

Bharat Jodo Yatra achieving desired objectives, has covered one-third distance: Congress

NEW DELHI(KCN): The Congress on Tuesday said the Bharat Jodo Yatra, which has completed one-third of the 3,570-km route, has achieved its desired purpose with people

He also said the Congress will launch state-specific marches, a 2,400-km yatra in Odisha starting October 31 from Bhubaneswar, an 850-km yatra in Assam, and one in West Ben-



gal starting December 28. Ramesh said after Telangana, the yatra will enter Nanded in Maharashtra. The Yatra will be in Maharashtra for about 16 days and thereafter cover Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. "After 48 days journey, 4 states, 18 districts, 4 public rallies, 35 street meetings and 4 press conferences, I can

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Modi Greets Sunak

New Delhi(KCN): Prime Minister, Narendra Modi congratulated Rishi Sunak



for becoming the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister tweeted: "Warmest congratulations

@RishiSunak! As you become UK PM, I look forward to working closely together on global issues, and implementing Roadmap 2030. Special Diwali wishes to the 'living bridge' of UK Indians, as we transform our historic ties into a modern partnership."

Partial solar eclipse seen in parts of India

NEW DELHI(KCN): Astronomy enthusiasts turned their gaze towards the sun as the moon started to cover the solar disc as a partial solar eclipse began on Tuesday.



The partial solar eclipse is being observed in several parts of the country with Srinagar witnessing the maximum obscuration of the solar disc at 55 per cent.

The first contact, where in the moon begins to cover the solar disc, CONTINUED ON: P-7

Rishi Sunak takes charge as UK's first Indian-origin PM after meeting King Charles

LONDON(KCN): Rishi Sunak has formally taken charge as Britain's first Indian-origin Prime Minister after an audience with King Charles III on Tuesday, a day after he was elected the new leader of the Conservative Party in a historic leadership run.

Outgoing Prime Minister Liz Truss chaired her final Cabinet meeting at 10 Downing Street on Tuesday morning before making her way to Buckingham Palace to formally tender her resignation to the 73-year-old monarch.

Sunak then arrived at the palace for his meeting with the King, who then invited him to form a government as the UK's 57th Prime Minister and the monarch's second in just over six weeks.

The 42-year-old former Chancellor of Exchequer, a devout Hindu, is the youngest British prime minister in 210 years. He is also Britain's first Hindu Prime Minister.

Sunak, the second prime minister in as many months and the third this year, will make his first prime ministerial address on the steps

of 10 Downing Street, expected to be joined by his wife Akshata Murty and daughters



Krishna and Anoushka. He is then expected to start finalising his Cabinet, with the key

Two BJP leaders quit party, file papers as independents from Dharamshala

DHARAMSHALA(KCN): Two senior BJP leaders here resigned from the party and filed nomination papers as independent candidates



for the Himachal Pradesh Assembly polls. Vipin Naihariya, the party's ST Morcha vice president, and BJP district chief Anil

Choudhry were ticket aspirants but the party chose OBC leader Rakesh Chaudhary over them and sitting MLA Vishal Naihariya.

Meanwhile, the sitting MLA said he is with the party and expressed confidence in Rakesh Chaudhary.

Vipin Naihariya, a Gaddi community leader, claimed that all office-bearers of the BJP's Dharamshala Mandal have put in their papers in protest against the party ticket to Chaudhary. Tuesday was the last day for the filing of nominations, which can be withdrawn till October 29. The voting will take place on November 12 and the results will be declared on December 8.

Mallikarjun Kharge to formally take over as Congress president on October 26

NEW DELHI(KCN): Hectic preparations were underway at the Congress headquarters for Wednesday's ceremony where party president Sonia Gandhi will hand over the baton to her successor, Mallikarjun Kharge, the first non-Gandhi to head the outfit in 24 years.

Kharge defeated Thiruvananthapuram MP Shashi Tharoor in a direct contest for the top post in the grand old party after the Gandhis opted out of the race. Security personnel and workers made last-minute arrangements on the AICC headquarters lawns where a tent was being put up and in the Congress president's office room.

Chairman of the central election authority of the Congress Madhusudan Mistry

will formally hand over the election certificate to Kharge at the function, which will also see the presence of outgoing chief Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi. Kharge, 80, takes

charge of the party at a time when it faces a tough challenge from a formidable BJP led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi which has ousted the Congress from many states. For Kharge, who has served as a leader of the opposition in the Karnataka Assembly,

to polls in the next few weeks.

Assembly elections in Himachal Pradesh are on November 12 but the dates for Gujarat are yet to be announced.

Later in 2023,



charge of the party at a time when it faces a tough challenge from a formidable BJP led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi which has ousted the Congress from many states. For Kharge, who has served as a leader of the opposition in the Karnataka Assembly,

With the Congress now remaining in power in only two states - Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh - on its own and in partnership as a junior partner in Jharkhand, Kharge's first challenge is to bring the party to power in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat, which go

Kharge will face the onerous task of leading the Congress in nine assembly elections that are due including in his home state of Karnataka where he was an MLA for nine terms. Kharge's election also comes at a time the party is reeling CONTINUED ON: P-7

doubt we face a profound economic challenge," said Sunak in his first address as Prime Minister elect on Monday, with reference to the economic turmoil he is inheriting following former prime minister Liz Truss' disastrous tax-cutting mini-budget last month.

"We now need stability and unity and I will make it my utmost priority to bring our party and our country together; because that is the only way we will overcome the challenges we face and build a better, more prosperous future for our children and our grandchildren. I pledge that I will serve you with integrity and humility and I will work day in day out to deliver for the British people," he said.

Sunak's victory on Diwali has resonated among the Indian diaspora groups across the UK, who have hailed it as a 'historic moment' in British social history.

"Rishi Sunak becoming the first British Indian Prime Minister is an historic moment. This simply would not have been possible even a decade or two CONTINUED ON: P-7

BITM Telecasts Solar Eclipse on its YouTube Channel

Kolkata (KCN): The last solar eclipse of 2022 started in the afternoon of Oc-



tober 25 and continued after sunset. It



was visible in most parts of India and



Low price fuels gold rush on Dhanteras in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): The gold rush on the occasion of Dhanteras continued in the Twin City with the price of the yellow metal coming down and almost every jewellery outlet announcing alluring offers and discounts to draw the crowd this year. All small and big jewellery shops in both Cuttack and Bhubaneswar were teeming with buyers on the day with Dhanteras being considered the most auspicious occasion to buy something precious. On Sunday, the price of gold hovered between Rs 47,000 and Rs 48,100 for 10 grams of 22-carat gold and silver sold at Rs 590 per 10 grams. In August this year, the price of gold was high at Rs 57,000 per 10 grams.

several other countries.

At BITM, Kolkata it was viewed by students, teachers, general Museum visitors and media personnel from the rooftop of the Museum premises. On this occasion, popular talk on Solar Astrophysics, by Dr. S. Krishna Prasad, Assistant Professor, Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital, an autonomous institute under the Department of Science & Technology, Govt. of India, was telecast

on the BITM YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/c4wgAA8KyIE>, from 3:00 pm.

