



LARA'S OBSERVATION

Actor Lara Dutta says the world of social media has made everyone a health expert

LEISURE P2



HAWKISH STANCE

Reserve Bank of India expectedly leaves its key lending rates unchanged for the fifth consecutive time, Friday

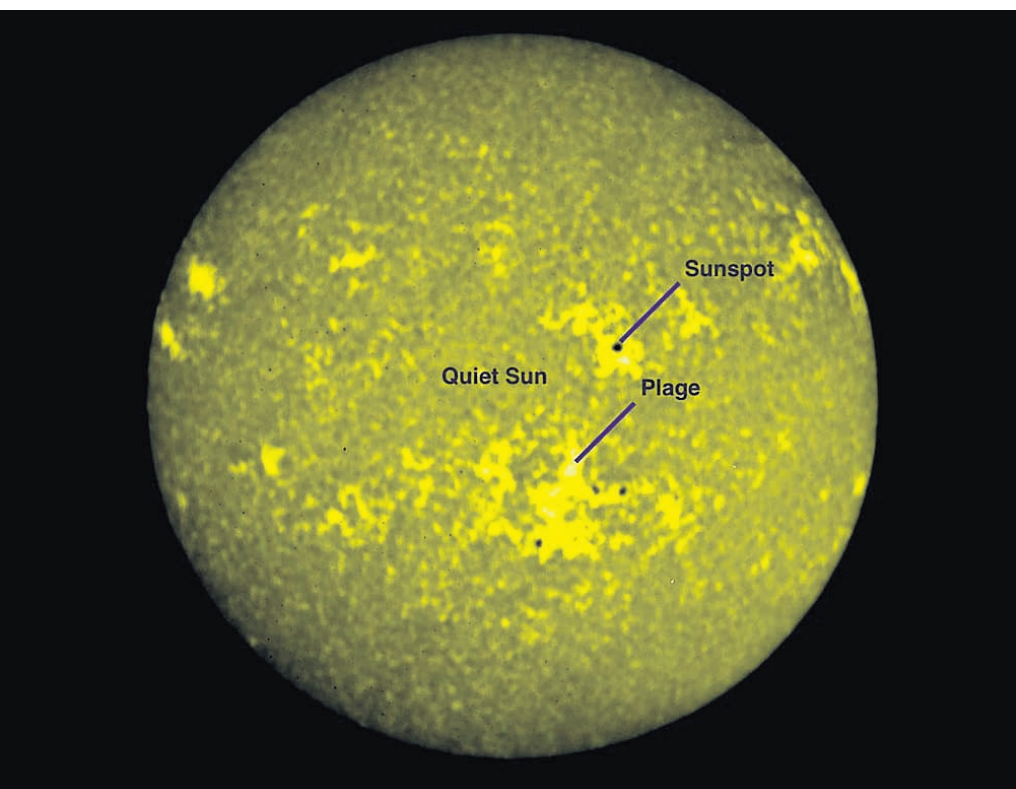
BUSINESS P12



SHAMI IN FOCUS

India's bowling coach Paras Mhambrey says Mohammed Shami is an artist who has no peers

SPORTS P12



ADITYA-L1 MISSION: The SUIT payload captures the first-ever full-disk representation of the Sun in near ultraviolet wavelengths ranging from 200 to 400 nm. It provides pioneering insights into the intricate details of the Sun's photosphere and chromosphere

Rail signal engineer dies in train accident

Nuapada: A Railway signal engineer died here as a train hit him after his leg got accidentally stuck in tracks in the district, Thursday night. The deceased was identified as Anup Ray, 28, of Dhobipada village under Kantabanji block in Balangir district. According to reports, Anup had gone to Nuapada railway station from Lakhna railway station to repair technical problems in the signaling system. While returning to Lakhana after finishing work, his leg got stuck in the tracks while he was crossing it. Later, a moving train hit Anup, killing him on the spot.

NBW against Sourin

Bhubaneswar: The SDJM court in Cuttack has issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against absconding Odia singer Sourin Bhatt in connection with a sexual harassment case, police said Friday. On the basis of a complaint lodged by a woman, a case was registered against Sourin at Mahila police station in Cuttack in June. The woman accused him of false promise of marriage, cheating, torture and exploitation, police added.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Joined so that I can bend like the viral video while doing namaste. Friends say it's good for my political health

2 bankers held in ₹3.33cr fraud

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: Two employees of a public sector bank were arrested for allegedly making fraudulent transactions that caused a loss of ₹3.33

crore, officials said Friday.

The two employees of Central Bank of India were arrested by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Odisha Crime Branch from Keonjhar and Bhubaneswar Thursday, they said.

'Kangaroo court' wins, Mahua Moitra loses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: Trinamool Congress leader Mahua Moitra was expelled from the Lok Sabha Friday after the House adopted the report of its Ethics Committee that held her guilty of accepting gifts and illegal gratification from a businessman to further his interest.

After a heated debate over the Panel report during which Moitra was not allowed to speak, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi moved a motion to expel the Trinamool member for 'unethical conduct', which was adopted by a voice vote. Reacting sharply to her expulsion, Moitra equated the action with hanging by a 'kangaroo court' and alleged that a parliamentary panel was being weaponised by the government to force the Opposition into submission.

She told reporters that she has been found guilty of breaching a code of ethics that does not exist and that there was no evidence of cash or gift given to her.

The Ethics Committee report found Moitra guilty of 'unethical conduct' and contempt of the House by sharing her Lok Sabha credentials - User ID and Password of Lok Sabha Member's Portal, with unauthorised persons which had an irrepressible impact on national security, Joshi said.

The Committee also recommended that in view of the 'highly objection-



able, unethical, heinous and criminal conduct' of Moitra, an intense, legal and institutional inquiry be initiated by the government in a time-bound manner.

The motion moved by Joshi said that Moitra's 'conduct has further been found to be unbecoming as an MP for accepting gifts and illegal gratification from a businessman to further his interest which is a serious misdemeanour and highly deplorable conduct' on her part.

Joshi urged the House to accept the recommendation and finding of the committee and 'resolve that continuance of Moitra as member of Lok Sabha is untenable and she may be expelled from the membership of the Lok Sabha'.

TMC and other Opposition members demanded that Moitra be allowed to put her views in the House, which was turned down by Speaker Om Birla citing past precedence.

RAINING CASH

Over ₹225cr in cash found during Day 3 of I-T searches at premises belonging to a distillery group; PM guarantees return of money to public; BJD welcomes raids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar/Ranchi, Dec 8: With the Income Tax (I-T) department recovering over Rs 225 crore cash during a series of raids on an Odisha-based distillery group on charges of tax evasion, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday assured people that the money looted from the public will be returned.

Taking to X, the PM said, "The countrymen should look at the pile of these notes and then listen to the honest 'speeches' of their leaders....Whatever has been looted from the public, every penny will have to be returned, this is Modi's guarantee."

Modi was apparently referring to some political leaders both in Odisha and Jharkhand.

The mobile phone of a Jharkhand MP, who allegedly has links with the liquor company, was found switched off when PTI tried to contact him. Employees in his Ranchi office said that the MP was unavailable.

Meanwhile, the Odisha unit of BJP demanded a CBI probe into the episode and sought clarification from the ruling BJD.

Showing some photos of a woman minister from western



Odisha sharing dais with one of the liquor traders on whose premises the raids were conducted, BJP spokesperson Manoj Mohapatra said the tax evasion could not have been possible without patronage of the state government.

BJD MLA Satyanarayan Pradhan, however, rejected BJP's allegation and claimed that CM Naveen Patnaik hates corruption and believes in transparency. "People found guilty will certainly be punished as our CM always says law will take its own course," Pradhan said.

In a statement, the BJD welcomed the I-T raids and said, "Jharkhand BJP leaders are saying the seized money belongs to Congress leaders. On the other hand, Congress leaders are say-

ing it belongs to BJP leaders. Both are blaming each other. It seems like both BJP and Congress leaders had stashed their money with this businessman." "We welcome the raids conducted by the I-T department. It seems some BJP leaders of western Odisha are connected with the recovered money and the businessman. Therefore, they panicked and held a press meet. All the facts will come out after investigation," the BJD said.

Continuing its raids, the I-T department Friday found 156 bags of cash during search on the third day at Sudapada in Bolangir; also linked to the distillery group. From the bags, Rs 25 crore were counted till Friday afternoon, taking the total amount recovered so far to Rs 225 crore.

The raids were carried out at Sambalpur, Bolangir, Titilagarh, Boudh, Sundargarh, Rourkela and Bhubaneswar. Meanwhile, torn currency notes of Rs 500 denomination were found dumped near the Boudh Distillery Private Limited at Titirikata.

Former I-T commissioner Sarat Chandra Dash said this could be the largest cash seizure by the I-T department in Odisha so far.

Jr Mehmood no more



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 8: Junior Mehmood, the child star remembered for his endearing performances in films such as 'Caravan', 'Brahmachari' and 'Mera Naam Joker' in the late 1960s and early 1970s, died in the early hours of Friday following a battle with cancer. He was 68.

The actor, who was born Naem Sayyed and got his pen name from his idol Mehmood, was laid to rest at the Santa Cruz cemetery in the presence of family and associates from the film industry in the evening.

"My father passed away at 2 am following his battle with stomach cancer. He was in a critical condition for the last 17 days. He had lost 35-40 kg in a month," Junior Mehmood's younger son Hasnain Sayyed said.

Junior Mehmood began as a child artist with 'Mohabbat Zindagi Hai' (1966) and 'Naunihaal' (1967). He was given the name Junior Mehmood by late comedy icon Mehmood after they starred together in the 1968 film 'Suhaag Raat'.

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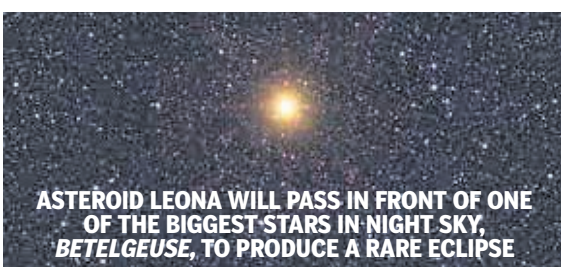
Star Betelgeuse to blink Tuesday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Canaveral, Dec 8: One of the biggest and brightest stars in the night sky will momentarily vanish as an asteroid passes in front of it to produce a one-of-a-kind eclipse.

The rare and fleeting spectacle, late Monday into early Tuesday, should be visible to millions of people along a narrow path stretching from central Asia's Tajikistan and Armenia, across Turkey, Greece, Italy and Spain, to Miami and the Florida Keys and finally, to parts of Mexico.

The star is Betelgeuse, a red supergiant in the constellation Orion. The asteroid is Leona, a slowly rotating, oblong space rock in the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.



ASTEROID LEONA WILL PASS IN FRONT OF ONE OF THE BIGGEST STARS IN NIGHT SKY, BETELGEUSE, TO PRODUCE A RARE ECLIPSE

Astronomers hope to learn more about Betelgeuse and Leona through the eclipse, which is expected to last no more than 15 seconds. By observing an eclipse of a much dimmer star by Leona in September, a Spanish-led team recently estimated the asteroid to be about 34 miles wide and 50 miles long (55 km wide and 80 km long).

There are lingering uncertainties over those predictions as well as the size

of the star and its expansive atmosphere. It's unclear if the asteroid will obscure the entire star, producing a total eclipse. Rather, the result could be a 'ring of fire' eclipse with a minuscule blazing border around the star. If it's a total eclipse, astronomers aren't sure how many seconds the star will disappear completely, perhaps up to 10 seconds.

"Which scenario we will see is uncertain, making the

event even more intriguing," said astronomer Gianluca Masa, founder of the Virtual Telescope Project, which will provide a live webcast from Italy.

An estimated 700 light-years away, Betelgeuse is visible with the naked eye. Binoculars and small telescopes will enhance the view. A light-year is 5.8 trillion miles.

Betelgeuse is thousands of times brighter than our Sun and some 700 times bigger. It's so huge that if it replaced our sun, it would stretch beyond Jupiter, according to NASA.

At just 10 million years old, Betelgeuse is considerably younger than the 4.6 billion-year-old sun. Scientists expect Betelgeuse to be short-lived, given its mass and the speed at which it's burning through its material.



ZEPHANIAH DIES AT 65

Popular show Peaky Blinders actor and poet Benjamin Zephaniah, who played the role of Jeremiah Jesus, passed away at the age of 65. According to a statement posted to Zephaniah's official Instagram account, he died on Thursday after being diagnosed with a brain tumor eight weeks ago, as per Variety, a US-based media outlet.

SELENA CONFIRMS DATING BLANCO

Singer-actress Selena Gomez has confirmed her romance with music producer Benny Blanco, and defended their love before the haters. Instagram account PopFactions posted a picture headlining "Selena Gomez Seemingly Confirms That She Is in a Relationship", in which she commented 'facts', reports *Mirror.co.uk*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today, a romantic link-up is about to be delivered at your doorstep, all wrapped in silver and tinsel! So, Ganesh hopes you are prepared. Don your best attire, check your breath and practice some sweet-talking. After all, who knows what the evening will lead to? Only Ganesh, and he's smiling an impish grin! Need more clue?

TAURUS

Chaos will reign supreme as unexpected things occur and expected ones are missed out on, says Ganesh. Luck will favour you and nothing is powerful enough to hamper you other than your own thoughts. You will dodge any trouble that is headed your way and escape easily, much to the embarrassment of others.

GEMINI

Today is an important day to completely immerse yourself in your favourite activities, says Ganesh. But don't forget that loved ones come first as lack of warmth may affect family life. Show your family members that you care.

CANCER

At work, your ability to forge great partnerships will see to the success of one of your ambitious projects. However, you need to be careful before signing the contract. It's always important to go through the finer details of a deal before closing it.

LEO

Reinvention and rejuvenation – these are the two words that shall dictate your philosophy for the day. Refurbishing oneself does not always have to be in accordance with something new; taking a look back can be equally enlightening. In any case, it's a small world, and, hence, chances are that you shall revive most of your old contacts either in a social occasion or an official meeting.

VIRGO

Achievement and accomplishment will be the high-lights of the day, notes Ganesh. You will be recognised for your devotion to work and determination to succeed at your workplace. Much awaited promotions may come and financial arrears may also reach your hands.

LIBRA

You will be very active today, especially when it comes to finishing tasks in office. Your thoughts will reach new heights and you will be able to motivate and stimulate others to perform. Your motto for the day is 'Arise, awake and sleep not till the goal is reached'.

SCORPIO

Your close friends and loved ones seem to be on the menu today, predicts Ganesh. Romantic brilliance will usher in happiness and favourable business prospects will be the icing on the cake. Your charm will peak and you will enjoy the attention you get out of it.

SAGITTARIUS

Be ready with you bags packed as you may decide to undertake an impromptu trip today. It could be a business trip or simply travel in pursuit of pleasure. Nostalgia will grip you as you run into an old childhood friend today.

CAPRICORN

That you are affectionate towards your loved ones will be more noticeable today than ever before, says Ganesh. In fact, you will enjoy their company and will do everything in your capacity to make them feel wanted. Long-term relationships will also thrive.

AQUARIUS

Fortune favours the brave, and who knows it better than you? Your performance may come under scrutiny, but your bosses will come away pleased as punch. Want to make some money? Ganesh points to real estate and the construction business.

PISCES

Your expenses are likely to soar and you will need to draw a line between your needs and your desires if you are to keep them in check. There is a strong possibility that you will undergo a spiritual experience today.

Curtains fall, memories live on

Once Hollywood actor Gregory Peck was in Mumbai and met Junior Mehmood at Mehboob Studio. He couldn't help remark, 'You're too handsome for a comedian', reveals Mehmood's brother Anwar



Junior Mehmood (C) with Dev Anand and Rajendra Nath



Mumbai: Junior Mehmood, who took an exit Friday, illuminated the silver screen, like no other. Born as Naem Sayyed,

Mehmood's journey in the film industry spanned over five decades, during which he left an indelible mark with his versatility and exceptional talent.

