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BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY DECEMBER 8 | 2023

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SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, GOVT. OF ODISHA

leisure

'Cinema's about

free artistic

expression'

New Delhi: Actress Triptii Dimri, who

has created a big impact with a small

role in the blockbuster movie Animal,

said that cinema is about free artistic ex-

pression and added that she submitted to

the director's vision for the film, although

about free artistic expression, and it

should be that way. When I did the rape

scene and the suicide scene in *Bulbull* and

Qala, there were a lot of people who

reached out to me and said that I should

not have performed that scene because

it's not a pleasant scene because it can

The 29-year-old, who featured in

Forbes Asia's 30 Under 30 list of 2021,

added: "Even if your character is killing

people or your character is doing some-

thing bad or harming someone, you

have to feel everything that the character

is supposed to feel because he's also

coming from someplace, and in his

head, the actions that he's taking are

IANS

make people take that step in life.'

The actress said: "I think cinema is

it has been tagged misogynistic.

P DIDDY SUED BY 4TH WOMAN FOR ALLEGED SEXUAL ASSAULT

Another woman has filed a lawsuit against rapper Sean 'Diddy' Combs for sexual assault. This is Combs' fourth sexual assault lawsuit in three weeks. The victim claims that in 2003 she was 'sex trafficked' and 'gang raped' by Combs, Harve Pierre, the then-president of Bad Boy Records and a third unnamed person.

SOFIA GETS RESTRAINING ORDER AGAINST STALKER

Actress Sofia Vergara has been granted a temporary restraining order against an alleged stalker. The 51-year-old sought protection for herself and her 32-year-old son to keep Gregory Brown away from them both after the TV star accused him of 'aggressive and harassing conduct', reports Female First UK.



FORTUNE FORECAST GaneshaSpeaks.com

accuracy • reliability • trust

You may feel empty, and completely down-and-out today. Ganesha says that this may make you feel a bit more inclined to spirituality, Meditation and prayer will engage more of your attenmaterial progress.

TAURUS

You are likely to be in a mood to get away from the need break. You would naturally try to stay free from future concerns and commitments and keep all your woes and worries aside for the day

Today, you may encounter unusual challenges, says Ganesha, You will come up with new thoughts and tactics, which will bring about positive changes and results. Avoid any confrontation with those living around you. Ganesha advises you to keep your cool during the day.

CANCER

Financially, you may be in a Payment of bills, taxes and loans may keep you busy for most part of the day. You may even contemplate borrowing money to meet the demands. However, you are likely to receive one of your pending payments, which will be enough to get you out of the fix.

Today, Ganesha advises you to keep the Bhagavad Gita's verses in mind, and persist in fulfilling your duties without bothering about the fruits of your labour. Put in some extra effort to finish off whatever you undertake today. Patience bears its fruits and they are always sweet.

You better identify your worth in the realms of emotions, feelings and sentiments. You shall warm up to and about everything - from play to colleagues to family. Simultaneously, you may realise where your limitations are. Ganesha predicts that the artist in you will flourish

Well, today is just not your aren't looking too good. However, there's no point in getting anxgood' does not necessarily mean bad. In any case, if it's a stressful day you have had, be sure to have an equally enjoyable evening.

SCORPIO

A creative thought or an innovative idea may spice up your routine work. Apparently, you may seem all worked up and disorganised, but actually you may be quite systematic when it comes to your work. Keep the enthusiasm in you alive to make life happier, tips Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Going to private parties is a high probability today. All in all, make the most of it as you get nostalgic with old friends and make plans with new ones. Moreover. relatives will be pleased to meet you after a long time.

CAPRICORN

Whatever field you are in, your career matters will top your priority list. You will put your personal life on the back burner for a while. This change of places will surely bring you great rewards as your performance will drastically improve and everyone will appreciate your efforts. Credit goes to your family members and well-wishers for believing in you in the toughest of times and supporting you along the way, says Ganesha.

AQUARIUS

Aim. Shoot. Achieve. Today, you will concentrate your energies to execute your plans with precision. Naturally, your work progresses by leaps and bounds By sundown, you will achieve far more than everyone's estimation. That's the way to go, says Ganesha.

PISCES

You will have difficulty in interpreting the behaviour of your life partner today. It is better to bring transparency in your relationship rather than to doubt it. Speak freely about your problems and communicate with your spouse. Business relationships will also face rough weather.

Tejasswi opens up on love, temptations

ing her boyfriend Karan Kundrra in the upcoming episode of Temptation Island India.

From the recent promo, the duo is finally making their debut to gether on the show in the upcoming episode. Talking about her take on love and temptations, she said: You can never

train the heart

to believe

emerges in the brain. Our heart doesn't understand this. If you fall in love, you're just in love; there's no going back. Previously, in his interviews for the show, Karan did not hesitate to express Tejasswi's positive, practical, and mature nature. He also shared

that, at times, she takes on the role of the elder one in their relationship, offering useful and effective solutions. Having been together for almost three years, the duo has garnered significant attention for their 'made for each

lives. All of this makes us anticipate how Tejasswi's inputs will affect the relaionships in the villa.

India streams on JioCinema.

other' appearance in their daily

Temptation Island

the coming weekend episodes Aoora's real name is Park Min-jun. He was a mem-

enter Bigg Boss 17 pop singer Aoora will

entrant

Samarth

Manasvi

Mamgai,

been evicted.

in the 17th sea-

son of Bigg

According to a

source, Aoora will

be seen er

tering

show in

ber of the

Korean boy

South

who

Jurel and

has

after

K-pop icon Aoora to

Double-A and its subunit Aoora&Hoik. He debuted September 4, 2009 with the song Love Back. be the third He has passionately shared his wild card love for Indian culture, performing Korean renditions of popular

Hindi film songs that garnered him millions of views on his social media platforms. In India, his bourgeoning base of fans call themselves Aurians.

> Aoora, after paying a foot-tapping tribute to Bappi Lahiri with a new version of his cult hit Jimmy Jimmy, performed his take on RD Burman's mellifluous clas-

> > Mastani. flash mob performance at Marine August

NAMAN 2023

Odia cine stars to salute Commissionerate Police

Bhubanesawar: In a bid to acknowledge the indomitable spirit of the Commissionerate Police, the Naman Foundation will organise its 2nd edition of Naman 2023 at the 7th Batallion Ground, Saturday. The event will be a tribute

to all the police personnel who everyday risk their lives for the safety of people, shared the organisers, adding, their families also sacrifice a lot. A press meet was held re-

cently where the Vice-Chairman of the foundation and actor Sabvasachi Mishra, Chairman and music director Prem Anand, Managing Trustee Ullash Behera were present. This vear several women police personnel will be felicitated for their contributions, it

Sidhath Mohapatra, Archita Sahu, Arindam Sabyasachi Mishra, Elina

Samantaray, Sivani Sangita, Akash Das Nayak, Sheetal Patra, Jyoti Ranjan Nayak, Divya Mohanty, Papu Pom Pom, Pragyam Khatua,

Krishna Beura, Sashank, Deeptirekha Pagi are among the Odia film celebrities who are set to perform during the



PEANUTS

justified."



CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



FUN POST

CROSSWORD Copyright ©2023 PuzzleJunction.com

22 Brass Across

1	Machinist's to
3	Gyro meat
6	Stein
9	Witch's mate

11 Tiger type of old (5-7)

10 Sanctuary

- 14 Shack
- 16 Barks
- 18 Some tennis
- matches (5,7)

21 Wrath

- 17 Beast of burden

Down

- 2 Chocolate substitute

instrument

24 Long-jawed fish

25 Highway hauler

26 Henrik Ibsen's

work

dinosaur

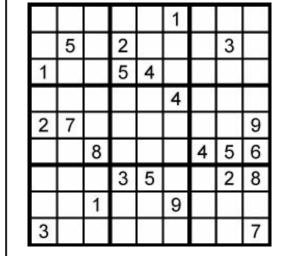
4 Tablet holder 5 Sauropod

1 Solemn promise

- 20 Piquancy 22 Balmoral cousin
- 23 Give it a whirl

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

FIIGURESKATIING CROSSWORD

7 2 1 5 8 3 6 5 8 9 1 SUDOKU 6 7 5 8 1 3 7 6 4 7 2 5 1 9 8 3 6 3 5 8 4 6 7 2 1 9

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

6 Writing genre

7 Burst of wind

8 Type of club

11 London district

12 Embrocated

13 Hawaiian

strings

15 Revolver part

19 Place for a pin

(6,6)



HIGH-LEVEL PROBE

India announces 'high-level' probe on claims of a plot to assassinate Gurpatwant Singh Pannun NATIONAL P7



FUNDING BILL BLOCKED

US Senate blocks emergency spending bill to provide billions of dollars in new security assistance for Ukraine and Israel

INTERNATIONAL P8



RAFA READY FOR RETURN

Tennis legend Rafa Nadal says he will return to competitive tennis in January next year at Brisbane

SPORTS

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BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY DECEMBER 8 | 2023

SHORT TAKES Arjun Munda new Agriculture min

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu Thursday accepted the resignations of Union ministers Narendra Singh Tomar, Prahlad Singh Patel and Renuka Singh Saruta, who successfully contested the recent Assembly polls, and assigned Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda the additional charge of the Agriculture ministry. As per a communiqué by the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the President gave additional charge of Agriculture Ministry and Farmer's Welfare to Munda, while Minister of State for **Electronics and Information** Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar has been given additional charge of Jal Shakti as MoS.

Govt issues alert against Meftal

New Delhi: The Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) has issued a drug safety alert, advising healthcare professionals and patients to monitor adverse reactions of painkiller Meftal, commonly used for menstrual cramps and rheumatoid arthritis. The mefenamic acid painkiller is prescribed in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, dysmenorrhoea, mild to moderate pain, inflammation, fever and

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



There's no record of you giving hate speeches or indulging in violence. How can you be in the ministerial race?

MARKET WATCH



WEAT			
	BHUB	СТК	
MAX	23.9°C	23.4°	
≅ MIN	18.8°C	19.0°	Forecast
Humidity	89%	91%	Light to
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	moderate rain

RAIL FIRE: A minor fire breaks out in a coach of Bhubaneswar-Howrah Jan Shatabdi Express at Cuttack station, Thursday

3-yr-old boy charred to death, 5 hurt

AGENCIES

Kendrapara, Dec 7: A threeyear-old child was charred to death and five others, including a 14-year-old boy, suffered burn injuries when illegally-stored petrol exploded at Badapada village under Pattamundai rural police station in the district Thursday evening, police said.

Ratnakar Mallick of Badapada had stored petrol in a drum illegally for the marriage procession of his son. However, the drum, which was kept inside a Ratnakar Mallick of Badapada had stored petrol in a drum illegally for marriage procession of his son

■ The drum, which was kept inside a thatched house, accidentally caught fire due to short-circuit and the explosion took place

thatched roof house, accidentally caught fire due to shortcircuit and the explosion took place, a police officer said.

The three-year-old boy, identified as Gulu Mallick, was burnt to death and five others were

injured. Of them, the condition of the 14-year-old boy is stated to be serious and he is undergoing treatment at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, Pattamundai rural police station inspector-in-charge (IIC) Padmalava Pradhan said, adding four others were undergoing treatment at the sub-divisional hospital here.

Fire tenders were pressed into service and the blaze was brought under control, Pradhan said, adding no one has been **GRANT OF CITIZENSHIP TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS**

Why only Assam: SC

New Delhi, Dec 7: The Supreme Court Thursday asked the Centre why did it single out Assam and exclude West Bengal from grant of citizenship under Section 6A of the Citizenship Act when the latter shares a much larger border with Bangladesh.

Section 6A of the Citizenship Act relates to illegal immigrants in Assam. While hearing as many as 17 petitions to examine the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act relating to illegal immigrants in Assam, a five-judge Constitution bench, headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, observed that illegal immigration is a serious problem and asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, what is the Union government doing to safeguard the border.

'Why did you single out Assam when West Bengal shares a much larger border with Bangladesh? We want to know why was West Bengal excluded from the grant of citizenship...The argument cannot be that there was agitation in Assam...Why was West Bengal left alone...What is the position in West Bengal now?" the Bench also comprising Justices Surva Kant, MM Sundresh, JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra asked.

As the hearing commenced,



Top court asks Centre, Assam to provide by December 11 detailed data on grant of Indian citizenship under Section 6A of the Citizenship Act

the Centre clarified that examination of the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act has nothing to do with any other amendments in the Citizenship Act.

Mehta told the five-judge Constitution Bench that the application of Section 6A is limited to only a specific period of time.

"I would like to begin with some factual clarifications. Your lordships are examining a limited question of constitutional validity of Section 6A. This is confined to a very few individuals during a particular period of time. This examination has nothing to do with any other amendment to Citizenship Act," he told the bench.

Mehta told SC that so far as the contentions as pointed out by the petitioners are concerned

like influx of immigrants from foreign countries, paucity of resources that were otherwise available to them, etc, all their concerns are true.

"Person is deemed citizen if his parents or any grandparents were born in undivided India. The category is very limited-it applies in Assam, a limited geographical area. The category from which persons are permitted is only Bangladesh, a very limited area," Mehta said.

During the hearing, the CJI remarked that there were people who benefited from the grant of citizenship under Section 6A.

"What happens to those who weren't granted the benefit of citizenship but are illegal immigrants. Nothing was done about them at all. Everyone who came between 1966 and 1971 did not get citizenship because for it they needed to be detected. So, within that larger circle, there is a smaller circle of people who came to India but never got citizenship. What happened to those people?" the CJI asked.

The top court directed the Centre and the Assam government to provide extensive data by December 11, including those on the number of Bangladeshi immigrants granted Indian citizenship in Assam between January 1, 1966 and March 25, 1971.

Nod to ₹4,804cr projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: The State-Level (SLSWCA), chaired by Chief Secretary 17.553 people. Thursday.

Welspun Living Limited's proposal to invest ₹200 crore for a textile facility in Kendrapara that would create 2,000 jobs and Tata Steel Downstream Products Limited's plan for a 10,00,000 MT steel service centre in Kalinga Nagar of Jajpur with an investment of ₹735 crore and prom-

in Jajpur to produce 2,20,000 MT Ferro Chrome and 20 MW WHRB Power, creating 1,190 jobs. Jindal Stainless Limited will establish a stainless-steel service centre unit at JSL Stainless Steel Park in Jajpur. With an investment of ₹150 crore, the project will generate 315 jobs. Crackers India Alloys Ltd is set to invest ₹101.50 crore to set up a 52.800 MT steel casting mill and rolling mill with ancillary facilities in

proposal for a mild steel strips and pipes manufacturing unit in Sundargarh got approval. With an investment of ₹100 crore, the project will create 295 jobs.

- Rungta Paints Pvt Ltd to set up manufacturing unit for paints and allied products in Dhenkanal with ₹991 crore investment,
- Jajpur to produce 2,20,000 MT Ferro Chrome and 20 MW WHRB Power will generate 1,190 employment opportunities
- crore in a Multi-Modal ICD in Kendrapara,

crore, the unit will create 700 jobs.

The SLSWCA approved the proposal of Modulus Oleochem and Surfactants Private Limited for a chemical manufacturing unit in Baliapal Industrial Estate of Balasore at an investment of ₹313.51 crore. It will create 300 jobs.

Limited will invest ₹120.39 crore in a chemical hub in Khurda, setting up a bulk industrial chemical storage, repacking and handling facility, offering 258 potential jobs. With paint giant Berger setting foot in Odisha, two of its ancillary companies will invest ₹54.55 crore in a manufacturing unit for plastic pails, lids, bottle and drum in Khurda, providing jobs to 152 individuals.