Guided by Prof. Shibu Mathew, from the Udaipur Solar Observatory (USO), Rajasthan, this partial eclipse of the Sun, live - streamed from USO, Physical Research Laboratory, was also telecast by BITM, Kolkata at <https://youtu.be/qjwU4jJd10>, from 4:30 pm. The next Partial Solar Eclipse will occur on March 29, 2025.

This year also saw a change in the jewellery-buying trend. Unlike the past when lightweight jewellery was mostly purchased, this Dhanteras saw the sale of heavy jewellery items as well with the marriage season approaching, said Sridhar Epari, owner of Epari Sadashiv Jewellers.

CEO of Khimji Jewellers Parth Sarthi said that due to the weekend and moderation in the gold price, customer footfalls across their showrooms were encouraging. "For the upcoming wedding season, we are also receiving good response for heavier designs from our collection and expect more sales compared to last year's Dhanteras," he added.

Mindset of people needs to change for new industrialised Odisha: Industries Minister Pratap Deb

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Industries Minister Pratap Deb handles the key portfolio during a crucial period after the Covid-19 pandemic. Waiting for three and a half years to get into the Naveen Patnaik cabinet, Deb has been entrusted with the task of giving a new fillip to the industrial ecosystem by overseeing the grounding of investment proposals received by the State.

Ahead of the Make-in-Odisha Conclave in November, Deb tells Bijay Chaki that people are still conservative about industrialisation, which has led to many problems. There is a need to change people's mindset for transforming Odisha into an industrialised State. Make-in-Odisha was launched in 2016 to push the industrial growth of the State? How far you have moved ahead?

The government of Odisha started industrialisation on a mission mode in 2016. In the last two editions, Make-in-Odisha at-

tracted investment intent of more than Rs 6 lakh crore. Ahead of the third edition of the flagship event, we can say that the State has moved ahead.

Has the goal of launching the initiative been achieved? The goal of the State government is industrialisation and it is an ongoing process. The more proposals come in, the better for us. So, after each edition the target shifts for more. There cannot be any fixed target or goal.

What has been the follow-up action of the government after the first and second editions of the Make-in-Odisha? We received 164 investment proposals worth Rs 2,03,235 crore in the first edition of the Make-in-Odisha. Of these, 58 projects were approved and 35 projects worth Rs 1.17 lakh crore have been grounded which comes to 42 per cent. Similarly, the State received 202 proposals of Rs 4.23 lakh crore with an employment potential of 1.5 lakh during the second edition in 2018.



Out of the 108 projects which were approved, 67 worth Rs 2.40 lakh crore have already materialised. This comes to around a 32 per cent success rate. Besides, during the Covid-19 pandemic also the State received 235 investment proposals of which 125 were approved and 16 have been grounded.

We will have to wait. We cannot rush through.

It has been seen that other than metal and mining projects, Odisha has not been able to draw investors in varied sectors. The manufacturing sector in the State has not been able to pick up. Why is it so and what is the strategy of the government to turn things?

It is true. Because Odisha has an abundant treasure of metal and minerals, related investments and industries will have to come to the State. The government on its part has been open to investment in all sectors - manufacturing, education, tourism, pharmaceuticals and others. It is working to facilitate the investors to industrialise the State and ensure employment generation. The ball is in the court of the investors. We are open to all. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has personally conducted roadshows in Dubai, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad ahead of the third edition. What is so special about the third edition?

This time we are aggressively promoting Odisha and the Hon'ble Chief Minister himself is leading from the front. After the pandemic and general recession because of several reasons including the Ukraine war, the government is taking all steps to woo investors and bring maximum investment to Odisha.

Goddess Kali Temple where fish is offered as 'Bhoga' in Odisha

CUTTACK(KCN): While non-vegetarian offerings are taboo at Hindu temples, the shrine of Goddess Kali at Kali Gali in Cuttack city is known for its delectable 'Fish Bhoga'. The tradition of the daily offering of the non-vegetarian 'Bhoga' to the deity at the temple is believed to have started 200 years back. "Anna Prasad is offered to the deity twice daily and fish curry is an integral part of the mid-day offering menu. The amount of fish offered as 'Bhoga' may be large or small depending upon availability," said the chief priest of Kali temple Santosh Bhattacharya (48). Interestingly no onion or garlic is used for preparing the fish curry. Only indigenous fish are cooked by the priests using ginger, cumin and ghee (clarified butter) inside the 'Rosha Ghara' (kitchen) of the temple, said

Bhattacharya. Legend has it that the uninhabited 'Kali Gali' locality was used as a crema-



tion ground where an 'Aghori' sadhu who had started worshipping a Shiva Linga had opted

for 'Shakti Upasana' during the period when Odisha was under the Maratha empire. He consecrated an idol of Goddess Kali made of clay collected from the banks of the Ganga river mixed with 'smashan' ashes in a thatched house.

The same idol is believed to be worshipped in the shrine. The then local zamindar Sashan Bandopadhyay who was believed to be issueless had constructed a temple and provided land and engaged a

priest for conducting daily rituals of the deity when he was blessed with a baby boy. Following the construction of the Kali temple, the locality was named Kali Gali. The three-foot-high idol of the four-armed Goddess Dakshina Mukhi Kali stands on the chest of Lord Shiva. As per tradition, 'Sodasha Upachar Kali Puja' is conducted at the Kali temple twice a year. Besides, Kali Puja on 'Deepawali Amavasya' and 'Ratanti Kali Puja' is done in 'Magha Krushna Pakshya Chaturdasi' at the shrine.

There is also a unique tradition prevalent at the shrine. Unlike other places, instead of using utensils like plate, cup, saucers, etc, the 'Anna Prasad' is brought in the cooking pots directly from the 'Rosha Ghara' and offered to the deity. The temple is now being managed by Endowment Commission.

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Chitah Yajnes Shetty impressed by the film 'Kantara' and actor Rishab Shetty

"Rishab Shetty has put our culture and tradition on the world map" - Chitah Yajnes Shetty

Mumbai (KCN, Sanjay Sharma Raj): Rishab



Chitah Yajnes Shetty

with the film and actor Rishab Shetty. He had a telephonic conversation with actor Rishab



Rishab Shetty in a still from Kantara.

have been shown very well. Rishab Shetty, Rakshit Shetty and Raj B Shetty's group



Chitah Yajnes Shetty

Shetty's film 'Kantara' is making a lot of noise at the box office and has become a super hit. The culture and tradition of South origin has been well portrayed in this film. Well-known martial arts expert Chitah Yajnes Shetty went to see this film and he was very impressed

Shetty during the making of this film. Yajnes Shetty wanted Rishab to direct a film for him. But Rishab Shetty was busy with his film 'Kantara' and the talks could not progress. But after watching the film, Yajnes Shetty was impressed. Chitah Yajnes Shetty says, "Watching the film 'Kantara' is a feast, an eye opener for every youth to follow our culture, values and tradition. Thanks to Rishab Shetty who brought our tradition and culture on the world map and made it reach to the International level. The film is based on the culture of the villages of Mangalore and Udapi. The house deities Punjurli and Guliga

has given a new dimension to film making. They always make different types of films and all their films are hits. These people have a passion for making films, which is praiseworthy. Today such films are needed to save the culture and civilization of India."

