



## Shradha's standpoint

Actor Shradha Kapoor says failure is a very powerful teacher and an important stepping stone towards success

LEISURE | P2



## COP29 in crisis

All signatories to the UN climate convention reject a draft text released for the developing world Thursday

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## Rupee at new low

Rupee depreciates 8 paise to settle at an all-time low of 84.50 against the US dollar Thursday

BUSINESS | P11



## Resurrection time

Captain of the Indian women's hockey team Salima Tete hails players for their title-defending effort in ACT campaign

SPORTS | P12

## ICC arrest warrant against Netanyahu

REUTERS

The Hague, Nov 21: The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants Thursday for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his former defence chief, as well as a Hamas leader, Ibrahim Al-Masri, for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza conflict.

In their decision, the ICC judges said there were reasonable grounds to believe Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant were criminally responsible for acts including murder, persecution and starvation as a weapon of war as part of a "widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population of Gaza".

Judges said there were also reasonable grounds to believe the blockade on Gaza and lack of food, water, electricity, fuel and medical supplies "created conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of part of the civilian population in Gaza, which resulted in the death of civilians, including children, due to malnutrition and dehydration".

P10

## MAOIST KILLED

AGENCIES

Malkangiri, Nov 21: A Maoist was killed and a policeman was injured during a gunfight between security forces and red rebels in Jineliguda forest near the Odisha-Chhattisgarh border, police said Thursday.

The exchange of fire took place late Wednesday night as the police personnel launched an operation to stop the inflow of Maoists to Odisha through the forest in Malkangiri district, a senior officer said.

Two Maoists were also arrested during the operation, he said.

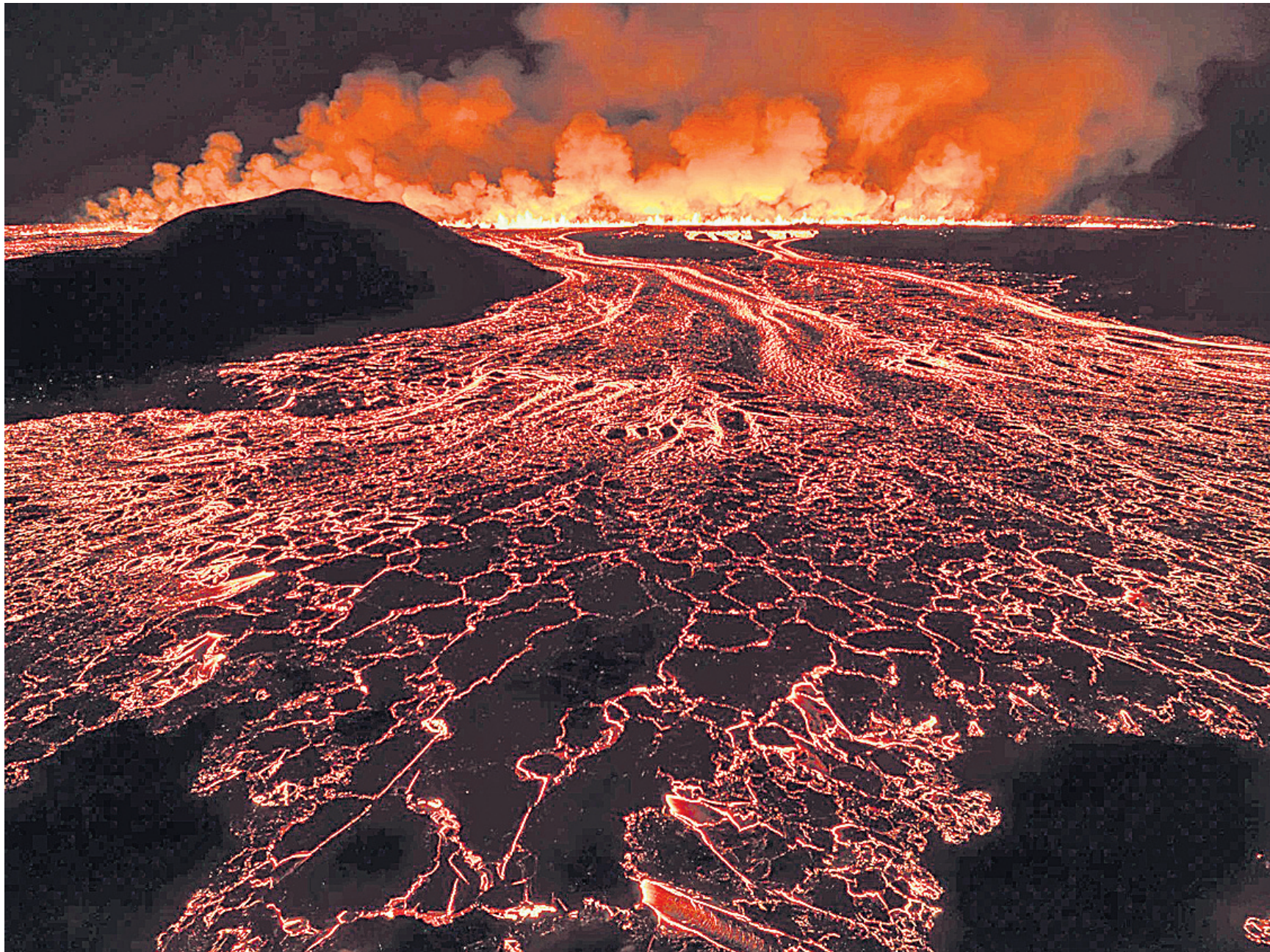
The injured policeman, identified as Damaru Badanaik, has been admitted to Malkangiri District Headquarters Hospital, he said. The deceased Maoist is yet to be identified, the officer said.

MORE P5

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



In old India, people stepped down on moral grounds. In new India, morality itself has resigned



NATURE'S FURY: A new volcanic eruption on Reykjanes Peninsula in Iceland late Wednesday. While the eruption poses no threat to air travel, authorities warn of gas emissions across parts of the peninsula, including the nearby town of Grindavik

AP PHOTO

## Adani bribed Odisha officers

The beleaguered Adani Group, which is still battling to salvage its reputation following last year's report of US short-seller Hindenburg Research, received a fresh blow when its boss Gautam Adani and seven others were indicted in New York for orchestrating a \$265 million bribery ring involving government officials, including a few from Odisha, to buy expensive solar power and concealing it from US investors. In the aftermath of the allegations, the group's stocks and bonds plunged, wiping nearly \$27 billion off the conglomerate's market value, while the broader Indian market fell into correction territory. The Congress, meanwhile, demanded the tycoon's arrest and reiterated the need for a JPC probe into the group's functioning following the 'release of warrants' in the US against him and his nephew Sagar Adani. The company, however, dismissed the US allegations, and said it would seek legal recourse.

AGENCIES

New York/New Delhi, Nov 21: Billionaire Gautam Adani has been charged by US prosecutors for allegedly being part of an elaborate scheme to pay USD 265 million (about ₹2,200 crore) bribe to Indian officials in exchange for favourable terms for solar power contracts. The bombshell allegations, which Adani Group denied saying it is innocent until proven guilty, may have a widespread fallout ranging from reputational risk to the conglomerate, inability to raise funds from the US market and the billionaire being forced to restrict his overseas travels to opening a political Pandora's box that will give the Opposition another tool to target the government just as Parliament meets for the Winter Session, starting Monday.

Adani and seven others, including his nephew Sagar, have been charged by the US Department of Justice (DoJ) with paying bribes to unidentified officials of state governments in



Andhra Pradesh and Odisha to buy expensive solar power, potentially earning more than USD 2 billion in profit over 20 years. Prosecutors said the US started an investigation in 2022. They alleged that the group raised USD 2 billion in loans and bonds, including from US firms, on the backs of false and misleading statements related to the firm's anti-bribery practices and policies as well as reports of the bribery probe. According to the indictment, Adani Green Energy in 2021 won a tender to supply 8 gigawatt (GW) of solar power to the government-owned Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI). New Delhi-based Azure Power, whose officials too have been named along with former executives of Canadian public pension

fund manager CDPQ in the case, won a similar 4 GW tender.

SECI was unsuccessful in finding buyers for the power at the prices contracted with Adani and Azure. Adani, in 2021 and 2022, met personally with government officials and offered them bribes to sign power sale agreements with SECI, according to the US Attorney's Office.

After the promise of bribes, electricity distribution companies in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh entered into agreements with SECI. It alleges that ₹25 lakh per MW was paid to an official of the Andhra Pradesh government, after which the state agreed to purchase 7,000 MW (7 GW) of solar power from SECI. "Odisha purchased 500 MW of power through the same route," it said. These apart, the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has charged Gautam and Sagar Adani and an Azure Power executive with 'violating the anti-fraud provisions of the federal securities laws'. Adani Group companies lost about \$27 billion in market value during the day.

P9&11

## Mahtab Odisha's Sardar Patel: CM

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Nov 21: Stating that 'Utkal Keshari' Harekrushna Mahtab played a key role in the merger of many princely states into Odisha, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Thursday likened the former chief minister to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

While addressing an event at the Vigyan Bhavan here to mark the 125th birth anniversary of Mahtab, the first chief minister of Orissa (now Odisha), Majhi said, "We know the contributions of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in achieving the integration of the princely states into the Union of India. Likewise, Dr Mahtab was the 'Sardar Patel of Odisha', as he helped merge various princely states into the state of Odisha."

He called Mahtab a cynosure of 'solidarity and responsive administration'.

The CM announced that the state government will set up



memorials and make a biopic on the life of the 'Utkal Keshari'.

President Droupadi Murmu was the chief guest at the event hosted by the Ministry of Culture where a special commemorative stamp and coin were released along with a few books.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Minister of Culture and Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat were also present on the dais.

## SHORT TAKES

### 'Sold' Bolangir baby traced to Raipur

Bhubaneswar: The state government has traced a newborn, allegedly sold by her parents due to poverty in Bolangir district, to a private hospital in Chhattisgarh's Raipur, where she is reported to be in critical condition, officials said Thursday. The baby was reportedly handed over to a couple, Abha Mittal and Raj Kumar Mittal from Raipur, November 2, after her mother was discharged from the hospital, officials said. Despite repeated efforts by Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo and other senior officials to convince the mother to reveal the couple's identity, she refused to disclose any information.

P3

### Truck runs over man at Palasuni

Bhubaneswar: Tension gripped Palasuni area here Thursday morning after a 55-year-old man was crushed under the wheels of a speeding truck while crossing the NH 16. A senior officer at the Mancheswar police station identified the deceased as Prashant Bej of Jajpur. He said the incident occurred at around 11am. Bej, who came by a bus from his native place, got down at Palasuni. However, on account of heavy traffic, he failed to cross to the other side for a long time. Finally, when he attempted to cross, a motorcyclist knocked him down. Before he could get up, a speeding truck ran over him, causing him die instantaneously.

## UK's most expensive coffee: \$344 for a cup

AGENCIES

London, Nov 21: It's an enormous price to pay for a little cup of coffee, but the man behind the pitch promises it won't leave a bitter taste behind as it comes with the sweetener of a share of a dairy farm.

A Scottish dairy is offering what it bills as the UK's most expensive cup of joe: 272 British pounds (\$344) for a flat white — a double shot of espresso topped with a layer of steamed milk and a fleeting work of foam art.

The costly cup is actually a perk for purchasing shares in Mossgiel Organic Dairy's crowdfunding campaign to enlarge its sustainable operation and produce more milk.

Investors who buy 34 shares in the farm get a certificate for a flat white that can be redeemed starting this weekend at one of 13 coffee shops in Scotland that use the dairy's milk.

"This coffee costs nearly 80 times the price of an average flat white in the UK — but it's much more than just a lovely drink," said owner Bryce Cunningham. "We know it sounds crazy, but when you break it down, it's a pretty good deal. How much is the future of farming worth?"

The price tops the eye-watering 265 pounds that Shot London, a coffee bar in the posh Mayfair and Marylebone neighbourhoods, charged for a flat white made with rare beans



from Okinawa, Japan. The Telegraph reported in April that it was the most expensive coffee in Britain. Before launching the coffee promotion, Cunningham had already raised more than a

third of the 300,000 pounds he is seeking from small investors as he tries to get a 900,000 pound loan that will help him double operations and expand out of Scotland and as far as coffee shops in London.

Shareholders receive other rewards, too, such as farm tours, milk delivery discounts and invites to special events. But investors are also given a standard warning that they could lose some or all of the money they invest — except for the coffee.

The tenant farm in Mauchline, about 25 miles (40-kilometre) south of Glasgow, was worked in the 18th century by poet Robert Burns, who penned 'Auld Lang Syne' and many other

well-known works. Burns, who is considered the national poet of Scotland, wrote while working in the fields there for two years and his face graces each glass bottle of Mossiel milk. Cunningham, a former service manager for Mercedes-Benz, took over the operation in 2014 after his father and grandfather died in 2014 from terminal illnesses.

The collapse of milk prices that year and other problems forced him to sell off most of the herd and reinvent the business as an organic farm. He uses a process to 'brew' the milk, instead of pasteurise it, that he said gives it the creamer taste and texture of raw milk without the health risks.

# leisure



## PAUL MESCAL, GRACIE ABRAMS MAKE RELATIONSHIP PUBLIC

Paul Mescal and Gracie Abrams seemingly confirmed their relationship. The pair stepped out as a couple at the *Gladiator II* afterparty in Los Angeles November 18, posing for photos and enjoying the evening together. Paul and Gracie were first romantically linked in June.

## PATTINSON REUNITES WITH NOLAN FOR HIS NEXT

Christopher Nolan is collecting Hollywood royalties for his next movie like the gems in the infinity gauntlet. Robert Pattinson is set to reunite with ace filmmaker after *Tenet*. The actor will be next seen in the Nolan's closely guarded project at Universal Pictures.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

Joining a yoga class? Good for you. Try an Ayurvedic diet too. You may be in for a lot of new things in your life, but you will have to choose today! There's a bit of money coming in to smoothen the road, assures Ganesha.

#### TAURUS

There are chances of you embarking on a frivolous shopping spree today, foretells Ganesha. Putting two and two together, you may end up spending a (not so) small fortune in the afternoon. You will be the last person to tolerate if someone tries to dominate you. Your sweetheart will sugar your soul today.

#### GEMINI

You may be forced to share your personal belongings with someone else. This may make you a little angry, even jealous perhaps. Spirituality and a visit to a religious place may help you restore your peace of mind, suggests Ganesha.

#### CANCER

It is very likely that your old contacts will come quite handy for you today, foresees Ganesha. At work, your skills in developing a quick rapport with others will help you perform better. People will have a high regard for your honesty. You will excel in social gatherings in the evening.

#### LEO

If you thought the Rubik's Cube was confusing, wait till you see what the day has in store for you. A rather nasty professional glitch will baffle and bewilder you. You may want to gear up for certain unpleasant situations at work. But keep your head through it all, since you shall need it in the afternoon to impress someone special, and find innovative ways to express your long cherished love.

#### VIRGO

Diet, Exercise and All-round Fitness - describes where you are much to incline today. Savour the most exquisite cuisine today, suggests Ganesha. Later in the day perhaps, you may reach a crossroad in life. A rise in the bank balance will cushion the safety of your future.

#### LIBRA

"Good fences make good neighbours", said Frost. It's a good thing that you rubbish that idea, because you are all about making better friends with your neighbours and breaking down some walls today. The theological part of you continues to exert force through the evening.

#### SCORPIO

Athletes will achieve prime fitness and form today, says Ganesha. Engineers will design plans that will concentrate their resources on laying the foundation to new business ventures. Your social reputation will get a major boost later in the day.

#### SAGITTARIUS

Today will be a day when you are inclined not only to being upbeat but also firm, says Ganesha. In your line of work, you may get passionate about your views. But compromise is on the cards and that too without any harm to your dignity. Your better half will keep you occupied, says Ganesha.

#### CAPRICORN

Dreading the consequences of errors induced in the past, you will be extra cautious while working on important assignments and will try to save your skin, says Ganesha. This apart, you will spend a major part of the day worrying over career prospects and mulling a change of job.

#### AQUARIUS

Today, you will be determined to clean up the mess on your desk at the office or your home. Your enthusiasm to have a neat and clean space around will certainly win you some brownie points at both the places, says Ganesha. Later on the day, you may enjoy a nice romantic dinner with your sweetheart.

#### PISCES

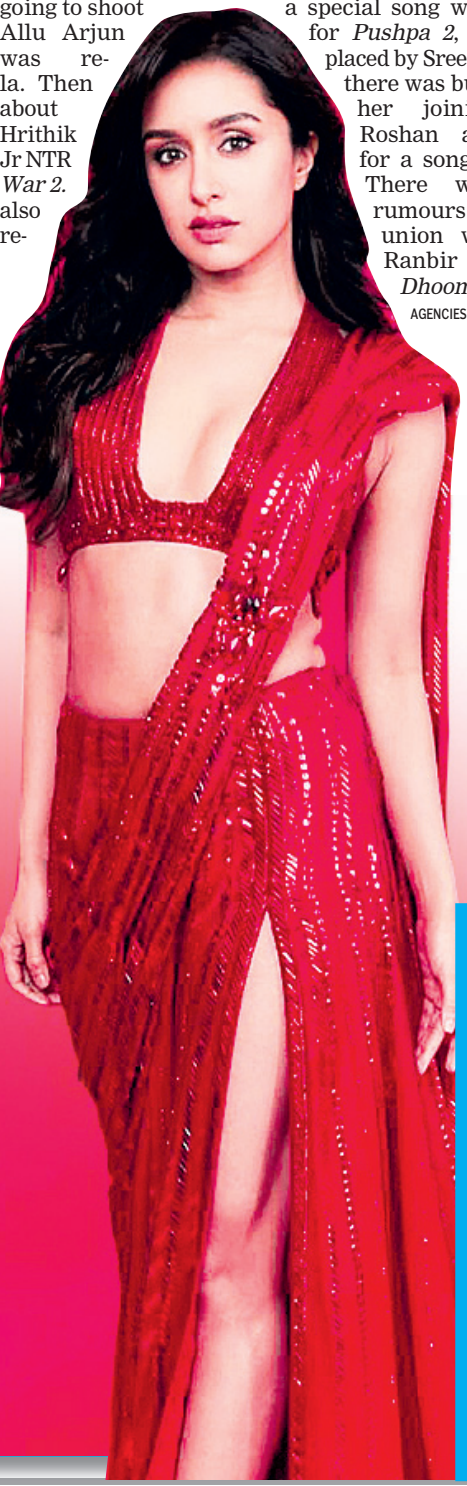
You will find yourself in a nostalgic frame of mind today, and will attempt to reach out to long lost friends and relatives, says Ganesha. It is also a good day for social and religious activities. You will also relate to your work rather emotionally. However, when it comes to business, practical prudence should guide your decisions rather than emotional attachments, opines Ganesha.

## Shraddha: Failure is a powerful teacher

**Mumbai:** Actress Shraddha Kapoor is one of the most loved stars in Hindi film industry. She is known for her versatility and acting skills. The *Stree 2* actress recently opened up about her failures and initial days in the industry.

In a recent interview, Shraddha talked about her journey and how failure paved her path to success. She shares, "Failure is indeed a very powerful teacher and a very important stepping stone towards success. I gave countless auditions at the beginning of my career. I was even finalised for a few films and then replaced. At that time, it was very demotivating."