Among other companies, Kaibalya Logistics Private Limited will invest ₹110 crore in a Multi-Modal Inland Container Depot (ICD) in Mahakalapada block of Kendrapara. It will generate 480 jobs.

Single Window Clearance Authority PK Jena, approved 19 investment projects worth ₹4,804.35 crore with a potential to create employment opportunities for

ise of 335 jobs got the SLSWCA nod. IMFA Limited will invest ₹977.43 crore

Barbil, Keonjhar, creating 240 jobs. Envirocare Infrasolution Pvt Ltd's

Rungta Paints Private Limited plans to set up a manufacturing unit for paints, allied products and intermediate in Dhenkanal. With an investment of ₹991

INFRA BOOST

- creating 700 jobs
- IMFA's ₹977.43 crore investment plan in
- Kaibalya Logistics Pvt Ltd to invest ₹110

Transnova Express India Private

Once a Maoist, Seethakka now T'gana min

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Dec 7: From a gun-wielding Maoist to lawyer to MLA, and now a minister in Telangana. Meet Danasari Anasuya, popularly known as Seethakka. It was an emotional mo-

ment when the 52-year-old MLA from Mulug constituency was invited to take oath as a minister at LB Stadium in presence of thousands of people, Thursday. In the just-concluded

Assembly elections, she was re-elected from Mulug constituency, reserved for STs.

Hailing from Koya tribe, Seethakka had joined Maoist movement at an early age and was heading an armed squad active in the same tribal belt. She participated in many gunfights with the police and lost her husband



Disillusioned with the movement, she surrendered to the police under a general amnesty plan in 1994.

With this, life took a new turn for Seethakka, who pursued her studies and secured a law degree. She also practised as an advocate at a

court in Warangal. She later joined Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and contested from Mulug in 2004 elections. However, facing a Congress wave, she finished runner-up. However, in 2009, she won the election from the same constituency. She finished third in the 2014 polls. In 2017, she quit TDP to

join Congress and made a strong comeback in 2018 by wresting the seat despite the statewide sweep by TRS (now BRS), Seethakka hit the headlines with her humanitarian work in remote villages in her constituency during Covid-19 pandemic.

Carrying a load of es-

sentials on her shoulders.

she walked through the forests, rocky terrain and crossed rivulets to help the needy during the lockdown.

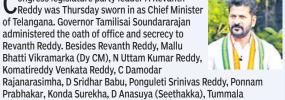
Last year, she completed her PhD in political sciences from Osmania University. The tribal MLA did her PhD in social exclusion and deprivation of migrant tribals of erstwhile Andhra Pradesh a case study of Gotti Kova tribes in Warangal and

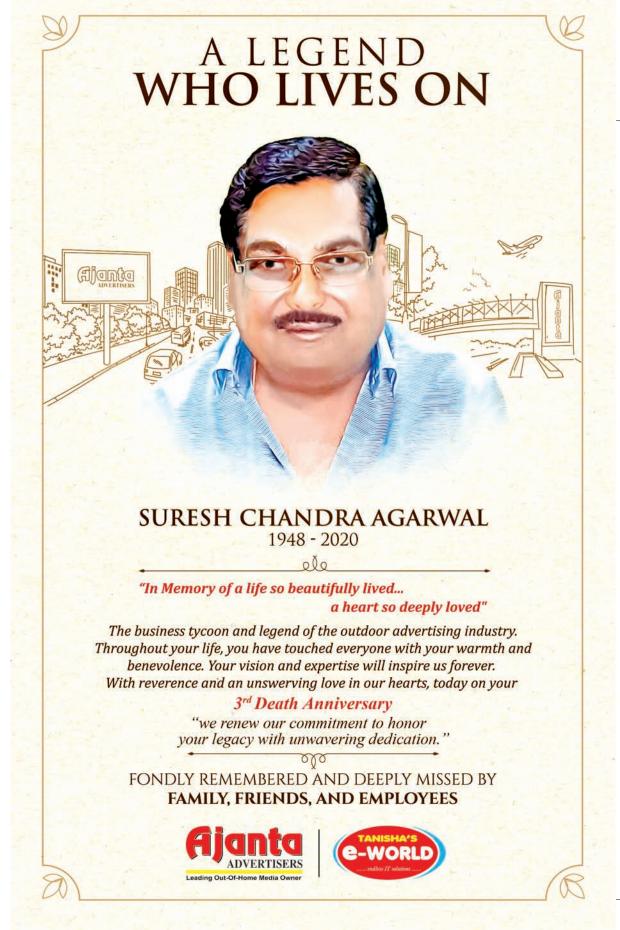
REVANTH REDDY SWORN IN AS CM

Nageswara Rao and Jupally Krishna Rao took oath as ministers.

Khammam.

Congress legislature party leader A Revanth Reddy was Thursday sworn in as Chief Minister of Telangana. Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan administered the oath of office and secrecy to Revanth Reddy, Besides Revanth Reddy, Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka (Dy CM), N Uttam Kumar Reddy, Komatireddy Venkata Reddy, C Damodar





₹150cr cash seized from Boudh Distillery

Bhubaneswar: The Income Tax (I-T) department Thursday recovered more than ₹150 crore cash after it carried out searches against an Odisha-based distillery group and linked entities on charges of alleged tax evasion, official sources said. The raids were launched Wednesday and the department officials have deployed counting machines to ascertain the exact amount of cash that appears to be 'unaccounted', they said.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Cuttack 4.12.23, I, Manasi Biswal, W/o Pitamber Biswal hereby declare that my correct DOB is 14.05.1982 as per my all documents. But my husband's service record has been wrongly mentioned DOB 10.08.1986. DOB 14.05.1982 and DOB 10.08.86 one and same

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Cuttack 4.12.23, I, Manasi Biswal, W/o Pitamber Biswal hereby declare that my correct name is Manasi Biswal as per my all documents. But my husband's service record has been wrongly mentioned as Manashi Biswal. Manashi Biswal and Manasi Biswal one and same person.

I, Sumitra Rani Sahoo, W/o Himansu Sekhar Sahoo, Village of Beguniapatna, P.O.-Kalikaprasad, P.S./Dist.-Nayagarh, Pin-752079, Odisha declare by this affidavit No.778 Dtd.-06.12.2023 that now onwards I shall be known as SUMITRA SAHOO for all future purposes.

I, No.14448512N Rank: HAV (SKT) PRADEEPTA KUMAR SWAIN, S/o. Late Pabitra Kumar Swain of 253, MED REGT. now residing at Lodhachua, Vill/P.O.- Lodhachua. Tahasil-Ranpur, Dist.-Nayagarh, Pin-752026 State that modification of my mother surname is Sajani Swain instead of Sajani Devi. Hereafter I will be called as Sajani Swain as per Aadhaar Card.



By virtue of an affidavit before the Executive Magistrate, Basudevpur on dt. 05.10.2023, I Smt. Madhusmita Sahoo, aged about 27 yrs., W/o- Sek Raju, D/o- Muralidhar Sahoo of Vill/P.O./P.S/ Basudevpur, Dist.-Bhadrak of State Odisha have changed my name from "Madhusmita Sahoo" to "Karishma Bibi" after getting marriage with one Sek Raju, S/o- Sek Baraktulla. Hence. I shall be known as "Karishma Bibi" instead of Madhusmita Sahoo for all purpose in the future.

Pandian for pollution-free Daya

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: Perturbed at the pollution in Daya river on the City outskirts, 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman VK Pandian Thursday directed the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB), Urban Development department and Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) to take immediate action to make the river pollution free.

Chairing a high-level meeting, Pandian directed the BMC authorities to make it mandatory for all institutions to connect wastewater to sewerage lines.

It was also decided in the meeting to construct a treatment plant with advanced technology by Water Corporation of Odisha (WATCO) at the confluence of

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: Odisha

Police has arrested one more

person in the interstate fake SIM

card/mule bank accounts racket,

taking the total arrests in the

A release by Odisha Police's

special task force (STF) said

Samim Islam of Gudhia village

in West Bengal's Murshidabad

district was arrested December

4 and produced in a court in the

tional chief judicial magistrate,

Lalbag, Murshidabad and was

brought to Bhubaneswar after

getting three-day transit remand.

Islam was one of the key mem-

bers of the racket having links

mainly in West Bengal and Bihar.

three persons identified as Sk

Hapizul and Sk Jahangir of

Balasore and Sk Jamiruddin of

Mohanpur district in West

Bengal's Paschim Medinipur,

police said, adding that they

EPF pensioners' dharna

Bhubaneswar: National Co-ordination

Jantar Mantar in New Delhi December

12 to press for fulfillment of several

demands including enhancement of

Bhagyadhar Brahma, state general

By virtue of an affidavit

I, Smt. Basanti Sarangi,

before the Notary, Ranpur,

W/o Manoranjan Sarangi,

At/P.O.- Raj Ranpur, P.S.-

Ranpur, Dist.- Nayagarh,

Odisha do hereby declared

that my original sale deed

bearing No.11411701148 &

Dt.4.10.2017, Khata No.196, Plot No.526, Mouza

Karadapalli, Ranpur along

with some essential documents have been lost at Narasinghpur to

Ranpur Road site on

dt.16.11.2023, time 2 P.M.

while I am going to my

house with my husband's

by motor cycle. It has been

reported to Police Station,

Ranpur & F.I.R. has been

dt.3.12.2023. I never avail

any loan by mortgaging

this sale deed from any

seeking loan from SBI,

Ranpur Branch, IFSC

at any place, please

Basanti Sarangi

Bank & I am interested for

Code SBIN0013599 by this

by any person any where

inform it to the Branch

Manager, SBI, Ranpur.

sale deed. If it be obtained

lodged with GD No.003

secretary of All Odisha EPF

vice-president said.

minimum monthly pension to ₹9,000,

Pensioners' Association and national

Committee of EPS-95 Pensioners'

Association has called a dharna at

Earlier, the STF had arrested

He was produced before addi-

neighbouring state.

case to four, officials said.



Daya river and Gangua nullah to purify the river water.

Besides, he also stressed on creating awareness about connecting all the houses in BMC

mule bank account syndicate

bank accounts which they sold

along with connected mobile

numbers to various cyber, cyber-

financial, sextortion scammers

and other criminals based in

Kolkata and other parts of India,

in the tri-junction area of Odisha,

Jharkhand and West Bengal es-

pecially in the districts of

Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Purba

Medinipur, Paschim Medinipur,

East Sighbhum, West Singhbhum

and Saraikela," an official said,

adding that this racket was

headed by Sk Jamiruddin of

Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal.

Jamiruddin had employed

around 10-15 people at the rate

of ₹15,000 per month to open

ous interior areas of these dis-

tricts targeting mainly poor vil-

lagers and persuaded them to

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: A local

court Thursday convicted a man

in a murder case, which created

a sensation in Capital City in

2022, and sentenced him to life im-

prisonment. The court however,

reserved its order on the co-ac-

cused in the case who remained

In September 2022, Kanha

Nayak and Ranju Nayak had

thrashed P Subrat Rao with a

wooden plank leading to his death.

Padmanav Pradhan said the in-

cident took place in Narayan

slum area in Unit VIII here.

Subrat was at loggerheads with

Kanha's family over a property

Capital police station IIC

absent during the hearing.

On the modus operandi of the

These members visited vari-

bank accounts.

open bank accounts.

POST NEWS NETWORK

According to the official, Sk

"This racket operates mainly

the release said.

racket, the STF said villagers

are generally offered ₹2,000 per

account for giving their docu-

ments and opening bank ac-

counts. However, the mobile num-

bers linked with bank accounts

are provided by gang members.

bank accounts along with con-

nected mobile numbers to var-

ious cyber, cyber-financial, sex-

tortion scammers and other

criminals in Kolkata and other

platforms like WhatsApp,

Facebook and Telegram to sell

the mule bank accounts at the

rate of ₹15,000 to ₹20,000 per ac-

count. So far, the racket has sold

around 5,000 mule bank accounts

in different platforms, the STF

The STF said it has also come

to the notice that scammers fre-

quently change the bank ac-

counts. Generally, they aban-

don the bank accounts once it

reaches a transaction of ₹1 lakh.

dispute. On the fateful day,

September 5, matters went to a

head when Subrat got into a bit-

ter spat with Kanha's sister,

Following this, an enraged

Kanha teamed up with Ranju

and hatched a conspiracy to kill

Subrat. The duo launched a vi-

cious attack on Subrat and hit

him mercilessly with wooden

planks. A profusely bleeding

Subrat was admitted to Capital

Hospital. He succumbed to the

The police registered a case

under IPC Sections 302 and 34 and

arrested Kanha within 5 days

while Ranju evaded arrest by

obtaining an interim bail from

injuries September 9.

Jhunu Navak, he added.

they said.

Man gets life term for murder

They also use social media

parts of India, the STF said.

In turn, the gang sells these

The 5T Chairman also directed the WATCO to expedite the sewerage works in the stipulated time and take steps to connect all the areas in the Capital city including slum areas to connect

Fourth arrest in SIM card & to implement PM-USHA

Bhubaneswar: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has written to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik urging him to implement Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) scheme in the state that aims to improve higher education and graduate employability. In his letter to Patnaik, Pradhan said PM-USHA will continue till March 2026 with a total outlay of ₹12,926.10 crore but the states are required to sign an MoU with the Ministry of Education. "The PM-USHA Scheme is an important step of the central government towards implementing the vision of NEP, to attain higher levels of access, equity, and excellence in the states/UTs higher education system by prioritising the unserved and

Idco, SPCB and BMC have been directed to ensure proper treatment of waste and water being released from various industries in the City.

with the sewerage line.

It was decided that WATCO and SPCB would conduct a technical inspection of sewerage water before it comes to the treat-

Pandian directed the BMC authorities to keep a close watch on the waste-generating industries and other establishments in the BMC area to keep the water of Daya clean. The Daya Task Force headed by BDA Vice-Chairman Balwant Singh has taken steps in coordination with various agencies to clean the river.

Singh made a presentation in this regard in the meeting.

Dharmendra urges CM

underserved areas," the letter said.

POST NEWS NETWORK the project as soon as possible because eight years have already New Delhi, Dec 7: Biju Janata passed since the announcement

BJD seeks early completion

of coastal highway project

Dal (BJD) MP Manas Mangaraj

Thursday raised concern over the

delay in coastal highway project

in Odisha and requested the

Union government to take steps

for the completion of the 346 km

The BJD MP raised the issue

in the Rajya Sabha during Zero

Hour. Mangaraj said the proj-

ect, connecting several districts

of the state, was announced by

the Union government in 2015.

He asked the Union government

to come up with the detailed

project report highlighting the

status of the implementation of

proved an important develop-

ment in terms of trade, tourism,

communication and industry.

However, there has been unde-

fined delay in the development

of the project. It comprises two

parts - connecting Rameswar

to Ratanpur and Ratanpur to

Digha. It was to be developed

The BJD MP said that the

Union government cancelled the

first two packages without any

defined reason. The Centre gave

clearance to two packages but the

project was stopped due to en-

vironment clearance from the

Union Ministry of Environment.

Mangaraj said, adding that the

clearance was given in August

2023 but there has been no head-

under the four packages,

"The project would have

the project.

Mangaraj said.