Neeraj Bharadwaj is shooting for web series 'Saazish' in Bhopal

Mumbai (KCN, which will soon be the role of city's family and me. I and just like be- webseries named



Sanjay Sharma (KCN, Film and TV veteran and famous actor Neeraj

airing on Disney Hotstar. It is produced by Col. S S Pattnaik and the famous lawyer Abhay Pratap Singh, who gets the brother of villain

am not able to do fore, I will definitely be able to make a place in the conspiracy is hatched and then heart of the audi-



Bharadwaj is shooting for the web series 'Saazish' in Kalua Khurd, Bhopal, director is Hiralal Khatri. About which Neeraj Bharadwaj says, "I am playing

Shahbaz Khan punished. After that Shahbaz Khan commits a lot of oppression on my

what happens is once with my performance." By the role in this is different, I hope Neeraj Bharadwaj will people will like it, soon have a

Madgaon...A Murder Case. Its shooting has been completed.

The main cast of the web series 'Saazish' are Mugdha Godse, Shahbaz Khan, Raza Murad, Mustakh Khan and Dev Manaria with Neeraj Bharadwaj. Its screenplay and dialogues are by Vinod Vats, Vikas Vashisht and Ajay. Its cameramen are Manish Vyas and Amar Vyas, music is by Manish Bhanushali. It is produced by Col.S S Pattnaik, co-producer Dev Manaria and executive producer is Anu Madrasi. It will be coming soon on Disney Hotstar. Its shooting is going on in Bhopal followed by Vadodara.

Climate politics

The great North-South divide between the developed industrialized western nations and the developing and under developed economically backward nations with respect to adopting appropriate mitigation



Saikat Kumar Basu

measures to deal with challenges of Climate Change has significant impact on global agriculture. The lack of cooperation, coordination, collaboration and communication (4Cs) between First and Third World countries on various aspects of Climate Change issues is only sliding down our strategies to cope with Global Warming and related global geatmospheric changes negatively impacting both our ecology and economy.



Without close cooperation there is very little chance that we would be able to deal with Climate Changes at a global scale impacting the future of our global agriculture. Furthermore, we are losing our natural biological pollinators at an astonishing rate. Loss of honey bees and native (wild) bees along with other pollinator insects, snails and slugs, birds and small mammals like bats have significant negative impacts on our ecology and economy. Around 85% of flowering plants are dependent on biological pollinators like bees to propagate. Several anthropogenic factors such as over application of toxic chemi-

cal pesticides, pollution, prevalence of various parasitic diseases and Colony Collapse Disorders (CCD), poor immunity, lack of suitable melliferous flora and changes in land use patterns are collectively resulting in catastrophic bee and other insect population collapse around the globe.

Loss of pollinators means destruction of our agriculture, apiculture and forestry industries leading to economic disruption and ecological stabilization. Sustainable, environment-friendly approaches like establishing Pollinator Sanctuaries has been proving to be effective

five in bee conservation and local biodiversity enrichment with promising future. There is opportunity for both India and Canada to collaborate and work in a common platform for both climate change mitigation as well as pollinator like bee conservation. The rich expertise and experience of both countries can support one another in a comprehensive manner. There are some lacunae between the two countries in some areas that has impacted the relationship over the past few years. However there is huge potential for both countries to engage and work together in the following key areas:

1. Strengthening people to people contact.
2. Naval and military cooperation.
3. Increasing use of Nuclear, wind, geothermal and hydro power technologies for

civilian purposes
4. Forest conservation

5. High altitude remote location road construction and infrastructure development
6. Increasing agricultural imports and exports
7. Expanding cooperation in modern agriculture, irrigation technologies and biodiversity conservation



8. Cooperation in areas of marine engineering and technology, mining activities and processing of industrial products and byproducts.
9. Reducing dependency on fossil fuels and work together to explore use of various modern alternative energy resources
10. Exploring forage crop industries in both countries and establishing forage crop production to boost local livestock and cattle.
11. Exchange knowledge and experience in expanding the livestock and dairy industries.
12. Promote both conventional and non-conventional tourism (eco tourism) in both countries
13. Encouraging exchange of soft powers

between India and Canada and to make it beneficial for both parties in a sustainable fashion

14. Exchanging snow and ice based technologies between two countries as Canada is a pioneer in this area and could serve as a big help for India.
15. Cooperation in North Pacific security establishment could be a win win for both countries
16. Genetic and biological exchanges of animal, plants and microbial materials will



boost agriculture and forestry industries, open up tourism and increase employment

17. Cooperation in use and processing of products related to iron and steel, fertilizer and petroleum-chemical industries
18. Increase in exchange of new military technology and equipment for both countries
19. Open border trade agreement to boost economy on both sides.
20. More stronger socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-economic engagements between the two countries are essential now

378 Prince Anwar Shah Road, Kolkata, West Bengal India

The Implication of Kartik Month: A Quest for Spirituality

Kartik month or Kartik Maas is believed to be the first month of Chaturamas.

Dr Sudipta Mishra

This year, it started on the 10th of October. It's considered to be the most sacred and religious month of the year. According to the Hindu Calendar, this month is the eighth month of the year. Kartik Maas is believed to be the holy month in which the devotees pray to Lord Vishnu or Damodar for the well-being of their families.



By leaving all nonreligious activities even the immoral persons of the society try to indulge in spiritual awakening.

The last five days of this month are even considered as most pious there is a saying that even a non-vegan bird starts to fast with a religious fervour.

That's why it's called 'Panchuka'. People decorate their houses with pristine reflections of Diya and also they worship the Tulsi plant.

It's a cultural heritage of our Hindu cult that we have been continuing for ages.

Even there is a tradition in Odisha where an earthen pot with Diya is lit with a complete whole inside. Every evening the worshipers light the pot and hang that at a high place with the use of a pulley.

There is no science behind every traditional belief of our country.

Lightening the earthen lamps and candles to justify the presence of virtue over vice. It intensifies the mystic aura everywhere. Light means consciousness and darkness means ignorance.

So in the month of Kartik, we celebrate the festival of Diwali. This month has so many relevance in our lives like enlightening the unconscious soul with the dawn of wisdom. Hence people pray for the purification of their souls by meditating or fasting.

Even some people eat once a day. Most people opt for vegan food instead of meat intake to maintain a balanced lifestyle.

Hence this month is for reviving the dead ideas with the spirit of liberation. By discard-

ing Earthly pleasure we embrace penance.

People get up extremely early in Brahma Murtha and

initiate their offerings to lords and particularly they visit the temple of Radha and Krishna.

Reciting and listening to the tales of Kartik maas (Katha) accomplish their days. They also take a holy dip in sacred rivers to eliminate their filthy thoughts and lusty attitudes towards worldly commodities.