Even as several celebrity visited him at his death bed and showed pity on him, not many know that he was a top celebrity in his own right and has always led life king size.

In an old interview, Mehmood's brother, Anwar Ali, had revealed the actor's exorbitant fees, surpassing that of lead actors. "Once Bhaijaan turned successful,

there was no looking back. Rajshri Productions' specially created a role for him in their first production Aarti (Pradeep Kumar-Meena Kumari starrer in 1962). Bhaijaan even taught Meenaji to play tennis. He was paid more than heroes, around Rs 7.5 lakh for 14 days of shooting. Once Gregory Peck was in Mumbai and met Bhaijaan at Mehboob Studio. He couldn't help remark, 'You're too handsome for a comedian,'" added Anwar.

Mehmood's brand value was so immense that filmmakers often promoted their films by highlighting his name. He had become not just an actor but a brand himself, and every filmmaker wanted to piece of him. "If the end

credits of the film read, 'And Mehmood', distributors would pounce to buy it," Anwar said during the interview.

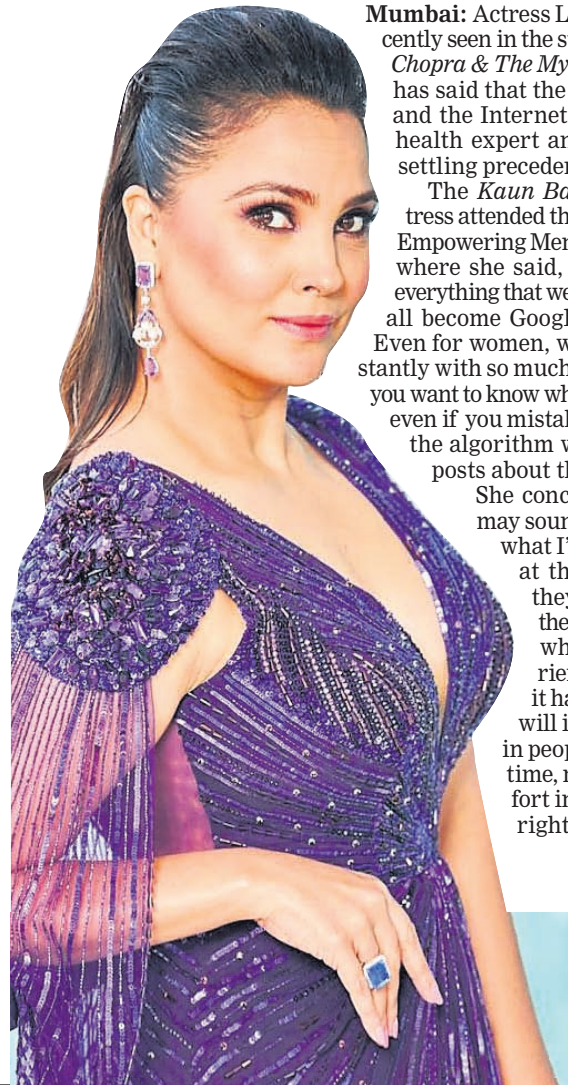
His ability to captivate audiences through his lively on-screen presence and impeccable comic flair made him an integral part of the Hindi cinema landscape. Junior Mehmood's dancing skills and versatile portrayals of characters made him a cherished figure in the hearts of movie enthusiasts.

His legacy extends beyond his acting brilliance; Junior Mehmood's dedication, passion, and commitment to his craft will continue to inspire budding actors and entertainers in the Indian film industry.

His demise has left an irreplaceable void in Bollywood, marking the end of an era. Junior Mehmood's contributions to Indian cinema will forever be remembered and cherished by fans, colleagues, and the film fraternity.

The passing of Junior Mehmood is mourned deeply by his family, friends, and countless admirers. As the curtains fall on an illustrious career, his memory will live on through the timeless performances that continue to bring joy and laughter to audiences across generations.

Lara: Internet has turned everyone a health expert



Mumbai: Actress Lara Dutta, who was recently seen in the streaming series *Charlie Chopra & The Mystery Of Solang Valley*, has said that the world of social media and the Internet has made everyone a health expert and that it's a very unsettling precedent.

The *Kaun Banegi Shikharwati* actress attended the Media Roundtable on Empowering Menopause Conversations, where she said, "All of us today with everything that we are exposed to, we have all become Google, Instagram doctors. Even for women, we are bombarded constantly with so much information. Today, if you want to know what you're going through even if you mistakenly click on one link, the algorithm will throw up multiple posts about the same thing."

She concluded with, "They all may sound like the right fixes to what I'm going through. But, at the end of the day, are they the experts? Are they the people who really know what my personal experience is, and just because it has worked for someone, will it work for me? I believe in people, who have put their time, money, research and effort into actually getting the right kind of information."

IAN S

5-DAY THEATRE FEST ON ODIA LEGENDS: DAY IV



Mirror Theatre of Belpahad Wednesday presented *Ramadebi*, a biographical play on the life and activities of freedom fighter Ramadebi Choudhury. Written by Narayan Sahoo, the play was directed by Subash Chandra Pradhan. The event is being organised by Odia Language, Literature and Culture (OLL&C) Department in collaboration with Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi to celebrate the lives of legends and social reformers of the state.

An artiste's life revolves around challenges: Triptii



Mumbai: Actress Triptii Dimri, who has been hailed as the national crush following her impactful performance in the recently released action thriller *Animal*, continuously shot for 48 hours in Delhi while juggling two projects.

Talking about juggling two projects simultaneously, the actress said: "I feel blessed to encounter such good challenges

in my life, where I must navigate between two exciting opportunities. In an industry where securing work can be a real struggle, I am grateful to have had the chance to be part of two projects concurrently."

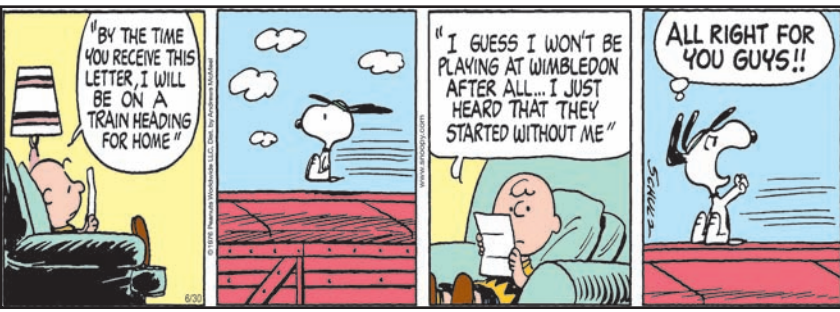
She further mentioned: "Despite the physical and mental exhaustion, it's all worthwhile at the end of the day. As artistes, we are built for these challenges, and our lives revolve around such experiences. The sense of fulfillment comes when we receive accolades for our performances. Hence, I look forward to encountering more such opportunities in the future."

On the work front, Triptii will be seen next in *Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video* and *Mere Mehboob Mere Sanam*.

IAN S

FUN post

PEANUTS



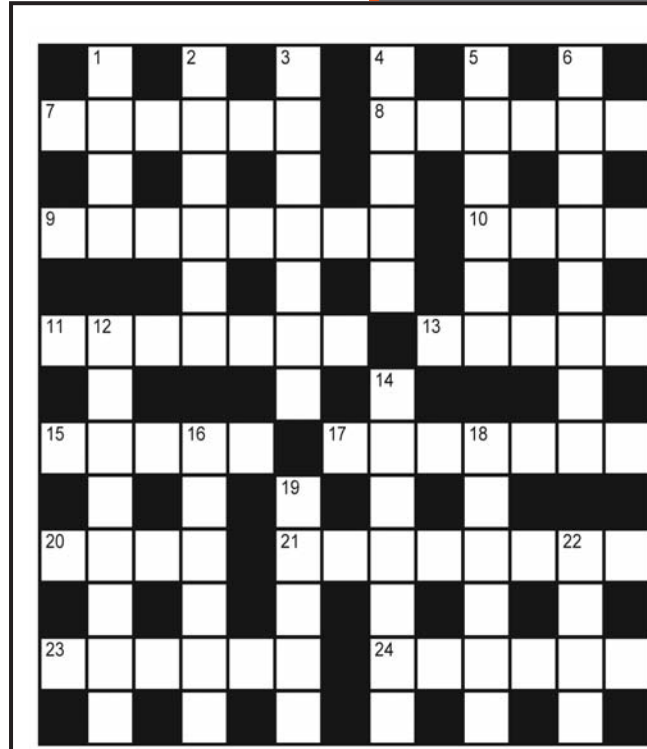
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



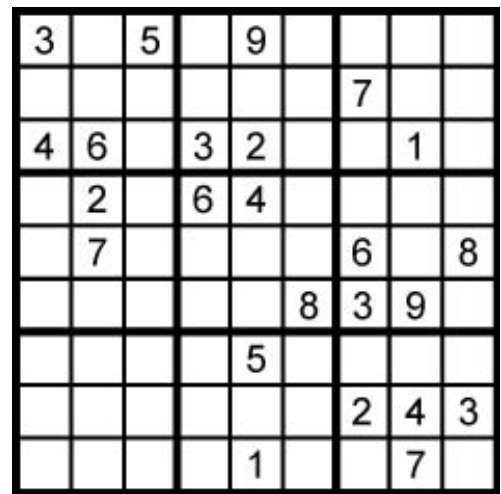
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Gumdrop
 - 8 Scottish clan leader and outlaw (3,3)
 - 9 Blonde's secret?
 - 10 Quarrel
 - 11 Golf course area
 - 13 Intense hatred
 - 15 Barrel part
 - 17 Busybody
 - 20 Toward shelter
 - 21 Put together
 - 23 Bucket accessory
 - 24 Jamaica, e.g.
- Down**
- 1 Olympic sled
 - 2 Hearsay
 - 3 Large seabird
 - 4 Salad oil holder
 - 5 Died down
 - 6 Hairdo
 - 12 Addax
 - 14 Diver's gear (3,4)
 - 16 City on the Danube
 - 18 Chin feature
 - 19 Sheik's bevy
 - 22 Air sac

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



People under the banner of 'Odisha Rajya Peshagram Sabha Coordination Committee' stage a demonstration at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Friday, demanding abolition of Odisha Regulation 21,956

downtown

CM INAUGURATES HOSP IN TALCHER



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday inaugurated Pabitra Mohan Pradhan Government Hospital at Talcher in Angul district in presence of Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Pralhad Venkatesh Joshi. The hospital named after renowned freedom fighter Pabitra Mohan Pradhan was built at a cost of Rs 492 crore using CSR funds of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL). The 330-bed hospital will be later upgraded into a medical college. Inaugurating the facility through virtual mode, Patnaik thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Centre's co-operation for the project. The hospital will be converted into a medical college in future, he said. Paying his respects to freedom fighter Pradhan, who was born in Talcher, the Chief Minister said the area has contributed immensely to the development of the state with its rich mineral resources.

Noting that his government has been stressing on high-quality health services to the people, Patnaik said the new hospital will serve the needs of the local residents. Coal Minister Pralhad V Joshi said Coal India, which has contributed towards construction of the hospital, would also support to upgrade the hospital into a medical college. He said the Coal India subsidiary MCL will provide Rs 628 crore for the management of the hospital for the next five years. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the day will be remembered by the local people as the hospital is named after the son of the soil. MCL CMD Keshav Rao expressed his gratitude to the Odisha government for extending help to the company in its pursuits to meet the aspirations of people. MCL had earlier handed over to the state government the 500-bed Pabitra Mohan Pradhan Medical College and Hospital at Talcher.

2 bankers held for ₹3.33cr loan fraud

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: Two employees of a public sector bank were arrested for allegedly making fraudulent transactions that caused a loss of ₹3.33 crore, Friday. The two employees of the Central Bank of India were arrested by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) from Keonjhar and Bhubaneswar Thursday. It was alleged that between September 2015 and November 2018, they made fraudulent transactions in respect of 68 Central Kisan Credit Cards and 24 term loan accounts, besides illegal diversion of subsidy, causing a loss of ₹3.33 crore to the bank. They were then posted as the BM and agricultural finance officer of Bhadreswar branch of the bank in Cuttack.



FOR HASSLE-FREE DARSHAN: Workers initiate process to set up air-conditioned tensile fabric structure on Grand Road in Puri that would help streamline queue management system for devotees visiting Srimandir, Friday

OP PHOTO

NUA Odisha to create empowered youth force: Min

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: NUA (Nutana Unnata Abhilasha) Odisha will create a skilled and empowered youth force, ready to face the challenges and opportunities of the future, said Skill Development and Technical Education (SD&TE) Minister Pritiranjan Gharai during the launch of a host of initiatives under the scheme that aims at transforming the skilling landscape for youths here, Friday. According to Gharai, Skilled in Odisha has become a global brand. "With wide opportunities in digital skilling and emphasis on skilling at doorstep through NUA Odisha, the youth will be empowered with employability. NUA Odisha is dedicated to cre-

A pact was inked with the NIOS that would help ITI students obtain Class XII certificates

ating a skilled and empowered youth force, ready to face the challenges and opportunities of the future," the SD&TE minister said. Under NUA Odisha, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed with the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), helping ITI students to obtain their Class XII certificates. Over 20,000 ITI students will receive Class XII certificates annually, opening new avenues for higher education and boosting their employability. Another pact was inked with

NASSCOM to provide digital skilling opportunities, aligning with the demands of the modern tech-driven world. With online courses curated in collaboration with industry leaders like Microsoft, IBM and Coursera, it will help provide e-skilling opportunities for over a lakh youths annually. Under the newly-launched initiatives which emphasises on decentralised skilling to strengthen the Skilled in Odisha brand, more than 5,000 ITI students will be upskilled in new-age trades through short-term courses, augmenting their skills and enhancing employability. Moreover, WSC SHAKTI will help create women leaders through Executive MBA programme and Centre of Excellence for girl students.

Father-daughter duo calls for climate action



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: Dubai-based Odia father-daughter duo - Priyadarshini Panigrahi and her 13-year-old Tisya Panigrahi - has sent out a unique message from 70 ft below the sea, urging upon all the nations across the world to unite, act and deliver on the sidelines of COP28 Climate Summit which is being held in Dubai. COP28, the United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference, is being held in Dubai from November 30 to December 12. Priyadarshini and Tisya are certified advanced scuba divers. While Priyadarshini is the head of the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) business of a large Indian multinational cor-

poration (specialising in fast moving consumer goods), Tisya is a Grade VIII student of Raffles World Academy, Dubai. Both of them are highly passionate about scuba diving. This father-daughter duo dived around 70 ft deep in Maldives December 2 (UAE's National Day) in the pristine coral reefs near the Sun Siyam Olhuvveli resort in South Male Atoll. After reaching around 70 ft deep in crystal clear waters and surrounded by colorful corals and prolific marine life they gave out their appeal by holding placards which carried the logo of COP28 UAE and the simple yet powerful message of 'PLEASE UNITE. ACT. DELIVER'. 'Unite. Act. Deliver' happens to be the theme of COP28 conference and 'PLEASE' was added to this to convey the urgency with which nations need to take action now. Priyadarshini and Tisya feel very strongly about the need to urgently act on climate change and wanted to draw the attention of the world to this imminent threat which is causing havoc on the Earth.



