

HAPPY Dussehra™

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Employee unions warned of an indefinite strike from December 14 for the demand of OPS



The Shinde-Fadnavis government which is already stressed to solve the Maratha reservation issue has another challenge awaiting to take them on task. In Maharashtra 17 lakh government-semi government employees have warned of an indefinite strike from December 14 if their demands are not met. They have also announced a "Family March" on November 8 demanding the reinstatement of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS). The employees are hopeless with the state government's approach towards their demand for OPS, which provides a stable source of income post-retirement. They are also against the indirect privatization of the education sector and the filling of all vacant posts.

The demand of OPS for government employees, including teachers came on political agenda during the campaign for legislative council elections in teachers and graduates' constituencies held in January this year. Chief minister Eknath Shinde announced that the government would think positively on the issue but still, the OPS issue had done political damage to Shinde-Fadnavis as BJP lost Nagpur and Amravati to MVA candidates. After that, state government employees went on strike from March 14 during the budget session of the legislature. The strike ended on March 20 after the state government appointed the committee under the former IAS officer Subodh Kumar to look into the demand for

OPS. But since then, the state government has not come forward with any proposal regarding the pension issue. Subodh Kumar Committee failed to give their report in given time, so there is unrest among the employees.

OPS is a pension scheme by the government in which a government employee gets 50% of its basic and dearness allowance after retirement as a pension. Government employees do not contribute to OPS. It gives a stable source of income post-retirement. This OPS was scrapped in Maharashtra as per the central government policy in 2005 due to heavy debt and the majority of government revenue was spent on the salary and pension of government

employees resulting in less amount left for developmental work.

After the scrapping of OPS, it was replaced by the contribution-based new pension scheme in which government employees have to contribute 10% of their basic pay for the pension. The government then invests it in the pension funds selected by the Government of India and the returns are the capital market link. Government employees want OPS as they need not be required to contribute to it and also give an assured amount as a pension with the increase in dearness allowance automatically and OPS also continues to the spouse after the death of the employee.

Jigna Vora, a journalist from Mumbai, got her voice back through TV shows?

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

Two decades ago, there was a female daredevil journalist, who wanted to say no to the hierarchy of the press room. She was doing many crime stories independently to create her own stand and name in the media. But one fine morning her fate challenged her and she had no clue which hell she was landing in. Jigna Vora began her reporting career in 2006 with the Free Press Journal (FPJ). She reported on underworld don Abu Salem and former encounter specialist Daya Nayak. After her stint with the FPJ, she worked with the Mumbai Mirror and Mid-Day until 2008.

Vora is from Mumbai and got married to a businessman in Gujarat at an early age. Soon after her marriage, she had to go through a lot

of domestic violence. Her husband had to beat her; in-laws used to abuse her. From this marriage she had a son. After son's birth her life became more miserable, Jigna finally returned back to her parents' home in Mumbai and filed for divorce. It was during those numerous court visits that Vora got fascinated with court proceedings and the people she met there. With help from a childhood friend, she got a job at the Free Press Journal to support her son and her parents. Vora's role as a reporter gave her a new sense of empowerment. The divorce came through three years ago.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 02

Editoritis

Jigna Vora, a journalist from Mumbai, got her voice back through TV shows?

Jigna was an independent woman. She was flamboyant and loud. Her transformation from a submissive housewife to a confident reporter surprised her close friends.

Who knew Jigna would be linked to Dey's murder? Day was returning to his home on his motorcycle from Ghatkopar four unidentified men on motorcycles opened fire on him at Hiranandani Gardens, Powai

The police alleged that Vora had supplied the address and licence plate number of Dey's motorcycle to Chhota Rajan. Police claimed Vora's professional rivalry was the reason for Dey's murder.

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By now Jigna was an independent woman. She was flamboyant and loud. Her transformation from a submissive housewife to a confident reporter surprised her close friends. She eventually graduated to doing stories related to the underworld. After her short stint with Mid-Day, Vora went on to join the Indian Express and later the Asian Age. After Dey's murder, she was seen at the Mid-Day office trying to get his job. She wanted to be made Head of Investigations, a post held by Dey. But the management refused. They said they had not heard of her stories. She was furious at the refusal. Vora's crime reports were mediocre and not as sensational as that of Dey.

Who knew Jigna would be linked to Dey's murder? Day was returning to his home on his motorcycle from Ghatkopar four unidentified men on motorcycles opened fire on him at Hiranandani Gardens, Powai. He was reported dead on arrival at the Hiranandani Hospital, with nine exit wounds on his body. Mumbai Police speculated the murder was a professional job, and may be related to his reporting on the oil mafia. The oil mafia, which pilfers oil being transported and also dilutes it before sale, has been under pressure since the killing of Yashwant Sonawane in January 2011. Dey had also reported that Chhota Rajan was the mastermind behind a shooting involving Dawood Ibrahim's brother Iqbal Kaskar in Mumbai. The murder was widely denounced by the press and the local government.