Reading Bhagavad Geeta and Holy Scriptures can cleanse the body and mind of the worshipers this month. The entire month goes on with the holy chants of divine lords. The devotees adore Lord Shiva, Kartikeya and Goddess Laxmi. Most believers pray near the plant of Tulsi and offer holy water to the Sun in the early morning.

The glorious month of Kartik commences with the advent of Sharad Purnima with the glory of the full moon.

The worshippers devour the entire month by worshipping Goddess Radhika and Lord Krishna.

Amavasya is followed after completing fifteen days of this holy month.

Deepavali is celebrated, as the festival of sparkling lights to commemorate the arrival of Lord Ram from Lanka. This festival also marks the triumph of virtue over vice. In this festival, people welcome Ma Laxmi with wealth in abundance by observing Dhanteras. The last five days are traditionally known as Vishnu Panchak. Devotees rigorously fast these five days beginning from the Ekadasi day to Purnima (full moon).

Again the full moon day is abundantly celebrated by the worshippers with a unique culture (particularly in Odisha). They flow small paper boats or boats made from banana stems in the sacred rivers to get rid of the sins and to obtain the fruit of the spiritual gains they procure from the chastity of the entire month. So with the offerings of flowers and incense sticks, devotees take a dip in the sacred rivers to get salvation.

With a variety of pious relevance, the month of Kartik sanctifies the vices of the worshippers by reawakening their inner consciousness with spiritual awareness.

Make in odisha - big boost to industry & employment

The make in odisha programme was

Pratap Chandra Sahu

G. D. P is increased to 25%. The initiative is

launched by the honourable chief minister first at dubai to invite the foreign investors to invest in odisha and welcome them to odisha. The chief minister assured them to provide all the facilities to them. He had one-to-one discussion with them. He also told them that odisha is the best place to invest. Then this programme has been launched in new delhi, bombay, hydrabad one after one. Now it is going to be held in bhubeneswar shortly. The make in odisha promoting odisha as an important investment destination and global hub for manufacturing, design and innovation. The initiative not only target manufacturing sector alone but also aims at promoting enterprenurship in the state. Odisha is first state in India to launch such type of programmes. Make in odisha seeks to encourage the investment that brings latest technology, expand knowledge base and inculcate research and development in the state. The government needs to motivate investors to contribute their share to make in odisha campaign. It is really with the collabaritive efforts of people and government of odisha can secure the title of a global manufacturing hub. In the line with the programme the ministry of industry and commerce has announced that the government e-market portal has made for mandatory for the seller to submit the state of origin while regestering any new product the online procurement. This will complement the 'amta nirbhar odisha' programme that has been started to push for locally made products. The make in odisha programme was a result of initiatives of the department for promotion of information technology, industry and internal trade and is collabaritive effort of departments and ministrys. The aims and objectives of the programme to increase the manufacturing sector's growth rate, to increase 50 million additional manufacturing jobs by 2022/2023 and to ensure that the manufacturing sector's contribution to

aimed at creating a conducive environment for investment. The public-private partnership is the hall-mark of the make in odisha campaign in the line. The make in odisha programme aimed at to reduce the level of unemployment faced by the youth of the state. It is the part of wider set of nation building initiatives and at attract the top investors across the world to come and invest in odisha. The aim of launching this campaign in odisha is to make odisha amtanirbhar and national level manufacturing hub which may help in solving some of the bigger issue of the economy crises. The government plans to give time bound cleanness to the projects through single online portal. This will create a conducive environment for business. Besides the government is taking into consideration the skill mapping and manpower demand for specific sectors. This will ensure that the right kind of training is given to the participants in order to boost their employability. The campaign aims to eliminate the hurdles and difficulties which have become synonymeous with the country's business environment. The validity of the industrial licence under this programme will be extended up to 3years. The government also intends to develop the industrial corridors and smart cities, create world class infrastructure with the state of information technology, art technology, and high speed communication. Better infrastructure will give a major bush to make in odisha initiative. Industry experts, I. T. experts and analysts have given thumbs up to make in odisha campaign. There are number challenges that the governments need to overcome in order to make the programme a success in real term. Government needs to focus on futuristic segments such as robotics, genomics, chemical feed back must provide a competitive advantage to the manufacturer i.e investors.

Nabarangapur

Many cities record poor air quality after Diwali

NEW DELHI: A day after Diwali, air quality was recorded as 'poor' or 'very poor' in Delhi and several other cities and towns, especially in Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, but was still relatively better than in previous years in the national capital.



The national capital and its neighbouring areas had witnessed severe air quality post-Diwali when the festival was celebrated in November during last two years, with intense smog enveloping the region for days as stubble burning peaks during the month while low temperatures and calm winds trap pollutants.

However, favourable weather conditions related to temperature and wind direction diluted the effect of firecrackers and stubble burning to some extent this year.

Delhi's air quality index (AQI) stood at 310 at 11 pm on Monday. It increased to 326 by 6 am on Tuesday, remained stable till 9 am and then started decreasing. It was 312 at 4.10 pm.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200



'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

A metro train runs on its track amid low visibility due to smog, post 'Diwali' celebrations, in New Delhi, Oct. 25, 2022 (Photo | PTI)

In neighbouring areas, Noida in Uttar Pradesh (312) and Gurugram (313), Faridabad (311) and Charkho Dadri (301) in Haryana reported very poor air quality at 9 am.

Greater Noida (282) and Ghaziabad (272) in

UP were also nearing the very poor category. Bhiwani, Ambala, Bahadurgarh, Sonapat, Jind, Yamunanagar, Kurukshetra, and Panipat in Haryana reported their AQI at 291, 241, 279, 214, 296, 211, 276 and 192 respectively, according to the Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) data On Tuesday afternoon. In Punjab's Ludhiana, Amritsar, Mandi Gobindgarh, Patiala, Jalandhar and Khanna, the AQI recorded at 10.10 am was 313, 249, 208, 225, 260 and 212 respectively.

Jodhpur (337) in Rajasthan and Bulandshahr (329) in UP also recorded very poor air quality.

Other cities with poor air quality included Rajasthan's Jaipur (265), Ajmer (226) and Kota (216); Gujarat's Ahmedabad (243), Belgaum (221) in Karnataka; Jabalpur (235), Katni (237) and Dewas (207) in Madhya Pradesh; in UP, Agra (206), Lucknow (241), Kanpur (218) and Khurja (238); Begusarai (325) in Bihar and Tamil Nadu capital Chennai (229).

The AQI in the Union Territory of Chandigarh, the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana, was recorded at 178.

Delhi and Northern states still face an uphill battle

On Monday night, people in Delhi flouted the ban on firecrackers with impunity though over 400 teams of the Delhi Police, the Department of Revenue, and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee were formed to implement it. The Delhi government had in September announced the ban on the production,



sale and use of all types of firecrackers till January 1, 2023, including on Diwali, a practice it has been following for the last two

years.

