



## DILIGENT DEEPIKA

Deepika has floored fans with her sizzling act in 'Besharam Rang', says choreographer Vaibhavi

LEISURE P2



## FRAUD CHARGES AGAINST SAM

US Prosecutors charge FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried with financial crimes and campaign violations

INTERNATIONAL P10



## 1ST TEST STARTS TODAY

India look for a place in the World Test Championship final when they face Bangladesh in the first Test of the 2-match series

SPORTS P12

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## ED arrests Archana

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 13:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Tuesday arrested lady blackmailer Archana Nag, the prime accused in high profile sextortion racket case, under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

ED sleuths informed the court about the lady blackmailer's arrest while producing her after the completion of the seven days remand period. On December 5, she was remanded to the seven day's ED custody for interrogation.

While hearing the ED's plea seeking seven more days of remand for Nag, the court allowed the central agency to take her on remand for another six days.

The court also allowed ED to take Archana's husband and co-accused in sextortion case Jagabandhu Chand on remand for nine days. The ED had sought the court's permission to take Jagabandhu on remand for 15 days.

ED Tuesday took Archana on remand while Jagabandhu will be taken on remand from Wednesday.

Notably, the 26-year-old woman from Kalahandi was arrested October 6 this year and sent to jail on charges of blackmailing rich and influential people along with running a sex racket.



**FOGGY MORNING:** Vehicles with their headlights on pass through a fog-enveloped road in Badambadi area of Cuttack, Tuesday morning

OP PHOTO

## NZ BANS YOUTH FROM BUYING CIGARETTES

AGENCIES

**Wellington, Dec 13:** New Zealand (NZ) Tuesday passed into law a unique plan to phase out tobacco smoking by imposing a lifetime ban on young people buying cigarettes.

The law states that tobacco can't ever be sold to anybody born on or after Jan 1, 2009.

It means the minimum age for buying cigarettes will keep going up and up. In theory, somebody trying to buy a pack of cigarettes 50 years from now would need ID to show they were at least 63 years old.

But health authorities hope smoking will fade away well before then. They have a stated goal of making New Zealand smoke-free by 2025.

The new law also reduces the number of retailers allowed to sell tobacco from about 6,000 to 600 and decreases the amount of nicotine allowed in tobacco that is smoked.

"There is no good reason to allow a product to be sold that kills half the people that use it," Associate Minister of Health Dr Ayesha Verrall told lawmakers in Parliament. "And I can tell you that we will end this in the future, as we pass this legislation."

She said the health system would save billions of dollars from not needing to treat illnesses caused by smoking, such as cancer, heart attacks, strokes, and amputations. She said the bill would create generational change and leave a legacy of better health for youth.

Lawmakers voted along party lines in passing the legislation 76 to 43. The libertarian ACT party, which opposed the bill, said many small corner stores, known in New Zealand as dairies, would go out of business because they would no longer be able to sell cigarettes.

"We stand opposed to this bill because it's a bad bill and its bad policy, its that straightforward and simple," said Brooke van Velden, ACT's deputy leader. "There won't be better outcomes for New Zealanders."

## HC pulls up state on Similipal poaching

The court asks the govt to inform it by Dec 22 as to how elephant deaths can be prevented and what measures are in place for corridor mapping

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Dec 13:** Expressing concern over the recent poaching of an elephant and burning of the carcass by a few Forest personnel in an attempt to destroy evidence in the core area of Similipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj, the Orissa High Court Tuesday asked the state government as to why no FIR has been registered against the officials although they have been suspended.

The HC observed that it has been a very bad year for elephants in Odisha.

"We're reacting to a situation all the time, but not preventing anything from happening. So, what're the preventive measures we've to put in place and how quickly can we ensure it as this has been a very bad year for elephants in Odisha. It is perhaps the



File photo of officials at the site

worst year," said Chief Justice S Muralidhar, while hearing the issue of discovery of the carcass of an elephant in Similipal South Wildlife division December 7 this year.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Manoj V Nair appeared before the court virtually and admitted that three Forest officials had burnt the carcass in order to destroy the evidence of the jumbo killing.

"The field director received complaints from dwellers of Bakua regarding the killing and covering up of a pachyderm in the core area by the field staff December 7. After inquiry, it came to our notice that the poaching had indeed happened.

The three officials—forester-cum-range in charge Shiba Shankar Samal, forester Chandrabhanu Behera and guard Binod Das—were instrumental in concealing the fact as they burnt the carcass, Nair told the HC, adding that they have been suspended.

Irked, the HC asked the government as to why no FIR has been registered against the officials who have been suspended in the Similipal case.

The joint task force (JTF) also filed a status report stating that all they could find were a few bones and flesh from the stream where the charred carcass was found.

The court directed the state government to inform as to how elephant death can be prevented and what measures have been taken for elephant corridor mapping, lawyer Asish Mishra, who presented the case, said.

Mishra added that the PCCF has been asked to remain present on the next hearing.

The court has posted the hearing to December 22.

The poaching has triggered apprehension among local wildlife lovers who alleged inadequate protection measures for the fauna in the tiger reserve.

## Lawyers postpone stir

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, Dec 13:** Anticipating law and order situation, the Central Action Committee of Lawyers' here has postponed the agitation scheduled for every Wednesday.

"Further course of action will be decided after due deliberations with members," said Pradip Bohidar, a member of the committee.

At least 15 lawyers have been arrested in Sambalpur for their alleged involvement in vandalism on the premises of the district court during protests over demand

for establishment of an HC bench in the district. Meanwhile, the Bar Council of India has suspended a total of 43 agitating advocates (29 Monday and 14 Tuesday) of the Sambalpur District Bar Association for allegedly indulging in vandalism on issues including the demand for establishment of a permanent bench of the state high court in western Odisha.

The Registrar General of the HC informed the Supreme Court that court work was disrupted in 26 districts due to December 12 agitation call given by the Bhubaneswar Bar Association for a day's Satyagrah.

14 more suspended; 15 arrested for vandalism

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Inform everybody, including the press, that I'll make a SURPRISE VISIT after two days at 11am sharp

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	variation
SENSEX	62533.30	↑ 402.73
NIFTY	18608.00	↑ 110.80
DOLLAR	82.80	↑ ₹0.27
EURO	87.60	↑ ₹0.54
GOLD	₹54,703	↑ ₹571
SILVER	₹68,815	↑ ₹1029

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	32.0°C	31.0°C
MIN	19.0°C	19.0°C
Humidity	67%	68%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Clear sky mainly	

## 10.79L Jan Dhan accounts fake

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** Nearly 47.57 crore Jan Dhan accounts have been opened in the country of which 38.19 crore are operative while 10.79 lakh are duplicate, Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad told the Rajya Sabha Tuesday.

In a written reply, Karad said that as on November 30, a total of 47.57 crore Jan Dhan accounts have been opened in the country.

"PMJDY guidelines envisage issue of RuPay debit card to Jan Dhan account holders and issuance of RuPay debit cards to Jan Dhan account holders by bank is an on-going process. As informed by banks, there are 19.90 crore account holders who do not have functional debit cards and 4.44 crore account holders did not renew their PMJDY RuPay Card," the minister said.

RBI has advised Financial Literacy Centres (FLCs) and rural branches of banks to conduct outdoor financial literacy camps for customers in collaboration with ground level stakeholders at the district/panchayat or village level. RBI also conducts specific camps for target audience like farmers, small entrepreneurs, Self Help Groups, senior citizens etc., including women.

Under its Centres for Financial Literacy project, RBI is imparting financial education among adults. Banks in general also organise camps, to create awareness about the banking habits including the benefits of keeping the account active.

Further, a strong network of Business Correspondents (BCs), representing the last mile connected in the Banking Services delivery system is also creating awareness, the reply read.

## Get ready to witness Geminid meteor shower

AGENCIES

**Queensland, Dec 13:** It's the most wonderful time of the year... not because Christmas is coming, but because it's time for the Geminid meteor shower—an annual spectacle to bring joy and good cheer to all!

The Geminids are the best meteor shower of the year—a reliable show that graces the heavens every December. Active for around a fortnight, the shower peaks on the evening of December 14. This year, the Moon will interfere with the best view of the Geminids. Rising just before or around midnight (depending on where you live), its glare will wash out and hide the fainter members of the shower.

For a normal meteor shower, that would be the kiss of death—but the Geminids are so good that, even fighting the glow of the Moon,

## A DAZZLING CELESTIAL EVENT

The Geminids are the best meteor shower of the year—a reliable show that graces the heavens every December

Active for around a fortnight, the shower peaks on the evening of December 14



For a normal meteor shower, that would be the kiss of death—but the Geminids are so good that, even fighting the glow of the Moon, they can still put on a spectacular show

they can still put on a spectacular show.

**So where do the Geminids come from?**

The Geminids are fragments of a rock comet.

Our Solar System is full of debris left behind from when the planets

formed. That debris includes comets and near-Earth asteroids—objects whose orbits around the Sun cross that of Earth itself. Comets and asteroids are dirty beasts. They both have a tendency to shed dust and debris to space as they move around our star. The parent of the

Geminids is an asteroid called 3200 Phaethon; its extremely elongated orbit around the Sun takes it in closer than Mercury and out beyond the orbit of Mars. With each lap, the temperatures on Phaethon vary dramatically—from extreme cold (below -100 degree celsius) to extreme heat (above 750 degree celsius) and back again.

The result? The rocks on Phaethon expand and contract with the heat, fracturing and fragmenting, causing shards of debris to go out into space. Over thousands of years, that debris has spread around Phaethon's orbit, creating a vast "tube". We go through that debris each December as we move around the Sun, and it ablates (often described as "burning up", though no fire is involved) high in our atmosphere, giving birth to the Geminid meteor shower.

## So where and when should I look for the Geminids in 2022?

For most of the fortnight the Geminids are active, their rates are low.

At that time, Earth is passing through the outer regions of Phaethon's debris stream, where the dust is widely spread. But for around 24 hours, centered on the evening of December 14, Earth will be passing through the densest part of the meteor stream. That's when the view will be best.

While Geminid meteors can appear in any part of the sky, all will point back to the same area. That region, in the constellation Gemini, is known as the shower's "radiant". When the radiant is below the horizon, meteors from the shower are hitting the far side of our planet, and so no shower meteors will be visible.

Continued on P4



# leisure



## I WAS BEING FED TO THE WOLVES: MEGHAN

Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, said she was “fed to the wolves”, and Prince Harry discusses “institutional gaslighting” in a new trailer for part two of their highly-anticipated Netflix docuseries. The series, which has put Harry and Meghan in the firing line of supporters of the British royal family, has attracted worldwide attention.

## CHRISTOPHER NOLAN RECREATES FIRST N-WEAPON DETONATION WITHOUT VFX

The pursuit of keeping things real pushed Christopher Nolan to recreate the first nuclear weapon detonation without CGI effects as part of the production for his upcoming movie ‘Oppenheimer’. The director has always favoured practical effects over VFX (he even blew up a real Boeing 747 for ‘Tenet’).



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

You will want to catch up with old friends that you have been neglecting for some time. The stars suggest that you will enjoy yourself. Your excitement will brighten up your activities. Your frankness and honesty are what set you apart from others, says Ganesh.

#### TAURUS

There ain't no mountain high enough and there ain't no valley deep! Today, you will find yourself on an invincible run. You might be your own worst enemy today, if you waste your effort and energy for unproductive purposes. Overall, it is smooth sailing today and Ganesh advises you to stay focussed.

#### GEMINI

You will try to think up creative ways to perform your daily routine to get a break from the boredom and the rut of your daily schedule. You need to mingle more with people and practice some humility. Guests will come visiting at your home.

#### CANCER

The day looks set to be so good that you may end up inviting jealousy and envy from people around you. The stars are favourable for matters pertaining to heart. In short, a great day for boosting love and relationships.

#### LEO

Though God is benevolent, it is but necessary that we reciprocate the magnanimity of the Almighty through our actions. So wake up today with a little prayer on your lips. Make it a point to visit a temple for some peace of mind. The other alternative is to do a small pooja at home.

#### VIRGO

The day will bring unexpected changes and pleasant surprises. You may hit the road with your loved ones, and the journey will not only be exciting but also calm your nerves. Overall, a bright, happy day to make most of, says Ganesh.

#### LIBRA

It's time to take what is already good, and turn it into something better. Take this day as a day to bring about improvements in your life and yourself. You may also consider taking up some extra courses in the evening. Maybe it's time for a salsa lesson, or learn how to toss a few Italian delicacies.

#### SCORPIO

You are one social butterfly today. However, shunning the gossips, you spread kindness and happiness in your social groups. People will look up to you today for this reason. What goes around, comes around; spread joy and you are sure to receive joy, says Ganesh.

#### SAGITTARIUS

Skilled at multi-tasking as you are, today you may just take things one by one. Instincts will rule the roost for most of the time. And govern your actions too. But as peculiar as the day may be, you shall find yourself back to being your own assured self.

#### CAPRICORN

Not many can match you when it comes to living a healthy lifestyle, and as Ganesh says, health won't be an issue today either. On the work front, you are likely to complete pending projects successfully and your boss, who may be furious because of the delay caused, will reluctantly admit that you did justice to the work and that it was worth the wait. While money matters may take a back seat later in the day, small issues will affect you in a big way.

#### AQUARIUS

You wish to have more than twenty-four hours in a day! You are determined to finish off your pending work but somehow you will find it extremely difficult to get the load off your shoulders. You will try everything; from canceling your vacations to postponing your dates, but nothing will seem enough, feels Ganesh.

#### PISCES

Ganesh feels that you will sympathize with people today. This will help you get people's good wishes. You can prove to be a good boss, co worker, husband or wife and son or daughter. Ganesh advises you to carry on with these virtues.

## Deepika trained hard for Besharam Rang

Mumbai: Deepika Padukone floored fans with her sizzling act in the first song of *Pathaan*, *Besharam Rang* and all the glam didn't come easy for the star. Vaibhavi Merchant has choreographed this number and is over the moon with the response to the song. She said, “In my body of work, I have probably consciously made an effort to ensure that the female leads are always presented very aesthetically. For instance, with Ash (Aishwarya Rai Bachchan) in *Kajra Re*, I made it a point to kind of enhance the expressions in the way she did her *adaakari*. In *Kamli* with Katrina again, I kept in my mind what Katrina would look great doing”.

Revealing her dedication to the song, Vaibhavi shared, “Deepika put in a lot of hard work to look the way she is looking in *Besharam Rang*. She had an entire crew - dietitian, her physical trainer and the stunning costumes by Shaleena. I was mighty impressed with the way she just approached all the costumes. So, I think that really triggered a certain style in which this song should be shot”.



## Kartik wants to do 'rooted' films like Kantara



Mumbai: Kartik Aaryan has spoken about doing films 'as rooted as' *Kantara*. He said that he loves watching movies like this. Helmed by Rishab Shetty, *Kantara* got a massive response from the audience for its storyline and amazing visuals. The story is set in coastal Karnataka and it merges local beliefs in Daivas with concepts of man vs nature and land politics.

Kartik said, “I would love to do rooted and grounded films. Main khud bohot desi hoon yaar. Mera khon pura desi hai. Mujhe aesi filmein dekhne bhi mazaa aata hai aur karne ka bhi shauq hai (I am completely native. My blood is completely native. I love watching such films and would love to do such films as well). Kuch headlines dekhta hoon (I come across some headlines), ke 'the era of Kartik Aaryan has begun', I get happy with my success and I hope good films chalti rahe (keep on happening) and I keep on getting good films”.

## Sunny appreciates tough journey

New Delhi: Sunny Leone has said that she got goosebumps after learning about the journey of 'Splitsvilla X4' contestant Sohail Shaikh, who has no more than 1 million followers on Instagram and runs his own gym.

The 25-year-old model and social media influencer told the host that he had a tough life. “I used to sell vada pav in a canteen and from there my journey started”.

Sunny replied, “So from vada pav to 'Splitsvilla', that's not an easy journey and it gives me goosebumps”.

He added, “I never fail, either I win or learn, that is what my mother taught me”.

To this, one contestant shared that with the earned money he has now opened his own gym. Sunny and everyone applauded him.

Another piece of news: Actor and model Shivam Sharma is all set to enter as a wild card contestant this week.



## The Kashmir Files shortlisted for 'Official Selection' of SIFF



Mumbai: Almost a year since its release in March, Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri's *The Kashmir Files* continues to make news beyond the box office.

After its brush with controversy at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa recently, the movie has been selected for the 'Official Selection' category of the prestigious Switzerland International Film Festival (SIFF).

Taking to social media, Vivek Ranjan Agnihotri stated: “Happy to inform that #TheKashmirFiles has been selected in the 'OFFICIAL SELECTION' category of the prestigious Switzerland International Film Festival.”

*The Kashmir Files* is a heart-wrenching film that captures the pain, suffering, and struggle of the Kashmiri Pandit community during the exodus of 1990. Apart from

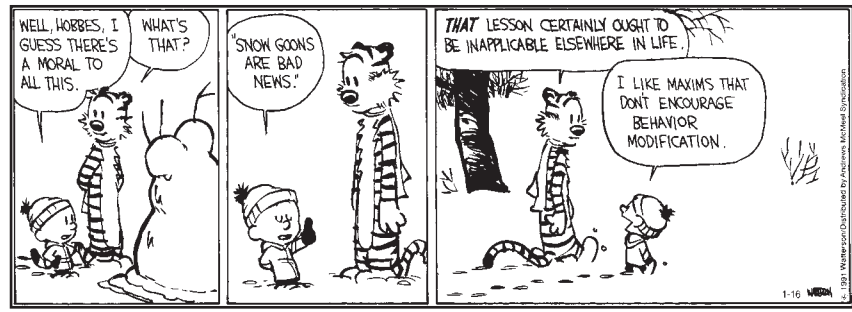
sparking a huge debate on Kashmir and the spectre of terrorism, the film collected Rs 340.92 crore worldwide.