However, the *Tu Jhoothi Main Makkaar* actress believes that these experiences made her who she is today. Shraddha was reportedly going to shoot a special song with Allu Arjun for *Pushpa 2*, but was replaced by Sreeleela. Then there was buzz about her joining Hrithik Roshan and for a song in *War 2*. There were also rumours of a union with Ranbir for *Dhoom 4*.



## Samantha's guiding light

**Mumbai:** Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu recently shared an inspiring poem titled "If" by author Rudyard Kipling.

The inspiring poem, known for its timeless message, emphasises maintaining composure and resilience in challenging circumstances. Sharing this poem on her Instagram handle, Samantha wrote in the caption, "This poem has always been a guiding light for me and I wanted to share it with you today."

Samantha's post comes amid Naga Chaitanya and Sobhita Dhulipala's wedding preparations. The couple will reportedly tie the knot December 4 in an intimate yet culturally rich ceremony, attended by close friends and family. For her big day, Dhulipala has chosen a traditional Kanjivaram silk saree, beautifully adorned with real gold zari.

In 2021, Samantha and Naga announced their divorce after four years of marriage. They issued a joint statement, revealing that their separation was mutual and amicable.



## Can't stay away from people: Manoj

**The actor, known for movies such as *Satya*, *Shool*, *Gangs of Wasseypur*, *Gali Guleidan*, and popular web series *The Family Man*, said he has always strived to stay connected to the masses.**

Even today, Bajpayee said, he likes being able to "buy vegetables at the market" than give out selfies. "I feel selfies enter into my private space, nowadays even my wife is not that close to me. On a serious note, if I'm going to keep my car windows black, how am I going to be close to the people? How am I going to understand what they are going through?"

How am I going to understand those characters. The more I will cut off from them, the more downward my journey will be. My kind of actor can't stay away from the people," the National Award-winner said during a masterclass at the ongoing International Film Festival of India (IFFI) here.

Bajpayee, 55, said he hasn't chased stardom in his over 30 year-career.

"Stardom is about mystery and glamour. I was only chasing roles... I don't want to be seen in public because I'm busy looking at people moving, standing near the bus stop or selling something.

An actor has to be like a fly on the wall. He's in the room but he's still not there. If you achieve that in real life then things become easy. You can see things which are unseen," he added.

## Prasar Bharati to revive nostalgia

**Mumbai:** Chief Minister of Goa Dr. Pramod Sawant Thursday launched OTT platform 'WAVES' of the national public broadcaster, Prasar Bharati at the opening ceremony of 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa.

Dignitaries such as Sanjay Jaju, Secretary I&B, among other names were also present on the occasion.

The recently launched platform aims to revive nostalgia while embracing modern digi-

tal trends by offering a rich mix of classic content and contemporary programming.

It will showcase *Ramayan*, *Mahabharat*, *Shaktimaan*, and *Hum Log* to name a few. Additionally, it offers news, documentaries, and regional content, reinforcing its commitment to inclusivity and diversity.

'WAVES' makes its entry as a large aggregator OTT with Inclusive India stories embracing Indian culture with an interna-



national outlook, in over 12 Languages such as Hindi, English,

Bengali, Marathi, Kannada, Malayalam, Telugu, Tamil, Gujarati, Punjabi, Assamese.

It will have over 10 genres of infotainment and will also provide video on demand, free-to-play gaming, Radio streaming, Live TV streaming, 65 live Channels, several App in App integrations for video and gaming content, and online shopping through Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) supported e-commerce platform.

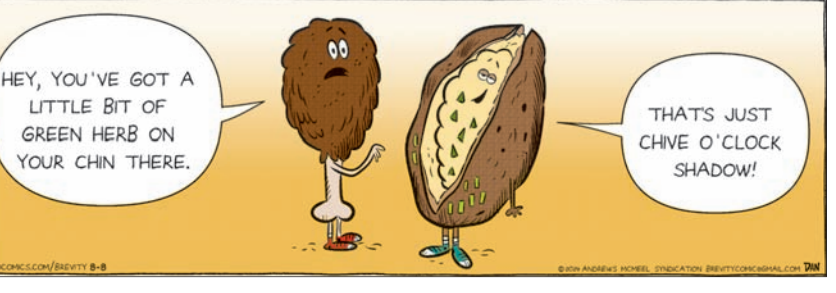
### PEANUTS



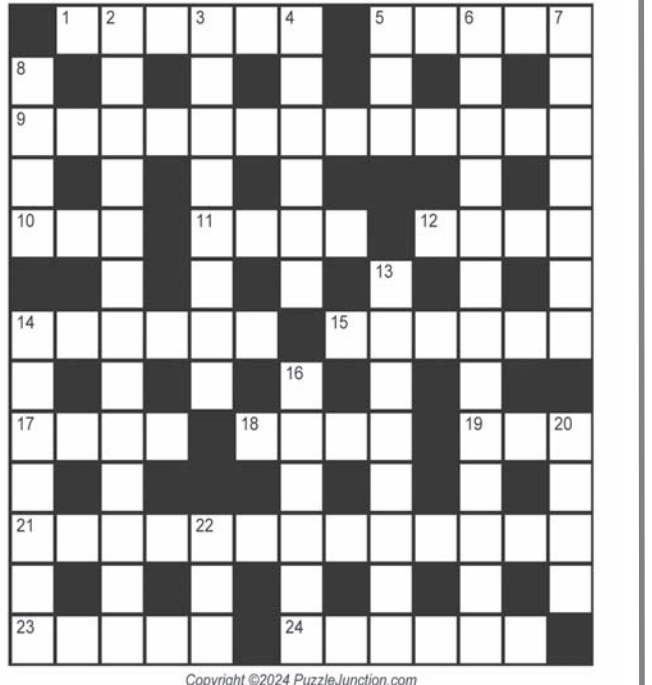
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



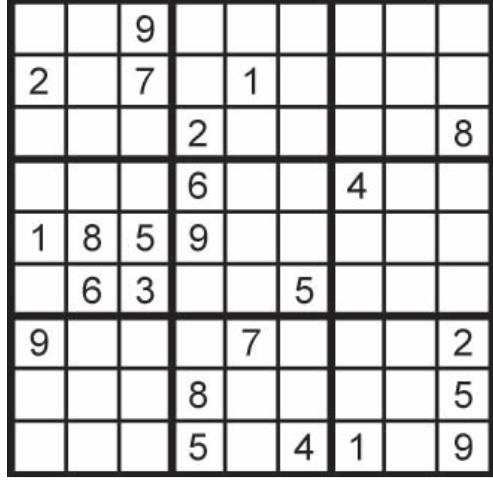
### FUN post CROSSWORD



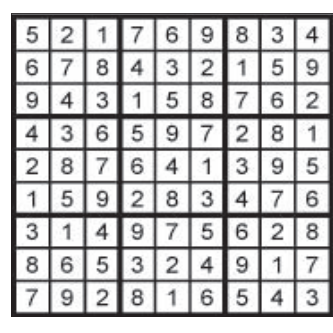
- Across**
- 1 Creative person
  - 5 Classical theatre
  - 9 Flotation device (4,9)
  - 10 Tavern
  - 11 Kirkuk locale
  - 12 Poke
  - 14 Higher in rank
  - 15 Unkind person
  - 17 Pitcher
  - 18 Bank note
  - 19 Flow back or recede
  - 21 Benefactor to a stranger (4,9)
  - 23 Hungarian wine
  - 24 Get cozy
  - Down**
  - 2 Atlas, for one (9,4)
  - 3 Incarcerate
  - 4 Boring tool
  - 5 Miner's find
  - 6 Some activists
  - 7 Shorten
  - 8 Meat loaf serving
  - 13 Asserts
  - 14 Hand dexterity
  - 16 Aviator
  - 20 Billiard cushion
  - 22 It's the limit

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

**MAHTAB'S 125TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS BEGIN**

The state government Thursday commenced the celebrations of the 125th birth anniversary of former chief minister Utkal Keshari Harekrushna Mahtab. The government has decided to commemorate Mahtab's birth anniversary throughout the year beginning with a three-day celebration from Thursday. Deputy CM Pravatī Parida along with ministers Prithiviraj Harichandan and Suryabanshi Suraj inaugurated an exhibition showcasing rare pictures of Mahtab, along with several other personalities, at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar. A cultural programme was also organised at Utkal University of Culture.

(In pic: A martial artist demonstrates his skills during the Paika rally organised by Harekrushna Mahtab Jayanti Committee at PMG Square in Capital City, Thursday)



downtown

**Oppn questions Adani's land purchase in Gandhamardan**

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 21:** With the Adani Group facing charges by US prosecutors for allegedly being part of a scheme to pay USD 265 million (about ₹2,200 crore) bribe to Indian officials in exchange for favourable terms for solar power contracts, the opposition BJD and Congress Thursday demanded clarification on whether the company has any plans to go for mining in Gandhamardan hills where it has reportedly purchased land parcels.



bauxite mining in Gandhamardan Hills in 1980s.

"People are getting prepared to launch another round of agitation if required. The state government would be responsible if there is any unpleasant situation," he claimed.

Veteran Congress leader Narasingha Mishra said the party would launch a massive agitation if there is any plan for mining in Gandhamardan Hills, the treasure house of hundreds of medicinal plants.

"The hill is sacred for the locals who believe that Lord Hanuman had taken a medicinal plant from Gandhamardan Hills for treatment of Lord Ram's younger brother Lakshman in the Ramayana," Mishra said.

Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, however, said there was no proposal for mining in Gandhamardan Hills.

"Since BJD has no issue against the state government, it has been trying to rake up a non-issue,"

Pradhan said.

Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo, also a relative of BJD legislator, claimed that the Bolangir MLA is trying to create an issue out of nothing just to stay in the limelight.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Debidatta Biswal said that he has no information about the land purchase by Adani Group.

"There is no transfer of any forest land to any group," Biswal said. Meanwhile, Adani Group in a statement said: "Mahanadi Mines and Minerals has acquired private land in Bolangir and Bargarh districts from willing landowners to transfer it to the Forest department of the Odisha government for afforestation purposes. The purpose of land acquisition is clearly mentioned in the sale deed with the landowners."

Mahanadi Mines and Minerals is a subsidiary of Adani Group.

"This land acquisition is not intended for any com-

mercial purposes. It will help enrich the local ecology on account of compensatory afforestation. The land acquisition process is in line with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change's comprehensive guidelines that allow the project proponent to procure land anywhere in permissible geographies in or outside the state," it said.

The company also said that the district forest officer of Bolangir division issued a Suitability Certificate in October for this purpose after due diligence by the authorities.

The Ministry of Coal vested the Bijahan Coal Mine in Sundargarh district with Mahanadi Mines and Minerals Pvt Ltd through competitive bidding in October 2022 for commercial mining.

As per provisions of the Forest Conservation Act 1980, the company is required to provide an equal extent of non-forest government land for Compensatory afforestation for the diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes.

Bargarh's BJP MP Pradeep Purohit, who came to the limelight as a leader through the anti-Balco movement in the 1980s, said that not an inch of land from Gandhamardan will be given for mining purposes.

"The Opposition parties are interested in playing politics out of this. No mining activities will ever take place in Gandhamardan hills," Purohit said.

**Crorepati CSO in Vigilance net**

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar/Sonepur, Nov 21:** Vigilance sleuths Thursday arrested a civil supplies officer (CSO) after finding undisclosed assets in his possession, an official said.

Acting on a tip-off, the anti-corruption wing officials Wednesday conducted simultaneous raids at the office and properties of Suresh Kumar Panigrahi, CSO, Subarnapur in 11 places of Khurda (Bhubaneswar), Bolangir, Sonepur, and Bargarh districts, the Vigilance department said in a statement.

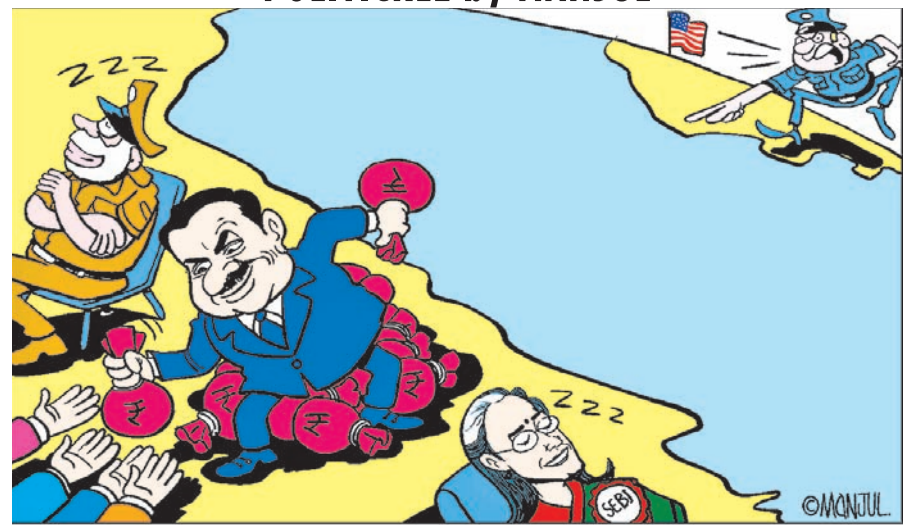


During the raid, assets including two buildings, a farmhouse spread over four acres of land, 19 plots, deposits over ₹1.72 crore and ₹1.49 lakh in cash were found, it said.

When asked about the source of accumulating the properties, he could not give any satisfactory explanation, the statement said.

Following the raid, the Vigilance department registered a case against Panigrahi and arrested him Thursday, it added.

**POLITICKLE by MANJUL**



**PENTHA ECO-RETREAT**

**Centre seeks clarification**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 21:** The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) Thursday sought clarification from the Odisha government over the Eco-retreat programme at Penth beach, within Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary.

"Concerns have been raised regarding the potential ecological impacts and possible non-compliance with environmental and wildlife conservation laws. In light of these concerns, this office seeks clarification and a detailed report on the following aspects: Whether the mass tourism activity is posing serious threats to the nesting of Olive Ridley sea turtles.

Padma Mahanti, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Forests (C) in a letter to the Additional Chief Secretary of Forest, Environment and Climate Change department, Odisha, said the office had received a complaint from Alaya Samantaray, a resident of Marshaghai in Kendrapara district, regarding the conduct of the Eco-retreat programme at Penth beach in Rajnagar. The venue falls within Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary.

"Therefore, we request you to get the matter enquired and provide a detailed response to the queries raised, supported by relevant documentation, at the earliest," she added.

Earlier, environment activist Alaya Samantaray had urged the state government to stop the Eco-retreat programme.

In a letter to the regional office of MoEFCC, Samantaray urged the state authorities not to continue with the Eco-retreat programme at the beach within Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary.

**2 burglars nabbed; 12 smartphones recovered**

**Bhubaneswar:** Two burglars who had looted over two dozens of smartphones from a shop in Rangamatia area here last month, were arrested by the Mancheswar police Thursday. IIC, Mancheswar police station, Manas Kumar Swain, said that 12 smartphones have been recovered following the arrest of Durga Prasad Barik, 21, and Priyadarshan Barik, 21. While Durga is a resident of Rangamatia area, Priyadarshan hails from Kendrapara district. The duo was arrested from a place in Rangamatia area, he said. Swain said the miscreants had broken into the shop of Bijaya Kumar Behera October 5 night after opening the shutters with the help of a mechanical lever. They took away more than 25 smartphones valued at over Rs 1.5 lakh. Behera discovered the burglary when he went to open the shop in the morning. He lodged a complaint at Mancheswar police station thereafter. Though the police later identified the miscreants from CCTV footage, they managed to evade arrest. Swain said the cops received a tip-off Thursday morning that the duo is planning to meet their associates near Rangamatia area. Accordingly, a trap was laid and they were rounded up when sighted.

**'Sold' Bolangir infant found in Chhattisgarh**

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 21:** The state government has traced a newborn, allegedly sold by her parents due to poverty in Bolangir district, to a private hospital in Chhattisgarh's Raipur, where she is reported to be in critical condition, officials said Thursday.

In another case, a newborn, sold by her parents for ₹20,000 in Rayagada district, was rescued from neighboring Andhra Pradesh Wednesday.

The baby was subsequently placed at the special adoption agency (SAA) in Rayagada after being presented before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC).



The state government had initiated an inquiry into the suspected sale of two newborns.

In the Bolangir case, the baby was handed over to a couple, Abha Mittal and Raj Kumar Mittal from Raipur, November 2, after her mother was discharged from the hospital, officials said.

Despite repeated efforts by Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo and other senior officials to convince the mother to reveal the couple's identity, she refused to disclose any information.

When the matter reached Lathore police station, officials found the baby at Blue Bird Hospital in Raipur. Bolangir CWC spoke to the consulting doctor at the Raipur hospital and confirmed the child's critical condition through video calls.

District officials from both Bolangir and Raipur are now working together to rescue the child and ensure her safe return.

**After Kalahandi, 'Swarna Prashan' now in Rayagada**

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 21:** The Ministry of Ayush, in collaboration with Vedanta Aluminium, has expanded its 'Swarna Prashan' initiative to Rayagada district, an official said Thursday.

Originally launched in Kalahandi district, the programme will now benefit over 6,400 students across 15 government schools in both districts, he said and added that the scheme aims to enhance the health and wellbeing of children in the region.

"Swarna Prashan" is an ancient Ayurvedic practice that involves administering a blend of gold particles, honey, and ghee to children, which is believed to improve memory, boost immunity, and sup-



**'Swarna Prashan' is an ancient Ayurvedic practice that involves administering a blend of gold particles, honey, and ghee to children, which is believed to improve memory, boost immunity, and support overall development during critical growth years**

port overall development during critical growth years.

District Education Offi-

cer (DEO) Basant Kumar Nayak and Ayurvedic doctor VJP Rao were among officials who attended the

event. Nayak emphasised the proven benefits of Swarna Prashan in enhancing immunity and cognitive functions in children.

Sunil Gupta, Chief Operating Officer (COO) of Vedanta Aluminium, said, "Through our collaboration with the government of Odisha and the Ministry of Ayush, we aim to promote the health and wellbeing of children in underserved regions by leveraging time-tested traditional practices."

Nitin Kumar Tiwari, a senior official from Vedanta Aluminium, said, "We aim to reach more than 30,000 children by the end of the year. This initiative underscores our commitment to fostering child health and holistic community development."

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WORLD FISHERIES DAY

Fisheries university & aqua park soon in state

Odisha aims to enhance fish production, research, and employment opportunities with new initiatives in fisheries and aquaculture



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 21: In a major step towards enhancing the state's fisheries sector, Odisha will soon establish a Fisheries and Animal Resources University, as announced by the Fisheries and Animal Resources Development (F&ARD) Minister Gokulnanda Mallik on the occasion of World Fisheries Day here Thursday.

The university will focus on advancing research, education, and training in the field of fisheries and animal resources, a move expected to boost the state's capacity in fish production and aquaculture.

Minister Mallik revealed that the department has already sought the approval of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi for the establishment of the university. The initiative is part of the state's broader strategy to enhance its fisheries

infrastructure and create more educational opportunities for those wishing to pursue careers in the sector.

In addition to the university, the state government is also planning to set up an aqua park in Sambalpur, with an investment of ₹100 crore. This aqua park is expected to become a major hub for aquaculture and marine research, helping to improve the quality of fish farming in the region and provide new avenues for employment and entrepreneurship.