On 27 June 2011, after sixteen days of investigations, the Crime Branch declared they have cracked the case. Police officials caught seven people from different locations of India. Of which three were detained from Chembur, in Mumbai; one in Solapur; and remaining two from Rameshwaram, in Tamil Nadu. All the suspects resided in different parts of Mumbai except Satish Kalia, who settled down in Trivandrum after the birth of his daughter and cases against him were cleared. After the shootout they fled to evade arrest. All the seven suspects Rohit Thangappan Joseph alias Satish Kalia, Arun Dake, Anil Waghmode, Babloo, Sachin Gaikwad, Mangesh Agawane and Chhottu are history-sheeters. The suspects were allegedly from

Chhota Rajan's gang.

On 21 February 2012, Mumbai Crime Branch chargesheeted journalist Jigna Vora (Deputy Chief of Bureau of Asian Age) under stringent provisions of Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) and various other penal offences for her alleged role in the sensational murder. Jigna Vora had been under the Mumbai police's radar since 4 July 2011 after the police intercepted a conversation between Manoj, brother of Vinod Asrani, who has also been arrested and the gangster Chhota Rajan. The police alleged that Vora had supplied the address and licence plate number of Dey's motorcycle to Chhota Rajan. Police claimed Vora's professional rivalry was the reason for Dey's murder.

On 27 July 2012, Jigna Vora was granted bail by a special court reasoning that she has a child to look after and is a single parent and that she had no previous criminal record. The 2023 TV Series Scoop deals with the story of Jigna Vora, focusing on the events leading to and after Dey's murder, her subsequent arrest and the courtroom proceedings. Jigna Vora was acquitted in 2018 by a trial court and her acquittal was upheld by Bombay High Court. The court concluded that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had failed to provide any direct evidence linking Vora to the 2011 killing of Dey. She is currently a contestant on the Indian reality TV show, Bigg Boss Season 17, which started in October 2023. After a series called "Scoop" on Netflix and Bigg Boss, the voiceless Jigna got her voice to tell people what all she had to go through. Jigna's life is always a roller-coaster ride, hoping she will bounce back again forever.

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Vaidehi has received several Awards like I Congo-karmavir chakra, Bedal Powell scout and guide awards 2021- best journalist, Newspaper Association of India award- best journalist. She received lot of awards for her contribution towards journalism.

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Voices



Addressing the Silent Epidemic: Osteoporosis and Bone Health

- Dr. Krishna Kumar Vepakomma

Osteoporosis is a growing global concern due to an aging population. Globally, approximately 1 in 3 women and 1 in 5 men over 50 experience osteoporotic fractures, leading to long-lasting pain and disability in the elderly. In India, a staggering 61 million individuals grapple with osteoporosis, with 80% of them being women. Unfortunately, only 20% of those with osteoporosis receive proper diagnosis and treatment due to limited healthcare resources and awareness. World Osteoporosis Day on October 20 aims to raise awareness, promote prevention, and encourage early diagnosis and treatment.

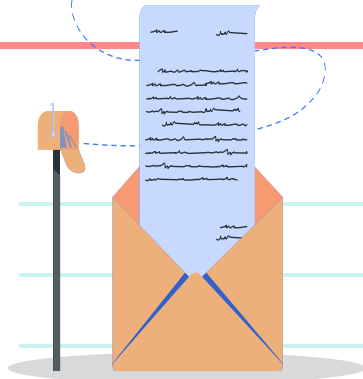
Osteoporosis weakens bones, making minor incidents like falls, bumps, coughs, or sneezes potentially lead to fractures, especially in older individuals due to low bone density. These fractures profoundly impact the quality of life and independence. However, adopting a healthy lifestyle and fall prevention measures can greatly improve well-being post-diagnosis.

To promote strong bones, ensure adequate calcium and vitamin D intake and engage in bone-friendly exercises, like walking and hiking. Staying physically active, including low-impact activities, can protect bones and build muscle. Programs like Matter of Balance, walking clubs, Tai Chi, and gardening can reduce osteoporosis impact.

Significant advancements have been made in osteoporosis treatment, with the potential for oral therapies to enhance bone density. This breakthrough offers promise for more accessible and effective treatments, not only for osteoporosis but also for other bone-related conditions.

Osteoporosis is a silent yet substantial health challenge that necessitates early detection, lifestyle adjustments, and the potential benefits of emerging treatments to reduce the risk of fractures and enhance the quality of life for affected individuals. World Osteoporosis Day offers an opportunity to champion bone health, prevent osteoporosis, and educate individuals about risk factors and management, inspiring people to maintain strong and healthy bones throughout their lives.

Letters to the Editor



Durga, an aspect of Adi Parashakti, the supreme goddess. It spans over nine nights, first in the month of Chaitra, and again in the month of Ashvin. The festival serves as a reminder of the power of femininity, the triumph of light over darkness, and continues to be a cherished part of India's cultural heritage. The festival serves as a reminder of the power of femininity, the triumph of light over darkness, and continues to be a cherished part of India's cultural heritage.