Earlier in November, at IFFI, jury head and Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid had sparked off a controversy by describing *The Kashmir Files* as “propaganda” and “vulgar”.

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

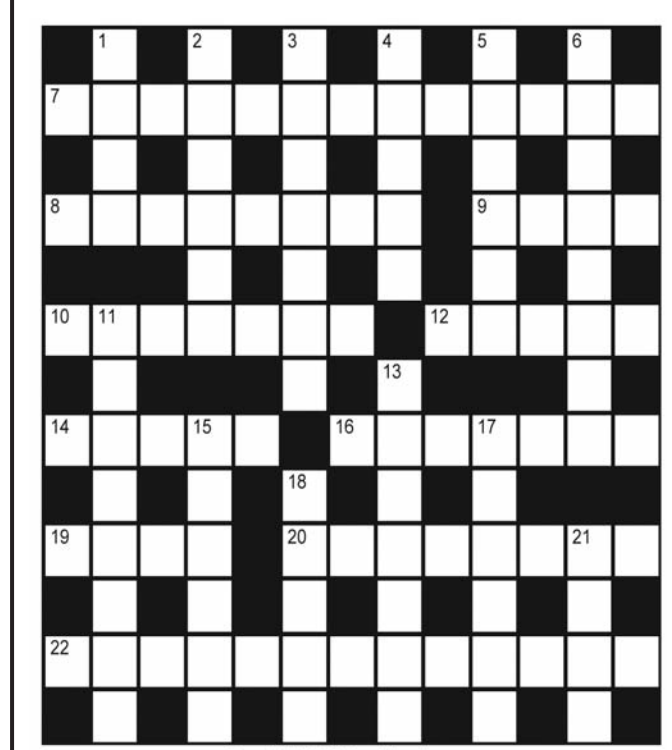


### BREVITY



### FUN post

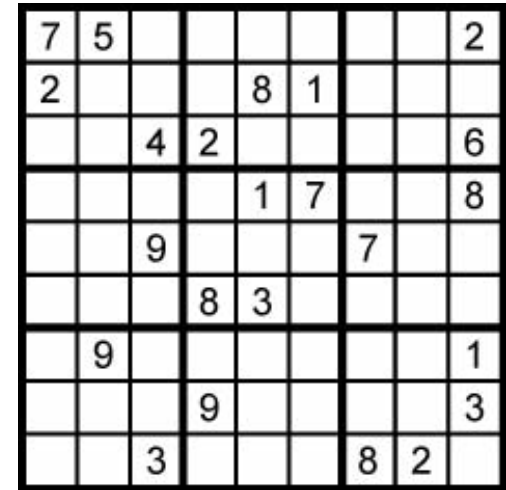
### CROSSWORD



- Across
- 7 Air spring (5,8)
  - 8 Italian biscuits flavoured with almond
  - 9 Extinct flightless bird
  - 10 Port city in southern Kenya
  - 12 Brawny
  - 14 Perfect
  - 16 Of extreme importance
  - 19 Buzzing pest
  - 20 Fragmentise
  - 22 Bomb carrier (6,7)
- Down
- 1 Impulse
  - 2 Egyptian beetle
  - 3 Valletta native
  - 4 On the move
  - 5 Plod
  - 6 Blood feud
  - 11 Average
  - 13 Like a coded message
  - 15 Accomplish
  - 17 Shade of red
  - 18 Poplar tree
  - 21 Cash drawer

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

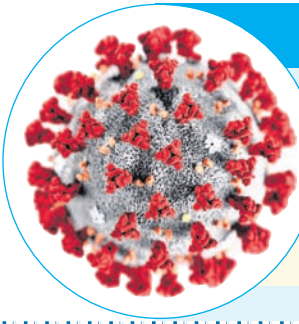


# downtown



## AIRING GRIEVANCES

Members of Internal Community Resource Persons' Union staged a dharna in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, seeking job regularisation



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	65,44,61,044	62,96,94,084	66,60,703
India	4,46,75,095	4,41,40,592	5,30,658
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

# Two Jharkhand crooks cuffed for ₹4-cr fraud



Accused Tanweer Nazri and Md Abdul Hasnain

### MODUS OPERANDI

- Accused Tanweer and Abdul, in connivance with others, launched two programmes on 'solar awareness' and 'pre-Matric scholarship'
- Under the solar awareness programme, they collected ₹1,650 in cash from each applicant as member fee with assurance to supply them with LED bulbs
- In their pre-Matric scholarship programme, the trust was offering the scholarship of ₹1,000 per month up to 24 months on the one-time deposit of ₹3,000 as membership charge

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 13:** The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Odisha police has arrested two persons from Jharkhand for their alleged involvement in a cheating case involving ₹4 crore.

The accused were identified as Tanweer Nazri and Md Abdul Hasnain, the president and secretary of Vastav India Trust respectively. They were arrested for duping people on the pretext of selling/supplying LED bulbs as part of their solar awareness programme and giving pre-Matric scholarship to the students in their 'Chhulo Aasman' programme, said superintendent of police, EOW, Dilip Tripathy.

The Vastav India Trust, which was registered with sub-registrar of Ranchi in Jharkhand, had

opened its branch office at Bomkhal in the Capital city in March 2022. Tanweer and Abdul, in connivance with others, launched two programmes on 'solar awareness' and 'pre-Matric scholarship' namely 'Chhulo Aasman'.

Under the solar awareness programme, they collected ₹1,650 in cash from each applicant as member fee with assurance to supply them with LED bulbs, he said.

In their pre-Matric scholarship programme, the trust was offering the scholarship of ₹1,000 per month up to 24 months on the one-time deposit of ₹3,000 as membership charge, said Tripathy.

The accused collected about ₹4 crore from more than 3,500 people. In order to gain the faith of the victims, they initially deposited ₹1,000 in the accounts of some of the investors. However, they did not

pay any amount to the victims after the one-time deposit of ₹1,000.

Subsequently, the accused disappeared after closing down their offices in the state.

The trust was inducing the gullible parents and general public in the name of social welfare programme and awareness. They had appointed several block coordinators and other staffers at different places in Sundargarh, Bhadrak, Nabarangpur, Kandhamal, Nayagarh, Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Dhenkanal.

"It is totally a money circulation case," the SP said, adding, the trust has also cheated people of other states like Jharkhand, Delhi and Bihar.

"We will alert the authorities of these states concerned," he mentioned.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



# Opening health edu centres made easier

New rule to be effective from 2023-24 academic session

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 13:** In a bid to encourage private sector investment in opening of quality healthcare education institutions, the state government has relaxed the norms which will come into effect from next academic session.

The process for obtaining no objection certificate (NOC) for different courses like Nursing, D Pharm, B Pharm, M Pharm, DMLT, DMRT, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and allied medical sciences have been streamlined.

Robust guidelines have also been formulated for ensuring min-



imum standard of requirements in accordance with recommendations of the councils concerned.

Health and Family Welfare secretary Shalini Pandit said that as per the new rules, the requirement of submission of GIS and gap analysis data by the applicant for determining the number of institutions in a district would be dis-

continued. Pandit said that assessment for suitability of the institutions through inspection would be done by subject experts.

Involvement of district administration i.e. Collector, additional district magistrate, block development officer, deputy collector and tehsildar would be discontinued, she said, adding, the new rules will be effective from 2023-24 academic session.

Educationists opined that such provisions would facilitate establishment of high-quality professional institutions in the state and boost production of qualified and skilled health personnel in different streams.

# 3 held for rape bid on woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 13:** Commissionerate Police Tuesday arrested three persons for allegedly trying to rape a woman in Mancheswar area here Monday evening.

The accused were identified as Debashis Pradhan alias Malanga, 24, of Tikabali in Kandhamal, Deepak Kumar Sethy, 24, of Rangamatia here and Swadhin Kumar Nayak alias Sanu, 22 of Badasahi in Nayagarh district.

Pradhan has been residing in Unit 8 area while Nayak is staying at Dasaraja Basti in Mancheswar. Sources in police revealed that Sethy had arranged a party on the occasion of his birthday along with his friends including Pradhan and Nayak in a City hotel Monday evening. The heavily drunk accused later came to an open field near the Railway colony where the victim has been staying along with her family in a tent after the demolition of their house during an eviction drive.

They started drinking liquor at the field making loud noise and using slangs. The woman got annoyed and asked them to stop making noise and using slangs. Subsequently, a verbal duel ensued between the victim and the accused.

Then they tried to rape her after disrobing her. However, some locals reached the spot after hearing the victim's scream following which the accused fled the scene.

Based on a complaint lodged by the victim, Mancheswar police registered a case (470/22) and arrested Pradhan, Sethy and Nayak.

# Panel reviews preparations for Hockey Men's World Cup



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 13:** A few weeks ahead of the commencement of FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup in the state, the World Cup organising committee along with the Chief Minister's Office Tuesday reviewed the preparedness by different departments for the successful conduct of the mega sporting event.

The organising committee was co-chaired by Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra and Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey, while senior officials from various departments and many Hockey India officials were present during the discussion.

The issues discussed included stadium readiness, connectivity, hospitality, community outreach, safety and security, traffic and crowd management, city festivals and World Cup celebrations, hospitality, and medical arrangements. It was informed that the Sports and Youth Services department has allocated ₹75 crore during financial

year 2022-23 for the World Cup. FIH has already certified the four turfs, two at Kalinga Stadium here that were recently re-laid and another two new turfs (main and practice) laid at Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela. In both the stadiums, the lighting systems have also been made operational.

Also reviewed were the facilities for the teams in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela. "The teams are being provided dedicated flights for their travel between Bhubaneswar and Rourkela. The commercial flights to Rourkela are expected to start soon after the necessary permissions," said an official present.

"The Mo Bus services in Rourkela will be operational from January and the services in Bhubaneswar are being augmented. It was decided that the spectators with match day tickets will be allowed Mo Bus travel free-of-cost," informed the official.

The committee reviewed the security arrangements, traffic and parking management in details to ensure a safe, secure and smooth experience for the spectators.

It also reviewed the World Cup celebration event in Cuttack to be held January 11.

Secretary to Chief Minister VK Pandian conveyed the direction of the Chief Minister that the celebrations be organised across all the districts in a grand manner involving the communities, schools, colleges etc.



**BUDDING ATHLETES:** Students of BJEM School performed during the inauguration of 48th Annual Athletics Meet in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday. OP PHOTO

# 'Paradip Port capacity to reach 500 MMT by 2047'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** Union Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Tuesday informed the Rajya Sabha that the capacity of Paradip Port will be more than 500 (million metric tonne) MMT per annum by 2047.

The Union minister said during the Question Hour in the Upper House that the Paradip Port is one of the largest ports of the country and it has the maximum capacity in terms of cargo handling. The minister said that



ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT

and it is now aiming to become the mega port in near future.

"By 2047, the capacity of Paradip Port will be more than 500 MMT. That is the target we have set, and to achieve that target, we are developing all kinds of infrastructure that is required," Sarbananda Sonowal said.

The Union minister responded to a question asked by Biju Janata Dal MP Sasmit Patra about the plans and programmes that the ministry is considering to increase the capacity handling and operations of the Paradip Port.

# Startup policy soon for UG, PG students



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 13:** Higher Education Minister Rohit Pujari Tuesday said the department has decided to introduce a startup policy for Plus III and PG students to further strengthen the startup ecosystem of the state.

He revealed during a meeting organised at Lok Seba Bhawan here under his chairmanship.

Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) vice chairman Ashok Kumar Das, Startup Odisha executive chairman Omkar Rai, and vice chancellors of various state universities were present in the meeting. After the meeting, Das said that the state will soon introduce a startup policy for Plus III and post-graduate (PG) students. "The startup policy will work on how the students can develop their idea into a business company. The projects of Plus III and PG students will be showcased to companies by the Higher Education department," he added.

"Although our Centre of Excellence is doing well as per the World Bank, it is only limited up to a particular level," said Das emphasising

the need for a startup policy to include university students.

A thorough research will be conducted regarding how to fit the commercial and global databases which will be funded by the state government, an official said. It should be mentioned here that Startup Odisha is an initiative of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) department to promote ideas and innovations of budding entrepreneurs in the state.

Earlier, the Higher Education minister and principal secretary had a consultative discussion with the delegates from Australia to envisage the provision of international quality higher education in the state. The minister had a detailed discussion with Nottingham Trent University, UK for the internationalisation of higher education in state.

"Our focus is on skill development. The foreign universities are known for their skilling courses. We are initially planning to focus on skill and competency areas like machine learning, data science, data mining (big data management) and artificial intelligence which can be offered and pursued online," said an official of the department.

# Fat visible under skin protects females' brains: Study

The subcutaneous fat that appears under the skin in places such as hips, buttocks and back of the arms emerges as protective against brain inflammation in females, a new study has shown.

According to the study by the Medical College of Georgia, this brain inflammation in females could result in problems like dementia and stroke, at least until menopause.

However, males of any age are more likely to deposit fat around the major organs in their abdominal cavity, known as visceral adiposity.

As a result, males are considered to be at greater risk for inflammation-related problems, such as heart attacks and strokes before females reach menopause.

"When people think about pro-



tection in women, their first thought is estrogen," said Alexis M Stranahan, PhD, a neuroscientist at the Medical College of Georgia.

"But we need to get beyond the kind of simplistic idea that every sex difference involves hormone differences and hormone exposure," she added.

The researchers experimented on the male and female mice to look at the increase in the amount and location of fat tissue as well as

levels of sex hormones and brain inflammation, to learn more about how the brain becomes inflamed.

Since, much like with people, obese female mice tend to have more subcutaneous fat and less visceral fat than male mice.

After further experiments, the researchers found that the subcutaneous fat loss increased brain inflammation in females without moving the dial on levels of their estrogen and other sex hormones,

According to the study by the Medical College of Georgia, this brain inflammation in females could result in problems like dementia and stroke, at least until menopause

As a result, males are considered to be at greater risk for inflammation-related problems, such as heart attacks and strokes before females reach menopause

the study revealed.

"When we took subcutaneous fat out of the equation, all of a sudden the females' brains start to exhibit inflammation the way that male brains do, and the females gained more visceral fat," said Stranahan. She also added that "the females who did not have subcutaneous fat removed but did eat a high-fat diet, showed brain inflammation levels similar to the males".

When subcutaneous fat was removed from mice on a low-fat diet at an early age, they developed a lit-

tle more visceral fat and a little more inflammation in the fat.

However, Stranahan and her colleagues found no evidence of inflammation in the brain.

Stranahan notes that some consider the reason that females have higher stores of subcutaneous fat to enable sufficient energy stores for reproduction.

"But many questions remain like how much fat is needed to maintain fertility versus the level that will affect your metabolism," she added.



Continued from P1

Get ready to witness Geminid...

The time at which the Geminid radiant rises is in the table below for cities around Australia. That marks the start of the show, and is a good time to head out and start getting adapted to the darkness.

In the first hour after the radiant rises, Geminids will be few and far between, but those that do appear have the potential to be spectacular. Entering Earth's atmosphere at a very shallow angle, these "Earthgrazers" can appear to travel from horizon to horizon, an amazing sight.

As the hours pass, the show would normally get better and better, with the best rates visible in the early hours. This year, however, the waning gibbous Moon will rise roughly a couple of hours after the Geminid radiant. The moonlight will add glare to the night sky, hiding the fainter Geminids. Despite this, the show will continue to be spectacular - just a bit less so than in a normal year!

This year the best time to observe might just be the hour or so before moonrise (and a little while after, when the Moon is still low in the sky). That's a good time to lie back, relax, and gaze up at Mars - brilliant, red and brighter than the brightest stars in the night sky. This year, Mars will be a perfect guide to view the Geminids.

If you can relax and find Mars,

and keep it roughly in the centre of your vision, you'll be well placed to see plenty of Geminids. While the meteors can appear anywhere in the sky (always pointing back to the radiant), we've found that looking about 45 degrees from the radiant and about 45 degrees above the horizon seems to be the sweet spot to get the best display.

Find somewhere comfortable to relax, and enjoy the show. Remember, though, that meteors are a bit like buses. While you might hope to see 20 or 30 in the hour before moonrise (more, if you're lucky!), don't expect them to fall as regularly as clockwork. You'll wait ten minutes, then three will come along at once! What if it's cloudy? You might have better luck next year!

The Geminids are an annual spectacle - something wonderful to set your calendar by. If you miss the peak this year, all is not lost. The nights either side of the maximum (December 13 and 15) will still put on a decent show, albeit not as good as the maximum. If all three are lost to cloud, then let's look forward to next year's show. There's good news there - in 2023, the Moon will be new, and won't interfere at all.

In the meantime - fingers crossed for clear skies! Hopefully we'll all get a good chance to see the best meteor shower of 2022. And if not, well, there's always next year.



ANTI-ENCROACHMENT DRIVE: An excavator engaged by BDA razing down illegal shops located along the Big Bazaar-Unnati Bhawan Road in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Politics hots up over HC bench issue

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: With the agitation of lawyers of western Odisha over establishment of permanent bench of Orissa High Court turns violent, political atmosphere over the issue hots up in the state.

Supporting the demand of Sambalpur lawyers, Leader of Opposition Jayanarayan Mishra said there is a need for establishment of a bench of the HC in Sambalpur.

"Union Law Minister has already clarified in the Parliament that the state government has not yet submitted a concrete proposal for establishment of HC bench in western Odisha," Mishra said.

The Odisha government is fully responsible for the delay in establishment of HC bench in western Odisha, he alleged. The people of western Odisha will take law into their hands and intensify their protest, Mishra warned.

