

## SHORT TAKES

### Sujata Karthikeyan denied leave extension

**Bhubaneswar:** The state government Tuesday declined IAS officer Sujata Karthikeyan's application seeking extension of child care leave (CCL) for another six months. She has been asked to join as the special secretary to Finance department Wednesday. In a letter to Karthikeyan, Additional Secretary Manoj Kumar Mohanty said, "After careful consideration, your leave application for extension of child care leave for a further period of six months is not acceded to. Therefore, you are requested to join office November 27." Notably, Karthikeyan was on leave since May 31, 2024.

### No need to apply for fresh PAN card

**New Delhi:** Existing Permanent Account Number (PAN) card holders are not required to apply for a new one under the upgraded PAN 2.0 system that is primarily aimed at introducing a 'common identifier' for all business-related activities, the Income Tax department said Tuesday. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had approved the ₹1,435-crore PAN 2.0 Project to streamline and modernise the process of issuing and managing PAN and TAN, making it more user-friendly and efficient. PAN is a unique 10-digit alphanumeric number issued by the I-T department to Indian taxpayers. "With existing PAN database of 78 crore PANs and 73.28 lakh TANS, the project addresses the requirements of taxpayers, focusing on consolidation of multiple platforms/portals and efficient services to PAN/TAN holders," the CBDT said in a release Tuesday. **P8**

### Byelections to 6 RS seats December 20

**Bhubaneswar:** The Election Commission Tuesday announced bypolls for six Rajya Sabha seats, including one in Odisha, December 20. The Odisha seat became vacant following resignation of BJD member Sujeet Kumar, who later joined the BJP. The winning candidate will serve the remaining term of approximately 16 months until April 2, 2026. The other seats that will go for bypolls are three in Andhra Pradesh and one each in West Bengal and Haryana, the EC release stated. Three vacancies were created in AP when YSRCP members Venkataramana Rao Mopidevi, Beedha Masthan Rao Yadav and Ryaga Krishnaiah had quit their membership in August. The terms of Yadav and Krishnaiah as Rajya Sabha members were to end June 21, 2028, while Mopidevi was to retire June 21, 2026.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



**UNREST IN BANGLADESH:** Policemen charge baton to disperse the supporters of Bangladeshi Hindu leader Krishna Das Prabhu after they surrounded a police van carrying their leader on the court premises at Chattogram in southeastern Bangladesh, Tuesday. **Lawyer killed in clash | P10**

### Shinde steps down; no clarity on Maha CM

**Mumbai, Nov 26:** Shiv Sena chief Eknath Shinde Tuesday stepped down as Maharashtra Chief Minister, even as the suspense over his successor continued, three days after Assembly election results were announced. In Delhi, Union Minister Ramdas Athawale said the BJP leadership has decided to make Devendra Fadnavis as the CM for the third time, but there was no confirmation on this from the saffron party. Shinde and Fadnavis were together early Tuesday morning at an event in Mumbai police commissioner's office to pay tributes to martyrs of the 26/11 terror attack, but hardly exchanged a word. Shinde's resignation came amid a growing chorus from within his Shiv Sena that he continues in the post as the Assembly elections were fought and won under his leadership. Accompanied by Deputy CMs Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar, Shinde met Governor CP Radhakrishnan at Raj Bhavan earlier in the day to submit his resignation. The Governor then requested Shinde to continue in a caretaker role until the new CM is sworn in, a Raj Bhavan official said. The outgoing Assembly's term concluded Tuesday, adding urgency to the transition process.

# ₹1,196 crore for Subhadra

*Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who also holds the Finance portfolio, Tuesday tabled in the Assembly the Supplementary Statement of Expenditure of ₹1,156 crore for 2024-25, with the BJP government's flagship women empowerment scheme 'Subhadra' receiving a lion's share of ₹1,196 crore. The government also allocated ₹125 crore and ₹92 crore for two new initiatives - hosting Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Bhubaneswar and launching of 'Dharti Aaba Janatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan' in the state. Prioritising healthcare sector, the government allocated ₹644 crore towards Gopabandhu Jana Arogya Yojana, along with ₹1,056 crore state's share towards National Health Mission. Similarly, another focus area of the government - education - also received a major boost with pre-matric and post-matric scholarships together getting ₹232 crore*

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** Four months after presenting the annual Budget for financial year 2024-25, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi presented a Supplementary Budget of ₹1,156 crore for the fiscal in the Assembly Tuesday.

In the Supplementary Budget, the government allocated ₹125 crore for organising Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Bhubaneswar in January next year.

Similarly, ₹299 crore has been allocated for deployment of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) in the state.

Likewise, the government has earmarked ₹1,056 crore towards the state's share in the National Health Mission (NHM) programme. The government has made an additional allocation of ₹644 crore for implementation of Gopaband-

hu Jana Arogya Yojana, the flagship healthcare scheme of the state government. The state government has also set aside ₹1,750 crore for the scheme for Special Central Assistance to States for Capital Expenditure which is aimed at boosting capital expenditure by the states.

Pro-women scheme 'Subhadra' has received a shot in the arm with an additional amount of ₹1,196 crore. The government has allocated ₹130 crore for the establishment of Centre of Excellence in 22 ITIs of the state in joint collaboration with Tata Technologies Limited. Similarly, ₹300 crore is provided by the state government in the Supplementary Budget for Loans to Public Sector Units under the state Energy department.

The state government has made an allocation of ₹196 crore towards transfer to Panchayati Raj Institutions as per

#### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **₹644cr** for Gopabandhu Jana Arogya Yojana
- **₹338cr** for Madhubabu Pension Yojana
- **₹299cr** for deployment of Central Armed Police Forces
- **₹196cr** towards transfer to Panchayati Raj Institutions
- **₹130cr** for establishment of Centre of Excellence in 22 ITIs
- **₹125 crore** for hosting Pravasi Bharatiya Divas
- **₹51cr** for installation of CCTVs at police stations and outposts

the State Finance Commission (SFC) award in the Supplementary Statement of Expenditure, 2024-25.

Meanwhile, ₹338 crore is provided under Madhubabu Pension Yojana.

In order to tighten vigil at police stations in the wake of Bharatpur incident, the government also allocated ₹51 crore for installation of CCTV Surveillance System in police stations and outposts. The decision came after the government received severe criticism over absence of CCTVs at many police stations following the alleged assault on an army officer and his fiancée at Bharatpur police station in Bhubaneswar.

## EVM tampered when you lose: SC

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** Around seven months after the Supreme Court dismissed a batch of petitions seeking a return to the paper ballot system, the apex court Tuesday rejected a similar petition saying that allegations of tampering with electronic voting machines (EVMs) raked up only when people lose polls. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and PB Varale castigated petitioner-in-person KA Paul from where does he get such brilliant ideas when he is associated with social service.

"What happens is, when you win the election, EVMs are not



tampered with. When you lose the election, EVMs are tampered (with)," remarked the bench.

Apart from ballot paper voting, the plea sought several directions including a directive to the Election Commission to disqualify candidates for a minimum of five years if found guilty of distributing money, liquor or other material induc-

## HC seeks action plan to tackle jumbo deaths

PNN & AGENCIES

**Cuttack, Nov 26:** The Orissa High Court Tuesday expressed concern over the rise in elephant deaths across the state, particularly those caused by electrocution, emphasising the need for a comprehensive action plan to protect the jumbos.

Acting on a suo motu public interest litigation, a division bench headed by Chief Justice CS Singh directed the state's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) to submit an action plan within 10 days to mitigate the crisis.

The PCCF informed the High Court that since 2020, 85 elephants have died due to electrocution, with three such

fatalities reported recently in Sambalpur's Naktideula range.

The court also instructed the PCCF to prepare a separate action plan in consultation with the power distribution companies to prevent such incidents.

During the hearing, the Joint Task Force (JTF) informed the court that in the past two months, 18 elephants and 20 people have died. The JTF highlighted the need to enhance compensation for victims of human-elephant conflicts, proposing an increase from ₹4 lakh to ₹6 lakh, to be disbursed within 40 days of an incident.

On elephant corridors, the court was informed that 14 corridors have been identified, of which four have been notified.

ment to the voters during polls.

When petitioner-in-person KA Paul said he filed the PIL, the bench said, "You have interesting PILs. How do you get these brilliant ideas?"

The petitioner said he is the president of an organisation which has rescued over three lakh orphans and 40 lakh widows.

"Why are you getting into this political arena? Your area of work is very different," the bench retorted.

After Paul revealed he had been to over 150 countries, the bench asked him whether each of the nations had ballot paper voting or used electronic voting.

## B'lore man kills lover, spends day with corpse

AGENCIES

**Bangalore, Nov 26:** In a ghastly and inhuman act that came to light in the Karnataka capital Tuesday, a man stabbed his lover to death and then spent an entire day with her corpse in a rented room before coolly strolling out and disappearing, police said.

The incident was reported from a service apartment located in Indiranagar police station limits of Bangalore, and the deceased woman was identified as Maya Gogoi from Assam.

According to police, the accused, identified as Aarav Harni, is on the run and the police have launched a manhunt to apprehend him.

Gogoi was employed in a private firm and residing in the HSR Layout locality. Maya and Aarav booked a room in a service apartment Saturday, police said.

As per police, the crime occurred Monday, and Harni escaped from the service apartment Tuesday morning and took a cab. The incident had come to light later in the day.

Indiranagar police rushed to the spot along with the dog squad and forensic science experts and launched their investigation.

The police have collected CCTV footage of Gogoi and Harni entering the service apartment normally November 23. Following the stabbing, Harni sat smoking in front of the dead body and only left the next morning.

The police are probing whether the killer had plans to cut the body into pieces and transport it outside as he had spent a day with the dead body.

## Amur falcon from Manipur reaches Kenya via Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal, Nov 26:** An Amur falcon that was radio-tagged by scientists of Wildlife Institute of India (WII) in Manipur's Tamenglong district has entered Kenya, via coastal Odisha, and is heading towards Tsavo East National Park, according to a scientist.

Suresh Kumar, a scientist of Dehradun-based WII, informed PTI that the Amur falcon named 'Chiuluan 2' has crossed Somalia and entered Kenya.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Tamenglong, Kharibam Hitler Singh said that two Amur falcons which arrived in

Manipur from Siberian region October 12 were captured by a team of Tamenglong forest division and local volunteers under the supervision of Suresh Kumar from Chiuluan roosting site.

The winged species were radio-tagged by the WII scientists in Tamenglong district. The male bird was named 'Chiuluan 2' and the female 'Guangram', after two important roosting villages in Tamenglong district.

"Chiuluan 2' was released November 8 after it was tagged with satellite transmitters. It reached the coastal areas of Orissa November 15 after a non-stop flight. From there

it went to Maharashtra and eventually crossed the Arabian Sea to reach the Somalia-Kenya borders," Singh said.

The female bird 'Guangram' is, however, yet to leave Manipur, he added.

Amur falcon is a small raptor of the falcon family. It breeds in south-eastern Siberia and Northern China. To escape from the harsh winter of Siberia and Northern China the birds travel a distance of around 14,500 km to head for the wintering grounds in Southern

and East African coasts. In April-May they start their return journey, said the DFO.

The birds make a stop-over in Nagaland, Manipur and a few other areas of North East region while on their way to Africa. An Amur falcon, locally known as 'Akhuaipuina', roosts for an average of 45 days where they engage in feeding for the arduous journey ahead, Singh said.

The radio tagging programme of Amur falcons

**The objective of radio-tagging Amur falcons is to study the migratory route of one of the world's longest-travelling birds**



# leisure



## ANOTHER SEXUAL ASSAULT CHARGE AGAINST DIDDY

Rapper Diddy, 54, is awaiting trial on sex trafficking and racketeering charges in New York, and on top of the slew of cases he is already facing from alleged victims, a woman has now come forward to claim she was sexually assaulted at one of his now-notorious 'White Parties'.

## CHER 'SHOCKED' AFTER FINDING HER REAL NAME

Music legend Cher shared that she was stunned when she obtained a copy of her birth certificate and found out her real name had been incorrectly registered as Cheryl. The 78-year-old singer was raised as Cheryl Sarkisian, but in 1979, she applied for a copy of her birth certificate.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
For no reason whatsoever, you may clam up today. Of course, you will give credit to others wherever they've contributed. But you need to be more generous than that, says Ganesha, and share the secrets of your success with your compatriots.

**TAURUS**  
This is a bright, rosy day for students and scholars, particularly who are engaged in, or are looking forward to higher studies, specializing in a particular professional stream. This is a great day for making plans for higher studies abroad. Do not miss this opportunity. Plans made today are likely to materialize.

**GEMINI**  
It is better for you to swim with the current in all of today's dealings, suggests Ganesha. This will help you effortlessly deal with even the most morbid state of affairs. No need to be a hero, today. Pleasure is the key word for you. Your performance will be satisfying at work, and more than satisfying back home.

**CANCER**  
A shopping spree with your darling is likely to be the highlight of the day, even though you will be paying for almost everything. Though you have decided to be this lavish out of sheer love, your sweetheart will more than return the favour with a sweaty thank you 'return gift' in the evening.

**LEO**  
Seems today is just one of those days when things simply refuse to go your way. It happens to the best of us, says Ganesha, and there isn't much one can do about it except slog it out and find that hidden reserve of moral support. On a brighter note, Ganesha observes the possibility of you meeting the right person who shall help you rekindle your imagination.

**VIRGO**  
Today is the right time to start a new project, while older projects which had been postponed will be finished. Over the next week you will try to boost your energy levels. Parties will lead to a lot of entertainment and joy. Ganesha says children will bring home pride which will put you in even higher spirits.

**LIBRA**  
The clock ticks on, but chances are it can hardly beat you in the race, thanks to your prompt and sincere efforts. Today, you shall be a paragon of excellence. However, Ganesha waves the red flag of caution: it always pays to be safe rather than sorry. Keep your eyes open and pay attention to the fine print before signing any contract or paper.

**SCORPIO**  
Add a pinch of innovation and inventiveness to your daily working style. There shall be order in the chaotic way you perform your tasks - though not apparent to others. Revitalise yourself and plunge into work with new-found zest and vigour, advises Ganesha.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Today, find yourself driving all your thoughts and actions towards your family. You will also spend some superb time with your dearie and discuss intimate matters. A relaxing day today as you spend time with your friends and family, chilling out and having a good laugh or two.

**CAPRICORN**  
Now is the perfect time to showcase your talents and skills. You are all geared up to hit your target and do everything that is needed to be done. Your efforts will not go in vain as they will bear fruits for sure, says Ganesha. You will spend quality time with your family member and catch with old friends.

**AQUARIUS**  
It's a day you may want to spend with yourself. But it may still not bring the desired peace and tranquility. An unpleasant situation may force you to deal with reality, says Ganesha. You now realise how much strength you derive from your devotion to God.

**PISCES**  
Of late, the harder you try, the more it seems you have to do. You are likely to put your foot down today and spend some time taking care of yourself and playing truant with your responsibilities. Recharge your batteries fully while you are at it, says Ganesha.

## Nayanthara shares her career 'lowest point'

Mumbai: Top star Nayanthara recently shared the lower point of her career.

A glimpse from *Nayanthara Beyond The Fairytale* was shared on Netflix's Instagram handle. She talked about how she was body-shamed for wearing certain outfits for the movie.

"The lowest point was the film *Ghajini* released in 2005 starring Suriya. There were days when I used to see all these comments and people were like why is she even acting? Why is she even there in the film? She is so fat. You can't say such things. You can talk about the performance part of it. Maybe I was not good," the actress was heard saying in the clip.

Nayanthara said that she did what her director AR Murugadoss asked her to do. "I was doing exactly what my director told me to do and I was wearing exactly what he wanted me to wear. So, I was a newcomer. I never had a say in it," shared the Jawan actress.

The actress recalled how the entire "drama" was about the "bikini scene" she did.

"The whole drama was about the bikini scene that I did, which was like an issue for everyone. But I thought that's how everything changes, right? I did it not because I wanted to prove a point, I did because my director told me that was the scene. It was necessary so I did it. And I think it kind of worked for me," she added.



A scene from movie *Ghajini*

## Ash: Stand up for your worth

Mumbai: Amidst chatter about her divorce, global head-turner Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has talked about street harassment and said to "never compromise your worth".

For a campaign video of a beauty brand she is a brand ambassador of, Aishwarya shared the video on her Instagram stories. In the clip, she said to go head-on with the problem rather than avoiding it.

Aishwarya said, "Street harassment. How do you deal with it? Avoid eye contact? No. Look the problem directly in the eyes. Hold your head high. Feminine and feminist. My body, my worth. Never compromise your worth. Do not doubt yourself. Stand up for your worth. Don't blame your dress or your lipstick. Street harassment is never your fault."

For the caption, she wrote: "On this International Day for the elimination of violence against women, join @lorealparis's Stand Up against street harassment training program. We're all worth it."

She added the hashtag- We Stand Up."

Talking about work, Aishwarya was last seen in *Ponniyin Selvan 2*, directed by Mani Ratnam. It is the sequel to the 2022 film of the same name.



### 26/11 TERROR ATTACK

## VIDEO OF SALMAN GIVING CLEAN CHIT TO PAK GOES VIRAL

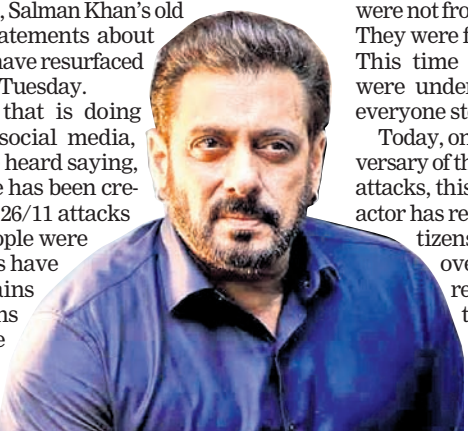
Mumbai: As the nation remembered the 26/11 attacks on Mumbai, Salman Khan's old controversial statements about the tragic event have resurfaced on social media, Tuesday.