'Take steps for layover of flight at

Deoghar airport'

MP Bhartruhari Mahtab

New Delhi: Biju Janata Dal (BJD)

Thursday urged the Union Civil Aviation Ministry to take steps for layover of Bhubaneswar-Patna flight at Deoghar Airport for the benefit of pilarims visiting Baidyanath Dham. The Cuttack MP, while speaking in Lok Sabha during zero hour, said that a large number of pilgrims from Odisha visit Deoghar, which is also known as Baidyanath Dham, an important Hindu pilgrimage site. He said it is one of the few places in India where the Jyotirlinga and the Shaktipeeth are lying together side by side. and the site is famous for the Shravan mela. "A large number of devotees also visit Baidyanath Dham via Kolkata. As has already been mentioned, there has been a long-pending demand from the devotees of Thakur Anukulchandra regarding layover of Bhubaneswar-Patna flight at Deoghar, I request the government to take necessary steps for lavover of Bhubaneswar-Patna flight at Deoghar Airport without

of the project and no significant development has been made as

further delay," Mahtab said.

way made by the Centre. "The Central government needs to work for completion of of now," Mangaraj said. CM lays foundation for Narsee

Monjee Management Institute ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid the foundation for Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS) at Infovalley in Bhubaneswar, Thursday.

The NMIMS is a leading management institute in the country. Set up in 40 Acres of land given by the state government, the Institute will reserve 30 per cent of seats for students of Odisha on merit. The Institute has been set up by Shri Vile Parle Kelavani Mandal Trust.

Speaking on the occasion Patnaik said that Odisha in recent times has made significant strides in various socio-economic parameters. It is now one of the fastest-growing economies in the country. The rising economic status of the state has created immense opportunities to attract talent from India and across the

India is now a leading economy of the world — the fifth largest

among the nations, and set to become third in a few years. This massive economic growth of India is driven by its youth power, he further said

Continuing on the power of youth, he said that the youth are our strength, our assets, and our hope for the future. The youth of India are now considered the hope for the global economy. This is evident from the number of global CEOs and management thinkers that India has produced.

The Chief Minister asserted that this is purely a contribu-

tion of Indian management institutes. The quality of their education, including the Indian value system, has placed Indian management professionals in great demand across the globe.

In the last few decades, he continued, management, as a profession of choice, has increased manifold, and this demand has been supplemented by private business schools in addition to the efforts of IIMs, and other premier government-run business institutes

The Chief Minister said that the landscape of higher education has undergone significant advancements since the year 2000. The state witnessed a surge in university establishments. expansions in course offerings, and infrastructure improvements across all streams of education.

Patnaik hoped that the NMIMS will contribute to strengthening the educational ambiance in the state and will provide support for societal causes as well.

Does North vs South debate warrant?

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi. Dec 7: Soon after the Congress Party's defeat in Hindi heartland states - Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a debate ensued on North vs South divide as the BJP doesn't have government in any of the southern states while the Congress won another one - Telangana after winning Karnataka in May this year.

Following the election results, Congress MP Karti P Chidambaram posted on social media platform X, "The SOUTH". But it was Congress leader Praveen Chakravarty who triggered the debate by posting on X that the North-South boundary lines are getting thicker and

Chakravarty, though, deleted his post after it faced flak from different quarters. But the ship had sailed by the time and the issue started trending on social media with several influencers talking about the divide as the Congress and non-BJP parties governing economically and socially developed southern states.

DMK MP Senthil Kumar December 5 added fuel to the fire with his remarks in Lok Sabha that the BJP can only win in 'goumutra states' referring to the Hindi heartland states and not in southern states. He later withdrew his statement and requested that words be expunged. However, the statement rocked the Parliament with BJP MPs targeting INDIA alliance

for breaking the country. South vs North: India's Great

Divide, a book authored by Nilakantan RS, speaks in detail about the mammoth difference between the two regions on the parameters of economy, health and education etc and the bias that southern states have been suffering due to the centralised policies of the Union government. The south has performed much better on the parameters of health, education and economy than the north. "Kerala, for instance, has an almost eleven-year advantage over Uttar Pradesh in terms of life expectancy at birth," the book comments. The Infant Mortality Report (IMR) in Kerala was 7 while the same in Uttar Pradesh was 43 and in Madhya Pradesh it was 48 in 2018.

On the economic front, all five southern states were among

the 10 richest large states of the country in 2018-19. The book commented that despite having a larger share in the revenue contribution, the southern states have been getting less financial assistance from the Centre and the centralization of policies is adding to their suffering. It referred to the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 whose goal is to reach 50 per cent enrolment in tertiary education by 2035.

"Some states in southern India have already exceeded that goal. Designing a policy whose fifteen-year goal has already been achieved is another way of condemning the south to the status quo while waiting for the north to catch up," South vs North: India's Great Divide reads.

(Tomorrow, Part II)

Cong seeks subsidy hike for rain-hit farmers

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: The Odisha Congress Thursday demanded that the state government enhance agricultural input subsidy (AIS) to ₹25,000 per hectare for farmers who have suffered crop loss due to Cyclone Michaung led rainfall.

Odisha Pradesh Kisan Congress chairman Amiya Pattanaik claimed that standing paddy, cotton, vegetable and other crops in south Odisha and some other areas have been damaged due to the rains.

Pattanaik claimed the state government was providing AIS of ₹17,000 per hectare to farmers who have suffered crop loss of 33 per cent or more in irrigated areas and ₹8,500 per hectare for non-irrigated or rainfed areas, 'which is insufficient'.

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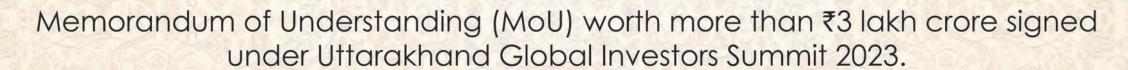


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Each new dawn brings the possibility of a new progress. **THE MOTHER**



Erik Berglöf

to invest in

fairer, more

economy

Only by committing

green - and to build

Nature as Infra

or millennia, natural infrastructure – such as river systems, wet- \dashv lands, coastal plains, sand dunes, and forests – supported the development of human civilisation. In fact, our ability to harness such infrastructure, for everything from food and drinking water to stormsurge protection and flood mitigation, has been central to our success as a species. And it will prove vital to our future survival.

Technological advances propelled the evolution of infrastructure. Green turned to grey, with concrete, cable, and steel delivering energy, communications, and transportation - and, with them, unprecedented growth and development. But while rapid modernisation produced once-unimaginable prosperity, it has had grave unintended consequences, not least the environmental degradation and greenhousegas emissions that are jeopardising our very existence.

The question now is how to meet urgent environmental goals – reducing emissions and protecting and restoring nature and biodiversity - while enabling developing economies to fulfill their legitimate growth aspirations. The answer, as a recent report from the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank suggests, may well begin with an explicit acknowledgement of nature as infrastructure.

Viewing nature as infrastructure is transformative, because it forces us to think in a more systemic way. As we pursue growth and development, we must not only avoid damaging nature: we must also strengthen and enrich it through "nature-positive" investments - all while tapping its vast potential to deliver essential services.

Biologists already do this when they benchmark how to restore degraded land. But now economists must get on board and enhance their tools for capturing the value and complexity of natural capital. Biodiversity, for example, covers not just the number of species, but also their genetic diversity and diversity of functions. Yet another dimension of biodiversity is the complex evolutionary history of species - when they were separated on the "tree of life." It is only by deepening our understanding of biodiversity that we will comprehend nature's full grey better - can we potential – and our impact on it.

acquiring it will require contributions from scientists and local populations. The good news is that there are already models for such collaboration. The massive Sanbei reforestation project, aimed at preventing two large deserts from merging in Northern China, was a flawed endeavour at the start, with only

ensure we lay the This knowledge is very site-specific, and groundwork for a sustainable, and inclusive global single tree types planted. But, over the course of two decades, deeper knowledge of the local environment and

the participation of local communities transformed it into a success. Governance and incentives are also crucial to protect and nurture natural infrastructure. In Indonesia, mangroves have long protected communities, particularly poorer households, from deadly tidal floods, but they are being depleted in regions with weaker state capacity. In Egypt, by contrast, efforts to restore mangroves have been aided by revenues from eco-tourism and beekeeping, which produces honey and supports the delivery of vital pollination services.

The nature-as-infrastructure approach demands that we assess what nature can deliver before considering grey solutions, and it can help countries close their infrastructure gaps in truly sustainable ways. But grey infrastructure will always be necessary for growth and development. This demands that we design it better, to minimise its impact on nature. For example, renewable-energy infrastructure has a large ecological footprint, and road infrastructure fragments and damages ecosystems. Solutions like co-locating infrastructure on brown sites and providing auxiliary infrastructure (such as wildlife highway crossings, green urban spaces, and nature-restoration offsets) can help mitigate

Of course, financing might pose a challenge. The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, agreed a year ago, assumes that \$598-824 billion per year will be needed by 2030 to close the biodiversity funding gap. Such sums, needed to protect and then begin to restore nature, can be generated only by valuing nature properly and creating markets that will mobilise private and institutional capital.

To this end, "nature as infrastructure" must be developed as an asset class, using new tools and financial instruments. At the micro level, this will require better pricing of nature's services – for example, usage charges or permits and taxes for damaging activities - and adaptive local regulations. Micro-level policies can support the development of other financial instruments and, eventually, markets - for performance-linked bonds, policy-based lending, debt-for-nature swaps, and nature credits, to name a few - to channel more finance into nature. Lessons from carbon markets should be heeded, to avoid repeat-

Special attention must be paid to low-income economies, many of which are highly vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation but have rich natural endowments that should be valued properly. Multilateral development banks can catalyze the nature-as-infrastructure approach, ensuring that it is incorporated into all aspects of their operations. Ultimately, this approach should also guide individual infrastructure projects and national growth strategies.

The consequences of the infrastructure decisions we make today will be felt for decades to come. Only by committing to invest in green – and to build grev better - can we ensure we lav the groundwork for a fairer, more sustainable, and inclusive global economy.

> The writer is Chief Economist at the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

Love has no age, no limit; and no death.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

You can't depend on your eyes when your imagination

MARK TWAIN

FRAN LEBOWITZ Life is something to do when you can't get to sleep.

THIS DAY **IN HISTORY**

- **1978:** The American classic film The Deer Hunter—starring Robert De Niro and Christoper Walken, among others-had its world premiere; an emotionally shattering look at the effects of the Vietnam War on the young American men sent to fight in it, the movie later won an Oscar for best picture.
- **1980:** John Lennon fatally shot by fan. British musician John Lennon—who rose to fame with the Beatles and had a successful solo career—was fatally shot by Mark David Chapman in New York City, causing a global outpouring of
- **1987:** First Intifada begins. The Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories began after an Israeli army truck attacked a car and killed 4 Palestinians. The Intifada ended in 1991 after the Madrid Conference.

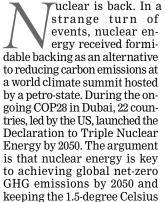


NUCLEAR IS BACK



Avilash Roul

IT IS BEING **ARGUED THAT WITHOUT BUILDING NEW NUCLEAR REACTORS THE WORLD CAN'T ACHIEVE 'NET** ZERO' **EMISSIONS BY 2050**



It's now a practice that world leaders, through their statements, a slew of pledges and a plethora of declarations, set the tone of the outcome of the COPs at the beginning of the conferences. One such announcement is to triple the world's renewable energy capacity by 2030 to cut the share of fossil fuels in the world's energy production. The Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge, initiated by the EU, the US and host UAE and signed by 118 countries, is claimed to be part of the final text as a global goal of COP28 outcome, aimed at decarbonising the energy sector that includes expanding nuclear power, reducing methane emissions, and cutting off private finance for coal power. Moreover, tripling renewable energy, as argued in the announcement, would help "phasing out" fossil fuels from the world's energy system by 2050. Despite India and China's reservation (yet to sign) on phasing out fossil fuel in the Pledge with climate-vulnerable countries (V20) categorising it as a half-solution, urging a complete ban on fossil fuel, can the expansion of nuclear capacity be the primary transition pathway for the world from unabated use of coal?

Following the nuclear pledge, it is being argued that without building new nuclear reactors the world can't achieve 'net



When world leaders fail to curb carbon dioxide emissions, they take refuge in expanding nuclear or pick up another gas from the **GHG** basket - methane

zero' emissions by 2050. Arguing for the upscaling of nuclear energy, the US climate envoy, John Kerry, stated during the launch that the "world can't get to netzero 2050 without some nuclear, just as you can't get there without some use of carbon capture, utilisation and storage. India may be against the provisions of complete phasing out of coal in the Declaration Pledge but endorses wholeheartedly the expansion of nuclear energy. India has the potential to generate up to 100 GW of power from nuclear, according to the Union Power Ministry. With 7,000 MW of installed nuclear capacity, India is expanding it to 15,000 MW.

Now, India must not worry about the so-called "invisible foreign hand" which has been stopping or delaying India's developmental progress by CSO, academicians and scholars from going nuclear. India is willing to be a comrade in the arms of Western countries in building nuclear reactors in other neighbouring countries

Since the beginning of production commercially in 1950s, nuclear energy now provides 10% of the world's electricity (4th largest), which accounts for 26%

of low carbon energy and second-largest source of clean dispatchable baseload power, with benefits for energy security. The total installed nuclear capacity of around 375 GW in 2020 is forecast to rise to 458 GW in 2030, 549 GW in 2040 and 631 GW in 2050. Largest, 70% of France's electricity comes from nuclear energy. While 13 countries produced at least one-quarter of their electricity from nuclear in 2022, Ukraine, Slovakia, Belgium and Hungary get about half from nuclear. There are 436 nuclear reactors in operation, 62 reactors in construction and 213 were shut down.

In the climate negotiations history, fossil fuel-producing countries have so far kept nuclear energy away from the basket of renewable energy mix with hydro, solar, wind, and geothermal as it's not safe and sound. However, nuclear energy as renewable has been always in COPs as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) used to organise side events to influence the outcomes. Even the Chornobyl nuclear disaster (1986) didn't hinder the post-Kyoto Protocol negotiations including nuclear energy. However, the 2011 Fukushima nuclear

disaster compelled the nuclear lobby to maintain a low profile. Since COP25 (2019), the IAEA has persistently argued that nuclear energy is a mature and proven low-carbon source of electricity that would help the world to meet the 1.5-degree increase in temperature arguments put forward.

As John Kerry explained expanding nuclear is a scientific reality, no politics involved, no ideology involved. The scientific reality is getting out of fossil fuel as soon as possible but developed countries have failed so far. Now, the sluggish growth in the US and other Western economies, authoritarian regimes in developing countries looking to build nuclear reactors, and the prosecution of dissent against nuclear in both hemispheres are the reasons behind expanding nuclear. From Sri Lanka to Tajikistan to the Philippines, all developing countries want to access nuclear Building a nuclear reactor, despite being a dangerous experiment, is easy now as there would be financial mechanisms, no protests by civilians and CSOs, and no international sanctions as it provides a profitable business model for Multilateral Development Banks are being advised to include nuclear energy, not so far, in their energy lending portfolio and policies through the nuclear declara-

The scientifically feasible, economically profitable, politically implementable but socially and environmentally sensitive nuclear reactor would be the next big thing in climate talks. When world leaders fail to curb carbon dioxide emissions, they take refuge in expanding nuclear or pick up another gas from the GHG basket - methane.

> The writer is a scientist at IIT-Madras. Views are personal.