Similarly, Congress Legislature



The issue can be resolved through mutual discussion. The lawyers first have to obey the orders of the SC

DEBI PRASAD MISHRA | BJD MLA

Party leader Narasingha Mishra said the state government is sitting idle in this issue and misleading the people. No one is interested in resolving the issue, that's why people forcefully hit the street, he said.

The Congress leader also demanded that the bench should be established in Bolangir.

Another Congress lawmaker Suresh Routray said the state government, Centre, SC and HC should sit together immediately for establishment of HC benches in western Odisha and Bhubaneswar.

"People are facing a lot of problems visiting the HC in Cuttack. The officials in Bhubaneswar are also

slammed the Odisha police and lawyers for the violence in the courtroom during the protests. The court has asked the Odisha DGP and IG of Northern Range for personal appearance through VC on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, keeping in view the order of the Supreme Court, the Central Action Committee of all bar associations of western Odisha has decided to call off their ongoing protest over the demand for establishment of Orissa HC bench in their area.

Expressing the hope that the demand for establishment of a permanent bench of the Orissa High Court in Sambalpur will be fulfilled, they said the lawyers have reposed faith in the Centre, state government and the High Court.

The lawyers' decision came after a crackdown by police which saw the arrest of at least 16 advocated for alleged vandalism of the chamber of a district judge during protest Monday.

Notably the Supreme Court has

spending a lot of time visiting the court every day. So, one bench should be established in Bhubaneswar," Routray said.

However, senior BJD lawmaker Debi Prasad Mishra said blame-game over the issue should be stopped. The issue can be resolved through mutual discussion. The lawyers first have to obey the orders of the SC, he said.

Another BJD leader Susanta Singh said, "First the people from western Odisha should decide one place for establishment of the HC bench. Then only the issue can be resolved."

Notably the Supreme Court has

Unicef-PANTISS organise meet for WASH entrepreneurs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: Unicef and PANTISS jointly organized an investors' meet and convocation ceremony for WASH entrepreneurs in Bhubaneswar. In the programme, 20 youth entrepreneurs were awarded certificates of merits under the Odisha WASHpreneur fellowship programme 2022. The objective of the programme is to attract more and more investors to get their support for the youth WASHpreneurs to make their dream into reality.

Speaking on the occasion Supra Saxena, Officer-In-Charge and WASH specialist, Unicef Odisha said, "The WASHpreneurs are going to start a new social revolution through their vibrant enterprises. Their social enterprises are going to create a significant impact on water, sanitation, hygiene and climate change."



"WASH Entrepreneur fellowship is one-of-its-kind in the country with the objective to create more and more youth entrepreneurs who will work on the theme revolving around WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene). It will attract more and more youth to become an entrepreneur", said Stalin Nayak, CEO, PANTISS.

20 winners of YATS felicitated

Bhubaneswar: The grand finale of the 16th edition of Tata Steel Young Astronomer Talent Search (YATS) was organised Tuesday at Pathani Samanta Planetarium here. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, addressed the students with a video message and congratulated the top 20 winners of the contest. The event was organised in association with Pathani Samanta Planetarium. More than 77, 500 students from 300 schools across 30 districts of Odisha participated in the annual flagship event of Tata Steel in the state. The theme for this edition was "Time to unravel the universe". The winners will get the opportunity to visit one of the premier facilities of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

China tried to change status quo in...

Singh's comments came a day after the Indian Army issued a statement on the incident. "I wish to share with this House that there are no fatalities or serious casualties on our side," the defence minister added.

Singh said as a follow-up of the incident, the local commander of the Indian Army in the area held a flag meeting with his counterpart on December 11 to discuss the issue in accordance with established mechanisms. "The Chinese side was asked to refrain from such actions and maintain peace and tranquility along the border. The issue has also been taken up with the Chinese side through diplomatic channels," Singh said.

The defence minister assured the Parliament that Indian forces are committed to protecting the country's territorial integrity and will continue to thwart any attempt made on it.

"I am confident that this entire House will stand united in supporting our soldiers in their brave effort," he said. Ahead of his statement in Parliament, the defence minister held a meeting with Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan, Army Chief Manoj Pande and some other senior officials. Sources said the Chinese troops were armed with spiked clubs and bamboo sticks and that the soldiers from both sides sustained injuries in the hand-to-hand combat.

In a related development, the top brass of the Army and the IAF separately reviewed their overall operational preparedness along the nearly 3,500 km LAC in view of

the incident, which is the first such flare-up in more than a year.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin, without specifically commenting on the December 9 incident, said the situation along the border was "generally stable" and two sides have maintained smooth communication on border-related issues.

However, hours after the Chinese foreign ministry briefing on the Sino-India border situation, senior Colonel Long Shaohua, spokesman of the Western Theatre Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), claimed that the December 9 clash took place when its troops on regular patrol on the Chinese side of the LAC were blocked by Indian soldiers.

Meanwhile, Congress said Defence Minister Singh's statement on the clash in Tawang was "incomplete" and accused the government of hiding the truth from the nation. Congress spokesperson and deputy leader of the party in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi and party leader Pawan Khera also accused the government of diplomatic failure with China, claiming that India has lost its pre-eminent position in Southeast Asia.

Both the leaders demanded that the government should agree to a detailed discussion on the border situation and ties with China, alleging that Prime Minister Modi's remarks made in June 2020 that "no one has entered Indian territory nor has anyone occupied its territory" has emboldened China to indulge in such misadventures.

HC Chief Justice unveils judicial infra projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Dec 13: Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar, along with Justice BR Sarangi and Justice V Narasingh recently visited different places of Nayagarh district where he participated in the inauguration of the Court Complex at Bhapur and laid foundation stones for several judicial infrastructure projects.

The Chief Justice and the other judges inaugurated the Court Complex at Bhapur in the morning, after which they went to Gania to attend the foundation stone laying ceremony for another court complex there. In the afternoon, the judges went to Dasapalla where they participated in foundation stone laying ceremony for construction of Bar Association, Canteen and Transit House. Likewise, in the



evening they inaugurated 44 E-Type quarters at Nayagarh and

laid the foundation stone for construction of Bar Association-cum-Amenity Centre Building, transit house, district record room, store house building and 32 F-Type quarters in Nayagarh.

Registrar General Pratap Kumar Patra and Registrar Vigilance of High Court Akhila Kumar Paschimakabata monitored the entire one-day programme. District and Sessions

Judge Rupashree Chowdhury, Collector Rabindra Nath Sahoo, SP Alekh Chandra Pahl along with judges of the district court and members of the bar associations of Nayagarh, Dasapalla, Gania and Bhapur assisted in the smooth conduct of the programme. The people of Nayagarh expressed their gratitude that all of these projects will make it easier for them to access justice.

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AFFIDAVIT

Under an affidavit before Notary Public, Bhubaneswar, I, Mrs. Sabita Kanhar, aged about 53 years, D/o. Sri Khageswar Kanhar of Mouza- Chatijar, Tahasil-Tikabali, Dist-Kandhamal, Odisha. My marriage with Mr. Debendra Digal, aged about 58 years, resident of At- Salapagaon, PS- Tikabali, Dist-Kandhamal, Odisha, Pin Code- 762010. Then my name changed to Sabita Digal, in my Aadhaar Card bearing No. xxx3746, my name has been recorded as Sabita Digal according to my husband's surname. Henceforth, I declared that Sabita Digal & Sabita Kanhar is the same person, that is myself for all purposes.

FIVB-KISS ink MoU to promote volleyball



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 13: The International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) signed an MoU with the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) for the growth and development of youth volleyball in India and South, Asia Tuesday.

The MoU was signed between FIVB President Ary S Graça F and KISS Founder, Achyuta Samanta at the FIVB Headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland. This is the first time that FIVB has forged ties with an educational institute to promote the game.

"The FIVB is delighted to join

The MoU will see KISS develop into a knowledge hub for volleyball training and other educational opportunities related to the sport

forces with KISS to further promote volleyball and beach volleyball in India and South Asia. Our sport brings different communities together through shared values and I look forward to seeing the positive impact of our programmes for children in the region," said

the FIVB president in his comments.

Samanta, on the other hand, expressed his gratitude to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for the promotion of sports in the state. "We are promoting various sport activities as we are inspired by our Chief Minister who is passionate about sports. At KISS, we are happy to work with the FIVB and bring volleyball and beach volleyball to our campus with 30,000 residential students and 10,000 studying in satellite campuses. We will popularize the sport more and more among the girl students" he said.

The MoU will see KISS develop into a knowledge hub for volleyball training and other educational opportunities related to the sport. KISS will also act as a training hub for youth volleyball national teams while providing training and general education programmes for those athletes. Over 20 volleyball courts will be developed on the KISS campus with the FIVB supporting KISS with materials and equipment. Academic scholarships and free tuition will also be available to former volleyball athletes.



FOR A BETTER VISION: People going through eye check-up at a camp organised by Odisha Mo Parivar at Town Hall in Cuttack, Tuesday

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Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



Illegal activities flourish along Kendrapara coastline

NO RESPONSE FROM CENTRE ON ODISHA GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST FOR FORMATION OF CIRB

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Dec 13: Five years have elapsed since the Odisha government wrote to the Home Ministry seeking permission to raise a special police battalion that will enhance security along the state's 480km-long coastline.



of Kendrapara district. However, the numbers have grown astoundingly since then with 76,000 Bengali-speaking people now living in the region.

Locals in this town, including Radhakanta Mohanty said that out of the 480km-long coastline, 48 kilometres pass through Kendrapara district.

These settlers are creating huge problems for the Bhitarkanika National Park which is home to saltwater crocodiles, various species of wildlife, reptiles, birds and mangrove plantations.

Senior resident of this town, Amarbar Biswal informed that police unearthed a fake radio station at Banipal inside the Bhitarkanika forest in 2001.

veloped missiles. In 2002, miscreants involved in illegal fishing shot dead a guard after Rajnagar forest officials tried to seize the trawler.

In another incident, coastguard personnel were involved in a shootout with some fishermen who were illegally catching fish in the prohibited zone of Gahirmatha marine sanctuary in 2019.

Social activist Prapat Chandra Padhi informed that several boats from Bangladesh have been seized during raids by Forest department in the last three years.

When contacted, SDPO Jayant Mohapatra said that the establishment of CIRB is the need of the hour. He added that intrusion to some extent has been checked after the setting up of the marine police stations.

2 killed, 2 injured in road accident

Malkangiri: Two persons were killed and two others suffered serious injuries Tuesday after a paddy-laden truck met with a mishap near Kambeda panchayat office under Korukunda block in this district.

Niti Aayog CEO lauds tribal edu policy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, December 13: Parameswaran Iyer, CEO NITI Aayog, visited the PVTG-dominated Juang Village in Ghungi village of Banspal block, during his visit to Keonjhar district Tuesday.



The students, while interacting with Iyer, explained to him the utility of using smart blackboards. Others who accompanied Iyer were Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Anil Kumar Jha, DC-cum-ACS, Government of Odisha, Pradeep Kumar Jena and Director of NITI Aayog Amit Burma.

Transformation programme by the Odisha government. Later they visited farms and oversaw the gardens developed by 'OPELIP Odisha' that have brought about change in the lives of the tribal community.

60-yr-old man gets 20 years in prison for raping minor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Dec 13: A local court here sentenced 60-year old Sunaram Singh, a native of Sagumashola village under Bangiriposhi police limits in Mayurbhanj district to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment after convicting him for raping a minor in 2018.

services authority (DLSA) to pay ₹4 lakh financial assistance to the victim, special public prosecutor Abhinna Kumar Patnaik said.

In case he fails to pay the amount, Singh has to undergo an additional seven months imprisonment, the judge said while announcing the verdict.

JHARSUGUDA SHOOTING

Four nabbed in Kolkata

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, Dec 13: Police arrested Tuesday four persons from Kolkata for their alleged involvement in a shootout in this town December 4.

Buremal locality in this town while brandishing guns with the intent to kill him. Later, the four abused another person identified as Chhotu in front of a restaurant and fired at him.



LEAPING FOR GLORY: A student of Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya at Belpada in Bolangir district participates in the high jump event at the annual sports meet of the school, which concluded Tuesday

Doctor held for 'molesting' minor girl

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Dec 13: Tension prevailed on the premises of Pandit Raghunath Murmu Government Medical College and Hospital (PRMMCH) here in Mayurbhanj district, Monday night after a minor tribal girl accused a doctor of molesting her during treatment.

Police arrested Tuesday the accused, Dr Sourav Upadhaya, a paediatrician, after the girl's mother lodged a complaint with the Town police station here, late Monday night.

The girl's mother alleged the doctor was drunk during duty hours and molested her daughter during check up. A case was registered in this connection and further investigations are on, said investigating officer and Sadar SDPO Prakash James Toppo.

investigations are on, said investigating officer and Sadar SDPO Prakash James Toppo. The statements of the victim and her mother have been recorded, he added.

Sources said, the 12-year-old girl, a native of Badasahi police limits is a student of Ashram School here. She was taken to PRMMCH after she complained of chest and stomach pains Monday night.

Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited advertisement for an E-auction sale of immovable assets.

State Bank of India Kuchinda Branch advertisement regarding possession of property.

Bank of Baroda Regional Office (Sambalpur Region) advertisement regarding possession of immovable properties.

Sundaram Home advertisement regarding possession notice.

Government of Odisha advertisement regarding e-procurement.



FOCUS KASHMIRI PANDITS

# BEYOND THE KASHMIR FILES



The Modi government is in power at the Centre for past eight years. Instead of using persecution of Kashmiri Pandits by radical Islamists for winning elections, it would be better for the BJP to usher in real change in the Valley

31 civilians were also killed in 123 terrorist incidents this year so far. He said various steps such as group security in form of static guards, day and night area domination, round-the-clock nakas at strategic points among others, have been taken to protect lives of minorities. Plus, under PM's Development Package, 2015, "3,000 government jobs for Kashmiri migrants have been created of which, 2,639 have been appointed in the last five years."

Though the abrogation of Article 370 has completed the integration of J&K into India, this hasn't gone well with neighbour Pakistan. Out of frustration, Pakistan-backed Islamic terrorists have now chosen to target the Hindus again in the Valley to scuttle the Centre's plan to usher in normalcy. More so, as the Centre has been making plans for the return of the Pandits and their rehabilitation. The numbers are small, and the security plan does not evoke confidence, even three years after scrapping of Article 370. In fact, even those recruited by the government have been protesting to relocate them to Jammu instead.

The Centre's promises to provide a secure environ doesn't have too many takers. The recent leaked list of Kashmiri Pandits working in the Valley also suggests there are sympathisers within the system, aiding the terrorists. It was the case then and little has changed. Besides, there were claims of holding business summit in Kashmir and wooing business houses to set up industries. The ground reality suggests otherwise, barring that this summer tourists did go back to Kashmir.

The Modi government is in power at the Centre for past eight years. Instead of using persecution of Kashmiri Pandits by radical Islamists for winning elections, it would be better for the BJP to usher in real change in the Valley. The party should move beyond the film and make genuine endeavour to deliver its promises of the return of Pandits to the Valley. When in Opposition it demanded their safety and promised to do so if voted to power. It must deliver now. The Pandits await justice. Don't exploit their pain. Keep them out of vote bank politics.

The writer is a political commentator. @INFA

The recent controversial statement made by the Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid on Vivek Agnihotri's directorial film, The Kashmir Files, at the closing ceremony of the 53rd International Film Festival of India in Goa has once again brought the issue of Kashmiri Pandits into the limelight. The film was one of the highest grossers this year and was based on the persecution of the minority Hindu Kashmiri Pandits by the radical Islamists in the Kashmir valley. Irrespective of whether the film is "propaganda" or not, the main talking point should be about the plight of the Pandits, who were forced to leave their homeland and in fact became refugees in their own country.

To be very fair, let's not beat around the bush by denying the bitter fact that Kashmiri Pandits were targeted and continue to be targeted by the Islamic terrorist groups because of their Hindu identity. The main agenda of these groups, backed by Pakistan, has always been to make the Valley completely Islamic. It is only the Leftists and liberals who have chosen to ignore this basic issue, often viewing it through the lens of it being one of the Indian government versus the terrorists and even sought to portray the persecution of Kashmir Pandits as mostly "a migration issue."

Unfortunately, even in the mainstream media, the Pandits' persecution in the Valley was largely ignored. This may be a probable reason that a low budget film like The Kashmir Files, hit the box office as it dramatises the persecution of the Hindu Kashmiri Pandits in a Muslim-majority region. More so, as the film also aids the Hindutva agenda of the BJP, and portrays the minority community as villains. It did come as a surprise that the film found a mention by none other than Prime Minister Modi.

That the government of India and Jammu and Kashmir administration failed to stop the persecution and exodus of the Pandits from the Valley is a bitter truth. When the Kashmiri Pandits started fleeing the Valley, the then Prime Minister was VP Singh heading the National Front government, surviving on outside support of both the BJP and Left Front. While talking about the exodus of Pandits,

the Left-liberals do rightly point out that at that time Singh's government was supported by the BJP but they remain silent on the fact that the same government was also supported by the Left Front.

However, the situation in the Valley started to turn worse much before 1989. In the 1986 communal riots, not so common before then, the minority Hindus and their temples were targeted in the Valley, particularly in the southern areas such as Anantnag. The Congress was in power at the Centre then with Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister. So passing on the blame to VP Singh's government alone for the exodus would not be completely right.

Coming to the present regime, the Narendra Modi-led NDA government at the Centre revoked Article 370 three years ago in August 2019, thus removing the special status that Jammu and Kashmir enjoyed. Not only did the BJP eventually act on its poll manifesto of removing the contentious article, but Home Minister Amit Shah justified it saying the move would drastically improve the situation in the Valley and peace would finally return after three decades of insurgency.

True, there have been some positive changes, such as stone pelt-

ing incidents on the Indian armed forces have become incidents of the past. With Governor's rule, guess the stone pelters haven't got the political support they did earlier. Or rather that with senior leaders of parties in the Valley having been put under house arrest for months, has led to a chilling effect on the populace.