11th

CONVOCATION CEREMONY

SATURDAY, 9TH DECEMBER, 2023 AT 10:00 A.M



His Excellency, the Governor of Odisha
SHRI RAGHUBAR DAS
VISITOR, CENTURION UNIVERSITY
Will preside over the Ceremony

The Commencement and Convocation Address will be delivered by the following Distinguished Dignitaries



Hon'ble Justice
SHRI CT RAVIKUMAR
Judge, Hon'ble Supreme Court of India



DR BVR MOHAN REDDY
Founder Chairman, CYIENT & Former Chairman NASSCOM



SHRI PUSHP KUMAR JOSHI
Chairman cum Managing Director
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd.
Government of India

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT CASE

NBW issued against singer Sourin Bhatt

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: A court in Odisha has issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against absconding Odia singer Sourin Bhatt in connection with a sexual harassment case, police said Friday. On the basis of a complaint lodged by a woman, a case was registered against Sourin at Mahila police station in Cuttack in June. The woman accused him of false promise of marriage, cheating, torture and exploitation, police added. During investigation, police conducted raids at various places to arrest the singer. He, however, has managed to remain at large, said Anil Mishra, Additional DCP, Cuttack. "Our investigating officer (IO) then requested the court to issue a NBW against Sourin. The court of sub-divisional judicial magistrate (SDJM), Cuttack, accepted our request and issued the NBW," Mishra said. Now, police will take legal action to declare him a proclaimed offender and attach his properties, he added. A team of Commissionerate Police had visited Sourin's house in Kolkata June 22. However, it had to return empty-handed as the singer was not there. The singer then moved the HC seeking anticipatory bail in this case, but the court rejected his plea. This was followed by police issuing a look-out circular against the singer in September.

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Mukta Soft app in 23 more ULBs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: The state government has taken a decision to implement Mukta Soft application in 23 more municipal bodies. These ULBs include Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur, Rourkela and Sambalpur Municipal Corporations, Puri, Baripada, Kotpad, Jeypore, Keonjhar, Kesinga, Jharsuguda, Jajpur, Paradip, Chhatrapur, Hinjilicut, Athagarh, Padmapur, Bolangir, Phulbani, Boudhgarh, Bhadrak and Balasore.

Mukta Soft application allows the payment of the project charges immediately. It may be mentioned that while the state government is implementing Mukta Yojana to provide work the urban people, priority is being given to women self-help groups and slum development as-



Mukta Soft application allows the payment of the project charges immediately

sociations. Therefore, more emphasis is being laid on how they can get their dues immediately after completion of project works.

Officials concerned had been asked to upload details of Mukta projects in Mukta Soft application by November 20.

City mission managers of 23 municipal bodies concerned will act as nodal officers for immediate implementation of Mukta Soft scheme and the 'Help Desk' at SUDA department will monitor the project work on a daily basis. However, it has been clearly stated that all valid projects should be uploaded by December 10 and 60 per cent of these projects by December 20. The entire rollout process needs to be completed by December last, the letter reads.



TOMORROW'S TALENT: Sports and Youth Services Minister Tusharkanti Behera and Chief Adviser to the Chief Minister's Office Suresh Chandra Mahapatra greet participants at the 22nd All Odisha Nalco Open Tennis Tournament, 2023 at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Friday

XIM University observes 36th Foundation Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: Xavier Institute of Management observed its 36th Foundation Day here Friday. The event highlighted the significant achievements of the institution in delivering distinct educational infrastructure.

Attending the event Apollo Hospitals managing director Suneeta Reddy shared anecdotes on leadership and management, by ascribing her experiences of managing the healthcare company. In her address to the students, she mentioned power is derived from self-belief, which rewards in achieving major life-goals.

Meanwhile, the varsity conferred Reddy with a Doctoral degree on Business Management.

This apart, the program marked the presence of Vice Chancellor Antony Raj, Chairman of board of Governors Rajive Kaul, Chairman Antony R uvari and students of different management branches.

Odisha MPs raise tribal, farmers & infra issues

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, Dec 8: In the first week of Winter Session of the Parliament, issues pertaining to tribals, farmers, communication and infrastructure development in Odisha were raised by the state MPs in both the houses.

On the first day of the session, BJD MP Niranjan Bishi highlighted lack of internet services in several rural areas of Odisha while speaking on the Post Office Bill, 2023 in Rajya Sabha. Similarly party MP Sujet Kumar requested the government for increasing tele-density and railway network in Odisha. BJD MP Sasmit Patra reiterated Odisha's demand for inclusion

of 169 communities in Odisha's ST list and inclusion of five tribal languages in Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Patra also sought withdrawal of 18 per cent goods and services tax (GST) on kendu leaves. He further requested the government to release payments of crop insurance and also requested a hike in the minimum support price of paddy.

Likewise, Rajya Sabha MP Manas Mangaraj sought early completion of the coastal highway project while Munna Khan and Mamata Mohanta battled for new railway services. Mohanta requested for railway services from Baripada to Balasore while Khan demanded Vande Bharat

Express from Bhubaneswar to Visakhapatnam.

Cuttack MP Bhartruhari Mahtab requested the Union Civil Aviation Ministry to take steps for a short stay of Bhubaneswar-Patna flight at Deogarh Airport for the benefit of pilgrims visiting Baidyanath Dham. Similarly, BJD MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu raised the demand for setting up of a tribal university in Odisha.

BJP MP from Bargarh Suresh Pujari raised the demand for bifurcation of districts, subdivision and blocks in Odisha. He requested the Union government to impress upon the state gov-

PARLIAMENT THIS WEEK

BMC to undertake median plantation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: As part of its plans to revamp greenery in the City, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Friday announced to launch its plantation drive on 36 major medians along 60 km of roads here. However, the civic body has committed to undertake plantation on medians along 45-km roads while the remaining will be taken up by Odisha Forest Development Corporation (OFDC).

This apart, the civic body has floated a tender to allow private agencies to undertake the work on remaining medians.

In a meeting chaired by BMC Commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange, a consensus was reached to consider new medi-

ans for plantation of different varieties of saplings. The meeting also stressed the use of advanced machines for trimming and cutting of overgrown trees, and watering the plants.

Out of the designated zones, North Zone will encompass 24 km of beautification drive which includes Chandrasekharpur, Patia, Mancheswar, Chakeisihani, VSS Nagar, Press Chhak, Palasuni and Rasulgarh, while 7 km in South-East stretch encompassing Acharya Vihar, Saheed Nagar, Jharpada, Laxmi Sagar, Unit-I, II and III, BJB Nagar, Samantarapur and 14 km in South-West zone including CRPF Square, Sum Hospital, Khandagiri, Baramunda, IRC Village, Nayapalli and Unit VI will be covered under the plantation drive.

Water Resources dept, IIT Roorkee sign MoU

BHUBANESWAR: State Water Resources department Friday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Indian Institute Technology (IIT), Roorkee for 'capacity building of civil engineers of minor irrigation (MI) organization' in presence of development commissioner-cum-additional chief secretary Anu Garg. Rashmi Ranjan Nayak, project director of Odisha Community Tank Development and Management Society (OCTDMS) signed the MoU with and IIT, Roorkee professor Deepak Khare. "The Odisha Integrated Irrigation Project for Climate Resilient Agriculture (OIIPRA) is an initiative to improve water use efficiency, strengthen participatory irrigation management in the MI tank command and foster climate resiliency in agriculture through technological solutions. This World Bank supported project is being implemented in a convergence mode, by the Water Resources Department and Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment and Fisheries and Animal Resources Development," said an official. In her address, Garg said that the training is expected to build the capacity of the engineers of MI wing in implementing various aspects of hydrology and related disciplines with a focus on sustainable use of water through cutting-edge technology and good practices.

INAE annual convention to start at SOA today



Bhubaneswar: Scientists and technologists from across the country will converge in City to attend the three-day annual convention of the Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE) commencing at the Siksha 'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be University (SOA) here from December 9. INAE is an autonomous professional body, partly funded by the Union Science and Technology Department, which comprises many distinguished engineers, scientists and technologists covering a wide range of engineering disciplines, said Damodar Acharya, chairman of INAE Bhubaneswar chapter and the SOA Advisory Board.

₹1cr for Mahanadi Netra Hosp

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) chairman Asit Tripathy Friday informed that WODC has sanctioned ₹1 crore for development of the Mahanadi Netra Hospital in Subarnapur, as the hospital has been playing a crucial role in providing eye care services in the region under the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana.

Tripathy informed this while attending a review of various development projects being attended in the district with financial assistance from the council.



On this occasion, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the Subarnapur Collector Bimalendu Ray and the officials of Mahanadi Netra Hospital. Budget has been sanctioned for 80 beds at the hospital which now has 30. Tripathy said that the hospital will be transformed into a 'centre of excellence' in ophthalmology in Western Odisha.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	69825.60 ↑ 303.91
NIFTY	20969.40 ↑ 68.20
DOLLAR	83.42 ↑ ₹0.04
EURO	90.06 ↑ ₹0.11
GOLD	₹61,971 ↓ ₹495
SILVER	₹73,597 ↓ ₹716

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	25.3°C	24.8°C
TEMP. MIN	19.5°C	19.0°C
Humidity	84%	89%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light to moderate rain	

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Mira Baral, D/o. Rabinarayan Baral, resident of Sadangi, Ward No.05, P.O-Sadangi, P.S.-Gondia, Dist-Dhenkanal, Pin-759016, Odisha, declare by this affidavit No.4202, Dated 06.12.23 that now onwards, I shall be known as Meera Rani Mohanty, W/o.- Susanta Kumar Mohanty, resident of Mirzapur, PO- Sadanandapur, PS- Kuakhia, Dist-Jajpur, Pin No.-755009 (Odisha) for all purpose.

Companies operating in hotspots can help mitigate pandemic risk

Financial entities investing in companies operating in hotspots for emerging infectious diseases should leverage their influence to mitigate risks of new pandemics, researchers have said in a new study published in The Lancet Planetary Health journal.

The researchers from Sweden, Belgium and Germany, have identified companies operating in economic sectors associated with increased risks of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.

These companies are known to operate in regional hotspots for these zoonotic diseases, they said in their study.

The researchers then analysed the financial entities with ownership and investments in these companies.

They found that a handful of largely US-based private financial entities, including Vanguard,

State Street, BlackRock, and T Rowe Price, have substantial investments in these companies.

Further, even public investors such as the state of California, Norway through its Sovereign Wealth Fund, and Sweden through its pension funds, hold shares in these companies operating in potential pandemic epicentres.

"Financial actors have an important, but often ignored, role to help prevent the emergence of infectious diseases. Their investments enable economic activities in known zoonotic disease hotspots globally," said Victor Galaz, lead author of the study and senior researcher at the Stockholm Resilience Centre at Stockholm University.

The researchers also pointed out countries such as France, the US, Portugal, Norway and Sweden either invest themselves or host headquarters of com-



panies with investments in zoonotic diseases hotspots.

They said that these countries could work together to use financial influence to address the risks of animal-to-human outbreaks and pandemics.

The authors said that efforts to prevent such outbreaks need to "go beyond current environmental, social, and governance metrics which have proven to be insufficient to show real-world ecological effects."

In their study, they described some policies and practices

which investors could push for, which included ecological restoration measures and the creation of pathogen surveillance systems.

Other measures they suggested included improvements in the health and economic security of communities living in geographical hotspots of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.

Corporate policies focussing only on deforestation and land-use change fail to consider the enhanced risks of spillover events through agricultural expansion and deforestation, according to co-author Paula A. Sánchez, researcher at the Stockholm Resilience Centre.

"There is a need for policies to reduce the edge effect, create pathogen surveillance systems and improve the health care systems of communities living in areas that are emerging

infectious hotspots," said Sánchez.

The researchers further warned of climate change's impacts on the risk of spillover events.

"Climate change will increase the risks of new zoonotic outbreaks. Financial actors should make sure that their investments help to mitigate and adapt to those risks," said Peter Sogaard Jørgensen, another co-author associated with the Stockholm Resilience Centre.

"Large investors hold potential influence over companies operating in these hotspots, and this influence could be leveraged to mitigate risks of new pandemics," said Galaz.

The researchers acknowledged that data availability continued to be a limitation for identifying potential alliances among investors and corporate actors.

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Hit by unseasonal rain, coffee growers ask govt to intervene

Rains struck during the peak coffee harvesting season and affected the quality and texture of the ripened fruits



PNN & AGENCIES

Koraput, Dec 8: A body of coffee growers demanded government intervention and subsidies in the wake of unseasonal rain triggered by cyclone Michaung wreaking havoc on harvest of the crop.

Odisha Coffee Growers' Association (OCGA) urged the government to provide subsidies to facilitate the adoption of modern drying techniques.

According to the farmers' body, the rain battered Koraput district, known for coffee gardens, Tuesday and Wednesday and damaged the crops.

The calamity struck during the peak harvesting season and affected the quality and texture of the ripened coffee fruits.

"It's the peak ripening season for coffee fruits. The cyclonic storm has significantly impacted growers. Drying the harvested coffee has become problematic after the unseasonal rain which we face almost every year. Also, the quality is affected," OCGA Vice-President Sjoy Pradhan said.

Cultivators in the district keep the harvested coffee fruits under sunlight to dry the crop.

"This practice becomes challenging during adverse weather conditions, leading to quality issues. Additionally, several substances may inadvertently mix with the coffee during the open drying process," he said.

Emphasising the need for gov-

ernment intervention, Pradhan said, "We demand subsidies to establish transparent polyhouses with raised beds and solar dryers." The charter of demands was formally presented by the association during the recent visit of KG Jagadeesha, Chief Executive Officer of the Coffee Board of India, to the district.

Currently, Koraput has over 3,500 hectares of coffee plantation involving around 4,300 growers.

UNTIMELY RAIN HITS VEGGIE GROWERS IN SUNDARGARH

Rourkela: Cyclone Michaung-triggered rain, which is causing havoc in many districts of the state, has left the farmers in the vegetable growing pockets of Sundargarh in a dire strait.

Unseasonal rain has adversely affected vegetable cultivation in the district and it will directly affect the prices.

Notably, the entire district experienced heavy rains as the cyclonic low pressure passed through Sundargarh towards Chhattisgarh. "This will not only affect Sundargarh, but also affect other districts because we supply vegetables to many parts of the state," said Mahi Sahu, a farmer and seller of vegetables. The prices of tomato,

"The association has presented its demand. There are plans to organise exposure visits for coffee growers of the district to learn about the polyhouse method of drying fruits," said Upendra Kumar Saha, Senior Liaison Officer, Coffee Board, Koraput.

He acknowledged that unseasonal rain affected the quality of coffee fruits during harvesting season.

Notably, untimely rainfall due to cyclone Michaung has caused extensive crop damage across the state bringing a sense of dismay to farmers who hoped for fruitful harvests this farming season.

Source said harvested crops lying open on large swathes of paddy fields were submerged under water in western and southern districts of the state leaving the farmers in despair.

beans, cabbage, capsicum and cauliflower were already high before the rain because truckloads of the produce were sent outside the district, including Chhattisgarh.

"Rain is the number one enemy of the vegetables growing in the field. And certainly, it will play spoilsport as far as supply and prices are concerned," said Ramachandra Mohanty, a vegetable wholesaler. The same sentiment was echoed by many farmers here.

"Rain will hamper growth of the vegetables. The most affected are cabbage, cauliflower, capsicum and tomato plantations," said Robin Xess, a known farmer of Nuagaon area.

ED files charge-sheet against 3 for trading leopard skin, organs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 8: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed a charge-sheet against three alleged wildlife poachers namely Satyaban Sahu, Mahit Bhue and Souki Thethua in connection with the alleged trading of leopard skin and organs, official sources said.

The ED said that the agency filed the charge-sheet under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.



ED filed the charge-sheet against Sahu, Bhue and Thethua of Barghar district, in the Court of the Sessions Judge, Khurda at Bhubaneswar-cum-Special Court (PMLA) with prayer for conviction and punishment of the accused persons and also confiscation of proceeds of crime.

The court took cognizance of the charge-sheet filed by ED in this case December 4, the agency said.