PM2.5 concentration at most places in the capital was over 550 micrograms per cubic metre by 1 am.

However, PM2.5 levels dropped below 350 micrograms per cubic metre by 10 am due to warm and windier conditions.

PM2.5 are fine particles that are 2.5 microns or less in diameter and can travel deep into the respiratory tract, reaching the lungs and entering the bloodstream.

The Punjab government had allowed bursting firecrackers on Diwali from 8 pm till 10 pm while the Haryana government allowed only green crackers in the state. Farm fires continued at many places in Punjab and Haryana despite efforts to stop the practice.

Paddy straw burning in Punjab and Haryana is one of the reasons behind the alarming spike in air pollution levels in the national capital in October and November.

"Bursting of firecrackers led to a sharp increase in air pollution with PM2.5 concentration, on an average, jumping to 550 micrograms per cubic metre across Delhi by 1 am," Sunil Dahiya, an analyst at the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), told here.

Dahiya said stubble-burning in Punjab and Haryana peaks only in October-end and November and hence its contribution to air pollution on Diwali was not very significant.

Mobile anti-smog guns spray water into the air after their flag-off by Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai, in New Delhi on Monday. (Parveen Negi by EPS)

However, the wind direction changed to southwesterly, which is unfavourable for the transport of smoke. Hence, the contribution of stubble burning to Delhi's pollution (five to eight per cent) was also "not very significant", said Gufran Beig, chair professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Indian Institute of Science.

Emissions from firecrackers and farm fires have contributed significantly to Delhi's

PM2.5 pollution on Diwali over the years. The share of farm fires in Delhi's PM2.5 pollution was 25 per cent on Diwali in 2021, 32 per cent in 2020 and 19 per cent in 2019.

Since Diwali was celebrated early in the season this year, moderately warm and windier conditions prevented the rapid accumulation of pollutants from firecrackers bursting and reduced the effect of stubble burning.

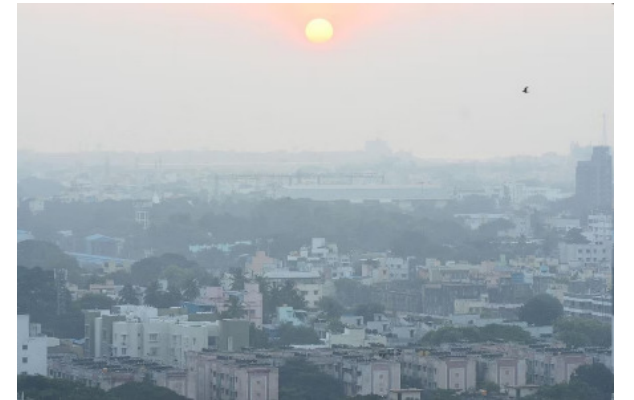
Other states like Punjab and Tamil Nadu allowed the bursting of firecrackers during a two-hour window.

Chennai chokes due to 'poor' air quality The Roads at Velachery were seen completely covered with smog following the Diwali celebrations on Monday Night. (Ashwin Prasath by EPS)

In Chennai (229), the air quality was recorded as 'poor', according to official figures. The city police registered 354 cases regarding various violations, including the time limit allowed for bursting crackers. According to the figures uploaded on the



website of the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) as of noon, most of the



observation points in the city and its surroundings generally had 'poor' air quality. The state government had earlier mandated the bursting of crackers between 6-7 AM and 7-8 PM in line with a Supreme Court direction.

Rishi Sunak's wife Akshata earned Rs 126.61 crore dividend income from Infosys in 2022

NEW DELHI: Akshata Murthy, Britain's incoming Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's wife whose tax status on income from outside the UK had triggered a controversy, earned Rs 126.61 crore (USD 15.3 million) in dividend income in 2022 from her shareholding in India's second-largest IT firm Infosys.

Murthy, daughter of Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy, held 3.89 crore shares, or 0.93 per cent, of Infosys at the end of September, according to company filings with the stock exchanges.

Her holding is worth Rs 5,956 crore (about USD 721 million) at Tuesday's trading price of Rs 1,527.40 on the BSE.

Infosys paid Rs 16 per share final dividend for 2021-22 fiscal on May 31, this year.

READ HERE | Rishi Sunak appointed as Britain's first Indian-origin Prime Minister by King Charles III

For the current year, the firm this month announced an interim dividend of Rs 16.5, according to the company's stock exchange filings.

The two dividends totalled Rs 32.5 per share or Rs 126.61 crore for Akshata.

Infosys is among the best dividend-paying companies in India.

In 2021, it paid a total of Rs 30 per share dividend, which would have given Akshata a total of Rs 119.5 crore in that calendar year. Sunak, 42, on Sunday won the race to lead the Conservative Party and is now set to become Britain's first prime minister of Indian origin and its youngest leader in modern

times.

While Sunak is a British national, his wife Akshata is an Indian citizen.

Her non-domiciled status, which allows her to earn money abroad without paying taxes



in Britain for a period of up to 15 years, has been a divisive issue in the UK.

Non-domiciled status of Akshata became an issue of discussion in Britain when Sunak first entered the race to become the prime minister in April this year.

At that time, her spokesperson had stated that as a citizen of India, she was unable to hold citizenship of another country and that "she has always and will continue to pay UK taxes on all her UK income."

As the controversy snowballed, she at that

time announced that she would pay UK tax on all of her worldwide earnings out of a "British sense of fairness".

It is not known how much taxes she paid in the UK on the dividend income that accrued

to her after April - Rs 16 per share final dividend for the 2021-22 fiscal year (April 2021 to March 2022) paid on May 31, 2022, and Rs 16.5 a share interim dividend for 2022-23 fiscal that is due to be paid on October 27.

READ HERE | 'We are proud of him,' says Narayana Murthy on son-in-law becoming UK PM

Born in her mother Sudha Murthy's hometown of Hubballi in northern Karnataka, Akshata did her schooling in Bengaluru, be-

fore moving to Claremont McKenna College in California, where she graduated with a dual major in economics and French.

She did a fashion designing diploma from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles, which followed a short work stint at Deloitte and Unilever.

She thereafter went on to pursue her MBA at Stanford where she met Rishi Sunak.

The two married in 2009.

The couple, who own a vast real estate portfolio, has two children, Krishna and Anoushka.

They live in a £7 million townhouse in Kensington.

They also own a flat in Kensington, a mansion in Rishi's Yorkshire constituency and a penthouse in California.

The son of a pharmacist mother and doctor father, Sunak was educated at one of England's most renowned schools, Winchester, and then Oxford.

He spent three years at Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and later gained an MBA from Stanford in California, where he met his wife Akshata Murthy.

According to Infosys filings, the promoters hold 13.11 per cent of the company.

Of this, the Murthy family owns 3.6 per cent (Narayana Murthy holds 0.40 per cent stake, his wife Sudha 0.82 per cent, son Rohan 1.45 per cent and daughter Akshata 0.93 per cent).

Other promoters include co-founder S Gopalakrishnan, Nandan M Nilekani and S D Shibulal and their families.