Terrorist incidents have gone down. Still, the bitter reality is that the minority Kashmiri Pandits who chose to stay back in the Valley continue to live under nagging fear. Recently, a blog linked to The Resistance Front (TRF), an offshoot of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) published a list of 56 Kashmiri Pandit employees working under the PM's rehabilitation package, to unsettle them. Indeed, terrorists are again targeting the Hindus in the Valley - minority Kashmiri Pandits and the migrant workers - in a very well-planned manner to puncture the Centre's claim that "peace has returned to the Valley."

According to data provided by Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai to Parliament, 14 persons belonging to minority communities, including three Kashmiri Pandits, have been killed in J&K this year so far. In all, 180 terrorists, 31 security personnel and



Sagarneel Sinha

THE PANDITS AWAIT JUSTICE. DON'T EXPLOIT THEIR PAIN. KEEP THEM OUT OF VOTE BANK POLITICS



Willem H. Buiter

Russia's war in Ukraine will end sooner or later, and most likely without a nuclear escalation

Love is the keynote, Joy is the music, Knowledge is the performer, the Infinite All is the composer and audience.

SRI AUROBINDO



## Too Much Gloom?

Nouriel Roubini thinks the global economy is "lurching toward an unprecedented confluence of economic, financial, and debt crises, following the explosion of deficits, borrowing, and leverage in recent decades." Is he right?

At the risk of sounding Panglossian, I do not regard such a disaster scenario as inevitable, or even as the most likely outcome. Turkey and a few other countries afflicted with severe macroeconomic and regulatory mismanagement will almost certainly suffer the fate Roubini describes, but most economies can still avoid a financial disaster and a deep recession.

Yes, private and public debt as a share of GDP is near a peacetime high. At 334% as of the third quarter of 2022, this ratio is down from its 2021 first-quarter peak (363%), but way up from its 1991 first-quarter level (227%). Moreover, the slight reduction since early 2021 is due primarily to (unanticipated) inflation, not real GDP growth. The inflationary surge following the COVID-19 pandemic eroded the real value of nominally denominated fixed-rate debt - a reminder that unanticipated inflation is always the debtors' best friend.

Nonetheless, the risk-free real interest rate across most advanced economies is close to an 800-year low, and the consensus estimate of the risk-free neutral real interest rate is 0.5%. That is comfortably below the current underlying real GDP growth rate for most countries and the world as a whole. If the effective interest rate on the debt is persistently below the GDP growth rate, Ponzi finance remains feasible and worries about debt sustainability are moot.

The question is whether and how long these conditions will last. After all, the empirical drivers of global real interest rates - never mind the unobservable neutral real rate - are poorly understood. In a recent study of long-maturity real interest rates over the past 700 years, Kenneth Rogoff, Barbara Rossi, and Paul Schmelzing conclude that neither demographics (old cohorts saving less and driving up real rates) nor productivity (higher gains boosting real rates) are the causal drivers of global real rates.

Likewise, former US Secretary of the Treasury Lawrence H. Summers' famous "secular stagnation" hypothesis never made much sense as an explanation for low global real interest rates since the early 1980s. There has been no global stagnation over the past 40 years. Moreover, it remains to be seen how investment demand will be affected by technological advances in artificial intelligence, machine learning, automation, robotics, biotechnology, fintech, and decentralised finance. The best we can do is to welcome the low neutral real rate without pretending to understand it.

Looking ahead, the component of inflation that is due to aggregate supply shocks (rather than to monetary and fiscal stimulus) is likely to be transitory. There also is not yet any evidence to suggest that medium- and long-term inflation expectations are becoming unanchored from the target rate of inflation. Russia's war in Ukraine will end sooner or later, and most likely without a nuclear escalation. Whenever that happens, the subsequent easing of Western sanctions will produce a disinflationary shock.

Moreover, China is rapidly phasing out its zero-COVID policy. Though this is already resulting in a wave of infections - a problem made worse by the government's refusal to use the more effective Western vaccines - the net effect on Chinese economic activity and key global supply chains is likely to be positive. In the United States, continued moderate monetary-policy tightening will slow the economy, but the likely effect will be a growth recession, rather than outright contraction. Similarly, although Europe has been hit harder than the US by the fallout from Russia's war, the European Central Bank's response to higher inflation has been even less aggressive than the US Federal Reserve's, again leaving a growth recession as the most likely scenario. The big loser among advanced economies is the United Kingdom - an economic mess whose external problems have been exacerbated by self-inflicted wounds such as Brexit, various regulatory failures, and an absurd demonstration of fiscal irresponsibility by Liz Truss's short-lived government.

As for Roubini's warning about the likelihood of a financial crisis, it bears mentioning that banking-sector balance sheets in most advanced economies are in better shape than they were at the time of the 2007-09 global financial crisis, and that supervision over much of the non-bank financial sector is much improved. While regulation has failed miserably in the crypto world, that industry's inevitable meltdown has been largely self-contained.

Across the advanced economies and China, monetary authorities are ready and able to monetise future deficit-financed fiscal stimulus should a recession become imminent. From February 2020 onward, central banks dealt effectively with what could have become a first-order financial crisis, by acting as lenders of last resort (including through liquidity swap lines) and market makers of last resort. That outstanding performance makes me confident of their readiness for the next potential crisis. Helicopter money - monetary financing - will work again.

Moreover, even fiscally challenged governments that don't have access to monetary financing or external support are not completely without options. The balanced budget multiplier (higher public spending or a selective tax cut increases national income if paid for with appropriately selected higher taxation) can come to the rescue. For example, because low-income households tend to spend a greater share of their incremental income than high-income households do, a tax cut benefiting the poor, and paid for with a tax increase on the rich, should boost total spending on goods and services. So, too, would an increase in public spending on real goods and services (such as a boost to green infrastructure investment - assuming sufficient shovel-ready projects are available), financed with a tax increase on the well-off. Resource utilisation, broader socioeconomic efficiency, and distributive fairness would all point in the same direction.

Almost everything is possible; but not everything is likely. I, for one, do not anticipate a Roubini-size global financial and macroeconomic disaster in the foreseeable future.

The writer is a former chief economist at Citibank. @PROJECTSYNDICATE

## WISDOM CORNER

- The fragrance of flowers spreads only in the direction of the wind. But the goodness of a person spreads in all directions. CHANAKYA
- To know, is to know that you know nothing. That is the meaning of true knowledge. SOCRATES
- Life has no meaning the moment you lose the illusion of being eternal. JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

## LOL

### OLDEST PROFESSION

A physician, an engineer, and an attorney were discussing who among them belonged to the oldest of the three professions represented. The physician said, "Remember, on the sixth day God took a rib from Adam and fashioned Eve, making him the first surgeon. Therefore, medicine is the oldest profession."

The engineer replied, "But, before that, God created the heavens and earth from chaos and confusion, and thus he was the first engineer. Therefore, engineering is an older profession than medicine." Then, the lawyer spoke up. "Yes," he said, "But who do you think created all of the chaos and confusion?"

## IN JEST THIS

# Don't take your freedoms for granted



Melvin Durai

IT'S NOT JUST SPOUSES WHO GREATLY INFLUENCE WHAT YOU EAT. YOU ALSO HAVE TO ABIDE BY THE EATING RULES AND CUSTOMS OF YOUR SOCIETY

History is full of heroes who fought for our freedom. Because of them, I enjoy many freedoms, such as the freedom to say whatever I want, freedom to wear whatever I want, and freedom to eat whatever I want.

Actually, I do NOT always enjoy these freedoms, largely because I am a married man. If you are married, you can't always eat whatever you want - sometimes you have to eat what your spouse has cooked. If your spouse has spent two hours preparing dinner, you'd better eat it, unless you can come up with a good excuse.

Husband: "Sorry, honey, but it's against my religion."

Wife: "It's against your religion to eat Bahamian vegetable stew?"

Husband: "Yes, I try to avoid anything that has the word 'ham' in it."

Wife: "But you use shampoo."

Husband: "I put it on my hair; I don't eat it."

Wife: "So you wouldn't mind if I took the Bahamian vegetable stew that I have spent the last two

hours cooking and dumped it on your hair?"

Husband: "I'd prefer to eat it, thank you. But let's call it Caribbean vegetable stew."

It's not just spouses who greatly influence what you eat. You also have to abide by the eating rules and customs of your society. Most societies, for example, frown upon the consumption of your fellow species. You must not eat your own kind, lest your own kind eat you. That's why legendary heavyweight boxer Mike Tyson bit off part of Evander Holyfield's ear; but did not chew. He knew where to draw the line. He knew that society would forgive him for being animalistic, but not cannibalistic.

Eating rules and customs vary considerably around the world. What's considered a delicacy in one country may be strictly forbidden in another. You may not have the freedom to eat pork in Pakistan, but you can feast on almost anything else. You have choices. Choices are good. The same isn't true for other

freedoms. Indonesia, for example, just passed a law forbidding anyone from insulting the president. This "crime" carries a maximum sentence of three years in prison. It would have been better, I believe, for lawmakers in Indonesia to give people choices: "It is against the law to call the president a pig. You may, however, call the president a donkey."

Among the many freedoms I enjoy, freedom of speech is the one I value the most. So let me take the opportunity to say this: "President Joko Widodo of Indonesia, you are such a joke. I'd call you a jackass, but I don't want to insult jackasses, even if there's no law against insulting them. Please stop taking away people's freedoms. If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen. Nobody likes what you're cooking anyway."

One of the freedoms that Indonesia has taken away is the freedom to sleep with another consenting adult outside marriage. If you're committing adultery or hav-

ing premarital sex, you might get a one-year prison sentence. Cohabitation - living together without being married - may get you six months in the slammer. On the bright side, you may get your very own cell, especially if you complain loudly about cohabitation with another prisoner.

These laws apply to not just Indonesian citizens, but also foreign tourists. So if you're heading to Bali for a holiday with your boyfriend or girlfriend, you'd better book separate rooms or pretend you're siblings.

Hotel manager: "You are sharing a room?"

Guest: "Yes, we're brother and sister."

Manager: "But you have different surnames."

Guest (handing over \$100): "Brother and half-sister. We have different fathers, but the same mother."

Manager: "Oh yes, I understand. And if you see me around with a young lady, she is my niece. She is spending the holidays with me."

## Act against defaulters

Sir, That banks, in the last four years, have written off a whopping ₹8.5 lakh crore is a matter of grave concern. SBI wrote off ₹1.65 lakh crore, followed by PNB around ₹60,000 crore, ICICI Bank ₹42,164 crore and HDFC Bank ₹31,516 crore. This indicates that both public and private sector banks are on the same platform as regards NPA write-offs. Removing such a huge amount from the balance sheet of the banks does not augur well for a nation that aspires to become a \$5 trillion economy. It has a disastrous effect on the financial sector. Of course it helps banks clean up their balance sheet, avail of tax benefit and optimise capital, but what if the written off amount is not recovered in full, either by cash or sale of movable and immovable properties? How can the money rotate unless the amount is recovered and put to use? Also protracted court cases hamper the recovery process. All these put a huge roadblock in the way of a strong financial system and a robust economy. It gives birth to Nirav Modis and Vijay Mallyas. Time is ripe to act sternly against the errant and wilful defaulters.

Pratap Nayak, BHUBANESWAR

## LAC face-off

Sir, This is not the first time that the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh has seen a face-off between the Indian and Chinese troops. Since the boundary is undefined, Indian and Chinese troops often face off while patrolling the area. In October 2021, a similar incident had taken place when some Chinese soldiers of a large patrol team were detained for a few hours by the Indian Army as they engaged in a minor face-off near Yangtse. In the last few years, the Army has significantly upgraded firepower and infrastructure along the LAC in the Tawang sector and a similar effort is under way in the rest of Arunachal Pradesh (RALP). This includes road infrastructure, bridges, tunnels, habitat and other storage facilities, aviation facilities and upgradation of communications and surveillance, especially in the Upper Dibang Valley region. After Galwan and Yangtse, it is now Tawang. A few soldiers sustained injuries during the skirmish and are said to be recuperating at a hospital in Guwahati. It was a resounding reply to the back-stabbing Chinese forces. A year after Galwan clash, China is beefing up positions along the LAC.

CK Subramaniam, NAVI MUMBAI

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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## of the day quote

Creating 'a unique family ID' for J&K residents is emblematic of the widening trust deficit esp post 2019. Kashmiris are viewed with deep suspicion & this is another surveillance tactic to tighten the iron grip on their lives

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

There is no political fight in Rajasthan and only some differences. Both (Gehlot and Sachin) have different experiences and capacities

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

Lot of our Gujarat politics was based on what happened before the last election...Patidar movement and so on...We considerably shifted our base to try and capture something that we haven't had in the past but unfortunately it wasn't sustainable, it didn't stay put and they drifted again from us. In a sense, our medium term and long term planning was a little bit in disarray because of that. We tried to put together an alternative style, alternative method, but sadly it didn't work

SALMAN KHURSHID | CONGRESS LEADER

## SHORT TAKES

### Terrorist associate held in Pulwama

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir police along with Army and CRPF at a joint checkpoint established at Bandzoo crossing in South Kashmir's Pulwama district arrested one active terrorist associate linked with proscribed terror outfit Al-Badr, officials said Tuesday. Police said that incriminating materials, arms and ammunition including a pistol were recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Yawar Bashir Dar, resident of Arigam, Pulwama.

### Kundra granted anticipatory bail

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday granted anticipatory bail to actors Sherlyn Chopra and Poonam Pandey, and businessman Raj Kundra and others, in connection with a case against them for allegedly distributing pornographic videos. A bench comprising Justices K.M. Joseph and B.V. Nagarathna said, "Having heard the counsel for the parties, we are of the view that the petitioners may be granted anticipatory bail..." Senior advocate R. Basant, representing one of the petitioners, contended before the bench that a charge sheet has been filed in the case. Basant emphasized that the accused were cooperating with the police in the investigation.

### Pawar threatened

Mumbai: A man has been arrested from Bihar for repeatedly making threat calls at Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) president Sharad Pawar's Mumbai residence, police said Tuesday. N Soni (45) was arrested by a Mumbai police team in Patna and was being brought here, said an official of Gamdevi police station. Soni had been allegedly calling Pawar's bungalow, 'Silver Oak', for the last three-four months.

### Karnataka on alert

Bangalore: The Health department is on high alert following the confirmation of the first Zika virus case in the state. The virus has been confirmed in a five-year-old girl from Raichur district in north Karnataka. Taking cognisance of it, the state government has directed the health department to initiate all precautionary measures from Tuesday to contain the disease.



The reports coming from Arunachal Pradesh are worrying and alarming. A major clash took place between Indian and Chinese soldiers and the government has kept the country in the dark for days. Why was the Parliament not informed, when it is in session?

ASADUDDIN OWAISI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

## 3,744 SEATS REMAINED VACANT IN 2021-22: GOVT

Of 60,202 postgraduate (PG) medical seats available for 2021-2022, 3,744 remained vacant after counselling, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya informed the Rajya Sabha Tuesday



# BILKIS BANO CASE SC judge opts out of hearing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: Supreme Court judge Bela M Trivedi Tuesday refused herself from hearing a plea filed by Bilkis Bano, who was gangraped and seven members of her family killed during the 2002 Gujarat riots, challenging the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the case by the state government.

As soon as a bench of justices Ajay Rastogi and Bela M Trivedi sat for the day, Justice Rastogi announced his sister judge will not like to hear the case. "List the matter before a bench in which one of us is not a member," the bench headed by Justice Rastogi ordered without specifying any reason for the refusal of Justice Trivedi.

Advocate Shobha Gupta, appearing for Bilkis Bano, said her only predicament is that winter vacation of the court is approaching and she wants the matter to be heard at an earlier date. The top court said that a new bench will be constituted and the matter will be taken up thereafter.

Gupta told the bench that when the matter is taken up, she would like to press her application seeking a stay of the remission order. Bilkis Bano has also filed a separate plea seeking a review of the apex court's May 13, 2022 order on a petition by a convict in which it had asked the Gujarat government to consider premature release of the convicts in terms of its policy of July 9, 1992 about deciding a remission petition within a period of two months.

The review plea was also listed



AS SOON AS A BENCH OF JUSTICES AJAY RASTOGI AND BELA M TRIVEDI SAT FOR THE DAY, JUSTICE RASTOGI ANNOUNCED HIS SISTER JUDGE WILL NOT LIKE TO HEAR THE CASE

THE TOP COURT SAID THAT A NEW BENCH WILL BE CONSTITUTED AND THE MATTER WILL BE TAKEN UP THEREAFTER

for consideration before a bench of Justices Rastogi and Vikram Nath at 1.30 pm in chambers. The order on the review plea is yet to be uploaded. In her writ petition against the grant of remission, which had led to the release of the convicts on August 15, Bilkis Bano has said the state government passed a mechanical order completely ignoring the requirement of law as laid down by the Supreme Court.

"The enmasse premature release of the convicts in the much talked about case of Bilkis Bano, has shaken the conscience of the society and resulted in a number of agitations across the country," she said in the plea.

Referring to the past verdicts of the top court, the petition said enmasse remissions are not permissible and, moreover, such a relief cannot be sought or granted as a

matter of right without examining the case of each convict individually based on their peculiar facts and the role played by them in the crime.

"The present writ petition challenging the decision of the state/central government granting remission to all the 11 convicts and releasing them prematurely in one of the most gruesome crimes of extreme inhuman violence and brutality by a group of human beings upon another group of human beings, all helpless and innocent people - most of them were either women or minors, by chasing them for days together persuaded by hate towards a particular community," it said. The plea, which gave minute details of the crime, said Bilkis and her grown-up daughters were shell-shocked with this sudden development.