Jubel D'Cruz

Twin Tube Tunnel project from Borivali to Thane

There was a recent newsreport according to which, the Twin Tube Tunnel project from Borivali to Thane is now finally going to see the light of day. This project is an underground tunnel running under the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SNGP), which has finally got wildlife clearance from the concerned authorities.

This tunnel may prove to a game changer and according to the metropolitan commissioner of MMRDA, obtaining wildlife clearance was a significant achievement. But, are they on the right track? And what achievement are they talking about? Are we disturbing wildlife & Nature? We are already displacing the wild from their own den as is evident from leopards straying into residential complexes built close to the SNGP or perhaps on encroached wildlife territory itself. There were apprehensions about the south Mumbai underground metro rail project affecting buildings in the area as well. I wonder what will be impact of this project, on SNGP. Also, what about the impact on the two lakes Tulsi & Vihar?

The scenario seems frightening.

Melville X. D'Souza

One plant getting multiple vegetables- redefining olericulture

The fantastic idea of planting one plant and getting multiple vegetables is soon going to become a reality and will turn out to be a boon to everyone. The Scientists at ICAR-Indian Institute of Vegetable Research (IIVR), Varanasi have come out with a single plant that can yield three vegetables at the same time - brinjal, tomato and chilli. Using the grafting technique, the scientists at ICAR-IIVR, first developed 'Pomato' that yields potatoes and tomatoes on a single plant and 'Brimato' that yields brinjal and tomatoes together.

The scientists at ICAR-IIVR, Varanasi is now working on developing and come out soon into the vegetable field with this unique single plant yielding three veggies at the same time. Studies to analyse feasibility of its cultivation will also be done and scientists are very hopeful that this research will be successful and redefine today's vegetable cultivation. Not only will vegetable farmers benefit a lot from this even common man will be able to plant and cultivate these on their terraces and in gardens. As these plants saves space and time these are sure to be a trend when they come to the market.

M Pradyu

Gaganyaan Mission

The Indian Space Research Organization successfully carried out a crucial test of the crew escape system on Saturday, after overcoming a technical glitch, laying the ground-

work for its planned mission, Gaganyaan, which will send Indian astronauts into space by 2024. With the successful launch of the Human Space Mission Gaganyaan's first test flight, India proudly achieves a historic milestone. It is a significant accomplishment for the nation and testament to Indian space prowess.

Jahangir Shaikh

Policemen have the Toughest Job

As many as 188 policemen laid down their lives in the line of duty while maintaining law and order in the past one year, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday. The country's police forces spend the golden years of their lives away from their families and many of them guarding the country's long land border and protecting the country through their bravery and sacrifices. Undoubtedly, all the personnel serving the country, policemen have the toughest job - be it day or night, winter or summer, festival or regular day, policemen do not get a chance to celebrate festivals with their families. If a police officer has been myrtered, govt must ensure to bear all expenditures of the martyrs' families and provide with all the facilities of well education for their children.

Tauqueer Rahmani

Readers are requested to mail Letters to the Editor only at

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No postal letters will be entertained

(The views expressed are authors' own)

Dussehra Rally: Around 15,000 Mumbai police personnel will be deployed on duty at the venue

More than 15,000 Mumbai police personnel will be on duty at venues of Dussehra rallies of rival Shiv Sena groups, for an ICC cricket World Cup match here on Tuesday and for overseeing immersion of Goddess Durga idols after the end of Navratri festival, an official said on Monday. The ruling Shiv Sena and its rival group led by former Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray are holding their Dussehra rallies at Azad Maidan (south Mumbai) and Shivaji Park in Central Mumbai's Dadar, respectively, where police personnel will be deployed in strength.

The police are geared up to deploy adequate personnel at the



two high-profile political rallies which will start late in the evening and see participation from a large number of people, including workers of the ruling Shiv Sena and the opposition Shiv Sena (UBT), said the official. Also on

Tuesday, the Wankhede Stadium in south Mumbai will host a day-night World Cup match between South Africa and Bangladesh, where, too, security personnel will be deployed, he said.

Besides the rallies and the

World Cup match, the metropolis will also see immersion of Goddess Durga idols after the end of the nine-day Navratri festival which will also keep cops busy with law and order and crowd management duties.

Considering that a large number of people come out on streets during the immersion processions, police are being deployed at all prominent places, the official said.

As many as 12,449 lower-rank personnel, 2,496 officers, 45 Assistant Commissioners of Police, 16 Deputy Commissioners and half a dozen Additional Commissioners of the city force are being deployed across the financial capital, he said. Besides the Mumbai cops, 33 State Reserve Police Force (SRPF) platoons (around 100 each), Quick Response Teams and Home Guards are being mobilised for duty for the multiple events in the metropolis, said the official. **PTI**

Fire broke out in Borivali and Kandivali, leaves 1 dead several injured



At least two people died and three others were injured after a fire broke out in an eight-storey building in Mumbai's Borivali on Monday, the officials said. According to the fire department, the deceased has been identified as Glory Walphati (43) and Josu Gems Robert (8).