In the video that is doing the rounds on social media, Salman could be heard saying, "Too much hype has been created around the 26/11 attacks because elite people were targeted. Attacks have happened in trains and small towns too, but no one talked about it so much."

He added,

"Everybody knows that the Pakistani government was not behind it and it was a terrorist attack. More than anything, our security had failed. We have had lot of attacks earlier, and all of them were not from Pakistan. They were from within. This time Taj, Oberoi were under attack, so, everyone stood up."

Today, on the 16th anniversary of the horrific 26/11 attacks, this old video of the actor has resurfaced with netizens trolling Salman over his controversial remarks. The Sultan actor had later apologised for his remarks, clarifying that his words were "twisted" out of context. Salman also issued an apology on his X handle.



## Reason why Urvashi still unmarried

Mumbai: Urvashi Rautela's fans have been eagerly waiting to see her as a bride. However, the actress recently shared that she won't be able to marry for another 2.5 years.

In an interview with Instant Bollywood, Urvashi explained that she is staying single due to something called Kathni Yog. She mentioned that people going through Kathni Yog should avoid marriage during this period, which lasts for 2.5 years.

So, she still has some time before she can consider getting married.

Kathni Yog refers to a period in one's horoscope that brings specific obstacles and challenges. This 2.5-year phase is believed to affect important life decisions, particularly marriage. During this time, it's advised not to marry, as it is thought to bring difficulties in personal relationships.

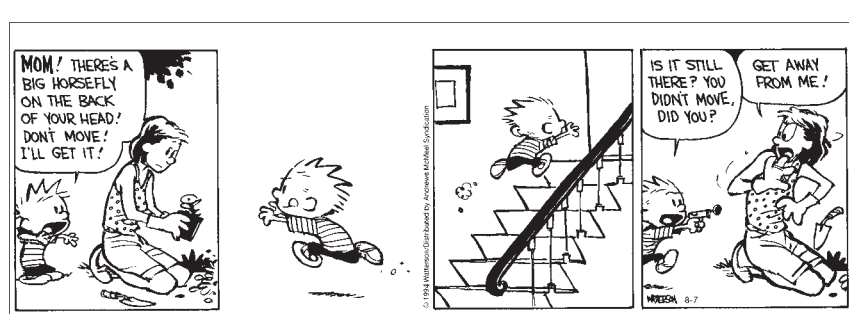
Earlier, there were rumours circulating about Urvashi and cricketer Rishabh Pant being involved. However, the actress quickly dismissed these claims in an interview with a national TV channel. She emphasized that the rumours were baseless, stating that she prefers to keep her personal life private.



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

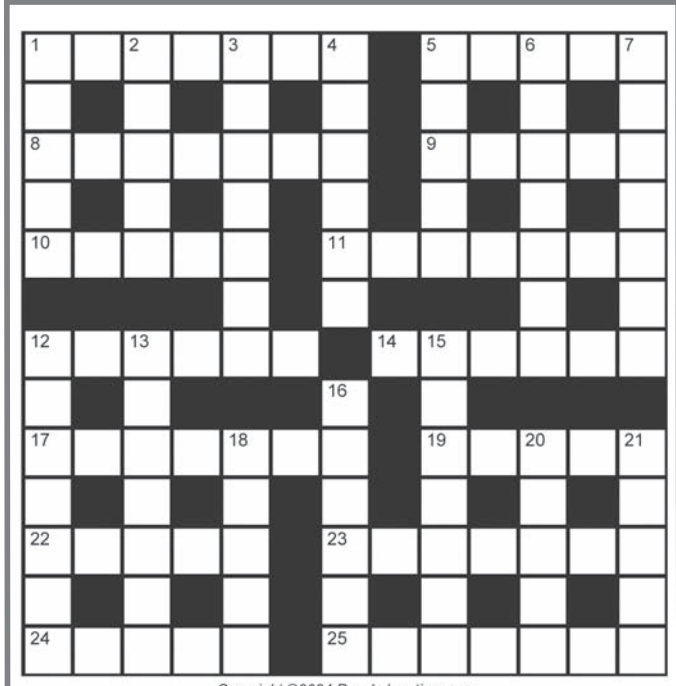


### BREVITY



### FUN post

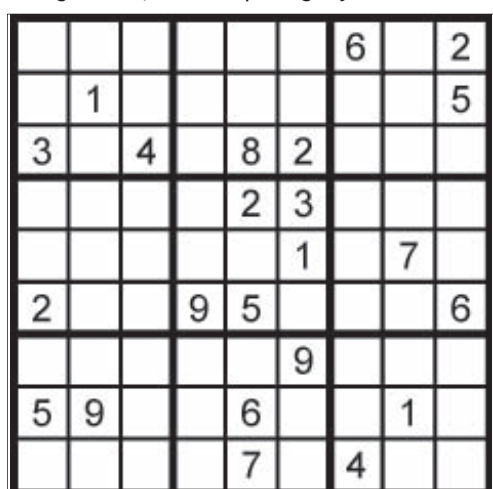
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Workspace, for some
  - 5 Ladies' man
  - 8 Copy
  - 9 Back street
  - 10 Port city in northwestern Belgium
  - 11 Sweet treat
  - 12 Baklava, e.g.
  - 14 Medicants
  - 17 Martial art
  - 19 Tiny tiffs
  - 22 Shed feathers
  - 23 Laurence of *As You Like It*
  - 24 Copy
  - 25 Spire of church
  - Down**
  - 1 Adhere
  - 2 Wedding party member
  - 3 Drink holder
  - 4 Vigour
  - 5 Camelot, to Arthur
  - 6 Jungle fever
  - 7 Mountain peak in northeast Greece
  - 12 Sleepwear
  - 13 Temporary stay
  - 15 Taking a breather
  - 16 Sky lights
  - 18 Fraulein, e.g.
  - 20 Excuse
  - 21 Femme fatale

### SUDOKU

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

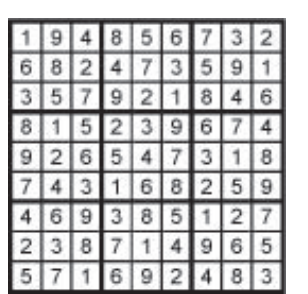


### SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

**Bhubaneswar:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold a roadshow and is likely to address a gathering near Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here Friday, state BJP president Manmohan Samal said, Tuesday. "The PM will reach Bhubaneswar around 4.15pm November 29. He would be accorded a warm welcome, following which he may address a gathering near the airport," he said, adding that the PM will hold a roadshow from Airport Square to the Governor House Square. The PM is coming to Odisha on a three-day visit to attend the all-India Conference of Director General of Police and Inspector General of Police here. The event, which will also be attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah and National Security Advisor Ajit Kumar Doval, will be held in Bhubaneswar November 29, 30 and December 1.

# downtown



**COURTESY CALL:** Lt Gen Ajay Chandpuria, AVSM, VSM, General Officer Commanding Vajra Corps pays a visit to Orissa POST and Dharitri office, Tuesday. Seen in the photograph are the twin publications' Editor Tathagata Satpathy, Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy and staffers

## Constitution has given equal rights to all: CM

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday said all should express gratitude to the architects of the Constitution, which has ensured equal rights to everyone irrespective of caste, creed and religion.

The Chief Minister took part in 'Ama Samvidhan, Ama Swabhimani' (Our Constitution, our pride), a 'padyatra' organised by the Sports and Youth Services department, and garlanded the statue of Dr BR Ambedkar at AG Square as part of the Constitution Day celebrations.

Addressing a gathering, Majhi said the Constitution has given respect and rights to everyone irrespective of caste, creed and religion. It has given equal rights to all sections of society. "Therefore, we should express our gratitude to the architects of our Constitution," he said.

Noting that the Constitution is the main source of unity and integrity of the country, Majhi said all should observe the

fundamental duties enshrined in the Constitution. "All must be conscious of the sovereignty, unity and solidarity of the country at every moment," he added.

The Chief Minister also said that all should respect the National Flag and National Anthem.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Odisha Assembly Naveen Patnaik asked people to renew their pledge to uphold the ideals enshrined in the Constitution and protect its sanctity in letter and spirit.

"Salute to the great visionaries who framed the Constitution for the largest democracy in the world. On #ConstitutionDay, let's renew our pledge to uphold the ideals enshrined in the Constitution and protect its sanctity in letter and spirit," said the former chief minister in a post on X.

The Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution at the Central Hall of Parliament November 26, 1949. The Constitution came into force January 26, 1950.

## CM for disaster-resistant infra



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** With Odisha frequently getting affected by natural calamities such as cyclones and floods, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday urged the Centre to build disaster-resistant sustainable infrastructure in the state for its overall development.

Majhi held a meeting with members of an inter-ministerial Central team, which wended up its three-day visit to the state to assess the damage caused by cyclone Dana.

The seven-member Central team, headed by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, PK Rai, during the tour, visited the worst-hit areas of Bhadrak, Kendrapara and Balasore districts to assess the damage.

During the discussion, Majhi emphasised the development of sustainable infrastructure for disaster management along with assistance for restoration following cyclone Dana.

Stating that Odisha has been facing natural disasters like cyclones and floods every year, Majhi said, "While the government is successful in saving the lives of the people, various

► CM BATS FOR SETTING UP OF A MODERN DISASTER MANAGEMENT CENTRE IN BHUBANESWAR WITH NECESSARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNION GOVERNMENT

► SEVEN-MEMBER INTER-MINISTERIAL CENTRAL TEAM, HEADED BY MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS JOINT SECRETARY PK RAI, PRAISES ODISHA GOVERNMENT FOR EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF CYCLONE DANA

► R&DM MINISTER SURESH PUJARI SAYS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF ODISHA CAN BE ACCELERATED ONLY IF A SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE IS CREATED

infrastructures are extensively damaged and a huge amount of money has to be invested for its reconstruction."

Therefore, there is a need to develop disaster-resistant sustainable infrastructure, he said.

The Chief Minister emphasised measures such as laying underground electricity cables in coastal districts, construction of embankments along the coast and large-scale afforestation.

He also proposed the setting up of a modern disaster management centre in Bhubaneswar and that the Union

government provide necessary support in this direction.

Participating in the discussion, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said that the economic development of Odisha can be accelerated only if a sustainable infrastructure is created.

Rai praised the state government for good management of cyclone Dana.

The team visited the Dana-affected areas in Rajnagar block Monday to assess the damage caused by the cyclonic storm and evaluate the affected areas.

Cyclone Dana made a landfall at Habalikhati Island within the Bhitarkanika National Park under Rajnagar block October 25.

The team inspected damaged houses, roads, crops, and fish farms affected by Dana. The team members also interacted with residents impacted by the storm.

Many affected farmers met the team members and showed them damaged paddy crops at various locations. The farmers alleged that the district administration prepared the cyclone assessment reports without conducting field visits to the affected areas.

## Kernel deaths, 'insult to Constitution' rock House

WINTER SESSION: DAY I

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** The Odisha Assembly Tuesday witnessed ruckus as Opposition members raised the issues of alleged insult to the Constitution and death of three tribal women in Kandhamal after consuming mango kernel gruel, forcing the Speaker to adjourn the House twice.

After obituary references were made, Speaker Surama Padhy allowed the Question Hour to begin. However, the BJD and Congress MLAs trooped into the Well of the House to protest.

Alleging that two words – 'secular' and 'socialist' – are missing in the replica of the Constitution's Preamble which was on display near one of the entry points of the House, BJD members demanded that the government correct this immediately as November 26 is celebrated as the Constitution Day in the country.

Senior BJD MLA Ranendra Pratap Swain wanted to speak on the alleged insult to the Constitution, but he was not allowed. As the din continued in the Well of the House, the Speaker adjourned the proceedings for the first time till 12.25pm. When the House reassembled, a similar scene was witnessed, forcing Padhy to adjourn the House again till 4pm.

Outside the House, Swain said, "Yesterday, the Supreme Court rejected PILs to delete 'secular' and 'socialist' from Constitution's Preamble. And today, the two words are missing in the Constitution's Preamble displayed in the Assembly."

The Supreme Court Monday dismissed the pleas challenging the 1976 amendment to the Constitution adding terms 'socialist', 'secular' and 'integrity' to the Preamble. The top court



## 40 elephants, 5 leopards died in 5 months: Min

Forty elephants, five leopards and 200 other wildlife species have died in Odisha in about five months from July, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia told the Assembly, Tuesday.

Responding to a written question of BJD member Tusharkanti Behera, the Forest Minister said departmental probes have been conducted into the deaths of elephants and leopards.

He said the wild animals died between July 1 and November 20 this year.

At least 26 people have been arrested in connection with the elephant deaths, and two Forest guards and a for-

ester have been placed under suspension for dereliction of duties, the Minister said. Fourteen people were arrested in case of leopard deaths, he added.

Khuntia also informed the House that special initiatives such as upgradation of habitats, tree plantation, creation of artificial water bodies, safety from wild-fire, anti-poaching camps, bird protection camps, forest patrolling, monitoring movements of wild animals, anti-poaching squad deployment and public awareness are being undertaken to prevent elephant and leopard fatalities in the state, he said.

Replying to another ques-

tion of BJD member Sanatan Mahakud, the Minister said elephant attacks in the state have also left 509 people injured during the period.

Elephant herds have destroyed crops over 73,620 acres of land and damaged 10,259 houses.

Khuntia stated that people also face attacks from wild animals other than elephants.

In Kendrapara district, crocodiles killed 22 people over the past five years, particularly in the Brahmani, Baitarani, and Kharasota rivers.

All such incidents took place when the water level rose in these rivers during monsoon, he added.

Earlier, Leader of the House and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi moved an obituary reference and the House paid tributes to six of its ex-members - Samit Dey, Dhaneswar Majhi, Makardwaj Pradhan, Niranjan Pradhan, Utkal Keshari Parida and Purna Chandra Majhi.

## SC laments distribution of free ration

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** The Supreme Court Tuesday flagged the difficulties surrounding the distribution of freebies and said COVID times were different when distressed migrant workers were provided the relief.

In a judgment June 29, 2021, and subsequent orders, the top court passed a slew of directions to the authorities asking them to undertake welfare measures, including giving ration cards to all migrant workers, who were distressed during the COVID-19 pandemic, registered with the 'e-Shram' portal.

The portal was a comprehensive national database of unorganised workers

launched by the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment with the primary aim to facilitate delivery of welfare benefits and social security measures to unorganised sector workers across the country.

On Tuesday, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan was informed by advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for an NGO seeking free ration for all the migrant workers, the court directed the Centre to provide free ration and ration cards to all those workers, who are registered on the portal.

Justice Kant said, "Ration

card is an important official document which is associated with the identity and entitlement of a person but the difficulties arise when we indulge in freebies. COVID time was something different but now, we have to look into it."

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, objected to Bhushan's submission and argued the government was bound by the National Food Security Act of 2013 and whatever entitlement was statutorily provided would be given.

He said there were certain NGOs who did not work on the ground during the pandemic and he could state on affidavit

that the petitioner NGO was one among them.

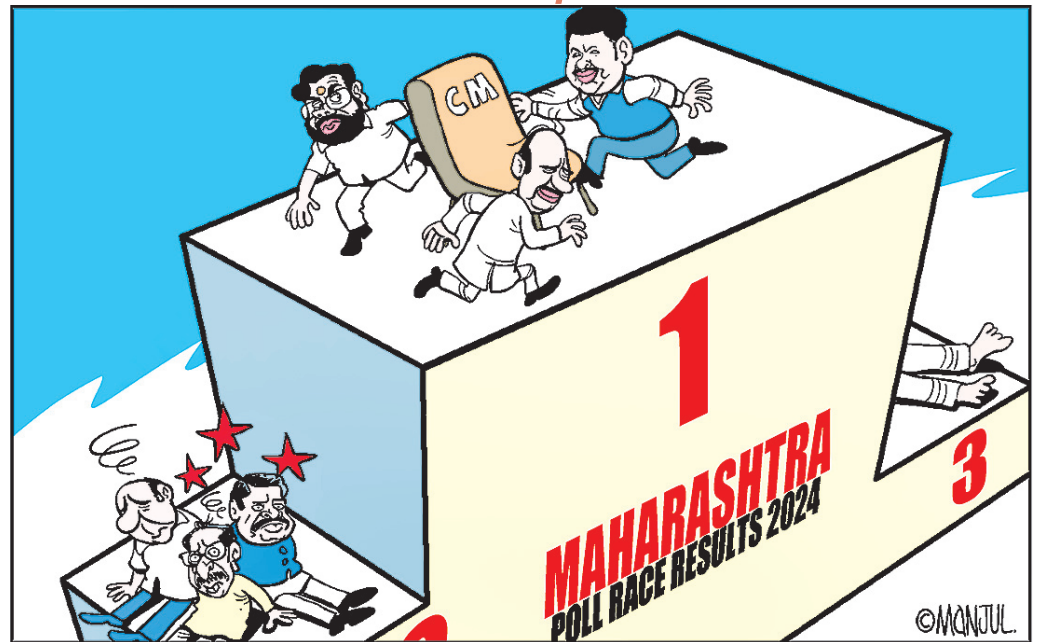
Bhushan said as the Centre relied on data from the 2011 census for migrant workers and hadn't conducted a census in 2021, actual figures were not available with it.

"There is a jump in figures by at least 20 per cent and that is why this court had directed that despite the mandate of Food Security Act, the government can go beyond the ambit to provide relief to the migrant workers registered on e-shram portal," said Bhushan.

The bench said the litigation was not an adversarial one and the court would try to find out a common ground to accommodate both the parties.