During his speech, Mallik emphasised Odisha's goal of becoming self-reliant in fish production, driven by both Central and State-sponsored initiatives. He highlighted the importance of two key schemes—Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampad Yojana (PMMSY) and Mukhyamantri

Matsyajibi Kalyana Yojana—which aim to promote income generation, livelihood growth, profitable employment, and nutrition safety. These schemes focus on supporting fishing communities, fish farmers, and others involved in the fisheries sector, encouraging sustainable and profitable practices.

Mallik also shared the state's impressive progress in the fisheries sector. Odisha currently ranks fourth in the country for fish production, with a record 11.33 lakh metric tons (MT) of fish produced in 2023-24. He also noted that the state's production of fish seeds has risen significantly, reaching 310 crore in the same year. Additionally, Odisha has seen a substantial increase in seafood exports, earning approximately ₹4,546 crore in foreign currency in the past year, a figure that has grown 12-fold over the last two decades.

The minister called upon various stakeholders, including farmers, youth, women's self-help groups (SHGs), and entrepreneurs, to participate in the state's pisciculture (fish farming) drive. He urged them to take full advantage of government schemes and initiatives aimed at promoting fish production, offering economic benefits and sustainable livelihoods.

The establishment of the Fisheries and Animal Resources University and the development of the aqua park in Sambalpur are expected to further enhance Odisha's standing in the national fisheries sector, foster innovation, and create significant opportunities for growth and employment in the region.



WORKMANSHIP: An exhibitor shows off a wooden framework at national-level Pallishree Mela-2024 during Bali Yatra in Silver city, Thursday OP PHOTO

Lifetime achievement award to Samanta

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 21: Achyuta Samanta, the visionary founder of Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), and Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) has been recently honoured with the prestigious lifetime achievement award by the World Academy of Art and Culture (WAAC).

The award recognises his transformative contributions to society, particularly in education, social empowerment, and the promotion of art and culture.

The award ceremony took place during the 43rd World Congress of Poets (WCP) held in Madurai. It was presented by His Holiness Thavathiru Kundrakudi Ponnambala Adigalar,



a renowned spiritual leader, in the presence of eminent poets and literary figures from over 30 countries.

Additionally, Samanta was conferred with the Rabin-dranath Tagore Award for his tireless efforts in promoting art, culture, and literature. The award was presented by Sethu Kumanan, the chairman

of the Sethu Bhasakara Group of Institutions, known for his philanthropic and educational contributions.

Recognising his lifelong dedication to leveraging art and culture for societal transformation, the World Congress of Poets inducted Samanta as a member of its executive board. This honour underscores his

The award recognises Samanta's transformative contributions to society, particularly in education, social empowerment, and the promotion of art and culture

significant impact on fostering unity and cultural appreciation globally.

Expressing his gratitude, Samanta stated, "This recognition strengthens my commitment to leveraging art, literature, and culture to inspire change and foster unity across communities, which I have been passionately pursuing for the past three decades."

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CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I Sulochana Panda alias Jyotirmayi Panda (37yrs), W/o-Damodar Panda, Vill/PO- Atto, PS- Sabarang, Dist-Bhadrak, declare that I have Changed my name in my LIC policy bearing no.- 588874880 from Sulochana Panda to Jyotirmayi Panda.

KALAPREET 2024

DPS Kalinga Fest of talent & tradition

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 21: The two-day cultural extravaganza, Kalapreet 2024, hosted by DPS Kalinga, took place November 19 and 20.

The event saw prominent personalities grace the occasion, with Sujata Misra, director of PGIMER and Capital Hospital, Bhubaneswar, as the chief guest on the first day, and Swarupa Panda, Professor of Paediatrics at SCB Medical College and Hospital, Cuttack, on the second day.

The festivities began with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp, accompanied by the rendition of shlokas. Principal Anuradha Rakshit extended a warm welcome to the guests and introduced the dignitaries.

The event featured a diverse range of performances, beginning with the orchestra Sursangam and a medley of songs titled Chanda Mama, blending English, Odia, and Hindi tunes.

Other highlights included the dance dramas Sri Mandira and Bal Ganesha, a fusion of folk dances in Nrityanjali,

Kisaan Desh ki Aan—a tribute to farmers, and Mobile Mania, which raised awareness about mobile addiction. The evening concluded with Jalsa, a tribute to India's festivals.

Pro Vice Chairperson Mala Mishra spoke about the detrimental effects of mobile phone usage on students' mental and physical well-being and emphasised the role of parents in ensuring the holistic development of children.

During the event, the Kalinga Post Junior, the school newsletter, was also launched by the guests in the presence of the school management.

The celebration concluded with acknowledgments from Executive Trustee Sunaina Patro, Vice Principals Sanjay Kumar Jena and Swati Nath, and Headmaster Mustaque Ahmed, who praised the students for their brilliant performances.

Amlan Patro, an alumnus of the 2012 batch and a graduate of IIT Kharagpur and IIM Calcutta, currently working with Boston Consulting Group, shared nostalgic memories of his time at DPS Kalinga.



OSCPCR launches 'Web Safe And Wise' campaign

POST NEWS NETWORK



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 21: In a significant initiative to combat the rising concerns of online crimes against children, the Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSCPCR), in collaboration with ChildFund India, recently launched the Web Safe And Wise campaign.

The campaign aims to create a safer digital environment for children across the state by raising awareness, enhancing community engagement, and providing effective reporting and response mechanisms.

The event brought together various stakeholders, including government institutions, law enforcement agencies, schools, community organisations, and other civil society groups. Together, they discussed strategies to empower communities

to better recognise and address the risks children face in the online world.

Speaking on the occasion, department of Women and Child Development's social welfare director Monisha Banerjee emphasised the need for parents to be available and accessible to their children. She stressed the importance of children feeling confident in discussing their mistakes and seeking guidance without fear.

Crime against Women and Child Wing IGP Shyni S also joined the event and highlighted the friendly approach by the police towards children involved in online victim cases. She also informed the audience about the cyber helpline number (1930) and the cyber control portal, encouraging children to feel comfortable reaching out to the police for help.

Health and Family Welfare

department's additional director of mental health Rekha Bhagat spoke about the parental control and different ways to regulate children's digital behaviour. She emphasised the need for parents to monitor online activity, set time limits, and identify suspicious behaviour. School and Mass Education department's additional secretary Subhashree Nanda stressed that training should be imparted at family and school levels to control digital behaviour of children.

OSCPCR chairman Mandakini Kar delivered the welcome address and gave a detailed presentation on various steps taken by the state government for the protection of children.

At the event, G Roja Reddy, a student of class XI and Sri-khetra Behera, representing ChildFund India shared their experiences with online usage.

COMMERCIAL COAL MINE AUCTION

JSW Energy Utkal Ltd bags block in Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: JSW Energy Utkal Ltd, NLC India Ltd and ACC Ltd are among the five companies that have bagged five mines on the first day of the tenth round of commercial coal mine auction, according to an official statement issued Thursday. While ACC Ltd bagged a coal mine in Madhya Pradesh NLC India Ltd and JSW Energy Utkal Ltd won one block each in Odisha.

Two other companies that won coal blocks are Mineware Advisors Pvt Ltd and Shreeji Nuravi Coal Mining and Trading Pvt Ltd.

A total of nine blocks have been put on sale in the tenth round of auction.

"On the first day, five coal mines were put up for auction," the statement issued by the coal ministry said.

One of the five coal mines is fully explored while four are partially explored.

The total geological reserves for these five coal mines are 2,630.77 million tonnes. Cumulative Peak Rated Capacity for these blocks is 12 MTPA.

The government launched the auction of coal mines for commercial mining under the tenth round on June 21.

"After evaluation of bids, forward e-auctions for nine mines commenced from November 21," it said.

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CLOSE FIGHT: Players of NBC College, Kendupadar and People's College, Buguda sweat it out during the inaugural match of the zonal level inter-higher secondary schools women's Kabaddi tournament organised by People's College Sports Association in Ganjam district, Thursday

# Farmlands shrinking in Gajapati district

### Brokers selling agricultural land as residential plots owing to increased demand for houses



POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, Nov 21: In what can be termed as an 'alarming development', agriculture land is being levelled and is being sold as residential plots in many parts of Gajapati district. Allegations have surfaced that farmlands are being purchased by brokers and are being converted into residential plots through manipulation at the tehsil level. This trend has also extended to endowment (temple) land plots, with brokers reportedly eyeing these properties. In rural areas, many persons have migrated to other states in search of work as they feel that farming is not a lucrative proposition anymore. Their farmlands are lying unused. Brokers are grabbing these plots at throwaway prices and then selling those at high rates to people wanting to build res-

idences. Due to urban expansion, the demand for such plots has increased manifold. Sources said that in Kulunda village under Gumma block, brokers have allegedly set their sights on farmlands belonging to the Radha Gobinda Bije temple. Under existing regulations, selling endowment land requires approval from the Endowment department. However, sources stated that brokers are bypassing the rules and selling agriculture land without the requisite approvals. Locals said that this practice is prevalent in the district headquarters as well as in the

blocks of Gosani, Kashinagar and Gumma, where fertile lands are being flattened and sold as residential plots. Activists and locals have called for stringent action from registration officials and tehsildars to prevent such malpractices. They have also said that agriculture land must be protected at any cost. When contacted, tehsildar Narayan Behera, stated, "Since I took charge, no such complaints have been reported. However, if such issues arise, strict action will be taken. I will personally ensure close monitoring of these matters."

# Maoist killed, jawan injured in encounter

PNN & AGENCIES

Malkangiri, Nov 21: A Maoist was killed in an exchange of fire with the security forces near MV-79 in Jindalguda area of Malkangiri district, police said Thursday. A member of the Special Operations Group (SOG) of Odisha Police sustained serious injuries during the gunfight with ultras near the Odisha-Chhattisgarh border. Two Red rebels were also arrested during the operation while the deceased Maoist was yet to be identified, they said. "We had received reliable inputs that some ultras from Chhattisgarh might enter Odisha's Malkangiri district. We have been guarding the area for the past several days. On Wednesday night, the exchange of fire took place. A Maoist was neutralised in the exchange of fire while one of our commandos sustained gunshot injuries," said YB Khurania, DGP, Odisha Police said Thursday. Khurania added that the injured commando, identified as Damaru Badanaik, had been



safely evacuated to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) in Malkangiri. Sources claimed that the health condition of the commando was stable. The DGP also informed that the exchange of fire continued for two hours and a combing operation against the Maoists in the area was continuing. He stated that Odisha Police was in touch with its counterparts in neighbouring states and other sister agencies over the activities of Maoists.

## Red camp busted; cache unearthed

Nuapada: Security forces Thursday busted a Maoist camp in this district bordering Chhattisgarh and seized a huge cache of supplies including a firearm. Acting on intelligence inputs about the presence of Maoists in the border areas of Nuapada and Nabarangpur districts, joint forces from the Nuapada Police, five Special Operations Group (SOG) teams, and the Gariabandh Police of neighbouring Chhattisgarh intensified combing operations in the region. During the operations, the joint team dismantled a Maoist camp along the border. On being discovered, the Maoists abandoned the site and fled. A large cache of materials, including a country-made gun, ration supplies, and other essentials, was seized from the camp. The search operation was underway, with personnel from Nuapada, Nabarangpur, and Chhattisgarh, along with SOG troops, actively involved. Additional forces have been deployed to strengthen the border operations, said Nuapada Superintendent of Police Gundala Reddy Raghavendra. Security forces remain on high alert in the area as efforts to eliminate Maoist presence continue.



Odisha Police will continue its operations against Maoists to put an end to their activities in the state, the DGP asserted. Khurania again urged the Maoists to shun violence and join the mainstream in the larger interest of the state and country. As per reports, Chhattisgarh has escalated its military operations against Maoist insurgents since November 2023. Many ex-

tremists have been neutralised in these anti-Maoist operations in Chhattisgarh. So, the police in bordering areas have been put on high alert expecting a massive influx of Maoists from neighbouring Chhattisgarh to Odisha. Notably, Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently announced that the country will be free of Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) by March 2026.

# 6 LIVES LOST IN A YEAR Yet another undertrial dies in Bonai Sub-Jail

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bonai, Nov 21: Yet another undertrial prisoner died at the Bonai sub-jail in Sundargarh district Thursday. Prison officials said that the deceased, identified as 64-year-old Johan Minj from Mahisichappal village under K Bolang police limits, was reportedly suffering from age-related illnesses and this might be the reason of his death. Bonai police registered an unnatural death case (36/24) and launched an investigation into the matter. The post-mortem, to be conducted in the presence of a magistrate, is scheduled for Friday.



Jail authorities stated that the post-mortem process will include necessary videography before handing over the body to the family members. Sudhansu Sekhar Behera, the jail superintendent, confirmed the incident and stated that preliminary findings suggest the death could be due to age-related health complications. Johan had been in judicial custody since January 1, 2021.

He suddenly fell ill Thursday morning and was rushed to Bonai Sub-Divisional Hospital, where doctors declared him dead on arrival. This incident follows the death of another undertrial prisoner under mysterious circumstances November 11, raising concerns about inmate welfare in the prison. As per sources, six undertrial prisoners have died here in a year, sparking questions about the living conditions in custody. Calls for intervention by higher authorities have grown louder as these deaths highlight the urgent need for improved oversight and care within the correctional system.

## 10 arrested for attack on Dharmasala MLA

Jaipur: Police arrested 10 people in connection with the attack on BJP-backed independent MLA Himanshu Sekhar Sahoo in Jaipur district Thursday. The attack took place Wednesday evening near a bridge on the Budha river within Jaipur Town police limits. In his police complaint, the Dharmasala MLA alleged that the attackers were supporters of BJD leader Pranab Prakash Das (aka Bobby) and they had been sent to kill him. Condemning the attack, the BJD leader demanded that all accused must be arrested. "I have asked the district police to arrest the culprits," he told reporters. He also said the BJD does not support violence and advised his brother, whom Sahoo had named in his complaint, to go to the police station and clear his name if he was not guilty. The police acted swiftly, carrying out searches at various locations of the district and arresting 10 persons allegedly involved in the attack. The arrested persons were forwarded to a local court Thursday and later remanded to judicial custody for 14 days after their bail pleas were rejected, police said.

## 9 fishermen held for flouting fishing ban in Gahirmatha

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, Nov 21: Forest personnel arrested nine fishermen and seized a trawler on the charges of catching fish inside the 'No Fishing Zone' of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary in the early hours of Thursday. Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary Ranger Pradosh Moharana said the Forest personnel also intercepted a trawler and seized three VHF sets, two GPS sets, one fish finder, 11 trawling nets, and seven mobile phones from the seized trawler. Moharana said the fishermen had entered the prohibited zone of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary near Madeli mouth, just 15km from the coast. All the nine arrested fishermen were booked under Sections 27, 29, 31 of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, punishable under Section 51 of the said Act. They were later produced before the JMFC Court of Rajnagar which remanded them to jail custody after rejecting their bail pleas. This is the second seizure in the ongoing turtle nesting season, which began from November 1. Forest personnel of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary had November 10 intercepted a fishing vessel and arrested seven fishermen for illegally catching fish at the 'No Fishing Zone' of Gahirmatha.

# Arribada to begin under tight security at Rushikulya mouth



POST NEWS NETWORK

Ganjam, Nov 21: Arribada, the annual mass nesting event of rare Olive Ridley sea turtles, at Rushikulya river mouth near Ganjam is predicted to begin in the last week of November, experts said Wednesday. These migratory turtles swim thousands of kilometres from regions like Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, and Japan to Odisha's shores to lay eggs. Environmentalists and the Forest department anticipate the mass egg-laying season to commence in December and continue until the first week of January. In previous years, rising sea levels and coastal erosion posed significant threats to the turtles' nesting grounds. This year, the Forest department has prepared new nesting beaches by leveling and restoring the coastline to provide a suitable habitat for the turtles. Senior environmentalist Ravindra Sahu highlighted that the coastline has been receding

since 2007, shrinking the beach area significantly. The district administration has relocated 142 fishermen families from the Podampeta region owing to the advancing sea and also to reduce human impact on the nesting process. Recognising the importance of safeguarding these endangered species, the Forest department has declared the area as 'No Fishing Zone' and constructed barricades along the coastline from Gokharkuda to Prayagi. Tapan Nanda, Divisional Forest Officer emphasised that the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) personnel have been deployed to ensure uninterrupted nesting. Divyashankar Behera, DFO, Rambha confirmed that regular patrolling is underway to secure the area. Rushikulya beach, known for hosting one of the largest Olive Ridley nesting sites globally, is under stringent protection measures to ensure the turtles' safety during this critical breeding season.

The Forest dept has prepared new nesting beaches by leveling and restoring the coastline to provide a suitable habitat for the turtles. The district admin has relocated 142 fishermen families from the Podampeta region owing to the advancing sea and also to reduce human impact on the nesting process.

## NOTICE FOR LOSS OF DOCUMENTS

Notice is hereby given from Vikash Chandra Sahu, S/o- Late Madhusudan Sahu that, his late Father has purchased a landed property under Mouza-Bhubaneswar Sahar Unit No. 32, Gobinda Prasad under Khata No. 1057/95, Plot No. 70, Area Ac. 0.040 decs. in vide RSD No. 5560 dtd. 29/09/2000 & under Khata No. 1057/679, Plot No. 70/2280, Area Ac. 0.019 decs. in vide RSD No. 5559 dtd. 29/09/2000 from his vendor M/s. Manorama Properties Pvt. Ltd. represented through its Director Radhakant Kar S/o- Brundaban Kar. But after death of said Madhusudan Sahu, said two RSDs. Are in the custody of his son Vikash Chandra Sahu which are misplaced/lost somewhere. Therefore, notice is hereby given to general public that if anybody has got any right, title interest over the property on the missing documents or if any person found the said documents, contact with the below contacts within 15 days from the date of publication. And after that the documents will lose its legal force in all respect. Address for Communication Vikash Chandra Sahu S/o- Late Madhusudan Sahu, At- 204 Duplex, Manorama Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar, Dist- Khordha, Odisha, PIN- 751010, Mobile No. 8908233340.

**ZONAL OFFICE: BHUBANESWAR ZONE**  
Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015, Tel: 0674-2362251/2362246, Email: zo.bhubaneswar@bankofindia.co.in  
**REQUIREMENT OF PREMISES**  
Bank of India requires suitable premises preferably on ground floor with appropriate frontage and sufficient parking space on lease basis for **Daspalla Branch (Nayagarh District)**. The premises should be in an approved building conforming to the conditions by the Govt. Authorities for commercial use. Detailed notification inviting offers for new premises is available in our website [www.bankofindia.co.in](http://www.bankofindia.co.in). Prescribed format for submission of offer may be obtained up to **3.00 PM of 28.11.2024** from our office at above address. Alternatively, the format can be downloaded from our website. Last date for submission of offer is up to **5.00 PM on 28.11.2024** at Zonal Office, Bhubaneswar. **Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone**

## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified for the information that the undersigned is the actual recorded tenant cum possessor of a property situated at Mouza: Sampur under PS.: Khandagiri and Tahasil: Bhubaneswar having Khata No.: 224/882, Plot No.: 541/3006, KISSAM: Puratan Patita, Area: Ac. 0.200 Dec. and for the development of her above said property. She executed and registered an agreement for sale/construction of independent residential units and flat(s) in favour of the **Chaubar Construction Pvt. Ltd.**, represented through its **Director: Sri Subash Samantary**, Office At: Plot No.: 204, Shastri Nagar, Pratima Tower, Bhubaneswar - 751001 on 06/11/2011, Vide No.: 11131114018 before Sub-Registrar: Khandagiri Concerned. But till yet no action has been taken by the construction company as per the terms and conditions of this agreement. Even if several attempt along with Legal Notice to the concerned company all are in vain. So, this is hereby informed that if the construction company or any person have any objection regarding the above said schedule property then contact to the undersigned in her below mentioned address and Contact No. within 7 days from the publication of the notice. Otherwise the undersigned will be compel to cancel the said agreement in proper Court of Law and also she will have no responsible in future and no complain will be acceptable after that in any Court of Law. **Sd/- Basanti Panigrahi**  
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Where as the Bank acting through its Authorised Officer in exercise of its powers under-Section 13(4) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (SARFAESI) has decided to put up for E-auction of the following properties "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for realization of the debts due to the Bank.