Meanwhile, BJP MLA Sunil Rane said that the police and fire brigade are investigating how the fire broke out. "After the fire broke out on the first floor, smoke spread up to six-seven floors, due to which a lot of damage occurred in the building...The police and fire brigade are investigating how the fire broke out. We are continuously in contact with them," BJP MLA said.

The fire was reported at around 12.27 pm in a flat on the first floor of the building in Sai Baba Nagar. It soon spread to the electric wiring and installations on

that floor, according to officials. Three other persons Lakshmi Bura (40), Rajeshwari Bhartare (24) and Ranjan Subodh Shah (76) - sustained burn injuries.

Meanwhile, four fire engines and other vehicles of the fire brigade were rushed to the spot. Efforts are on to douse the flames and further details are awaited.

Earlier in the day, Four people sustained injuries after a fire broke out on the first floor of a nine-storey building in the Kandivali area of Maharashtra's capital city Mumbai, fire department officials said on Monday. Mumbai Fire Services rushed fire tenders to the Pavan Dham Veena Santur building after receiving information of the blaze at 12:27 pm today, an official said. The injured were admitted to a nearby hospital. The blaze was confined to electric installations, an official said. **ANI**

Marathas' inclusion in the OBC category would amount to injustice- OBC Mahasangh

The OBC Mahasangh has said that Marathas' inclusion in the OBC category would amount to injustice. All India Banjara Kranti Morcha president Haribhau Rathod believes the reservation issue can be resolved through dialogue between both communities. Rathod, a former Lok Sabha MP, said, "Both OBCs and Marathas should shed their adamant stand. They should approach the issue with an open mind. A sub-category can be formed under the OBC category and the Marathas can be accorded reservation. Kunbis in Vidarbha, Konkan and north Ma-

harashtra are already availing of OBC reservation."

"We are not against Maratha reservation. But they should get a separate quota. Our quota of 19 per cent out of the 52 per cent should remain intact," Tawde said. Maharashtra OBC Mahasangh president Babanrao Taywade said Monday the organisation has adopted the strategy of "wait and watch" while reiterating that there will be no change in its stand on Maratha reservation, for which the state government has been given an October 24 deadline by community leaders.

"The OBC is firm on its deci-

sion not to allow Marathas inclusion in the OBC quota. At this moment we are happy with the state government as it has assured us that the OBC quota will not be diluted," he said. But he added that the OBCs were closely monitoring the developments in the state. "And we cannot be caught unawares. We have to be ready to act if anything goes wrong," he said. Maratha activist Manoj Jarange-Patil has given the October 24 deadline to implement reservation for the community. "The state government should make a decision soon. There is no question of giving more time," he said Monday.

Two Maratha quota activists die by suicide in Nanded

Two Maratha quota activists, including a minor, allegedly died by suicide in Maharashtra's Nanded district in the last two days. According to sources, both left suicide notes seeking reservations for the Maratha community.

The two were identified as Shubham Pawar, 24, who ended his life at the Vadgaon village on Saturday night and a 17-year-old

Class 10 student who killed himself at the Naigaon the next day. Three quota activists ended life in the last four days in the state.

On October 19, Maratha quota activist Sunil Kawale was found dead at a flyover in Mumbai's Bandra area. He had also left behind a suicide note seeking quota for the community.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said Sunday that

his government was committed to Maratha quotas. He urged the youth not to take extreme steps like suicide and give the government time to provide reservations that would fit in the legal framework and be sustainable. Manoj Jarange-Patil, the Jalna-based activist who became the face of agitation after he sat on a hunger strike last month, also urged the community members not to take drastic steps.

Nation

BJP's Telangana first list takeaways: Raja Singh returns, 3 MPs fielded, Kishan Reddy to skip fray



BJP 5th list out: 29 MLAs dropped, Union Minister faces party workers' anger

The BJP on Saturday released its fifth list of 92 candidates for the upcoming Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, dropping 29 MLAs including three state ministers. The release of the list was followed by angry protests from BJP workers in Jabalpur.

Supporters of party leader Sharad Jain cornered Union minister Bhupender Yadav, the BJP's Madhya Pradesh election in-charge, protesting against the party's decision to field Abilash Pandey instead of Jain from the Jabalpur North seat. The BJP workers raised slogans against state party president V D Sharma and also assaulted a security guard.

The BJP's first list of 52 candidates for the November 30 Telangana Assembly elections, released on Sunday, figures three Lok Sabha members, including its former state unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Dharmapuri Arvind, and Soyam Babu Rao, who have been asked to contest from the Karimnagar, Koratla, and Boath Assembly constituen-

cies respectively.