The matter will be heard December 9.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



NATIONAL MILK DAY

'Odisha to double milk production in 5 years'



Odisha's current daily milk production is of 72 lakh liters, which falls short of the per capita requirement of 300 ml, with only 160 ml being produced

State government to enhance milk production through several initiatives, including the provision of livestock healthcare services via 314 Mobile Veterinary Units

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: The state government has launched the Mukhyamantri Kamadhenu Yojana with the aim of doubling the state's milk production in the next five years, said Gokulananda Mallik, Minister of Fisheries and Animal Resources Development (FARD), at an event organised to mark National Milk Day Tuesday.

The minister further said that financial assistance of up to ₹1 crore is being provided under the Mukhyamantri Krushi Udyoga Yojana for establishing dairy units and milk processing

Bhaskar Pradhan gets Gopal Ratna Award

Bhubaneswar: Bhaskar Pradhan, an artificial insemination technician from Subarnapur district was honoured with the National Gopal Ratna Award 2024 for being the best Artificial Insemination Technician. The award was presented to him during a ceremony held in New Delhi Tuesday, organised by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Resources, and Dairying. The award was presented by Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Lalan Singh), Cabinet Minister, along with SP Singh Baghel, Minister of State. This marks the third consecutive year that Odisha has won the prestigious award, a significant achievement that reflects the state's continued commitment to promoting excellence in the dairy sector.

plants. Paying homage to Verghese Kurien, the father of India's White Revolution, Mallik highlighted Odisha's current daily milk production of 72 lakh liters, which falls short of the per capita requirement of 300 ml, with only 160 ml being produced.

"To address this gap, the state government is focusing on enhancing milk production through several initiatives, including the provision of livestock healthcare services via 314 Mobile Veterinary Units," the minister said.

In a bid to increase profitability for dairy farmers, artificial insemination is being carried out using sex-sorted semen, alongside assistance for fodder cultivation, vaccination, and deworming of animals. Recently, the government provided ₹8.96 crore as the first phase of assistance to 66 registered goshalas for the financial year 2024-25. These goshalas currently shelter approximately 20,000 destitute cattle.

Speaking at the event held at the Veterinary College Auditorium of OUAT, Principal Sec-

retary of FARD Suresh Kumar Vashishth stated that around 3 lakh dairy farmers are benefitting from 3,700 milk producers' cooperative societies under OMFED. These farmers receive subsidies on feed and training in advanced dairy farming practices.

The programme also included a felicitation ceremony for 25 successful dairy farmers and entrepreneurs. Other dignitaries, including OMFED President Kishore Chandra Pradhan, OMFED CMD Vijaya Amrita Kulanga, ARD director Ramasish Hazra, SLBC convener Gautam Patra, Dean of Veterinary College, OUAT Susena Kumar Panda and additional director Ashok Tripathy addressed the gathering.

A technical session during the event focused on the current state of milk production in Odisha, government interventions, and livestock healthcare services. The Mukhyamantri Kamadhenu Yojana is expected to serve as a transformative initiative for Odisha's dairy sector, fostering growth and empowering farmers across the state.



RAISING VOICE: Members of All India Federation of Electricity Employees, stage a demonstration at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, to press for fulfilment of their demands

Govt orders early release for 14 life-term convicts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: On the occasion of Constitution Day, the Odisha government ordered the premature remission of fourteen life-term convicts serving sentences for serious crimes such as dacoity, murder, and sexual assault. The remission order was issued Monday, followed recommendations made by the Directorate of Prisons and Correctional Services. According to a senior official, three of the convicts are still awaiting final approval. The remission order highlights the distribution of the released convicts across various jails. Koraput Circle Jail leads with the highest remission, releasing four life-term convicts. The Biju Patnaik Open Air Jail in Jhampur follows with three convicts, while Rourkela Special Jail releases two. One convict each is released from Sambalpur, Bhubaneswar, Phulbani, Bonaigarh, and Deogarh Special Jails.

The release order, addressed to the DIG of Prisons and Correctional Services, references the powers granted under Section 432 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and Section 473 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, which empowers the government to remit the unexpired portion of a sentence and order premature release.

Children's fest 'Mahak' unveiled

POST NEWS NETWORK



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida Tuesday emphasised the importance of shaping a bright future for children, which she called the nation's most valuable asset, while inaugurating the state-level Children's Festival 'Mahak'. Reflecting on Mahatma Gandhi's words that the future of the country lies in the hands of its children, Parida urged a collective effort to ensure their well-being and growth to build a beautiful nation.

During her speech, Parida highlighted the blessings of orphaned children, noting that the PM CARES scheme launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the Covid-19 pandemic has been crucial in supporting orphaned children. She also mentioned the work of Child Care Institutes (CCIs), run by the Women and Child Development department, in providing care

and support to these children.

Law, Works, and Excise Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, who attended the event as the guest of honour, stressed the importance of offering special attention and affection to children deprived of parental love. He praised the efforts of the CCIs in nurturing these children and helping them gain respect and dignity in society. Harichandan also called for greater government focus on the welfare of orphaned children.

The event also saw Higher Education, and Sports and Youth Services Minister Suryabanshi Suraj speak about the potential of children from marginalised and rural areas. Suraj suggested creating a digital platform for showcasing their talents and promoting their handicrafts globally, ensuring their recognition and development. He called for nurturing these children's talents and giving them opportunities to flourish despite early struggles.

Memorial meet for Samir Dey held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Nov 26: A memorial meeting was recently organised at Christ College, Cuttack, to pay tribute to former Christ College Students' Union president and former minister Samir Dey, following his demise. The event, chaired by alumnus and former student leader Om Prakash Ray, was coordinated by AGA Satyabrata Mohanty.

Prominent alumni and former student leaders gathered to honour Dey's legacy and recall his remarkable contributions to the institution and the community. Attendees included Salil Kumar Ghosh, Pradeep Kumar Pattnaik, Yogendra Satapathy, Ashok Mohanty, Saroj Kumar Satapathy, Krishna Keshav Mishra, Subrata Kumar Nayak, Tapaswini Sinha, Tapan Sahu, Ashish Kumar Sahu, Deepak Nayak, Manas Ranjan Das, Barada Das, Asit Kumar Jena, Hemant Kumar Behera, Bijay Kumar Behera, Gitanjali Behura, Corporator Basant Kumar Behera, and Rashmi Ranjan Senapati.



Several speakers reflected on Dey's impactful leadership and his contributions to Cuttack's development. A resolution was unanimously passed during the meeting, urging the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) to construct a memorial in his honour within the city.

The proceedings were facilitated by advocates Sudhiranjan Mohanty and Jagannath Mohanty, concluding with a heartfelt expression of gratitude for Dey's enduring legacy.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Bidyut Kumar Mohanty, S/o-Late Baikuntha Mohanty, resident of At/PO.- Kapilprasad, Sundarpada, P.S.- Airfield, Bhubaneswar-751002, District.- Khordha declare by this affidavit No.-737, dtd.-26.11.2024 that now onwards I shall be known as Bidut Kumar Mohanty for all future purposes.

Before Executive Magistrate, Sanakhemundi, Ganjam, I Kasturi Bisoyi (51) W/o Sima Bisoyi, At - Sundhipalli, P.O. - Ambagam, P.S. - Digapahandi in my voter ID and other documents, but in my Aadhaar Card wrongly mentioned as Jadi Pradhan D/o Raju Pradhan Both Kasturi Bisoyi and Jadi Pradhan as one and same person. Henceforth, I shall be known as Kasturi Bisoyi for all future purposes.

H&UD secy attends affordable housing workshop in Seoul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Department's Principal Secretary Usha Padhee Tuesday attended a four-day international workshop on affordable housing in Seoul, South Korea.

Organised by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the workshop aims to bring together experts and leaders from

various countries to discuss strategies and best practices in affordable housing development.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MHUA) has nominated Padhee to represent India at the event. The workshop is expected to cover a range of topics, including policy frameworks, financing mechanisms, and community partnerships in the context of affordable housing projects.

Samanta receives 61st doctorate

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: Well-known social worker and KIIT and KISS Founder Achyuta Samanta was conferred with his 61st honorary doctorate by UPES University, Dehradun at the 22nd convocation ceremony Tuesday.

The recognition is a testament to Samanta's significant contribution to society through education. The uni-



versity highlighted his exceptional efforts in these areas

while bestowing the honour.

Receiving the honour, Samanta said, "For the last 33 years, I have been working relentlessly for the people in society.

This 61st honorary doctorate will be remembered by me for all times to come."

Lord Karan Bilimoria, CBE, DL, a member of the House of Lords in the UK was also presented with an honorary doctorate during the ceremony.

Odisha showcases aromatic rice at IITF-2024

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, Nov 26: The distinctive fragrance of Odisha's aromatic rice has captivated visitors at the India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2024 in New Delhi. The Odisha Mandap, organised by the department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, has become a major attraction, showcasing a variety of agricultural products, including rice, millets, and organic produce.

The spotlight is on Odisha's aromatic rice varieties such as Badshah Bhog, New Kalajeera, and Sugandha, which have drawn significant interest from shoppers. Organic rice cultivated across the state has particularly appealed to health-conscious buyers. "We used to buy basmati rice, but this time, we chose the locally grown New



Kalajeera variety from Odisha. It's amazing to see farmers from our state producing such quality products," said Madhusudan Palai, an Odia resident of New Delhi.

Currently, eight varieties of aromatic rice are cultivated across 13 districts of Odisha. The Agriculture department is providing farmers with tech-

nical assistance and essential inputs to promote cultivation.

"The International Trade Fair offers an excellent platform to showcase Odisha's rich agricultural heritage. Apart from rice, millet-based products are receiving an overwhelming response. Such fairs significantly boost farmers' morale and provide market exposure,"

The spotlight is on aromatic rice varieties such as Badshah Bhog, New Kalajeera, and Sugandha, which have drawn significant interest from shoppers

Products like millet laddus, biscuits, namkeen, and noodles have also picked customers' interest

said Arabinda Kumar Padhee, Principal Secretary of the Agriculture department.

Millet-based items, prepared under the 'Shri Anna Abhiyan' initiative, have also been a highlight at the Odisha Mandap. Products like millet laddus, biscuits, namkeen, and noodles have also picked customers' interest. Kandhamal turmeric, jaggery, and lemon grass oil are other bestsellers at the fair.

"I purchased Kandhamal turmeric and was delighted to

find Kalajeera rice, which is known for its health benefits," said DK Sharma, a visitor from Uttar Pradesh.

Department sources revealed that sales of millets at the Odisha pavilion have risen significantly, from 1.5 quintals last year to an estimated four quintals this year. Similarly, about 28 quintals of aromatic rice varieties are expected to be sold during the fair.

Union Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth and Odisha Legislative Assembly Speaker Surma Padhi were among the dignitaries who visited the Odisha Mandap, appreciating the diverse range of agricultural products on display.

The Odisha Mandap continues to be a vibrant platform, promoting the state's rich culinary and agricultural diversity while empowering local farmers with national exposure.

WEATHER table with BBSR and CTC columns for Max Temp, Min Temp, Humidity, Rainfall, and FORECAST.

MARKET WATCH table with INDEX and VARIATION columns for SENSEX, NIFTY, DOLLAR, EURO, GOLD, and SILVER.

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Narrow road, illegal parking cause frequent accidents near Judia Ghat



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Nov 26: Flawed road diversions causing perennial traffic congestions, and inordinate parking of heavy vehicles are resulting in frequent accidents on National Highway 49 (NH-49) at Judia Ghat near Keonjhar town.

The road, constructed with DMF funds is incapable of handling large vehicles, especially trailers and big container carriers, which find it difficult to turn at the narrow Fire Station junction.

traffic to flow through the Fire Station intersection. This is at the root of the problems," a local said. "We urge the administration to declare the area a no-parking zone to ensure smooth movement of vehicles," said Dilip Sahu, a social activist.

Man awarded 20 years in jail for raping minor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Baripada, Nov 26: A court in Mayurbhanj district sentenced a man to 20 years of imprisonment for raping a 10-year-old girl in 2020.

Neelachal Ispat expansion plans focus on zero liquid discharge

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Nov 26: Tata Steel's Kalinganagar-based plant, Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited (NINL), in this district has unveiled plans to expand its annual production capacity from 1 million tonne to 9.5 million tonne.



Key components of the project include a Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) system and a rainwater harvesting initiative," he added. The expansion will result in a tenfold increase in production capacity with water usage rising proportionately from 400 cubic metres per hour to 4,600 cubic metres per hour.

support the expanded capacity," the official added. He said the emphasis is on minimising environmental impact, guided by the Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) directives.

RTO officials, youths arrested for extortion

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Nov 26: Golanthara Police arrested Tuesday an additional RTO, a junior MVI of Ganjam Regional Transport Office, and three youths for extorting money from truck drivers near Girisola checkpost on National Highway-16 in Ganjam District.

Ganja worth ₹50L seized, one arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Nov 26: Sundargarh police personnel seized Tuesday more than 543kg of ganja worth ₹50 lakh from a truck that was going to Mathura in Uttar Pradesh. One person, identified as Niranjan Pradhan, 40, a resident of Thakurgarh in Angul district has been arrested.

was coming from Jharsuguda and it would pass through Sundargarh district. We intercepted it on a bridge near Lohardhipa. The vehicle was searched in front of an executive magistrate and the 20 packets of the contraband item were found hidden under the aluminium rolls. Those were seized and the driver was arrested," Divakar said.

Politics heats up over NODC proposal

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

Rourkela/Sundargarh, Nov 26: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's statement suggesting the inclusion of Sundargarh district in the Northern Odisha Development Council (NODC) has evoked sharp reaction.

an apology from the CM. Sundargarh BJD MLA Jogesh Singh criticised the CM, labeling his statement as "irresponsible" and accused him of attempting to divide the state.



Another leader, Benumadhab Tripathy, highlighted Sundargarh's consistent marginalisation and termed the CM's statement as "highly objectionable."

But it has shifted from here. And now, Sundargarh is going to be part of NODC! This is not acceptable," he said. The Opposition's sentiments were echoed by prominent figures and residents.

Woman critical in jumbo attack

Rupra Road:

A woman sustained critical injuries after she was attacked by a wild elephant at Damapadar village, under Rupra Road forest section, in Kalahandi district Tuesday. The victim has been identified as Purnami Bewa, 40, a resident of the village.

Farmers, labourers protest in Ganjam dist

Chhatrapur:

In response to the nation-wide protests by the farmers and labourers of different unions including the Samyukta Kisan Morcha and Bharatiya Majdoor Sangh, the Ganjam district committees of various labour and farmers' unions staged a protest Tuesday, the Indian 'Constitution Day'.

The police official also added that this has been a huge breakthrough for the cops. He informed that many more arrests are on the cards following this haul.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER HEAD WORKS DIVISION, SAMAL INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) E-mail ID: ee.hwd.samal@gmail.com

Bank of India REQUIREMENT OF PREMISES Bank of India requires suitable premises preferably on ground floor with appropriate frontage and sufficient parking space on lease basis for opening of New Branch - Phulnakhara.

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SUNDARAM HOME DEMAND NOTICE (Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act 2002) The under mentioned parties are hereby informed that the Company has initiated proceedings against each of you under the SARFAESI ACT, 2002, and that the notices under Section 13(2) of the Sarfaesi Act sent to each of you separately by Regd. Post Ack. due have been returned unserved.

FOCUS POLITICS

# BJP IN DRIVER'S SEAT



The BJP knew all along that the primary roadblock to it achieving pre-eminent status in Maharashtra was not so much the Congress but the regional parties

Marathi asmita, a Mumbai-based sons-of-the-soil movement but gradually spreading into rural areas under a wider Maharashtra Hindu identity. Even while being allies, the BJP and the Sena were competing for a similar vote base unlike, for example, the other long-standing alliance between the BJP and the Akalis in Punjab. For 25 years the saffron alliance held together because the BJP needed the Shiv Sena's local connect to build its own standing. The RSS, after all, was identified for decades as an upper caste, Brahminical group in Maharashtra: aligning with the Shiv Sena gave the sangh parivar a more popular folk appeal. The NCP of Sharad Pawar was enfeebled by using state power to slowly but surely bring all its cash-rich leaders within the enforcement agency scanner. It is no surprise that when the break in the NCP took place in 2023, a number of those who switched sides were facing Enforcement Directorate cases. The break in the Sena, on the other hand, was caused by a combination of personal ambition, agency pressure and ideological rupturing. A Shiv Sena aligning with Congress was an alliance fraught with internal contradictions, one which left the average Shiv Sainik feeling confused and even betrayed. Could the party which had claimed credit for bringing down the Babri Masjid now be aligned with the party that was accused of questioning the existence of Ram? An ambitious Eknath Shinde, egged on by

the BJP, used this ideological dissonance to position himself as a true inheritor of Balasaheb's legacy even as Uddhav Thackeray struggled to hold his flock together. For BJP, the Sena's vertical split was just the opportunity they were looking to capitalize on. In the Modi-Shah era in particular, the BJP has steadily moved away from the more inclusive coalition dharma of the Vajpayee-Advani period to establish itself as the dominant player in any alliance with a regional party. Two consecutive Lok Sabha majorities have given the party the self-belief that they can now set the terms of engagement with state parties. In Assam, the Assam Gano Parishad (AGP) is now very much the junior partner in the BJP-led government. In Goa, the once dominant Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP) is now a minor appendage to the BJP. In Karnataka, the JD (S) is the subordinate member of the alliance. Even in Bihar, where Nitish Kumar is Chief Minister, the BJP is only bidding its time before it calls the shots. The allies that remain within the NDA fold - be it Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti or Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam - remain within the foldout of compulsion not any ideological conviction. Even Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar, both canny politicians, are well aware of who is the Big Boss in Maharashtra now. An energetic Shinde used the Ladki Bahin scheme

of cash transfers to women to prop himself up as a 'common man' welfare chief minister. But while Shinde's popularity has dramatically increased, he remains dependent on the BJP's patronage. Similarly, Ajit Pawar may have stepped out of his uncle's shadow but he knows that the BJP can short-circuit him at a time of its choosing. In a sense, the state allies are like local battalion commanders who must pay obeisance to the generals of a domineering Centre. Which leaves open the question: will we now see an opposition-mukt Maharashtra like is the case with its western neighbour Gujarat? The BJP's conquest of Gujarat was easier because there was no regional party to resist its spread. In Maharashtra, the socially progressive legacy of home-grown icons like Shahu-Phule-Ambedkar challenged the BJP's Hindutva ideological core. Centrist and left-leaning political forces were at the heart of the politics of backward caste and Dalit assertion, making it difficult for the sangh parivar to hold sway. Now, the 2024 election verdict has revealed the limitations of this once robust legacy, one which has been denuded by the cash and carry politics of stark opportunism. Today, both Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray stare at an uncertain future, both having lost their grip over their parties. The Congress bested by the BJP in as many as 62 of the 75 direct contests has also lost the momentum it seemed to gain with its Lok Sabha success in Maharashtra. By contrast, the BJP can now use the next five years to establish its supremacy over the state's politics. Maharashtra may not be a Hindutva laboratory like Gujarat just yet but a new order has been put in place. What better gift for the Nagpur-headquartered RSS as it prepares to celebrate its centenary year.