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrowers / Guarantor / Total Dues	Description of the Properties	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	<b>JAGATSinghpur BRANCH, PH.: 9938772882 /</b> Borrower: <b>M/s. Rajnandini Fashions, Prop.: Mr. Keshab Kumar Das, S/o.: Mr. Bishnu Charan Das / Guarantor: Mrs. Manorama Das, W/o.: Mr. Keshab Kumar Das, Both are At/ PO.: Jankoti, P.S.: Jagatsinghpur, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, PIN-754103 / Total Dues: ₹10,75,300.43 + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.</b>	Vacant Land situated over Mouza: Jankoti, SRO/ Tahasil: Jagatsinghpur, Tahasil No.: 217, P.S.: Jagatsinghpur, P.S. No.: 217, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha-754103, Khata No.: 805/146, Plot No.: 937, Area: Ac.0.120 Dec. i.e. 5227.2 Sqft, KISSAM: Gharabari, Standing in the name of <b>Mr. Keshab Kumar Das, S/o.: Mr. Bishnu Charan Das, Bounded by East: Plot No.: 930, West: Plot No.: 935, North: Plot No.: 936, South: Plot No.: 938 (Rev. Road &amp; earthen Road connect to main Road)</b>	₹23,11,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹2,31,100/- / ₹ 50,000/-
2.	<b>JAGATSinghpur BRANCH, PH.: 9938772882 /</b> Borrower: <b>Mr. Manas Ranjan Khuntia, S/o.: Mr. Dhaneswar Khuntia, At/PO.: Jaipur, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, PIN-754133 / Total Dues: ₹19,80,574.54 + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.</b>	Residential Land and Building situated over Khata No.: 639/56, Plot No.: 744, Area: Ac.0.110 Dec, KISSAM: Gharabari, under Mouza: Jaipur, P.S.: Raghunathpur, SRO/Tahasil: Raghunathpur, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha-754133, Standing in the name of <b>Mr. Manas Ranjan Khuntia, S/o.: Mr. Dhaneswar Khuntia, Bounded by East: Part of Plot No.: 742, West: Rev. Plot No.: 752, North: Chirakala Nayanjori &amp; Cuttack Paradeep N.H., South: Rev. Plot No.: 745</b>	₹25,80,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹2,58,000/- / ₹ 50,000/-
3.	<b>RAGHUNATHPUR BRANCH, PH.: 8984003737 /</b> Borrowers: <b>1) Mrs. Kusum Joshi, W/o.: Mr. Krushna Kumar Joshi, 2) Mr. Krushna Kumar Joshi, S/o.: Mr. Jamunadhar Joshi, Both are At: Manik Ghose Bazar, Bhandari Sahi, Telenga Bazar, Cuttack, Odisha-753009 / Total Dues: ₹20,01,988.37 + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.</b>	Vacant Land situated over Khata No.: 313/512, (i) Plot No.: 943/1637, Area: Ac.0.016 Dec. and (ii) Plot No.: 942/1636, Area: Ac.0.024 Dec., <b>Total Plot Area: Ac.0.040 Dec. i.e. 1742.40 Sqft.</b> , KISSAM: Gharabari, Mouza: Cuttack Sahar Unit No.: 3 Bidanasi, P.S.: Bidanasi No.: 3, Tahasil: Cuttack No.: 204, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha, Standing in the name of <b>Mrs. Puspalata Barik, W/o.: Mr. Purnachandra Barik, Mr. Ajay Kumar Barik, S/o.: Mr. Purnachandra Barik, Mr. Bijay Kumar Barik, S/o.: Mr. Purnachandra Barik &amp; Mrs. Latika Barik, D/o.: Mr. Purnachandra Barik, Bounded by East: Basanti Nilaya, West: S K Sahoo, North: Road, South: Govt. Land (Vacant)</b>	₹38,12,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹3,81,200/- / ₹ 50,000/-

**Date & Time of E-Auction: 26.12.2024 From 11.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M.** with unlimited extension of 10 (Ten) minutes each.  
**Last Date & Time for submission of EMD & Documents: 26.12.2024 upto 4.00 P.M.**  
**Inspection will be provided to the prospective bidders on any working day before 24.12.2024 with prior appointment of the authorised officer**  
The sale shall be subject to the terms and conditions and provisions prescribed in the SARFAESI Act 2002 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.  
This is also a 30 days sale notice to the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) of the aforesaid loan account for settlement of their outstanding dues with the Bank and to participate in the public auction on the above mentioned date.  
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in <https://ebkay.in/eauction-psb/home>  
Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 22.11.2024 **Authorised Officer, Bank of India**

FOCUS ECONOMY

# TAX EQUITY MUST



**The current regressive impact of indirect taxes calls for immediate learning from global best practices. India should design policies that prioritise tax equity and reduce the disproportionate tax burden on low- and middle-income households**

rect taxes 34.2% in 2022-23. The increasing share of indirect taxes implies a heavier burden on lower-income individuals.

The GST has heightened the existing regressive nature of indirect taxes, disproportionately affecting low- and middle-income population. In its January 2023 report Survival of the Richest: The India Story, Oxfam India claimed that the poorest 50% pay 64.3% of total GST, while middle 40% pay 31.8% of total GST and top 10% pay 3.9% of total GST.

India is a tax haven for the rich as they do not have to pay wealth and inheritance taxes. This government has shown unusual favour to the rich by abolishing wealth tax in 2015-16; reducing maximum surcharge from 37% to 25% having taxable income above ₹10 crore; lowering GST on luxury goods in 2022-23, and reducing corporate taxes in 2019-20 by big margin. By contrast, middle-class citizens, who are savers, have been made to pay tax on insurance premiums, paltry interest received from savings bank accounts. Unlike the past, personal income taxes are making a larger share of government revenue than corporate taxes since 2022-23 due to past corporate tax cuts.

The middle class is barely growing, rather shrinking especially due to high indirect taxes, inflation, rising inequality, low real wages, costly realty, increasing household debt, escalating lifestyle expenses, and rise of health and educational expenditures. The current regressive impact of indirect taxes calls for immediate learning from global best practices. India should design policies that prioritise tax equity and reduce the disproportionate tax burden on low- and middle-income households.

*The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.*

limit of ₹2 lakh in 2013-14 was worth 68.52 gm of gold then. However, at ₹3 lakh basic exemption limit, it is worth a tiny 39.88 gm now. In terms of gold value, the basic exemption should have been hiked to ₹5.15 lakh instead of ₹3 lakh. If we apply Cost Inflation Index (CII), ₹2 lakh in 2013-14 will be equivalent to ₹3.16 lakh in 2023-24. The CII is used to estimate the increase in the prices of goods and assets year-by-year due to inflation. With 2001-02 as base year having value of 100, the index value of 2013-14 is 220 and for 2023-24, it is 348.

Moreover, the new tax regime 2023-24 provides only standard deduction of ₹50,000 but does not provide most common old regime deductions and exemptions like Section 80C, Section 80D, Section 24 and many more. The tax rebate under Section 80C should have been revised to ₹2.37 lakh in 2023-24 from ₹1.5 lakh in 2013-14 by considering inflation. By this middle class pay more taxes and savings is discouraged.

It is also said that an individual opting for the new tax regime and having taxable income of up to ₹7.5 lakh will not be required to pay any taxes at

the time of filing ITR. But this rebate is not applicable to those having taxable income above ₹7.5 lakh. This ₹7.5 lakh of 2023-24 is equivalent to ₹4.74 lakh in 2013-14 if inflation is taken into consideration.

The tax burden falls upon poor and middle class through indirect taxes. Indirect taxes which include Union excise duties and the GST are levied on goods and services, and the final cost is paid by the consumer. The tax is considered regressive as it is the same for everyone, regardless of their income. People with lower incomes spend a larger proportion of their income on goods and services, so the effective tax rate is higher for them.

Advanced economies collect more direct tax and less indirect tax for these reasons. The share of indirect taxes - both Centre and state combined - in total taxes, which was dwindling steadily since 1980s has increased from 2010-11 onwards. On the other hand, the share of direct taxes, which had been swelling till 2010-11, has steadily recorded a downturn in recent years.

While indirect taxes comprise around 65.8% of total taxes, di-

In a bid to project the government as pro-poor and obliterate the image of pro-rich and pro-corporate, the I-T department produced statistics and claimed that the income tax liability on individuals earning below ₹20 lakh a year, categorised as middle class, has reduced in the first ten years of the NDA government, while the burden on those earning above ₹50 lakh - considered rich - has increased considerably. In reality, the Indian middle class is increasingly burdened by our regressive tax system that favours the rich and corporate tycoons.

The government claims that the number of I-T returns filers above ₹50 lakh has increased five-fold from 1.85 lakh in 2013-14 to 9.39 lakh in 2023-24 while their tax liability has boomed by 3.2 times from ₹2.52 lakh crore to ₹9.62 lakh crore in same period. For those in the income bracket of ₹10-15 lakh, the average tax liability has reduced to ₹1.1 lakh in 2023-24, from ₹2.3 lakh in 2013-14. For individuals earning between ₹15-20 lakh, the average tax liability has shrunk to ₹1.7 lakh from ₹4.1 lakh in same period.

Actually, more people are entering the high income category not because of rise in real income but simply due to rise in nominal income spawned by inflation. Hence, a comparison of tax burden at two different points should adjust the income levels for nominal growth in income. If inflation is taken into consideration or income is linked to gold, middle classes will be found paying more taxes. Since, budget of 2013-14, the average price of per 10 gram gold was ₹29,190, while same was around ₹75,220 in 2023-24. But tax exemption limit has increased to ₹3 lakh in 2023-24 as against ₹2 lakh in 2013-14.

Basic income tax exemption



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

**INDIA IS A TAX HAVEN FOR THE RICH AS THEY DO NOT HAVE TO PAY WEALTH AND INHERITANCE TAXES**



In sincerity is the certitude of victory. Sincerity! Sincerity! How sweet is the purity of thy presence?

THE MOTHER

## Trump's Bad COP

Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election has cast a dark shadow over the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) in Baku. Having made no secret of his belief that climate change is a "hoax," Trump's return to power threatens to undo much of the progress made in combating the climate crisis, leaving global leaders and policymakers with ample reason to feel disheartened.

Trump is expected to ramp up domestic fossil-fuel production. During a meeting at Mar-a-Lago in May, he openly asked for \$1 billion in campaign contributions from oil and gas executives in exchange for promising to roll back regulations threatening their profits. His pick to lead the Environmental Protection Agency, former Congressman Lee Zeldin, has already vowed to "deregulate" the EPA.

During his first term, Trump withdrew the United States from the 2015 Paris climate agreement - a decision later reversed by his successor, Joe Biden. He is widely expected to withdraw from it again. Notably, Argentine President Javier Milei, Trump's political ally, recalled his country's delegation from COP29 - a move that may signal Argentina's imminent departure from the accord.

The mood at COP29 was further dampened by the conspicuous absence of global leaders like Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, and Chinese President Xi Jinping, all of whom skipped this year's summit. As the escalating climate crisis disproportionately affects the world's poorest populations, and the ongoing wars in the Middle East and Ukraine continue to generate massive greenhouse-gas emissions, prospects for meaningful climate action appear increasingly remote.

But the fight against climate change is not necessarily doomed. The ability to avert catastrophe will depend on the global response to Trump's obstructionism and whether other countries can come together to confront the crisis, even without US leadership.

It is also worth noting that the US has long been a reluctant participant in global climate initiatives, regardless of who occupies the White House. This reluctance is hardly surprising, given its position as the world's largest producer and net exporter of fossil fuels.

Even under Biden, America's green policies have been primarily additive, focusing on expanding renewable-energy production rather than replacing or reducing fossil-fuel extraction. As Indian journalist Nitin Sethi has noted, the US approach to climate negotiations has been to "retain, reinforce, and gain new competitive economic advantage," wielding "climate language as a tool" to advance its national interests.

This helps explain many of America's policy positions. Over the years, the US has blocked discussions on climate reparations and shifted the burden of mitigation and financing onto emerging economies like China and India while subjecting them to intense scrutiny. It has ensured that financing and mitigation measures remain voluntary rather than enforceable. At the same time, it has sought to benefit American companies by prioritising enforcement of intellectual-property (IP) rights over the broader dissemination of green technologies. And it has favoured vague, non-binding language in international agreements on national mitigation goals, adaptation support, and compensation for loss and damage.

Given this reality, many negotiators believe that America's involvement in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is driven less by a commitment to multilateral cooperation and more by the pursuit of narrowly defined, self-serving goals. Moreover, the US frequently bypasses the UN system, favouring bilateral deals that align more closely with its economic and geopolitical interests.

Paradoxically, Trump's anticipated withdrawal from the Paris agreement could pave the way for more effective climate negotiations - a dynamic that also could prompt the Trump administration not to withdraw so that the US act as a spoiler.

Irrespective of Trump's policies, it is now clear that the COP process is no longer fit for purpose. Earlier this month, I joined other academics and climate advocates in sending an open letter to UNFCCC Executive Secretary Simon Stiell and UN Secretary-General António Guterres, arguing that the current framework "simply cannot deliver the change" we need "to ensure a safe climate landing for humanity." Instead of hosting grand annual summits that often serve as platforms for fossil-fuel lobbyists to broker side deals, we called for "smaller, more frequent, solution-driven meetings."

Trust between high-income and lower-income economies is crucial for any collaborative climate effort. To promote transparency and accountability, governments must prioritise feasible near-term goals over distant, effectively meaningless targets, and rich countries must make genuine, well-defined, and transparent climate-financing commitments.

Importantly, climate finance must not take the form of loans, which often trap developing countries in perpetual cycles of debt and distress, exacerbating their external vulnerabilities. Equally pressing is the need to share the knowledge and technologies critical for both mitigation and adaptation. To be sure, achieving this would require a re-evaluation - or even an outright waiver - of existing IP rules, so that these vital resources are treated as global public goods and are accessible to all.

Even if a second Trump presidency disrupts multilateral arrangements, there is still significant potential for large international coalitions to tackle climate change. The clean-energy transition, led by China and other countries, is not just inevitable - it is already underway. As this shift becomes harder to ignore, even a US administration fixated on getting the best "deals" may realise it cannot afford to be left behind.

*The writer, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, is a member of the Club of Rome's Transformational Economics Commission and Co-Chair of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.*

@PROJECT SYNDICATE

### WISDOM CORNER

**When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight**

KAHLIL GIBRAN

**Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy**

THICH NHAT HANH

**To have faith is to trust yourself to the water. When you swim you don't grab hold of the water, because if you do you will sink and drown. Instead you relax, and float**

ALAN WATTS

### SPECTRUM SOCIETY

## The child and the State

Children are torchbearers of the future, set to shape and lead the worlds of work, business, economy, environment, and politics, impacting lives profoundly. According to a World Economic Forum report, 65% of primary school children today will eventually work in jobs that do not yet exist. AI and technological advances merely offer a glimpse of this future. We are now in an era of "listening to and investing in the future," where the State holds a crucial role in nurturing and developing its children, or "human capital," to meet tomorrow's demands.

The State's responsibility toward young children is especially significant since children lack the agency to make life-altering choices. For example, they rely on caregivers - parents, grandparents, and family - to make crucial health, educational, and welfare decisions. In a developing country, access to education, healthcare, and basic opportunities varies widely, affected by socio-economic realities such as caste, religion, and region. The State must act as an equalizer, protecting all children's rights regardless of socio-economic status. In a just

and equitable state, every child deserves equal opportunity and protection.

Recognising these principles, the United Nations formulated the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, now the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. This agreement presents children as individuals with inherent rights, not simply as dependents of parents. The treaty defines a child as anyone under 18 and lists around 40 rights governments are responsible for ensuring. These rights are universal, applying irrespective of a child's background, appearance, or circumstances. The treaty emphasises the interconnectedness and equal importance of these rights, which cannot be denied to any child.

Among these rights are those supporting children's growth and development, such as the right to a safe home, quality healthcare, and proper nutrition. Rights protecting children from harm guarantee safety from violence, abuse, and exploitation. Additional rights protect children from harmful labour and substances. Children are also entitled to education and services that help develop their skills and abilities. They have the right to

participate in society, express themselves, and engage in the fulfillment of their rights.

Schools play an essential role in realising these rights. Beyond family, schools offer a structured environment where children exercise their right to education and are entitled to a safe learning space, adequate nutrition through school meals, and facilities that support their development. India, through its Right to Education Act of 2009, has taken significant steps to guarantee every child's right to free and compulsory education. This act mandates that central and state governments ensure access to quality education. India's government directly manages nearly one million schools and sets policies for approximately half a million private schools. Through a range of centrally sponsored programmes, including the Integrated Child Development Scheme, Mid-Day-Meal (PM Poshan), Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, and mass immunisation and school health programmes, over 260 million children receive essential nutrition, quality education, basic healthcare, and social protection within school settings. Yet, as schooling access grows,

so must the focus on learning outcomes. Studies, particularly in low- and middle-income countries like India, reveal that while many children attend school, they are not acquiring fundamental cognitive and life skills necessary for navigating the world independently and making informed decisions. Recognising this, India's National Education Policy 2020 emphasises foundational learning as the cornerstone of its educational vision. Foundational skills, especially in language, communication, and basic math, are crucial to a child's future academic success, employability, and overall potential.

A new call is emerging for the right to learn as a fundamental right. Such a right would ensure that all children, regardless of background, gain access to foundational skills and cognitive development, allowing them to fulfil their potential in education, work, and personal life. Commitment to this right underscores the essential role of education in shaping the capabilities of future generations, ensuring that every child realises their inherent right to learn and thrive.

*The writer is a Director at Central Square Foundation.*



Parthajeet Das

**ACCORDING TO A WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM REPORT, 65% OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN TODAY WILL EVENTUALLY WORK IN JOBS THAT DO NOT YET EXIST**

### Bibliophile's paradise

Sir, Any piece of information about the prestigious Higginbothams bookstore, located in the heart of Chennai, and which has entered its 180th year, instantly evokes nostalgia. In the hustle and bustle of Chennai with the honking traffic, Higginbothams is the door and store to India's rich literary heritage. Stepping into Higginbothams is akin to entering a bibliophile's paradise. With its classic charm and extensive collection spanning diverse genres, Higginbotham's beckons book enthusiasts to immerse themselves in a world of timeless literature. The legacy of Higginbothams extends far beyond its physical confines. It has witnessed the ebb and flow of history. Generations of luminaries, from Mahatma Gandhi to Rabindranath Tagore, from Jawaharlal Nehru to RK Narayan, have graced its portals, with their words echoing through the corridors of time. Each time a book lover visits this magnificent bookstore, he/she is sure to meet with the nostalgic waft of old and new books..