The ED case is based on the FIR and charge sheet filed against the accused persons, by the Special Task Force of state Crime Branch under various sections of the IPC, 1860 and Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

ED investigation revealed that the accused persons were allegedly involved in trading of leopard skin and wildlife articles or organs or trophies since long and one leopard skin, 11 numbers of its nail and four numbers of its teeth valued at Rs 6.30 lakh were identified as proceeds of crime, the agency added.

Mayurbhanj sees most cases of crimes against women

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: There has been rise in the incidents of crime against women in Odisha, with Mayurbhanj district witnessing registration of the maximum number of cases, according to a latest report of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

The report on 'Crime in India, 2022' also presents a detailed district level account of various crime incidents that occurred in different states including Odisha, last year.

As per the NCRB report, Mayurbhanj district bore the undesirable distinction of being the first in crime cases committed against women.

The tribal dominated district reported 1,788 criminal offences such as assault, murder, rape, kidnapping and abduction of women in the state in 2022.

Ganjam is not far behind Mayurbhanj in cases related to crime against women. As many as 1,532 cases were registered in the district. Kendrapara district stood third with 1,476 cases.

Mayurbhanj recorded 394 kidnapping and abduction cases



The northern district also recorded the maximum number of cyber offences, sexual offences against girl children, and kidnapping and abduction cases of women

Koraput witnessed 121 rape cases which was the highest in the state during 2022

of women in 2022 which was the highest among districts. Balasore closely followed Mayurbhanj with 387 cases of kidnapping in 2022.

Mayurbhanj recorded the maximum number of cases related to cyber offences against women registered under the Information Technology Act. The district recorded as many as 45 cases under the IT Act for cyber crime offences against women in the state.

As many as 37 cyber crime offences against women were reported in Cuttack in 2022.

The report also brought to fore the fact that Mayurbhanj registered third highest assault incidents against women while Kendrapara topped the list in the state.

Kendrapara, Khurda and Mayurbhanj registered 792, 639

and 621 assault on women cases, respectively. Similarly, Mayurbhanj with 120 sexual abuse cases recorded the second highest rape cases in the state in 2022. Koraput witnessed 121 rape cases which was the highest in the state during 2022.

Mayurbhanj and Nuapada districts reported two cases each in which the victim were killed after sexual abuse in 2022. Meanwhile, Mayurbhanj also topped the list of districts with the highest number of sexual offences against girl children in 2022.

The district recorded 193 cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Violence Act.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. ELS-ANGL-OT-23-24-06
Name of Work: REPAIR/REHABILITATION (OR) OF CO-CO BOGIE OF WAG-7 ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES OF ELECTRIC LOCOSHED ANGUL.
Advertised Value: ₹ 2,33,09,807.76, EMD: ₹ 2,66,600/-, Period of Completion: 24 Months.
Bidding start date: 20.12.2023, Tender closing date & time: at 1500 hrs. of 03.01.2024.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.reps.gov.in
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRS), PR-866/O/23-24, Angul

EAST COAST RAILWAY

e-Tender Notice No. ETELCONBST-349ER, Dtd.: 05.12.2023
Name of Work: DESIGN, SUPPLY, ERECTION, MODIFICATION / AUGMENTATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF SUB-SECTIONING & PARALLELING POST (SSP) WITH ASSOCIATED PSI WORK AT BUDHAPANK ALONG WITH REQUIRED MODIFICATION AT TALCHER ROAD/TRACTION SUBSTATION (TSS) IN CONNECTION WITH 3RD & 4TH LINE BETWEEN BUDHAPANK-JARAPADA SECTION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.
Approx cost of the work: ₹ 319.13 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 3,09,600/-, Completion period of the work: 18 Months.
Tender closing date & time: at 1200 hrs. of 27.12.2023.
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 letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website www.reps.gov.in. The prospective tenders are advised to visit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenders/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.
The tenders should read all instructions to the tenders carefully and ensure compliance of all instructions including check lists, para 3.1 (additional check-list) of tender form (Second sheet) Annexure-I of chapter 2 of Tender documents, submission of Annexure-B/G & G1 duly verified and signed by Chartered Accountant.
By, Chief Electrical Engineer/Con-I, PR-100/CG/23-24, Bhubaneswar

Advt. No. 02/2023
Government of India
Department of Atomic Energy
Invites application for the post of
Chairman and Managing Director
In Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL)
Last date of receipt of applications is
22.01.2024 upto 17.00 hrs.
For details login to website
http://www.dae.gov.in
CBC 48134/12/0052/2324

प्रत्युषा PRATYUSH
INTERVIEW FOR SCIENTIFIC AND LEGAL PERSONNEL
PRATYUSH, a unit of Multi Services Organization will conduct an interview on 26.12.2023 from 9.00 A.M. onwards to select Scientific and Legal personnel for temporary engagement on outsourcing basis for State Wildlife Project Management Unit to function in the office of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden, Odisha, BBSR as detailed below-

Sl. No.	Name of the Post	Vacancy	Consolidated monthly emoluments in Rupees
1	Monitoring & Evaluation Expert (Habitat Management & Research)	1	60,000/-
2	Monitoring & Evaluation Expert (Policy & Wildlife Management)	1	60,000/-
3	Subject Matter Specialist (Habitat Management)	1	40,000/-
4	Subject Matter Specialist (Carnivore Specialist)	1	40,000/-
5	Subject Matter Specialist (Wetland Management)	1	40,000/-
6	Subject Matter Specialist (Law & Policy)	1	40,000/-
7	Subject Matter Specialist (Outreach & Evaluation)	1	40,000/-

For complete details like essential & desirable qualification, application form, venue of interview and other terms & conditions, please refer to the notice section of official websites: www.wildlifedodisha.in & www.wildlife.odisha.gov.in. Interested & eligible candidates can download the Application Form from the above websites. Scanned copy of duly filled in Application Form along with all relevant document scan be sent on email- pratyush.hr.09@gmail.com or can send the hard copy by Speed Post/Registered Post/ Courier, so as to reach our office on or before 18.12.2023 (Monday), 05.30 P.M. Hardcopy of the application form can also be collected from our office address given below-

A/62, KRISHNA GARDEN COMPLEX, PHASE-II, JAGAMARA, BHUBANESWAR - 751030, CONTACT NO.: 9237398198, 9237398130

* No TA/DA will be paid for attending the interview.
* For any queries please contact-9237398130

Body of engineer found in mysterious condition

Bhawaniapatna: An assistant executive engineer of Water Resources department in Kalahandi district was found dead under mysterious circumstances inside his official residence situated at Mukhiguda under Jaipatna police limits, Friday. The deceased was identified as Ranjit Karji, 45, a resident of Subhadrapur village near Gunupur in Rayagada district. Ranjit was posted at the office of the superintending engineer of Indravati Project. The exact reason behind Ranjit's death is unclear. On being informed, Jaipatna police reached the spot, recovered the assistant executive engineer's body and sent it for autopsy to Jaipatna Hospital. The police have launched an investigation to ascertain what led to the assistant executive engineer's death.

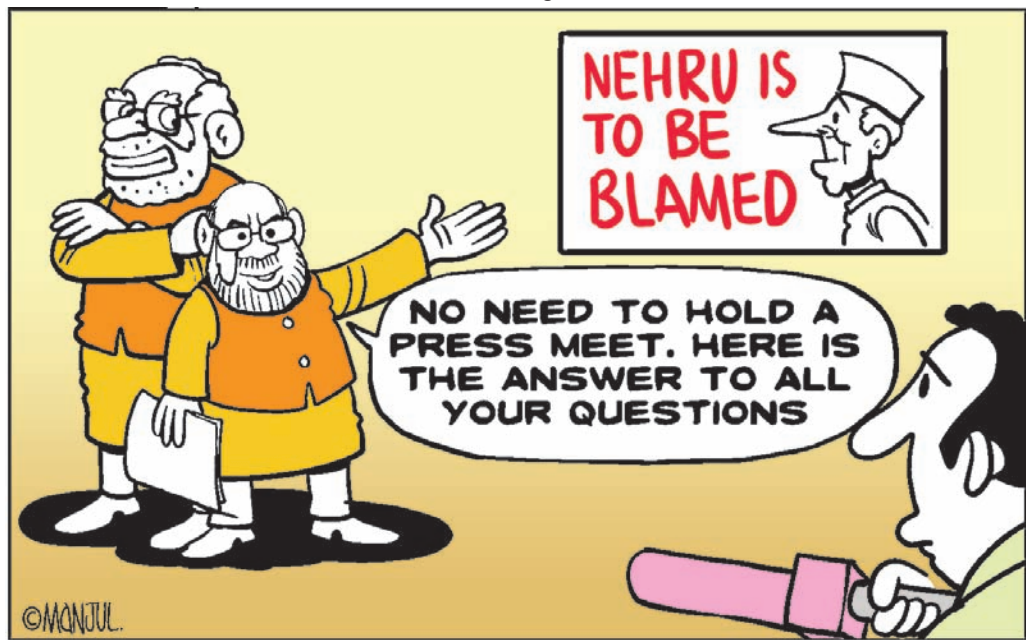
5 arrested for beating army jawan to death

Berhampur: Odisha Police Friday arrested five persons for allegedly beating to death a 28-year-old Army jawan in Ganjam district. The accused had assaulted Army jawan J Dilleswar Patra of Kalipalli near Haripur in the district Sunday, police said, adding that he succumbed to injuries at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar Wednesday. The deceased was posted at Pannagada in West Bengal's Durgapur district, police said. The arrested persons were identified as J Kalyani Patra (19), Ch Sekhar Patra (23), B Cheneya Patra (26) of Kalipalli, B Bulu Patra (26) and Ch Vicky Patra (26) of Jagannathpur. Two motorcycles and two mobile phones were seized from them, police said. Previous enmity between two groups in the village was said to be the reason for the incident, Ganjam SP Jagmohan Meena said. Meena said there was a quarrel between two groups in the village during the immersion procession of Lord Ganesh a few months ago.

Wild tusker tramples 2 to death

Bhubaneswar: Two persons were trampled to death by a wild elephant at separate locations in Angul district, a forest official said Friday. The deceased were identified as Guru Nayak of Saradhapur village and Ainthu Sahu of Cheliapada village in the district. Police recovered their bodies Thursday night, the official said. The elephant first attacked Nayak in Saradhapur when he was out for a walk, and then attacked Sahu in Cheliapada, said Vivek Kumar, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Angul. "We are investigating under which circumstances the wild tusker trampled the two persons to death. Usually, tuskers exhibit violent behaviour due to hormonal changes. We are studying the elephant's behaviour and action will be taken accordingly," he said.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Man gets 20-year jail for raping, impregnating girl

PNN & AGENCIES

Berhampur, Dec 8: A court in Ganjam district has sentenced a man to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment for raping and impregnating a 16-year-old girl three years ago, an official said Friday.

The special court under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act in Berhampur convicted 27-year-old Ranjit Nayak of Aska area Thursday after examining the statements of 17 witnesses, including the police and a doctor, and the medical reports, special public prosecutor Narayan Panda said.

Pravat Kumar Rajguru, the judge of the court, has also imposed a fine of Rs 13,000 on the convicted person. Nayak

will have to serve an additional jail term of 14 months if he fails to pay the fine, the special public prosecutor said.

The court has recommended the district legal service authorities (DLSA) to pay Rs 8 lakh to the survivor as compensation, he said.

Sources said the police had registered a case against the accused person under different sections of the Indian Penal Court and POCSO Act in September 2020 after an FIR was lodged by the girl's mother.

The complainant claimed that the man had a sexual relationship with the girl against her will and left her when she became pregnant. A police team from Buguda arrested the accused from Chennai.

Sec-144 imposed at Madina Maidan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Dec 8: The district administration here imposed prohibitory orders under Section-144 citing law and order situation at Madina Maidan area under Puruna Bazar police limits in Bhadrak district from Friday morning. The curfew will last till 6pm, Saturday.

Bhadrak Sub-Collector Manoj Patra instructed the Puruna Bazar police to impose Section-144 to maintain law and order.

According to reports, Sabir Khan of Puruna Bazar area sought per-

mission from Puruna Bazar PS for a protest meeting at Madina Maidan along with all the leaders of the Muslim basti.

However, after the complaint of Muslim Jamat and some others about the possibility of law and order situation arising owing to the protest meeting, curfew has been issued in and around 200m radius area of Madina Maidan, said DSP Ansuman Dwivedi.

Strict action would be taken against the offenders, instructed the sub-collector and an announcement in this regard was made by the police.

Bank of India Zonal Office: Bhubaneswar Zone, 1/1D, Star House, Jaydev Bihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015, Ph.:0674-2362249

Gold Auction Notice

It is hereby brought to the notice of the following gold loan borrowers, their legal heirs, person engaged in the business of gold ornaments and general public that in spite of repeated notices by the Bank, the following borrowers are not repaying their dues to the Bank. Notice is hereby published that if they fail to deposit all their dues in their respective gold loan accounts (including Up-to-date interest and all costs, charges/expenses) by 22.12.2023, their pledged gold ornaments will be auctioned at **Concerned Branch Premises on 27.12.2023 at 11.00 AM**. For this Bank shall not be held responsible for any inconvenience or damage caused to the concerned borrowers and no allegations or representations will be entertained from any borrowers in this regard. Bank reserves the right to cancel the auction without assigning any reason in case, the bidding price so arrived at is observed to be low or inadequate. Further, if needed be Bank reserves the right to change the date and time of the above scheduled auction or cancel the same without assigning any reasons thereon. Purity and net weight and reserve price of gold ornaments/ coins etc. will be available to interested bidders on auction date and auction venue/auction portal.