The writer is a senior journalist and author. His new book: 2024: The Election That Surprised India.

## Country's Image

It would be wrong for the BJP-led NDA government to dismiss as the Opposition's disruptive tactic the furore in the Parliament over the indictment of billionaire businessman Gautam Adani and his associates by the US Department of Justice for allegedly offering bribes to officials in a number of states ruled by the Opposition including Orissa and also Jammu & Kashmir while it was under Central rule. This expose was unkind to both the BJP as also parties that were seemingly opposing it, thereby proving the old adage true that money is sweeter than honey. Similarly, it would be foolhardy to accept at face value the Adani group's denial that there was any wrongdoing. Unlike the Hindenburg Research report, which the group had rubbished as the work of a short seller with business interests of its own, this time it is a key US department and its top investigative agencies that have brought the charges based on substantive evidence. The Justice department got involved because Adani group has been raising huge amounts of money from the US market. The offences allegedly committed are very serious: conspiracy to violate the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and efforts to obstruct investigation by the FBI and US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The case underscores the heightened scrutiny of global financial transactions and corporate ethics, especially in the renewable energy sector. The whole saga of alleged corruption of monumental proportions involving bribing Indian government officials for unlawful gains, manipulating share markets and "duping" investors in the US does not simply tarnish the image of a business tycoon, but also indirectly casts aspersions on Indian regulators and system of justice. The question that automatically arises is what the Indian market regulator, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) was doing when such alleged colossal fraud was being perpetrated. The role of the justice system has also come under a question mark. In other words, the reputation of the government of India that claims to have zero tolerance towards corruption is in tatters. That is why the Central government needs to immediately announce a probe into the web of corruptions purportedly committed by several government officials and inaction by market regulators. More so because Gautam Adani is known to be a close friend of the Prime Minister for years since the latter was Chief Minister of Gujarat. The government has to come clean, instead of maintaining a stoic silence on the issue that has already touched several countries, including France and Kenya.

The US administration has already charged the Adani group with violations of US laws that prohibit corrupt transactions with foreign entities. This makes it all the more necessary since the government has been very prompt in using its agencies to probe allegations of corruption against Chief Ministers of Opposition-ruled states and Opposition leaders. The same alacrity is required to be shown in the case of Adani and his associates for their murky activities in states like Orissa and Andhra.

The BJP has not covered itself with glory by publicly rallying behind the Adani group and using its social media platforms to create confusion that the US has no authority to frame the group for alleged violations of Indian laws. The fact is the FCPA empowers the US government to go into allegations of corruption by any company in any other country using and mobilising funds from US investors. The evidence collected for the 54-page indictment appears to be irrefutable as the investigators had accessed the personal email accounts of the accused and other documents.

Interestingly the BJP seems totally disinterested to move against the state governments named by the US Dept of Justice for corruption as that would imply the bribe giver too getting dragged into the investigation, if ever conducted.

Already, Kenyan President William Ruto cancelled a procurement process that had been expected to award control of the country's main airport to Adani. In Bangladesh, a panel examining power generation contracts, including one with Adani Power, urged the interim government to hire a global legal firm to ensure a thorough and transparent investigation into previous deals. French energy major TotalEnergies has decided that it will not make "any new financial contribution" as part of its partnership with the Adani group till the accusations against the firm's individuals in the US and their consequences have been clarified.

It would be in the greater interest of India and fitness of things for the government to concede the Opposition's demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe. If the Adani group has nothing to hide and the government is in no way involved in the case, the JPC is the answer to redeem the country's image in the international money market. Otherwise this taint could easily carry over to other genuine Indian companies that may require funds from foreign markets in future.



Rajdeep Sardesai

MAHARASHTRA MAY NOT BE A HINDUTVA LABORATORY LIKE GUJARAT JUST YET BUT A NEW ORDER HAS BEEN PUT IN PLACE

### IN JEST THIS

## Even a grandma can set fitness record

Mike Tyson, the former heavyweight boxing champion, made a lot of people feel old recently when he got into the ring to challenge Jake Paul, a You-Tuber-turned-fighter. It was a 58-year-old versus a 27-year-old, and the youngster easily defeated the oldster. Tyson got paid a lot of money, reportedly as much as \$20 million. Many older men would probably fight Paul for that much money. I would never do it, mostly because I like having an intact skull. Money is great, but it's hard to enjoy it while you're in the hospital ICU. Of course, the only reason Tyson is able to make so much money from a single fight is because he made a name for himself in his prime, back in the '90s. He was a terror in the ring, the type of fighter who would hit his opponents so hard, it would take them a few days to remember their own names.

But there's an old saying that "Father Time always wins," and even Tyson can't escape the creeping effects of aging. It eventually catches up with all of us, no matter how much we spend on hair dye. As we get older, we have to recognise our limitations - that we can't always compete with people much younger than us. I say "always" because there are some older people who push themselves so hard that only a few younger people can match their achievements. Sometimes none of them can. If you happen to run into a youngster from Canada who says, "I bet my grandma can do more push-ups than you," you'd better not accept that bet, no matter your age. Otherwise you might find yourself challenging 59-year-old Donna Jean Wilde, who is no ordinary grandma. Wilde, who hails from the province of Alberta, set a Guinness World Record this month for most push-ups in one hour by a female. She completed 1,575 push-ups in an hour. In other words, she completed more push-ups in one hour than I've completed in my entire life. Admittedly, I'm not too fond of doing anything with "ups": push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, or screw-ups. Wilde not only set a world record for push-ups, she demolished the old record. She broke it with 17 minutes to spare. "I had to fight back the happy tears and emotions and keep going," Wilde told Guinness World Records. "I still felt quite strong and I was aiming for a high number of push-ups to complete in the next 17 minutes." Wilde had a cheering squad at the seniors' home where she broke the record. Eleven of her 12 grandchildren were there to witness her feat. One of them made a sign that said, "My grandma is officially amazing."

How amazing is she? She's so amazing that her push-ups record was her second Guinness World Record this year. In March, she set a Guinness World Record for longest time in an abdominal plank position (female). She held a plank for 4 hours, 30 minutes and 11 seconds. In case you're like me and have no idea what a plank is, here's the definition from Wikipedia: "A plank is what a pirate makes you walk off." No, that's a different kind of plank. The plank that Wilde did is described as "an isometric core strength exercise that involves maintaining a position similar to a push-up." To train for her plank world record, Wilde did 500 push-ups a day. Did I mention that she's 59? "I believe that if we stay active and have health and wellness goals we can age gracefully and powerfully," Wilde said. You can't defeat aging, but you can certainly try to slow it.



Melvin Durai

YOU CAN'T DEFEAT AGING, BUT YOU CAN CERTAINLY TRY TO SLOW IT

### WISDOM CORNER

- If money is your hope for independence you will never have it. The only real security that a man will have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience, and ability. HENRY FORD
- All fixed set patterns are incapable of adaptability or pliability. The truth is outside of all fixed patterns. BRUCE LEE
- To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life. ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1493: Christopher Columbus returns to La Navidad colony, finding it destroyed by the 1st native American uprising against Spanish rule. Taino cacique Caonabo led his people to attack the settlement after the brutal treatment they received from the garrison who disobeyed Columbus's orders.
- 1807: Portuguese Royal Family and its court of nearly 15,000 people leave Lisbon for their colony of Brazil to escape invading Napoleonic troops
- 1895: Alfred Nobel signs his last will. Alfred Nobel signed his last will which called for his estate and fortune that he made as the inventor of dynamite to be used for creating awards for those who contributed to the benefit of mankind. The will created 5 awards - in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature and peace, and was signed in the Swedish-Norwegian Club in Paris.
- 1919: The Treaty of Neuilly, outlining the post-World War I peace terms for Bulgaria, was signed between the defeated country and the Allied powers.
- 1942: The French navy scuttled 73 ships at Toulon in order to avoid German seizure during World War II.
- 1970: Pope Paul VI wounded in chest during a visit to Philippines by a dagger-wielding Bolivian painter disguised as a priest

### Multipolar world

Sir, The global order is undergoing a significant transformation, marked by a shift from unipolarity to multipolarity. This shift is driven by the rise of emerging powers, the decline of traditional power structures, and the increasing complexity of geopolitical challenges. The traditional unipolar world, dominated by the United States, is giving way to a more balanced distribution of power. China's rapid economic growth and assertive foreign policy have positioned it as a major global player. India, with its large population and growing economy, is also emerging as a significant force. These rising powers, along with established powers like the European Union and Russia, are reshaping the global balance of power. This multipolar world presents both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, it can lead to increased competition and conflict, as great powers vie for influence and resources. On the other hand, it can also foster cooperation and innovation, as countries work together to address global issues such as climate change, poverty, and disease. One of the key challenges in a multipolar world is the risk of great power rivalry. As major powers compete for dominance, there is a potential for increased tension and conflict. This could lead to a new Cold War or even outright military confrontation. To mitigate this risk, it is essential to establish effective mechanisms for dialogue and cooperation between great powers. Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

### Discussion must

Sir, This refers to "Adani rocks Parl" (Orissa POST, November 26). In my opinion, in order to avoid getting the Winter Session of the Parliament repeatedly interrupted without any productive outcome, the ruling party at the Centre ought to have been mentally prepared to allow immediate discussion on issues inter alia against the Adani group. The Adani issue is one of the burning issues along with the Manipur violence. How a top notch industrialist allegedly breached the sanctity of business with any foreign country requires a thorough discussion in Parliament. Everyone expects the ruling party to be liberal, bearing in mind the huge cost involved in running the Parliament session. Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

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, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

CYCLONIC STORM BREWING

# Rains lash several parts of TN

Due to the rains, heavy traffic congestion was witnessed here in many areas including the arterial OMR Road and traffic flow was affected in several areas as roads came under sheets of water



Fishing boats anchored amidst the forecast of heavy rains at Marina beach, along the coast of the Bay of Bengal, in Chennai, Tuesday. PTI PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, Nov 26:** Rains lashed several parts of Tamil Nadu Tuesday, and the India Meteorological Department has forecast heavy rainfall for three more days in the state, starting November 27, when the deep depression is likely to become a cyclonic storm.

Chief Minister MK Stalin chaired a high-level meeting here at the Secretariat to review the precautionary measures and directed deployment of NDRF and State teams in areas likely to receive heavy rainfall. In total, 17 teams have been deployed and it includes Chennai, Tiruvarur, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam and Cuddalore and Thanjavur districts.

Chennai and nearby districts of Chengelpet, Kanchipuram and Tiruvallur, the northern

coastal city of Cuddalore and Cauvery delta areas, including Nagapattinam were among the places that received rainfall, which was mild to moderate in many areas and heavy in some places.

Due to the rains, heavy traffic congestion was witnessed here in many areas including the arterial OMR Road and traffic flow was affected in several areas as roads came under sheets of water. Also, in Chennai, there was delay in the landing of seven flights.

On an average, areas under Chennai corporation limits received 5.35 cm rainfall and the highest was seen in Manali New Town (13.31 cm). Naga-

pattinam (11 cm), Mayiladuthurai (8.9 cm), Chengelpet (8.4 cm) and Tiruvarur (7.9 cm) were among the regions that witnessed heavy showers, the government said.

As many as 1,634 relief centres are ready for use if needed and a situation has not arisen so far warranting its utilisation anywhere in the state. Generators, motor pumps, boats and other equipment and machinery are on standby for use wherever needed. First-responders and volunteers are also ready for deployment.

State-run Aavin said it has taken all steps to ensure uninterrupted milk supply to the people. Deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin following his inspection of

city areas here, advised officials to continue the maintenance work so that inundation could be prevented. Work to desilt canals is continuing as part of the maintenance.

According to the IMD, the depression over Bay of Bengal formed into a deep depression Tuesday and it is likely to intensify into a cyclonic storm.

The deep depression was about 720 km south-southeast of Chennai and 520 km southeast of Nagapattinam and warned of squally/gale wind and rough to very rough sea condition.

In its bulletin, it said, "It is very likely to continue to move north-northwestwards and intensify further into a cyclonic storm 27th November. Thereafter, it will continue to move north-northwestwards towards Tamil Nadu coast skirting Sri Lanka coast during subsequent 2 days."

For Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely at a few places and extremely heavy rainfall at isolated places November 26 and 27. Heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places is likely November 28 and heavy rainfall at isolated places November 29. Heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely in some places in the districts of Mayiladuthurai, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam, Chennai, Tiruvallur, Kanchipuram and Chengelpet.

Stalin, through video conferencing, reviewed the action plan to tackle the situation

# J&K orders confidentiality of official communications

The officials are directed to use NIC email or government messaging platforms like Samvad and Sandesh for confidential and restricted communications

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jammu, Nov 26:** The Jammu and Kashmir government Monday issued detailed guidelines for the secure handling of sensitive and classified official communications, urging officials to strictly use government email services and its secure instant messaging platforms for transmitting confidential and restricted information.

The circular, issued by Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department, Sanjeev Verma, highlights the increasing use of third-party platforms like WhatsApp and Gmail for sharing sensitive information, which poses significant risks.

"It has come to the attention of the administration that there is an increasing trend among officers and officials to use third-party tools such as WhatsApp, Gmail and other similar platforms for transmitting sensitive, secret and confidential information," Verma said.



"This practice poses significant risks to the integrity and security of the information being communicated. Using third-party tools can lead to unauthorized access, data breaches and leaks of confidential information," he added.

Verma emphasized that platforms like WhatsApp and Gmail lack the stringent security protocols required for official communications.

"The use of such tools could jeopardize the integrity of governmental operations and lead to severe security breaches," he said.

The officials are directed to use NIC email or government messaging platforms like Samvad and Sandesh for confidential and restricted communications.

With regard to information

classification, it was impressed upon the officials that information classified as top secret and secret should never be transmitted over the internet and must only be shared through closed networks with SAG grade encryption.

"The departments are required to implement firewalls, white-list IP addresses and ensure access to e-Office systems through Virtual Private Networks (VPNs). Only authorized personnel are permitted to use these systems. Top secret and secret information should only be transmitted on leased-line networks," Verma said.

Referring to fresh guidelines on video conferencing (VC), the circular stated that only government-approved VC solutions from CDAC, CDOT or NIC are permitted.

"Access controls such as waiting rooms and participant registration are mandatory. Top secret and secret information must not be discussed during VC meetings," he added.

The officials working remotely should use security-hardened devices connected to office servers via VPNs and firewalls. Sharing top secret and secret information in work-from-home settings is strictly prohibited, the circular noted.

The government also imposed restrictions on smart devices for transferring sensitive communication.

VIZHUTHUGAL - INDIA'S FIRST ONE-STOP REHAB CENTRE

# Stalin launches rehab centre for disabled

Special education, vision assessment, hearing-speech therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and psychological counselling will be offered at the Kannagi Nagar facility

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, Nov 26:** Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin inaugurated the 'Vizhuthugal-Integrated Service Centre' to provide health related rehabilitation services for differently-abled persons here Monday.

An initiative of the Department for the Welfare of Differently Aabled Persons under the World Bank assisted TN Rights project, Stalin inaugurated the one-stop centre at Kannagi Nagar in Sozhinganallur, the first facility out of the proposed



273 centres across the state.

The TN Rights project aims delivering, "integrated and accessible services tailored to the individual needs of differently-abled persons either in their homes or in specialised vehicles for rehabilitation or in dedicated one stop centres," a statement said here.

According to the government, this is the first time in the country that rehabilitation professionals of special education, optometry, audiology and speech therapy, physiothera-

py, occupational therapy and psychological counselling are brought under a single roof to meet the chronic health-related rehabilitation service requirements exclusively for differently-abled persons.

The services in the centre are only available in pre-assigned time slots to the differently-abled persons identified in a field survey held during 2023-24. Those who wish to access the services will have to approach the community rehabilitation workers of TN Rights project.

"This centre has been empanelled under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme." The centre has strategically placed surveillance cameras that ensure safety while protecting privacy and has all its restrooms equipped with panic buzzers.

Refurbished at a cost of ₹3.08 crore, the centre is fully accessible, taking the implementation of the Union government's Harmonized Guidelines 2021 for building design 'to a totally new level.' The centre also houses an Aavin milk booth, run by a differently-abled person.

Inaugurating the centre, Stalin interacted with the beneficiaries and their families, reiterating the government's commitment to their welfare.