Ram temple to open to devotees in January 2024: Trust Member

AYODHYA(KCN): The Ram temple here will be open to devotees in January 2024 after the installation of the idols of Ram Lalla, said a member of the trust set up to oversee the construction of the shrine.

Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Khestra on Tuesday said 50 per cent of the construction work of the temple has been completed and the overall progress is satisfactory.

"The temple will be opened to devotees in January 2024 after the installation of idols of Ram Lalla in the sanctum sanctorum of

Court verdict of November 9, 2019, had paved the way for the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

According to the plan, temples of Valmiki, Kewat, Shabari, Jatayu, Sita, Vighneshwar (Ganesh) and Sheshavatar (Lakshman) will also be constructed within a 70-acre area in the vicinity of the Ram temple.

A rectangular, two-storeyed 'Parikrama' road is also being constructed, enclosing a total of eight acres of land including the area of the temple and its courtyard. In its eastern



part, there will be an entrance made of sandstone. White marble from the Makrana hills in Rajasthan will be used inside the sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

Modi's visit to Ayodhya on October 23 was the first after he laid the foundation stone two years back. After offering prayers to Ram Lalla at the makeshift temple, the prime minister had reviewed the progress of the construction work. The opening of the temple for devotees at the beginning of 2024 is seen as politically important too as the Lok Sabha elections are scheduled for later that year. The BJP has been highlighting the Ayodhya issue for a long and the opening of the temple for the devotees is expected to generate enthusiasm among Hindus.

"An estimated Rs 1,800 crore will be spent on building the Ram temple," Rai said, adding that space will be made for idols of prominent Hindu seers.

A group of journalists were on Tuesday taken to the elevated place from where Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Sunday, had inspected the construction work of the temple. The prime minister had performed the "Bhoomi puja" for the construction of the temple on August 5, 2020. The Supreme

Many places in Punjab, Haryana report 'poor' to 'very poor' air quality

CHANDIGARH(KCN): After Diwali, several parts of Punjab and Haryana on Tuesday morning recorded air quality in the 'poor' and 'very poor' categories.

Gurugram in Haryana and Ludhiana in Punjab reported their respective air quality index

'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

The AQI in the Union Territory of Chandigarh, the joint capital of the two states, was recorded at 178.

The Punjab government had allowed a win-



dow of two hours from 8 pm till 10 pm for bursting firecrackers on Diwali while the Haryana government had allowed only green crackers in the state.

Farm fires also continued at many places in Punjab and Haryana. Paddy straw burning in Punjab and Haryana is one of the reasons behind the alarming spike in air pollution levels in the national capital in October and November.

As the window for Rabi crop wheat is very short after paddy harvest, farmers set their fields on fire to quickly clear off the crop residue.

Sumum On DDT Aware

Bhubaneswar: SUM Ultimate Medicare (SUMUM) organised a Deceased Donor Transplant (DDT) Orientation Program on Friday to create awareness of DDT protocols among key stakeholders of the hospital.

Prof. (Dr.) Umakanta Satapathy, Additional

meeting which was an initiative by CEO of the hospital, Dr. Swetapadma Dash at the behest of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA). "Deceased Donor Transplant has remained sporadic in India and there is an urgent need to bring clarity regarding DDT protocols to address the attitudes towards



Director, Medical Education and Training and State Nodal Officer of State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (SOTTO), who graced the occasion as chief guest, emphasized organising such programs on DDT while congratulating SUMUM for arranging the interactive session.

"Such programs will certainly create awareness and also fill up the gaps during the implementation of DDT," he said.

The state government, Prof. (Dr.) Satapathy said, was keen on such programs which would benefit patients waiting for organ transplantation. He said that the government would extend all support for such a noble cause.

Brig. (Dr.) Biraj Mohan Mishra, Chief of Medical Services, SUMUM, chaired the

organ donation after death and encourage participation in the DDT program. This is a first-of-its-kind initiative and we expect to evolve a structured program for deceased donor transplantation in Odisha", informed Dr Dash.

Dr. Bibhuti Bhushan Nayak, Joint Director, SOTTO, explained the standard operating procedure followed by the SOTTO team in case of deceased donor transplantation and explained the role of police and forensic specialists in case of medical-legal cases.

Doctors of different departments of SUMUM, SOTTO team members and other officials participated in the interactive program.



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Play Store policies: CCI fines Google Rs 936.44 crore in second antitrust penalty this month

NEW DELHI: In its second ruling against Google in less than a week, the Competition Commission on Tuesday slapped a penalty of Rs 936.44 crore on the internet major for abusing its dominant position with respect to its Play Store policies.

The regulator has also directed the company to cease and desist from unfair business practices as well as carry out various measures to address the anti-competitive issues within a defined timeline. This is the second major CCI ruling against Google in less than a week.

On October 20, the watchdog imposed a penalty of Rs 1,337.76 crore on the company for abusing its dominant position in multiple markets in relation to Android mobile devices and ordered the internet major to cease and desist from various unfair

business practices.

In a release on Tuesday, the Competition Commission of India (Commission) said it has imposed a penalty of Rs 936.44 crore on Google for abusing its dominant position with respect to its Play Store policies.

Google's Play Store constitutes the main distribution channel for app developers in the Android mobile ecosystem, which allows its owners to capitalise on the apps brought to market.

The regulator noted that making access to the Play Store for app developers dependent on mandatory usage of GPBS (Google Play's Billing System) for paid apps and in-app purchases constitutes an imposition of an unfair condition on app developers. Apart from the penalty, CCI said Google should not restrict app developers from using any third-

party billing/ payment processing services for purchasing apps.

There was no immediate comment from Google on the latest CCI order.

On October 21, Google said it will review the order with respect to the Android devices matter.

Google should not restrict end users, in any manner, to access and use within apps, the features and services offered by app developers, the release said. According to CCI, the company should set out a clear and transparent policy on data that is collected on its platform, the use of such data by the platform

and also the potential and actual sharing of such data with app developers or other entities, including related entities.

Among other directions, the regulator has told Google that the competitively relevant transaction/ consumer data of apps generated and acquired through GPBS should not be leveraged by the company to further its competitive advantage.

"Google shall also provide access to the app developer of the data that has been generated through the concerned app, subject to adequate safeguards, as highlighted in this order," the release said.

Also, CCI has asked the internet major not to impose any condition on app developers, which is unfair, unreasonable, discriminatory or disproportionate to the services provided to them. As per the regulator, Google should ensure complete transparency in communicating to app developers, services provided, and the corresponding fee charged.

Google shall also publish in an unambiguous manner the payment policy and criteria for the applicability of the fee.

"Google shall not discriminate against other apps facilitating payment through UPI in India vis-a-vis its own UPI app, in any manner," it added.

Meanwhile, the watchdog said that recently Google has allowed rival UPI apps to be integrated with the intent flow.

Bharat Jodo Yatra achieving desired objectives, has covered one-third distance: Congress

Continued from page-1

say that the desired purpose and objectives with which Bharat Jodo Yatra was started are being achieved," Ramesh told reporters.