Sl. No.	A/c. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower(s)	Gross Wt. in Gram	Net Wt. in Gram	Total Dues as on 30.11.2023 (excluding unapplied interest Charges, Cost & Expenses)
SINGHIPUR BRANCH, SINGHIPUR, DIST.: KHURDA, PIN-752021, MOB.: 702288904					
1.	555677610000808	Ashok Nayak, S/o- Kanganli Nayak, At: Bidharpur, PO: Bhusandpur, Dist.: Khordha, Odisha, PIN-752021	10.00	9.00	₹ 25,538.00
2.	555677610000634	Amir Kumar Ray, S/o- Anukul Chandra Ray, At: Balipatpur, PO: Bhusandpur, Dist.: Khordha, Odisha, PIN-752021	14.70	13.50	₹ 47,872.34
3.	555677610001499	Sarbeswar Muduli, S/o- Binod Muduli, At: Kantalbai, PO: Singhipur, Dist.: Khordha	13.66	12.50	₹ 40,000.00
BHUBANESWAR SME BRANCH, 102, CUTTACK ROAD, JHARPADA, BHUBANESWAR-751006, MOB.: 9937640878					
1.	556177610000436	Girija Sankar Agasty, S/o- Rajanikanta Agasty, Plot No.: LB-68, Stage-4, BDA Colony, Near Tarini Temple, Jharpada, Budheswari Colony, Bhubaneswar-751006	25.1	23	₹ 92,350.00
2.	556177610000818	Rajani Kant Nath, S/o- Padma Charan Nath, Plot No.: 12, Adarsh Vihar, Near Big Bazar, Patia, Bhubaneswar-751023	148.31	136.48	₹ 6,35,952.50
KIIT BRANCH, KIIT CAMPUS, PATIA, BHUBANESWAR-751024, MOB.: 8987407717					
1.	514077610000162	Satyabrata Das, LP 630, Prasanti Vihar, KIIT, Patia, Bhubaneswar	68.40	46.00	₹ 2,13,000.00
ANANDBAZAR BRANCH, AT: KAITHA, VIA: CHHATIA, CUTTACK-754023, MOB.: 9040419287					
1.	517477610000749	Atrish Nath, S/o- Babaji Charan Nath, At: Gothamuhapatna, PO: Kaittha, Cuttack	14.33	10.22	₹ 40,441.00
2.	517477610000891	Mamali Swain, W/o- Chandan Swain, At: Chadeipada, PO: Rudrapur, Dist.: Cuttack	23.71	19.96	₹ 85,834.00
BANAMALIPUR BRANCH, AT/PO: BANAMALIPUR, DIST.: KHURDA, PIN-752103, MOB.: 9124333347					
1.	559477610000452	Sushil Kumar Bhoi, At: Gapur, PO: Majhihara, Dist.: Khurda, PIN-752103	4.9	3.4	₹ 11,912.00
PANASPADA BRANCH, AT/PO: PANASPADA, VIA: BRAHMAGIRI, DIST.: PURI, PIN-752011, MOB.: 7978065454					
1.	516377610001331	Manoranjan Pradhan, S/o- Binod Bihari Pradhan, At: Naranpur, PO: Brahmagiri, Dist.: Puri, PIN-752010	9.40	8.00	₹ 22,564.00
SASTRI NAGAR BRANCH, PLOT NO. 206, SASTRI NAGAR, VIP ROAD, NEAR THE WORLD, BBSR-751012, MOB.: 7008636839					
1.	513277610000213	Madhusmita Mohanty, W/o- Rashmi Ranjan Parida, HIG-154, Prachee Enclave, Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar-751016	88.83	85.000	₹ 2,91,094.50
SAHID NAGAR BRANCH, A/123, SAHID NAGAR, BHUBANESWAR-751007, MOB.: 9652075096					
1.	555177610000330	Sandip Mohanty, Panitira, PO: Osakana, Jagatsinghpur, Odisha-754119	16.8	16.5	₹ 54,271.00
2.	555177610000669	Rajeb Chaudhury, Plot No.: 1731/1732, Gajapati Nagar, Sainik School, Odisha-751005	27.5	25	₹ 1,07,250.00

Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 08.12.2023
Zonal Manager, Bank of India



Few are those who tread the sunlit path; only the pure in soul can walk in the light

SRI AUROBINDO



ED's Future Actions

The recent empanelling of IRS officer Rahul Navin as the interim chief of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and conferring upon him the additional secretary rank was not merely anticipated but deemed inevitable, according to several senior babus. Navin assumed the role in September 2023, succeeding SK Mishra, following a pattern where the position is often temporarily elevated to the rank and pay of Secretary.

This move is seen by some as a potential signal from the Centre to regularise Navin as the full-fledged Director of the ED. The central probe agency, responsible for investigating financial crimes under key legislations, is witnessing a strategic transition in leadership. Certainly, its role has gained prominence in recent times as the Modi sarkar.

There has been a five-fold increase in the number of cases registered by ED since 2014, especially after 2019. The Opposition parties often accuse the BJP government of misusing central agencies, especially ED to target opposition leaders. And now, flush from the poll victories in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, the ED is widely expected to continue its investigations with even greater vigour.

As Navin takes charge, the agency's future operational continuity will be followed with great interest. The development underscores the intersection of bureaucratic reshuffles, specialized financial investigations, and the leadership required of the agency.

CCPA's crackdown on coaching institutes

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has taken a stance regarding a practice that is widely observed: the cooperation between successful UPSC candidates and coaching classes. Sources have informed DKB that the CCPA views these arrangements as deceptive and in violation of fair trade practices.

The matter concerns the use of UPSC toppers' images by coaching institutes in their advertisements, which the CCPA claims fall under the definition of 'misleading advertisement' and 'unfair trade practices', as specified in the Consumer Protection Act of 2019.

The Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964, should be enforced, the CCPA reportedly wrote to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), which is the controlling authority for officers chosen through the UPSC examination. This recommendation applies to all candidates who are still featured in advertisements for coaching classes, essentially serving as their brand ambassadors throughout the year.

Following the decision, the CCPA has reportedly taken decisive action by issuing notices to 20 prominent IAS coaching institutes. The institutes, in turn, are arguing that the successful candidates were part of the interview guidance programme and not the more expensive foundation courses.

This crackdown by the CCPA reflects a growing concern about the ethics of such advertising practices. Many UPSC candidates heavily rely on these coaching institutes for guidance in their pursuit of a career in the civil service. It has prompted a larger conversation about the responsibilities of both coaching institutes and UPSC toppers in pursuit of creating a level playing field.

Karnataka HC calls for clarity

A recent directive from the Karnataka High Court requires the state government to outline guidelines for appointing lower cadre individuals to higher cadre positions. Against the backdrop of a legal dispute between two Karnataka Administrative Service (KAS) officers, the court order sheds light on the intricate dynamics of cadre promotions.

The petitioner, Prajna Ammembala, challenged a transfer order placing her in the role of Additional Director in the Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Bengaluru, a post traditionally reserved for an IAS cadre officer or, in their absence, a KAS officer in the super-time scale. However, the incumbent babu, Potharaju, challenged the transfer, citing its premature nature and the lack of chief ministerial approval.

The Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal (KSAT) ruled in favour of Potharaju, but now this recent directive of the High Court stresses the importance of scrutinizing the eligibility of both officers and questions Potharaju's standing to contest the appointment.

Observers have noted that the court's nuanced interpretation broadens the definition of promotion beyond mere pay scale and rank elevation, and encompasses the significance of advancements in honour, dignity and grade.

The court has instructed Ammembala to assume her responsibilities as Additional Director contingent on the state government, under newly appointed chief secretary Rajneesh Goel, considering eligible candidates for the position.

Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

A man must commit a crime at least once in his life-time. Only then will his virtue be recognized. GIRISH KARNARD

Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Happiness always looks small while you hold it in your hands, but let it go, and you learn at once how big and precious it is. MAXIM GORKY

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1868: The world's first traffic light was erected near Westminster Bridge in London; however, it was removed a month later after a gas leak caused one of the lights to explode.

1961: Tanganyika became independent, with Julius Nyerere as its first prime minister, and in 1964 the territory united with the island of Zanzibar to form Tanzania.

1979: Some 10 years after the World Health Organization began a global vaccination program against smallpox, the disease was officially declared eradicated.

1998: The United Nations General Assembly declared anti-Semitism a form of racism.

2016: South Korean President Park Geun-Hye was impeached by the National Assembly amid allegations of corruption; she left office the following year, after the country's Constitutional Court upheld the parliamentary decision.

LOL

Johnny's calculation

Teacher: "If I gave you 2 cats and another 2 cats and another 2, how many would you have?" Johnny: "Seven."
Teacher: "No, listen carefully... If I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?" Johnny: "Seven." Teacher: "Let me put it to you differently. If I gave you two apples,



and another two apples and another two, how many would you have?" Johnny: "Six."
Teacher: "Good. Now if I gave you two cats, and another two cats and another two, how many would you have?" Johnny: "Seven!" Teacher: "Johnny, where in the heck do you get seven from?!" Johnny: "Because I've already got a freaking cat!"

GLOBAL SOUTH'S DEBT CRISIS

FOCUS COP28

This year's United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), currently underway in Dubai, will be decisive for the Loss and Damage Fund established at COP27, because governments must agree on how the new fund will be operationalized and financed. But equally important is the first global stock take (GST), which will assess countries' progress toward achieving the goals of the 2015 Paris climate agreement.

A preliminary report on the GST, released in October, is underwhelming, while the most recent World Energy Outlook from the International Energy Agency found that global carbon dioxide levels have yet to peak. This implies that if we want to achieve our climate targets, we must fast-track the clean-energy transition and urgently slash greenhouse-gas emissions. But while this will undoubtedly require closing the massive climate financing gap, policymakers must overcome widespread sovereign-debt distress.

The Debt Relief for a Green and Inclusive Recovery Project, using data from the UN Development Programme and the International Monetary Fund, estimates that 69 countries need immediate debt relief, of which 61 have at least \$812 billion in debt that must be restructured across all creditor classes. Moreover, an IMF working paper calculated that only seven of 29 low-income countries that submitted estimates of their adaptation needs had sufficient fiscal space to meet those needs and achieve their emissions-reduction targets, also known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs). With debt-service costs set to increase in 2024, many countries will spend more on interest payments than on health or education.

As long as the debt crisis in the Global South grinds on, many emerging-market and developing economies will be unable to invest in gender-sensitive



To address the debt-climate nexus at COP28 and beyond, policymakers should focus on three objectives: a more inclusive and efficient debt-restructuring process; more concessional finance; and expansion of the size and remit of multilateral development banks

low-carbon development. This, in turn, would make these countries more vulnerable to climate shocks and fiscal instability, and would also foreclose the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius, the target set by the Paris climate agreement.

To address the debt-climate nexus at COP28 and beyond, policymakers should focus on three objectives: a more inclusive and efficient debt-restructuring process; more concessional finance; and expansion of the size and remit of multilateral development banks (MDBs).

For starters, the G20's Common Framework must be reformed to ensure that all climate-vulnerable countries, including middle-income countries, are eligible for debt treatment. While the Common Framework has started providing relief, recent debt-restructuring deals have been modest in scope and came at the cost of protracted negotiations that only exacerbated the problem. Future deals must ensure significant relief measures that enable countries to kickstart economic growth and achieve climate goals, rather than merely returning them to previous levels of austerity or helping them stave

off the next crisis. Second, the need for more concessional finance has never been clearer. In October, at the annual meetings of the World Bank and the IMF in Marrakesh, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva noted that interest rates were in a "higher-for-longer era." This comes at the same time that countries must accelerate the deployment of renewables, which are highly sensitive to the cost of capital. Moreover, climate vulnerability has been found to drive up the cost of debt and restrict access to financing.

But there is ample room to scale up concessional finance. From 2021 to 2022, low-cost project-level debt and grants accounted for only 11% of total climate finance, according to the Climate Policy Initiative. The World Bank, as part of its "Evolution Roadmap" initiative, has indicated that it will expand concessional lending beyond the poorest countries to fund necessary climate investments. Other MDBs should emulate this approach, and their shareholders should inject more capital to facilitate it, so that governments can access affordable financing that does not crowd out other priorities.

Moreover, MDBs must become bigger and better equipped to supply the low-cost, long-term finance that climate-vulnerable countries need. While the World Bank has taken a step in this direction by implementing balance-sheet-optimization measures to increase the scale of its lending by \$50 billion over the next ten years, it is not enough. Other MDBs should devise concrete plans for capital increases and, when presenting them to their boards, outline how a fresh injection of funds will enable them to provide low-cost finance to developing countries and make bolder bets on transformational investments.

In addition to increasing their lending capacity, MDBs must reform their debt architecture.

The GST at COP28 is sure to find that the world is falling far short of the Paris agreement's targets. Accelerated action is needed, but high levels of debt stand in the way.

G20 governments and international financial institutions must acknowledge that a severe debt overhang could worsen the climate crisis. Mobilizing financial resources on an unprecedented scale, while important, should be complemented by measures to address heavy sovereign-debt burdens. One hopes that by forcing policymakers to confront the world's dangerously slow progress toward net-zero emissions at COP28, the GST will generate the political will and trust necessary to tackle the interlocking problems of debt distress and global warming.

Maria Fernanda Espinosa is former president of the UN General Assembly and Rishikesh Ram Bhandary is Assistant Director of the Global Economic Governance Initiative at the Boston University Global Development Policy Center.

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SPECTRUM FOREIGN POLICY

From non to multi-alignment

The erudite and articulate foreign affairs minister S Jaishankar has of late been stressing the multi-polarity in world politics that requires a multi-alignment approach. Probably he means that configuration of world powers has drastically changed causing a few global powers emerging on the scene. So non-alignment between two blocks in a bipolar world as it was, should give way to engaging with various power centres. This certainly merits a deeper evaluation.

Foreign policy of any country is essentially a manifestation of its national imperatives. They are defined by international political observers, commentators, academics and diplomats as determinants, objectives, principles and national interests. India's foreign policy, likewise, has been shaped by and has evolved as reflection of such priorities, and more important, in response to the prevalent world order.

The evolution of India's foreign policy since 1947 till date could be divided into several phases in various ways. The first phase (1947-62) could be described as op-

timistic Non-Alignment. India got independence in 1947, two years after the end of Second World War when international politics got divided into two camps - one led by the US and the other by the former Soviet Union. India was wary of the Western powers which were colonisers and wanted to stay away from them. Thus, India founded the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) in 1961, which, in a way, was the zenith of solidarity in the Third World which was getting decolonised.

However, The unexpected war with China and its consequence led to the second phase of Realism and Reorganising (1962-71). New Delhi had to look beyond Non-Alignment in the interest of national security.

The third phase (1971-91) consisted of India's assertion as a regional power based on self-reliance. India showed remarkable strategic autonomy and use of hard power in liberating East Pakistan (Bangladesh) in 1971 war against Pakistan. The emergence of US-China-Pakistan axis posed multiple challenges for India. Recognising the security risks, New Delhi signed a Peace

and Friendship Treaty with Soviet Union. Geo-political and domestic upheavals in 1990s necessitated a strategic shift in India's foreign policy. The Gulf War (1991-91), the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991) and the economic stagnation at home causing a balance of payment crisis led India to rethink its foreign policy.

The fourth phase, safeguarding the strategic autonomy (1991-98) came into play. The strategic autonomy manifested conspicuously in exercising its nuclear option (Pokhran-II) in 1998. The emergence of the US as a sole super power also prompted India to change its course. India reached out to engage with the US, Israel and Asean countries.

In the fifth phase (1998-2013), India acquired the attributes of a balancing power and began to be seen as the counterweight to China, a new economic power. This recognition could be reflected in India-US Nuclear Agreement in 2008. At the same time, India maintained its traditional ties with Russia and made 'common cause' with China in BRICS and SCO. The sixth phase turned India

to multi-alignment (2013-till now). This current strategy emanates from India's self-realisation of its capabilities and geo-political significance in the existing world politics influenced largely by rise and threat of China. To name a few of India's power-indicators; it is one of the major world economies (fifth largest), a big technology power (software), global player in certain major issues like climate change (Paris Agreement), anti-terrorism (peace-broker) and a regional power - SAGAR, Act East, BIM-STEC, QUAD, and so on.

Multi-alignment is stating the obvious. No country can function in isolation. Politics is global although strategies in actions are national. Multi-alignment as a strategy seems nebulous; it needs to be clearly defined. Going with everyone conceptually appears to be confusing two potential allies, actual friends and partners. What is therefore needed is realignment in India's foreign policy in keeping with its long-term national interests.

The writer is secretary general, association for democratic socialism

INF A



DK Giri

NO COUNTRY CAN FUNCTION IN ISOLATION. POLITICS IS GLOBAL ALTHOUGH STRATEGIES IN ACTIONS ARE NATIONAL

Mahua's expulsion

Sir, First it was Rahul Gandhi who raised various charges against Gautam Adani and tried to expose the BJP government's nexus with him and got expelled from the Parliament, based on a very old defamation case against him allegedly to silence his voice in the House. Now, it is Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra who has been expelled from the Parliament allegedly for same reasons. A report submitted by a panel of the Lok Sabha Ethics Committee that inquired into the above allegations has recommended her expulsion from the House. Though the Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla had assured TMC's leader in the House, Sudip Bandyopadhyay that Mahua would get to defend herself when Lok Sabha takes up the ethics committee report recommending her expulsion and that he would allot half an hour for the opposition to discuss the issue, neither Mahua was allowed to defend herself nor the opposition to discuss the matter but the expulsion of Mahua was carried out with voice vote from the brutal majority, the saffron party enjoys in the House. Mahua is expected to take up her expulsion with the Supreme Court and seek justice from the top court. In view of the fact that only four months are left for the General elections, one only hopes that, if a case is filed by Mahua in the Apex Court, the court should hear the case on priority basis and render justice without delay.