The integrated service centre, the government said, will benefit the differently-abled persons in Perungudi and Sholinganallur zones of Greater Chennai Corporation.

60TH JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

# WCC planning of seal authenticity for J&K crafts

Organised by the Jammu and Kashmir govt, the programme from November 25 to November 27 aims to spotlight the Union Territory's rich craftsmanship and cultural heritage on a global platform

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, Nov 26:** The World Craft Council (WCC) Tuesday said it is planning to introduce the seal of authenticity of crafts - an initiative aimed at addressing the "pressing need" for globally-recognised certification for handmade crafts of Jammu and Kashmir.

WCC president Saad Al-Qaddumi made the announcement at the 60th jubilee celebration of the council here.

J&K Lieutenant Governor presided over an award ceremony to confer the UT-Level Craft Awards, recognising outstanding contributions by local artisans to the craft sector.

Addressing the gathering, Al-Qaddumi said he is proud to introduce the council's new flagship programme - the seal of authenticity of crafts - in Jammu and Kashmir.



"This initiative aims to address the pressing need for globally recognised certification for handmade crafts - a significant step towards encouraging quality and ownership. This is predominantly for start in the textile industry. It is a vision born from discussions during my last visit to Srinagar with Jammu and Kashmir LG Manoj Sinha," he said.

The WCC president said he was thrilled with immense

pride and joy to witness Srinagar being officially recognised as a world craft city - a title that reflects its deep-rooted cultural heritage and world-renowned craftsmanship.

"We are also looking forward to catalyse many more initiatives as we go forward. This recognition opens a new door for Srinagar. We are now at the historic moment embarking on a journey marked by the signing of an MoU with the govern-

ment of Jammu and Kashmir." Al-Qaddumi said the WCC and the Jammu and Kashmir government are setting the stage for transformative growth and innovation in the Union territory's crafts sector.

The WCC official said Srinagar is a city that breeds artistry and craftsmanship. "From the intricately woven Pashmina shawls to the stunning paper mache creations, from the skilled artisans who craft floating walnut wood masterpieces to the vibrant carpets that adorn homes around the globe, every craft here tells the story of tradition, passion, and unparalleled creativity," he said.

"Our diamond jubilee is a celebration of such craftsmanship. For six decades, the WCC has strived to bring the beauty and significance of crafts to the

forefront of the global stage," he added.

Srinagar serves as a shining example of how crafts are not merely objects of utility, but an expression of identity, culture and a source of livelihood for countless artisans and inspiration for generation to come, he said.

Asserting that the artisans were the heartbeat of the city and an inspiration to the world, Al-Qaddumi said he wants to reaffirm the WCC-AISBL commitment to empower the artisans preserving the traditions and crafts and fostering international collaboration to ensure these treasures are passed on to the future generations.

Earlier, delegates from 15 countries which are members of the WCC assembled at SKICC here to take part in the celebrations.

The members from diverse regions, including Kuwait, Australia, France, the UK, Ireland, Central Asia and beyond have come together alongside artisans from various parts of the world to showcase their exceptional craftsmanship.

Organised by the Jammu and Kashmir government, the programme from November 25 to November 27 aims to spotlight the Union Territory's rich craftsmanship and cultural heritage on a global platform.

# CA foundation exam rescheduled in TN

The decision comes in response to widespread protests in Tamil Nadu against the initial scheduling of the exam on Pongal day

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, Nov 26:** The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has rescheduled the CA Foundation Examination from January 14, 2025, to January 16, 2025.

The decision comes in response to widespread protests in Tamil Nadu against the initial scheduling of the exam on Pongal day.

In a statement issued Tuesday, ICAI clarified that the exam was postponed to accommodate the Makar Sankranti, Bihu, and Pongal festivals celebrated across India.

The controversy arose after ICAI's initial decision to conduct the examination on Pongal, Tamil Nadu's most celebrated festival, triggered strong objections.

DMK Deputy General Secretary and Member of Parliament Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, sister of Chief Minister MK Stalin,

had come out strongly against the earlier decision of the ICAI to conduct the CA foundation examination on Pongal day.

Kanimozhi, in a social media post, described the scheduling as "gross insensitivity" and accused the institute of disregarding Tamil traditions and regional autonomy.

She had demanded an immediate postponement of the exam, stating, "Pongal is the most celebrated festival in Tamil Nadu, depicting the culture, heritage, and tradition of the state. The Union Government must direct the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, under which ICAI operates, to reschedule the exam to honour Tamil sentiments."

Similar concerns were raised by CPI(M) leader and Madurai MP, Su Venkatesan. He criticised the decision to conduct the Business Law exam on Pongal and the Quantitative Aptitude test on Farmers' Day January 16.

Pongal, also known as Thai Pongal, is a multi-day Hindu harvest festival celebrated across Tamil Nadu. It typically falls on January 14 or 15 during the Tamil month of Thai and is dedicated to the Sun god.

The festival marks the beginning of Uttarayana, the Sun's six-month northward journey as it enters Capricorn.

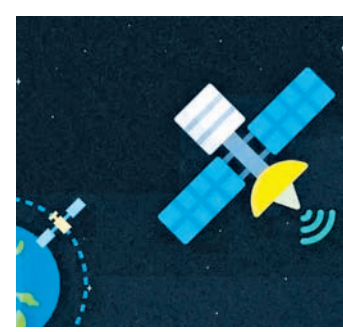


The Constitution by design insulates judiciary from the ebbs and lows of electoral process

SANJIV KHANNA | CJI

START-UP TO LAUNCH AI LAB IN SPACE IN DEC

A Hyderabad-based start-up is set to launch an artificial intelligence lab in space on board ISRO's PSLV rocket next month, the company said Tuesday



## of the day uote

PM Modi has set 2047 as the target for Vikshit Bharat for which we all should know about the provisions of the Constitution to work in that direction

PEMA KHANDU | ARUNACHAL CM

Today in Delhi, I met the Congress president respected Malikarjun Kharge ji. Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi ji and senior Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra ji and invited them to attend the swearing-in ceremony of 'Abua' (our) government November 28

HEMANT SOREN | JHARKHAND CM-DESIGNATE

The election results were announced November 23 and we should have had the oath of the new Chief Minister November 26, the Constitution Day

RAMDAS ATHAWALE | RPI(A) LEADER

# Existing PAN holders don't need to apply afresh, says Tax dept

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs had approved the ₹1,435-crore PAN 2.0 Project to streamline and modernise the process of issuing and managing PAN and TAN, making it more user-friendly and efficient



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Existing Permanent Account Number (PAN) card holders are not required to apply for a new one under the upgraded PAN 2.0 system that is primarily aimed at introducing a 'common identifier' for all business-related activities, the Income Tax Department said Tuesday.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had approved the ₹1,435-crore PAN 2.0 Project to streamline and modernise the process of issuing and managing PAN and TAN, making it more user-friendly and efficient.

PAN is a unique 10-digit alphanumeric number issued by the Income Tax Department to Indian taxpayers. "With existing PAN database of 78 crore PANs and 73.28 lakh TANS, the project addresses the requirements of taxpayers, focusing on consolidation of multiple platforms/portals and efficient services to PAN/TAN holders," Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a release Tuesday.

PAN 2.0 is an e-governance project of the Income Tax Department (ITD) for re-engineering the business processes of taxpayer registration services, it said, adding that the objective of the project is to enhance the quality of PAN services through adoption of latest technology. The Tax Deduction and Collection Account Number (TAN)-related services are

also merged with this project. In an FAQ, the CBDT further said, "The existing PAN card holders are not required to apply for new PAN under the upgraded system (PAN 2.0)." The PAN card will not be changed unless the PAN holders want any updation/correction, it added.

"The existing valid PAN cards will continue to be valid under PAN 2.0," FAQ said.

CBDT also clarified that the "QR code is not a new feature, and it has been incorporated in PAN cards since 2017-18" and the same will be continued under PAN 2.0 project with enhancements (dynamic QR code which will display latest data present in PAN database).

The QR code helps in validating the PAN and PAN details. Presently, a specific QR reader application is available for verification of QR code details.

On scanning of the QR code, complete details -- photo, signature, name, father's name/mother's name and date of birth -- is displayed. On how PAN 2.0 will be different from the existing setup, the FAQ said it will lead to integration of platforms.

Presently, PAN-related services are hosted on three different portals -- e-filing Portal, UTIITS Portal, and Protean e-Gov Portal. In the PAN 2.0 Project, all PAN/TAN-related services will be hosted on a single unified portal of the ITD. PAN 2.0 will also make comprehensive use of technology for paperless processes.

# Constitution a guiding light: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday said the spirit of 'nation first' will keep alive the Indian Constitution for centuries to come, as the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution was celebrated across the country with calls for constructive dialogue to serve people effectively.

As Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar cautioned that disturbance as a strategy threatening democratic institutions, Modi said the Constitution is acting as a "guiding light" at a time when India is going through a period of transformation.

The Constitution was variously described by the country's leadership as a "holy book", "living, continuously flowing stream", "progressive document", "masterpiece" and "our mother".

Recalling the words of the country's first President Rajendra Prasad in his concluding address to the Constituent Assembly November 26, 1949,

The Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution at the Central Hall of Parliament November 26, 1949

The Constitution came into force January 26, 1950

The day of its adoption is observed as 'Samvidhan Divas'

Modi said he had stated that India does not need anything more than a group of honest people who will keep the country's interests above their own.

"This sentiment of 'nation first' will keep alive the Constitution for centuries to come," he said, comments that came against the backdrop of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's relentless attack on the BJP alleging that the saffron party wanted to "destroy the Constitution."

Leaders of the BJP and the Congress also accused each other of working against the constitutional values.

A year long celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Constitution's adoption was launched by President Droupa-



di Murmu with an address to a joint sitting of parliamentarians to mark 'Samvidhan Diwas' (Constitution Day) in Parliament.

President Murmu said it is the responsibility of the executive, legislature and the judiciary to work together to make the lives of common people better in accordance with the spirit of

the Constitution.

India's Constitution is a "living and progressive" document and the country's farsighted Constitution-makers provided for a system of adopting new ideas, according to the needs of the changing times, she added.

Several chief ministers also took out padyatras in their respective state capitals and spoke how the Constitution has ensured equal rights to everyone irrespective of caste, creed and religion.

The celebrations were also utilised by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to urge MPs to follow the tradition of constructive and dignified debates set by the Constituent Assembly. Birla's comments came against the backdrop of frequent disruptions in Parliament over a range of issues.

Addressing Congress 'Samvidhan Rakshak Abhiyaan' at the Talkatora stadium in Delhi, Rahul Gandhi, who is also the Leader of the Opposition, targeted the Prime Minister, saying it is his guarantee, that "Modi has not read" the Constitution.

## SHORT TAKES

### 3.2 magnitude tremor hits Gujarat

Ahmedabad: A tremor of 3.2 magnitude was experienced in Gujarat's Saurashtra region Tuesday evening, the Institute of Seismological Research (ISR) said. There was report of any casualty or damage to property, the Gir Somnath district administration said. The tremor was recorded at 6.08 pm, with its epicentre around 2 km from Talala in Gir Somnath district, the ISR state in a report. Kutch district November 18 recorded a tremor of 4 magnitude, and November 15, Patan in north Gujarat was jolted by a tremor of 4.2 magnitude, the ISR data showed.

### AAP takes out 'Shukrana Yatra'

Chandigarh: Punjab's ruling Aam Aadmi Party took out its 'Shukrana Yatra' from Patiala to Amritsar Tuesday to thank voters after its victory in three Assembly seats in the November 20 bypolls. Punjab AAP president and Cabinet Minister Aman Arora and working president Amansher Singh Sharry Kalsi paid obeisance at the famous Kali Mata Temple in Patiala before the start of the yatra. Several party leaders, including ministers Harpal Singh Cheema and Harjot Singh Bains, Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kulvir Singh Sandhwan and the MLAs, including Ajitpal Singh Kohli were also present.

### UP: 7-time BJP MLA no more

Varanasi (UP): Senior BJP leader and seven-time MLA from Varanasi South Shyamdev Rai Chaudhary died at a hospital here Tuesday, a local BJP leader said. Chaudhary, who was 85 years old, was ailing from some days. He was popularly known as 'Dada'. BJP Mahanagar president Vidyasagar Rai said Chaudhary was admitted to a private hospital in Mahmooorganj after he suffered a brain haemorrhage.

### Class XI student commits suicide

Jaipur: A 17-year old school student allegedly committed suicide by jumping from the third floor of a mall in Rajasthan's Udaipur district, police said Tuesday. Krish Pamecha, a student of Class XI, went to the mall alone on a motorcycle and jumped from the third floor of the building.

# Centre is manipulating voters list, claims Atishi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Delhi Chief Minister Atishi alleged Tuesday that the BJP-led central government is attempting to manipulate the electoral process by getting names of AAP supporters deleted from electoral rolls as the saffron party fears defeat in the upcoming Delhi Assembly polls.

Dismissing the allegations, the BJP said the Aam Aadmi Party like its other INDIA bloc partners is resorting to such "rhetoric" due to its impending electoral loss and its ouster from Delhi is certain.

Atishi also wrote to Chief Secretary Dharmendra, seeking an inquiry and action against a district magistrate and a sub-divisional magistrate who she alleged were involved in deleting voters' names from the electoral

## DELHI POLLS



rolls. "I have been reliably informed that some officers of the revenue department who are in charge of conducting and ensuring free and fair elections are, instead, vitiating elections by large-scale deletion of voters and trying to reduce the registration of new voters," the letter stated. The Chief Secretary, who is also the chief vigilance officer, is directed to conduct an inquiry into the possibility of large-scale electoral roll ma-

## The Delhi Assembly polls are due in February

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

nipulation being done by the officers and take action if found guilty, the Chief Minister said in the letter. Hitting back at the Aam Aadmi Party, the BJP said it is regrettable the AAP, fearing a loss in the Assembly elections, has begun echoing the rhetoric of other INDIA bloc partners. No matter how much political noise AAP leaders make, their departure from Delhi is certain in February 2025, the party said. Chief Minister Atishi cited an October 28 order by the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi transferring 29 SDMs and ADMs as the first step in the alleged conspiracy to tamper with electoral rolls.

# Low-intensity blast near rapper Badshah's bar



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Nov 26: Two low-intensity explosions occurred outside as many police-cum-lounges, one of them owned by rapper Badshah, in the Sector 26 area of Chandigarh early Tuesday. No casualties were reported.

The blasts occurred outside De'Orra and Seville. Seville is reportedly owned by the rapper. The explosions shattered De'Orra's glass windows.

In CCTV footage, an unidentified person was seen throwing something towards the lounge and thereafter a cloud of smoke emerged. Sources said two suspects came on a motorcycle. Police said they received a call reporting a "loud sound" from the area around 3.25 am. A police team recovered jute rope pieces from the spot. A team from the Central Forensic Science Laboratory collected the samples, police said. Chandigarh Deputy Superintendent of Police Dilbag Singh Dhaliwal told reporters an investigating officer who responded to the call found broken glasses at the scene. An FIR has been lodged and an investigation was underway, Dhaliwal said.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Essar Group co-founder Shashi Ruia has died after a prolonged illness. He was 80. Ruia, who co-founded metals-to-technology conglomerate Essar with his brother Ravi, died in Mumbai around 23.55 hrs November 25, family sources said. He had returned from the US, where he was undergoing treatment, about a month back.

His mortal remains will be kept at Ruia House from 1 pm to 3 pm Tuesday. The funeral procession will leave from Ruia House at 4 pm towards the Hindu Worli Crematorium. Shashi, a first-generation entrepreneur industrialist, started his career in 1965 under the guidance of his father Nand Kishore Ruia. He, along with his brother Ravi, laid the foundation of Essar in 1969 by constructing an outer breakwater at Chennai Port.

# 5-minute brain scan could reveal risk of psychosis: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: A "single five-minute" brain scan could help predict individuals at risk of experiencing psychosis, according to a study.

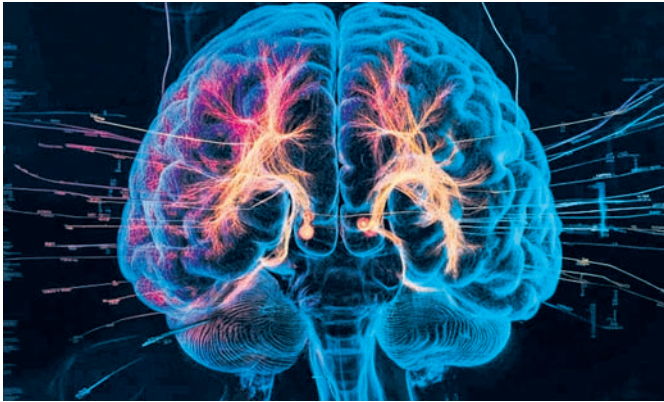
Brain scans of psychosis patients revealed that regions processing information from senses were weakly connected to each other and strongly connected to the thalamus -- which acts as a "relay station" for sensory and movement information to the brain.

"A single five-minute scan could potentially improve our ability to predict which at-risk individuals will transition to

a psychotic disorder, which in turn could allow for more timely treatments or interventions," author Brian Keane, an assistant professor of neuroscience at the University of Rochester, said.

Researchers analysed MRI scans from 159 participants, including 105 who developed a psychotic disorder up to five years prior to testing.

A psychotic disorder -- schizophrenia, manic phase of bipolar disorder -- involves losing touch with reality and developing symptoms such as hallucinations. The differences in the brains of psychotic and non-psychotic patients were confined to two networks



-- the somatomotor network, responsible for preprocessing bodily movement and sensations, and the visual one,

which creates representations of objects, faces, and complex features, the researchers found. By combining the dy-

A single five-minute scan could potentially improve our ability to predict which at-risk individuals will transition to a psychotic disorder, which in turn could allow for more timely treatments or interventions

BRIAN KEANE

sconnectivity -- or abnormal brain connectivity -- patterns across these two networks allowed the researchers to create a "somato-visual" biomarker. 'Somato-' is a prefix meaning 'body'. Detecting the biomarker in brain scans could help diagnose the psychiatric condition before the

first symptom emerged, they said. Currently, psychosis is diagnosed through an interview between a mental health professional and patient.