SPECTRUM NATION

Addressing regional imbalance



Dhurjati Mukherjee

ECONOMIC JUSTICE DEMANDS THAT THE FINANCE **COMMISSION ALLOCATE TAX PROCEEDS IN SUCH** A WAY THAT RICH STATES SUBSIDISE THE POOR ONES

ment via 'double engine' sarkar has takers. And the timing should make the task of the 16th Finance Commission, recently recommended by the Union Cabinet to be set up, easier. It is to decide on sharing of taxes between the states and Centre. States are entitled to 41% share of the divisible pool, which comprises all taxes, excluding the cesses and surcharges. However, they have been demanding a larger share of the pie, arguing they are burdened by many schemes announced by the Centre. On its part, the Centre believes it's funding several schemes that areas such as health and education that part of the states' mandate. The difference of opinion may steadily disappear now.

The existence of regional imbalance in India cannot be denied as there has not been balanced development. As in the case of literacy and educational attainment, where states of southern India are far ahead of others, similarly in financial matters, states in the western part as well as Tamil Nadu and Karnataka in south are stronger than other

The BJP's victory in three parts. The pace of growth in the to make India the third largest all states to redress regional debeen phenomenal in recent years and experts believe their performance may be even better in coming years

The per capita income of West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha is far below the national average, whereas in Telangana, Karnataka and Haryana it's more than double. The Centre's strategy of tackling regional imbalance has not been successful enough.

Prior to liberalisation, the Centre's efforts vielded some results with the economic emergence of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh (undivided), and Haryana and helped the hilly and smaller states to stand on their own. But presently, the government has hardly any means of restricting regional imbalances. If is left on the market forces and in all likelihood imbalances in the standard of living of people in different states shall reach a crisis proportion. By 2047, some states will be as prosperous as some East European nations while most others will be comparable to some central African nations.

The present determination

states appears to suggest two southern states and in economy is obviously a posi-velopment imbalances. Maharashtra and Gujarat has tive development. India's per India's geographical diver capita GDP increased from \$442 in 2000 to \$2389 in 2022, which is considered quite impressive. But what has been of great concern is the widening inequality in incomes along with regional, spatial and gender disparities. Unless the laggard states can increase their incomes, even if the achievement becomes a reality, the development would not be balanced.

Thus, the importance of the 16th Finance Commission comes into play. Obviously, the poorer states would be given a larger chunk of funds compared to the performing ones but this strategy, adopted by the earlier Finance Commission, hasn't vielded expected results. The high growth states continue to make rapid strides in their incomes while only Odisha has shown some promise among the poor states

Economic justice demands that the Finance Commission allocate tax proceeds in such a way that rich states subsidise the poor ones. Then there is the Backward Region Grant Fund which is implemented in 272 identified backward districts in

sity and different levels of development across regions mean that location specific targeted action would be required in less prosperous regions to ensure a minimum acceptable level of prosperity. The belief that giving more funds to the poor states would result in a shift in the composition of India's GDP away from agriculture has not become a reality as movement of labour from agriculture and from rural to urban areas has not taken shape. Thus, the inequality among states remains a big challenge, which needs to be seriously looked into and, it would be better, if the responsibility is given to the Finance Commission to suggest ways of improving the per capita income of the laggard states.

Economists and financial analvsts are unanimous that merely providing funds will not help. unless it's supported by a plan, which the laggard states may be advised to follow. Accordingly, there's an urgent need to frame some mechanism to boost incomes of non-performing states and bridge the gap

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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Trading on terror

Sir, Determining whether Hamas profited from short-selling Israeli shares before an attack is a complex and contentious issue, lacking a clear-cut resolution. The research paper "Trading on Terror?" by Robert Jackson Jr and Joshua Mitts presents compelling evidence of a substantial surge in short-selling of Israeli shares preceding the Hamas attack, hinting at possible insider knowledge. However, attributing this spike exclusively to Hamas necessitates a more thorough investigation and concrete evidence directly linking them to these trades. Market dynamics are multifaceted, and various factors beyond insider trading could contribute to such fluctuations, emphasising the need for cautious scrutiny before drawing definitive conclusions. Currently, Israeli authorities are actively investigating these claims, although no official findings have been disclosed. Unveiling the truth requires access to comprehensive financial records and verified identities of those involved in the suspicious short-selling activities. While the research paper raises pertinent questions, making direct associations with Hamas without conclusive evidence can lead to misinformation and potentially harmful assumptions. Therefore, exercising prudence and ensuring diligent investigation are essential steps in arriving at a more accurate understanding of this intricate scenario. Even if Hamas did benefit financially, it doesn't mitigate the ethical implications or validate their actions. Israeli shares. Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

Combating corruption

Sir, Corruption is a significant global challenge, threatening prosperity and stability across borders. Its impact spans regions, communities, and nations, highlighting the urgent need for awareness and transparency. International Anti-Corruption Day observed annually on December 9, serves as a reminder of corruption's disheartening prevalence and its threat to democracy. Tackling corruption requires a collective effort from individuals, governments, civil servants, law enforcement agencies, media, the private sector, civil society, academia, and the youth. Reaffirming dedication to collaborative initiatives is vital in the pursuit of confronting and eliminating corruption. Imagining a world where equality and sustainable development thrive without the influence of corruption remains crucial in this endeavour.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

UP govt sets up SIT to probe foreign funding of madrasas

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Dec 7: The Uttar Pradesh government has set up a three-member Special Investigation Team (SIT), to look into the financial sources of madrasas in the state.

So far, 80 madrasas have been identified for receiving nearly Rs 100 crores as donations from several countries over the past two years.

Senior officials said that the SIT is now trying to identify the head under which these funds were spent by the madrasas and if there were any irregularities.

The state has around 24,000 madrasas, of which over 16,500 are recognized by the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madrasa

'We will see how the money received through foreign funding has been spent. The brief is to check if the money is being used to run madrasas or for any other activities," said Mohit Agarwal,



Additional DG, ATS, who is heading the SIT

Agarwal said that no time frame has been mentioned by the state government yet to complete the probe.

Sources said that the SIT has already sought details of registered madrasas from its board.

The Yogi Adityanath government, last year, had directed District Magistrates to conduct a survey of unrecognised madrasas.

During the two-month survey, 8,449 madrasas which were not recognised by the state madrasa

education board were found to be functioning.

Apart from Lakhimpur Kheri, Pilibhit, Shravasti, Siddharth Nagar and Bahraich adjacent to the Nepal border, over 1,000 madrassas are being run in many other nearby areas. Sources said that the number of madrasas in these areas has increased rapidly in the past few years. Besides, information was also received about these madrasas getting foreign funding after which the SIT was formed

The Minority Department probe has also revealed that many madrasas were receiving foreign funding.

Recently, the ATS has arrested three active members of a gang involved in the illegal entry of Bangladeshi citizens and Rohingvas. The investigation revealed that foreign funding of Rs 20 crore was received in three years through a Delhirun NGO, which was being used to help them.



Devotees ride boats as migratory Siberian gulls fly around at Sangam, in Prayagraj, Thursday

'Party workers shouldn't be ignored': Pratibha Singh's veiled attack on CM



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Dec 7: In a veiled attack on Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, state Congress president Pratibha Singh Thursday said workers who ensured the party's victory in the assembly polls last vear should be rewarded with more responsibility.

"The party has come to power due to the efforts of the workers and they should not be ignored. she told reporters.

Singh, who has herself been a contender for the CM's post. made the remarks on sidelines of a meeting with district and block level leaders to discuss the party's plans to mark its first year in office in the state.

She has said earlier that she was not consulted before Sukhu announced a rally in Dharamshala December 11 to celebrate the anniversary.

Singh said there should be coordination between the government and the party organisation. The CM understands the importance of the organisation as he has himself risen from the ranks, she said.

"I have been urging the chief minister for the past six months to give importance to workers by bestowing responsibilities on them," she said.

Singh may have been referring to several posts of chairman and vice chairman of boards and corporations that are lying vacant.

Recently, the party's state general secretary Yashwant Chhajta was appointed vice-president of Himachal Pradesh Housing and Urban Development Authority, raising hopes of other workers of getting similar posts.

A cabinet expansion is also pending for the past 11 months to fill three berths.

Sukhu announced plans to celebrate the party's year in office at a meeting of the Congress Legislature Party on Monday. A committee headed by Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi was given the responsibility of preparing for a rally in Dharamshala. Pratibha Singh had then said she was neither taken into confidence nor informed about any such decision.

Assembly poll results will strengthen INDIA bloc: Akhilesh INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE He said, "Results of the rethe SP had no standing in MP.

Lucknow, Dec 7: Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav has said the results of the recently concluded Assembly polls in the states would further strengthen INDIA bloc, but has slammed the Congress for the

Results of the state elections in five states were unfavourable for anti-BJP parties. The BJP won three and the Congress only

Yadav seems to have adopted a conciliatory tone and has constantly been speaking in favour

cently concluded polls would only strengthen and consolidate the INDIA alliance. And this should worry the BJP. The public has been in a mood to bring in change. There would have been a change of power in a state had the Congress not behaved the way it did there."

After the polls were announced in five states, there had been substantial bad blood between the SP and the Congress over seatsharing in Madhya Pradesh. The former wanted to contest the MP polls in alliance with the

However, the Congress lead-

QR code to create awareness



ership in MP went solo.

Countering it, the SP said that the Congress too had no standing in Uttar Pradesh and indicated that it would take a call on seat-sharing in UP accordingly.

The SP contested 69 seats in MP without any alliance and drew a blank, but it badly hurt the Congress' prospects on five seats there.

Yadav also indicated that his party would lead the alliance in UP and nudged the Congress to adopt the original stance of regional parties - that in 2024 polls, whichever parties are strong in their states should lead the battle in the respective states while

all other constituents of the bloc should extend support.

'In UP, the PDA will defeat the NDA. The double-engine government of the BJP has nothing original to mention in the name of development works," said the SP chief.

Despite drawing a blank in MP, Yadav said: "The SP will work towards becoming an alternative in the next polls in

Javed Ali Khan, member from the SP side in INDIA bloc coordination committee, said: "Not only will the INDIA bloc stay, it will also firm up further as more parties want to join it.

Ragi curbing malnutrition among kids

on leopard behaviour in UP

Bijnor, Dec 7: The Uttar Pradesh forest department has unveiled a QR code to educate residents about the behaviour of leopards and how to avoid encounters with them.

This innovative move is designed to tackle the increasing incidents of human-leopard con-

flict in Bijnor area. The QR code, when scanned on mobile phones, will display a PDF file with comprehensive insights into leopard behaviour and conflict prevention through engaging cartoons to illustrate effective strategies, identify leopard pugmarks, and recommend al-

ternative crop plantation methods. Bijnor Sub-Divisional Forest Officer Gyan Singh said, "We have generated the QR code to raise awareness about the dos



and don'ts to avoid leopard attacks in the region. Villagers will be sensitised via mobile phones, and plans are also underway to showcase animated videos in theatres before movies. Our aim is to make people aware about the behaviour of leopards during human attacks.

Singh said key safety measures include urging people not to engage in open defecation, to move around in large groups in fields, avoid disturbing the big cats, wear protective gear, and use radios and mobile music to deter leopards, especially when work-

ing in the fields. 'Switching on the lights in the premises is also advised to

keep the big cats at bay," he said. Notably, the Bijnor region has witnessed 18 human casualties since February due to leopard attacks, with more than 55 villagers sustaining injuries.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hamirpur, Dec 7: In a bid to defeat malnutrition, laddu and churma made of ragi are being served to children at Anganwadi centres in Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur, officials said Thursday Deputy Commissioner Hamirpur Hemraj Bairwa said children up to three years of age are being given laddu made of desi ghee and ragi once a week while malnourished children in the age group of three to five years are getting it twice a week.

Ragi churma, also made with desighee, is being given to children aged between six months and one year, he added.

Distribution of laddu and churma containing ragi and ghee started from Wednesday.

The deputy commissioner said the ingredients for laddu and churma are being procured directly from local farmers and women's self-help groups have come forward to prepare the items.

Women self-help groups are

also being given training in making traditional nutritious dishes at the Hotel Management Institute, Hamirpur, he said.

Bairwa noted that despite being given adequate food, many children become victims of malnutrition. "Many of our traditional dishes made from coarse grains are rich in nutrients. Ragi laddu is one of these. Keeping in view its nutritional properties, an initiative has been taken to distribute them to children in the district." he said.

EAST COAST RAILWAY WITH PROVISION OF 32 NOS. PLATFORM SHELTERS AT NORTH SECTION OF KHURDA ROAD (KUR) DIVISION. Advertised Value: ₹ 16,96,208.12, EMD:

₹ 33,900/-, Period of Completion: 180 days. Bidding start date: 12.12.2023, Tender closi date & time: at 1300 hrs. of 26.12.2023.

Manual offers are not allowed against tender and any such manual offer received

Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.ireps.gov.in

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD),

347ETR. Dtd.: 04.12.2023

Name of work: DESIGN, SUPPLY, ERECTION, MODIFICATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF 1X25KV OHE IN CONNECTION WITH ELECTRIFICATION OF GOODS SHED SIDING AT NAYAGARH TOWN STATION ALONG WITH 01 NO. NEW SECTIONING & PARALLELING POST (SP) WITH ASSOCIATED PSI WORK AT DASPALLA UNDER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.

Approx cost of the work : ₹ 186.33 Lakhs EMD: ₹ 2,43,200/-, Completion period of the work: 06 Months Tender closing date & time : at 1200 hrs. of

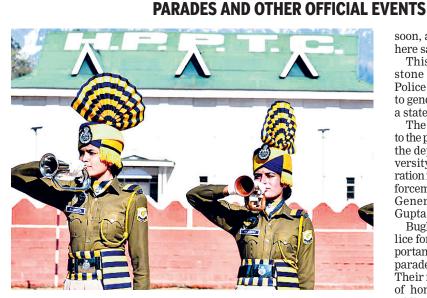
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's etter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any

documents of the above e-tender is available in website www.ireps.gov.in. The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on

The tenderers should read all instructions to the tenderers carefully and ensure ists, para 3.1 (additional check-list) of tende form (Second sheet) Annexure-I of chapter of Tender documents, submission of Annexure-B, G and G1 duly verified and signed by Chartered Accountant.

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/Con-II/

Himachal police to soon have women buglers **BUGLE CALLS SERVE AS IMPORTANT SIGNALS DURING CEREMONIES,**



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, Dec 7: Himachal Pradesh Police will soon have women buglers in the guard of honour and other ceremonies and their training has already begun, officials said Wednesday.

Three women constables --Shivani, Shweta and Neeshu -- are undergoing the Basic Bugler Course at the Himachal Pradesh Police Training College (HPPTC), Daroh in Kangra district. More women constables are showing interest and are expected to join the course soon, an official statement issued

This marks a significant milestone in the Himachal Pradesh Police Department's commitment to gender equality and inclusivity, a statement issued here said.

The addition of women buglers to the police force not only highlights the department's dedication to diversity but also serves as an inspiration for aspiring women in law enforcement, said Deputy Inspector General, HPPTC, Daroh Bimal Gupta.