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

### Alacritous apology

Sir, This letter relates to the apology tendered by 10 Downing to British Hindus for serving meat and booze at a Diwali party hosted by the UK PM at his official residence. The apology acknowledges that the sentiments of Hindus were hurt and further goes on to assure the aggrieved party that this mistake will not be repeated. I was impressed by the direct and unconditional nature of the apology - sincere and heartfelt, and delivered within a reasonable period of about two weeks. The Indian political class needs to take a lesson from this apology. An apology that was not made in the middle of an election. As things stand, our leaders have a lot to apologise for. They need to apologise to their fellow leaders for the abusive language used and the wild charges hurled at one another - calling those in the Opposition "terrorists" and "anti-nationals" is the new normal. They also need to apologise for lives lost in the event of accidents that could have been averted.

Avinash Godbole, DEWAS

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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

SMOG BLANKET

Delhi most polluted city

Air quality crisis persists in north India



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: Delhi emerged as the most polluted city in India, recording an average PM2.5 level of 243.3 micrograms per cubic metre air (µg/m³), with pollution surging by 19.5 per cent in week-on-week increase, according to a report released Thursday.

Crisis fuels demand for CNG, BS-6 vehicles during wedding season

The enforcement of Stage IV of GRAP, which bans BS-3 and BS-4 diesel vehicles, has disrupted travel and transportation, particularly for those engaged in the wedding business. The Central Pollution Control Board imposed GRAP-IV measures after Delhi's air quality index (AQI) entered the 'severe' category Sunday. The restrictions, which came into effect at 8 AM Monday, aim to curb pollution caused by older diesel vehicles. However, the measure has had unintended consequences. Travel agencies report a sharp rise in demand for BS-6 and CNG vehicles, including cars like Eriga, Innova, and traveller buses, as they scramble to meet commitments made before the ban. "The wedding season has added to the pressure. Many vehicles were pre-booked months in advance, and with this sudden ban, we had to scramble to adjust," said Sewak Tuar, a travel agency owner. "We are struggling to arrange new vehicles, the petrol, CNG, and BS-6 compliant ones, as weddings and transportation needs are being heavily affected," he added.

Combined with cooler winter temperatures, these conditions are trapping pollutants closer to the ground, the report said. It claimed that Delhi's pollution was part of a larger trend affecting the Indo-Gangetic Plain and several other northern states, including Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Punjab, which also recorded hazardous air quality levels. Ronak Sutaria, Founder and CEO of Respirer Living Sciences, spoke to PTI about the analysis. He said the spike in pollu-

tion levels every year around November marks a significant departure from the usual pattern, which typically sees such levels between mid-December and February. "This shift not only highlights an unusual trend but also raises serious concerns about what we might face in the coming months," he said. Another observation made was the stark difference in PM2.5 concentrations across the region. PM2.5 levels in New Delhi's municipal limits were up to 100

The seasonal onset of winter, coupled with temperature inversions and reduced wind speeds, has exacerbated pollution

µg/m³ higher than in surrounding areas such as Gurugram, Ghaziabad, and Faridabad, suggesting the presence of localised pollution sources that must need immediate attention. Sutaria also raised the possibility that these discrepancies could be due to inaccuracies in monitoring systems, which may require further investigation. While northern cities are grappling with severe pollution, the analysis also highlighted regions in southern and northeastern India that enjoy significantly better air quality.

**LITTLE IMPROVEMENT** On the air quality front, Delhi's 24-hour average AQI was recorded at 371, improving slightly from the previous day's severe category reading of 419. On Sunday, Delhi's air quality was in the severe category, prompting authorities to impose the GRAP-IV measures. However, the situation worsened Monday and Tuesday, with the AQI exceeding 450, reaching the severe-plus category. For context, AQI readings are categorised as follows: an AQI between 0 and 50 is considered "good," 51 and 100 "satisfactory," 101 and 200 "moderate," 201 and 300 "poor," 301 and 400 "very poor," and 401 and 500 "severe."

'No fuel for minors' in Jammu

Jammu petrol pumps declare 'no fuel for vehicles driven by minors', DSE issues circular

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Nov 21: In a bid to ensure the safety of underage children, petrol pumps in Jammu have put up posters declaring "no fuel for vehicles driven by minors".

The Jammu and Kashmir Directorate of School Education (DSE) has also issued a circular prohibiting minor students from driving motor vehicles, including two-wheelers and four-wheelers, to school.

The poster, first displayed at petrol pumps in the Gandhi Nagar area on the Jammu-Pathankot highway reads, "No fuel for minors". "The poster, which specifically focuses on minors riding two-wheelers without helmets or four-wheelers, is aimed at ensuring the safety of children," said an employee of the petrol pump.

This step has drawn praise from residents and encouraged the authorities to take proactive measures.

"It has come to notice that some underage students are driving vehicles while going to schools or coaching centres. Such an act has the potential of causing road accidents, endangering public safety, and is also in violation of the provisions of the Motor Vehicle Act," the DSE said in a circular issued Thursday.

It further said, "In view of the above, it is impressed upon Heads of Institutions of all government and private schools & coaching centres to implement these instructions strictly. They should keep a close vigil to ensure



ACCIDENTS GALORE

On November 14, two young boys died while another was critically injured after a tragic collision between two vehicles near the Tengpora area in Srinagar. This incident sparked a debate on driving by minors and road safety in the valley. Following another accident in Srinagar last week, in which two teenage boys died and two others were injured after their car rammed into a stationary truck, the DSE issued an order prohibiting minor students from driving motor vehicles, including two-wheelers and four-wheelers to school.

Awareness programmes on age restrictions and traffic rules should be organised in collaboration with the traffic police, it said. "Parents and guardians should be educated through PTMs (parents-teachers meetings) about the consequences of underage driving and their responsibilities," it stated. Additionally, schools and coaching centres are required to monitor parking areas and entry points to ensure compliance, it said. "Any instance of a minor driving a vehicle should be immediately reported to the concerned authorities. They should also regularly coordinate with the Traffic Police to enforce strict measures," the circular said.

that no underage student is allowed to attend the institution while driving any motor vehicle, including two-wheelers or four-wheelers." Such students must not be permitted entry and their parents should be informed accordingly, the circular added. The directive further instructed schools and coaching centres to ensure proper sensitisation of students and parents about the dangers and risks involved in underage driving.

Centre to conduct survey of homeless people in Ladakh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Leh/Jammu, Nov 21: Union Power Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Thursday reviewed the functioning of the power and housing departments in Ladakh, and announced to conduct a survey of all the homeless people in the Union Territory to ensure no one remains homeless.

irbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme, and all efforts will be made to ensure that no one is left out. In Leh, the minister received a comprehensive overview of the operations of the power and housing departments, including their achievements.

Expressing satisfaction with their performance, he assured all possible support to overcome the challenges posed by the region's tough terrain. On waste management and worker safety, he emphasised Ladakh's goal of achieving 100 per cent processing of waste materials. "I was presented a detailed project report on this. I also stressed the importance of improving the working conditions of 'Safai Mitras' to eliminate occupational hazards," Khattar said.

Instructing the officials to expedite the preparation of detailed project reports (DPRs) for the water supply and sewage treatment plant (STP) projects in Leh and Kargil, he said, "Timely completion of these DPRs is crucial for the smooth implementation of the projects which will enhance the quality of life in both the regions."

Highlighting Ladakh's immense potential for solar power development due to its vast area, Khattar said work is progressing on a 13 GW solar plant which aims to meet local energy needs besides addressing energy demands in other parts of the country.

Khattar arrived in Leh Thursday morning on a three-day visit to the Union Territory (UT). "A survey of all homeless people will be conducted in the Union Territory so that they can avail the benefits of PM Awas Yojana. The ministry will ensure that no person remains homeless in Ladakh," Khattar, who also holds the housing and urban affairs portfolio, told reporters in Leh. He also said that financial assistance has been provided to all the street vendors under the PM Street Vendor's AtmaN-



NSUI members stage a protest demanding the arrest of industrialist Gautam Adani after he was charged in the US for alleged bribery and fraud, in New Delhi, Thursday

1984 ANTI-SIKH RIOTS Delhi LG distributes job letters to 47 survivors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena Thursday distributed appointment letters to 47 survivors of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. According to a statement, six additional letters will be issued to successors of beneficiaries who have exceeded the age of service.

Speaking at an event in the Tilak Vihar area of west Delhi, Saxena announced that 437 pending applications for appointments are under verification. The locality primarily houses the 1984 riot victims. He also directed the Revenue department to organise special camps to expedite their resolution, the statement said.

Saxena announced that the colony, commonly referred to as "Widows' Colony," would be renamed based on residents' recommendations.

DELHI SCHOOLS GO ONLINE Students in slum areas face challenges

Several parents and students raised concerns saying many children are unable to attend classes regularly due to the dearth of smartphones, stable internet connections or multiple devices in their households

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: With Delhi schools switching over to online teaching due to high pollution levels, students living in the city's slum areas are facing significant accessibility challenges.

Families living in Lalbagh slum near Delhi's Azadpur area are struggling to adapt to limited resources, forcing children to share phones, miss lessons or entirely forego online school.

Soni Kumari, a 39-year-old mother of two who lives in Lalbagh, shared her struggles with managing online classes for her children due to limited access to mobile phones.

"I have only one mobile phone, which makes it difficult for my two daughters to attend their online classes. When their classes overlap, they fight over who gets to use the phone. If schools resumed offline classes, both of them



would be able to study properly," she said, while sweeping in front of her home. Nine-year-old Krish, waiting for his friends to go out to play, said his mother has one phone which she takes to her work. He, therefore, fails to attend his online classes. "I can't attend online classes because my mother takes her phone to work. For me, online school feels like a holiday because I spend the whole day playing with my friends," he said.

I have only one mobile phone, which makes it difficult for my two daughters to attend their online classes. When their classes overlap, they fight over who gets to use the phone. If schools resumed offline classes, both of them would be able to study properly

SONI KUMARI | RESIDENT OF LALBAGH

A walk through the Lalbagh slum revealed groups of children playing outside. While some played cricket, others were seen playing badminton. Similarly, Anu, an 11-year-old, who was playing with her younger sister, said her parents have two phones but one is a basic phone so her elder sister and she attend online

classes on alternative days. "Today, my sister, who is in class 6, is attending her classes. So I'm looking after my younger sister because my mother is at work," she said.

Sunita, a 35-year-old mother, said pollution does not bother them much anymore. "We have been living here for the past eight years, surrounded by a sewer on one side and piles of garbage on the other. But what is worrying us is that my child is not able to attend online classes as we do not have a smartphone," she said.

Sunita said she only has one feature phone.

"If the government keeps schools online for 15 days, that means my child will miss 15 days of lessons," she said, expressing her concern.

A tea-seller in Lalbagh, busy serving his customers, said his child's online classes get disrupted due to poor internet connection in the area.

# national



**The rights of eligible ration card holders will be fully protected**  
SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

## MALAYALAM ACTOR MEGHANADHAN DIES

Renowned Malayalam film and television actor Meghanadhan, known for his iconic villainous roles, passed away in a hospital in the early hours of Thursday, industry sources confirmed. He was 60



### of the day note

Our government is making rapid progress in road infrastructure, and that is showing in Bihar, too. I promise that after the current five-year term, when we will be completing 15 years in power, the network of Bihar will be on par with that of America



NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

I am taking back very sweet memories from Jharkhand. This is a wonderful state. I have full faith that BJP-led NDA will form the government



SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | UNION MINISTER

Earlier, we used to have two governments—the Union government and the state government. But now the situation has changed with the three-tier Panchayati Raj emerging as another elected government



MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

## DELHI REELS UNDER POLLUTION

# Govt declares staggered work timings for employees

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: The Centre of Thursday announced staggered working hours for its employees here to aid the fight against pollution as the city reeled under "very poor" air quality even though the AQI fell below the 400-mark after several days.

The 24-hour average Air Quality Index, recorded daily at 4 pm, stood at 371 Thursday, showing an improvement from 419 Wednesday due to increased wind speeds, according to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

However, Delhi still ranked as the second most polluted city in the country only behind Bihar's Hajipur (AQI 403).

While Delhi's AQI was the worst in the country Monday and Tuesday, with readings exceeding 450 in the "severe plus" category, it recorded the third-worst ranking Wednesday before moving to the second place Thursday. The Centre, meanwhile, announced staggered working hours for its employees. According to an order issued by the Union Personnel Ministry, employees have been advised carpooling and use of public transport to minimise vehicular pollution. "Offices can operate from 9 am to 5.30 pm or from 10 am to 6.30 pm," the order stated.

These measures may



**However, Delhi still ranked as the second most polluted city in the country only behind Bihar's Hajipur (AQI 403)**

be adopted by ministries, departments, and organisations based on their functional requirements, ensuring that there is no adverse impact on efficiency and productivity," the order further added.

Bihar's Hajipur recorded the highest AQI in the country Thursday, with a reading of 403 in the "severe" category, followed by Delhi at 371, according to the CPCB's 24-hour data.

Out of 35 monitoring stations in Delhi, six reported "severe" air quality with AQI readings exceeding 400, while 28 stations fell into the "very poor" category with readings above

300, according to the SAMEER app, which provides hourly updates on the National Air Quality Index.

An AQI between 0 and 50 is considered "good," 51-100 "satisfactory," 101-200 "moderate," 201-300 "poor," 301-400 "very poor," 401-450 "severe," and above 450 "severe plus."

At 5 pm Thursday, CPCB data identified PM2.5 as the primary pollutant, with its levels recorded at 168. PM2.5 particles, measuring 2.5 micrometers or smaller (about the width of a human hair), pose significant health risks as they can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream, according to CPCB. The Centre's Decision Support System (DSS) for Air Quality Management attributed 17.7 per cent of Delhi's pollution Thursday to vehicular emissions. Stubble burning, another significant contributor, accounted for 17.3 per cent of PM2.5 levels Wednesday.

## DELHI POLLS

### AAP releases first list of 11 candidates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: The Aam Aadmi Party Thursday announced its first list of 11 candidates for the Delhi Assembly polls, dropping three sitting MLAs and fielding six leaders who switched over from the BJP and the Congress recently.

Elections in the national capital are due in February to elect 70 members of the Delhi Legislative Assembly. AAP is the first party to release a list of candidates.

Making the announcement at a press conference here, Delhi AAP convener Gopal Rai reasoned that the early declaration of names of candidates was because eight of the 11 constituencies are not held by the party.

Six of these eight constituencies are currently held by the BJP. He also rebutted suggestions that outsiders who recently joined AAP were given tickets at the cost of party leaders.

The names of candidates were announced after a meeting of the AAP's political affairs committee, headed by party national convener Arvind Kejriwal. AAP, which has been ruling Delhi since 2015, won 62 seats in the 2020 assembly polls. Talking to reporters, Rai said the tickets were given strictly based on performance, surveys and public opinion as was promised by Kejriwal.

Sitting AAP MLAs who were denied tickets include Rituraj Jha from Kirari, Gulab Singh Yadav from Matiala and Abdul Rahman from Seelampur. Both Jha and Gulab Singh are two-term MLAs.

## EXCISE POLICY

### Delhi HC refuses to stay ED case against Kejriwal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: The Delhi High Court Thursday refused to stay for now the proceedings against former CM and AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal in a money laundering case linked to purported irregularities in the state Excise Policy 2021-22.

Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri issued notice and sought the response of the Enforcement Directorate on a plea by the former Delhi Chief Minister challenging a trial court's order taking cognisance of a chargesheet in the case.

The matter will be heard December 20. Kejriwal sought setting aside of the trial court order and argued that cognisance of the chargesheet was taken by the special court in the absence of the required sanction for his prosecution as he was a public servant when the alleged offence was committed.

However, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the ED, submitted a sanction was obtained to prosecute Kejriwal and he would be filing an affidavit. Kejriwal's counsel said the relevant document was not supplied to them along with the supplementary chargesheet and claimed there was no sanction at the time of filing of the final report.

The AAP convener's lawyer sought an early hearing after the court posted the hearing in January, 2025 and insisted an order on his plea for a stay on the proceedings be passed during the day owing to urgency. Mehta opposed the



The high court November 12 sought ED's response on another plea filed by Kejriwal who challenged summons issued to him on the agency's complaint in the money laundering case

The high court refused to stay the trial court proceedings at the moment in the criminal case

While Kejriwal was granted interim bail by the Supreme Court July 12 in the money laundering case, the apex court released him on bail in the CBI case September 13

submission and sought to file a reply to the stay application, pointing out such an approach was unfair.

He said this was a kind of "threat" on the part of the petitioner to carry the matter to the Supreme Court. Kejriwal's lawyer responded asking how could they "threaten anybody".

The court, which said an early date was not possible as there was "enough load", posted the matter December 20.

Kejriwal's counsel also urged the high court to exempt the leader from appearing before the trial court, scheduled to hear the money laundering case December 3.

### SHORT TAKES

#### Manipur: Autopsy of six bodies done

**Silchar (Assam):** Even after completion of the post-mortem of all the bodies of the six missing persons from Manipur's Jiribam district, the corpses remain at the morgue of the Silchar Medical College and Hospital (SMCH) in Assam as family members are unwilling to take them back for last rites, sources said Thursday. The final body was discovered floating in Barak river in Assam's Cachar district Monday, following which its autopsy was conducted at SMCH.

#### Lokayukta raids on four govt officials

**Bangalore, (Karnataka):** The Karnataka Lokayukta Thursday conducted simultaneous raids on the properties of four government officials in the state, official sources said. The raids are underway in Bengaluru, Mandya, and Chikkaballapura, they said. Searches are on at many locations linked to four officials, as part of investigations into disproportionate assets cases.

#### Maha: 14 injured as tempo hits bus

**Mumbai:** Fourteen persons were injured after a tempo hit a private bus on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway in Maharashtra's Raigad district in the early hours of Thursday, a police official said. The incident took place at around 3 am when the bus carrying 11 persons was on way to Mumbai from Sangola.

#### Fire destroys carpet warehouse

**Palghar:** A massive fire broke out Thursday morning in a warehouse where carpets were kept in Maharashtra's Palghar district, a fire official said. So far, no person was reported to be injured, he said, adding that goods stored in the godown were destroyed in the fire.

#### Kerala HC quashes FIR against Goa Gov

**Kochi:** The Kerala High Court has quashed an FIR against Goa Governor P S Sreedharan Pillai for certain remarks in his speech in 2018 against the entry of women of all ages in the Lord Ayyappa temple at Sabarimala.

# Extend AFSPA to entire Manipur, say Kuki MLAs

*In a joint statement, the 10 Kuki MLAs said, "The imposition of AFSPA as per orders dated 14 November, 2024 indeed needs immediate review to extend the Act in the remaining 13 police jurisdictions"*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal/Guwahati, Nov 21:** Manipur Assembly's 10 Kuki MLAs, including seven of the state's ruling BJP-led alliance, have demanded that AFSPA be extended to the entire state to recover looted arms.

The Centre November 14 reimposed the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in Manipur's six police station areas, including the violence-hit Jiribam, with the Union Home Ministry asserting that the decision was taken given the "continuous volatile situation" there due to ethnic strife. Now, the entire state, except the areas under the jurisdiction of 13 police stations, is under AFSPA. In a joint statement, the 10 Kuki MLAs said, "The imposition of AFSPA as per orders dated 14 November, 2024 indeed needs



immediate review to extend the Act in the remaining 13 police jurisdictions."