# Govt panel to consider 246 women officers for promotion: Centre to SC



The bench had asked the Additional Solicitor General and Balasubramanian, who appeared for the Centre and the armed forces, why they had not considered these women officers for promotion in October

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: The Centre Tuesday told the Supreme Court a special selection board has been convened from January 9 to consider around 246 women Army officers for promotion.

Senior advocate R Balasubramanian, appearing for the Centre, informed a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice P S Narasimha that the special selection board-III will consider the issue of promotion of these officers.

"We are seized of the matter. They are saying special selection board will be over by January 23. We will keep it after January 24," the bench noted and posted the matter for further hearing on January 30.

The apex court said the respondent shall file an updated report before it setting out the results of the special selection board. The top court was hearing a plea by 34 women Army officers who have alleged junior male officers are being considered over them for promotions to perform "combat and commanding roles" in the force.

While hearing the matter on December 9, the apex court had

asked the Army to put its "house in order", saying it feels the Army has not been "fair" to the women officers who have alleged delay in promotion after being granted permanent commission on the directions of the top court in 2020.

The bench had asked the Additional Solicitor General and Balasubramanian, who appeared for the Centre and the armed forces, why they had not considered these women officers for promotion in October.

The law officer had told the court the Army has sanctioned 150 seats for promotion of women officers. Senior advocate V Mohna, appearing for the women officers, had said since the apex court judgement granting permanent commission to the women officers, 1,200 junior male officers have been promoted.

Earlier, the top court had asked the Centre about what steps it intended to take with regard to the 34 women officers who alleged discrimination. The 34 women army officers who have filed the petition, include Col Priyamvada A Mardikar and Col Asha Kale, both granted permanent commission.

They have alleged they were discriminated against by a special selection board convened two months ago that reportedly considered male officers much junior to them for promotion. "Why are you holding a selection board for male officers and not women?" the apex court had asked.

The senior counsel for the Centre had said a special selection board will be convened for women officers against the 150 additional posts that were in the final stages of approval by the Union Finance Ministry.

# SC Collegium recommends 5 HC judges for elevation

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 13: The Supreme Court Collegium Tuesday recommended the names of five high court judges for the elevation to the apex court.

A statement uploaded on the apex court website said: "The Supreme Court Collegium in its meeting held on 13 December 2022 has resolved to recommend elevation of the following Chief Justices/Judges of the High Courts, as Judges in the Supreme Court: Justice Pankaj Mithal, Chief Justice, Rajasthan High Court (parent high court (PHC): Allahabad); Justice Sanjay Karol, Chief Justice, Patna High Court (PHC: Himachal Pradesh); Justice P.V. Sanjay Kumar, Chief Justice, Manipur High Court (PHC: Telangana); Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, Judge, Patna High Court; and Justice Manoj Misra, Judge, Allahabad High Court".

Justice Dipankar Datta was Monday sworn in as a judge of the Supreme Court. CJI Chandrachud administered the oath of office to Justice Datta on the apex court premises, in presence of all apex court judges, lawyers, and family members.

With this, the working strength of the apex court rose to 28 as against its sanctioned strength of 34.

# 24.3% of POCSO cases in Assam, Maha, WB were 'romantic' relationships: Analysis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: Of the 7,064 POCSO judgments between 2016 and 2020 from Assam, Maharashtra, and West Bengal, 1,715 cases (24.3 per cent) involved "romantic relationships", according to a new analysis.

Enfold Proactive Health Trust, with support from UNICEF India, analysed the 1,715 judgments by Special Courts in Assam, Maharashtra, and West Bengal that entailed an express reference to a romantic relationship between the victim and the accused.

In the majority of cases - 1,058 or 61.7 per cent - the Special Court expressly concluded that the relationship between the accused and the girl was consensual in nature

# Kerala Assembly passes Bill to remove Governor as Chancellor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 13: The Kerala Assembly proceedings Tuesday saw high drama as it passed the Bill to replace the Governor as the Chancellor of universities in the State and appoint eminent academicians in the top post, while the opposition UDF boycotted the House over non-acceptance of its suggestions regarding the bill.

"The University Laws (Amendment) Bill is passed," Speaker A N Shamseer said. The bill, which had undergone scrutiny by a Subject Committee of the House, was passed after hours long discussions during which the Congress-led UDF said it was not opposed to the removal of the Governor as Chancellor.

It said that it wanted retired Supreme Court judges or former Kerala High Court chief justices to be considered for appointment at the helm of universities. The opposition also said there need not be different chancellors for each of the universities and the selection panel should comprise the Chief Minister, Leader of Opposition (LoP) and the Kerala High Court Chief Justice.

The UDF said one Chancellor for all universities was sufficient as day-to-day activities would be handled by the respective Vice Chancellors. However, state Law Minister P Rajeeve said that a judge cannot be a part of the selection panel and the Speaker would be a better option.

He also said that the government has not decided how many chancellors there would be, but laws of each university regarding appointment of Chancellor need to be amended. "The number of chancellors can be decided later," he said.

Rajeeve's suggestion regarding the selection panel was accepted by the opposition subject to the condition that retired judges are appointed as Chancellor. The minister, however, said that retired judges cannot be the sole option for being appointed at the helm of universities.

# Shah attacks Congress after chaos in House



Between 2005 and 2007, the RGF had received ₹1.35 crore from the Chinese embassy. After following due diligence, the Home Ministry cancelled the FCRA registration of the RGF

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: No one can capture an inch of Indian land till the Narendra Modi government is in power, Home Minister Amit Shah said Tuesday and claimed the actual reason behind the Congress disrupting Lok Sabha proceedings was not the clash between Indian and Chinese soldiers but a question on the cancellation of FCRA registration of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF).

Shah said if the Question Hour, which was a washout following the opposition's protest, had continued, then he would have told the House that the RGF's Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) registration was cancelled as it got ₹1.35 crore from the Chinese embassy for research related to development of the Sino-India relationship while its registration is for social work.

In a swipe at the Congress, Shah said since the RGF might already have conducted the research, have it included the issue of the occupation of thousands of hectares of Indian land by China in 1962? "If research is conducted on this subject then what is the outcome of it," he told reporters.

Seeking to turn the tables on the Congress as the opposition party has been targeting the Modi gov-

ernment over its handling of the border dispute with China, the home minister claimed India lost its membership of the United Nations Security Council because of the personal relationship its leaders had with foreign leaders.

He asked whether the party also researched issues like Jawaharlal Nehru "sacrificing" India's seat in the United Nations Security Council, denial of visa by China to the then Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh Dorjee Khandu and issuing of staple visa to residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

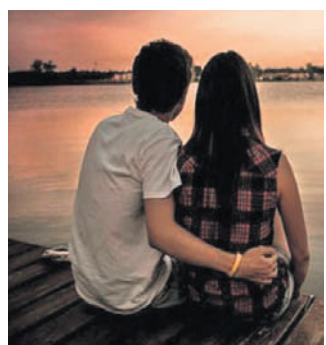
He also said the RGF headed by Congress leader Sonia Gandhi received ₹50 lakh from Zakir Naik, founder of the Islamic Research Foundation (IRF), which was banned by the government for its alleged involvement in terrorism.

On the border issue, the minister made it clear that the "BJP government will not allow any incursion on land. We will not leave an inch of land. The bravery shown by soldiers is appreciable, they have saved our land". Recalling that China had raised questions about then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Arunachal Pradesh on October 13, 2009, he asked if the party carried research on the issue.



Army jawans display their skills during 'Military Tatoon' event in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO



or that they were having a "love affair".

This included 131 cases (7.6 per cent) where the Special Court concluded that the relationship was romantic, but it was denied by the girl or she was silent about it, it said. Of the 7,064 judgments under

the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act registered between 2016 and 2020 and available on e-courts from Assam, Maharashtra, and West Bengal, 1,715 (24.3 per cent) were "romantic" cases, it said. Informants in "romantic" cases were predominantly the parents (70.8 per cent) and relatives (9.4 per cent) of the girls who together constituted 80.2 per cent of the informants. Girls were informants in 18.3 per cent cases.

The research was initiated in May 2021 and completed by April 2022.

The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the judgments was undertaken to gain an in-depth understanding of the manner in which "romantic" cases enter the criminal justice system, the profile

of informants and "victims", nature of charges applied in such cases, and the trends in testimony of the "victims" and its correlation with the outcomes.

The analysis also focuses on the diverse approaches taken by the Special Courts in such cases, particularly their views on "consent" by minors. In 314 cases (18.3 per cent), girls lodged the complaint in a "romantic case", for reasons such as the accused's refusal or breach of promise to marry the girl (155 cases), and forced sex or kidnapping in 154 cases.

Other factors included pressure from family or community to lodge a case (52 cases); sexual harassment, which included stalking by the accused (24 cases), and other forms of violence (14 cases).



# Will repeal PSA if NC wins: Omar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, Dec 13:** Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah Tuesday said the National Conference will repeal the controversial Public Safety Act (PSA) if it forms the government in the Union Territory after the Assembly elections. He also termed as unfortunate the face-off between the armies of India and China in Arunachal Pradesh and said the two countries should work together to improve their relations.

"They (Centre) have only kept those (old) laws here which can be used to harass people. There is no (Public) Safety Act anywhere in the country...It is only in Jammu and Kashmir. I have said it earlier and I repeat when the National Conference government comes, on the first day, this law will be repealed," Abdullah told party workers at Dooru in Anantnag district.

Chief Minister said his party will take every step to protect the identity and interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He accused the Centre of taking away the resources and jobs of local people by bringing outsiders in the Union territory.

"The mineral extraction contracts are given to outsiders...Even the postman who delivers letters will be brought in from other places. Our youth are not deemed fit for these jobs," Abdullah claimed. "I would have had no objection to these things but then they should take our youth and give them jobs in Haryana, Punjab, UP and other states. They should allow our contractors to do mining in Punjab. But they won't do it," he added.

Abdullah said a National Conference government will ensure that the land and the resources of Jammu and Kashmir are reserved for locals only.

On development, he lambasted the J&K administration alleging that it is not able to carry out even 10 per cent of the work that should have been done. "During our time, we might have been able to get only 70 per cent of the work done, but this administration has failed to get even 10 per cent done," he added. On China-India tensions, Abdullah said the two countries should work together to improve their relations.

**The PSA was first enacted by the then J&K government headed by National Conference founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in 1978 to curb timber smuggling**

**The law, which provides for detention of up to two years without trial, was later used against terrorists and separatists after the eruption of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir in 1990**



## J&K SHIVERS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Srinagar, Dec 13:** The minimum temperatures again dropped in Jammu and Kashmir due to clear night sky.

Weather was cold and dry in J&K during the last 24 hours as the Meteorological (MeT) office said Tuesday that similar conditions were likely to continue.

"Cold, dry weather with mainly clear sky is likely in J&K during the next 24 hours," the MeT department official said.

Srinagar had minus 2.2, Pahalgam minus 3 and Gulmarg minus 5.5 degrees Celsius as the minimum temperature.

In the Ladakh region, Kargil had minus 10.6 and Leh minus 7.4 as the minimum temperature.

Jammu had 8, Katra 9.3, Batote 2.9, Banihal 0.2 and Bhandarwah 1.2 as the minimum temperature.

## Delhi govt launches winter action plan for homeless

*A 24x7 centralised control room has been set up and multiple helpline numbers (14461, 011-23378789 and 011-23370560) have also been issued by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB)*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** The Delhi government has launched a winter action plan for the homeless which includes food and lodging facilities across all shelter homes in the national capital.

A 24x7 centralised control room has been set up and multiple helpline numbers (14461, 011-



A man rows his boat in the interiors of Dal Lake on a sunny winter day in Srinagar

PTI PHOTO

## Quest for rediscovering Dogra past

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jammu, Dec 13:** Our heritage reminds us of our glorious past, the wars we won, the kingdoms we built, and the legacies our forefathers left behind. And Jammu and Kashmir houses some of the boldest stories of warrior kings and clever politics.

We must learn about our past and take pride in it. Modern times have propagated western ideologies that have our citizens questioning their existence and relevance in today's world. To destroy this imported narrative that the East is weak, and India is weak, J&K has started a series of works to restore its ancestry. It began with the declaration of a holiday on the birth anniversary of Maharaja Hari Singh by the Home Minister this October.

Across the world countries erect structures and monuments displaying the finest architecture that showcases their past grandeur, their art and culture, values, and lifestyle. And that is what the administration has in mind for Mubarak Mandi Complex in Jammu. Mubarak Mandi was the Royal Record Office during the



rule of Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857-1885). It is situated in the old walled city next to the Tawi river. It was the main seat of the Dogra Dynasty till 1925 before Maharaja Hari Singh relocated to the Hari Niwas Palace in northern Jammu. All the classified and other important royal documents have been preserved here.

In 1947, the Government of India brought the Complex under the State Archives Department. The Department holds the distinction of being one of the oldest Archival Repositories in the subcontinent with a record dating back to the Mughal period (1724 AD). There are nearly 14 lakh files of admin-

istrative and historical importance. Some documents from the 17th century are in the form of rare copper sheets written in the Sharda script. The archive has about 6 lakh manuscripts and 27,000 old books collected over centuries. History lovers including foreigners have been visiting this facility for decades for its rich material. Many important records are being digitized for greater access.

The resurrection of the complex will help immensely in tourism generation. The restoration work across India of historical structures has attracted a large audience lately. Hence there is no question that Jammu's Mubarak Mandi

Heritage Complex will not be the upcoming favourite destination of explorers.

It will teach people about the Maharajas, the generals, and the warriors of the Dogra era, their military strategies, political astuteness, and values that assisted them in ruling this strategic region for so long. The complex has 25 heritage buildings along several courtyards. The plan is to transform the space into galleries depicting the timelines and achievements of all the celebrated contributors of Jammu and Kashmir. Besides the glorification of the past, the complex will also be an introduction to our future to the onlookers.

## All sub-registrars in Delhi to be women

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** From property registrations to marriage registrations, Delhi will now see only women sub-registrars involved in dealing with common people as Lt Governor V K Saxena directed Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to appoint them.

In an official statement, the LG office said that it is expected that with women officers at the helm, the "prevalent corruption, red-tapism and harassment of people at such offices will be mitigated".

The sub-registrar offices are at the cutting edge of government's interface with the common citi-

*The move would mean that for the first time, all 22 Sub-Registrars (SRs) in Delhi government's Revenue Department will be women officers*

zens, it said. After assuming office, Saxena, with an aim of empowering women in government services by placing them in positions of importance, had envisaged that the sub-registrar offices of the Delhi government's Revenue Department be headed by women officials. "This, he had underlined, would also ensure more sensitive, corruption-free and empathetic public dealing, as experience around the world had established," the statement added.

The sub-registrar offices are responsible for land registry - sale, purchase and lease, registration of properties, sale deeds, issuing share certificates, marriage registrations, issuing of caste certificates, income certificates, verification of documents and other services that have a direct bearing on the common people, it said.

Through an earlier order, six women SRs had been appointed, in the latest order issued Monday, another 16 women officials have been selected and appointed as SRs in the remaining 16 SR offices, thereby taking the total number to 22. Earlier, the chief secretary, following Saxena's directions, had also appointed a woman Officer on Special Duty (OSD) on October 8 for developing an 'e-platform' to ensure that all SR offices become faceless and the services be provided to the people through the online mode.

## DELHI POLLUTION

# Smoke intrusion from farm fires in Oct-Nov lowest in four yrs: CSE



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** Not only have the number of farm fires in Punjab and Haryana this season been the lowest since 2016, the national capital also witnessed the least smoke intrusion from stubble burning during October-November in four years, according to a Centre for Science and Environment analysis.

Analysis of data from SAFAR, the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality forecasting agency, shows that smoke from farm fires contributed to PM2.5 pollution in Delhi on 53 days this year, starting October 12.

The figure is lower than the previous three years when smoke intrusion was reported on 56-57 days but higher than the 2018 reading of 48 days.

The highest contribution this year was 34 per cent on November 3. Last year, the share of farm fires in Delhi's PM 2.5 pollution peaked to 48 per cent November 7.

The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) said stubble burning-related smokefall over Delhi depended on two major factors -- the number and intensity of farm fires and meteorological conditions conducive for the transportation of the smoke to the national capital.

This October-November, not only have the quantity and intensity of farm fires been comparatively lower but also the meteorological conditions less conducive for transport of the smoke, the green think tank said. The CSE estimated that smoke from farm fires accounted for 4.1 tonnes of PM2.5 during October-November in Delhi. This is 37 per cent lower than 6.4 tonnes of PM2.5 from stubble burning last year and almost half the 2020 figure (8 tonnes).

The volume this year is also significantly lower than the 2019 figure (6.4 tonnes) - an indicator of the meteorological help Delhi got as there were fewer farm fires in 2019.

## Jammu hoteliers concerned over loss of business

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jammu, Dec 13:** Hotel and lodge owners here Monday raised concern over the loss of business over the past several years and demanded immediate restoration of 'darbar move', a practice under which the government functioned six months each in Jammu and Srinagar.

The Lt Governor Manoj Sinha-led administration stopped the age-old practice in June last year after moving to e-office to ensure smooth functioning of the Civil Secretariat in the twin capitals in all the 12 months, thus saving Rs 200 crore per year on shifting of offices.

"The business in Jammu used to thrive before the start of the direct train to Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting Mata Vaishno Devi shrine (in 2014). The Covid-19 outbreak and the government decision to end the darbar



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

move has dealt a severe blow to our business," President All Jammu Hotels and Lodges' Association Pawan Gupta told reporters here.

He said the pilgrim traffic to Vaishno Devi is expected to cross 90 lakh this year but it has no benefit for the business community of Jammu which is facing the worst

23378789 and 011-23370560) have also been issued by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB).