Buglers play a vital role in the police force. Bugle calls serve as important signals during ceremonies, parades and other official events. Their melodic tunes evoke a sense of honour, respect and tradition, adding a touch of solemnity and grandeur to these occasions. Bugle is a must when the national flag is raised at sunrise and lowered at sunset. Director General of Police (DGP) Sanjay Kundu congratulated DIG Gupta for this initiative and 'breaking the glass ceiling', the statement said.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, MOHANA NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement No. O-1725: Identification No. Online Tender 11/MOHANA/2023-24 Name of the Work **Building Works** 2 (Two) Nos. Rs.46.16 Lakhs Total No. of Work **Estimated Cost** Class of Contractor As per Annexure Period of Completion As per Annexure Availability of Tender Last date & time Date & Time Bid Identification No. of Procurement Officer Online for Bidding of seeking tender of Opening No. Works From of Tender 26.12.2023 2 (Two) upto Rural Works Division 11/MOHANA/ from Nos. 11.00 A.M. 5.00 P.M. 11.00 A.M Mohana 2023-24 Further details can be seen from the Website www.tenderodisha.gov.in. OIPR-25148/11/0018/2324 Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Mohana

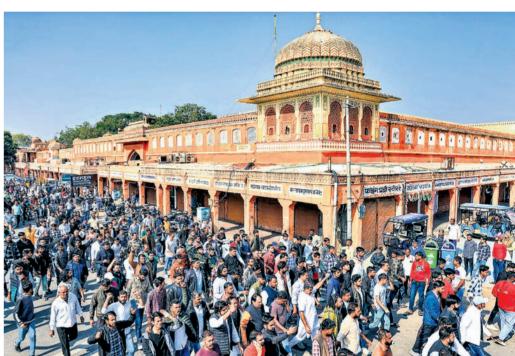
No. O-1724: Idea Name of the Work Total No. of Work Stimated Cost Class of Contractor Period of Completic	EXECUTIVE COMPETION N : Ro: : 42 : Fro : As	ENGINITIVE BIO. Online ad Work (Forty Two	DDING T Tender 1) Nos. Lakhs to Rs. ure	AL WOR HROUG 0/MOHAN	H e-Procurer A/2023-24	MOHAN
6. Other Details Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	No. of Works		of Tender r Bidding To	Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Tim of Opening of Tender
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Executive Engineer,	Online Tender	42 (Forty	27.12.2023 from	08.01.2024 upto	05.01.2024 upto	09.01.202



Dragon dance and parade on the streets of Yuen Long on the second day Yuen Long Jiao Festival 2023. The Yuen Long Jiao Festival marks its 100th anniversary in 2023. It has been held once every 10 years in the town centre of Yuen Long since 1923 and is one of the biggest and community-wide religious events in the district. The ritual involves praying and requesting deities to bestow peace and harmony in the neighbourhood



Israeli soldiers take part in trainings at the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights amid ongoing cross-border hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah at Israel-Lebanon border



Rashtriya Rajput Karni Sena supporters shout slogans during a protest against the killing of their leader Sukhdev Singh Gogamedi in Jaipur, Rajasthan



West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee during her visit to the Makaibari Tea Estate at Kurseong in Darjeeling, West Bengal



A biologist studies plastics and micro plastics in increasingly contaminated waters as part of a volunteer group that works to clean the sea



Commuters cross a road during rain, in Kolkata. Intermittent rain and chilly wind greeted the denizens of Kolkata and adjoining districts in south Bengal Thursday morning hampering normal life



A volunteer offers food to a resident after his house got partially submerged following heavy rains due to Cyclone Michaung in Chennai, Tamil Nadu AP/REUTERS/PTI/SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

The Centre Thursday said that since December 2021 it has issued directions to block 122 YouTube news channels for carrying content related to the "sovereignty and integrity" of the country



Our objections to the bill are on two issues. The first is that the Supreme Court has not announced its

reorganisation and they (government) are bringing changes OMAR ABDULLAH NATIONAL

CONFERENCE (NC) VICE PRESIDENT

Garba is an age-old dance form that brings the community together with its rhythmic harmony. Its inscription on the Intangible Heritage List is an accolade for the



with even more savagery than before the truce. Food supplies are scarce,

medical facilities have been destroyed and basic amenities have been shut down

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Masroor Ahmad Wani succumbs to injuries

New Delhi: Police Inspector Masroor Ahmad Wani, who was critically injured when he was shot at by a Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist while playing cricket in Srinagar in October, died at AIIMS here Thursday leaving behind his wife who is expecting her first child. Officials said despite best efforts of the medical team, Wani succumbed to injuries this afternoon.

Bidhuri regrets his remarks

New Delhi: BJP MP Ramesh Bidhuri Thursday expressed regret for his objectionable remarks against BSP's Danish Ali in a meeting of the Lok Sabha Privileges Committee, which heard both leaders separately. Sources said Bidhuri in his deposition before the committee noted that senior BJP leader and Union minister Rajnath Singh had conveyed his regret in the House for his comments on September 21 when he was making a speech during a discussion on the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission.

TMC protests against Giriraj's remarks

Kolkata: The TMC orchestrated protests across West Bengal Thursday, calling for an apology and the immediate removal of Union Minister Giriraj Singh from the union cabinet, following his "misogynistic" remarks targeting party supremo and state Chief Minister

Probe panel formed: EAM

New Delhi, Dec 7: Days after Washington alleged an Indian link to a conspiracy to kill a Sikh separatist, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Thursday said India instituted an inquiry committee to look into the inputs received from the US in the case as the matter has a bearing on national security.

However, at the same time, Jaishankar told Rajya Sabha that there will be "no equitable treatment" to Canada's allegations of a potential involvement of Indian agents in the killing of a Khalistani extremist as no specific evidence or inputs were provided to India by Ottawa.

Asked why there was no equitable treatment with regard to charges made by the Canadian government. Jaishankar said: "Insofar as Canada is concerned. no specific evidence or inputs were provided to us. So the question of equitable treatment to two countries, one of whom has provided input and one of whom has not, does not arise."

The US federal prosecutors have charged Nikhil Gupta of

Rajnath conducts

aerial survey of TN

Chennai, Dec 7: Prime Minister

Narendra Modi has directed the

Union Home Ministry to release

₹450 crore, the second instal-

ment to Tamil Nadu for cyclone

relief, Defence Minister Rajnath

Following an aerial survey

and a hi-level meeting with Chief

Minister M K Stalin at the

Secretariat, Singh said the first

instalment of ₹450 crore had

been released earlier to the state.

The release of two instalments

to Tamil Nadu is the Centre's

share in the State Disaster

loss of lives in TN due to rains,

flood," he said. After the meet-

ing with Singh, Stalin said a

team from the Centre would soon

visit the state to assess damage

He termed as 'unseen before,'

the rains here and nearby areas

and outlined the state's relief

initiatives on war-footing. In

view of the government's pre-

ventive measures, loss of lives and

damage has been avoided to a

continue to go on in full swing

to bring normalcy in all the af-

fected areas. The Union Minister

said the problem of urban floods

has become repetitive in Chennai

in recent years and the

Government of India has ap-

proved a Central funding of ₹500

crore for urban flood manage-

The CM said relief work would

due to the cyclone.

large extent.

Response Fund.

Singh said here on Thursday.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

working with an Indian gov-

ernment employee in the foiled plot to kill Sikh separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, who holds dual citizenship of the US and Canada. In September, Canadian Prime

Minister Justin Trudeau made

an explosive allegation of a "po-

tential" involvement of Indian

agents in the killing of

Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil in June. India has strongly reBagchi said at a media briefing that US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Christopher Wray's upcoming visit to India should be seen in the context of overall cooperation between the two countries in areas of cyber-security, counter-terrorism and counter-

Bagchi said the details for the FBI director's visit had been worked out with the US side over the course of the last few

To a question if the Pannun case will come up during Wray's visit, he said it is part of the ongoing dialogue process.

Pannun, a leader of so called Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), last month released a video threatening passengers of Air India flights on November 19.

Asked about reports of some new threats including Pannun's new video threatening to attack India's Parliament, the MEA spokesperson said: "I don't want to amplify or give too much credence to such extremists who

Indian envoy met 8 ex-Navy men: MEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi. Dec 7: The Indian ambassador to Qatar met December 3 eight former Indian Navy personnel who were handed death sentence by a Qatari court in October, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Thursday.

MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said two hearings on the appeal against the death sentence have already taken place. "We are closely following the matter and extending all legal and consular assistance...Our ambassador got consular access to meet all eight of them in prison December 3," Bagchi said at a media briefing.

The Indian nationals were given consular access earlier as well. The Navy veterans were on October 26 given death sentence by Qatar's Court of First Instance. India described the ruling as "deeply" shocking and vowed to explore all legal options in the case. The Indian nationals, who worked with private company Al Dahra, were arrested in August last year reportedly in an alleged case of espionage.

Neither the Qatari authori-

rations for the Global Investors

Summit have been completed by

the state government. This event

is being organised by the gov-

ernment with the aim of estab-

lishing Uttarakhand as a new

a target of investment of ₹2.5

lakh crore in the Global Investors

Summit. Before organising the

Global Investors Summit, 4 in-

ternational and 5 domestic road

shows were organised by the

Uttarakhand government. Four

international road shows have

been held outside the country in

London, Birmingham, Abu

Dhabi, Dubai, while the state

government has conducted road

shows across the country in

Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore,

The state government had set

investment destination.

tionals public. In its reaction to the ruling by the Qatari court, the MEA last month said that it

to this case and is exploring all legal options.



NTPC Limited is India's largest power conglomerate with an installed capacity of 73,874 MW. Commensurate with our country's growth challenges, NTPC has embarked upon an ambitious plan to attain a total installed capacity of 130 GW by

To fuel its ambitious growth plan, NTPC is looking for promising, energetic, young professionals with brilliant academic record to join NTPC as Executive Trainee Finance (CA/CMA) in the pay scale of ₹ 40,000/- to ₹1,40,000/- (E1 Grade).

ET- Finance (CA/CMA)

VACANCIES | REQUIRED QUALIFICATION

HOW TO APPLY: Interested and eligible candidates should log on to our website careers.ntpc.co.in or visit careers section at www.ntpc.co.in for viewing the detailed advertisement and for applying. Only online mode of application will be accepted. The online application portal will remain open from 06.12.2023 to 20.12.2023. Any further addendum/corrigendum/updates will only be published

New Delhi-110003; CIN: L40101DL1975G0I007966 | www.ntpc.co.i Follow us on: f /ntpc1 / ntpclimited / ntpcttd1 in /company

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, No.O-1733 **RWS&S DIVISION, BARIPADA**

Tel. No.06792-254029, Fax No.06792-259464, E-Mail:eerwss_bpd@rediffmail.com, eerwss_bpd@ori.nic.in

Govt. of Odisha e-procurement Notice Bid Identification No.23 of 2023-24, Date: 05.12.2023.

Nature of the work: Supply of ERW MS Pipes (CFC/SFC) in Percentage rate contract. (01 package).

2. Estimated Cost: 45.44 lakhs 3. Date and time of availability of bid document in portal: From 11 hour

of 12.12.2023 to 21.12.2023 upto 17 hours. 4. Last Date / Time for receipt of bids in the portal: Both Technical & Financial Bid for each Package Upto 17 hours of 21.12.2023.

5. Name and address of the O.I.T.:

Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Baripada 6. Date & Time for Opening of Tender: 22.12.2023 at 11.00 A.M.

'. Corrigendum and addendum if any shall only be published in the above website http://www.tenderodisha.gov.in

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement Portal: "https://tendersodisha.gov.in"

OIPR-25014/11/0014/2324

Sd./- Executive Engineer **RWS&S Division, Baripada**

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.A-960: e-Procurement Notice

Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Angul Bid Identification No.- 09 OF 2023-24 e-mail ID- eemidivision_angul@yahoo.com

Letter No.2257 Date:- 04 .12 .2023

2 (Two) numbers of Civil works Number of Works Varies from Rs.25.65 lakh to 32.23 lakh

Approximate estimated cost

3. Cost of Tender Paper

Period of completion Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal 6. Last date / Time for receipt

of bid in the portal

Date of opening of bid documents

8. Date of lottery if required

: Dt.21.12.2023 at 11.00 A.M.

Rs.6000/-

Name and address of the

06 (Six) Calendar months Dt. 12.12.2023 at 10.00 A.M. to Dt. 20.12.2023 up to 5.00 P.M : Dt.20.12.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.

: Dt.03.01.2024 At 11.00 AM Superintending Engineer

Minor Irrigation Division, Angu At/Po-Hakimpada, College Square District-Angul, PIN-759143 Ph.No.:06764-236522

Email Id: eemidivision_angul@yahoo.com 10. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal: http://tendersorissa.gov.in.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer OIPR-32284/11/0007/2324 M.I.Division, Angul

FOREST, ENVIRONMENT & **CLIMATE CHANGE DEPARTMENT, ODISHA** OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER

> **KORAPUT DIVISION** Email: dfo.koraput@odisha.gov.in

INVITATION FOR BIDS THROUGH e-Procurement Bid Identification No. DFO-KPT-05/2023(1F) e-Procurement Notice

: Construction of Police out post-Name of the work cum-Office at proposed Eco Cottage Complex at Deomali under Koraput Forest Division during the year 2023-24.

Rs.18,62,008/- (Excluding GST & Labour cess)
As per DTCN
03 (Three Calendar Months) Class of Contractor Type of tender
Date and Time of availability of Single Cover Tender From 11.00 A.M. of Dt.11.12.2023 to 17.00 hrs. of dt.20.12.2023 Bid documents in the portal Dt. 20.12.2023 upto 17.00 hrs in the portal Date of opening of Bid through Dt. 21.12.2023 at 11.00 hrs in the office of the undersigned.
Divisional Forest Officer 10. Name & address of the O.I.T.

(Officer Inviting Tender) Koraput Division, Koraput Further details can be seen https://tendersodisha.gov.in

N.B. Subsequent corrigendum/addendum if required in this regard will be made available in the website as indicated above

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer OIPR-08067/11/0012/2324 **Koraput Forest Division**

Government of Odisha E-mail Id:eelicd.kha@gmail.com

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, LOWER INDRA CANAL DIVISION, KHARIAR Dist-Nuapada, Odisha,Pin-766107 e-Procurement Notice No.SELICD-05/2023-24, Dt.06.12.2023 (Online)

1. Type/Nature of Work: Civil Works, 2. Total No. of Works: 05 (Five) Nos., 3. Approx. value of works Rs.12.28 Lakh to Rs.21.54 Lakh (Excluding GST). 4. Period of Completion: 3 Months. 5. Classification of Bidders: 'D', 'C' & 'B' Class Contractors only Other details as follows:

Availability & Submission of bids Procurement Officer Date & Time of Open No. ing of Tender in online 21.12.2023 SELICD-05/2023-24, 11.12.2023 22.12.2023 Superintending Engineer, Lowe Indra Canal Division, Khariar, Dt.06.12.2023 for 05 Upto 5.00 PM At 10.00 AM At 11.30 AM Dist-Nuapada, Odisha (Five) No.of Works

Sd./- (Er.Soumya Kishore Jaipuria)

jected the allegations. make threats and get a lot of ties nor New Delhi made the $\stackrel{\smile}{\text{Meanwhile}}, \stackrel{\smile}{\text{External Affairs}}$ charges against the Indian na-PM to inaugurate 'Uttarakhand Global Investors Summit' today



New Delhi, Dec 7: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 'Uttarakhand Global Investors Summit 2023"in Dehradun December 8 as the hill state looks to boost investment in the coming years, his office said in a statement.

Modi will also address the gathering on the occasion, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in its statement.

The 'Uttarakhand Global Investors Summit 2023' is a step

as a new investment destination and the theme of the two-day event is 'Peace to Prosperity'

The summit will be attended by thousands of investors and delegates from across the world. It will witness participation of Union ministers ambassadors of various countries along with leading industrialists, among others, the statement said.

This time the theme of the Global Investors Summit is "Peace to Prosperity".

Chief Minister Shri Pi towards establishing Uttarakhand Singh Dhami said that all prepa-

Ahmedabad and Mumbai. Prime Minister Shri Narendra

Modi will launch grounding of projects worth ₹44,000 crore during the inaugural session of the

Kuang and chartered accountants

email sent in this regard. The ED had

claimed in its remand papers be-

fore a local court here that the alleged

activities of the four arrested accused

Vivo-India did not respond to an

Nitin Garg and Rajan Malik.