They asserted that AFSPA should be imposed in the entire state in order to facilitate the recovery of the "more than 6,000 sophisticated weapons" looted by Meiteis since May 3 last year as it is a long overdue action required to contain the violence.

Ethnic violence between Meities and Kukis began May 3, 2023, after a Tribal Solidarity

March' was organised in the state's hill districts to protest the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. More than 220 people have been killed in the violence since then. The central and state governments must take all necessary steps to restore peace and normalcy in Manipur by initiating political dialogue to bring lasting peace to the troubled region, according to the statement of the Kuki legislators.

## NIA raids multiple locations in J&K

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 21:** The NIA Thursday conducted searches at multiple locations in five districts of Jammu and Kashmir in connection with a case related to infiltration by terrorists from across the border and recent attacks on security forces and civilians.

According to an official statement, National Investigation Agency (NIA) teams conducted the raids at eight locations in the Reasi, Udhampur, Doda, Ramban and Kishtwar districts. It said the searches led to the seizure of various materials showing linkages between terrorists of banned outfits with overground workers (OGWs) and hybrid terrorists whose premises were searched.

The searches are part of an investigation in a case registered by the NIA October 24, based on information regarding the infiltration of active terrorists belonging to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) into Indian Territory through the International Border and Line of Control, the statement said.

# REMARKS ON CONSTITUTION Setback for Saji Cherian as court orders CBI probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kochi, Nov 21:** In a blow to state Fisheries Minister Saji Cherian, the Kerala High Court Thursday ordered further probe into the allegation that he "insulted" the Constitution in a speech at an event in July 2022 by saying that certain words used by him "cannot be terms of respect generally".

The High Court's direction was used by the Congress-led UDF opposition and the BJP to demand Cherian's resignation or sacking from his ministerial post, while he said that further steps would be decided after going through the order.

Justice Bechu Kurian Thomas said that it was a matter of common perception in the Malayalam language that the words -- 'kuntham' and 'kudachakram' -- "when spoken in collocation with each other,

cannot be stated to be used in a respectful manner".

Cherian in his speech had used these words and also said that 'Constitution is ideal for looting the people', the High Court noted in its order. "Thus, the words used by the minister in his speech, like 'ideal Constitution to loot the people' or the words secularism, democracy, 'kuntham' (spear), 'Kudachakram' (a type of firecracker) cannot be terms of respect generally.

"But the question that begs the answer is whether the context in which those terms were used shows disrespect to the Constitution. The statement that the Indian Constitution is ideal for looting the people does not leave much room for discussion. There cannot even be two views on that statement," the High Court said. It further noted that the expres-

sion -- secularism, democracy, 'kuntham', 'kudachakram' -- was obviously referring to the Preamble which is a part of the Constitution.

"The said expression cannot be stated to be used with respect..." the High Court observed. The High Court noted that the investigating officer in his final report said there was no intention behind the words to disrespect the Constitution.

"It is difficult to comprehend the said conclusion and the manner in which such a conclusion was arrived at..." "When the statutory intention is explicit that no member of the public shall disrespect the Constitution, and when the words themselves can manifest the intention, the conclusion of the investigating officer (IO) is not legally tenable," the High Court said.

It said the report of the fo-



Cherian in his speech had used these words and also said that 'Constitution is ideal for looting the people', the High Court noted in its order

"Thus, the words used by the minister in his speech, like 'ideal Constitution to loot the people' or the words secularism, democracy, 'kuntham' (spear), 'Kudachakram' (a type of firecracker) cannot be terms of respect generally

the magisterial court erred in accepting the final report without noticing that there were several witnesses, like mediapersons, who had viewed or published the speech.

It said the conclusion arrived at by the IO was in haste, the investigation conducted was not proper and the magisterial court was wrong in accepting the final report.

"On a consideration of the entire circumstances, this court is of the view that the final report ought to be set aside and a further investigation be conducted," the High Court said while allowing a plea by a lawyer challenging the decision of the magisterial court and the final report of the police.

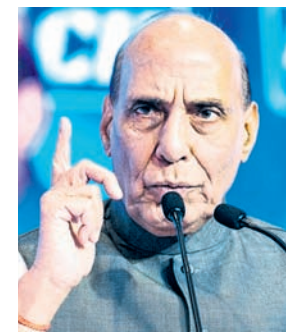
The High Court further said that since the accused is a minister, investigation by an SHO would not suffice and a superagency was required.

rensic laboratory and the video and audio recording of the speech were relevant to conclude whether the words were used disrespectfully or not.

The High Court said it was not proper for the IO to conclude no offence was made out even before receiving the forensic lab's report. It said that even



# national



With the world increasingly getting polarised into blocks and camps, leading to increasing strain on the established world order, it is time that the Buddhist doctrines of peaceful co-existence are embraced more closely by all

RAINATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

## K SANJAY MURTHY SWORN IN AS COMPTROLLER, AUDITOR GENERAL

Former Higher Education Secretary K Sanjay Murthy was sworn in as the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India by President Droupadi Murmu Thursday. Murthy, a 1989 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre, succeeds Girish Chandra Murmu



### of the day quote

Our initiatives to promote carbon and green credits align with global climate goals, while safeguarding India's developmental objectives



BHUPENDRA YADAV | ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

The 'Balak Buddhi' cabal wants us to believe there is no employment in India, but the latest data released by the Periodic Labour Force Survey exposes their lies



AMIT MALVIYA | BJP'S IT DEPARTMENT HEAD

The launch of Nipuna saw collaborations with IBM, Intel, Microsoft, NVIDIA, BFSI Consortium and Accenture to drive skilling and workforce transformation. Through these MoUs, Karnataka will train 1 lakh trainees in a span of one year



PRIYANK KHARGE | KARNATAKA IT MINISTER

### POST OF THE DAY

BJP does no press conference for - Manipur - Railway accidents - Deaths due to Infra failures - Attacks on forces - Taxes, Tolls, Petrol, Diesel, LPG

BJP does press conference for - Adani

@NarundarM

### SHORT TAKES

Hosp fire: 21 rescued children discharged

Jhansi (UP): Twenty-one of the 39 children rescued after last week's devastating fire at the Maharani Laxmibai Medical College here were Thursday discharged after treatment, officials said. The fire broke out in the neonatal intensive care unit of the hospital on the night of November 15. Forty-nine children were being treated there. While 39 could be saved, 10 children died due to suffocation or burns. Five more children died in the subsequent days, while the treatment of 10 children is underway in the hospital. Three children are undergoing treatment in a private hospital, Principal Narendra Singh Sengar of the medical college said.

School student dies by suicide

Khandwa (MP): An 18-year-old female student of a Navodaya school in Madhya Pradesh's Khandwa district allegedly hanged herself in a bathroom of the residential facility Thursday, a police official said. The teenager went for a bath around 7 am in her hostel on the school premises in Pandhana town. When she did not come out for a long time, her friends knocked on the door but there was no response, the official said. Her hostel mates then checked through the ventilator and found her hanging with a piece of cloth, he said.

Man booked for thrashing pet dog

Noida: A man in Greater Noida of Uttar Pradesh was caught on camera thrashing his pet dog and throwing him on the ground, police Thursday said. Inspector-in-charge of Ecotech-3 Police Station Anil Kumar Pandey said a video appeared on social media Wednesday in which a person, who looked like a woman, was seen beating a dog.

# Adani indictment turns into political slugfest

Several Opposition parties including the TMC, CPI-M, CPI, AAP and NC stepped up the attack on the business conglomerate, calling for a JPC probe



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: The Adani group's indictment in the US over alleged bribery and fraud gave fresh ammunition to Opposition parties to demand a joint parliamentary committee probe into the business group's dealings, even as Congress leader Rahul Gandhi sought Gautam Adani's immediate arrest.

Addressing a press conference here, Gandhi claimed that it is now pretty clear and established in the US that the businessman has broken Indian as well as American laws. Adani should be arrested immediately and interrogated while his "protector" and SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch should be removed from her post and a probe initiated, the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha said. Taking a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Ek hain to safe hain' slogan, Gandhi said as long as the prime minister and Adani are together, "they are safe" in India. "Modi ji will never arrest Adani because in the end he will be the one to get caught. There-

fore - 'if we are one, we are safe', he said in a post on X. The Adani group denied the charges, saying the allegations by US prosecutors are baseless and that the conglomerate is compliant with all laws. It also said it will pursue all possible legal recourse.

The issue has given fresh impetus to the opposition camp's attacks on the government just ahead of the winter session of Parliament starting November 25, and is likely to dominate the proceedings of both houses.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said a comprehensive JPC probe into all aspects of the Adani group's functioning, including its investments in foreign countries, and institutional erosion in India is the need of the hour.

Gandhi said the entire Opposition is together on the matter and will jointly raise the issue during the session, he said. "I can guarantee that Adani won't be arrested or investigated in India because the Modi gov-

ernment is protecting him," he said in a statement.

TMC general secretary Kunal Ghosh demanded a statement from Prime Minister Narendra Modi on charges of alleged bribery and fraud against the billionaire. National Conference president Farooq Abdullah said the Centre should take the allegations against Adani group seriously and investigate the matter thoroughly.

The CPI(M) demanded a CBI probe into the entire affair and said the Modi government cannot hide behind a smoke-screen anymore. CPI leader D Raja said "Only through a fair, unbiased probe can the truth be uncovered. In this context, the CPI demands that a joint parliamentary committee be formed to look into the growth, business malpractices and controversies surrounding the Adani Group and their bonhomie with Narendra Modi and the BJP."

The BJP, on the other hand, slammed Rahul Gandhi's attack on Prime Minister Modi as part of his long-running efforts to target its leader and noted that none of the four states named in American courts had a BJP government.

Patra also pointed out that the four states - Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Chhattisgarh Tamil Nadu - where government functionaries were allegedly paid bribes of over \$250 million to secure favourable deals, were ruled by non-BJP formulations during the period mentioned in the indictment.

## BITCOIN PONZI SCAM CASE CBI questions audit company employee

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, Nov 21: The CBI Thursday questioned Gaurav Mehta, an audit company employee, in connection with its probe into the ₹6,600-crore Gain Bitcoin ponzi scam case here, officials said.

The central probe agency, which registered three cases related to the alleged scam in October, had called Mehta to appear before its investigation team as soon as possible after his name cropped up in purported tapes of Maharashtra political leaders discussing the encashment of the cryptocurrency worth crores.

Mehta has been questioned since the afternoon in connection with the case. The officers quizzed him regarding the tapes and documents related to alleged investments in cryptocurrency.

The officials said Mehta was also asked if he had shared the voice notes of the political leaders and if so, their details. The audit company employee is understood to have been asked about his role in the purported bitcoin transactions alleged in the notes, they said.

The Supreme Court handed over to the CBI in December 2023 10 cases related to the alleged Gain Bitcoin ponzi scam registered by police in various states against Variable Tech Pvt Ltd, Late Amit Bhardwaj, Ajay Bhardwaj and others for allegedly collecting Bitcoins worth around ₹6,600 crore from people through their multi-level-marketing scheme with false promises of 10 per cent monthly return in the form of the cryptocurrency. Bitcoins, a cryptocurrency, are not controlled by any central bank of any country.



An artiste performs during the India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2024, at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi

## PARL WINTER SESSION

# Govt lists 16 Bills including waqf

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: As Parliament gears up for a stormy start next week over the Adani issue, the government has listed 16 Bills, including one to amend the waqf law and five new ones, for the winter session.

The five new draft legislations include the one to set up a cooperative university, the Rashtriya Sahkari Vishwavidyalaya. The Bills pending in the Lok Sabha include the Waqf (Amendment) Bill which has been listed for consideration and passage after the joint committee of the two Houses submits its report to Lok Sabha.

The panel is mandated to submit its report on the last day of the first week of the winter session. Opposition members on the panel are demanding an extension in the timeline to submit its report.

They have alleged that committee chair Jagdambika Pal, a BJP MP, is bulldozing the committee meetings and have sought the intervention of Speaker Om Birla.

The presentation, discussion and voting on First Batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants for the year 2024-25 has also been listed. The session concludes December 20.

The other Bill listed by the government for introduction, consideration and passage is the Punjab Courts (Amendment) Bill to enhance the pecuniary (defined as the monetary value of a case) appellate jurisdiction of Delhi



The five new draft legislations include the one to set up a cooperative university, the Rashtriya Sahkari Vishwavidyalaya

The bills pending in the Lok Sabha include the Waqf (Amendment) Bill which has been listed for consideration and passage after the joint committee of the two Houses submits its report to Lok Sabha

district courts from the existing ₹3 lakh to ₹20 lakh.

The Merchant Shipping Bill, also a new draft law planned by the government, seeks to ensure compliance with India's obligation under maritime treaties to which New Delhi is a party. Besides, the Coastal Shipping Bill and the Indian Ports Bill have also been listed for introduction and eventual passage.

As many as eight Bills, including the Waqf (Amendment) Bill and the Mussalman Wakf (Repeal) Bill are pending in Lok Sabha. According to a Lok Sabha bulletin, two Bills are pending with the Rajya Sabha.

The Rajya Sabha bulletin said an additional Bill The Bharatiya Vayuyam Vidheyak passed by the Lok is pending with the upper house.

## SNIPPETS

### Maharashtra sees 66.05 pc voter turnout

Mumbai: The final turnout in Maharashtra Assembly polls was 66.05 per cent as per EVM votes, up from 61.1 per cent in 2019, Election Commission officials said Thursday. The polling percentage for the Nanded Lok Sabha bypoll was 67.81 per cent. Polls for the 288-member state assembly were held Wednesday, while votes will be counted Saturday. "The official figures for each Assembly constituency will depend on the count of postal ballots reported. The 66 per cent turnout figure refers specifically to the votes cast on electronic voting machines," the chief electoral officer said. The increase, excluding postal ballots, highlighted the EC's efforts to engage a broader electorate, the statement added. Kolhapur led with 76.63 per cent, followed by 75.26 per cent in Gadchiroli, which has some Left Wing Extremism affected pockets, while the lowest was in Mumbai island city at 52.07 per cent and 55.95 per cent in the metropolis' suburban district.

### Seven killed after bus overturns in Jharkhand

Hazaribag (Jharkhand): At least seven people were killed and several others injured Thursday after a Patna-bound bus with passengers on board overturned in Jharkhand's Hazaribag district, police said. The accident occurred near Gorhar Police Station area, around 50 km away from district headquarters, when the bus overturned while negotiating a sharp bend, a senior officer said. "Seven deaths have been confirmed so far. Some more people may be trapped in the bus," Hazaribag SP Arvind Kumar Singh told PTI. There were about 50 passengers on the bus which was going to Patna from Kolkata when the accident took place, another officer said.

### RG Kar: CPI(M) takes out rally to CBI office

Kolkata: Voicing displeasure over the "delay" in carrying out investigations by the CBI into the rape-murder of a medic of RG Kar hospital over three months ago, CPI(M) and its front organisation Thursday organised a rally to the central agency's office in Salt Lake near here. The demonstrators, waving red flags and chanting slogans, were halted by CISF personnel outside the CBI office. Underterrred, party leaders, led by CPI(M) state secretary Md Salim, addressed the gathering of about 1,000 people, demanding that the scope of the CBI's investigation be expanded.

# Even Kasab was given a fair trial: SC to CBI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: Even Ajmal Kasab was given a fair trial in our country, the Supreme Court Thursday remarked and indicated it may set up a courtroom inside Tihar Jail for the trial of J&K separatist leader Yasin Malik in a kidnapping case.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih was hearing a CBI plea against the September 20, 2022 order of a Jammu trial court that directed Malik, serving life term in Tihar jail, to be produced before it physically to cross-examine the prosecution witnesses in the kidnapping case of Rubaiya Sayeed, daughter of politician Mufti Mohammad Sayeed.

The bench, however, remarked, "How will cross-examination be done online? There is hardly any connectivity in Jammu... In our country, a fair trial was given even to Ajmal Kasab and legal assistance was given to him in the high court." Kasab, the lone Pakistani gunman caught alive after the Mumbai terror attack,

was hanged till death at the Yerawada Central Prison. The bench told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the CBI, to take instructions on the total number of witnesses in the case.

Mehta pointed out security concerns and said Malik couldn't be taken to Jammu for the trial. The law officer accused Malik of "playing tricks" for having asked to appear personally and not engaging a lawyer. Mehta said Malik was not an ordinary criminal and showed a purported photograph of Malik sharing the dais with terrorist Hafiz Saeed.

The top court said it could order trial to take place inside the jail premises and ask the judge to come to the national capital for the proceedings. The bench, however, noted all the accused persons in the matter had to be heard before it passes an order.

Mehta said Malik appearing in the Supreme Court physically raised security concerns previously. The bench said Malik could be allowed to appear virtually in the apex court proceedings and posted the matter November 28.

## YASIN MALIK CASE



The CBI in the meantime was directed to amend its petition and implead all accused persons as respondents.

In 2023, Mehta wrote to then Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla flagging a "serious security lapse" after Malik was brought to the Supreme Court to appear in a case.

Malik, serving life sentence in a terror-funding case, was brought to the high-security

apex court premises in a prison van escorted by armed security personnel without the court's permission.

Expressing surprise at his presence, Mehta informed the apex court there was a procedure for high-risk convicts to be allowed into the courtroom to argue their case personally. The CBI said Malik, the top leader of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front

Kasab, the lone Pakistani gunman caught alive after the Mumbai terror attack, was hanged till death at the Yerawada Central Prison

The bench told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the CBI, to take instructions on the total number of witnesses in the case

(JKLF), was a threat to national security and cannot be allowed to be taken outside the Tihar jail premises.

The apex court April 24, 2023, issued notices on the CBI's appeal following which the incarcerated JKLF chief wrote a letter to the registrar of the Supreme Court May 26, 2023 seeking permission to appear in person to plead his case.

An assistant registrar took up his request July 18, 2023 and said the apex court would pass necessary orders - a decision the Tihar Jail authorities reportedly misconstrued to allow Malik to appear and argue his case.

Mehta referred to the CBI's contention in its appeal against

the trial court order to bring Malik to Jammu for the in-person examination of the witnesses in the kidnapping case, and said under Section 268 of the CrPC a state government may direct certain people to not be shifted from the confines of a prison.

A special TADA court September 20, 2022 in Jammu directed Malik to be physically produced before it on the next hearing for him to cross-examine prosecution witnesses in the kidnapping case.

The CBI challenged the trial court order before the Supreme Court as appeals in TADA cases are only heard by the top court.

Rubaiya was abducted near Lal Ded Hospital in Srinagar December 8, 1989 and freed five days later after the then BJP-backed V P Singh government at the Centre released five terrorists in exchange.

Mufti, who now lives in Tamil Nadu, is a prosecution witness of the CBI, which took over the case in early 1990s.

Malik is lodged in Tihar jail after he was sentenced by a special NIA court in May, 2023 in a terror-funding case.



They (children in Gaza) are being killed, injured, forced to flee, and deprived of safety, education, and play. Their childhood has been stolen, and they are on the verge of becoming a lost generation, having lost another school year

PHILIPPE LAZZARINI | COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF UNRWA

## CHINA DISPATCHES 300 TROOPS TO PAKISTAN

Over 300 Chinese troops have arrived in Pakistan to take part in the joint China-Pakistan anti-terrorism exercise amid escalating militant attacks in the country



## PUGNACIOUS DY UK PM TO TONY BLAIR, DIES AT 86

London, Nov 21: John Prescott, the pugnacious deputy Prime Minister to Britain's Tony Blair during his 10 years in government, has died aged 86 after a battle with Alzheimer's, his family said Thursday.

