew McDonald said Sunday that the absence of Mohammed Shami during the marquee Border Gavaskar Trophy next month is a huge loss for India, but stressed that the hosts won't underestimate the other quicks stepping in for the seasoned pacer.

Shami, who had played a significant role in India's successful 2018 tour of Australia, has not played since the ODI World Cup final last November due to an ankle injury. He underwent surgery and was subsequently rehabilitating at the National Cricket Academy (NCA). However, he developed swelling in his knees which affected his rehabilitation.

"Mohammed Shami is a big loss for India," McDonald was quoted as saying by *ESPNCricinfo*. "The way our batters speak about his relentless nature, his line and lengths, the way he goes about his business, a real good complimenting skill set to (Jasprit) Bumrah, so I think that one-two combo they'll lack a little bit, and they'll miss that," McDonald added.

India have handed maiden call ups to Delhi speedster Harshit Rana and Andhra seam bowling all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy while pacers Akash Deep and Prasad Krishna have also been selected for the marquee series.

"But needless to say we saw what happened last time, they had reserves that came in and did the job as well, so they cannot be underestimated at all," McDonald said.

Barca rout Real Madrid in Clasico

AGENCIES

**Madrid, Oct 27:** Robert Lewandowski struck twice in three minutes as Barcelona crushed rivals Real Madrid 4-0 at the Santiago Bernabeu here Saturday, inflicting the Spanish champions' first La Liga defeat in over a year. Teenage winger Lamine Yamal and Raphina completed the rout, while Madrid superstar Kylian Mbappe had two goals ruled out for offside on a frustrating first Clasico appearance for Los Blancos, who now trail league leaders Barcelona by six points.

France captain Mbappe was consistently outwitted by the visitors' high defensive line to the chagrin of the exasperated crowd, whose mood darkened as Barcelona hit four second half goals.

Barcelona snapped Madrid's 42-match unbeaten streak in La



Barcelona goal-scorers Robert Lewandowski (in front) and Lamine Yamal celebrate after the game against Real Madrid, Saturday AP PHOTO

Liga, one game short of the Catalan giants' all-time record, adding further shine to their triumph.

Hansi Flick has whipped Barcelona into shape in just a matter of months and in ending a run of four Clasico defeats,

his young side made a statement victory to show how far they have come.

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti opted for more muscle in midfield by selecting Eduardo Camavinga over Luka Modric, with his team's game-plan clear - defend

in numbers and try to spring Mbappe or Vinicius (Jr) with a long ball into the space behind Barcelona's high defensive line.

It led to an intense but repetitive first half, with Barcelona's defence catching Madrid offside on eight occasions.

Mbappe hit the side-netting and lobbed over but was offside on both occasions, while Jude Bellingham forced a superb save from Barcelona goalkeeper Inaki Pena, but it would also have been disallowed for offside.

In the second half, the game completely changed. Casado slipped Lewandowski through and with Madrid defender Ferland Mendy a step behind his teammates, the Pole was on-side. The 36-year-old slotted low past Lunin to silence the Bernabeu, and two minutes later he pounced again. He headed home Alejandro Balde's cross to double Barca's advantage.

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