Global Investor Committee.

ED files chargesheet against Vivo, others national Guangwen alias Andrew

New Delhi, Dec 7: The Enforcement Directorate has filed its first charge sheet in connection with its money laundering probe against Chinese smartphone maker vivo-India and some oth-

ers, official sources said Thursday. The prosecution complaint was filed before a special court here Wednesday under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act and vivo-India has been named an accused apart from those arrested in this sources the told PTI. The federal probe agency arrested four people, including



company International's MD Hari Om Rai, in October as part of this investigation. The others who were

Lava taken into custody were Chinese

enabled vivo-India to make wrongful gains that were detrimental to the economic sovereignty of India. The ED had then alleged that a whopping Rs 62,476 crore was "illegally" transferred by vivo-India to China to avoid payment of taxes in India. The company had said that it "firmly adheres to its ethical principles and remains dedicated to legal compliance".

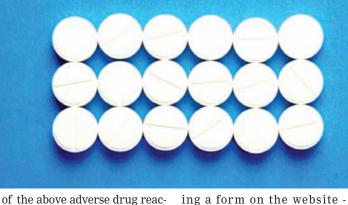
Govt issues health alert on painkiller Meftal

New Delhi, Dec 7: The Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) has issued a drug safety alert advising healthcare professionals and patients to monitor adverse reactions of painkiller Meftal, commonly used for menstrual cramps and rheumatoid arthritis.

The mefenamic acid painkiller is prescribed in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, dysmenorrhoea, mild to moderate pain, inflammation, fever and dental pain.

The commission, in its alert,

stated that a preliminary analysis of adverse drug reactions from Pharmacovigilance Programme of India (PvPI) database revealed drug reactions with eosinophilia and systemic symptoms (DRESS) syndrome. "Healthcare professionals, pa-



ing a form on the website tion (ADR) associated with the use www.Ipc.Gov.In - or through android mobile app ADR PvPI and of the suspected drug," according to the alert, issued on November PvPI Helpline No. 1800-180-3024. An autonomous institution of the Ministry of Health, the IPC

Children undergoing Covid vaccination must not take paracetamol, a common pain reliever, without first consulting, city doctors advised on Friday. The advice was issued in response to growing concerns that some immunisation centres are advising children to take three paracetamol 500 mg tablets after receiving the Covid vaccine. Taking paracetamol without consulting a doctor can harm children, the health experts warned.

DOCTORS ADVISE NOT TO

TAKE PARACETAMOL:

"Paracetamol is not recom-

- Internal Medicine, Indian Spinal Injuries Centre.

ceiving Covid vaccines is not rec-

ommended. It is because it has the

potential to cause hepatotoxic-

ity (liver damage caused by drug

exposure) in them," added Dr.

Col. Vijay Dutta, Senior Consultant

mended as prophylaxis, before and after any Covid vaccination as we don't know how it alters the immune response of the vaccine," said Dr. Akshay Budhraja, Sr. Consultant, Respiratory and

If such reaction is encoun-Sleep Medicine, Aakash tered, the alert advised, people sets standards for all drugs that should report the matter to the naare manufactured, sold and con-Healthcare. "Giving paracetamol to chiltional coordination centre of the tients/consumers are advised to sumed in India. OIPR-32206/11/0007/2324 closely monitor the possibility PvPI under the commission by fildren (15-18 years old) who are re-

um/Cancellation to the above notice will be published in the Govt. website www.tendersodisha.gov.in Superintending Engineer, Lower Indra Canal Division, Khariar

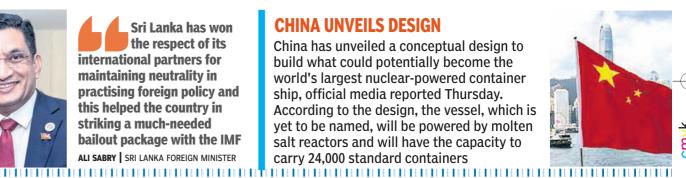
international



Sri Lanka has won the respect of its international partners for maintaining neutrality in practising foreign policy and this helped the country in striking a much-needed bailout package with the IMF ALI SABRY | SRI LANKA FOREIGN MINISTER

CHINA UNVEILS DESIGN

China has unveiled a conceptual design to build what could potentially become the world's largest nuclear-powered container ship, official media reported Thursday. According to the design, the vessel, which is yet to be named, will be powered by molten salt reactors and will have the capacity to carry 24,000 standard containers





The world is probably much closer to a point where the average temperature rise will reach 1.5 degrees Celsius

above the pre-industrial (1850-1900)

ELENA MANAENKOVA

state visit to Netherlands will help strengthen semiconducto

cooperation between the two countries and contribute to the development of South Korea's defence industry and exports

YOON SUK YEOL | SOUTH KOREA PRESIDENT







CANADA PM



Pak court to hear Nawaz appeal

Islamabad: In some relief to former Pakistan prime minister Nawaz Sharif, the Islamabad High Court Thursday decided to hear on merit an appeal by him against his conviction in the Al-Azizia Steel mill corruption case as he eves a record fourth term as premier in the next elections. Sharif. 73, was sentenced to seven years in iail and imposed a heavy fine by an anti-corruption court in December 2018 after he failed to convince the court that he had nothing to do with the steel mill set up by his father in 2001 in Saudi Arabia

Lanka arrests 21 Indian fishermen

Colombo: At least 21 Indian fishermen have been arrested for allegedly poaching in Sri Lanka's territorial waters, the island nation's Navy has said. taking the total number this ear to 195. The Indian fishermen were arrested and their four trawlers were seized on Wednesday in the northeastern waters off Mannar and Kovilan.

Dr Samir selected as new BBC chairman

London: Dr Samir Shah, an India-born media executive with over 40 years of experience in TV production and journalism, has been named as the UK government's preferred candidate to take over as the new BBC chairman. The 71year-old, who was honoured with a CBE (Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) by Oueen Elizabeth II in 2019 for services to television and heritage, will replace Richard Sharp, who was forced to resign after his communication with former prime minister Boris Johnson came under scrutiny.

Senate Republicans block funding bill



Washington, Dec 7: An emergency spending bill to provide billions of dollars in new security assistance for Ukraine and Israel was blocked in the US Senate Wednesday as Republicans pressed their demands for tougher measures to control immigration at the U.S. border with Mexico.

The vote was 49 in favour to 51 against, leaving the \$110.5 billion measure short of the 60 votes needed in the 100-member Senate to pave the way to start debate. threatening President Joe Biden's push to provide new aid before the end of 2023. The

vote was along party lines, with every Senate Republican voting no along with Senator Bernie Sanders, an independent who generally votes with Democrats but had expressed concerns about funding Israel's "current inhumane military strategy" against Palestinians.

The bill would provide about \$50 billion in new security assistance for Ukraine, as well as money for humanitarian and economic aid for the government in Kyiv, plus \$14 billion for Israel as it battles Hamas in Gaza. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, a Democrat. also voted "no" so that he could Schumer noted the risks if Ukraine falls, saying it was a serious moment that will have lasting consequences for the 21st century," risking the decline of Western democracy

Republicans said it was essential to make their case for tighter immigration policies and control of the southern border."Today's vote is what it takes for the Democratic leader to recognize that Senate Republicans mean what we say," Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell said in a floor speech earlier on Wednesday. "Then let's vote. And then let's finally start meeting America's national security priorities, including right here at home.'

Even if the bill passes the Senate, it still would need to be approved in the Republicancontrolled House Representatives, where dozens of Republicans have voted against Ukraine aid, including Speaker Mike Johnson. Congressional Republicans and Democrats have been debating for months how to address Biden's request for billions of dollars in funding for Ukraine as it fights Russian invaders, for Israel following the October 7 attacks by Islamist Hamas militants, for U.S. interests in the Indo-Pacific, and for interna-



Cracks along a road in the aftermath of a massive explosion at an industrial area on the main island in Mahe, Sevchelles, Thursday. Authorities in Seychelles declared a state of emergency Thursday after a blast at an explosives store caused massive damage in an industrial area also facing flooding amid heavy rainfall, according to the presidency PTI PHOTO

Fighting between Israel, Hamas rages

The ground offensive has sent tens of thousands of Palestinians fleeing to the territory's southernmost edge and prevented aid groups from delivering food, water and other supplies



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rafah (Gaza Strip), Dec 7: Israeli troops battled Hamas militants Wednesday in the centre of the Gaza Strip's second-largest city, the military said.

The ground offensive has sent tens of thousands of Palestinians fleeing to the territory's southernmost edge and prevented aid groups from delivering food, water and other supplies. Two months into the war. Israel's offensive into southern Gaza was bringing to Khan Younis the same fierce urban fighting and intensified bombardment that obliterated much of Gaza City and the north of the territory in recent weeks.

But in the south, the areas where Palestinians can seek safety are rapidly shrinking. Ahead of the assault, Israel urged residents to evacuate Khan Younis, the childhood home of two top Hamas leaders.

But much of the city's population remains in place, along

with large numbers who were displaced from northern Gaza and are unable to leave or wary of fleeing to the disastrously overcrowded far south.

Late Wednesday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres used a rarely exercised power to warn the Security Council of an impending "humanitarian catastrophe" in Gaza and urged members to demand a cease-fire.

He invoked Article 99 of the UN Charter, a step no UN chief has taken in half a century which says the secretary-general may inform the council of matters believed to threaten international peace and security.

Israel accused the UN chief of "a new moral low" and "bias against Israel". The United States signalled it would not support Security Council ac-

Earlier Wednesday, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk said, "Palestinians in Gaza are living in utter, deepening horror".

SIGNIFICANT

Greece, Turkey agree to mend ties

Athens, Dec 7: Greece and Turkey Thursday agreed to reboot their relations, establishing a roadmap designed to usher in a new era of ties between the two NATO allies but historic foes. In a landmark visit of Turkish

President Tayyip Erdogan to Greece, the long-time sparring partners agreed to focus on pursuing good neighbourly relations, keep open channels of communication, boost trade volumes and work on issues which have kept them apart, notably in the Aegean Sea

"There is no issue between us that is unsolvable. So long as we focus on the big picture and don't end up being like those who cross the sea and drown in the river." Erdogan said after a meeting with Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis in Athens. The meeting went on longer than expected.

The NATO allies wanted to raise bilateral trade volume to \$10



billion, while Erdogan said both countries could benefit from high-level meetings held annually.

'Geography and history has dictated that we live in the same neighbourhood.. But I feel a historical responsibility to utilise this opportunity to bring the two states side-by-side, just as our borders are," Mitsotakis said.

More accustomed to verbal jousting in recent years, chilly relations between the two neighbours thawed markedly after Greece swiftly dispatched aid in the wake of a devastating earthquake in Turkey in February. Greece and Turkey have been at odds for decades over issues including where their continental shelves start and end, energy resources, overflights of the Aegean Sea, and ethnically-split Cyprus.

They came to the brink of war in the 1990s, and in recent years have argued over energy resources in the Eastern Mediterranean, defence issues, migration and the acquisition of fighter jets, which interrupted cooperation talks.

But 'earthquake diplomacy -similar to another thaw under similar circumstances in 1999 has turned the tide, again. Striking an upbeat tone, Erdogan earlier said the two countries should focus on the positives, and less on the negatives. "It will be much more benefi-

cial for the future if we look at things from a glass half-full perspective," Erdogan said during a meeting with Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou earlier. Greece got permission from the European Union to re-activate a seven-day tourist visa for Turkish visitors for 10 islands close to_ the Turkish coast. Both countries want to show

they are willing to mend ties. Turkey has been seeking EU membership for more than two decades. Following a debt crisis that rocked the euro zone, Greece wants to regain its footing and appear as a pillar of stability in a changing geopolitical landscape due to the war in Ukraine and the Gaza conflict.

BORIS DENIES

HE WANTED TO

LET COVID 'RIP'

RUSSIA SETS 2024 ELECTION DATE

Putin moves a step closer to fifth term

Moscow, Dec 7: Lawmakers in Russia set the country's 2024 presidential election for March 17, moving Vladimir Putin a step closer to a fifth term in office.

Members of the Federation Council, Russia's upper house of parliament, voted unanimously to approve a decree setting the date."In essence, this decision marks the start of the election campaign," Valentina Matviyenko, the chamber's speaker, said.

Putin, 71, hasn't yet announced



his intention to run again, but he is widely expected to do so soon now that election day is scheduled. Russia's Central Election Commission plans to hold a meeting Friday on the presidential campaign.

Asked whether Putin had decided to seek reelection, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov urged reporters to "be patient". Under constitutional reforms he orchestrated, Putin is eligible to seek two more six-year terms after his current term expires next year, potentially allowing him to remain in power until

The tight control over Russia's political system that he has established during more than 20 years in power makes his reelection in March all but assured. Prominent critics who could challenge him on the ballot are either in jail or living abroad, and most independent media have been banned.

ASSOCIATED PRESS London, Dec 7: Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson Thursday rejected suggestions that he wanted to let COVID-19 "rip" through the population as he defended his handling of the pandemic during a second day

into the crisis. Johnson shook his head and responded "No, no, no" as he was confronted with a series of diary entries by his chief scientific adviser that indicated he had argued in favour of letting the virus spread rapidly to increase immunity to COVID-19 rather than imposing further restrictions on the people of Britain.

of testimony at a public inquiry

The former prime minister, who is testifying under oath, said he was simply pushing scientists to explain why such a strategy wouldn't work as the government debated whether to impose a second national lockdown in the autumn of 2020 when infection rates were rising and vaccines weren't yet available.



IERS TEST AI'S INTEI

team of researchers at Facebook's parent company Meta has come up with a new benchmark to gauge the abilities of AI assistants like OpenAI's large language model GPT-4. And judging by current standards, OpenAI's current crop of AI models are all... still pretty stupid.

The team, which includes "AI godfather" and Meta chief scientist Yann LeCun, came up with an exam called GAIA that's made up of 466 questions that "are conceptually simple for humans yet challenging for most advanced AIs," per a yet-to-be-peerreviewed paper.

The results speak for themselves: human respondents were capable of correctly answering 92 percent of the questions, while GPT-4, even equipped with some manually selected plugins, scored a measly 15 percent. OpenAI's recently-released GPT4 Turbo scored less than ten percent, according to the team's published GAIA leaderboard. It's unclear, however, how com-

peting LLMs like Meta's own Llama 2 or Google's Bard fared. Nonetheless, the research demonstrates that we're likely still a long way away from reaching artificial general intelligence (AGI), the state at which AI algorithms can outperform humans in intellectual tasks.

That conclusion also flies in the face of some lofty claims made by notable figures in the AI industry."This notable perform-



the recent trend of LLMs outperforming humans on tasks requiring professional skills in e.g. law or chemistry," the researchers write in their paper.

Case in point, in January OpenAI competitor Anthropic claimed its AI dubbed Claude got a "marginal pass" on a blindly graded law and economics exam at George Mason University. In

its GPT-4 documentation, OpenAI also claimed that its model "exhibits human-level performance on various professional and academic benchmarks, including passing a simulated bar exam with a score around the top ten percent of test takers.

But how to actually gauge the intelligence of these systems has remained a thorny debate. Tools like GPT-4 still have plenty of inherent flaws and still can't reliably tell the truth from fiction. In other words, how could an algorithm really pass the bar if it can't even tell whether Australia exists?