Tharcus S. Fernando, CHENNAI

Emerging star

Sir, Team India's young spinner Ravi Bishnoi has reached No.1-rank in the T20 format. His stunning show against the Aussies who fell flat to his 'stinging spin' attack and has caught the attention of cricketers and cricket lovers. The ranking is sure to give him a shot in the arm during the selection process as the BCCI is in the process of selecting the best for the upcoming T20 world Cup. No doubt his grit and mettle plus his skills has already got him a position in the squad that has flown to South Africa for the T20 series. The young player should come out with his best and let us hope he rises to the occasion and make his team and the nation proud.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulguri Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



Over 1cr people visited Delhi zoo in 5 years: Data

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: Over one crore people have visited the National Zoological Park here in the last five years, according to official data.

The data shared by the zoo stated that 20.46 lakh people visited the park in 2022-2023, leading to a revenue generation of Rs 15.34 crore. In 2017-18, more than 27 lakh people visited the zoo, the footfall was 27.12 lakh in 2018-19, 21.47 lakh in 2019-20, and 5.66 lakh in 2021-22, the statement said.

During a revision of the entry fee in 2021-22, the fare for all categories was increased by 100 per cent.



THE ZOO WAS CLOSED TO VISITORS FROM 2020-21 WHEN COVID-19 FORCED THE GOVERNMENT TO IMPOSE A LOCKDOWN

Earlier, the price for the tickets for adults was Rs 40, Rs 20 for senior citizens, Rs 20 for children with height under 3-5 ft and free for children measuring below 3 ft.

In the revised list, a ticket for adults, senior citizens and children aged 5-12 years is now available for Rs 40, while it is free for children below 5 years, the data showed.

The ticket price for foreigners is Rs 400 for adults, Rs 200 for children (5-12 years), while earlier it was Rs 200 for adults and

Rs 100 for children (5-12 years), it stated.

The visitors from SAARC countries can take an adult ticket for Rs 200 and a ticket for children (5-12 years) costs Rs 100, the data showed.

The visitors now can take their still cameras for free which earlier cost them Rs 50. Earlier, amateurs with video cameras used to pay Rs 200 but now it is free for them.

The zoo did not change its fee of Rs 2,000 for documentaries, while it has gone up from Rs 20,000 to Rs 50,000 for feature films, it stated.

The zoo had recently said it will have the facility to accept international Master and Visa

cards for foreign tourists.

Akanksha Mahajan, director of the National Zoological Park, had said this facility will attract more foreigners to come to the zoo.

"We have seen that the foreign nationals who visit the zoo without tourist guides face difficulty while making payment at the ticket counters and later turn back. Most of the foreign tourists come to the national capital during winter and we want them to visit the zoo as well. So we have asked the bank officials concerned to update the facility so that tourists having international Visa or Master cards can use it to buy the tickets," Mahajan had said.

Decline in Delhi's sex ratio, rise in birth rate in 2022

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: The sex ratio in the national capital dropped to 929 in 2022 from 932 a year back, according to a report published by the Delhi government.

The 'Annual report on registration of births and deaths in Delhi, 2022' showed that the birth rate in Delhi increased to 14.24 per thousand of population during 2022 from 13.13 in 2021. The death rate declined to 6.07 per cent in 2022 from 8.28 per cent in 2021. It also revealed a significant jump in the average number of births per day in Delhi i.e. Up from 745 in 2021 to 823 in 2022. The sex ratio declined to 929 per thousand males in 2022 from 932 in 2021, the report said.

The report said 1,55,670 (51.83 per cent) of the total births registered were males and 1,44,581 (48.14 per cent) were females and 99 (0.03 per cent) belonged to the "others" category.

Out of the total births, 2,82,389 (94.02 per cent) were institutional - 1,86,905 (66.19 per cent) of them in government hospitals - and 17,961 (5.98 per cent) were domiciliary in nature.

A majority of births (89.15 per cent) were in urban areas while births in rural areas accounted for 10.85 per cent of the total, the report said. An analysis of age-group of mothers at the time of delivery showed that 37.52 per cent were in the 25-29 age bracket while 30.55 per cent were in the 20-24 age group, the report stated. Also, in 29.71 per cent cases, the age of the mother was more than 29 years. The report shows that 2.23 per cent women had deliveries when they were 19 years or younger. In the case of domiciliary births, a majority of births (60.62 per cent) occurred with the assistance of relatives and others while only 13 per cent cases were where a doctor, nurse or a trained midwife was present.

Cyber crimes soar in Delhi

According to the Cyber Crime Unit, of the Delhi Police, these crime methods are "fake TRAI or FedEx courier company callers", "home job or Telegram fraud", "sextortion", "fake family member or friend in distress", and "OTP or link-based cheating"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: With the national capital witnessing a sharp increase in cybercrime cases over the years, the Delhi Police has identified top five methods adopted by cyber criminals and cautioned people against them.

Here are brief details of modus operandi followed by cyber criminals:

(1) Fake TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India) or FedEx (courier) company callers

Under this modus operandi, a person gets a recorded call from an unknown number and is told by the caller that his or her mobile number will be soon disordered. The caller will then ask the person to click '9', that will be linked to a fake call centre which is set up by the fraudsters in a room.

The potential victim is then told that the mobile number has been detected to have terror links and some money has been deposited into the person's account via hawala operators.

When questioned for authenticity, the caller asks the target to come on a Skype call and informs that he or she will be digitally arrested. Soon after, the target receives a fake notice from security agencies such as the CBI and the Income Tax.

Thereafter, the fraudsters show sympathy towards the target and promise help. If the target seeks their help, they take bank details in the garb of verification and ask the person to put some money into a fake government account number shared by them with the promise of returning the amount in two-three days.

According to police, a similar modus operandi is used by fraudsters posing as courier company agents from FedEx.



This kind of cases of cheating is being reported for the past six months, an official said.

In these cases, a fake courier company agent usually tells a potential target that the parcel sent to them contains drugs. The agent then offers help to protect the person from any potential action by a security agency and take money.

(2) Home job or Telegram fraud
In this, the potential target will get a message on his or her WhatsApp number with a part-time job offer. The target is told to open an account in Telegram and an organiser then adds the number in a group. The organiser then give some tasks, usually to follow certain social media accounts or like videos on social media platforms.

The potential target is promised thousands of rupees for a day's work. Initially, the person gets the promised money, starting from Rs 150 to Rs 300, for just clicks. Once a person starts working on a daily basis, he or she is asked deposit some money for certain tasks. Though initially a person gets some refund, once the prepaid amount is high, the fraudsters dupe the person. In this method, an official said, other members in the group usually encourage the potential target to invest more by stating that they have already done so. According to the officials, the

accounts of other members in the group are actually handled by one person.

(3) Sextortion
Under this modus operandi, the potential target gets a random video call on mobile phone. When the person attends the video call, he finds a woman engaging in obscene act. By the time the person disconnects the call, the fraudsters either record the video or take a screenshot of the video chat.

(4) Fake family member or friend in distress
In this method, a potential target receives a call from an anonymous number and the caller claims to be an old friend or relative. The fraudsters may even use artificial intelligence (AI) to emulate the voice of someone known to the person. The caller will tell the other person that he is in distress and needs money.

The caller will ask the target to send the money to his account but the sender will find out later that the caller was lying. In this category, the fraudsters dupe women by creating profiles on matrimonial websites and once they gain a woman's trust, they ask her to deposit money on some pretext. The fraudsters stop taking calls after getting the money.

(5) OTP or link-based cheating
This is the most commonly used modus operandi by cyber criminals for years. Under this, a person usually gets a message of offers and links of prizes on mail. The person is asked to open the link and follow the procedure to get the money. People who are less tech savvy still get trapped in such operations. The fraudsters also send message about a courier and asks the potential target to deposit money in the account number shared by them.

'More than 70 per cent rape victims in Delhi between age 18 & 30'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: The highest number of women rape victims in Delhi in 2021 were in the 18-30 age group, accounting for more than 72 per cent of all such cases, a state government report released Friday said.

The Directorate of Economics and Statistics in its report stated that in 2021, of a total of 1,251 rape victims in Delhi, the most, at 905, were in the age bracket 18-30, followed by 328 in the 30-45 age group.

The pattern bears out at national level too, with 20,065 rape victims, the highest, coming from those between age 18 and 30, followed by 7,627 in the age group 30-45.

There were a total of 31,878 rape victims across the country in 2021, the report said. The report revealed there were more male victims of suicides than female over the years.

In 2021, out of 2,840 victims of suicide in Delhi, 2,093 were men and 746 women. In 2020, of 3,142 such acts, 2,247 were committed by men and 895 by women, it said.

According to the data, during 2017-2021, unemployed and married men were more susceptible to die by suicide, and in case of women, housewives constituted the highest of the lot.

In 2021, a total of 73,715 cases of crime against women went to trial, out of which, 274 cases resulted in conviction and 355 in acquittal.

In 2020, 403 such cases resulted in conviction and 388 in acquittal out of 65,437 cases that went to trial, the report said.



Anti-smog gun being used to sprinkle water near the India Gate amid 'very poor' air quality in New Delhi

Cold wave sweeps Kashmir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Dec 8: The minimum temperature dropped at most places in Kashmir Friday as the valley continued to experience sub-zero nights, IMD said.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 2.4 degrees Celsius, slightly up from minus 2.6 degrees Celsius noted the previous night, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in its bulletin. Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district, which serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath yatra, saw the minimum temperature settling at minus 4.8 degrees Celsius. The resort was the coldest recorded place in the Valley. The famous ski resort

of Gulmarg in Baramulla district recorded a low of minus 3.0 degrees Celsius - down from minus 2.5 degrees Celsius the previous night, the IMD bulletin said.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 2.4 degrees Celsius. Kokernag town in south Kashmir registered a minimum temperature of minus 2.0 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara recorded a low of minus 2.5 degrees Celsius.

The meteorological office said the weather would remain generally cloudy but mainly dry till December 11. It also predicted a dip in the night temperature by a few degrees. From December 12 to 15, there is a possibility of light rain or snowfall at isolated places in the higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir, the MeT office said.

Kashmiri rappers set internet on fire

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Dec 8: Two rappers from Kashmir have taken the musical route to highlight the "transformation" of the valley following the abrogation of Article 370 that provided special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

The video of the rap song "Badalta Kashmir" has become a hit on social media, garnering over two million views.

The over three-minute-long song is by the rappers Raasiq Sheikh



(MC Raa) and Humaira (8MR). It was released on YouTube December 3. Those who have shared the song include Corps Commander of the Srinagar-based 15 or Chinara Corps, Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai. "Good to see this... The young here are re-

markably talented and music has always resonated in Kashmir... Power to the youth," Ghai said in a post on X. The track highlights the positive transformation in Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019. The song also talks about religious inclusiveness and freedom of girls to wear the clothes they like. It also references tourist seasons, the Amarnath yatra, Srinagar Smart City and Digital revolution.

The youngsters sing about how people in the valley were proud to

be Indian. "Tiranga is in my heart, it is my identity, Hindustan is my country," the lyrics read. The idea of the song, Sheikh said, came after observing the changed situation and development in the valley.

"Every hip-hop artist observes things minutely. I saw the transformation in Kashmir like smart-city, G20, and other developments, and that was my inspiration. I wanted to vent my feelings," Sheikh, a resident of south Kashmir's Shopian, told PTI.

'FCI to be upgraded to IHM in Jammu soon'

Jammu: The Food Craft Institute (FCI) will soon be upgraded as the Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) to cater to the requirement of skilled manpower for the industry in the Jammu region, an official said. This was informed during the 18th governing body meeting of Food Craft Institution (FCI) held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Secretary, Skill Development Department (SDD), Saurabh Bhagat here. The proposal, in this regard, has been submitted to the Union Ministry of Tourism for approval, he said. The meeting accorded approval to purchase a bus for the institute, installation of rooftop panels and creation of hostel facility within the campus. The Commissioner Secretary appreciated the efforts of the institute, which has tied up with J&K Police for training their jail inmates and kins of martyrs to make them employable.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, BHAWANIPATNA KALAHANDI-766001, ODISHA
Ph: 6670-230424 ; Mail At: eobptm@yahoo.com
No.4305/BPM
Dated 07.11.2023

CORRIGENDUM
No.C-2051: The pre-proposal meeting as per the Request for Proposal (RFP) No.4293/BPM, dt.02.12.2023 was scheduled on 08.12.2023 at 11.00 AM is hereby rescheduled to dt.13.12.2023 at 11.00 AM in the Conference Hall of Collectorate, Kalahandi. Other terms & conditions are remain unchanged.
Sd./- Executive Officer,
Bhawanipatna Municipality
OIPR-13100/11/0013/2324

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL: SUNDARGARH
Tender Call Notice No.9994, Dt.06.12.2023
COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Bid Reference No. SNGM-22 / 2023-24 / Dt.06.12.23

- Total No. of Works for which Tenders Invited: 38 Nos.
- Place of Execution: Different locations of Sundargarh Municipality.
- Estimated Cost of Individual Works excluding GST: Rs.63,090/- to Rs.16,92,688.00/-
- Eligible Class of Contractors: Registered Contractors of Class-'D' to Class-'C' as indicated against each work mentioned in the tender call notice.
- Intending bidders have to participate through "On-Line" bidding only. The website for online bidding is <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>.
- The bid documents will be available in the above website from 11.00 A.M of Dt.11.12.2023 to 5.00 P.M of Dt.20.12.2023 for online bidding.
- Bids received will be opened on e-Procurement System at 11.00 A.M onwards on Dt.21.12.2023.
- The bidder must possess valid and compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)
- The DTCN for bid shall be available in the e-procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in> for on-line bidding.