"What makes this biomarker unique is its large effect size, its robustness to over a dozen common confounds, and its high reliability across multiple scans," Keane, also the corresponding author of the study published in the journal Molecular Psychiatry, said.

"It also gives us a place to keep looking. An important next step will be to determine if the somato-visual biomarker emerges before or as psychosis begins," Keane said.



# national

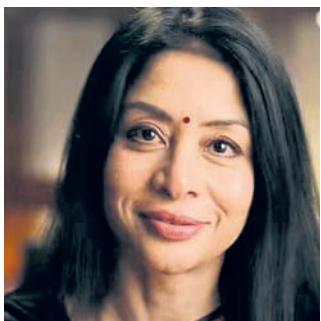


Rahul Gandhi had promised a caste census in Telangana. The work of caste census in Telangana has been completed 92 per cent

A REVANTH REDDY | T'GANA CM

## SHEENA BORA CASE: INDRANI MOVES SC

Former media executive Indrani Mukerjea, accused of killing her daughter Sheena Bora, has moved the Supreme Court challenging the Bombay High Court ruling denying her to travel abroad. A special court July 19 allowed Mukerjea's plea to travel to Spain and the UK for 10 days between intermittent periods over the next three months



### of the day quote

State president B Y Vijayendra has appealed to Basangouda Patil Yatnal and others to stop protesting separately, and work with us unitedly. Despite this, because of their self-conceit, they are doing such things. It is not right on their part

An iconic building should be built in the state capital (greenfield) Amaravati. Prepare the proposals necessary for this. The future of the youth is dependent on deep technology, AI and related emerging technologies

As India lurches from one environmental crisis to another, Indira Gandhi's commitment to the preservation of ecological balance -- not just in words but through actions -- is always worth recalling

# Delhi's AQI at 343; air quality may slip to 'severe'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Delhi's air quality remained stagnant in the "very poor" category Tuesday, with experts warning that it may deteriorate to "severe" levels in the next 24 hours due to a change in wind patterns. None of the 39 monitoring stations in the capital recorded the air quality in the "severe" category Tuesday. According to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the city's 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) recorded at 4 pm was 343 against 349 the previous day.

The AQI peaked at 419 November 20 while it was recorded at 371 the next day. The air quality level stood at 393, even as it rose to 412 Saturday and Sunday, it was 318. 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".

Mahesh Palawat, vice-president of Skymet Weather Services, said the air quality might deteriorate in the next 24 hours and fall into the "severe" category again as easterly winds are expected to arrive. He explained that while there were westerly winds so far, they will now change and the calm easterly winds will contribute to increased pollution.

At 3 pm Tuesday, the CPCB data indicated that PM2.5 was the primary pollutant, with levels of 143 µg/m³ and PM10 at 325 µg/m³.

These fine particles, particularly PM2.5, pose significant health risks as these can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream.

The Centre's Decision Sup-



port System (DSS) for Air Quality Management estimated that 22.2 per cent of Delhi's pollution Tuesday was due to vehicular emissions. Stubble burning, another major contributor, accounted for 6.9 per cent of the pollution Monday.

The DSS provides daily estimates for vehicular emissions, while the data on stubble burning is typically available the following day.

of the restrictions has been increased, particularly in the border areas. The city police, in coordination with teams from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), transport department and civil defence volunteers, is conducting thorough vehicle checks at the border points.

Another officer mentioned that the local police is working alongside the traffic police to enforce traffic regulations, with challans being issued to violators. Under the stage 4 of the GRAP, the entry of trucks, except for those run on CNG, electric and BS-VI diesel, is banned in Delhi.

According to the traffic police, more than 1.64 lakh challans amounting to ₹164 crore were issued in the capital against vehicles lacking valid Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificates from October 1 to

November 22. Police have also impounded 6,531 10-year-old petrol and 15-year-old diesel vehicles this winter season.

Since October 15, a total of 13,762 non-designated trucks approaching Delhi were diverted through the Eastern and Western Peripheral expressways, while the number stood at 2,944 since the implementation of GRAP-4 November 18.

The maximum temperature was recorded at 26.7 degrees Celsius Tuesday, while the minimum temperature settled 0.6 notches above normal at 11.9 degrees Celsius. Humidity fluctuated between 81 and 63 per cent during the day.

The weather department has forecast moderate conditions for Wednesday, with the maximum and minimum temperatures likely to hover around 27 degrees Celsius and 11 degrees Celsius respectively.

## MANIPUR VIOLENCE

# NIA launches probe into 3 recent cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Acting swiftly on the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) directions to bring the culprits to book expeditiously, the NIA has launched thorough investigations into three major cases relating to the recent spate of violence in Manipur, an official statement issued Tuesday said.

◀ The NIA teams visited the spots November 21 and 22 and started the probe

◀ Giving details on the first case, the NIA said several houses were burnt and two civilians were killed at Borobekra

◀ Later, unknown militants also abducted and murdered six persons including three women and three children



### Tension in Imphal Valley after man goes missing

Imphal: Tension was palpable Tuesday in parts of the Imphal West district that borders Kangpokpi after a 55-year-old man belonging to the Meitei community remained missing for more than 24 hours, officials said. Laishram Kamalbabu Singh, a resident of Loitang Khunou village in Imphal West, left home Monday afternoon to report for work at the Leimakhong Army Camp in Kangpokpi. He has been missing since then, they said. His mobile phone has been switched off, they added.

The gory incident took place November 11, when some unknown armed militants fired towards Borobekra police station as well as some houses and shops located at Jakuradhor Karong. They also set them ablaze later.

The police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel retaliated, leading to a heavy exchange of fire. Subsequent search operations led to the recovery of two dead bodies inside the burnt houses. The case has been re-registered by NIA under various sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 and Arms Act, 1959, the statement said.

The second case in which NIA has initiated a probe is connected with the November 11 attack on a CRPF post located at Jakuradhor Karong and Borobekra police stations in Jiribam by armed militants. A CRPF constable sustained bullet injuries in the attack and was evacuated to Silchar

for medical treatment.

During a search by security forces and the police team, dead bodies of unidentified armed militants along with arms and ammunition were recovered from the vicinity of the attack.

The NIA has re-registered this case under various sections of BNS, 2023 and the Arms Act, 1959.

The third case relates to the murder of a woman at Jiribam by fully armed militants.

The incident took place November 7, when a mother of three children from Jairolpokpi (Zairawn) in Jiribam was brutally raped and burnt alive at her residence by fully armed militants, the statement said.

The case was originally registered at Jiribam police station November 8. The NIA has re-registered the case under relevant sections of BNS, 2023, Arms Act, 1959, and Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

# India seizes 5.5 tonnes of Myanmar meth in 'biggest' drug bust

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Port Blair, Nov 26: The Andaman and Nicobar Command and the police suspect that the 5,500 kg of banned Methamphetamine drug seized from a fishing trawler with six Myanmar crew from near Barren island was supposed to be delivered to Thailand, officials said Tuesday.

The police are trying to get the call record of the satellite phone seized from the trawler which was coming from Myanmar, an official said.

"We are trying to get details of the recipients of the drugs through the seized satellite phone call detail record because the crew members are refusing to reveal anything during interrogation. It seems that they are scared to reveal the identity of the receiver and the person behind sending the consignments. We are trying to get in touch with the service provider to get the call detail record," the officer said.

The huge consignment of Methamphetamine drug was supposed to be delivered in Thailand and could be part of drug cartels, police sources said.

"Based on the quantity of the consignments and the modus operandi it definitely seems like the handiwork of notorious drug cartels like Jalisco New Generation Cartel (run by El Mencho) and Chinese El

### The huge consignment of Methamphetamine drug was supposed to be delivered in Thailand and could be part of drug cartels

Chapo gang leaders. In 2019, we seized similar drugs from the Andaman sea and then El Mencho's cartel emerged as a key suspect," the sources said.

When asked about the Thailand connection, a senior police officer said, "This is the biggest catch ever on the Andaman Sea. During Christmas and New Year's eve, there is a huge demand for such drugs in Thailand. We suspect that it was supposed to be delivered to either El Mencho or El Chapo gang leaders. The drugs were packed inside tea packets. All the accused were produced before a local court and remanded in police custody for 14 days".

The laboratory tests of the seized substance in Port Blair confirmed that the substance was Methamphetamine.

The pilot of a Coast Guard Dornier aircraft November 23 while on routine patrolling noticed a suspicious movement of a fishing trawler near Barren Island which is nearly 150 km from Port Blair, the Defence official said.



## Sambhal returning to normal after violence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sambhal (UP), Nov 26: Two days after violence broke out during a court-ordered survey of a Mughal-era mosque, life in Sambhal was gradually returning to normal Tuesday with schools reopening and several shops selling daily essentials resuming operations. However, internet services in the district continued to remain suspended.

Members of both Hindu and Muslim communities have called for unity and pledged to rebuild communal harmony even as police and administration officials were continuing to closely monitor the situation with personnel deployed at key intersections and Rapid Action Force teams stationed in sensitive areas. The authorities have imposed restrictions on the entry of outsiders and public representatives into Sambhal until November 30.

## 5 crushed to death after truck ploughs into tent in Kerala

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thrissur (Kerala), Nov 26: At least five people, including two children, were killed and six others were injured when a truck ploughed into the roadside tent where they were sleeping in this district early Tuesday, police said.

The victims, nomads living in tents set up along the highway on a national highway in Natika, under the Valapad police station limits, at around 4.30 am, they said. Among the deceased are two children, aged one-and-a-half and four years. Two women were also killed.

According to the police, the truck was coming from Kannur with timber and the cleaner, who did not have a license, was driving the vehicle when the accident occurred. The driver and the cleaner have been taken into custody.

## POST OF THE DAY

Amazing how our constitution was written so brilliantly to promote equality. The exact opposite is happening today. - Cops and Officers touch a CMS feet and call him Maharaj in UP - Traffic movement stops in the whole city when Modi comes in his vehicle. - Stadiums being named after incumbent leaders. Modi's India is gradually undoing its constitution, one by one.

@RoshanKrRaii

### SHORT TAKES

#### 20 wagons of goods train derail

Bilaspur: At least 20 wagons of a coal-laden goods train derailed in Bilaspur railway division of Chhattisgarh Tuesday morning, affecting the movement of passenger trains, railway officials said. While no casualties were reported in the incident, the movement of trains on the Bilaspur-Katni section on both the Up and Down lines was disrupted, they said. A coal-laden freight train was heading to Katni from Bilaspur when 20 wagons derailed between Khongsara and Bhanwartank railway stations around 11.11 am, a public relations officer of the Railways said.

#### HC dismisses Balaji's plea

Chennai: The Madras High Court Tuesday dismissed a petition filed by Tamil Nadu V Minister Senthil Balaji, which challenged an order of a sessions court rejecting his plea to defer the trial in a money laundering case registered by the ED against him. A division bench comprising Justices S M Subramaniam and M Jyothimani dismissed as withdrawn, the petition filed by Senthil Balaji, after his counsel sought permission to withdraw it.

#### Soren meets PM

New Delhi/Ranchi: Acting Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren met Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday, in his first visit to the national capital after leading his ruling alliance to an unprecedented second straight term in the state. The Prime Minister's Office posted pictures of the meeting.

# SC asks Centre, states to fill up vacancies in CIC, SICs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: Taking serious note of vacancies in the Central Information Commission (CIC) and state information commissions (SICs), the Supreme Court Tuesday asked the Centre and the state governments to apprise it about the steps taken to fill up the posts.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan said the states that have initiated the process of filling up the vacant posts should complete the process within four weeks.

Pointing out that there are eight vacancies in CIC out of the 11 sanctioned posts including that of chief information commissioner, the bench asked Additional Solicitor General Brijender Chahar, appearing for the Centre, to file an affidavit within two weeks



about the steps taken to fill up the vacancies.

Since February 2019, the apex court has given several directions on the need for timely appointments to the transparency watchdog by the Centre and states so that the 2005 law on the Right to Information remains effective.

The court said Tuesday that in Jharkhand, Tripura and Telangana, the SICs have become virtually defunct, as there are

no information commissioners. The bench asked the chief secretaries of these states to immediately initiate the process for filling up the vacancies and said where it has been started, it should be completed within four weeks. Senior advocate Arunabh Chowdhury, appearing for the Jharkhand government, said that the posts were vacant in the State Information Commission (SIC) from 2020 because there was no Leader of

Opposition in the House.

"The quorum could not be completed. The new House will be sworn in Wednesday and thereafter the process will be initiated within four weeks to fill up the vacant posts," Chowdhury said.

The bench directed the chief secretary of Jharkhand to initiate the process expeditiously and complete filling up the posts as early as possible. Similarly, the counsel for Tripura said they have initiated the process in June and the appointment will be made at the earliest.

The bench asked other states to file status reports as well, indicating the sanctioned strength at their respective SIC, the number of vacancies and the steps taken to fill up those posts.

Advocate Prashant Bhusan, appearing for petitioner Anjali Bhardwaj, said that despite directions issued by the top court October 30, last year, the Centre and the states have not filled the va-

Last year October 30 the apex court issued a similar directive regarding the filling of vacancies, stating that otherwise, the 2005 law on the Right to Information would become a "dead letter"

cancies in the information commissions.

The bench noted that in Chhattisgarh there are two vacancies, in Bihar one post is vacant, in West Bengal four posts, in Odisha five posts are vacant and in Tamil Nadu two posts are vacant in the SICs.

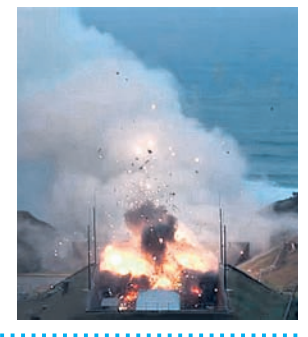
Last year October 30, the apex court issued a similar directive regarding the filling of vacancies, stating that otherwise, the 2005 law on the Right to Information would become a "dead letter".

It had asked the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) to collect information from all states on aspects including the sanctioned strength of information commissioners in the SICs, vacancies at present and the total number of pending cases there.



On January 20th, as one of my many first Executive Orders, I will sign all necessary documents to charge Mexico and Canada a 25% Tariff on all products coming into the United States, and its ridiculous Open Borders

ENGINE OF JAPAN'S FLAGSHIP NEW SMALL ROCKET EXPLODES The engine for a flagship new small Japanese rocket burst into flames Tuesday during a combustion test, but there was no injury or damage to the outside, officials said



# international

## of the day quote

In pursuing its illegal war in Ukraine, Russia makes use of North Korean weapons and troops, Iranian drones and Chinese dual use goods for its defense industry. Our support for Ukraine has kept them in the fight, but we need to go further to change the trajectory of the conflict



MARK RUTTE | SECRETARY GENERAL OF NATO

Despite withdrawing from the Istanbul convention (preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence), Turkey is one of the few countries to have addressed this issue comprehensively through its national legislation



RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN | PRESIDENT, TURKEY

When I visited India last week, everyone shared this enthusiasm for mutual collaboration and tackling global problems together. From exciting higher education opportunities to cooperation on clean power and climate change



CATHERINE WEST | MINISTER FOR THE INDO-PACIFIC, UK

## HINDU MONK ARREST

# B'desh: Lawyer killed in clash



A lawyer was killed Tuesday during clashes between security personnel and followers of a Hindu leader, who was denied bail

"A Muslim lawyer defending Das was killed amid protests outside the court (in Chittagong)," said police officer Liaquat Ali. A probe has been ordered into the alleged killing, the caretaker government said in a statement, adding that Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus had directed law enforcement agencies to step up security in the port city.

A Muslim lawyer defending Das was killed amid protests outside the court (in Chittagong)

HINDU LEADER'S ARREST IN BANGLADESH SPARKS DEADLY CLASHES. INDIA URGES PROTECTION FOR HINDUS, SLAMS ARREST OF DAS. B'DESH GOVT COMMITS TO COMMUNAL HARMONY AMID TENSIONS.

than 2,000 supporters surrounded the van, blocking it for over two hours, Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner Hasib Aziz, said. "They went on a rampage, throwing bricks at us. To disperse the crowd, we had to fire tear gas. No one was seriously injured, but one of our constables was hurt," Aziz said. India condemned the arrest of Das, saying in a sternly worded statement that the perpetrators of documented vandalism and arson against minorities as well as those who desecrated deities remained at large. Hindu-majority India has strong cultural and business ties with its neighbour and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has expressed concern over a spate of attacks on Hindus.

# Islamabad protest claims four troops



Jailed former PM Imran Khan's supporters reach the heart of Pakistan's capital Yesterday after removing barricades and battling police in clashes

Security forces clashed with protesters near Pakistan's Parliament Tuesday as hundreds of supporters of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan demanded his release in demonstrations the government said have killed four paramilitary troops. A Reuters witness said hundreds of protesters reached D-Chowk in the capital Islamabad, a square near the country's legislature that has been a historic rallying point for protests. The interior ministry said the army had been deployed to protect diplomatic missions in the fortified red zone area where many government buildings and embassies are located. It added that a curfew could be imposed with paramilitary troops called in to block the marchers, whom the Prime Minister blamed for the deaths, saying the troops were run over by vehicles in a convoy of protesters. "It is not a peaceful protest. It

is extremism," Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said in a statement, condemning the bloodshed as being aimed at achieving "evil political designs". The interior ministry confirmed the killings, but did not say who was responsible. Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party has planned to hold a sit-in at D-Chowk until their demands are met. The protesters were armed with steel rods, slingshots and sticks and were setting fire to trees and grass as they marched. Reuters witnesses heard firing around the protests though it was not clear who was responsible. PTI did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the government's accusations. Thousands of Khan's supporters broke through security barriers on roads blocked with shipping containers as they responded to his call for a sit-in protest. Calling for the government's resignation among other demands, the protesters ransacked vehicles and set a police kiosk on fire. The protesters also attacked and wounded journalists at two separate locations, people from two media houses told Reuters. The government met Khan's aides to try to calm the protests, but the attempt did not succeed, Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif said.