After reviewing the plan with senior officials of various departments Tuesday, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said, "To ensure that no one is left out in the cold during the peak winter

season, the government has established food and lodging facilities for homeless people across 195 shelter homes which have the capacity of accommodating over 17,000 people." Those willing to help the homeless to be rescued can call on the helpline numbers issued by DUSIB or access the 'Rain Basera' app. Fifteen rescue teams have also

been formed -- each equipped with one vehicle, for surveillance and rescuing the homeless.

"So far over 1,500 homeless people have been rescued by the DUSIB teams in the past few weeks. On receiving information from the DUSIB control room or from any other sources, the rescue teams pick up the homeless from the identified location and take them to the nearest shelter home," a DUSIB official said. The existing 195 night shelters for the homeless in Delhi include 19 for families, 17 for women, four for drug addicts and three recovery shelters. The facilities provided to the people in these government shelter homes are food, lodging, lockers, three meals per day, free medicines, and ambulance, among others.

People staying at the shelter homes can also avail the free medical services at any Mohalla Clinic.

On September 26, Democratic Azad Party (DAP) chairman and former chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad had also vouched for the restoration of the darbar move.

"The darbar move was beneficial for the economy in Jammu. During my chief ministership I also thought of saving the money (by stopping darbar move). The businessmen in Jammu requested me not to think of it as people from Kashmir come (in winters) and their sales go up by 1000 times," he had said.

of the Jammu business community. "The business in Jammu is going through its worst phase as all hotels and lodges are running in losses due to no occupancy. If you are concerned about the people and restoration of our economy, restore the practice of darbar move," Sharma urged the Lt Governor-led administration.

and Mubarak Mandi heritage complex were tipped to make Jammu an independent tourism attraction but these projects are moving at a snail's pace.

His deputy Pritam Sharma was quite vocal in his demand for restoration of darbar move and said it is imperative for the sur-

**The business in Jammu used to thrive before the start of the direct train to Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting Mata Vaishno Devi shrine (in 2014). The Covid-19 outbreak and the government decision to end the darbar move has dealt a severe blow to our business**

PAWAN GUPTA | PRESIDENT ALL JAMMU HOTELS AND LODGES' ASSOCIATION



# national

## of the day quote

The time has now come to wonder how wise it is to use a government platform to criticise the Opposition parties. Nehru, even during political campaigning, never used to criticise his opponents. He used to present his own policies and stand on various issues during campaigns

SHARAD PAWAR | NCP CHIEF

Some people are often batting for talks with Pakistan. They say security and normalcy cannot return here (Jammu and Kashmir) unless there are talks with them (Pakistan). I strongly reject this notion. As per the policy of the government of India, there is no question of holding talks with Pakistan unless and until it doesn't reject terrorism and criticise it openly

MANOJ SINHA | J&K LG

The Ministry of Tourism along with all stakeholders, including the tourism departments of all states and Union Territories, have adopted the 'Code of Conduct for Safe and Honourable Tourism' which is a set of guidelines to encourage tourism activities to be undertaken with respect for basic rights like dignity, safety and freedom from exploitation of both tourists and local residents in particular, women and children

G KISHAN REDDY | UNION TOURISM MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### Elephants kill girl

**Guwahati:** In a tragic incident, a class 9 student was Tuesday trampled to death by a herd of wild elephants in Assam's Jorhat district. The deceased has been identified as Barsha Gogoi. The incident occurred when Barsha Gogoi, along with her mother, was passing by a forest area in Bijoyppur, when suddenly a herd of elephants appeared in front of them.

### 2 labourers hurt

**Lakhimpur Kheri:** Two labourers working in a sugarcane field were injured after they were attacked by a herd of elephants near Maheshpur range in the social forestry region of Uttar Pradesh's Lakhimpur Kheri district. The two have been admitted to the district hospital in Lakhimpur with multiple fractures.

### Two students die

**Patna:** Two students died after their bike rammed into a divider on four lane Atal Path in Patna, police said Tuesday. The accident occurred when the students, a girl and a boy who were preparing for NEET examination, were on their way to Ganga Pathway for late night ride on Monday. Digha police station Sub-inspector Phool Kumar Chaubey said: "The victims were staying in a hostel and preparing for the NEET examination. They met with an accident on Atal Path-Ganga Pathway rotary divider."



PCC president said that the Congress has done this and that... That is okay... But I want to give a message to the party that what was done is not that much necessary, what needs to be done is more necessary

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

## PATEL TAKES CHARGE

BJP leader Bhupendra Patel Tuesday took charge as the 18th Chief Minister of Gujarat at the state secretariat in Gandhinagar. Along with Patel, all the 16 ministers including eight cabinet-rank ministers also took charge of their respective departments at Swarnim Sankul-1 and Swarnim Sankul-2, said an official press release



# Moitra tears into govt over economy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 13: Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra Tuesday cited government data showing industrial contraction to question the Centre's handling of the economy and asked "who is the Pappu now?"

Participating in a debate in Lok Sabha on demands for additional grants for 2022-23, the firebrand TMC leader said, "This government and the ruling party coined the term Pappu. You use it to denigrate and signify extreme incompetence. But the statistics tell us who the actual Pappu is."

Moitra accused the Narendra Modi government of spreading "falsehood" about India's growth and appealed to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to take control of the economy, which, according to the TMC leader, is going downhill.

Referring to the latest data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), Moitra claimed that while the country's industrial output shrunk by four per cent in October to a 26-month low, the manufacturing sector, which is "still the biggest generator of jobs", contracted by 5.6 per cent.

"Seventeen of the industry sectors that make up the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) have recorded negative growth. Forex reserves have fallen by 72 billion dollars in under a year," she said. The manufacturing sector's output declined by 5.6 per cent in October 2022 as against a growth of 3.3 per cent recorded in the year-ago month, according to the IIP data released by the NSO.

She also took a swipe at the BJP over its defeat in the just-concluded Himachal Pradesh assembly elections, saying the ruling party's president could not hold on to his

This government has us believe every February that this country's economy is going great guns, we are the fastest growing most efficient global player, everyone is getting employment, cylinders, electricity and pucca houses. This falsehood flies for eight to 10 months and the truth comes out limping after it

MAHUA MOITRA | TRINAMOOL CONGRESS MP

home state. "Who is the Pappu now?" she asked.

Himachal Pradesh is the home state of BJP national president JP Nadda and in the elections, the Congress wrested the state from his party. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday mentioned during the Question Hour how 50 per cent of Foreign Institutional Investors inflows into emerging markets are coming to India, but the government in reply to a question told the House last Friday that almost 2 lakh people renounced their Indian citizenship in the first 10 months of 2022, Moitra said.

"This exodus of 2022 takes the total number of Indians renouncing Indian citizenship under this government in the past nine years since 2014 to over 12.5 lakh people," she said.

"Is this sign of a healthy economic environment or a healthy tax environment (in the country)?" she asked, adding, "Who is the Pappu now?"

The TMC member alleged that there is an "atmosphere of terror" in the country with the "sword" of the Enforcement Directorate hanging over "businessmen and high-net-worth individuals" as well as leaders of opposition parties.



Security personnel during a tribute ceremony to pay homage to those who lost their lives in the 2001 Parliament attack on its 21st anniversary, at Parliament House complex in New Delhi

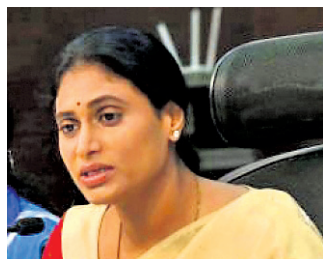
PTI PHOTO

## Cops stop Sharmila from leaving house

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad, Dec 13:** Police stopped YSR Telangana Party (YSRTP) leader Y. S. Sharmila from leaving her house in Hyderabad Tuesday.

Sharmila was on her way to the Telangana High Court to attend the hearing of her petition seeking permission to resume her padyatra. Police did not allow the YSRTP leader to come out of her Lotus Pond residence. The party said she was illegally detained by the police. It alleged that police vehicles were used to block Sharmila's car from coming out of the residence.



Sharmila asked the police officers if she was kept under house arrest. She wanted them to show the orders. Later, talking to reporters, she lashed out at Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Nara Chandrababu Naidu, saying "We have the permission, but KCR continues to shoot through the police's shoulders. 'We have moved the lunch motion in the court and I am on my way to the court. They say I have no permission to go out. Did this happen to the leader of any other political party till date?' "The cops are in hundreds of numbers, but without a single-word answer to my questions. Our supporters and activists have been stopped from meeting me and visiting me. How can I be stopped from approaching the court?" she asked.

She alleged that CM KCR is abusing the police machinery like his domestic helpers. "Is this democracy or Afghanistan? Is this the golden Telangana KCR often refers to, where our fundamental rights are trampled under the iron feet of the abusive government machinery?" Sharmila asked.

The YSRTP leader was discharged from hospital Monday. She was admitted to the hospital in the early hours of Sunday after being arrested from her residence.

## Cong MLA held for 'kill Modi' remark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal/Damoh, Dec 13:** Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh minister Raja Pateria was arrested Tuesday morning for his controversial 'be ready to kill Modi to save the Constitution' remark about the prime minister.

He was produced in a court at Pawai in Panna district which refused to grant him bail and sent him in 14-day judicial custody, said his lawyer Govind Narayan Baghel. They will file an appeal in the higher court, the lawyer added. The state Congress, meanwhile, issued a show-cause notice to Pateria, terming his remarks as extremely objectionable. Pateria was arrested by the police from his residence in Hata town in Damoh district. "A police team went to his house around 5.30 am to inform him about the arrest. They took him to Pawai (in Panna district) around 7 am," Hata sub divisional officer of police Virendra Bahadur Singh said.

MP Home Minister Narottam Mishra said that two more Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections - 115 and 117 -- were added to the First Information Report (FIR) registered against him. Section 115 deals with 'abetment of offence punishable with death or imprisonment for life if offence not committed, and 117 deals with 'abetting commission of offence by the public.'

In a video that surfaced on social



Raja Pateria was produced in a court at Pawai in Panna district which refused to grant him bail and sent him in 14-day judicial custody, said his lawyer Govind Narayan Baghel

media on Monday morning, Pateria could be heard telling Congress workers at a meeting in Pawai, "Be ready to kill Modi. Kill in the sense of defeating him.....Modi will end the elections. Modi will divide on the basis of religion, caste and language. The future of Dalits, tribals and minorities is in danger. If you want to save the Constitution, then be ready to kill Modi. Kill in the sense of defeating him." Subsequently, an FIR was registered against Pateria under IPC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, Dec 13:** Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Tuesday dropped further hints that he was looking forward to passing on the mantle to his young deputy Tejashwi Yadav, leaders emerging

from a meeting of legislators of the ruling Mahagathbandhan said. The septuagenarian JD(U) supreme, once again, ruled himself out as a prime ministerial candidate for the next Lok Sabha polls even as he maintained that a "united opposition" could defeat the

## Nitish drops big hint

The Chief Minister pointed towards Tejashwi ji and said he is the leader of the future, under whose leadership the 2025 Assembly polls in the state would be fought

MAHBOOB ALAM | LEGISLATURE PARTY LEADER OF THE CPI(ML) LIBERATION

Narendra Modi-led BJP in 2024. "The chief minister pointed towards Tejashwi ji and said he is the leader of the future, under whose leadership the 2025 assembly polls in the state would be fought," said Mahboob Alam, the legislature party leader of the CPI(ML) Liberation which supports the government from outside.

He also said "we are of the view

that it will benefit the grand alliance which is fighting the communal forces represented by the BJP. Tejashwi ji is a young and energetic leader."

Notably, Yadav, the younger son of RJD's founding president Lalu Prasad, had steered the Mahagathbandhan, which then did not have the chief minister on its side, to an impressive electoral performance in 2020 assembly polls in which the NDA could barely scrape through.

After dumping the BJP in August this year, Kumar, whose love-hate relationship with Lalu Prasad is the stuff of legend, had been asserting that he was done with the long association that he has had with the saffron party.

## Couple enters suicide pact; woman backs out

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 13:** A 31-year-old man died while his lover with whom he had entered a suicide pact, developed a cold feet and chickened out at the last moment in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala, sources said Tuesday.

As part of the pact, the two checked into a hotel where the man died, while the woman failed to muster the courage. On Monday night, on hearing the woman's cries, the hotel staff rushed to the couple's room only to see the man hanging and blood oozing out of the woman's ears.

Soon, the police arrived and rushed her to a local hospital, which referred her to the Kottayam Medical College hospital. According to the woman, the two had decided to die together for which they checked into a hotel where they consumed some medicines and the man hanged himself to death, while the woman got afraid and started to scream.

They had checked into the hotel on Sunday, and when the woman who hails from the state capital, failed to return home, her relatives registered a missing complaint at their local police station. A probe has been launched into the incident.



# Hacker planted evidence on Stan Swamy's computer: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, Dec 13: A US-based forensic firm Tuesday claimed that digital evidence used to arrest Jesuit priest Father Stan Swamy in the Bhima-Koregaon case was "planted" on his computer's hard drive, similar to two other cases involving human rights defenders Rona Wilson and Surendra Gadling.

Swamy, 84, who was accused in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case, died in July 2021, while waiting for interim bail on medical grounds. An examination of an electronic copy of his computer by Arsenal Consulting, a Massachusetts-based digital forensics firm, concluded that a hacker

Swamy, 84, who was an accused in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case, died in July 2021, while waiting for interim bail on medical grounds

infiltrated his device and "planted" evidence, The Washington Post reported, citing a new report by the company.

This follows previous reports which documented digital evidence planting on the devices of other human rights activists Rona Wilson and Surendra Gadling, the firm said in its report. "Over 50 files were created on Swamy's hard drive, including incriminating documents that fabricated links between him and the Maoist insurgency," the report said.



"The final incriminating document was planted on his computer on June 5, 2019, a week before the

raid on Swamy," the report said. It was on the basis of these documents that he was first arrested in

the Bhima Koregaon case, despite experts raising doubts about the authenticity of the documents, it added.

The Elgar case relates to alleged inflammatory speeches delivered at the 'Elgar Parishad' conclave, held at Shaniwarwada in Pune on December 31, 2017, which the police claimed triggered violence the next day near the Koregaon-Bhima war memorial located on the city's outskirts. The Pune Police claimed the conclave was backed by Maoists. After Swamy's death, a spokesper-

son for the Ministry of External Affairs had said that his detention followed due process of law.

In response to the media queries on the demise of Father Swamy last year, the MEA spokesperson said that his bail applications were rejected by the courts because of the specific nature of charges against him.

"India's democratic and constitutional polity is complemented by an independent judiciary, a range of national and state level Human Rights Commissions that monitor violations, a free media and a vibrant and vocal civil society. India remains committed to promotion and protection of human rights of all its citizens," he had said.



# international

## of the day quote

I have experienced racism in my life. But what I am pleased to say is some of the things that I experienced when I was a kid and a young person, I don't think would happen today because our country has made incredible progress in tackling racism

RISHI SUNAK | PM, UK

Delighted to receive our External Affairs Minister, @DrSJaishankar during India's ongoing UN Security Council #UNSC Presidency. The Minister will be chairing India's signature events at the UN, alongside #bilaterals and significant side events

RUCHIRA KAMBOJ | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UN

The Taliban-led government in Afghanistan had accepted its mistake in attacking a village on the border that left eight people dead and over 20 others injured

KHAWAJA ASIF | PAKISTAN DEFENCE MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### N-power returns to favour in Finland

**Helsinki:** Heading into the winter months, people in Finland appear to be overwhelmingly supportive of the government's energy efficiency measures and according to a recent survey, their attitude has also changed markedly towards nuclear power. The rise in electricity prices has prompted Finns to reconsider their approach to the energy challenge, the Finnish Business and Policy Forum (EVA) think tank said.

### US storm brings tornado warnings

**Sioux Falls (US):** Much of the central US from the Rocky Mountains to the Midwest was braced Tuesday for blizzard-like conditions, while states farther to the south saw tornado warnings from a massive storm blowing across the country. An area stretching from Montana into western Nebraska and Colorado was under blizzard warnings, and the National Weather Service said that as much as 2 feet (61 cm) of snow was possible in some areas of western South Dakota and northwestern Nebraska. Meanwhile, ice and sleet were expected in the eastern Great Plains.

### Earthquakes hit Bali Island

**Denpasar (Indonesia):** A moderately strong earthquake and two aftershocks hit Indonesia's resort island of Bali Tuesday, causing panic but no immediate reports of damage or casualties. The US Geological Survey said the magnitude 4.9 quake was centred 35 km (22 miles) north of Amlapura, a city in Bali's Karangasem district. Its shallow depth of 9.6 km (6 miles) may have caused people to run outside.

### India signs MoUs for 3 projects with Nepal

**Kathmandu:** India Tuesday signed Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with the Nepal government worth more than Rs 101 million for fast-tracking three projects in education, healthcare sectors and for providing safe drinking water in the Himalayan nation. The implementation of these projects reflects the continued support of the Indian government in bolstering efforts of the Nepal government in upliftment of its people, the Indian Embassy here said.

## Donors meet in Paris to get Ukraine through winter, bombardments



From the left, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, Ukrainian first lady Olena Zelenska, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal, French President Emmanuel Macron, French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna and President of the European Commission Ursula Von Der Leyen attend the conference in solidarity with the Ukrainian people in Paris

As temperatures plunge and snow falls, Ukraine's needs are huge and pressing. Russia's has repeatedly targeted the Ukrainian power grid and other critical infrastructure since early October

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Paris, Dec 13:** Dozens of countries and international organisations threw their weight and hundreds of millions of euros (dollars) behind a fresh and urgent push Tuesday to keep Ukraine powered, fed, warm and moving amid the onset of winter, responding defiantly to sustained Russian aerial bombardments that have plunged millions into the deepening cold and dark by targeting critical infrastructure.