The BJP has renominated its controversial MLA T Raja Singh from his Goshamahal seat after revoking his suspension effected last year for his alleged remarks against the Prophet. The BJP's state election committee head and MLA, Etela Rajender, has been fielded from Huzurabad, his existing seat, as well as Gajwel.

Delhi: Student Federation of India members were detained for pro-Palestine demonstration



Students' Federation of India (SFI) members were detained in the national capital while holding a pro-Palestine demonstration on Monday. SFI members were detained at Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Road in the national capital when they were on their way to the Israel Embassy to hold a demonstration amid the ongoing Israel-Hamas war.

There have been a number of public rallies in India both in support of Israel and Palestine since the war between Israel and Hamas began after the terror group's sudden attack in Israel on October 7. Meanwhile, on October 19, Women in the Saidabad area of Hyderabad gathered at a Dargah ground to demonstrate solidarity with Palestine. "We

gathered at a Dargah ground to demonstrate solidarity with Palestine," another women supporter said.

Earlier on October 17, a group of people staged a public march in Ahmedabad in support of Israel in its ongoing war with Palestine-based militant group Hamas. They held placards and banners saying, "We stand with Israel". Approximately 2,500 individuals, including terrorists, breached the border and carried out violent actions in southern Israel, resulting in the deaths of about 1,400 people, the majority of whom were civilians. Additionally, they took at least 222 individuals hostage and transported them to Gaza, according to Times of Israel. ANI

Owaisi attacks BJP over revocation of Telangana MLA Raja Singh's suspension

AMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi has slammed the BJP for revoking the suspension of its Telangana MLA T Raja Singh, against whom the party had initiated action last year for his alleged derogatory comments on prophet Mohammed.

He also alleged that hate speech was the fastest way to promotion in BJP under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "@narendramodi has rewarded his dear 'fringe element.'" Quite sure that Nupur Sharma will also get her blessings from the PM. Hate speech is the fastest way to a promotion in Modi's BJP," Owaisi said on

X, responding to the lifting of Singh's suspension.

The BJP leadership revoked the suspension of Raja Singh, MLA from Goshamahal in Hyderabad in the outgoing Telangana Legislative Assembly, considering his explanation in response to the show cause notice served by the party earlier, Telangana BJP chief G Kishan Reddy said in a statement on Sunday.

In August last year, Raja Singh was suspended from the party following his alleged controversial remarks against "Islam and Prophet Mohammed" in a video which was later pulled down by the social media platform on which it was uploaded. PTI

Amid ongoing controversy of 'Cash for query', Congress MP Shashi Tharoor says, 'Cropping images and circulating on social media is 'cheap politics'

Congress Working Committee member Shashi Tharoor on Monday criticised the circulation of cropped images showing him with Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, calling it an act of "cheap politics".

The Thiruvananthapuram MP clarified that he was present at Moitra's birthday party, attended by around 15 people, including his sister. He said he was being trolled by displaying the cropped version of the image taken during the function. "This is just cheap politics. It was the birthday party of that child. Well, she is not



a child, but for me, she is like one. That MP is around 20 years younger to me. It was her birthday party, in which around 15 people, including my sister, participated. Instead of showing the full image, they are spreading the

cropped one," Tharoor said.

He said he doesn't give importance to such trolls and is busy working for the people. "They are spreading it as a private meeting, but then who clicked the picture," Tharoor asked. Moitra had earlier said that she was "most amused" to see some personal photos of her being circulated on social media by "the BJP's troll sena". "I like green dress better on me than white blouse. And why bother cropping -- show rest of the folks at dinner as well. Bengal's women live a life. Not a lie," she had posted on social media platform X. PTI

Delhi: Afghanistan national has been arrested for stabbing a man for sitting at a park with his sister

An Afghanistan national has been arrested in connection with an incident in which a 20-year-old was stabbed in a park in the national capital for allegedly sitting with a girl who is the sister of an associate of the apprehended foreigner, Delhi Police said on Monday. The victim of the multiple stabbings, identified as 20-year-old Faiz Ali has been hospitalised,

police said.

According to police, a police control room call was received at Malviya Nagar at 3 pm on October 22 informing them about the stabbing.

The injured man told police that he was attacked by one Kaifi Malik and his associate Harun while he was sitting in a park with Malik's sister. Malik and Harun asked Ali to give his mo-

bile phone to them so that they could check his call records and when Ali refused, the duo stabbed him on his shoulders, back, and hand and fled, police said. A case under Section 307/34 IPC has been registered at the Malviya Nagar police station. A search has been initiated for the absconding Kaifi Malik, police said. Further investigation is underway. ANI

World

Israeli warplanes strike targets across Gaza ahead of an expected ground offensive in besieged Hamas-ruled territory

Israeli warplanes are striking targets across Gaza ahead of an expected ground offensive in the besieged Hamas-ruled territory. Fears of a widening war have grown as Israel struck targets in the occupied West Bank, Syria and Lebanon and traded fire with Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group. Two aid convoys arrived in the Gaza Strip over the weekend through the Rafah crossing from Egypt. Israel said the trucks carried food, water and medical supplies. Israel has not allowed in fuel, which is critically needed for water and sanitation systems and hospitals. The war, in its 17th day Monday, is the deadliest of five Gaza wars for both sides.