# Philippines summons VP Duterte over threat to have Prez killed

Manila, Nov 26: Philippine law officials Tuesday summoned vice president Sara Duterte for questioning over her weekend statements that she had contracted someone to assassinate President Ferdinand Marcos Jr if she were to be killed.

Duterte accused the administration of twisting her words to create a false narrative that Marcos' life was under active threat, saying in a statement Tuesday that her remarks were a "conditional act of revenge." The summons from the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) requires Duterte to appear at its offices November 29. According to the summons, a copy of which was seen by Reuters, Duterte will be questioned over the alleged offence of making a grave threat and possible violations of the anti-terrorism law. In an online press conference Saturday, Duterte said she had spoken with an assassin and instructed him to kill Marcos, his wife and his cousin, the speaker of the Philippine House, if she were to be killed. Duterte's office said she was not in when the summons was served and had not read the order. Duterte Monday said she would comply if summoned by investigators. The estranged vice president's stunning remarks were the latest salvo in a bitter row that has intensified since the collapse of a formidable alliance between their powerful families in which Marcos won the 2022 election by a huge margin, with Duterte running alongside him. Both Marcos and Duterte are children of former Presidents.

Duterte's office said she was not in when the summons was served and had not read the order. Duterte Monday said she would comply if summoned by investigators. The estranged vice president's stunning remarks were the latest salvo in a bitter row that has intensified since the collapse of a formidable alliance between their powerful families in which Marcos won the 2022 election by a huge margin, with Duterte running alongside him. Both Marcos and Duterte are children of former Presidents.

# 'Taliban detains scribes over 250 times since takeover'

Kabul, Nov 26: The United Nations' mission to Afghanistan said Tuesday the ruling Taliban had arbitrarily detained journalists 256 times since their takeover three years ago, and urged authorities there to protect the media.

In a reply accompanying the report, the Taliban-led foreign ministry denied having arrested that number of journalists and added that those arrested had committed a crime. Journalists in Afghanistan worked under "challenging conditions", the UN mission (UNAMA) and the UN Human Rights Office said in a statement. "They often face unclear rules on what they can and cannot report, running the risk of intimidation and arbitrary detention for perceived criticism," said Roza Otunbayeva, the special representative of Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. "We urge the de facto authorities to ensure the safety and security of all journalists and media workers as they carry out their tasks, and to fully recognize the importance of women working in the media," she added. In its response, the ministry said women continued to work in the media, subject to certain conditions to meet religious morality rules, such as covering their faces and working separately from men. It described the UN report as being "far from actual realities" and said security forces were working to protect journalists. The Afghan information ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The foreign ministry said the arrest figure was "exaggerated" and detentions took place subject to law. "No one is arrested arbitrarily," it said, listing the infringements of those detained.

## SHORT TAKES

### Russia expels British diplomat for spying

Moscow: Russia said Tuesday it was expelling a British diplomat for alleged spying, in the latest blow to the already dire state of relations between the two countries. The FSB security service said the diplomat, whose photo was splashed across TV news bulletins, had intentionally provided false information when he entered the country. "At the same time, the Russian FSB has discovered signs of the said diplomat conducting intelligence and subversive work that threatens the security of the Russian Federation," it said in a statement. There was no immediate comment from Britain's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. The TASS news agency cited Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova as saying that the ministry had summoned the British ambassador, a step that host governments often use to express a strong protest.

### No relief for Ramaphosa

Johannesburg: South African Opposition party the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) brought a case to the country's top court Tuesday to try to revive impeachment proceedings against President Cyril Ramaphosa over the scandal dubbed "Farmgate" by local media. The scandal centred on the alleged theft of millions of dollars hidden in furniture on Ramaphosa's Phala Phala game farm, which a former intelligence official revealed to police. An independent panel report found evidence Ramaphosa may have committed misconduct over the incident.

### Pak foils infiltration bid on Afghan border

Islamabad: Pakistan's security forces have killed three suspected terrorists allegedly belonging to the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) who were attempting to infiltrate the border in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the military's media wing said Tuesday. The security forces detected the movement of a group of terrorists, who were trying to sneak into Pakistan via the Afghanistan border in the general area of Hassan Khel in North Waziristan district, according to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Geo News reported.

## SNIPPETS

### China tracks US aircraft over Taiwan Strait

Taipei: China deployed military aircraft and ships to track and monitor a US Navy plane transiting the sensitive Taiwan Strait Tuesday, Beijing said, as the two nations continue to spar over self-ruled Taiwan. The US Navy's 7th fleet said in a statement a P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft flew through the strait's international space "in accordance with international law." The transit upheld navigational rights for all nations and "demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," it added. The US is Taiwan's most important supplier and arms provider, and American military ships and aircraft regularly transit the waterway separating China from self-ruled Taiwan. Beijing claims the East Asian island as its own territory and threatens to annex it, by force if necessary.

### G7 renews support for Ukraine

Italy: Foreign ministers from the Group of Seven democracies Tuesday expressed their support for Ukraine and condemned what they described as Russia's "irresponsible and threatening nuclear rhetoric." They also warned that North Korean support for Russia marked a dangerous expansion of the conflict, with serious consequences for European and Indo-Pacific security, and called on China, a long-standing ally of North Korea, to act against it. "Russia's use of an intermediate range ballistic missile 21 November is further evidence of its reckless and escalatory behaviour," they said in a draft statement at the conclusion of their meeting. "Our support for Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence will remain unwavering," they added.

# Israel strikes Beirut ahead of truce talks

Jerusalem, Nov 26: Israeli war planes hit Beirut's southern suburbs with a wave of airstrikes Tuesday just before Israel's cabinet met to discuss a ceasefire deal with its Hezbollah foes.

A senior Israeli official and Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib appeared optimistic a deal could be reached, clearing the way for an end to a conflict that has killed thousands of people since it was ignited by the Gaza war last year. Despite the possibility of an imminent diplomatic breakthrough, hostilities raged Tuesday. Israeli strikes smashed more of Beirut's densely-populated southern suburbs, a Hezbollah stronghold, with the Israeli military saying one barrage of strikes had hit 20 targets in the city in just 120 seconds. Israel had issued its biggest evacuation warning yet, telling civilians to leave 20 locations. Israeli military spokesperson Avichay Adraee said the air force was conducting a "widespread attack" on Hezbollah targets across the city. The Iran-backed Hezbollah has kept up rocket fire into Israel. The UN rights chief voiced concern about the escalation of bloodshed in Lebanon and his office said nearly 100 people had been reported killed by Israeli airstrikes in recent days, including women, children and medics. Israel's security cabinet under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was due to start meeting at 1400 GMT for up to three hours to discuss the ceasefire deal, which a senior Israeli official said was likely to be approved. This would pave the way for a ceasefire declaration by US President Joe Biden and French President Emmanuel Macron, four senior Lebanese sources told Reuters Monday. At a conference in Rome, Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib expressed hope that a deal could be sealed by Tuesday night.



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# Tamil film Maharaja to be released in China

First Indian film to be screened after normalisation of ties between India, China

8.7/10 on Chinese movie review site Douban and is regarded as one of the highest-rated Indian films in recent years. Directed by Nithilan Swaminathan, the film stars actors Vijay Sethupathi, Anurag Kashyap, Mamta Mohandas and Natty Natraj. It hit the Indian screens June 14 and was a huge hit. Maharaja, which is titled 'Yin Guo Bao Ying' in Chinese, will be first Indian film to be screened in China after both the countries firmed up an agreement on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, in a major breakthrough to end the over four-year border standoff. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping at their meeting in Kazan in Russia on the sidelines of the BRICS summit October 23 endorsed the agreement and issued directions to revive var-



ious bilateral dialogue mechanisms and normalise ties that were hit by a deadly military clash in 2020 at Galwan Valley. Indian films specially Aamir Khan's Three Idiots, Dangal and Secret Superstar have become a major success in China in re-

cent years as the themes largely resonated with the Chinese audiences and earned a significant amount of revenue. Khan has become a household name in China. China has about 86,000 theatres all over the country, the highest in the world. Chinese film critics say Maharaja too is expected to do very well. "The strength of Maharaja lies in its distinctive cultural expression and unique narrative techniques," Wang Peiyu, a Douban film critic, told the Global Times. "As a suspense film, it uses editing techniques to cleverly conceal the key actions of the protagonist, interspersing nu-

merous subplots to confuse the audience. Through cross-cutting, it creates a feeling of simultaneity and carefully constructs a labyrinthine narrative," he noted. The film's release in China coincides with two major competitors, the upcoming Hollywood blockbuster Gladiator II and local film Her Story. Wang said many Chinese moviegoers have expressed that the theme of Maharaja, which deliberately misguides the audience and revealing the truth suddenly near the end, leaving watchers stunned, can break through language and cultural barriers to resonate with Chinese audiences.

The film's release in China coincides with two major competitors, the upcoming Hollywood blockbuster Gladiator II and local film Her Story





With a pick-up in private sector capex and the government's ongoing focus on capex in infrastructure, we believe we are well positioned to meet the growing opportunities in the market

SUNIL MATHUR, | MD AND CEO, SIEMENS

## 5G SUBSCRIBERS MAY TRIPLE BY 2030: REPORT

The number of 5G subscribers in India is expected to grow threefold to 970 million, accounting for 74 per cent of the total mobile customer base in the country by 2030, a report by telecom gear firm Ericsson said Tuesday. According to Ericsson ConsumerLab research report, simultaneously Generative AI applications are emerging as a key driving factor for 5G performance.



## of the day quote

As the CNG vehicle market is poised for significant growth, particularly in the passenger vehicle segment, we aim to capitalise on this opportunity by delivering high-quality solutions to our customers



DEEPAK JAIN, | PROMOTER DIRECTOR OF LATL

With a robust technological infrastructure and a deep understanding of client needs, we are poised to transform the passive investing space in India



DINESH THAKKAR, | CMD OF ANGEL ONE

With the launch of the Ola Gig and S1 Z range of scooters, we will further accelerate EV adoption, catering to a wide range of personal and commercial use cases with affordability, reliability, and safety as the core pillars



BHAVISH AGGARWAL, | OLA ELECTRIC CMD

# Adani hit by downgrades

REUTERS

Mumbai, Nov 26: Adani Group's troubles deepened Tuesday as two more credit rating agencies cut their outlook for the Indian conglomerate, whose billionaire founder Gautam Adani has been charged by US authorities over an alleged \$265 million bribery scheme.

The US indictments' widening fallout comes after S&P Friday put Adani Ports, Adani Green Energy and Adani Electricity on a downgrade warning and as partners reviewed individual projects involving the group.

Andhra Pradesh is likely to suspend a power purchase deal linked to the group, two state government sources said, in what would be the first such move by an Indian state government after the US charges over solar power-supply contracts.

Most of the alleged bribes were paid to a government official to get Andhra Pradesh's electricity distribution companies to agree to purchase power, the U.S. indictment said.

The allegations are having a knock-on impact across the Adani empire as Moody's Ratings lowered its outlook for seven Adani firms, including Adani Ports and Adani Green, to negative from stable, saying the US indictments will likely weaken the group's access to funding and increase its capital costs.

Ratings agency Fitch earlier put some Adani Group bonds on watch for a possible downgrade, also citing the US indictment, while Sri Lanka said it



was reviewing any potential fallout for the Indian group's projects in the neighbouring island nation.

A US agency that agreed to lend more than \$550 million to a Sri Lankan port development said on Sunday it was reviewing the impact of the bribery accusations against Adani, his nephew Sagar Adani and six others over the alleged scheme to bribe Indian officials to secure power supply deals.

The Adani Group has denied the allegations, as well as those made in a parallel civil case by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, but news of the indictment has wiped \$34 billion off the value of shares in 10 companies owned by the Indian giant.

Adani stocks deepened losses Tuesday, with Adani Green the hardest hit, closing 7.3% lower.

Fitch said in a statement it had placed Adani Energy Solutions Ltd, Adani Electric-

ing, including rolling over credit lines, accessing new facilities and potentially a rise in the cost of its debt.

Adani Green responded Tuesday to TotalEnergies saying it would halt investments in Adani firms, saying there was no new financial commitment under discussion and that the French oil major's decision would not have any material impact on the company's operations or its growth plans.

Meanwhile, Adani Enterprises, Adani's flagship firm, and Singapore-based Wilmar International, will delay a proposed sale of at least 12% in their Adani Wilmar Indian food joint venture, Bloomberg News reported.

Adani and Wilmar did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Shares in the joint venture closed 2.3% lower.

One of Adani Group's main backers, Australia-listed investment firm GQG Partners said in a memo to clients which was seen by Reuters that it not see the indictments having a material impact on Adani businesses.

Except for Adani Green, the group does not need to raise capital at this point, it added, although if Adani did need more funding, the indictment would limit its access to foreign capital.

Any negative actions by the Indian government could have meaningful implication for Adani, it added, though it believed the government would maintain support for Gautam Adani.

# Sensex, Nifty snap two days of rally



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 26: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty snapped the two-day rally and closed lower Tuesday in line with weak global market trends amid concerns over tariff threats by US President-elect Donald Trump.

In a volatile trade, the 30-share Sensex declined 105.79 points or 0.13 per cent to settle at 80,004.06. During the day, it lost 311.18 points or 0.38 per cent to 79,798.67.

The broader NSE Nifty declined by 27.40 points or 0.11 per cent to 24,194.50.

Adani Ports & SEZ was the biggest loser among Sensex stocks, dropping by 3.23 per cent. UltraTech Cement, Sun Pharma, NTPC, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Larsen & Toubro and Power Grid were among the laggards.

On the other hand, Asian Paints, Infosys, JSW Steel, Tata Consultancy Services and Reliance Industries were among the biggest gainers.

Global stock markets de-

clined following concerns over US President-elect Donald Trump's comment that he plans to impose new tariffs on Mexico, Canada and China as soon as he takes office January 20.

"The domestic market took a pause after the recent strong rally. However, the broader market remained agile. FIIs have turned net buyers, breaking a long streak of selling, with MSCI rebalancing," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

All Adani group stocks ended lower, with Adani Green Energy tumbling 7.05 per cent.

Broader markets defied trend with the BSE smallcap gauge climbing 0.62 per cent and mid-cap index by 0.10 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, utilities dropped 1.77 per cent, power declined 1.55 per cent, auto (1.26 per cent), oil & gas (0.93 per cent) and services (0.64 per cent).

IT jumped 1.11 per cent, teck (0.89 per cent), telecommunication (0.80 per cent) and metal (0.58 per cent) were the gainers.

# Alphabet gets CCI nod to acquire Flipkart stake

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Nov 26: The Competition Commission Tuesday granted approval to Alphabet's arm Shoreline International Holdings LLC to acquire a stake in Walmart group firm Flipkart.

Shoreline International Holding is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Google's parent firm Alphabet Inc. It is a holding company and does not own or operate any Google products or services. "The proposed transaction comprises an investment through subscription of shares of Flipkart Pvt Ltd (Target) by Shoreline International Holdings LLC (Acquirer) and an arrangement between an affiliate of the acquirer and the target's subsidiary for the provision of certain services," the regulator said in a release.

"Commission approves transaction involving subscription of shares of Flipkart Pvt Ltd by Shoreline, an Alphabet, Inc subsidiary," the regulator said in a post on X.

Flipkart is a subsidiary of Walmart Inc and ultimately belongs to the Walmart Group. It is primarily engaged in the business of wholesale cash and carry of goods and providing marketplace-based e-commerce platforms to facilitate trade between customers and sellers in India. In May this year, Walmart-owned Flipkart has closed a funding round of about USD 1 billion that in-

cludes USD 350 million from Alphabet's Google.

US retail giant Walmart, which holds an 85 per cent holding in the Indian ecommerce major Flipkart, has invested USD 600 million in the fund-raise that kicked off last year.

In a separate release Tuesday, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the acquisition of additional stake of DMI Finance Pvt Ltd by MUFG Bank, Ltd.

Delhi-based DMI Finance is a digital-led non-banking finance company that offers loans to individuals and small businesses.

The proposed combination envisages acquisition of additional securities of DMI Finance Pvt Ltd (DMI Finance) by MUFG Bank, Ltd, such that MUFG Bank's shareholding will increase to 20 per cent of the share capital of DMI Finance, CCI said.

MUFG Bank is a Tokyo-headquartered banking institution. MUFG Bank is wholly owned and controlled by Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc, which is a financial services and holding company.

MUFG Bank in India provides corporate banking loans, deposit accounts, remittances, trade finance and bank guarantees. In August, Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, Inc and its subsidiary, MUFG Bank announced that the bank will make an additional investment of ₹2,798.8 crore in DMI Finance, a digital financial services business in India.

# Term deposits outpace CASA growth in Sept

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Nov 26: Term deposits, which offer more attractive return, outpaced the growth in CASA (current account and savings account), and their share in total deposits rose to 61.4 per cent in September 2024 from 59.8 per cent a year ago, as per RBI data. The Reserve Bank Tuesday released Quarterly 'Basic Statistical Return' (BSR): Deposits with Scheduled Commercial Banks - September 2024.