Sd./- Executive Officer
Sundargarh Municipality
OIPR-13130/11/0031/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.B-1422:
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER JHARSUGUDA (R&B) DIVISION, JHARSUGUDA
E-mail Id: eeepdwjsg2014@gmail.com
Telephone: 06645-271242, Kalimandir Road, Jharsuguda, 768202
"e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. SE-R&B-JSG-11 of 2023-24

1	The Executive Engineer, Jharsuguda (R&B) Division on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in Single Cover System on ONLINE mode from eligible contractors for construction of Civil Work/Electrical Work as detailed in DTCN.
2	Nature of Work :- Civil Work & Electrical Work
3	Estimated Cost :- Rs. 1.99 Lakhs to Rs. 38.34 Lakhs
4	No. of Work :- 06 (Six) Nos.
5	Tender Cost :- Rs. 2000/-, Rs. 4000/-, Rs. 6000/- (as per DTCN)
6	Class of Contractor :- 'D', 'C' & 'B' Electrical MV/HT & Authorized Manufacturer/Distributor
7	Availability of bid document in the website :- 10.00 A.M. of 13.12.2023 to 5.00 P.M. of 22.12.2023
8	Date of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I) :- 11.30 AM on Dt.26.12.2023
9	The bidders have to participate in ON-LINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersodisha.gov.in . In Any Addendum/Corrigendum/ Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Sd./-Executive Engineer
Jharsuguda (R&B) Division
OIPR-34094/11/0016/2324

WATCO OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER WATCO DIVISION-I, VANIVIHAR SQUARE BHUBANESWAR, ODISHA, PIN-751022
Phone/Fax: 0674-2542821/e-mail: gmdivonewatco@gmail.com
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-PROCUREMENT
No.C-2041: Invitation For Bids (IFB)
GMWATCO-I/94/2023-24, Dt.06.12.2023
No.17828, Date:06.12.2023

- Name of the work :- Fitting, Fixing of Water meter box & Data Collection with PVR through mobile App for Khandagiri Bari DMA & Ghatikia Village DMA.
- Estimated cost :- Rs.11.40 Lakh
- Period of completion :- 15 Days
- Date & time of availability of bid document :- From 11.00 AM of Dt.12.12.2023 to 5.00 PM of 27.12.2023 in the portal
- Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal :- 5.00 PM of 27.12.2023.
- Date & time of opening of bids :- 5.00 PM of 28.12.2023.
- Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid :- The General Manager, WATCO Division-I, BBSR, Odisha

Name & Address of Officer :- The General Manager, WATCO Inviting Bid Division-I, BBSR, Odisha
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>.
Sd./-General Manager
WATCO Division-I, BBSR
OIPR-13083/11/0020/2324

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement Tel.No.06752222092, e-mail id: eerwपुरi@gmail.com
TCN No.TENDER ONLINE-10 OF 2023-24
No.7744 / Dt.06.12.2023

No.O-1748: The Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Puri on behalf of Government of Odisha invites percentage rate tenders through e-procurement for 1 No. of work for the year 2023-24 in the District of Puri.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding	Last Date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date, Time & venue of opening of tender
1	2	3	4	5
E.E. Rural Works Division, Puri	Online-10	15.12.2023 at 11.00 AM	29.12.2023 upto 3.00 PM	28.12.2023 upto 1.30 PM
				30.12.2023 at 11.30 AM Office of the S.E.R.W., Division, Puri

6. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which is available in website <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
OIPR-25065/11/0013/2324
Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W.Division, Puri



Members of the public view a section of the main Garsen-Lamu road at Gamba village which was swept away by heavy floods, in Gamba, Kenya



People ride e-scooters on the sidelines of the COP28 UN Climate Summit



A baby sits on a pile of things, as displaced Palestinians, who fled their houses due to Israeli strike, shelter in a camp in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip



People release balloons for Israeli hostages, who are being held in the Gaza Strip after they were seized by Hamas gunmen on October 7, as the country observes the start of Hanukkah amid the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas, in Tel Aviv, Israel



A relative lays a wreath at the mortal remains of J&K Inspector Masroor Ahmad Wani who succumbed to his injuries more than a month after he was shot by militants, in Srinagar



Tourists participate in river rafting in Manali



Street vendors sell groundnuts to customers during 'Kadalekai Parishes', an annual groundnut fair in Bangalore



Rescue operation underway after the structure caved in at a construction site in which two people are feared dead, on the Five Furlong Road-Velachery Main Road junction, in rain-hit Chennai

national

of the day quote

Sudden deaths have been reported in some people after they contracted Covid, but sufficient evidence is not available to confirm the cause of such deaths

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | HEALTH MINISTER

Children studying in waqf properties and registered madrasas run by waqf institutions will be taught continuously for two years in Kannada, English, Science, Mathematics on an experimental basis and other subjects and will be made to write SSLC, PUC and graduation exams through National Open Schools. An order has already been issued in this regard

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

The Railways Ministry has no plans to constitute any committee to decide train fares in the country

ASHWINI VAISHNAV | RAILWAYS MINISTER



The latest report of National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) is not merely statistics, it is the BJP's record of making the life of SC-ST community unsafe

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

NAVY REELING UNDER SHORTAGE

The Indian Navy is reeling under a shortage of 10,896 personnel including 1,777 officers, according to details provided by the defence ministry in Parliament Friday. Responding to a question in Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt also said 9,119 posts of sailors are lying vacant in the Navy as on October 31



BJP names observers to pick 3 CMs

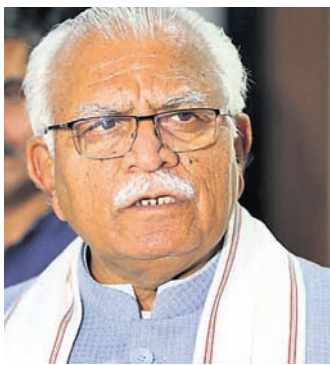
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: The BJP Friday appointed Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda as central observers for the election of its legislature party leaders in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh respectively.

The legislature party leaders will become Chief Ministers of the three states and the meetings to elect them may take place over the weekend. There is a view within the party that its leadership may usher in fresh faces at the helm of these states.

Singh will be joined by the party's vice president Saroj Pandey and its general secretary Vinod Tawde as central observers for Rajasthan amid an intense buzz within the BJP that the leadership will bring in a new leader, ignoring the claim of two-time former chief minister Vasundhara Raje.

The choice of Singh, one of the senior most BJP leaders, is likely to help build a consensus



around the leadership's chief ministerial choice among MLAs, a number of whom are seen as supporting Raje. Khattar will be joined by the party's OBC Morcha head K Laxman and its secretary Asha Lakra for the Madhya Pradesh legislature party meeting, while Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and BJP general sec-

retary Dushwant Kumar Gautam will be central observers for Chhattisgarh along with Munda. In Madhya Pradesh where the BJP scored its biggest victory among the three states with a two-thirds majority, current Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's stake has gone up with the win but there is a view that the party leadership is look-

THE LEGISLATURE PARTY LEADERS WILL BECOME CHIEF MINISTERS OF THE THREE STATES AND THE MEETINGS TO ELECT THEM MAY TAKE PLACE OVER THE WEEKEND

THE PARTY WILL LIKE TO PICK AT LEAST ONE WOMAN CHIEF MINISTER AT A TIME PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTING WOMEN VOTERS' SUPPORT TO THE BJP

Party stands with Mahua: Mamata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee Friday denounced Moitra's expulsion and said the action was a "betrayal" of India's parliamentary democracy.

"It is a disgrace to parliamentary democracy. We condemn the expulsion of Mahua Moitra, the party stands firmly with her. Unable to defeat us in elections, the BJP has resorted to vendetta politics. It is a sad day that marks a betrayal of India's parliamentary democracy," Banerjee said at a press conference in Darjeeling.

She accused the BJP of preventing Moitra from presenting her defence. Banerjee highlighted the submission of the nearly-500-page report in Parliament, followed by a mere 30-minute window for all parties to discuss the matter.

Expressing disappointment that Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not intervene, Banerjee

said, "This is unfortunate and unacceptable. Moitra will emerge victorious in the next battle and people will deliver a resounding response and justice. They (BJP) will face defeat in the upcoming election. I am fully convinced of this."

The BJP said the expulsion was "apt" and there was no ground left for the TMC leader to remain as an MP as there was proof of the allegations levelled against her. Congress's whip in the Lok Sabha Manickam Tagore slammed the Centre over Moitra's expulsion, saying it was an attack on the parliamentary system itself.

Responding to a post on X on Moitra's expulsion, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor said, "It's a complete travesty... Fortunately it has only strengthened Mahua Moitra who is now likely to be re-elected with a bigger majority. Also do note how the INDIA parties all stood with her: Another good omen."

CPI(M) MP John Brittas said an articulate member was dismissed from the Lok Sabha.

KCR suffers hip fracture

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Dec 8: Former Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao needs to undergo a hip replacement surgery following a fracture sustained from a fall at his Erravelli residence and the recovery process would take about 6-8 weeks, doctors treating him said on Friday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi wished speedy recovery for the opposition Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS) founder while state chief minister A Revanth Reddy directed for best medical care to his predecessor.

KCR's son KT Ramarao said in a post on 'X' that Rao "needs to undergo a hip replacement surgery today after he had a fall in his bathroom." Rao was taken to the Yashoda Hospitals at Somajiguda in the city.

"On evaluation, including CT scans he was found to have left hip fracture (Intracapsular Neck of femur fracture). He would require left hip replacement for the same and the usual course of recovery for such cases is expected to be 6 to 8 weeks," a health bulletin from the hospital said.

KCR is being constantly monitored by a multi-disciplinary team, including orthopaedic and general medicine, and his condition is stable, it added.

PM Modi wrote on 'X' that he was "distressed to know that former Telangana CM Shri KCR Garu has suffered an injury. I pray for his speedy recovery and good health."

Rao's office said his wife Sobhama, son Rama Rao, daughter Kavitha and other family members were with him.



Houses are covered in snow after fresh snowfall at Sandakphu, in Darjeeling district, Friday. The popular tourist destination of Sandakphu, known for its majestic view of the Kanchenjunga mountain range, received the season's first snowfall, as temperatures dipped in the higher reaches of West Bengal's Darjeeling district

PTI PHOTO

SHORT TAKES

6 dead, 10 hurt

Pune: At least six persons died and 10 sustained injuries after a fire broke out at a sparkling candle manufacturing unit in Pimpri Chinchwad area of Pune district Friday, an official said. The fire brigade received a call about the blaze at the factory located at Talawade around 2.45 pm, said Pimpri-Chinchwad municipal commissioner Shekhar Singh.

Cop killed

Jamshedpur: A police constable was among two killed when three motorcycle-borne men fired at them here Friday, police said. The criminals first fired at one person identified as Sajjad in between Road No. 15/16 and fled when they were intercepted by a mobile police patrol team, a senior officer said. Seeing the police team, the criminals fired at them fatally injuring police constable Ramdev Mahato, senior superintendent of police Kishore Kaushal said.

Criminal arrested

Shillong: A notorious interstate "criminal" was arrested in Meghalaya's Ri-Bhoi district Friday with a huge cache of arms and animal remains, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said. He said it was a decisive blow to "the forces of darkness targeting our state." "A notorious interstate criminal who is entangled in a web of illegal activities that spanned from trafficking of arms and precious wildlife, as well as forgery of official documents, is arrested," he posted on X.

Vikasit Bharat Sankalp Yatra surpasses 1 cr participants

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 8: The Vikasit Bharat Sankalp Yatra, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 15 from Khunti, Jharkhand, has emerged as a transformative expedition fostering connections with citizens nationwide.

As of December 7, 2023, the yatra has reached over 36,000 gram panchayats and witnessed participation of over 1 crore citizens, as per the data captured on the customized portal developed by MEITY.

More than 37 lakh people participated in the yatra in Uttar Pradesh, followed by 12.07 lakh



in Maharashtra, 11.58 lakh in Gujarat and nine lakh people in Jammu and Kashmir.

While the first week of the Sankalp Yatra saw participation of 500,000 citizens, over 77 lakh people across the country, participated in the yatra during the last 10 days. Within a short span, the urban segment of the yatra has reached over 700 locations and a

lakh individuals have been screened.

Drone demonstration for farmers showcased as part of the Vikasit Bharat Sankalp Yatra has attracted great curiosity.

With the launch of 'Drone Didi Scheme' under which 15,000 Women's Self Help Groups will be provided with drones, along with necessary training for two members of the women, a large number of women are also coming forward to witness the drone flights.

The SHGs shall rent out the drone services for a fee, which will serve as another stream of revenue for the Self Help Group members.

Lalduhoma sworn in as Mizoram CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Aizawl, Dec 8: Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) leader Lalduhoma was sworn in as the chief minister of Mizoram Friday.

Along with 73-year-old Lalduhoma, 11 others also took oath as state ministers at a function held in Raj Bhavan here. Seven of them were sworn in as cabinet ministers and four as ministers of state. Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati administered the oath of office and secrecy to Lalduhoma and other ministers.



With a 40-member assembly, Mizoram can have 12 ministers, including the chief minister. Mizo National Front (MNF) leader and outgoing chief minister Zoramthanga and former chief minister Lal Thanhawla attended the event.

All 10 newly elected MNF MLAs, including its legislature party leader Lalchhandama Ralte, attended the programme. Two newly elected BJP MLAs and lone Congress legislator were also present at the programme.

ZPM legislature party deputy leader K Sapdanga was made the home minister while Lalrinpuui from Lunglei East constituency became the first woman cabinet minister in Mizoram. She would hold health, social welfare and tribal affairs, women and child development and tourism portfolios.

SC RAPS HC'S 'CONTROL SEXUAL URGES' ADVICE TO GIRLS

"PRIMA FACIE, WE ARE OF THE VIEW THAT THE JUDGES ARE NOT EXPECTED TO EXPRESS PERSONAL VIEWS OR PREACH," THE BENCH SAID WHILE ISSUING NOTICE TO THE WEST BENGAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER PARTIES IN THE CASE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: Judges are not expected to express their personal views or preach, the Supreme Court remarked on Friday, strongly criticising a Calcutta High Court judgement which advised young girls to "control sexual urges" and adolescent boys to train themselves to respect women.

Terming the High Court observations as "highly objectionable and unwarranted", a bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Pankaj Mithal said the observations are completely in violation of the rights of adolescents under Article 21 of the Constitution.

In its October 18 judgement, a division bench of Justices Chitta Ranjan Dash and Partha Sarathi Sen of the Calcutta High

Court said that adolescent girls should "control sexual urges" and "not give into two minutes of pleasure".

The apex court said the issue before the High Court was legality and validity of order and judgement dated September 19/20, 2022 by which a man was convicted for offences under sections 363 (kidnapping) and 366 (kidnapping, abducting or inducing woman to compel her marriage) as well as Section 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

"As per the order of the CJI, suo motu writ petition has been initiated mainly due to sweeping observations/findings recorded by the division bench of the High Court." In an appeal against conviction, the High Court was called upon to decide only the merits of the appeal



and nothing else. Prima facie, we are of the view that in such a case, the Hon'ble judges are not expected to either express their personal views or preach." After having carefully perused the judgement, we find that many

parts thereof, including paragraph 30.3, are highly objectionable and completely unwarranted. Prima facie, the said observations are completely in violation of rights of adolescents under Article 21 of the

Constitution," the bench said. "Prima facie, we are of the view that the judges are not expected to express personal views or preach," the bench said while issuing notice to the West Bengal government and other parties in the case.

The top court appointed senior advocate Madhavi Divan as amicus curiae to assist in the court and advocate Liz Mathew to assist the amicus. The matter has now been posted for hearing on January 4, 2024.

The High Court had made the observations while hearing an appeal by a boy who was sentenced to 20 years in prison for the offence of sexual assault. The High Court had acquitted the boy stating that this was a case of "non-exploitative consensual sexual relationship between two consenting adolescents, though

consent in view of the age of the victim is immaterial".

The High Court had also said it is the duty/obligation of every female adolescent to "protect her right to integrity of her body; protect her dignity and self-worth; thrive for overall development of her self transcending gender barriers; control sexual urge/urges as in the eyes of the society she is the loser when she gives in to enjoy the sexual pleasure of hardly two minutes; protect her right to autonomy of her body and her privacy".

"It is the duty of a male adolescent to respect the aforesaid duties of a young girl or woman and he should train his mind to respect a woman, her self-worth, her dignity and privacy, and her right to autonomy of her body," the High Court had said.

international

of the day quote

The country wants to strengthen cooperation with the United States to combat climate change

HUANG RUNQIU | CHINA'S ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

There's a recognition that my government is committed to climate action and that we're playing a positive role, not just with our commitment to reduce our emissions by 43% by 2030 and to reach net zero by 2050, but that, importantly, we are playing a role in the region, and indeed, around the globe

ANTHONY ALBANESE | AUSTRALIAN PM

Malicious use of AI could undermine trust in institutions, weaken social cohesion, and threaten democracy itself

ANTÓNIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

SHORT TAKES

Macron visits Notre Dame

Paris: French President Emmanuel Macron visited Notre Dame Cathedral Friday, one year before its scheduled reopening in 2024. After a blaze burned through the roof and spire on April 15, 2019, Macron's visits have become a tradition, with Friday marking his sixth to highlight the rebuilding progress.

ADB approves \$200mn loan to SL

Colombo: The Asian Development Bank said Friday that it has approved USD 200-million concessional loan to debt-stricken Sri Lanka to help stabilise the country's finance sector following an unprecedented economic crisis that engulfed the Indian Ocean island nation last year. The bank's announcement comes as Sri Lanka is awaiting International Monetary Fund approval for the second installment of a USD 2.9-billion bailout package to rescue the country from bankruptcy.

Japan's leader grilled in parl

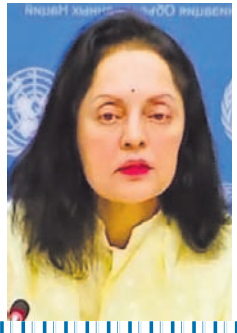
Tokyo: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and several key Cabinet ministers were grilled by opposition lawmakers in parliament on Friday over a widening fundraising scandal and an alleged connection to the Unification Church which threaten to further drag down the government's sagging popularity. Support ratings for Kishida's government have fallen below 30 per cent because of public dissatisfaction over its slow response to rising prices and lagging salaries, and the scandal could weaken his grip on power within the governing Liberal Democratic Party.