An international donor conference in Paris quickly racked up pledges of financial and in-kind support for Ukraine's beleaguered civilian population to survive freezing temperatures and long nights. It also heard impassioned arguments from Ukraine's president that such help could pressure Russia into suing for peace. There was also strong condemnation from donors of the Kremlin's savaging of civilian targets. French President Emmanuel Macron, the conference host, denounced Moscow's bombardments of civilian targets

as war crimes. He said the Kremlin is pounding civilian infrastructure because its troops suffered setbacks on the battlefields and their "military weaknesses have been exposed to all."

Russia "has chosen a cynical strategy, aiming to destroy civilian infrastructure in order to put Ukraine on its knees," Macron said. "The objective is clear: Respond to military defeats by spreading terror among civilians, try to break the back as it can't maintain the front."

Successive waves of cruise missiles and exploding drones have destroyed about half of Ukraine's energy infrastructure, the Kyiv government has said. Ukraine's Prime Minister says Russia is trying to create a fresh wave of refugees to Europe. Russia says that by striking civilian infrastructure, its military aim is to weaken Ukraine's ability to defend itself and to disrupt the flow of Western weapons to the invaded country.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who addressed the Paris conference by video link, said some 12 million Ukrainians — roughly one-quarter of the country's population before Russia launched its full-scale invasion in February — were living with power outages.

Zelenskyy argued that a concerted international effort to keep Ukraine's utility systems working could help dissuade Moscow from further attacks and potentially force it to the negotiating table, and also prevent new waves of Ukrainians fleeing to elsewhere in Europe.

## FTX founder charged with fraud

REUTERS

**New York/Nassau, Bahamas, Dec 13:** US federal prosecutors Tuesday alleged Sam Bankman-Fried committed fraud and violated campaign finance laws, and the founder and former CEO of FTX also faced additional charges by US regulators.

In the indictment, prosecutors said Bankman-Fried had engaged in a scheme to defraud FTX's customers by misappropriating their deposits to pay for expenses and debts and to make investments on behalf of his crypto hedge fund, Alameda Research LLC.

A lawyer for Bankman-Fried did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the criminal charges.

He also defrauded lenders to Alameda by providing them with false and misleading information about the hedge fund's condition, and sought to disguise the money he had earned from committing wire fraud, prosecutors said.

Both the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) alleged Bankman-Fried committed fraud in lawsuits filed Tuesday.

"While he spent lavishly on office space and condominiums in The Bahamas, and sank billions of dollars of customer funds into speculative venture investments,



Bankman-Fried's house of cards began to crumble," the SEC filing said.

The CFTC sued Bankman-Fried, Alameda, and FTX on Tuesday, alleging fraud involving digital commodity assets.

Since at least May 2019, FTX raised more than \$1.8 billion from equity investors in a years-long "brazen, multi-year scheme" in which Bankman-Fried concealed that FTX was diverting customer funds to its affiliated crypto hedge fund, Alameda Research LLC, the SEC alleged.

While the public believed Bankman-Fried's "lies" and sent billions of dollars to FTX, he improperly diverted customer funds to his hedge fund, the SEC said in a court filing. He continued to di-

The 30-year-old Bankman-Fried was due to appear in a Bahamas court Tuesday in his first in-person public appearance since the crypto currency exchange's collapse

He faced a possible legal fight over whether he would be extradited to the United States

## MATTER OF CONCERN

Illness is on the rise among the Australian population for the first time in two decades, a government report published Tuesday revealed



## Chinese students return home amid fears of Covid spread

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Beijing, Dec 13:** Some Chinese universities say they will allow students to finish the semester from home in hopes of reducing the potential for a bigger Covid-19 outbreak during the January Lunar New Year travel rush.

It wasn't clear how many schools were participating, but universities in Shanghai and nearby cities said students would be given the option of returning home early or staying on campus and undergoing testing every 48 hours.

The Lunar New Year, which falls January 22, is traditionally China's busiest travel season.

Universities have had frequent lockdowns in the past three years, occasionally leading to clashes between authorities and students confined to campus or even their dorm rooms.

With so many people staying home, Beijing's downtown streets were eerily quiet Tuesday, giving it the feel of a voluntary lockdown. Restaurants were mostly closed or empty, as many businesses are having difficulty finding enough staff who haven't gotten infected. Sanlitun, one of Beijing's most popular shopping districts, was deserted despite having its anti-Covid fences taken down in recent days.



A car passes snow covered trees at the 'Harz' mountains near Wernigerode, Germany

## Sino-India border situation 'generally stable': China

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, Dec 13:** China Tuesday said the situation was "generally stable" along its border with India, days after the troops of the two countries clashed in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh, resulting in minor injuries to some soldiers on both sides.

At a media briefing here, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said the two sides have maintained smooth communication on border-related issues through diplomatic and military channels. Wang, however, declined to provide details of the December 9 clash between Indian and Chinese soldiers at the Yangtse area of Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang sector.



Earlier in the day, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh made a statement in Parliament in New Delhi on the incident in the Tawang sector. "The Indian Army bravely prevented the PLA from encroaching on our territory, and forced them to withdraw to their posts. Some soldiers from both sides were injured in the skirmish," he said in his statement in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

The Chinese Defence Ministry has not reacted to the incident so far. Wang also said Beijing hopes that the "Indian side will work with us in the same direction and smoothly deliver the important common understanding reached by leaders of both sides."

"And act strictly on the spirit of relevant bilateral agreements signed by both sides and jointly preserve peace and tranquility in the border areas". It is the first major clash between the Indian and Chinese armies since the fierce face-off in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades.

## Putin skip annual news conference

ASSOCIATED PRESS

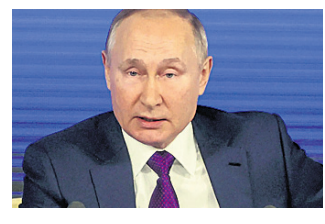
**Moscow, Dec 13:** Russian President Vladimir Putin will not be holding his annual year-end marathon news conference this month amid the war in Ukraine, a break in the long-held tradition that observers have attributed to the Kremlin's uneasiness about a string of battlefield setbacks.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has confirmed that Putin wouldn't hold the annual news conference for the first time in 10 years. He didn't comment on the reason behind it, but many commentators attributed it to the Russian

leader's reluctance to face unpleasant questions about what he calls Russia's "special military operation" in Ukraine.

The annual news conference has been used by the Kremlin to polish Putin's image. The tightly stage-managed show televised live lasted for up to 41/2 hours and featured Putin talking about a

wide range of domestic and foreign policy issues. Political analyst Abbas Gallyamov said in a video commentary that Putin cancelled the annual news conference because "he has nothing to say from the point of view of strategy."



## British Library celebrates India ties with exhibition on Hampi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, Dec 13:** The British Library in London is celebrating the 75th anniversary of India's independence with a special photographic exhibition on the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Hampi in Karnataka.

"Hampi: Photography and Archaeology in southern India" is made up of a display of photographs taken between 1857 and 1970 capturing the archaeological site of Hampi - the capital of the prosperous Vijayanagara kingdom established in the 14th century. The display, enhanced by three works by celebrated photographer Raghu Rai, is devised as a lens on the archaeological legacy of Hampi

through the archives of the British Library and the research activities that have played a role in preserving the city's cultural heritage.

"An Italian traveller documented that this was the most extraordinary city in the world at the time," said Vikram Doraiswami, Indian High Commissioner to the UK, at a celebratory event for the exhibition in London Monday.

"It had the most amazing urban architecture, it was a developed, flourishing, prosperous city. Even today when you visit it, you need several days to take in the totality of Hampi...In this 75th year of India's independence, the High Commission is happy to work with the British Library, which holds so much that is wonderful



and gives us all an opportunity to be part of history and to be able to celebrate and share it in special ways," he said.

Its ongoing religious significance and its designation as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987 mean it continues to attract worshippers and tourists to this day, something the British Library exhibition aims to celebrate.

The ancient city was located along the banks of the Tungabhadra River and temple complexes, palaces and administrative buildings were built amongst the rugged landscape of granite boulders

After flourishing for over 200 years, Vijayanagara fell to a rival kingdom in 1565 and Hampi was abandoned

by the library's Head of Visual Arts Malini Roy, is part of a wider programme on South Asia at the British Library and is linked to the 'Early Photography and Archaeology in Western India' exhibition being showcased at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (CSMVS) in Mumbai

since last month.

"This spotlight exhibition on Hampi is part of a year marking India@75, which has seen outstanding events and programmes in both countries to mark 75 years of independence. Our connection with partners in India remains strong," said Dame Carol Black, Chair of the British Library. The sister exhibition at CSMVS in Mumbai is part of the British Council's India/UK Together, Season of Culture.

Skinder Hundal, Global Director of Arts at the British Council, added: "It brings us the opportunity to view some of the rarest, earliest and the most striking photographs and objects of India's rich archaeological heritage."



# business

## of the day quote

Government data are provided as aggregates, which is not good. We should break down the aggregation



AMITABH KANT | INDIA'S G-20 SHERPA

I think India will be the first to handle the issue of auctioning the space base spectrum. We are working on it



PD VAGHELA | TRAI CHAIRMAN

Despite short-term hiccups, we anticipate strong domestic demand, thanks to the government-led infrastructure spending



KAMAL SARMA | IIFL DIRECTOR & CEO

## SHORT TAKES

### Tata Motors to hike prices

**Bangalore:** Tata Motors Ltd said Tuesday it would increase prices of its commercial vehicles by up to 2% from January to partly offset a steep rise in input costs. The company's third price increase in the commercial segment this year will be applicable across all vehicles, but vary across models and variants, it said in an exchange filing. "The company has been absorbing a significant portion of the increased costs, but the steep rise in overall input costs has compelled it to pass on some proportion through this minimal price hike," the company said. While prices of commodities such as steel and aluminium have corrected from highs this year, costs related to building vehicles such as trucks and buses are still elevated, analysts have said. The automaker has also raised prices of passenger vehicles four times so far this year.

### Kotak arm raises ₹5,328 crore

**Mumbai:** A Kotak Mahindra Bank arm Tuesday announced it has raised Rs 5,328 crore to invest in infrastructure projects in the country. Kotak Investment Advisors Ltd (KIAL) is targeting to raise Rs 6,000 crore in total for the Kotak Infrastructure Investment Fund, and this is the maiden close for the platform, according to a statement. The fund will be focusing on infrastructure credit and this is the first time where a fund is being set up with significant commitments from global investors, the statement said. Majority of the Rs 5,328 crore fund in commitment has been made by the Canadian Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB), while the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has pitched in with a USD 100 million (about Rs 828 crore) commitment.

### Gold ETFs log ₹195cr outflow

**New Delhi:** After attracting funds in October, gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) witnessed a net outflow of Rs 195 crore last month primarily due to profit booking amidst a rally in the markets. In comparison, the segment had attracted a net inflow of Rs 147 crore in October and Rs 330 crore in September. Prior to that, gold ETFs saw a net withdrawal of Rs 38 crore in August, data with Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed. "The latest outflow could be attributed to profit booking amidst the rally in the markets and gold demand in the households for the prevailing wedding season," Priti Rathi Gupta, Founder of LXME, said. While the fund inflow in October was mainly on account of festive season demand as investors might have chosen to buy physical gold.



All our achievements would be futile if our workers are not safe and healthy

PRALHAD JOSHI | COAL MINISTER

## INDIA, UK TRADE MINISTERS REVIEW PROGRESS OF FTA TALKS

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and his UK counterpart Kemi Badenoch Tuesday reviewed the progress of talks for the proposed free trade agreement between the nations, an official said. The UK Trade Secretary is in India to kickstart the sixth round of free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations and hold bilateral talks with Goyal.



# Rupee records 6.9 per cent depreciation in current FY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** The Indian rupee has witnessed a depreciation of 6.9 per cent in the current financial year till November 30, the Parliament was told Tuesday. Exchange rate depreciation, other factors remaining unchanged, is likely to put upward pressure on prices of imported commodities and as a result, imported items becoming costlier, Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply. "The overall impact on the domestic prices depends on the pass-through of import prices into the domestic prices. On the other hand, exchange rate depreciation is likely to enhance the country's export competitiveness. However, the nominal exchange rate is only one factor that determines the export competitiveness and cost of imports and hence, the overall trade balance. Hence, the impact of movements of the exchange rate on the trade balance and also on other components of the current account balance cannot be isolated," he said. Chaudhary also said that the value of the Indian rupee is market-determined. "As global spillovers from geo-political tensions and aggressive monetary policy tightening across the world intensified alongside a surge in crude oil prices, the US dollar strengthened by 7.8 per cent in the financial year (till November 30, 2022). While the rupee has depreciated in the current financial year, it has performed better than most Asian peer currencies, including the Chinese renminbi (10.6 per cent), Indonesian rupiah (8.7 per cent), Philippine peso (8.5 per cent), South Korean won (8.1 per cent), Taiwanese dollar (7.3 per cent) etc during the financial year," he said.



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) closely monitors the foreign exchange markets and intervenes only to maintain orderly market conditions by containing excessive volatility in the exchange rate, without reference to any pre-determined target level or band, he said. The minister also gave details of measures taken by the Reserve Bank of India, saying: "The RBI had announced various measures in the recent period to diversify and expand the sources of forex funding to mitigate exchange rate volatility and dampen global spillovers."

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# Nifty could post 5% gains next yr: Report

This would be the benchmark index's slowest growth in 5 years, according to BofA Securities

REUTERS

**Bangalore, Dec 13:** India's benchmark Nifty 50 index will rise roughly 5% next year, which would be its slowest growth in 5 years, BofA Securities estimated, but also said Indian stocks were a good bet if a global recession struck. BofA Securities expects the bluechip index to close at 19,500 points next year, while continuing to be volatile and trade between 17,000 and 20,000 levels for the year. The Nifty 50 index is up slightly more than 7% at 18,584 so far in 2022, after three straight years of double-digit growth. This year has also been volatile with the index swinging between a low of 15,183.40 to a record high of 18,887.60. BofA Securities advised buying any dips at around 17,000 levels, saying India's economic growth and equities are less impacted during a recession and recover faster after one. "Indian markets deliver much higher returns against the U.S. 12 months post a recession," BofA Securities said, based on an analysis of the past three U.S. recessionary cycles. Even valuations are unlikely to contract below the long-term average, said BofA, as domestic investors could see \$20 billion in inflows from pension, provident, insurance funds and systematic investment plans. And with foreign institutional investors (FII) ownership of Indian equities at a multi-year low of 18% now, the potential for incremental outflows from FIIs is limited, it added. In fact, there could be inflows into emerging markets as the U.S. Federal Reserve could be forced to start cutting interest rates early if there is a pronounced downturn in consumer price inflation, BofA Securities said. BofA analysts remain overweight on sectors like financials, industrials, staples, utilities, metals and cement, and underweight on IT, healthcare, consumer discretionary and autos. Meanwhile, Samir Arora, founder and fund manager at Helios Capital, expects Indian equity markets to revert towards a long-term trend of 10%-15% returns on average in rupee terms next year.



# India has strong pipeline of 80 IPOs over next 5 years

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** While the stock performances of tech IPOs, compared to other consumer companies, witness a steeper crash, India is poised to see more than 100 large-scale profitable/path-to-profitability startups in the next five years. With about 20 of them already being listed, about 80 start-ups have the potential to look at an IPO journey, according to a report by Redseer Strategy Consultants with HSBC. The learning is that there may be more time, maybe a few quarters, for the markets to recover. "We always see IPOs bouncing back post downturns," the report added. In India, with about a \$3.9 trillion market capitalisation, only about 1 per cent can be attributed to tech/new age companies. There are a lot of metrics here that the start-up will need to focus on in their IPO journey, including market leadership, clearly visible TAM, moats/multiple use cases, diversified, consumer love, predictable revenues, high operating leverage, achieved sustainable unit economics and a clear path to profitability. "We are just getting started with the journey of start-ups coming up and going towards their path to profitability, then looking at that public market journey," said the report.

## JSP wins FICCI CSR Award

**Bhubaneswar:** Leading steelmaker Jindal Steel & Power (JSP) has been honoured with FICCI CSR Special Commendation Award for its fight against the Covid-19 pandemic in the country. Arjun Munda, Union Tribal Affairs Minister, presented the prestigious award to Prashanta Kumar Hota, President & Head (Group CSR), JSP, during the FICCI CSR Summit and Awards held at New Delhi. FICCI CSR Chairperson Padma Bhushan Rajashree Birla was present on the occasion. JSP, under the leadership of its Chairman, Naveen Jindal, was among the few organisations in India to take up multidimensional initiatives, supporting the community and government to fight the pandemic in India. Through its CSR arm, JSP Foundation, led by Shailu Jindal, the steelmaker started a series of on-the-ground services to ease the suffering of the poor and vulnerable immediately following the pandemic's onset in India.



## Union Bank of India bags Regional Rajbhasha Award

**Bhubaneswar:** Union Bank of India which is the 5th largest public sector bank in the country was awarded the First Regional Rajbhasha Award of Ministry of Home Affairs for excellent performance in official language implantation in "C" region for FY 2020-21. Tushara Kanta Kar, Regional Head, Cuttack Region of the bank, received the award from Ajay Kumar Mishra, Minister of State for Home Affairs in the Joint Regional Rajbhasha Sammelan for east & north-east regions held at CSIR-IMMT, Bhubaneswar. Akhilesh Kumar, Sr. Manager (Rajbhasha) posted in Cuttack region during FY2020-21 received a Commendation Certificate in this regard. Sarvesh Ranjan, Field General Manager of Bhubaneswar Zone was also present at the conference. On this occasion, the Bank put a stall on the conference premises in which banners/posters in Hindi on the deposits & loan products were prominently displayed. Besides, reference literature, journals, magazines and books published by the Bank in Hindi were also displayed in the stall.