The Palestinian Health Ministry said Sunday that at least 4,651 people have been killed and 14,254 wounded in the territory. In the occupied West Bank, 96 Palestinians have been killed and 1,650 wounded in violence and Israeli raids since Oct 7.

More than 1,400 people in Israel have been killed, mostly civilians who died in the initial Hamas rampage into southern Israel. In addition, 222 people, including foreigners were believed captured by Hamas during the incursion and taken into Gaza, Israel's

military has said. Two of those have been released.

Europe ministers discussing getting aid into Gaza Brussels: European Union foreign ministers are meeting Monday to discuss ways to help vital aid get into Gaza, particularly fuel, after two convoys

entered over the weekend. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said that in normal times, without war, 100 trucks enter into Gaza every day. So it's clear that 20 is not enough. Borrell said the emphasis must be on getting power and water-providing desalination plants running again. Without water and electricity, the hospitals can barely work, he told reporters in Luxembourg, where the meeting is taking place. He said the ministers will also look at ways to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians longer term. The great powers have forgotten about the Palestinian issue, thinking it was going to be solved alone, or it doesn't matter. Yes, it matters, Borrell said. PTIm

Israeli forces raid Jalazone refugee camp in West Bank, two dead, says Palestinian health ministry

In the Israeli-occupied West Bank, two Palestinians were killed at the Jalazone refugee camp near Ramallah, the Palestinian health ministry said today.

Residents told Reuters that Israeli forces raided the camp and carried out widespread arrests, as they clashed with gunmen and some youths who threw stones. The Israeli army has not issued a statement about the incident. (Reuters) Israeli forces raid Jalazone refugee camp in West Bank,

two dead, says Palestinian health ministry

In the Israeli-occupied West Bank, two Palestinians were killed at the Jalazone refugee camp near Ramallah, the Palestinian health ministry said today.

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Hamas says its fighters engaged Israeli force infiltrating Gaza

Hamas fighters engaged with an Israeli force that infiltrated the Gaza Strip and returned to their base after destroying some Israeli military equipment, the Palestinian group's armed wing Izz el-Deen al-Qassam Brigades said yesterday.

The group said in a statement the infiltration by what it described as an armoured force took place east of Khan Younis in the southern region of Gaza, amid expectations of a full-scale ground offensive by Israeli forces massed around the enclave.

"Fighters engaged with the infiltrating force, destroying two bulldozers and a tank and forced the force to withdraw, before they returned safely to base," the statement said. There was no immediate Israeli comment about the destruction of Israeli equipment or vehicles. Reuters

Around 1,600 migrants reach Spanish Canary Islands

Some 314 migrants arrived in Spain's Canary Islands in two boats early Monday, bringing to more than 1,600 the number of migrants to reach the islands since Friday, emergency services said. The service said one boat carrying 229 migrants was escorted to El Hierro island while another with 85 was taken to Tenerife. Of the boats that arrived over the weekend, one on Saturday was carrying 320 migrants.

The state news agency EFE said it was the largest number in a single boat since human traffickers began to regularly use the Canary Island route in 1994. The previous record of 280 was recorded earlier this month. Most of the boats arrived at El Hierro, which has received several thousand migrants in recent weeks.



The Canary Islands are located off the northwest coast of Africa.

Most of the migrants come from sub-Saharan African countries and most of the boats depart from Senegal. Migrants arriving by boat in Spain spend up to 72 hours in police custody, for identification, then are moved into various reception or detention centres depending on their cases. Although some are deported,

most apply for asylum and are taken to mainland Spain for their petitions to be studied. In the end, many are freed and ordered to leave Spain if they don't get asylum. Spain's Interior Ministry says nearly 23,500 migrants reached the Canary Islands by boat between Jan. 1 and October 15. That's a 90 per cent increase from the same period last year. PTI

Oil down as diplomatic moves in Gaza war trim supply-disruption risk

Oil prices fell more than \$1 today as concerns about supply disruptions eased due to diplomatic efforts intensifying in an attempt to contain the conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas.

Brent crude futures fell 67 cents to \$91.49 a barrel, as of 0628 GMT, having lost \$1.08 to \$91.08 a barrel earlier on Monday. US West Texas Intermedi-

ate crude futures were down 82 cents at \$87.26 a barrel, after sliding \$1.72 to \$87.03 a barrel earlier in the session.