Prescott, who served under Blair from 1997 to 2007, was known as a plain-speaking politician who bridged the divide between the traditional left-wing and the modernisers in the Labour Party.

"There was no one quite like him in British politics," Blair told BBC radio. "I don't think, to be honest, I'd ever met anyone quite like John, and I still don't think I've ever met anyone quite like him, and I'm very sad that he's passed."

A proud trade unionist dubbed an old-school political "bruiser", he famously punched a member of the public during an election campaign in 2001, after he had been pelted with an egg.

"I was just thinking this morning about the time when someone smashed an egg on his head and he turned around and he punched the guy and laid him out. There were no rules that he really abided by," Blair said.

Prescott was born May 31, 1938, in a seaside house in Wales. His father was a railway signalman, his mother a maid.

He went into politics after coming ashore and he attended Oxford's Ruskin College, which offered courses for mature students.

Prescott entered Parliament in 1970 and worked his way through the ranks, becoming a key player in the Labour Party's historic three election victories from 1997 to 2007.

## 'New US base in Poland raises nuclear danger'

Moscow, Nov 21: Russia said Thursday that a new US ballistic missile defence base in northern Poland will lead to an increase in the overall level of nuclear danger, but Warsaw said "threats" from Moscow only strengthened the argument for NATO defence.

The air defence base, situated in the town of Redzikowo near the Baltic coast, part of a broader NATO missile shield, was opened November 13.

"This is another frankly provocative step in a series of deeply destabilising actions by the Americans and their allies in the North Atlantic Alliance in the strategic sphere," Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said.

"This leads to undermining strategic stability, increasing strategic risks and, as a result, to an increase in the overall level of nuclear danger."

Pawel Wronski, Poland's foreign ministry spokesperson, said there were no nuclear missiles at the base, which was purely for defence.

"It is a base that serves the purpose of defence, not attack," Wronski said.

# Arrest warrant against Netanyahu

The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants Thursday for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defence minister and Hamas officials, accusing them of war crimes and crimes against humanity over their 13-month war in Gaza



The Hague, Nov 21: The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants Thursday for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defence minister and Hamas officials, accusing them of war crimes and crimes against humanity over the war in Gaza and the October 2023 attacks that triggered Israel's offensive in the Palestinian territory.

The decision turns Netanyahu and the others into internationally wanted suspects and is likely to further isolate them and complicate efforts to negotiate a cease-fire to end the 13-month conflict.

But its practical implications could be limited since Israel and its major ally, the United States, are not members of the court and several of the Hamas officials have been subsequently killed in the conflict.

Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders have condemned ICC Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan's request for warrants as disgraceful and antisemitic.

US President Joe Biden al-

so blasted the prosecutor and expressed support for Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas. Hamas also slammed the request.

"The Chamber considered that there are reasonable grounds to believe that both individuals intentionally and knowingly deprived the civilian population in Gaza of objects indispensable to their survival, including food, water, and medicine and medical supplies, as well as fuel and electricity," the three-judge panel wrote in its unanimous decision to issue warrants for Netanyahu and his former defence minister Yoav Gallant.

The court also issued a warrant for the arrest of Mohammed Deif, one of the

leaders of Hamas.

The ICC chief prosecutor had also sought warrants for two other senior Hamas figures, Yahya Sinwar and Ismail Haniyeh, but they were both killed in the conflict.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry said in September that it had submitted two legal briefs challenging the ICC's jurisdiction and arguing that the court did not provide Israel the opportunity to investigate the allegations itself before requesting the warrants.

"No other democracy with an independent and respected legal system like that which exists in Israel has been treated in this prejudicial manner by the Prosecutor," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Oren Marmorstein wrote on X.

He said Israel remained "steadfast in its commitment

## Israeli PM nixes ICC verdict

Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has condemned the International Criminal Court's arrest warrant against him, saying Israel "rejects with disgust the absurd and false actions". In a statement released by his office, he said: "There is nothing more just than the war that Israel has been waging in Gaza." The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants Thursday for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defence minister and Hamas officials, accusing them of war crimes and crimes against humanity over their 13-month war in Gaza and the October 2023 attack on Israel respectively.

Netanyahu condemned the arrest warrant against him, saying Israel "rejects with disgust the absurd and false actions". The decision turns Netanyahu and the others into internationally wanted suspects and is likely to further isolate them and complicate efforts to negotiate a cease-fire to end the fighting. But its practical implications could be limited since Israel and its major ally, the United States, are not members of the court and two of the Hamas officials were killed in the conflict.

to the rule of law and justice" and would continue to protect its citizens against militancy.

The ICC is a court of last resort that only prosecutes cases when domestic law enforcement authorities cannot or will not investigate. Israel is not a member state of the court. The country has struggled to investigate itself in the past, rights groups say.

US President Joe Biden blasted the prosecutor and expressed support for Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas. Hamas also slammed the request

## of the day quote

Ukraine, even while receiving Taiwan's support and sensing hostility from China, since China collaborates with Russia, which continues its war against Ukraine, is very careful about its relationship with Taiwan

FRANCOIS WU | DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, TAIWAN

Conditions on the ground in Haiti are not appropriate for UN peacekeepers. Their role is to maintain peace and not to fight crime in urban areas or to save a dysfunctional state that has been plunged into domestic conflict

DMITRY POLYANSKY | DEPUTY UN AMBASSADOR, RUSSIA

It is our duty to make everyone accountable and equal before the law. We will deliver justice to everyone affected by past crimes

ANURA KUMARA DISSANAYAKE | PRESIDENT, SRI LANKA

## SHORT TAKES

### NK, Russia to expand economic cooperation

Seoul: North Korea and Russia reached a new agreement for expanding economic cooperation following high-level talks in Pyongyang this week, the North's state media said Thursday, as they continue to align in the face of their confrontations with Washington. North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency didn't elaborate on the details of the agreement signed Wednesday between its senior trade officials and a Russian delegation led by Alexandr Kozlov, the country's minister of natural resources and ecology. The Russian news agency Tass Tuesday said officials following an earlier round of talks agreed to increase the number of charter flights between the countries to promote tourism. Kozlov, who arrived in North Korea Sunday, met with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his top economic official, Premier Kim Tok Hun, before returning home Wednesday, KCNA said.

### Methanol poisoning: Four tourists die

Bangkok: Four foreign tourists have died after a suspected mass methanol poisoning from drinking tainted alcohol at a backpacker hotspot in Laos, Western government officials and media said Thursday. A young Australian woman was the latest confirmed death, and her friend was fighting for her life, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said. Two Danish citizens and an American had also died, officials said, after what media said was a night out in Vang Vieng where they drank possibly tainted alcohol. The group of about a dozen tourists became ill after going out on November 12, according to British and Australian media.

### No relief for Khan

Islamabad: An anti-terrorism court in Pakistan Thursday granted a five-day physical remand of former Prime Minister Imran Khan, who was arrested formally by police hours after his bail in a corruption case was accepted. Khan, 72, was arrested by Rawalpindi police in the New Town police station case Wednesday night after securing bail in the second Toshakhana case and was produced before the Anti-Terrorism Court in Adiala Jail. The police prosecution team sought a 15-day physical remand but the court granted the five-day physical remand and ordered to continue the investigation inside the jail.

## COP29 IN CRISIS All countries reject climate finance draft

Baku, Nov 21: A draft text released early Thursday on a new climate finance package for the developing world was rejected by every single country signatory to the UN climate convention.

The COP29 presidency, however, said the draft was far from final and invited countries to submit bridging proposals.

The next version, due Thursday night, will be leaner and packed with numbers aimed at finding the sweet spot for consensus, it said in a statement.

The text shows that developed countries are still dodging a key question: how much climate finance are they ready to provide developing countries every year starting in 2025?

The developing world has repeatedly said it needs at least \$1.3 trillion annually, 13 times the \$100 billion pledged in 2009, to meet the growing challenges.

Although developed countries have yet to officially propose a figure, their negotiators indicated that European Union nations were discussing a global climate finance target of \$200 billion to \$300 billion per year.

However, in the words of Colombian Environment Minister Susana Muhamad, the critical objective of this COP is, right now, an "empty placeholder".

The problem is not that developed countries lack money; the problem is that they are playing geopolitics, she said in an impassioned speech, drawing applause from a plenary full

of negotiators, observers, and journalists.

The G77, the largest negotiating bloc at the UN climate talks with over 130 developing nations, said they have been very clear that "we should not leave Baku without a quantum".

Adonia Ayebare, the G77 chair, denounced the developed countries' attempt to turn the climate finance package into a global investment goal that would draw funding from a variety of sources, including governments, private companies and investors.

"We are disappointed that the draft text doesn't even specify a quantum for provisional mobilization," said Bolivia's Diego Pacheco, on behalf of Like-Minded Developing Countries, which includes India.

African Group of Negotiators chair Ali Mohamed said they were deeply concerned by the "lack of mention of quantum". "This quantum is the main mandate for which we are here at COP29."

European Union's climate Chief Wopke Hoekstra called the draft "imbalanced, unworkable, and not acceptable".

"Developed countries must stop playing games with our life and put a serious quantified financial proposal on the table," he said. Pakistan, still reeling from the aftermath of the devastating 2022 floods, said an ambitious outcome on the climate finance package was particularly important for them, but the text lacked "concrete numbers on the quantum."



The pleasure garden and the water palace are illuminated at the opening of the "Christmas Garden" light show in the grounds of Pillnitz Palace, Dresden, Germany

## PM Modi addresses Guyana Parliament

Georgetown, Nov 21: Offering the mantra of 'Democracy First, Humanity First' for global good, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday said that space and sea should be subjects of "universal cooperation", not universal conflict.

In his address at a Special Session of Parliament of Guyana here, Modi also said India has "never moved forward with selfishness, expansionist atti-



Indian head of the state to visit the country in more than 50 years.

## US regulators seek to break up Google

### The authority forces Chrome sale as part of monopoly punishment

Washington, Nov 21: US regulators want a federal judge to break up Google to prevent the company from continuing to squash competition through its dominant search engine after a court found it had maintained an abusive monopoly over the past decade.

The proposed breakup floated in a 23-page document filed late Wednesday by the US Department of Justice calls for sweeping punishments that would include a sale of Google's industry-leading Chrome web browser and impose restrictions to prevent Android from favouring its own search engine.

A sale of Chrome "will permanently stop Google's control of this critical search access point and allow rival search engines the ability to access the browser that for many users is a gateway to the internet," Justice Department lawyers argued in their filing.

Although regulators stopped short of demanding Google sell Android too, they asserted the judge should make it clear the company could still be required to divest its smartphone operating system if its oversight committee continues to see evidence of misconduct.

### Chrome sale as part of monopoly punishment

The broad scope of the recommended penalties underscores how severely regulators operating under President Joe Biden's administration believe Google should be punished following an August ruling by US District Judge Amit Mehta that branded the company as a monopolist.

The Justice Department decision-makers who will inherit the case after President-elect Donald Trump takes office next year might not be as strident. The Washington, DC court hearings on Google's punish-



ment are scheduled to begin in April and Mehta is aiming to issue his final decision before Labour Day.

If Mehta embraces the government's recommendations, Google would be forced to sell its 16-year-old Chrome browser within six months of the final ruling. But the company certainly would appeal any punishment, potentially prolonging a legal tussle that has dragged on for more than four years.

Besides seeking a Chrome spinoff and a corraling of the Android software, the Justice Department wants the judge to ban Google from forging multibillion-dollar deals to lock in its dominant search engine as the default option on Apple's iPhone and other devices.



In many other developing countries, including India, weak exchange rate actually has become a protective cover for lack of productivity. It was used to hide our inefficiencies. That should not be the case

**V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN** | CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

## AVIATION SPACE TO EXPAND

Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlungmang Vualnam Thursday said the number of planes with domestic airlines will increase to 1,400 in the next five years as he highlighted the growth potential of the country's aviation space. Currently, the fleet is around 800 aircraft and leading carriers IndiGo and Air India have placed significant plane orders



### of the day quote

I believe that with this pool of capital (ANRF), and if we can quickly use it, I assure you, the government will not be found wanting to put up additional funding on the table

**PIYUSH GOYAL** | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

With \$400 billion worth of transport assets in India being severely exposed to the perils of disaster and climate change, rapid deployment of resilience measures is a must; innovation has a major role to play

**VINEET VIJAYAVARGIA** | MD AND PARTNER, BCG

We hope that by the end of this year, the number of Indian tourists travelling to Israel will reach around 10,000

**AMRUTA BANGERA** | DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, IMOT INDIA

## HINDENBURG DÉJÀ VU ON THE ANVIL

# Adani's indictment rattles stock market

Sensex, Nifty tumble amid broad-based selloff

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 21: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled Thursday amid a sharp fall in Adani group stocks after billionaire industrialist Gautam Adani was charged in the US for alleged bribery and fraud.

Besides, relentless foreign fund outflows and weak trends in Asian and European peers also dragged benchmark indices lower.

The BSE benchmark Sensex while the market has been in the midst of a bear hug for the past few weeks, today's fall can also be attributed to the news of the Adani group facing bribery charges, which triggered a massive sell-off in its group stocks

**PRASHANTH TAPSE** | SENIOR VP (RESEARCH), MEHTA EQUITIES

tanked 422.59 points or 0.54 per cent to settle at 77,155.79. During the day, it lost 775.65 points or 0.99 per cent to 76,802.73.

As many as 2,736 stocks declined, while 1,237 advanced and 92 remained unchanged on the BSE. The NSE Nifty slumped 168.60 points or 0.72 per cent to 23,349.90.

Investors' wealth plummeted Rs 5.27 lakh crore Thursday in line with markets fall following a sharp decline in Adani group stocks. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms eroded by Rs 5,27,767.57 crore to Rs 4,25,38,908.01 crore (\$5.04 trillion).

**FIRST JOLT:** In the first major business fallout of the indictment, Kenya's president said Thursday that he has cancelled multimillion-dollar airport expansion and energy deals after US bribery and fraud charges against Gautam Adani, one of Asia's richest men



## ADANI STOCKS GO INTO TAILSPIN

The combined market valuation of all ten listed Adani group firms fell sharply by ₹2.19 lakh crore Thursday, more than double of what the conglomerate had lost when the US short seller Hindenburg brought out a damning report in January 2023. The stock of the group's flagship firm, Adani Enterprises, plunged 22.61 per cent. Adani Green Energy plummeted 18.80 per cent. Adani Ports dived 13.53 per cent. Ambuja Cements cracked 11.98 per cent, and Adani Total Gas tumbled 10.40 per cent on the BSE. Shares of Adani Wilmar declined 9.98 per cent. Adani Power slumped 9.15 per cent. ACC fell 7.29 per cent, and NDTV dipped 0.06 per cent. Some of the group firms also hit their lowest trading permissible limit for the day during the day. The combined market capitalisation (mcap) of all ten listed group firms eroded by ₹2,19,878.35 crore.

"The domestic market faced renewed pressure due to escalating tensions in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and heightened nuclear concerns. Additionally, the fresh Adani case with the US DoJ added to the

market's woes. Although there were signs of a slowdown in FII selling, it surged again, adversely affecting market sentiment, particularly financials sector. We expect an improvement in the trend when global & domestic political issues stabilise," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

From the 30-share Sensex pack, Adani Ports tumbled over 13 per cent after Gautam Adani was charged by US prosecutors over his role in an alleged years-long scheme to pay \$265 million bribes to Indian officials in exchange for favourable terms for solar power contracts.

# Man of many disputes

The crisis is the second in two years to hit the ports-to-power conglomerate founded by Gautam Adani, one of the world's richest people

REUTERS

Mumbai, Nov 21: Indian billionaire Gautam Adani and his ports-to-power conglomerate Adani Group were hit by a new controversy Thursday after US prosecutors charged him in an alleged bribery and fraud scheme, accusations the group denied.

Below are some other major disputes involving Adani and the group he chairs.

### HINDENBURG VS ADANI

US short-seller Hindenburg Research alleged in January 2023 that Adani improperly used offshore tax havens and that certain offshore funds and shell companies tied to Adani Group "surreptitiously" owned stock in Adani's listed firms. The group described the claims as baseless.

In August, Hindenburg alleged that the chief of the Indian markets regulator, who was investigating the group after the Hindenburg report, previously held investments in offshore funds also used by the Adani Group.

The regulator said investigations into the allegations against Adani Group were completed in almost all matters, and that the chief had made relevant disclosures.

### DHARAVI REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Adani's \$619 million deal to redevelop Mumbai's Dharavi slum, Asia's largest, into a modern city hub has faced opposition from residents over his capacity to deliver. It also faced allegations that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's allies treated Adani favourably, accusations the conglomerate denied.

The group struggled to secure land to rehouse the roughly 700,000 residents who would be displaced during the redevelopment.

### CARMICHAEL COAL MINE

The Carmichael coal mine, owned by Australia-based Adani Mining Pty Ltd and located in Queensland, battled a seven-year campaign by climate activists before shipping its first cargo in December 2021.

Green groups worried about emissions and damage to the Great Barrier Reef opposed the project, and sustained protests scared off lenders, insurers and engineering firms.

The development of the mine was shrunk to 10 million metric tons a year from the previously-envisioned 60 million tons a year.

### TROUBLES IN KENYA

Kenya's high court suspended two Adani Group projects this year following criticism from stakeholders.

On September 10, the court temporarily blocked a proposed deal to lease the country's main airport for 30 years in exchange for expanding it, after allegations that the lease was unaffordable, threatened jobs, was a fiscal risk and did not offer taxpayers value for money.

A month later, the court suspended another \$736 million deal between state-owned Kenya

Electrical Transmission Company (KETRACO) and Adani Energy Solutions after an advocacy group argued it was "a constitutional sham" and "tainted with secrecy".

### MYANMAR PORT SALE

In October 2021, Adani Ports abandoned plans to build a container terminal in Myanmar after rights groups reported the company would be leasing the land for the project from a military-controlled firm under US sanctions.

The company sold the project in May 2024 for \$30 million, significantly lower than the \$127 million it invested in it.

### BANGLADESH POWER

Adani Power reduced electricity supply to neighboring Bangladesh this month after failing to recover more than \$800 million in dues amid a political crisis in the country.

The power deal is being studied by a panel set up by Bangladesh's caretaker government which is investigating if contracts signed by its predecessor protected the nation's interests. The power pact has been criticised by Bangladesh's opposition groups who say it is overpriced.

### VIZHINJAM PORT PROTESTS

Construction of the \$900-million port in southern India was halted for about four months in 2022 as fishing workers protested, blaming the project for coastal erosion and affecting their livelihoods.

The Adani Group said the port complied with all laws and cited studies that showed it is not linked to shoreline erosion. The construction resumed in December 2022.



### SHORT TAKES

#### Ola Electric to lay off 500 employees

New Delhi: India's top electric scooter maker Ola Electric plans to cut about 500 jobs as it seeks to prioritise profitability, as per reports, citing sources. Ola Electric had 4,011 on-roll employees as of March 2024, according to its latest IPO document from August. The company declined to comment on the reports. The company's stock ended 3% lower at its lowest-ever closing price of ₹67.23. The SoftBank-backed firm has yet to turn a profit due to high costs and reductions in EV subsidies. Using in-house batteries for its scooters will be key to bringing down costs and becoming profitable, Ola has said.