# 'Arrive early, carry just one hand baggage'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** With passengers continuing to experience long waiting hours at Delhi and other airports, airlines have asked them to reach early, do web check-in and carry only one piece of hand baggage for faster movement. The country's largest airline IndiGo has asked passengers to reach Delhi airport at least 3.5 hours prior to domestic departures. In recent weeks, the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital has been witnessing long queues and crowds amid rising air traffic. Authorities have put in place an action plan, including reducing the number of flights during peak hours, to deal with the situation. Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia also inspected the arrangements at the airport



here Monday. Amid congestion, Vistara is asking its passengers to arrive at the airport at least three hours prior to domestic as well as international flights. Delhi airport is experiencing high footfalls and the check-in and boarding time is expected to be longer than usual, as per the advisory tweeted by IndiGo. "Passengers are requested to reach the airport at least 3.5 hrs prior to domestic departures, and to carry only 01 piece of hand baggage weighing 7 kgs for a smooth security check. Please ensure that you complete your web check-in

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for added convenience," it said. Citing high footfalls at airport terminals, SpiceJet has issued an advisory to passengers asking them to reach early and carry not more than one hand baggage of up to 7 kilograms only. About Delhi airport, the carrier said due to high footfalls, check-in and boarding is expected to take much longer than usual. Regarding Mumbai airport, SpiceJet has advised passengers for domestic flights to reach "2.5 hours prior to flight departure time and 3.5 hours prior for international travel." Passengers have also been asked to complete web check-in and keep boarding pass along with identification proof in hand for faster and seamless experience. Tuesday too, many passengers took to social media to complain about chaos and long waiting hours at the Delhi airport.

# India's real rates turn positive as inflation eases: Analysts

REUTERS

**Mumbai, Dec 13:** India's real interest rate has turned positive after headline retail inflation eased below 6% for the first time this year, analysts said, suggesting that the peak policy rate is now close. The RBI has hiked repo rate by 225 basis points since May, taking the terminal rate to 6.25%, to curb inflationary pressures. Inflation had stayed above the central bank's repo rate for this year, implying a negative real rate. "India returned to a positive

real policy rate in Nov, 2022, and this month's 35bp (basis point) rate hike to 6.25% has moved the real (inflation-adjusted) repo rate even more emphatically into positive territory," Prasenjit K. Basu, chief economist at ICICI Securities wrote in a note. "We retain our view that the Dec, 2022 rate hike was the last one for FY23 (fiscal year 2023), and the next policy action by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will entail a rate cut of 25bp." India's retail inflation was at 5.88% in November, as against 6.77% in the previous month, surprising analysts who had predicted the reading at 6.40%. Inflation had stayed above the central bank's target for 10 straight months to October.



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While the central bank does not target real rates, most analysts expect it to try keeping the inflation-adjusted rate at close to 1% to support growth. This would mean that the central bank will be ready to pause rate hikes as inflation is seen easing towards 5% in the first quarter of 2022/23, implying a real rate of above 1%. While the economic research division of State Bank of India believes that the chances of a rate hike are minimal in February, Nomura lowered the probability to 60% from 70% previously, reiterating that it remains a close call.

Deutsche Bank also expects the central bank to pause at its next meet and has raised the prospects of the central bank cutting rates from December. The bank lowered its inflation forecast for the financial year by 40 bps to 6.5% soon after the November inflation data was released, saying the rate hike cycle has ended. The RBI will pause any policy action between now and September, when it will cut the repo rate, ICICI Securities' Basu said. "Amid a global tightening of monetary policy, the RBI would be wary of easing sooner."







**MOROCCAN WORLD CUP 'DREAM' FACES BIGGEST CHALLENGE AS THEY LOCK HORNS WITH DEFENDING CHAMPIONS FRANCE IN THE SEMIFINAL**

# India eye WTC final qualification

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chattogram, Dec 13:** KL Rahul's tactical acumen will be tested along with his batting prowess when a depleted Indian team clashes with a tricky Bangladesh in the high-stakes two-match series, the result of which will have an impact on India's chances for the World Test Championship final qualification.

India are currently fourth in the WTC table behind Australia, South Africa and Sri Lanka. The only way of qualifying for the final in June is to straightaway win both the Tests against Bangladesh and then all four at home against Pat Cummins' Australia to eliminate any ifs and buts.

The journey starts at the Zahoor Ahmed Stadium, which has traditionally favoured the batters but also offers some turn towards the business end of the match.

The visitors will start as overwhelming favourites in Test format, in which the Bangladesh is yet to beat India but the absence of Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Ravindra Jadeja could hurt the side.

Jadeja-Ashwin duo, at least against lesser Test nations on sub-continental tracks could be lethal but Axar Patel has done his hard yards over the past two seasons as the second choice left-arm spinner.

As many as 10 Indian players, if all are fit, select themselves in the playing XI and the most important call that the two Rahuls—skipper KL and head coach Dravid—need to make is about the fifth specialist bowler—a third pacer or a third spinner.

Whether India will field a third choice specialist spinner in wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav or slow left-arm orthodox Saurabh Kumar is there to be seen.

Saurabh, who has been a star performer for India A team in the recently concluded two-Test series against Bangladesh A with 15 wickets, would feel that he has made his case for a Test Cap in at least one of the two games.

Rahul's test as a leader In the past one year, Rahul has

## INDIA SQUAD

KL Rahul (C), Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Axar Patel, Umesh Yadav, Navdeep Saini, Jaydev Unadkat, Mohammed Siraj, Saurabh Kumar, KS Bharat, Kuldeep Yadav & Abhimanyu Easwaran



Skipper KL Rahul closely watches the ball while batting at the nets ahead of first Test against Bangladesh, starting Wednesday

n't been exactly exceptional in terms of cricketing smarts as far as captaincy is concerned and this series where he is likely to get two games will be an acid test as far as his long-term leadership ambition is concerned.

Monday, during the trophy unveiling ceremony with his counterpart Shakib Al Hasan, Rahul told the mediapersons that his team "plans to play aggressive cricket" as they know what exactly needs to be done in order to reach the WTC finals for the second consecutive time. But Rahul, whose performances in white-ball formats has been a bit underwhelming to say the least, will have to walk the talk in terms of showing

the required intent and aggression in batting department.

He will have young Shubman Gill for company with Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli and Shreyas Iyer manning the middle-order. Rishabh Pant will be back in what could safely be termed as his favourite format where his uncluttered batting has been a delightful spectacle for the Indian fans.

In the bowling department, Umesh Yadav, a master at his craft on barren sub-continental tracks will have Mohammed Siraj, Ashwin and Axar Patel for company.

As far as Bangladesh team is concerned, they will be keen to change their dismal winless record against India over the past 22 years.

# Giant-killers' gigantic test

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Doha, Dec 13:** Morocco's improbable, history-making run at the World Cup is about to get its ultimate test. Africa's first World Cup semifinalist is playing defending champion France and its star striker Kylian Mbappe, the leader of a new wave of soccer superstars coming out of an era dominated by Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

Wednesday's match has cultural and political connotations — Morocco was under French rule from 1912-1956 — and the outcome is far from the foregone conclusion many would presume by looking at the names of the players and the rankings of the teams.

Morocco have exceeded all expectations in Qatar by beating second-ranked Belgium in the group stage and then eliminating European powerhouses Spain and Portugal in the knockout phase to

reach the semifinals. No African or Arab nation have ever gotten this far. It is one of the biggest stories in the World Cup's 92-year history and Morocco are not done yet.

"I was asked if we can win the World Cup and I said, Why not? We can dream, it doesn't cost you anything to have dreams," said Walid Regragui, Morocco's French-born coach. "European countries are used to winning the World Cup and we have played top sides, we have not had an easy run. Anyone playing us is going to be afraid of us now." The defending champions have just passed their own big test by coming through a tough quarterfinal match against England, on a rare occasion when Mbappe was kept quiet.

No player has scored more than his five goals and it won't be easy for Mbappe to add to that tally against Morocco, which has yet to concede a goal to an opposition

player at this World Cup — or indeed in its nine games since Regragui was hired in August. The only goal allowed was an own-goal by its defender, Nayef Aguerd, against Canada in the group stage.

Morocco might have some injuries now — Aguerd and fellow center back Romain Saiss could be missing Wednesday — but Regragui's game plan relies on team shape and discipline more than any specific individual.

The Morocco coach said his team is ready to "change the mentality" of Africa, and he's told his players not to settle for anything less than the top prize.

Regragui said defender Achraf Hakimi is looking forward to a 'nice duel' with Mbappe, his teammate at Paris Saint-Germain, but added that France doesn't just depend on its star player.

The key to winning the game, he said, will be Morocco's 'team spirit' and the support of the crowd at

Al Bayt Stadium, where French President Emmanuel Macron is set to be in attendance along with tens of thousands of green-and-red-clad Morocco fans. It will feel like a home game for Morocco's players, which might level things up even more.

France start as the big favourites, though, because of their star quality and experience. In Mbappe and Antoine Griezmann, a forward who has reinvented himself as a midfield playmaker at the World Cup, the team has two of the World Cup's leading players while Olivier Giroud's winner against England took him to four goals — the same as Messi.

They have attacking threats from everywhere and that intangible quality of just knowing how to get the job done. France center back Raphael Varane said there will be no danger of complacency among his teammates in a game against the World's No.22-ranked team.

# INDIA THRASH BANGLA AT T20 WC FOR BLIND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Cuttack, Dec 13:** India defeated Bangladesh by seven wickets to secure their third consecutive win in the 3rd T20 Cricket World Cup for the Blind at the Barabati Stadium here Tuesday.

Opting to field, India made early inroads by dismissing Bangladesh openers Salman and Abid inside three overs. Bangladesh captain Md. Ashiqur Rahman and Md. Arif rebuilt their innings and stitched together 84 runs for the third wicket. The partnership was broken in the 13th over when Arif was run out after scoring run-a-ball 33.

Rahman was then joined by Tanzil in the middle and the pair batted till the end of the innings taking the total to 166 with a partnership of 61 runs. Rahman was dis-

missed in the last ball of the innings after scoring a well made 75 off 53 balls. Tanzil remained unbeaten at 20.

In reply, the Indian openers T Durga Rao and Nakula Badanayak made a quick start and scored 95 runs of 8.3 overs. Nakula was the first to be dismissed after scoring a quick 36 off 24 balls. Durga Rao (73) continued to score runs at a brisk pace. When he retired out in the 12th over, India were just 15 runs away from the target. Captain Ajay Kumar Reddy and Sunil Ramesh finished the match without any further trouble in 13.1 overs.

## BRIEF SCORES

Bangladesh 166/4 (Md. Ashiqur Rahman 75, Md. Arif 33) lost to India 167/3 in 13.1 overs (T Durga Rao 73, Nakula Badanayak 36).



Players of India and Bangladesh shake hands after the match at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, Tuesday

# Eves look to build on special win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Dec 13:** High on confidence India after an inspirational 'Super Over' win, Indian women will look to maintain momentum with improved fielding and bowling performance against the mighty Australia in the third women's T20 here Wednesday.

After the first two games at a packed DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai, the cricket caravan moves to the iconic Brabourne Stadium in the Southern part of the 'Maximum City' where another belter of a track awaits the two teams.

The game Sunday turned out to be a perfect advert for women's cricket with a 47,000 plus crowd witnessing an edge of the seat thriller. For a change, India, who have often gone suicidal from winning positions against Australia, were finally able to end up on the right side of the result.

However, the famous win is in the past now, and as pointed out by batting coach (acting head coach) Hrishikesh Kankar in a stirring speech after the game, India have a lot of work to do with the five-match series locked at 1-1. The ability has always been there to regularly compete with the likes of Australia but India need to do the little things to gain the remarkable consistency of their rivals.

Indian batters have done their job but the bowling and fielding in the first two games left a lot to be desired. The hosts have been able to take only two wickets in the series so far and that is a major concern.



The catching too has been pretty sub-standard.

The pace department doesn't give a lot of hope with Meghna Singh leaking runs and rookie left-arm pacer Anjali Sarvani not able to provide early breakthroughs.

Renuka Thakur, who has been India's standout bowler in the last six months, too is yet to take a wicket. To be fair to Renuka, she does need a bit of nip in the air to

let the ball do all the talking.

Wrist-spinner Devika Vaidya, who is playing her first T20 series in eight years, is yet to make an impact with the ball but did her bit with the willow in a tense situation with a couple of boundaries.

With Yastika Bhatia warming the bench, Jimmah Rodrigues needs to find the runs after two failures while opener Shafali Verma needs to build on her quickfire starts.

# SHANTANU, SUBHRANSHU PROP ODISHA vs BARODA

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 13:** Shantanu Mishra (61, 163b, 6x4) and skipper Subhranshu Senapati (52, 143b, 7x4) scored fighting half centuries to help Odisha reach 214/5 at the end of Day 1 of their Ranji Trophy 2022-23 campaign opener against Baroda at the Vikas Cricket Ground here, Tuesday.

Baroda won the toss and opted to field first. Their decision paid dividends when Lukman Meriwala (2/46) dismissed Anurag Sarangi on the fifth delivery of the first over. However, Shantanu and Subhranshu carefully negotiated with the new ball and went on to add 106 runs for the second wicket.

Both the batters were watchful throughout their innings. However, left-arm spinner Ninad Rathva (2/50) trapped the Odisha skipper in front to break the dangerous-looking partnership midway into the post-lunch session. Seasoned Biplab Samantray (26) joined

Shantanu in the middle.

Shantanu too followed his partner into the dressing room just before the tea giving Rathva his second scalp of the day. Biplab was joined by Kartik Biswal (31) at the middle as the pair forged together a 51-run stand for the fourth wicket. It was looking like the duo would take Odisha past 200.

However, Baroda gave Odisha a double blow, starting with Meriwala getting rid of Biplab. Another left-arm spinner Bhargav Bhatt (1/51) then dismissed Kartik the very next over to put Baroda in a strong position. At the time of stumps, Abhishek Raut (33 batting, 33b, 5x4, 1x6) and wicketkeeper-batter Rajesh Dhuper (6 batting) were occupying the crease having a 34-run partnership.

## BRIEF SCORES

Odisha 214/5 (Shantanu Mishra 61, Subhranshu Senapati 52; Lukman Meriwala 2/46, Ninad Rathva 2/50) vs Baroda. Match to continue.



Shantanu Mishra



Subhranshu Senapati

# TICKET PRICES ANNOUNCED FOR FIH WORLD CUP 2023

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Dec 13:** The highest ticket price for a men's hockey World Cup match has been set at ₹500, the organisers said Tuesday.

"India match day tickets are priced at ₹500 for West Stand, ₹400 for East Stand, and ₹200 for North and South Stand. For non-India match days, tickets are priced at ₹500 for West Stand, ₹200 for East Stand and ₹100 for North and South Stand," Hockey India said in a statement.

"For qualifiers onwards till the final in Bhubaneswar, tickets are priced at ₹500 for West Stand, ₹400 for East Stand and ₹200 for North and South Stand.

"For positioning matches from



(9-16 placings) in Rourkela, tickets are priced at ₹500 for West Stand, ₹200 for East Stand and ₹100 for North and South Stand. Each ticket allows the spectator to watch the entire day's proceedings at the respective venue," the national federation added.

The World Cup will be jointly hosted by Bhubaneswar and Rourkela, January 13-29 next year.

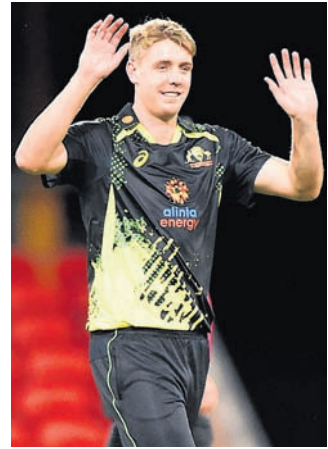
# Stokes, Green headline IPL's mini-auction list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Dec 13:** World's premier all-rounders Ben Stokes of England and Cameron Green of Australia are set to enjoy bidding frenzy as 405 players will go under the hammer for 87 slots at the IPL mini-auction December 23 in Kochi.

England's Test captain Stokes and the rising Aussie sensation Green are in the highest base price bracket of ₹2 crore while former England Test captain Joe Root has also put his name up at ₹1 crore.

"Out of 405 players, 273 are Indians and 132 are overseas players of which 4 players are from associate nations. The total capped players are 119, uncapped players



are 282 and 4 from associate nations. A maximum of 87 slots are now available with up to 30 being



slotted for overseas players," BCCI secretary Jay Shah was quoted as saying in a media release.

While Kolkata Knight Riders has the lowest purse available at ₹7.2 crore, Sunrisers Hyderabad, with ₹42.25 crore and 13 spots available, are expected to go on a buying spree after a poor last season.

Another inconsistent team, Punjab Kings are also likely to come out all guns blazing at the mini-auction with ₹32.20 crore in its kitty. Chennai Super Kings (₹20.45 crore), Lucknow Super Giants (₹23.35 crore), Mumbai Indians (₹20.55 crore), Delhi Capitals (₹19.45 crore) and defending champions Gujarat Titans (₹19.25 crore) can also go a fair distance for the players they want.

With hard-hitting, pace bowling all-rounders being the need of the hour, Stokes and Green are likely

to command anything in the range of ₹15-17 crore from at least two to three franchises.

With most of the top Indian players already in one team or the other, out-of-favour national team players Mayank Agarwal and Manish Pandey at ₹1 crore base price will command a fair bit of bidding.

But the same cannot be said about veterans Ishant Sharma and Ajinkya Rahane, who have kept their going price at a modest ₹50 lakh, expecting to get a team or two raise the paddle for them.

One of the players who can cause a bidding war is South African batter Rilee Rossouw, who has been prolific on Indian tracks. Rising Englishman Harry Brook has kept his base price at ₹1.5 crore.