The contracts had risen more than 1% last week for a second consecutive weekly jump on fears of potential supply disruption if the Israel-Hamas war grows into a wider confrontation in the Middle East, the world's biggest oil-supplying region. Reuters

Expression

Dussehra: The Festival of Victory of Virtues over Evil



Lalit Gang

Columnist

The festival of Dussehra is celebrated every year on the tenth day of Shukla Paksha of Ashwin month. This festival symbolizes the victory over evil. Over the period of time, this festival also comes to instil a new energy into the cultural consciousness and the sense of patriotism in the country. Even today, the need to enliven the culture of this inspirational and motivational festival has become all the more necessary in order to fight the forces of darkness. The question is who should protect the culture? Who should lead the rise of ideals? Who should get his first name written in the foundation of life values? The process of fighting evil is very difficult. This practice of awakening brilliance and power is very difficult. It is very complex to give a high peak to self-existence and self-identity. After all, how to fight the evils hidden in our house, when Ravana is taking birth in the courtyard of the house, be it in the form of corruption, be it in the form of political criminalization, be it in the form of those spreading communal hatred, be it in the form of anti-national elements. Be it in the form of terrorists who break the law, or in the form of those who make education, medicine and justice a business. Celebrating this festival every year, where strength is prayed for, attention is drawn towards various issues of national importance. This provides new inspiration, new freshness, new strength, new dreams and new directions.

The festival of Dussehra, which follows Navratri, is a very special festival for Hindus; it comes 20 days before the festival of Diwali. Dussehra is celebrated to mark the victory of Lord Shri Ram over the demon king Ravana. People stage the war between Shri Ram and Ravana in the form of a drama for ten days prior to the arrival of Dussehra. This dramatic life depiction is called Ram-Leela in North India— people organize Ram-Leela by wearing masks and through various dance forms, which they enjoy, making it a medium of Hindu culture, following the verses of Ramayana. They also make giant size effigies of the three great demons namely— Ravana, Meghnad and Kumbhakarna in which big fire-crackers

are filled; and when the effigies are made to burn, they turn out to be the brilliant spectacles to watch on.

Lord Shri Ram is, thus, the symbol of truth, while his opponent Demon King Ravana is the evil incarnate. This great religious festival and custom is celebrated by the Hindus with the worship of Goddess Durga. The traditions and procedures of celebrating this festival are different across the country. Lord Ram was a devotee of the war goddess Maa Durga, who worshiped Maa Durga for nine days preceding the war, and killed Ravana on the tenth day of war. After this, Shri Ram rescued His Divine consort Sita through fighting a big war in company with His brother Lakshman, devotee Hanuman, and an army of monkeys. Therefore, Vijayadashami is a very important day of the victory of Good over the Evil, of the Truth over the Falsehood and the Light over the Darkness. On this day, along with burning of Ravana, there is also a tradition of worshipping weapons, vehicles and worshipping Maa Durga, Lord Shri Ram and Ganapati Devata. Therefore, Vijayadashami has also been called as Vijaya Tithi. It is believed that this day is very auspicious to please Goddess Lakshmi.

Dussehra has a cultural aspect also. It is also a festival to unite the cultural unity and integrity of the country. This year's Vijayadashami festival has special significance, because with the positive revolutionary energy of this festival, not only a strong message has to be given to the negative and anti-national forces active in the nation, but also a challenge and caution against the misdeeds of neighbouring countries like Pakistan, China etc. After celebrating the Amrit Mahotsav year of Independence, the nation has to be strengthened for the Centenary Year that is 2047. The new consciousness that has come in the country with the strengthening of fundamental beliefs,

nationalism is a living evidence of a powerful leadership. The efforts being made in search of renewable sources of energy for nationalism, self-identity, patriotic sentiments and the Hindu culture are unprecedented. The contemporary environment in which the nation is being led in accordance with the popular aspirations is extraordinary.

Dussehra is also a festival of Shakti sadhana, karma, new creation and worship. During the last eight decades, there have been continuous political moves to weaken the Hindu religion and culture. Actually Hindu is not a religion, it is an idea, and a culture. Being a Hindu nation does not mean to be a theocratic state, but the all-embracing spirit of Hindu culture. Hindu culture is the inherent sound of generosity, because it is the only culture in the entire world which embraces pluralism i.e. all religions, ideas and cultures. This country also gave the title of Rishi to a materialistic philosopher- thinker like Charvak who had said that 'Rinaam Kritva Ghritam Peevet' i.e. whatever is there is today, who has seen tomorrow, hence today should be lived to the fullest and even if one has to take loans. If it has to be done, it should be done. Along with this, our other sages also gave us this advice that 'Satyam Buryat Na Buryat Satyam Apriyam' i.e. speak the truth, but do not speak the bitter truth. The greatness and specialty of Hindu culture has been that it advocates the beloved truth, but also asks for its prohibition when it becomes harsh.