"A substantial amount of deposits have shifted to higher interest rate bucket during the latest monetary policy tightening cycle; term deposits bearing over 7 per cent interest rate has increased to 68.8 per cent from 54.7 per cent a year ago," it said.

As per the BSR, bank deposits growth (y-o-y) at 11.7 per cent in September 2024 remained close to that in the previous quarter.

Deposits of all population groups (rural/semi-urban/urban/metropolitan) recorded double-digit annual growth.

During Q2:2024-25, 66.5 per cent of the total incremental deposits were contributed by the metropolitan branches, which have 54.7 per cent share in total deposits. Of the total deposits, 51.4 per cent was held by individuals; female depositors owned nearly 40 per cent of the deposits by individuals, the RBI said. Deposits growth (y-o-y)



of public sector banks inched up to 9 per cent in September 2024 (8.1 per cent in June 2024), which, however, remained well below that for other bank groups at above 15 per cent.

The share of senior citizens' deposits increased to 20.1 per cent in September 2024 from 19.7 per cent a year ago.

According to another quarterly BSR on 'Outstanding Credit of Scheduled Commercial Banks', bank credit growth (y-o-y) moderated to 12.6 per cent in September 2024 from 15.3 per cent, net of merger, in March 2024. Metropolitan branches of banks, which accounted for 60.6 per cent of loans, recorded lower growth of 11.6 per cent.

Agriculture, industry, housing and personal (non-housing) loans had 11.5 per cent, 23.7 per cent, 16.5 per cent and 14.9 per

cent shares, respectively, in credit by non-RRB SCBs; they recorded 13.2 per cent, 10.4 per cent, 13.2 per cent and 17.5 per cent growth (y-o-y), respectively.

"Credit to private corporate sector exceeded the headline credit growth and stood at 16.5 per cent (y-o-y) in September 2024; working capital loans accelerated to 15.3 per cent from 14.1 per cent a year ago," it said.

The share of female borrowers' loans to individuals has been rising gradually and it stood at 23.6 per cent in September 2024. Further, public sector banks and private sector banks which have 53.2 per cent and 41.8 per cent shares, respectively, in credit by non-RRB SCBs, recorded 13 per cent and 11.9 per cent increase (y-o-y), respectively, in September 2024.

# Oil firms unlikely to go 'drill, baby, drill' under Trump

REUTERS

London, Nov 26: US oil and gas producers are unlikely to radically increase production under president-elect Donald Trump as companies remain focused on capital discipline, a senior executive at Exxon Mobil said Tuesday.

"We're not going to see anybody in 'drill, baby, drill' mode," Liam Mallon, head of Exxon's upstream division, told the Energy Intelligence Forum conference in London.

"A radical change (in production) is unlikely because the

vast majority, if not everybody, is focused on the economics of what they're doing," he said.

"Maintaining the discipline, driving the quality, driving the information, will naturally limit that growth rate."

Trump, who takes office January 20, pledged during the election campaign to boost domestic oil and natural gas output.

Reuters reported Monday that his transition team was preparing a wide-ranging energy package to roll out in the first days of his presidency.

The United States has be-



come the world's top oil producer following a surge in shale oil production, pumping over 13 million barrels per day earlier

this year. It is also the world's leading natural gas producer.

Relaxing of land permitting processing could provide a

Trump, who takes office January 20, pledged during the election campaign to boost domestic oil and natural gas output.

short-term boost to production, Mallon said.

BP CEO Murray Auchincloss told the conference Monday that he looked forward to the Trump presidency, saying the Republican leader will help

accelerate permitting time for energy projects.

Exxon earlier this year completed the \$60 billion acquisition of smaller U.S. rival Pioneer Natural Resources, consolidating its position as the largest shale producer.

Exxon expects to grow oil production in the Permian shale basin to over 2 million barrels per day, Mallon said.

"We see growth beyond the 2 million probably for a couple of years but not at that continuous same rate ... certainly up to 2030 we see it growing," he said.

# Early struggles helped Jaiswal

Sleeping in tents for groundsmen and selling paani puri for food have helped batter conquer all odds

AGENCIES

**Perth, Nov 26:** Brought up in penury, the sensational Yashasvi Jaiswal has said he now uses the experience gained from those difficult days as ammunition to conquer the battles on and off the field. Jaiswal stamped his class with a masterful hundred in the second innings of the first Test against Australia to script a memorable win for India.

Having moved to Mumbai from Uttar Pradesh's Bhadohi when he was just 11 years old to train at Azad Maidan, the left-handed batter lived in tents with the groundsmen and sold paani puri at night to earn money for food.

"It's something (his back story) which always gives me confidence that I can come out of any situation. I always fight, I always look to fight, I want to be in the battle, I want to enjoy the battle and I want to win the battle," Jaiswal said during a chat Tuesday with Australian television broadcaster Mark Howard.

"So this is what it gives me and I am really blessed that I have this life, which gives me a lot of confidence, learning about myself, how I can believe in me, and how I can go through with different emotions, different situations in my life. I think it's just incredible and I really want to thank god for where I am and what I am doing. I am doing what I love, so I am just happy at the moment. I want to enjoy this with every ball," the 22-year-old opener added.

Jaiswal's journey to fame is a fascinating tale of a strong-willed man making his own destiny. His swashbuckling hundred more than made for

## GAMBHIR FLIES BACK TO INDIA

**Perth:** India head coach Gautam Gambhir has flown back home with his family due to a 'personal emergency' and is unlikely to rejoin the squad before the second Test against Australia beginning December 6 in Adelaide. "He left with his family on early Tuesday morning for India. It is an unavoidable personal emergency. He will be back in Adelaide before the start of the second Test match," a BCCI official said. The Indian team will leave Wednesday for Canberra, where they are expected to attend an official reception by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. They will also play a two-day pink ball game to prepare for the day/night game at Adelaide.

the first-innings duck here.

Jaiswal was asked about his unusual celebration after getting to the three-figure mark. "Yes, it was (an unusual) way to bring up the hundred. In my mind, I was like, I will do this or that, and then suddenly, something happened, and I was like, 'oh my god, what should I do,'" Jaiswal stated.

"So, I was like, okay, I will just celebrate, and I will enjoy this moment. I was blessed, I was grateful, I enjoyed it; this feeling will stay with me for a long time. I give kisses to all my loved ones, all my fans who have supported me. I just wanted to give them my love with the kisses," Jaiswal added.

T-15 I-28 R-1,568 100s-4 50s-8 HS-214\* Avg-58.07



# Rohit may bat down the order

IN-FORM RAHUL CAN ALSO OPEN IN THE 2ND TEST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** Returning skipper Rohit Sharma will walk into the Indian playing XI for the second Test in Adelaide in place of young Devdutt Padikkal. However, the question is whether he will open the innings or bat in the middle-order. Hence the in-form KL Rahul's batting slot in the pink ball warm-up game in Canberra will certainly keep everyone interested.

It will all depend on whether the injured Shubman Gill gets fit in time for the Adelaide Test starting December 6, failing

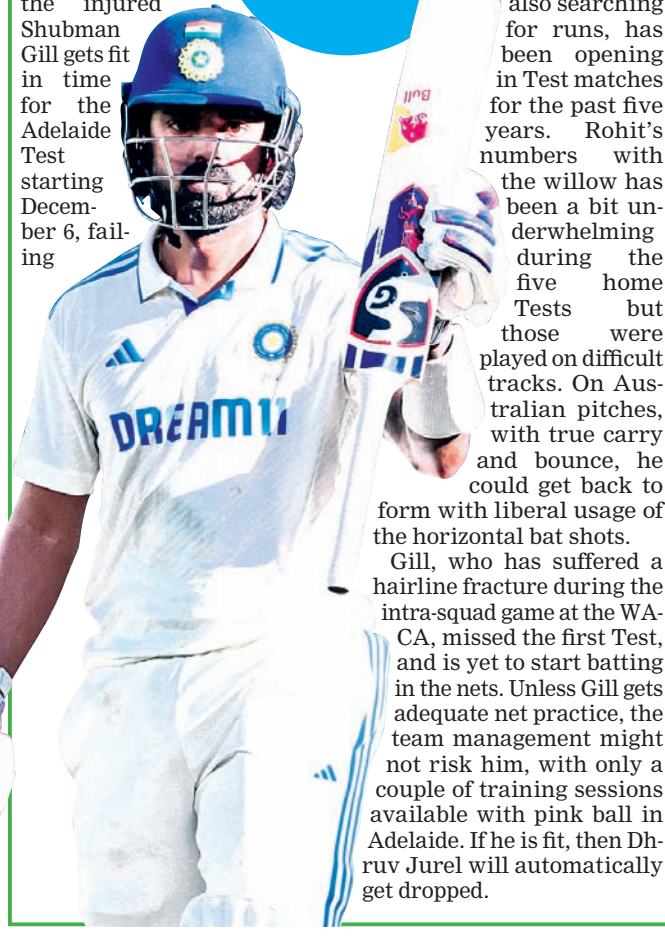
which Rahul might be slotted at No. 3 in place of Padikkal. But there is a school of thought that believes the team might be served better if Rohit bats in the middle-order, preferably at No. 5 or No. 6.

Rahul was seen more as a makeshift opener due to Rohit's absence at Perth. But he has been technically the most compact among all Indian batters across both innings at Optus Stadium, with scores of 26 and 77.

The Indian captain, who is also searching for runs, has been opening in Test matches for the past five years. Rohit's numbers with the willow has been a bit underwhelming during the five home Tests but those were played on difficult tracks. On Australian pitches, with true carry and bounce, he could get back to form with liberal usage of the horizontal bat shots.

Gill, who has suffered a hairline fracture during the intra-squad game at the WACA, missed the first Test, and is yet to start batting in the nets. Unless Gill gets adequate net practice, the team management might not risk him, with only a couple of training sessions available with pink ball in Adelaide. If he is fit, then Dhruv Jurel will automatically get dropped.

Despite centuries by Yashasvi and Virat, Rahul looked the most technically accomplished player in the Perth Test



## SHORT TAKES

### Satwik, Chirag pull out of home event

**Lucknow:** India's star men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty withdrew Tuesday from the Syed Modi International Super 300 badminton tournament to be played here. The former World No 1 duo, touted as the favourites to win the men's doubles title here, had been sidelined from competitive action post the Paris Olympics due to Satwik's shoulder injury. They made their comeback at the China Masters Super 70 tournament last week where they reached the semifinals. Sources however, stated that Satwik faced some 'difficulty' in China and decided to pull out from the home tournament.

### ICC meets Nov 29 for CT schedule

**Dubai:** The all-powerful board of the International Cricket Council (ICC) will meet virtually November 29 to finalise the much-delayed schedule of the Champions Trophy (CT) to be held in Pakistan in February-March next year. The cause of the delay has been India's refusal to play in Pakistan considering the tense relations between the two countries. Sources stated here Tuesday that the tournament will be played in hybrid model with India to play all their games here even if they reach the semifinals and final. The ICC will compensate the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) financially for allowing to shift the tournament out the country.

### Odisha hockey eves thrash Tamil Nadu

**Secunderabad:** Hockey Association of Odisha began their campaign in the 14th Sub-Junior Women's National Championships 2024 with a thumping 9-0 win over Hockey Tamil Nadu in a Pool C game played here Tuesday. Anjana Xaxa (30th, 40th, 44th) and Lugun Shibani (41st, 45th, 47) scored three goals each including a hat-trick. The other goals were scored by Sanjana Kujur (29th and 35th) and Kiro Sanjana (46th). The Odisha eves dominated the show from the start and were 7-0 up at the interval. Had they not relaxed in the second half, the could have easily won by a double digit margin. In another game Hockey Madhya Pradesh went on a scoring spree and thrashed Le Puducherry Hockey 33-0.

# Gukesh fights back with draw in second game

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Singapore, Nov 26:** Indian Grandmaster (GM) D Gukesh bounced back to draw a largely uneventful second game against defending champion Ding Liren of China in the World Chess Championship here Tuesday.

Playing with black pieces, Gukesh made a comeback of sorts, having lost to Liren in the opener of the 14-game showdown, Monday. It was a good recovery by Gukesh as Liren could do very little with his white pieces and had to share the point.

"Draw with black in the World Championship match is always nice and it's too early, we still have a long match," the Chennai-based GM said in the post-game press conference.

"I think after I was surprised in the opening, I reacted pretty decently, and I didn't give him (Liren) any chances. It was a solid game with black, which is nice," added Gukesh.

Liren did not press at all while Gukesh just followed the basics as the game ended in a draw via repetition soon after black had completed the 23rd turn.

It was one of the quietest



D Gukesh in action during the 2nd game, played Tuesday

variation in the Italian opening as Liren probably did not want to rush things having grabbed a full point advantage in the first game itself. The 32-year-old said he was happy with how he performed in the second round.

"In the first game I played something new in the opening and of course it requires a lot of memory. Today I also played not a common move (for me) 1.e4 and I prepared a lot," Liren said. "I think it will be a big fight tomorrow (Wednesday). He's a point down and he will have the white pieces, so I am ready for a fight," he added.

Liren's fifth move, when he moved his Queen's knight, was indication enough about his peaceful intentions. There have been many top-level games that have ended in draws through this manoeuvre and this game was no exception.

# Colts eye encore at Oman

India begin campaign in Jr Asia Cup with game against Thailand

AGENCIES

**Muscat (Oman), Nov 26:** A confident India, coached by two-time Olympic bronze medal-winner PR Sreejesh, will start as firm favourites when they take on Thailand in their opening match of the Junior Asia Cup men's hockey tournament here Wednesday.

India have been placed in Pool A along with Korea, Japan, Chinese Taipei and Thailand. India are the defending champions in the tournament. India beat Pakistan 2-1 in the final last year. India have won this tournament for a record four times, including in 2004, 2008, 2015 and 2023.

With 10 teams participating in the event this time, the remaining five teams in Pool B are Pakistan, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Oman, and China.

"Our team have been working hard, and we are confident in our abilities to perform well," skipper Amir Ali said. "Playing against strong teams like Thailand, Japan, and Korea in Pool A will be challenging, but we are ready to give our best and aim for a top finish. We have worked very hard to prepare for the competition. We would like to defend our ti-



The Indian team during a training session Tuesday at Muscat

INDIA'S GAMES	
Vs Thailand	November 27
Vs Japan	November 28
Vs Taipei	November 30
Vs Korea	December 1

tle and make our country proud once again," Ali added.

Sreejesh also expressed optimism ahead of the tournament. "We have the ability to go all the way and the boys are really geared up for the opening game.

# Pant bids emotional adieu to DC

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant expressed gratitude and thanked Tuesday his former IPL franchise Delhi Capitals (DC) for the amazing memories over the years.

Pant was part of the Delhi franchise since debuting in the tournament in 2016. He went on to represent the franchise in eight seasons after missing the 2023 edition due to injuries suffered in a car crash. In 111 matches for Delhi, Pant amassed 3,284 runs including a century and 18 half centuries. He was made captain of the side in 2023.

However, things turned different ahead of the IPL auc-

tion as he was not part of the retention list. As expected, Pant shattered all the records and was bought by Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) for a whopping ₹27 crore, becoming the most expensive player in the tournament's history.

"Goodbyes are never easy. The ney with Delhi Capitals has been nothing short of



amazing. From the thrills on the field to the moments off it, I've grown in ways I never imagined. I came here as a teenager and we grew together over the last nine years," Pant wrote in a farewell note on social media. Pant also thanked his fans and supporters for standing by him during the difficult times and making the journey special for him.

"What made this journey all worthwhile is you, the fans... you've embraced me, cheered for me and stood by me in one of the toughest phases of my life. As I move on, I carry your love and support in my heart. I'll look forward to

entertain you whenever I take the field. Thank you for being my family and making this journey so special," the player signed off.

DC co-owner Parth Jindal also lamented Pant's departure from the franchise.

"To Rishabh @RishabhPant17 you are and will always remain my younger brother - from the bottom of my heart I love you and I have tried everything to make sure you are happy and have treated you like my family," Jindal wrote in an emotional post on 'X'. "I am very sad to see you go and I am very emotional about it. You will always be in DC and I hope one day we can reunite," he added.

# Ashok Kumar stable after angioplasty

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Nov 26:** Ashok Kumar, the former India hockey player and son of the legendary Major Dhyan Chand, has undergone angioplasty at a city hospital here and is stable now, family sources said Tuesday. He underwent the procedure Monday. Kumar had suffered a heart attack after being hospitalised for discomfort in chest here Sunday.

"He (Ashok Kumar) underwent a successful angioplasty at the hospital. The doctors implanted a few stents after they found a few blockages in his artery," a family source stated. "He is completely out of danger and in a very stable condition. He is right now under observation and will be discharged from the hospital in 2-3 days, the source added.

The former inside-right player, who was known for his ball control, was a member of the Indian team that won the 1975 World Cup under Ajit Pal Singh. He was also a member of the Indian side that won a bronze medal in the 1972 Munich Olympics.

The 74-year-old became a recipient of the Arjuna Award in 1974 and, in 1975, scored the winning goal against Pakistan in the World Cup final.

# KIIT, UTKAL QUALIFY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Nov 26:** KIIT and Utkal University have qualified for the All India Inter University Inter Zone Basketball (Men) Championships 2024 by finishing first and second in the East Zone Inter University (Men) tournament which ended Monday. The all-India tournament will be played at Manipal University in Jaipur December 2 to December 5.

In the East Zone championships a total of 11 universities from Odisha participated. Four teams - the two others being - Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith and University of Science and Technology, Meghalaya qualified for the Super League stage. In the super league KIIT



KIIT players pose with their trophy

won all their three matches to emerge champions. Utkal University finished runners-up after losing one of their three games. Kashi Vidyapith won one match to finish third while the Meghalaya team failed to win a single match. Even then Kashi Vidyapith and University of Science and Technology sealed their spots in the all-India meet.