LeCun has long been an outspoken critic of AI doomsaying and has repeatedly downplayed comments alleging that we're

facing an existential threat in the form of a rogue AGI."LLMs obviously have 'some' understanding of what they read and generate," he tweeted over the weekend. "But this understanding is very limited and superficial. Otherwise, they wouldn't confabulate so much and wouldn't make mistakes that are contrary to common sense.

That, however, may not always be the case. If recent rumors are to be believed, OpenAI is working on a next-generation model dubbed Q*, pronounced Q star, that could introduce a level of deductive reasoning and "planning." But whether it'll manage to score a higher mark on Meta's brutal GAIA test remains to be seen.



business



India has potential to grow at 8 per cent as the country is labourrich with enough institutional maturity of a functioning democracy

SUMAN BERY VC, NITI AAYOG

OLA ELECTRIC CUTS SALES TARGETS

India's Ola Electric has slashed its sales goals for 2023-2025 by more than half and delayed its target of achieving profits by a year, after reduced government incentives pushed up e-scooter prices. The scaling back of Ola's targets comes ahead of its \$700 million stock market debut plan





India will add another 38 gigawatt (GW) of renewable energy capacity by March 2025 to touch 170 GW-mark, aided by

moderation in solar module prices

VIKRAM V VP & SECTOR HEAD (CORPORATE RATINGS), ICRA

We gladly welcome the initiative to be transparent on GHGs. Hindalco has been a leader in sustainable metal manufacturing for years. Because of its infinite recyclability

SATISH PAI MD. HINDALCO INDUSTRIES

Interestingly, average rental values across the top 7 cities cent growth in H1 FY24, as compared to

the same period in FY23, essentially due to increased construction and

PRASHANT THAKUR REGIONAL DIRECTOR & HEAD (RESEARCH), ANAROCK

SHORT TAKES

Hyundai joins price hike race

New Delhi: Automaker Hvundai Motor India Ltd Thursday said it will hike the prices of its vehicles from next month citing rising input cost, adverse exchange rate and increase in commodity prices. The company, which sells a range of vehicles starting from Grand i10 Nios to electric SUV IONIO5. priced between Rs 5.84 lakh to Rs 45.95 lakh, however, did not specify the quantum of the proposed price increase to be effective from January 1, 2024. The company joins the likes of Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Honda and Audi among others which have also announced plans to increase vehicle prices in January.

SpiceJet to raise upto \$100mn

Mumbai: No-frills carrier SpiceJet Thursday said its board of directors will meet December 11, to consider various options to raise fresh funds on preferential basis. The announcement comes amid reports that SpiceJet promoter Ajay Singh was in discussions with a bunch of global private credit funds to raise up to \$100-million. "... The board of directors of the company in its meeting scheduled on December 11, 2023 will discuss and consider, inter-alia, options for raising fresh capital through issue of equity shares and/or convertible securities on preferential basis ...," SpiceJet said in a regulatory filing.

FEB '24 BUDGET

No big announcement

Upcoming Budget just a vote on account as elections loom, says Finance Minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Thursday ruled out any "spectacular announcement" for her sixth budget February 1 next year, saying it would just be a vote on account before the general elections.

A full Budget for the 2024-25 fiscal would be presented in July next year by the new government elected after the April-May general elections, she said at the CII Global Economic Policy Forum

"I am not going to play a spoilsport, but it is a matter of truth that the February 1, 2024, budget that will be announced will just be a vote on account because we will be in an election mode. So the budget that the government presents will just be to meet the expenditure of the government till a new government comes to play," she said.

"No spectacular announcements come in that time (in a vote on account). So you will have to wait till after the new government comes in and presents the next full Budget in July 2024," Sitharaman said in reply to a question on whether she would announce a "supercharged budget" in February.

Piyush Goyal, who was holding additional charge of the Ministry of Finance after Arun Jaitley fell ill, had presented the last interim budget in 2019. After the Narendra Modi-led



The Budget 2024-25, to be presented in July, is likely to aim for 10.5% in direct tax collections, in spite of apprehensions of a slowing global economy in 2024, and high base of revenue collections in current fiscal, as per reports

I don't want to be a spoilsport, but the 1st February Budget is just a vote on account; a budget to meet expenditure till the next government comes to power NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

government swept to power for the second straight time, Sitharaman was appointed as the finance minister and she presented the full budget July 5, 2019. Traditionally, a vote on account is an authorisation for incurring certain expenditures required till a new government takes office.

Governments in the past have refrained from making any major policy announcement during the vote on account, but there is no constitutional bar from making big announcements.

Goyal had announced a Rs 6,000 per year cash dole to 12 crore farmers in the interim Budget 2019.

Goyal had also announced tax sops for the middle class, including hiking the standard deduction available to the salaried class to Rs 50,000, from Rs 40,000.

Also, a full tax rebate was announced for individual taxpayers having taxable annual income of up to Rs 5 lakh. The 2019 interim budget had proposed that such taxpayers would not be required to pay any income tax

Also, ministers have made political speeches which some saw as a pitch for re-election.

Before the vote on account, Governments also do not present the customary pre-budget Economic Survey that traditionally is presented a day before the presentation of the full budget. The survey which details the state of the economy and directional events, is presented when the full budget is tabled in Parliament in July.

SWEET SPOT

Sitharaman said India continues to maintain the momentum of the fastest-growing major economy, with all sectors contributing significantly in economic activities.

The second quarter growth was very high, it is the highest in the world. We continuously maintain that momentum of being the fastest-growing economy," she said.

She further said that in just the last eight years, India has become the fifth largest economy from the 10th in 2014

Adani Ports may buy SP Group's Gopalpur port

Bangalore, Dec 7: India's largest private port operator Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone is in early talks to acquire real-estate conglomerate Shapoorji Pallonji Group's (SP Group) Gopalpur port in Odisha for about Rs 11-12 billion (\$132-\$144 mln), The Economic Times reported Thursday.

The deal could potentially be Adani Ports' sixth acquisition of a port along India's eastern coast, where it already has about 247 million tonne of capacity, the newspaper daily added.

The Gopalpur port's enterprise value is Rs 50 billion, and due diligence for its buyout is in process, the ET report said citing people aware of the talks.

The buyout is part of the Gautam Adani-led group's strategy to own ports across the western and eastern water margins.

In August, Deloitte resigned as auditor of Adani Ports, the first such move since US short-seller Hindenburg Research flagged high debt levels and alleged irregularities at the group.

The conglomerate's seven listed firms lost about \$150 billion of their combined market capitalisation after the Hindenburg report and have recovered only a part of those losses after paying down some

The Adani Group has denied allegations from Hindenburg.



BIZ BUZZ

PROFIT BUYING

EQUITIES BREAK SEVEN-DAY RALLY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 7: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty snapped their seven-day winning streak Thursday due to profit taking by investors after recent sharp gains triggered by negative

132.04 points, or 0.19 per cent, to close at 69,521.69. The gauge hit the lowest intra-day level of 69,320.53. Broader index Nifty also declined 36.55 points, or 0.17 per cent, to settle at 20,901.15.

Analysts said crude oil prices

Major laggards among Sensex constituents included Bharti

Power Grid, UltraTech

1.62 UltraTech Cement

cues from Asian markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex fell

in international markets failed to boost sentiment amid selling pressure from foreign institutional investors even as traders staved on the sidelines ahead of RBI's monetary policy decision. The Reserve Bank of India is

expected to maintain the status quo on the interest rate in its bi-monthly monetary policy decision to be announced Friday.

Airtel, Hindustan Unilever, Tata Steel and ITC.

SENSEX FELL 0.19% TO CLOSE AT 69,521.69 IFTY DOWN 0.17% TO SETTLE AT 20,901.15

Cement, NTPC and Titan emerged as winners.

As many as 17 shares of the 30-share Sensex ended the session in red, while 23 Nifty firms closed lower. In the broader market, the

BSE largecap index moved up

marginally by 0.02 per cent, the midcap gauge gained 0.66 per cent and smallcap advanced by 0.28 per cent. Among sectoral indices,

FMCG, metal and teck declined by 0.85 per cent, 0.75 per cent and 0.38 per cent respectively. On Thursday, global oil

benchmark Brent crude was trading 1.01 per cent higher at \$75.05 a barrel. On Wednesday, Sensex surged

357.59 points, or 0.52 per cent, to settle at a new record of 69,653.73. The broader index Nifty climbed 82.60 points, or 0.40 per cent, to hit its fresh peak

Govt priorities sugar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: The Centre

However, the government has allowed use of 'B-molasses' for ethanol production in 2023-24, a move which sugar industry bodies welcomed.

mills and distillers, the Food Ministry directed them "not to use sugarcane juice /sugar syrup" for ethanol production during the 2023-24 ethanol supply year (December-November).

isting offers received by Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) from B-Heavy molasses will continue," Food ministry said in the letter.

Welcoming the move, the

National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories (NFCSF) Managing Director Pakash P Naiknavare said. "There is huge stock of ethanol made from B-molasses lying in the country apart from contracted quantities. The letter resolves the industry's concern."

biguity in the letter that states supply of ethanol from "existing offers" received by OMCs from B-Heavy molasses will continue. "Will it be withdrawn after the existing tender is over? There is no clarity," he told PTI.

built for making ethanol from sugarcane juice and sugar syrup alone. These units will become sick if they remain unoperational, he added. To contain food inflation, the

Central government has also banned exports of wheat and broken rice. It has also fixedminimum export price (MEP) for basmati rice.

TIDBITS

EV sales on fast lane; up 25.5% in November

Mumbai: Electric vehicle total retail sales, including passenger and commercial vehicles, grew 25.5 per cent to 1,52,606 units in November, according to data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers Association (FADA) Thursday. The total EV retail sales in November 2022 were recorded at 1,21,596 units, according to FADA. The e-two-wheeler sales were



18.82 per cent higher at 91,243 units during the previous month from 76,791 units in November 2022. The e-three-wheeler volume rose 32.37 per cent to 53,766 vehicles in the reporting month as compared to 40,619 units retailed in the year-ago period, the data showed. Electric passenger vehicles retail sales in November this year stood at 7,064 units, a growth of 77.35 per cent over 3,983 units in the same month of last year. The electric commercial vehicle (e-buses) retail sales were reported at 533 units in the previous month as against 203 units retailed in November 2022, registering a year-on-year growth of 162 per cent, it said.

1K outlets: India fastest growing mkt for KFC

New Delhi: Food services chain KFC has reached a store count of 1,000 outlets in India, among its fastest growing markets worldwide, the quick service chain said Wednesday. KFC global chief executive Sabir Sami said in a statement that the chain is looking to grow "in every market it operates." Yum Restaurants in India are operated by three franchisees - Devyani International Limited and Sapphire Foods which operate KFC and Pizza Hut, and Burman Hospitality which operates Taco Bell. KFC, which debuted in India in 1995, said it will add over a lakh jobs across the country. Yum Restaurant's other brand in India, Pizza Hut, however, trails KFC and operates a little over 800 stores in the country.

PPL bags FAI awards

Bhubaneswar: Paradeep Phosphates Limited (PPL) was once again recognised for its overall effort in maintaining the plant site and achieving desired production performance. PPL was conferred with prestigious Fertiliser Association of India - Best Performing Phosphoric Acid Plant and Best Environment Management in NPK plant. Nilesh Dessai, Chief Manufacturing Officer & Unit Head received the award from Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Chemical & Fertilizers and Health & Family Welfare at the Annual Seminar of Fertliser Association of India at New Delhi December 6. Rajat Kumar Mishra, IAS Secretary, Department of Fertilisers, Suresh Krishnan, Chairman, Fertiliser Association of India were also present. The award will inspire PPL to scale new milestones in industrial safety.



Vedanta wins best exporter award from Govt of Odisha

Jharsuguda: Vedanta Aluminium, India's largest producer of aluminium, has been conferred with the 'Best Exporter' Award at the Odisha State **Export Awards for its** Jharsuguda smelter's excentional



consecutive fiscal years 2020-21 and 2021-22. The coveted award was presented by Pratap Keshari Deb, Minister of Industry, MSME (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise), and Energy, Government of Odisha. On behalf of the company, Ashok Kumar Patro, Head Indirect Taxation, and Karan Kumar Agarwal, Deputy Head Taxation Direct and Indirect, received the award. Notably, Vedanta Aluminium, tharsuguda received the same award in fiscal years 2018-19 and 2019-20. Speaking about the award, Sunil Gupta, COO, Aluminium Business said, "I thank Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister of Odisha, and the Directorate of Export Promotion & Marketing for awarding us with the prestigious Best Exporter Award. Vedanta Aluminium has been a longstanding partner to state's socioeconomic advancement with substantial contributions towards the state's GDP, employment, and quality of life. Our Jharsuguda smelters play a pivotal role, single-handedly producing over onethird of India's aluminium, bolstering the state government's 'Make in Odisha' initiative. We take great pride in being Odisha's partner in progress, committed to leveraging our assets to establish the state as a global hub for aluminium production."

performance as the largest exporter of the state, for two

Tata lobbies India not to slash EV import taxes

made by Tata.

around \$9 billion, and the second

source said lower duties for for-

Tesla, which is losing share

in an increasingly crowded US

market, has its sights set on the

potential of India's auto mar-

ket, one of the world's biggest

where more than 3 million cars

are sold each year. EVs still ac-

count for a tiny share in India,

but Modi's

DOMESTIC CAR INDUSTRY IS LOBBYING HARD AGAINST TESLA'S PLAN FOR INDIA TO LOWER TAXES. AS THEY BELIEVE THIS MOVE WILL BE CONTRARY TO GOVERNMENT'S MAKE-IN-INDIA PUSH

REUTERS

New Delhi, Dec 7: Tata Motors is pressing Indian officials not to lower import taxes of 100% on electric vehicles and to protect domestic industry and its investors, as the government reviews Tesla's plans to enter the market, people

with direct knowledge said. As India tries to boost domestic manufacturing and EV adoption, Tesla is proposing to set up an Indian factory, but is demanding lower import taxes for electric cars.

India is working on a new policy to cut import taxes on EVs to as low as 15% for companies committing to some local manufacturing. The policy could allow Tesla to set up its India factory to

make its proposed \$24,000 car, while importing its more expensive models with lower tax.

Tesla's strategy is a departure from its failed plan last year when it just pushed India to lower duties.

In meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's office and other departments, Tata has opposed the plan, arguing that its investors made decisions assuming the tax regime favouring locals will remain unchanged, two sources with knowledge of talks said.

Tata is also arguing that India's EV players need more government support in the early growth stage of the industry, pointing to imported gasoline or diesel cars which are still taxed at

eign players could risk future fundraising India's EV market is small, but 74% of the 72,000 electric cars sold so far this year are

first source. "Lower duties will hit the entire (domestic) industry," the person said, adding "the investment climate will get vitiated."

up to 100% despite the industry

being well developed, said the

Tata, one of India's biggest carmakers, started its EV business in 2019. Private equity firm TPG and Abu Dhabi state holding company ADQ invested \$1 billion in 2021, valuing

ment is promotthe EV business

■ TESLA EYES INDIA, MARKET

■ TATA PUSHING INDIAN OFFICIALS TO NOT LOWER EV TAXES

LEADER TATA WARY: SOURCES

■ IT IS WORRIED ABOUT COMMITTED

INVESTMENT IF TAXES CUT use of clean cars and the sector

is rapidly growing. Modi has been directly overseeing talks with Tesla since his meeting with CEO Elon Musk

INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S VIEW

in New York in June.