The Hindu culture is that of non-violence, but it also talks about self-defence by taking up arms if necessary. The word 'Hindu' itself gives the sense of 'Swarashtra' which is a part of the larger form of Hindu culture. Vijayadashami festival is a powerful medium to strengthen this ideology. Through this festival, everyone's voice and objective is

to destroy evil and encourage goodness. After Navratri, the last i.e. tenth day of Dussehra is Vijayadashami, which means that you have conquered all the three gunas - Tamas, Rajas or Satva. You passed through these three qualities, saw all three, participated in all three, but you were not attached or tied to any of these three in any way, you overcame all three of them. This is Vijayadashami – the day of your victory.

Indian culture is a worshiper of bravery and valour. The festival of Dussehra has been organized to display bravery in the blood of individuals and society. The festival of Dussehra provides good inspiration to give up ten types of sins – lust, anger, greed, attachment, jealousy, ego, laziness, violence and theft. One who is full of hatred, full of anger, full of malice, full of jealousy, full of greed, is increasing fear. All these lead to fear and powerlessness. While celebrating Dussehra festival of force and bravery, the biggest need is to burn these vices within us.

India never supported war or violence, but when somebody challenged us and created war-like situations, the skill of Indian politics is to attack and defeat the enemy, instead of waiting for his attack. Since the time of Lord Ram, this day is the symbolic day of victory. Lord Ram had left for the war against Ravana on this day. Maratha Ratna Shivaji also protected Hindu religion by leaving for war against Aurangzeb on this day. There are many examples in Indian history when Hindu kings used to march in victory on this day. The celebration of Dussehra symbolizes protection of religion, display of power and coordination of power. Apart from this, Dussehra symbolizes the victory of positive forces over negative forces.



Entertainment

Kareena Kapoor Khan pens a sweet birthday wish for her dear friend

It's Malaika Arora's birthday today and her loved ones have flooded social media with adorable messages. "These three pictures symbolise our love for each other our sisterhood bond and ofcourse our love for our Foothaaaasss. love you Malla happy birthday gorgeous @malaikaaroraofficial," Kareena wrote on Instagram, adding several throwback pictures of Malaika. It's Malaika Arora's birthday today and her loved ones have flooded social media with adorable messages. "These three pictures symbolise our love for each other our sisterhood bond and ofcourse our love for our Foothaaaasss. love you Malla happy birthday gorgeous @malaikaaroraofficial," Kareena wrote on Instagram, adding several throwback pictures of Malaika.

The first image shows Malaika holding her black heels in a funny way. In another picture, Malaika and Kareena are seen jokingly holding someone's leg who is wearing boots. In the third photo, Malaika is hugging Kareena from behind. **ANI**



Actress Tara Sutaria new thriller look unveiled, film poster out now



Actor Tara Sutaria will be seen in a never seen before avatar in a film titled 'Apurva'. Directed by Nikhil Nagesh Bhat, 'Apurva' is touted to be a story of an ordinary girl who faces extraordinary circumstances and will do anything to Survive and Live. Rajpal Yadav, Abhishek Banerjee, and Dhairya Karwa are also a part of the thriller.

On Monday, the makers unveiled the first look poster of the cast and undoubtedly Tara looked as fierce as ever.

Excited about the project, Tara said, "This is a powerful and thrilling story of an ordinary girl whose inner strength, intelligence, wit and courage shape a journey that will keep one at the edge of their seat. It's the role of a lifetime for me and I am eagerly awaiting audiences to see my transformation in Apurva as we launch our trailer very soon." Rajpal Yadav also expressed his excitement. "Audiences will see me in a very different and unusual avatar in Apurva which will be revealed when our trailer launches very soon. This is just the first glimpse, and I am looking forward to audiences watching Apurva," he shared. Abhishek Banerjee recalled how he was moved by the script. **ANI**

Dussehra: Actress Kangana Ranaut to burn Ravan effigy at Delhi



Actor Kangana Ranaut will perform the Ravan Dahan at the national capital's famed Lav Kush Ramleela on the occasion of Dussehra on Tuesday. In the 50-year history of the event, held annually at the Red Fort, this will be the first time a woman will set the effigy of the demon king ablaze by shooting an arrow, said Arjun Singh, president of Lav Kush Ramleela Committee of Delhi. Singh said the decision was taken by the committee in a nod to the Women's Reservation Bill, which was passed by the Parliament last month. **PTI**



Punjabi actor Gippy Grewal announces expansion of his popular "Carry on Jatta" franchise with a new project

Punjabi star Gippy Grewal on Monday announced that he is expanding his popular "Carry on Jatta" franchise with a new film, starring Sargun Mehta, Jasmin Bhasin and Sunil Grover. The movie, titled "Carry on Jattiye", will be produced by Panorama Studios and Humble Motion Pictures. It will be directed by Smeep Kang. "Carry on jatta franchise is back with new a twist. Panorama Studios & Humble Motion Pictures Presentation 'Carry on Jattiye' Shoot begins in London," Gippy Grewal, the star of the three "Carry on Jatta" movies, posted on his official page on X. **PTI**