He said 50 different organisations of the youth, women, trade unions, social workers, and civil society organisations met Rahul Gandhi during the yatra and discussed different issues.

The issues related to farmers have been raised everywhere and their plight is being highlighted, besides discussion on unemployment, he said, adding the third issue raised is inflation, especially GST on essential commodities.

Ramesh also claimed that around 50 organisations have walked with Rahul Gandhi during the yatra and have spent time with him.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the party's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', in Chitradurga district, Karnataka, Oct 12, 2022. (Photo | PTI)

Rahul Gandhi has addressed four press conferences in these 48 days - one each in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. He has so far addressed four huge rallies - in Kanyakumari, Thrissur, Bellary and Raichur, besides 35 street meetings, public meetings, and small public meetings, in the evenings.

"So one-third of the Bharat Jodo Yatra has been completed and with the speed with which we are going, I hope that by February 20 we will reach Kashmir. It may be possible to reach even before that, but with the speed with which we are going, we can say that the Bharat Jodo Yatra will be complete anytime between February 20 and 25," Ramesh said.

Ramesh also said the enthusiasm of people is worth seeing and the yatra has received an overwhelming response so far. He said the Congress organisation at the block, district and state levels has remained united and the party's cadre at the grassroots has been mobilised and are now preparing for the yatra in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir.

Responding to a question, he said he was hopeful that the leaders of the Maga Vikas Aghadi coalition in Maharashtra would join the yatra in the state. Ramesh said any organisation or political party which believes in the objectives of the Bharat Jodo Yatra is welcome to join it and that in the last 48 days, many such persons and organisations have joined it.

Rupee rises 7 paise to close at 82.81 against US dollar

MUMBAI: The In the previous equity market front, Foreign Institutional rupee appreciated 7 session on Friday, the 30-share BSE



paise to close at 82.81 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, as easing crude oil prices buoyed investor sentiments.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened at 82.71 and witnessed a high of 82.62 and a low of 82.81.

It finally settled at 82.81 against the American currency, registering a rise of 7 paise over its previous close.

the rupee had slipped 9 paise to close at 82.88 against the dollar.

The forex market was closed on Monday on account of Diwali.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was quoted at 111.98.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures fell 1.59 per cent to USD 91.78 per barrel. On the domestic

Sensex fell 287.70 points or 0.48 per cent to end at 59,543.96, while the broader NSE Nifty declined 74.40 points or 0.42 per cent to 17,656.35.

Mallikarjun Kharge to formally take over as Congress president on October 26

Continued from page-1

under internal rumblings and high-profile exits after a series of electoral debacles and has been reduced to a shadow of its former formidable self.

Beginning his career as chief of the Gulbarga city council, Kharge has also served as a state minister and a Lok Sabha MP from Gulbarga (2009 and 2014).

The old warhorse is well known for not losing an election barring the 2019 Lok Sabha poll from Gulbarga.

It was after that loss that Sonia Gandhi brought Kharge to the Rajya Sabha and in February 2021 made him the leader of the opposition.

Kharge also faces the challenge of restoring the Congress' primacy in the opposition space, implementing radical reforms the party pledged at the mid-May Chintan Shivir in Udaipur and maintaining his independence in the face of insinuations that he is a candidate of the Gandhi and would seek their approval in all decisions.

The last non-Gandhi Congress president was Sitaram Kesri, who was unceremoniously removed in 1998 just after two years into his five-year term.

A leader with more than 50 years of experience in politics, Kharge is also the second All India Congress Committee (AICC) president from Karnataka after S Nijalingappa and also the second Dalit leader after Jagjivan Ram to hold the post.

Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets as they offloaded shares worth Rs 153.89 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

Similar to the observations made in its ruling against Google in the Android matter, CCI on Tuesday said the penalty amount is provisional as there were glaring inconsistencies and wide disclaimers in presenting various revenue data points by Google. The penalty amount translates to 7 per cent of the company's average relevant turnover.

Google has been given a time of 30 days to provide the requisite financial details and supporting documents, the release said.

The regulator has been probing Google in other cases as well, including those pertaining to alleged anti-competitive practices by the internet major with respect to news content and smart TV.

In February 2018, the regulator imposed a fine of Rs 136 crore on Google for unfair business practices in the Indian market for online search.

According to the release on Tuesday, Google has been asked to implement various measures, including allowing and not restricting app developers from using any third-party billing/ payment processing services, either for in-app purchases or for purchasing apps.

"Google shall also not discriminate or otherwise take any adverse measures against such apps using third-party billing/ payment processing services, in any manner," the release said.

Further, the internet major has been asked not to impose any anti-steering provisions on app developers as well as not restrict them from communicating with their users to promote their apps and offerings, in any manner.

Rishi Sunak takes charge as UK's first Indian-origin PM after meeting King Charles

Continued from page-1

ago,? said Sunder Katwala, Director of British Future think tank.

?But we should not underestimate this important social change. When Sunak was born in Southampton in 1980, there had been no Asian or black MPs at all in the post-war era.

There were still no black or Asian Conservative MPs when he graduated from university in 2001. That Rishi Sunak is set to be Prime Minister during the coronation of King Charles III next spring tells an important story about our society, where we have come from and where we are going in the future,? he said.

The Archbishop of Canterbury urged Britons to pray for Rishi Sunak as he enters No. 10 Downing Street at a turbulent time.

"At a time of great difficulty and uncertainty for this country, please join me in praying for Rishi Sunak as he takes on the responsibilities of leadership," Justin Welby wrote on Twitter.

"May he, and all leaders of all parties, work across divides to bring unity and offer stability for those who need it most," he said. Sunak's victory in the Tory leadership race came at the end of a dramatic few days in Westminster since Liz Truss resigned last Thursday in the wake of a disastrous tax-cutting mini-budget and several policy U-turns.

Former prime minister Boris Johnson ruling himself out from the contest over the weekend and Leader of the Commons Penny Mordaunt conceding defeat just moments before the shortlisting deadline on Monday paved the way for a remarkable political comeback for Sunak ? having lost the Tory membership vote to Truss just last month.

However, his popularity as the frontrunner among his party colleagues was replicated yet again as more than half the Tory MPs came out publicly in his support. He now faces the enormous challenge of steering the UK economy through massive inflationary turbulence and also uniting the different wings of a divided Conservative Party.

Qatar's residents squeezed as World Cup rental demand soars

DOHA: Where to sleep? It's among the biggest questions facing fans travelling to tiny Qatar for the World Cup amid a feverish rush for rooms in Doha. Some will sleep on cruise ships. Others will camp in the desert. Others will fly in from Dubai and elsewhere. But in the run-up to the world's biggest sporting event in the world's smallest host country, the struggle for housing is hardly limited to tourists. Qatar's real estate frenzy has sent rents skyrocketing and priced long-term residents out of their own homes, leaving many in the lurch.