Another Indian player, Mahindra & Mahindra, which has raised around \$400 million from Singapore's Temasek and British International Investment, has also raised concerns with officials about the lower EV tax

plan, said a third source, a senior federal official involved in policymaking. New Delhi, said the third source, is trying to soothe concerns of local automakers, but India remains determined to make EV sector entry for foreign players easier to help meet its goals. Modi wants 30% of annual car sales in India to be electric from 2030 compared to the current 2%. Charging infrastructure is in its infancy too.

"We will come out with a policy that addresses everyone's fears," said the official, adding one option was to lower import taxes only above a certain price point.

India's current EV import tax of 100% is for cars priced above \$40,000 - which applies to most Tesla models. Tata has three EV offerings, priced \$10,400 to \$24,000.

"If India needs to be an EV hub, we need more manufacturers ... Local industry need not fear that Tesla or anyone else will wipe them out," said the Indian official.

India's talks with Tesla come as other countries are courting the US giant.

supply over ethanol

Thursday banned the use of 'sugacane juice and sugar syrup' for ethanol production in the 2023-24 supply year that started this month, in order to maintain adequate sugar availability for domestic consumption and to keep prices under check.

In a letter issued to all sugar

The directive was issued as per clause 4 and 5 of the Sugar (Control) Order 1966. "Supply of ethanol from ex-

The decision by the ministry comes in the backdrop of estimated fall in sugar production in 2023-24 marketing year (October-September).

However, there are some am-

Also, some units have been

Ugly spat mars LLC JAVELIN THROWER TO TRAIN IN INDIA ONLY AHEAD OF OLYMPICS JENA SEEKS PERSONAL



AGENCIES

Surat, Dec 7: The Legends League Cricket (LLC) will conduct an internal investigation on the violation of the code of conduct in the incident involving former India teammates Gautam Gambhir and S Sreesanth which took place Wednesday during the Eliminator played between India Capitals and Gujarat Giants. Former India pacer Sreesanth alleged both Wednesday and Thursday that he had been abused by Gambhir.

"The code of conduct and necessary action will be taken against all that have violated the very clear rules stated by the league's Code of Conduct &

Ethics Committee, the LLC said in a statement Thursday.

Sreesanth said Gambhir called him a 'fixer' during the match which India Capitals won by 12 runs. The two World Cup-winning players were involved in a heated exchange during the game. The umpires had to intervene and separate the two players.

"He (Gambhir) kept on calling me 'fixer fixer, you are a fixer, **** off you fixer' on live television," Sreesanth said while going live from his Instagram handle. "I just said 'what are you saying', I kept laughing in a sarcastic way. He spoke to the umpires in the same language when they tried to control him," added the pacer.

Sreesanth was handed a life

committee due to his alleged involvement in the IPL 2013 spotfixing scandal. However, the ban was reduced to seven years in 2019 by the Supreme Court.

"Now his people are saying sixer sixer bola hai but unhone bola you fixer, tu fixer hai (his people are claiming he said sixer sixer but he said you are a fixer). This is not the way to talk. I'm thinking of leaving it (the incident), but his people are trying to save him. I request you all to not fall for extra paid PR work,' Sreesanth said.

An hour after Sreesanth went live. Gambhir, who is a BJP MP from East Delhi, posted on 'X' a picture of himself in the Indian jersey smiling. He captioned it, "Smile when the world is all

about attention!"

In another Instagram live video Wednesday after the game Sreesanth had called Gambhir 'Mr fighter'. "Just wanted to clear the air about what happened with Mr fighter. One who always fights with all his colleagues. That's exactly what happened today (Wednesday). Without provocation, he just kept on calling me something which was very rude,' Sreesanth had said.

This is not the first time Gambhir has been involved in an on field altercation. He has had fiery exchanges with Virat Kohli a couple of times during the IPL, including earlier this year when Royal Challengers Bangalore took on Lucknow

BEST IN PARIS GAMES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: Odia javelin thrower Kishore Kumar Jena made a meteoric rise this year which he capped with an Asian Games silver medal. In spite of the success, Jena wants to remain grounded, just looking ahead to produce yet another personal best in next year's Paris Olympics.

A late bloomer, the 28-yearold Jena improved his performance by nearly 10 metres in one year. After recording 78.05m to finish third in the National Open Championships in October last year, he produced his personal best of 87.54m to win a silver in the Hangzhou Asian Games.

"I don't want to set any target regarding the distance which I will throw in the season ahead. I just want to throw my personal best in Paris and then hope that I get a medal," Jena said Thursday.

Jena was speaking on the sidelines of the release of the book The man who made history: The Neeraj Chopra Story written by senior journalist Norris Pritam. Chopra took the gold in Hangzhou with a throw of 88.88m.

"He (Chopra) is my idol, whatever good things are happening in Indian athletics is because of him," Jena asserted. "Athletes have certainly grown in stature in India after Chopra's international dominance," added Jena.

Chopra recently talked about Jena's good rhythm on the runway but advised the Odisha athlete to work on improving his blocking technique. "Yes, I will do that. We are in off-season training, so not doing anything on throwin India mostly and go for a few competitions abroad before the Paris Olympics," informed the

tions abroad.

"In all likelihood I will train

things are happening in Indian athletics is

because of Neeraj

ing and on technique. However, me

and my coach will work on my

technique so that everything is OK

before the Paris Olympics," said

Jena. "All my focus is on the

If Jena maintains his per-

formance or improves upon it, he

can be a serious medal contender

in the Paris Olympics. He said the

plan as of now is to train mostly

in India next year and take part

in some top competitions abroad

before the Olympics.

Paris Olympics," he added.

Chopra. He is my idol

KISHORE JENA

Asian Games silver medallist.

Jena's coach Simarjeet Singh Malhi also said that they would prefer to train mostly in India, and take part in a few competi-

Hangzhou Asian Games women's javelin throw gold medallist Annu Rani who was also present at the function said the hard work of athletes comes to the fore after winning medals. "I even began throwing with sugarcane at my village (Bahadurpur near Meerut). People of my village would say why a girl would play sport. I would bring javelin from my school and hide it from my father," Annu informed.

SHORT TAKES Two Odisha teams to take part in IWL

Kozhikode: Defending champions Gokulam Kerala FC will face Sethu FC in the opening match of the VIIth Indian Women's League (IWL) football here Friday. For the first time, the IWL will be played in a double round-robin format on a home-and-away basis. All the previous six seasons were held at a one venue. Seven teams will battle it out for the trophy with the tournament ending in March 2024. The other teams in the league are Odisha FC, HOPS FC, East Bengal, Kickstart FC and Sports Odisha. This is the first time that two teams from Odisha will be taking part in the event. Gokulam Kerala have won the last three IWL titles.

Goa to host 2nd edition of WTT

New Delhi: The second edition of India's biggest table tennis tournament, the WTT Star Contender will be held in Goa from January 23 to 28 next year. World Table Tennis (WTT), conceptualised by the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) in 2019, serves as the epicentre for professional men's and women's table tennis events globally. The tournament boasts of a prize pool of USD 2,50,000 and ranking points will be up for grabs. The event is also a qualifier for the WTT **Cup Finals and WTT** Champions Series.

Pogba faces 4-yr ban

Rome: Anti-doping prosecutors in Italy requested Thursday a maximum fouryear ban for Juventus midfielder Paul Pogba after the World Cup winner tested positive for testosterone. Pogba opted not to make a plea bargain with the antidoping agency, meaning the case will be tried before the country's anti-doping court. If the four-year ban is confirmed, it could end the 30-year-old Pogba's career. Pogba's positive test was announced in September, stemming from an exam that was carried out after Juventus' game at Udinese played August 20. Pogba did not play in the Serie A match but was on Juve's bench. Pogba has made no public comments on the case. 'Humanely, I'm sorry for Paul,' Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri said in October. AGENCIES



MCTOMINAY GOALS LIFT UNITED IN CRUCIAL GAME AGAINST CHELSEA

AGENCIES

London, Dec 6: Aston Villa outran Manchester City with a fullydeserved 1-0 win Wednesday in Birmingham thanks to a deflected shot from Leon Bailey, leaving the reigning Premier League champions in an unfamiliar fourth position and six points off the top. However, it was a good day for Manchester United who overcame Chelsea by the odd goal in three.

Unai Emery's hungry and confident Villa, enjoying their best season for years, dominated the game from start to finish, leapfrogging Man City to third in the table. After squandering a hatful of

chances, Villa's winner came in the 74th minute when the quick Bailey took the ball just past the half-way line, ran at City's defence and unleashed a shot that hit Ruben Dias' foot to beat goalkeeper Ederson.

Minutes later, Douglas Luiz struck the post for Villa, who could have won by a larger margin in a surprisingly one-sided game, to the noisy delight of the majority at Villa Park.

'It was a great game, great night for the fans, great night for Aston Villa," said Bailey. "To get the win and to be the one that scored the goal is a magnificent feeling.

The result left Pep Guardiola's



NIGHT TO REMEMBER: Leon Bailey of Aston Villa celebrates with teammates after scoring against Manchester City

team on 30 points after 15 games six points behind leaders Arsenal – and without a win in their last four Premier League matches. Aston Villa moved up to third on 32 points, two behind Liverpool and four behind Arsenal.

Such was their dominance that Villa's 22 shots were the joint-most faced by a Guardiola team in 535 games managing in Europe's big five leagues.

'Today (Wednesday) Aston Villa played better and we struggled, especially in the first half," acknowledged Guardiola. "The challenge now is going to Luton

and trying to win the game. As a manager. I have to find the way to lift them again and find

the way to win games," he added. Meanwhile Manchester United's Scott McTominay (19th and 69th) scored either side of half time to lift his team to a well-deserved 2-1 victory over Chelsea at Old Trafford. The victory lifted Erik ten Hag's beleaguered team, who have been hounded by recent reports of unrest in the dressing room, into sixth in the table on 27 points after 15 games. Chelsea are 10th on 19 points.

Shami nominated for Nov ICC award

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 7: India's senior fast-bowler Mohammed Shami, along with Australia's ODI World Cup winning duo of Travis Head and Glenn Maxwell have been shortlisted for the ICC 'Men's Player of the Month' award for November 2023.

Shami topped the wickettaking charts at the 2023 Men's ODI World Cup, and led India's bowling attack in fine fashion with a number of scintillating displays during the month, though the hosts' ended up as runnersup despite being overwhelming favourites to win the title.

Shami was a late addition to India's playing XI, but left a huge impact thereafter. He started November with a 'player of the match' performance against Sri Lanka at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai, tearing through their batting line-up with sterling figures of 5-18, leaving every-

one mesmerised. Shami's highlight of the campaign, though, came in the semifinal victory over New Zealand at the same venue. He took seven wickets for 57 runs against the Kiwis and helped India reach the final. Overall he finished the tournament with 24 wickets, including three five or more wickets haul. During the calendar month of November, Shami took 15 wickets at a remarkable average of 12.06.

down to Spain stick of Rohit, who converted a penalty corner in the 33rd minute Kuala Lumpur, Dec 7: Spain

Indian colts go

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

were superb on the wings and played a close-knit game to crush India 4-1 in a pool match of the FIH junior men's hockey World Cup here Tuesday. Spain are currently leading Pool C with six points from two wins, while Korea are ahead of India on goal difference, with both sides having three points each. The fourth team in the pool, Canada, are yet to open their account after two losses.

The advantage for India is that they play their last pool match Saturday against Canada. They can keep in mind the goals they need to score to be in contention to qualify for the knockout stage

Uttam Singh's side, after starting the prestigious tournament on a high with a 4-2 victory against Korea, were brought down to earth by the tactically superior Spain, who made full use of the opportunities and tightened their defence resolutely to deny India penalty corner conversions.

Cabre Verdiell Pol (first, 41st minutes) and Rafi Andreas (18th, 60th) were on target for the Spaniards, while for India, the consolation goal came from the

of the game.

Most contests between India and Spain have gone to the wire but Thursday, it seemed the 2016 junior World Cup champions were low on energy, conceding_ a goal in the very first minute of the contest with an unmarked Cabre hitting the mark.

India tried rotating the midfielders following the jolt but were unable to find a way to pierce the sturdy Spanish defence. They did manage a few circle penetrations with their aggressive play, but the equaliser still eluded them. Then Spain again scored from a penalty corner converted by Andreas to take the wind out of India's sails.

Even though India, did pull a goal back after the interval, their joy was short-lived as Cabre struck his second goal of the match to regain the two-goal lead for his side.

India earned three penalty corners between the 55th and 57th minutes but Spanish goalkeeper Capellades put his body on the line to deny them success. Spain earned a penalty stroke in the last minute and didn't miss the gilt-edged opportunity to add to

Odisha on verge of innings win

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: Fine bowling by Jogeswar Bag (4/12) put the Odisha U-16 team on course for an innings victory Thursday at stumps on the second day of the three-day Vijay Merchant Trophy game against Tripura. The game is being played at the Mangaldai Sports Association Stadium in Assam.

Odisha resuming at their overnight score of 91 for five took the total to 224 all out thereby taking a lead of 142 runs in the first innings. Earlier on the first day, Tripura were bowled out for 82 with Odisha bowler Abhneet Patnaik taking seven wickets for 21 runs.

In the second innings also, the Tripura batters could not do much better against the Odisha bowlers who bowled in a disciplined manner. They were reduced to 68 for the loss of eight wickets at stumps, still needing



Jogeswar Bag

another 74 runs to avoid an innings defeat with only two wickets in hand.

Earlier, when Odisha batted Rehan Khan (57, 137b, 7x4, 1x6) and Rudra P Mallick (46, 45b, 8x4, 1x6) batted well to ensure a commanding lead for their side. While Rehan displayed admirable grit and tenacity, Rudra launched a counter-attack to wrest the game away from the opposition.

FORMER WORLD NO.1 ALL SET TO RETURN TO PROFESSIONAL TENNIS NEXT MONTH AT BRISBANE AGENCIES

Madrid, Dec 7: Former World No. 1 Rafael Nadal has insisted he will be 'competitive' when he returns to professional tennis next month after enduring nearly a year out of action due to injury.

Nadal, the 22-time Grand Slam champion has undergone surgery twice in 2023 after struggling with a hip injury. He has said next vear will likely be his last season before retirement and announced last week he would make his comeback at the Australian Open warm-up event in Brisbane, which runs

from January 1-7. "I don't know at what level (will play at), I don't know what to expect, I have no idea, but I don't care right now," Nadal said Thursday in a video posted on so-



Rafa promises to be fiercely 'competitive'

cial media. "I'm just happy to be back and with great excitement to make the effort that is necessary to have fun and I believe that I will be competitive,' the Spaniard added. Nadal last played at the Australian Open in January, losing in the second round to American MacKenzie McDonald. He originally hoped to be back in time for the clay-

court season and Roland Garros, where he is a 14-time French Open winner, but had to end his campaign early. The 37-year-old has slipped to 664th in the world rankings while sidelined.

"It's been a long year in which I've gone through many phases, from trying to get back to compete at the clay season, week after week, disappointment after disappointment," said Nadal. 'Of course I have had many doubts, of course there were moments where it seemed impossible

that this moment would come, but we've maintained the work, spirit and hope and I think I am ready," the legendary player said. Nadal is a two-time Australian Open champion, in 2009 and 2022. However, he has slipped behind

old rival Novak Djokovic in the all-time list of Grand Slam singles titles, as the Serb won three this year in his absence to take his tally to a record 24. "I have finally had good train-

ing weeks at a level that allows me to have the possibility to compete again. I know that the tournament I'm coming back is going to be tough, but it is the right time to test myself," Nadal pointed out.