#### Solar installations zoom in Jan-Sept

New Delhi: India added 16.4 gigawatt (GW) of solar capacity during January-September 2024, posting a 167 per cent year-on-year rise on account of commissioning of delayed projects, Mercom Capital said. The country had installed 6.2 GW of solar capacities in the nine-month period of 2023, the US-based research firm said in its latest report. "In the nine months (9M) of January-September of the calendar year (CY) 2024, solar projects totaling 16.4 GW were added in India, an increase of over 167 per cent compared to 6.2 GW in 9M 2023. The commissioning of several previously delayed projects contributed to capacity additions in the first nine months of 2024," the report titled 'India Solar Market Update' said.

### Indian Bank executive director visits state

Bhubaneswar: Mahesh Kumar Bajaj, executive director of Indian Bank, was on a two-day visit to Bhubaneswar from November 20-21.



During the visit, he met many top level government officials. He updated them about various banking services being provided by Indian Bank in the state. He apprised them about various digital initiatives taken by the bank for the benefit of general public as well as corporate customers. The bank's participation in Odisha government's 'Subhadra' scheme and providing RBI's digital currency by onboarding Subhadra beneficiaries to CBDC platform was also informed during his meeting with the officials. As a part of the bank's CSR activity, he donated four sanitary napkin vending machines to Rama Devi Women's University and an ambulance to Kalinaga Institute of Social Science (KISS). Bajaj inaugurated a new branch at Nimapara in Puri district. Indian Bank is now providing services through 199 branches in the state of Odisha. Bajaj launched two campaigns of the bank to boost savings and current deposits and reconnect with lost customers, named 'Run to Reach' and 'Connect and Conquer'. During the launch he addressed the media and said, "Indian Bank is a pioneer in digital services and customer outreach." He highlighted the transformative role of digital innovation in enhancing efficiency and customer experience in banking. Bajaj added, Indian Bank's digital journey continues with the IndSMART Mobile Banking app, an omnichannel platform offering internet and mobile banking services with over 220 features.

### BIZ BUZZ

# Rupee touches fresh nadir of 84.50

INDIAN CURRENCY FALLS 8 PAISE TO HIT ALL-TIME LOW OF 84.50 AGAINST US DOLLAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 21: The rupee depreciated 8 paise to settle at an all-time low of 84.50 against the US dollar Thursday, dragged down by massive sell-off in domestic equity markets and surging crude oil prices amid a volatile geopolitical situation.

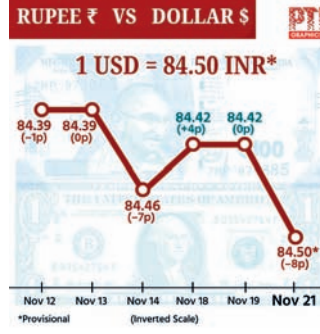
According to forex traders, the American currency strengthened due to safe-haven appeal amid escalating tension between Russia and Ukraine, while the continuous outflow of foreign funds also put pressure on the domestic unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 84.41 and touched the lowest-ever level of 84.51 against the greenback during intra-day. The unit ended the session at 84.50 against the dollar, surpassing its previous all-time low closing level of 84.46 recorded November 14.

On Tuesday, the rupee had settled flat at 84.42 against the US dollar.

The foreign exchange market was closed Wednesday on account of assembly elections in Maharashtra.

"We expect the rupee to trade around 84.5 against



healthy foreign exchange reserves, should help keep rupee volatility in check," said Rajani Sinha, Chief Economist, CareEdge Ratings.

FPIs have withdrawn approximately \$4 billion from Indian markets in November following a record \$11 billion in outflows in October. While high US Treasury yields and a strong dollar have contributed to these outflows, other domestic factors have also been at play, such as muted corporate earnings and high valuations.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.02 per cent at 106.66.

## CROSS-BORDER TRANSACTIONS

# RBI, Maldives to promote local currencies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 21: The RBI and the Maldives Monetary Authority Thursday signed an agreement here for establishing a framework to promote the use of local currencies - the Indian Rupee and the Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR) for cross-border transactions.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Governor of Reserve Bank of India Shaktikanta Das and Governor of Maldives Monetary Authority Ahmed Munawar.

"The MoU encourages the use of INR and MVR in current account transactions, permissible capital account transactions



and any other economic and financial transactions as agreed upon by both countries," the RBI said in a statement.

This framework would enable exporters and importers to invoice and settle in their respective domestic currencies,

which in turn would enable the development of trading in the INR-MVR pair in foreign exchange market.

Use of local currencies would optimise costs and settlement time for transactions, the RBI added.

"This collaboration marks a key milestone in strengthening bilateral cooperation between RBI and MMA," it said.

Use of local currencies in bilateral transactions will eventually contribute to promoting trade between India and Maldives as well as deepen financial integration and strengthen the economic relations between India and Maldives, India's central bank said.

## Jio, Airtel, VIL lose subscribers; BSNL's surprise gain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 21: Private telcos Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea cumulatively lost over one crore wireless subscribers in September, even as state-owned BSNL surprised with net adds of almost 8.5 lakh mobile users, as per monthly data released by TRAI.

Reliance Jio lost 79.69 lakh mobile subscribers in September compared to the previous month, Bharti Airtel (14.34 lakh users), and Vodafone Idea (15.53 lakh users). Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) added 8.49 lakh users to its wireless subscriber tally.

The wireless subscriber base of Reliance Jio stood at 46.37 crore in September, while that of Bharti Airtel was 38.34 crore. The wireless user base of Vodafone Idea was 21.24 crore as of September 2024.



BSNL's gains in September pushed its subscriber tally to 9.18 crore. It is pertinent to mention that the three private telcos had hiked mobile tariffs by 10-27 per cent in July.

BSNL, however, refrained from following the footsteps of its larger rivals, and its Chairman and Managing Director Robert Ravi recently ruled out an increase in tariffs, in the near future.

"We can clearly say we are not going to increase our tariffs in the near future," Ravi had told reporters in October. BSNL, in fact, is looking to

proactively woo subscribers and claw back market share, and recently launched a slew of new offerings and initiatives, ranging from spam blockers to automated SIM kiosks and direct-to-device services.

According to TRAI subscriber data, with the sole exception of Odisha, all other service areas showed a decline in their wireless subscribers during September 2024.

"As per the information received from 1,167 operators in September 2024, in comparison to 1,219 operators in August 2024, the total Broadband Subscribers decreased from 949.21 million at the end of August-21 to 944.40 million at the end of September-24 with a monthly decline rate of 0.51 per cent," Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) said.

# IT'S SHOW TIME

Australia start favourites in 1st Test of BGT beginning Friday at Perth



TROPHY TO PLAY FOR: Jasprit Bumrah and Pat Cummins pose with the Border-Gavaskar Trophy

PHOTO: CRICKET AUSTRALIA X

**Perth, Nov 21:** Character defines an individual or a team, be it any sport. India will have to show plenty of that when they take the field at the Optus Stadium here Friday in the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy (BGT). They are taking the field after the humiliating 0-3 series loss to New Zealand and without regular skipper Rohit Sharma, best exponent of reverse swing Mohammed Shami and Shubman Gill who is out of the game with a fractured thumb. To put all these issues in the back-burner, the Indian XI will have to show real character.

India have shown character in the past many times in Australia. The 2020-21 series was a

perfect example of that. Missing many stars including then skipper Virat Kohli, the Men in Blue overpowered Australia 2-1 even after getting bowled out for 36 in the first Test at Adelaide. India must do an encore, if they are to define their true character.

The last time Australia won a series against India was a decade back. Since then they have won the ODI World Cup, the World Test Championship and the T20 World Cup. But none of those achievements appear to matter quite as much to Australian cricket fans as back-to-back home defeats to India.

"I think for about half the change room we haven't won the Border-Gavaskar (Trophy), so it's kind of one of the last things to tick off I think for a

lot of us," Australian skipper Pat Cummins said Thursday. "I also think almost every challenge that we've had thrown at us over the last few years, we've stepped up and done well. I think to do that for another year, another home summer would kind of cement the legacy of this team. So, yeah, we're all excited."

The anticipation has reached fever pitch. The back pages of some of Australia's papers have been printed Monday in Hindi.

In 2018-19 and 2020-21, India proved that lightning can strike twice with back-to-back series wins in Australia, the first Asian team to do so. However, now the undeniable truth is that some of the stars driving this Indian unit are in the twilight of their hallowed

careers. How the five-match rubber against Cummins and his men unfolds could well decide their future.

Virat Kohli, Rohit, who will arrive before the second Test in Adelaide, and senior off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin are facing that moment of reckoning again and an indifferent result could have repercussions.

Kohli's coronation as 'King Kohli' happened in 2014 in this very country with those four hundreds while Cheteshwar Pujara and Rishabh Pant still make appearances in the nightmares of the Aussie bowling quartet, which will certainly be playing their last BGT series together.

This will perhaps be the series which will be decided by

## India's Test series in Australia

1947-48	Winner Australia 4-0 (5)
1967-68	Winner Australia 4-0 (5)
1977-78	Winner Australia 3-2 (5)
1980-81	Draw 1-1 (3)
1985-86	Draw 0-0 (3)
1991-92	Winner Australia 4-0 (5)
1999-2000	Winner Australia 3-0 (3)
2003-04	Draw 1-1 (4)
2007-08	Winner Australia 2-1 (4)
2011-12	Winner Australia 4-0 (4)
2014-15	Winner Australia 2-0 (4)
2018-19	Winner India 2-1 (4)
2020-21	Winner India 2-1 (4)

Figures in brackets denotes the number of Tests played

TV timings  
7.30am (IST) Star Sports channels

bowlers more than ever with Jasprit Bumrah, leading in the opening game, entrusted with the duty of setting the tone against a line-up which has been far from its best even at home in recent times. Mohammed Siraj and Akash Deep are likely to be Bumrah's partners but the lanky Prasidh Krishna and the burly Harshit Rana are also staking a claim with impressive skill sets.

To ensure that India's tail isn't as big as that of kangaroos found in Australian outback, rookie all-rounder Nitish Reddy is expected make his debut Friday with hope and a prayer that he can be a steady fourth pacer giving 12 to 15 overs per day.

But then it is the batters like Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant, Kohli, KL Rahul who will have to take the onus to set the game up for the bowlers. If they can do that nothing better for the Men in Blue.

# Bumrah ready to start afresh



Ravichandran Ashwin, KL Rahul and Rishabh Pant have lots to discuss about during a training session

to them, no one looks confused or overawed," he added.

Virat Kohli's current form might be a matter of debate but Bumrah has no doubt that India's top batter looks in fine nick. "I don't have to say anything about Kohli the batter. I have made my (Test) debut under him. I don't need to give him any special inputs, he is the utmost professional we have in our team and he is one of the leaders," Bumrah was loud and clear.

Bumrah said that there are lessons to be learnt from 0-3 defeat against New Zealand recently but the team have moved on as they embark on a fresh journey fraught with challenges.

"At the end, whether one wins or loses, the fresh start is still from zero. Obviously, we won the T20 World Cup doesn't mean that we become complacent and obviously we were disappointed and we had a tough series last time but we are not carrying any baggage. We need to absorb the learnings (from NZ series) and move on," Bumrah asserted.

This is the second time that Bumrah will captain the team in the absence of Rohit after the Edgbaston Test against England in 2022, and the 30-year-old said he would like to skin the cat in his own way.

**Reddy wants responsibility and wants to be thrown at the deep end of the pool as he wants to prove himself. Nothing could be more heartening for a captain**

JASPRIT BUMRAH

## SHORT TAKES

### Rohit to join squad Sunday

**Perth:** Regular skipper Rohit Sharma will join the Indian team here Sunday, the third day of the first Test against Australia at the Optus Stadium. Rohit declared himself unavailable for the opening Test as he stayed back in India with his family for the birth of his second child. Rohit and his wife Ritika were blessed with a baby boy November 15. "Rohit will be arriving in Perth on the third day of the Test match," a BCCI source said. Hence, the 37-year-old will be available for the second Test against the Australia at Adelaide starting December 6.

### Eden stand to be named after Jhulan

**Kolkata:** Legendary Indian women's cricketer Jhulan Goswami will have a stand named in her honour in the 'B' Block of the iconic Eden Gardens here, following a proposal by the Cricket Association of Bengal. A proposal to honour the former Indian pacer has been placed before the apex body of CAB and if all goes well, it will be unveiled during the India-England T20 January 22 next year, sources said here Thursday. "I never imagined something like this would come to fruition. I would definitely love to watch a match from there," said Goswami. "For any cricketer, the ultimate dream is to represent her district, state, or country, but receiving an honour like this is truly monumental," she added.

### Tennis now a bit bland: Kyrgios

**New Delhi:** As Australian tennis star Nick Kyrgios prepares to step back onto the court after a two-year injury hiatus, he has said that modern tennis is a bit 'bland at the moment' as new crop of players are each other's best mates. "There are some amazing players out there, but I think the game's a bit bland at the moment," he said. "Everyone's liking each other. Rivalry can't happen that way," he said

# Debut likely for Nitish, Harshit



Nitish Kumar Reddy



Harshit Rana

**Perth, Nov 21:** Going by the recent trends and what the Indian team management is indicating there is a strong possibility of all-rounders Nitish Kumar Reddy and Harshit Rana making their debuts at the Optus Stadium here. The 21-year-old Reddy is a batting all-rounder who bowls medium pace. For the 23-year-old Rana, his bowling is first priority, but he can wield the willow too.

Reddy is the youngest member of India's squad. He made his first-class debut in 2019-20 but his numbers in the format do not exude much confidence. Reddy is in the side because of

his IPL performance this year. It remains to be seen whether he can achieve the same standards in red ball cricket. However, his recent form has not been great. In three of the four innings against Australia A, he was bounced out three times.

Uncapped Rana can bowl fast, hit the deck hard, and has pace variations. His IPL franchise, KKR, identified his talent before his domestic side, Delhi. He was the joint-fourth-highest wicket-taker in IPL 2024 and played a key role in KKR lifting the trophy. In 10 first-class games, he has 43 wickets at 24.00 and 469 runs at 42.63. He has also scored a hundred in the format.

## Nitya, Vishvas put Baroda in command

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 21:** Centuries by Nitya J Panda (179, 261b, 21x4, 1x6) and Vishvas (138, 177b, 14x4, 6x6) put Baroda in a commanding position against Odisha at stumps on the second day of the Cooch Behar Trophy (U-19) game Thursday at the Gandhi Stadium in Bolangir.

After putting on board a massive score of 537, the visitors hit back with the ball to reduce Odisha to 172 for the loss of five wickets. Odisha will need to reach the target of 338 in their first innings to avoid following on, but that at the moment looks a remote dream. Except for Sambit Beja (41), none of the Odisha batters could offer any resistance to the opposition bowlers. Pavan Patel (2/20) and Ahmida (2/26) bowled well for Baroda.

Earlier resuming at their overnight score of 376 for four, the Baroda batters scored freely in an attempt to force the pace. Vishvas led the charge with some brilliant strokeplay. Sayed Tufayal Ahmad was the most successful bowler for Odisha with four wickets.

# Salima lauds team effort in ACT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Rajgir (Bihar), Nov 21:** A new-look and much-fitter Indian women's hockey team started their 2028 Los Angeles Olympics' qualification journey in the most perfect manner, producing a scintillating, unbeaten performance during their title-defending Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) campaign here.

It marked a resurrection of sorts for the side that had been left deflated after failing to qualify for the Paris Olympics this year. It marks a fresh beginning for the team and their seasoned coach Harendra Singh. Since taking over in April this year, Harendra's vision has been crystal clear – to qualify for the 2028 Games.

Skipper of the Indian women's team Salima Tete is thrilled with the victory. "I truly believe this victory will inspire more young girls to take up hockey and further elevate the sport in India. We are thrilled to be able to bring this win to our fans and our nation," Tete said Thursday, after the brilliant campaign.

"While we celebrate this win, our focus remains on long-term



PRIME TIME: India's captain Salima Tete (left) poses for a selfie with Sunelita Toppo after the final, Wednesday

goals. We are working hard every day, trusting the process, and staying dedicated to delivering our best in every tournament. Our ultimate aim is to bring more laurels to India and make the country proud," the skipper added.

The ACT produced many stars for India, the most prominent among them was 20-year-old young striker Deepika, who was the tournament's highest scorer with 11 goals, including four from field play, six from penalty corners and one penalty stroke.

In fact, five Indians were there in the top-10 scorers' list.

Besides Deepika, the others were Sangita Kumari (4 goals), Preeti Dubey (3), Navneet Kaur (3) and Lalrmsiami (3).

Harendra worked extensively on the fitness of the players in the run up to the tournament and it was clearly visible on the turf as the side played fast-paced, one-touch hockey throughout to trouble opponents, including reigning Olympic silver-medallists China whom they defeated 1-0 in the final to retain the title. India had also defeated China 3-0 in the group encounter. India scored 29 goals in the tournament and conceded just two.

# Mixed day for Indian shuttlers

Lakshya in quarterfinals but Sindhu suffers early exit again in China

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shenzhen (China), Nov 21:** Shuttler Lakshya Sen progressed to the quarterfinals with a straight-game win, but PV Sindhu's campaign ended in the second round of the China Masters Super 750 badminton tournament here Thursday.

Lakshya looked at his lethal best while disposing off Rasmus Gemke of Denmark 21-6, 21-18 in a 46-minute men's singles second round match.

But it turned out to be another disappointing outing for Sindhu as she lost to Singapore's Yeo Jia



Lakshya Sen was at his dominating best against Rasmus Gemke

Min in a hard-fought women's singles contest. Sindhu fought valiantly before going down 16-21, 21-17, 21-23 to Min in a match that lasted 69 minutes.

The doubles pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand

was no match for second seeded Chinese pair of Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning. The World No. 18 Indian duo lost 16-11, 11-21 against their Chinese opponents in a second round match.

Defending champions Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also moved to the quarterfinals of the men's doubles with a 21-19, 21-15 win over Danish pair of Rasmus Kjaer and Frederik Sogard.

The Asian Games gold medalist Indian duo will meet the Danish combination of Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen, who are seeded second.

## Shami slams Sanjay

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 21:** Mohammed Shami took to social media Thursday to ridicule commentator Sanjay Manjrekar's suggestion that the Indian pacer will not attract a higher price in the upcoming mega auction of the IPL. The pacer was released by Gujarat Titans ahead of the mega auction and he is listed at a base price of Rs 2 crore.

"Baba Ki Jay Hooooo. Thoda sa gyan apne future ke liye bhi bacha lo kaam ayeaga Sanjay G. Kisi ko future janna ho to sir se mile (All hail baba ji. Please save some wisdom for the future as well Sanjay G. If anyone wants to know about their future please meet Sir)," Shami wrote on Instagram.

# Odisha trounce MP 6-1

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 21:** Odisha began their campaign Thursday in style in the Santosh Trophy football tournament routing Madhya Pradesh 6-1 in a match played at the GNDU Stadium in Amritsar. The Odisha footballers completely dominated the game and had ball possession for the maximum amount of time.

Arbin Lakra (11th), Roshan Panna (26th), Jitu Muduli (37th), Kartik Hantal (45th and 64th) and substitute Rahul Mukhi (90+2) got the goals for Odisha. While the first five were field goals, the last one came from a spot-kick which Mukhi converted. Substitute



Kartik Hantal scored two goals for Odisha against MP

Shubam Mane got a consolation goal for Madhya Pradesh in the 73rd minute.

Odisha will play Saturday their next group game against Chhattisgarh. If they win it, they will qualify for the knockout stage of the tournament.