"Landlords are taking full advantage of the situation and there's nothing in place to support the people who already live here," said Mariam, a 30-year-old British resident whose landlord refused to renew her annual contract in September, then quadrupled her monthly rent — from 5,000 Qatari riyals (some \$1,370) to 20,000 riyals (\$5,490). Unable to afford the increase, she had no choice but to move out and is now staying at a friend's place.

"It's really demoralizing," she said, giving only her first name for fear of reprisals, like other renters interviewed in the autocratic nation. Others spoke on the condition of anonymity for the same reason. Residents in the country, where ex-pats outnumber locals nine to one, say the surging demand and shortage of rooms ahead of the World Cup has empowered landlords to raise rents by over 40% in many cases on short notice, forcing tenants to pack up and face an uncertain future.

The Qatari government acknowledged the "increased demand for accommodation" and encouraged tenants who believe they have been wronged to file a complaint with the government's rental disputes committee.

Some 1.2 million fans are expected to descend next month on the Gulf Arab sheikhdom, which has never before hosted an event on the scale of the World Cup. Local organizers have sought to dispel fears of an accommodation crisis, pointing out that Qatar has set aside 130,000 rooms, available through the official website.

The rooms, which are in hotels, resorts, specially built housing and three cruise ships at the port, start at around \$80, they say, although it's not clear how many low-budget options there are.

A price ceiling applies to 80% of the rooms, the government said in a statement to The Associated Press. It did not respond to questions about whether and how the cap has been implemented, and the ceiling — which is about \$780 for a five-star resort room — can go higher, depending on the room's amenities.

Many long-term occupants in hotels and apartments say they're being driven out to make room for players, staffers and fans.

"You're committed to either staying and paying the extra or leaving and not knowing whether you're going to have anywhere to live," said a British teacher whose landlord hiked his rent by 44%.

The teacher sold all his furniture and is now crashing at a friend's place, worried sick about his future. Other renters renewing their leases reported signs appearing on their apartments marking the buildings as "chosen by the government to host the 2022 World Cup guests and events."

The notice, seen by the AP, orders tenants to vacate so the building can be handed over for maintenance ahead of the tournament. Local organizers have signed a deal with French hospitality company Accor

to set aside some 45,000 rooms for fans. Omar al-Jaber, the executive director of housing at Qatar's Supreme Committee of Delivery and Legacy, said the government played no role in contract terminations affecting long-term tenants.

"To be honest with you, we are not controlling what happens in the market," he told the AP.

A 48-year-old French pilates instructor said that when she signed her lease a year ago, her landlord promised he wouldn't kick her out during the World Cup. Yet just days before her lease renewal, she got a devastating message:

Her landlord couldn't rent her the place for "personal reasons." The next day, her friend saw her room advertised on Airbnb for nearly \$600 more a month than she had paid. "You're kicking out long-term residents for a one-month event?" she said. "People are angry. It's very disruptive."

Residents scrambling to find new homes because of the rent hikes say it's nearly impossible to find suitable places within their budgets. Most two-bedroom apartments on the Pearl, an artificial island off Doha, go for over \$1,000 a night on Airbnb. Luxury apartments on the site can fetch a staggering \$200,000 a month. "The accommodations that are left for us are not good at all," said a 32-year-old Indian resident whose monthly rent will increase by over \$400 next month. "Suddenly if we can afford it, there's no kitchen, it's too far away or it's divided by partitions. It's very disturbing."

Energy-rich Qatar has spared no expense in its grand plans for the first World Cup in the Arab world, promising that locals and ex-pat residents will enjoy a lasting legacy, too.

"This tournament is for everyone who's living in Qatar," said al-Jaber. "We would like everyone to enjoy this tournament."

But some say the tight squeeze shows the joyous event comes at a cost.

"It's costing me a lot of stress and money," said the British teacher who had to leave his apartment after seven years. "I'm having to pay for the World Cup."



PV Sindhu back in top 5, Prannoy moves to 12th in latest BWF rankings

NEW DELHI: Double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu and Thomas Cup winner HS Prannoy gained a spot each to reach the 5th



In the men's singles, Prannoy continued his ascendancy after a pre-quarterfinal finish at the Denmark Open Super 750. The 30-year-old, who is ranked number one in the Race to Guangzhou ranking, has 64,330 points from 26 tournaments.

CWG champion Lakshya Sen and CWG bronze medallist Kidambi Srikanth are static at number 8 and 11.

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who also claimed a maiden gold in Birmingham, too held on to their number 8 rankings in the men's doubles.

The pairing of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila jumped two places to grab the 19th spot.

Women's doubles pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand and mixed doubles pair of Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto achieved a new career-high ranking of 27 and 29 respectively.

However, women's doubles combination of Ashwini Ponappa and N Sikki Reddy dropped to 24th, while two-time CWG gold medallist Saina Nehwal slipped a place to 33rd in the women's singles rankings.

and 12th positions in women's and men's singles world rankings released on Tuesday. Sindhu, who has not played any tournament since winning gold in the Commonwealth Games in August due to an ankle injury, possesses 87218 points from 26 tournaments.

This is after three years that Sindhu, a former world no. 2, has regained her place in the top 5. The former world champion from Hyderabad resumed her training on Monday after recovering from the injury.

Bidens host largest ever Diwali reception at White House

Washington: US President Joe Biden and First Lady Dr Jill Biden on Monday hosted a Diwali reception at the White House in what they called the largest since the People's House started celebrating the festival during the George Bush administration.

More than 200 eminent Indian Americans attended the reception at the East Room, a venue which has witnessed some of the landmark events related to the India-US relationship, including the signing of the nuclear deal and the joint press conference by then US President Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in November

president of US India Business Council told PTI during the reception.

It's an honour and a privilege to be here to celebrate Diwali. Indian Americans thank the President and the First Lady for this, said H R Shah, chairman and CEO of TV Asia, the largest South Asian television channel in the US.

Ajay Jain Bhutoria, a member of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, said the event was held to recognise the South Asian community's contributions in economic development and managing Covid crisis among others.

Biden has appointed a record number of over 130 Indo-Americans at various levels of the administrations, he said.

Lauding the Diwali celebration, Bhutoria said it sent a message how much President Biden and this administration loves and respects the South Asian community?.

Earlier, welcoming the guests, Biden said it was the first Diwali reception to be held at the White House on such a scale.

The incredible South Asian community all across America has helped the country emerge stronger from this pandemic, building an economy that works for everyone, teaching children and caring for elders, responding to the cry for action on climate, working to fix immigration system, defending rights and freedoms, building a more just and equitable country, serving and protecting our communities and the nation, informing, entertaining and inspiring, he said.



2008. The reception saw some enthralling cultural events, including performances by sitarist Rishab Sharma and dance troupe The Sa Dance Company. The guests, dressed in traditional Indian attires such as saree, lehenga and sherwani, relished some mouthwatering Indian delicacies.

The room is full at the East state dining room? This is a real celebration of what the Indian American community has achieved in the United States. It's a wonderful recognition by the President and by the White House to host all of us on Diwali. I feel very privileged to be here as an Indian American, said Atul Keshap,




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