Pak's election body issues notice to PTI

Islamabad: Pakistan's election commission on Friday issued a notice to jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party on a petition challenging its recent organisational polls, which were termed as "rigged and fraudulent".

11 houses gutted

Yangon: Eleven houses were gutted after a fire broke out in Madaya Township of Myanmar's Mandalay region, the state-run media reported Friday. The accident occurred when a five-year-old boy played with a match and a bed caught fire. Later, the fire spread from that house to other houses and 11 houses were gutted, an official from a rescue organisation said.



If the trillion dollar question is to ensure peace, do we have a peace infrastructure representative of the current times and contemporary realities?

RUCHIRA KAMBOJ | INDIA'S PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN

HUNTER BIDEN INDICTED ON NINE TAX CHARGE

Hunter Biden was indicted on nine tax charges in California Thursday as a special counsel investigation into the business dealings of President Joe Biden's son intensifies against the backdrop of the looming 2024 election



Salvoes of rockets fired at US Embassy in Baghdad

Baghdad: A rocket attack on the sprawling US Embassy in Baghdad caused minor damage but no casualties Friday morning, US and Iraqi officials said. The attack is the first on the embassy located in the heavily fortified Green Zone of Iraq's capital to be confirmed since the beginning of the Israel-Hamas war. The Green Zone houses Iraqi government buildings and embassies on the west bank of the Tigris River. Iran-backed militias in Iraq have claimed responsibility for dozens of attacks that targeted bases housing US troops in Iraq and Syria since Israel declared war on Hamas two months ago.

SNIPPETS

UK paid Rwanda \$300mn for a blocked asylum deal

London: Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was under pressure Friday to explain why Britain has paid Rwanda 240 million pounds (USD 300 million) as part of a blocked asylum plan, without a single person being sent to the East African country. The total is almost twice the 140 million pounds that Britain previously said it had handed to the Rwandan government under a deal struck in April 2022. Under the agreement, migrants who reach Britain across the English Channel would be sent to Rwanda, where their asylum claims would be processed and, if successful, they would stay. The plan was challenged in UK courts, and no flights to Rwanda have taken off. Last month, Britain's Supreme Court ruled the policy was illegal because Rwanda isn't a safe country for refugees.

Chinese military balloon spotted in Taiwan Strait

Taipei (Taiwan): Taiwan's Defence Ministry says a Chinese military surveillance balloon was spotted in the Taiwan Strait, as well as a large-scale movement of military aircraft and ships. The ministry said the balloon passed southwest of the northern port city of Keelung on Thursday night, then continued east before disappearing, possibly into the Pacific Ocean. However, there seemed to some uncertainty about whether the balloon was operated directly by the People's Liberation Army, the military branch of China's ruling Communist Party. The ministry referred to it both as a "PLA surveillance balloon" and as "1 PRC's balloon", using the acronym for the People's Republic of China, China's official name.



Sardines and mackerels are seen washed up on a beach in Hakodate, Hokkaido, northern Japan. Thousands of tons of dead sardines have washed up on a beach in northern Japan for unknown reasons, officials said Friday

Putin to run for Prez again

PUTIN ANNOUNCED HIS DECISION TO RUN IN THE MARCH 17 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AFTER A KREMLIN AWARD CEREMONY, WHEN WAR VETERANS AND OTHERS PLEADED WITH HIM TO SEEK RE-ELECTION IN WHAT KREMLIN SPOKESMAN DMITRY PESKOV DESCRIBED AS "SPONTANEOUS" REMARKS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moscow, Dec 8: Vladimir Putin on Friday moved to prolong his repressive and unyielding grip on Russia for at least another six years, announcing his candidacy in the presidential election next March that he is all but certain to win.

Putin still commands wide support after nearly a quarter-century in power, despite starting an immensely costly war in Ukraine that has taken thousands of his countrymen's lives, provoked repeated attacks inside Russia — including one on the Kremlin itself — and corroded its aura of invincibility.

A short-lived rebellion in June by mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhin raised widespread speculation that Putin could be losing his grip, but he emerged with no permanent scars. Prigozhin's death in a mysterious plane crash two months later reinforced the view that Putin was in absolute control.

"I won't hide it from you — I had various thoughts about it over time, but now, you're right, it's necessary to make a decision," Putin said in a video released by the Kremlin after the event. "I will run for president of the Russian Federation."

Tatiana Stanovaya of the Carnegie Russia Eurasia Centre noted that the announcement was made in a low-key way instead of a live televised speech, probably reflecting the Kremlin's spin effort to emphasize Putin's modesty and his perceived focus on doing his job as opposed to loud campaigning.



About 80 per cent of the populace approves of Putin's performance. That support might come from the heart or it might reflect submission to a leader whose crackdown on any opposition has made even relatively mild criticism perilous

"It's not about prosperity, it's about survival," Stanovaya observed. "The stakes have been raised to the maximum."

Whether due to real or coerced support, Putin is expected to face only token opposition on the ballot. Putin, 71, has twice used his leverage to amend the constitution so he could theoretically stay in power until he's in his mid-80s. He is already the longest-serving Kremlin leader since Soviet dictator Josef Stalin, who died in 1953.

In 2008, he stepped aside to become prime minister due to term limits but continued calling the shots while his close associate Dmitry Medvedev served as a placeholder president. Presidential terms were then extended to six years from four, while another package of amendments he pushed through three years ago reset the count for two consecutive terms to begin in 2024.

"He is afraid to give up power," Dmitry Oreshkin, a political analyst and professor at Free University of Riga, Latvia, told The Associated Press this year. At the time of the amendments that allowed him two more terms, Putin's concern about losing power may have been elevated: Levada polling showed his approval rating significantly lower, hovering around 60 per cent.

In the view of some analysts, that dip in popularity could have been a main driver of the war that Putin launched in Ukraine in February 2022.

For the first time, voting in the presidential election will take place over three days from March 15 to 17, 2024, including in four regions of Ukraine partially and illegally annexed by Russia. The election commission argued that the practice of multi-day voting, used in other elections since the COVID-19 pandemic, is more convenient for voters. Putin's rule has spanned five US presidencies, from Bill Clinton to Joe Biden. He became acting president on New Year's Eve in 1999, when Boris Yeltsin unexpectedly resigned. He was elected to his first term in March 2000.

Negotiations at COP28 climate talks ramp up

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, Dec 8: The United Nations climate conference on Friday began its final week with negotiators expected to zoom in on the future of fossil fuels on a dangerously warming planet.

"It's go-time for governments at COP28 this week," UN Climate Chief Simon Stiell said at a press event Friday.

Discussions after a first week of pageantry and official visits now become more difficult, particularly when it comes to language calling for the potential phase-out of the use of emission-spewing fossil fuels.

Any language along those lines likely will draw the ire of Saudi Arabia, a major oil producer just next door to the United Arab Emirates. The UAE itself also is planning to boost its oil production from 4 million to 5 million barrels of crude oil a day to take advantage of the fossil fuel market before countries potentially shift away from its use.

Stiell underlined the challenge ahead if the world doesn't limit emissions, describing ice shelves melting causing catastrophic flooding in coastal cities around the globe.

Negotiators this week are

working to finalise a key document called the Global Stocktake. It evaluates the world's climate change progress since the 2015 Paris agreement and what needs to be done now to avoid blowing past its goal of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) compared to preindustrial times.

Professional negotiators who have been working on getting options into shape will turn over their work to senior national officials, many at minister levels, who will have to make the tough political choices.

COP28 President Sultan al-Jaber said he was "quite positive, hopeful and optimistic" that the summit could bring a "paradigm shift centred around and based on the science."

EU countries, along with small island countries — oft-victimised by climate change — and some progressive Latin American countries are aligned on calling for a phase-out of fossil fuels, negotiators said.

While there will be strong resistance to this measure, officials are confident references to fossil fuels will appear in the final text for the first time and within a timeline compatible with UN science reports.



Israel's failed bombing campaign in Gaza

Since October 7, Israel has invaded northern Gaza with some 40,000 combat troops and pummeled the small area with one of the most intense bombing campaigns in history. Violence against Palestinians by Israeli settlers in the territory has also reached record highs, according to the United Nations.

Even now, as Israeli forces push deeper into southern Gaza, the exact purpose of Israel's approach is far from clear.

Although Israeli leaders claim to be targeting Hamas alone, the evident lack of discrimination raises real questions about what the government is actually up to. Is wrecking northern Gaza and now southern Gaza a prelude to sending the territory's entire population to Egypt, as proposed in a "concept paper" produced by the Israeli Intelligence Ministry?

Whatever the ultimate goal, Israel's collective devastation of Gaza raises deep moral problems. To the contrary, it has only heightened resentment among Palestinians.

Nor has the campaign succeeded in dismantling the group ostensibly being targeted. LOSING HEARTS AND MINDS Since the dawn of airpower, countries have sought to bomb

enemies into submission and shatter civilian morale. This strategy of coercive punishment reached its apogee in World War II. History remembers the indiscriminate bombing of cities in that war simply by the place names of the targets: Hamburg (40,000 dead), Darmstadt (12,000), and Dresden (25,000).

Now Gaza can be added to this infamous list. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has himself likened the current campaign to the Allies' fight in World War II.

While denying that Israel was engaging in collective punishment today, he pointed out that a Royal Air Force strike targeting Gestapo headquarters in Copenhagen killed scores of schoolchildren.

In fact, never in history has a bombing campaign caused the targeted population to revolt against its own government. The United States has tried the tactic numerous times, to no avail.

The war in Ukraine is the most recent case in point. For nearly two years, Russia has sought to coerce Ukraine through wave after wave of devastating air assaults on cities across the country, killing more than 10,000 civilians, destroying more than



Israel sharply stepped up strikes on the Gaza Strip, pounding the length of the Palestinian enclave and killing hundreds in a new, expanded phase of the war

1.5 million homes, and displacing some eight million Ukrainians. Russia is clearly shattering Ukraine. But far from crushing Ukraine's fighting spirit, this massive civilian punishment has only convinced Ukrainians to fight Russia more intensely than ever.

A COUNTERPRODUCTIVE CAMPAIGN

This historical pattern is repeating itself in Gaza. Despite nearly two months of heavy military operations — virtually unrestrained by the United States and the rest of the world — Israel has achieved only marginal results. By any meaningful met-

ric, the campaign has not led to Hamas's even partial defeat. Israel's air and ground operations have killed as many as 5,000 Hamas fighters (according to Israeli officials), out of a total of about 30,000. But these losses will not significantly reduce the threat to Israeli civilians, since, as the October 7 attacks proved, it takes only a few hundred Hamas fighters to wreak havoc on Israeli communities. Worse, Israeli officials also admit that the military campaign is killing twice as many civilians as Hamas fighters.

LAND FOR PEACE

The only way to deal a lasting

defeat to Hamas is to attack its leaders and fighters while separating them from the surrounding population.

That is easier said than done, however, especially since Hamas draws its ranks directly from the local population rather than from abroad.

Indeed, survey evidence shows the extent to which Israel's military operations are now producing more terrorists than they are killing. Compare that with the 27 percent of respondents in both territories who told different pollsters in September that Hamas was "the most deserving of representing the Palestinian people."

This result also reinforces the lessons of history. Contrary to conventional wisdom, most terrorists do not choose their vocation owing to religion or ideology, although some certainly do. Rather, most people who become terrorists do so because their land is being taken away.

A LASTING PEACE

Only a two-state solution will lead to lasting security for Israelis and Palestinians alike. That is the only viable approach that will truly undermine Hamas, and Israel can and should unilaterally press forward with a plan, taking steps on its own before ne-

gotiating with the Palestinians. The goal should be to revive a process that has been dormant since the last negotiations failed in 2008, 15 years ago.

To be clear, Israel should couple this political approach with a military one, engaging in limited, sustained operations against the Hamas leaders and fighters responsible for the atrocities of October 7. But the country must adopt the political element of the strategy now, not later. Israel cannot wait until after some mythical time when Hamas is defeated by military might alone.

Those who doubt that a two-state solution can ever be reached are right that immediately resuming negotiations with the Palestinians would not reduce Hamas's will to fight.

For one thing, the group is an avowed proponent of eliminating Israel.

For another, it would be one of the biggest losers in a two-state solution, since a peace deal would almost certainly involve the prohibition of armed Palestinian groups aside from Hamas's main internal rival, the Palestinian Authority, which would likely enjoy renewed support and legitimacy if it secured an agreement that the majority of Palestinians supported. AGENCIES

of the day quote

Businesses should ensure they conduct themselves ethically and fairly and this matter of ethics and fairness should reflect in all relations and transactions with clients, employees, vendors, and others which is the foundation. Because if business is not conducted ethically, no purpose is material



AZIM PREMJI | FOUNDER-CHAIRMAN, WIPRO

India has a two-to-three-year window to capitalise on the global strategy of de-risking from China and the government needs to be very alert to come up with a set of policies that make the shift of businesses to India attractive and easier



BVR SUBRAHMANYAM | CEO, NITI AAYOG

We are doing a market study on artificial intelligence... In that study (we will) try to understand the dynamics better. We can differentiate what kind of AI that we would like to support and which one is stifling competition



RAVNEET KAUR | CHIEF, CCI

SHORT TAKES

Nayara's PP plant

New Delhi: Nayara Energy, India's second-largest private oil firm, Friday said it will start operations of a new polypropylene plant in the first half of next year, marking its entry into the lucrative petrochemical sector. In the last financial year (April 2022 to March 2023), India's consumption of polypropylene stood at 6.4 million tonne, of which around 1.6 million tonne or around 25 per cent was imported. With wide applications in segments like packaging, automotive applications, consumer durables and lifestyle products, the demand for polypropylene (PP) is projected to rise.

BITES, OIL ink MoU

New Delhi: Transport infrastructure consultancy and engineering firm BITES Ltd has signed a pact with Oil India Ltd (OIL) to develop Duliyan Township in Assam as a mini smart city, according to an exchange filing. As part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), BITES will undertake an extensive study, review the existing system and prepare a suitable, feasible design to develop the township which is managed and operated by Oil India. The collaboration which aims at reviving the township, involves infrastructure works such as review of existing drainage system and design, detailed project report (DPR) for integration of solid waste management system, review of road and traffic network and plan for parking facilities, the company said.

Softbank pares stake in Zomato

New Delhi: Japanese conglomerate Softbank Friday divested a 1.1 per cent stake in online food delivery aggregator Zomato for Rs 1,128 crore through an open market transaction. Following the stake sale, shares of Zomato fell 1.27 per cent to close at Rs 120.15 apiece on the NSE. Invesco Mutual Fund (MF), Sundaram MF, Edelweiss MF, ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, Goldman Sachs (Singapore), Morgan Stanley Asia Singapore, Societe Generale, BNP Paribas Arbitrage, Coptihall Mauritius Investment, and Citigroup Global Markets Investment, among others were the buyers of the Zomato's share. SVF Growth (Singapore) Pte, an affiliate of Softbank, offloaded 9,35,69,368 shares, amounting to a 1.08 per cent stake in Zomato, as per the block deal data available with the National Stock Exchange.



To safeguard investors' money from misuse, an ASBA-like facility for trading in secondary markets will be available from January or February
MADHABI PURI BUCH | CHIEF, SEBI

RELIEF FOR EMBATTLED SPICEJET

Domestic airline SpiceJet Friday said one of its aircraft which was seized and grounded in Dubai in late October due to litigation has now been released following an order of the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) Court. "In a DIFC Court hearing on December 7, the Order was discharged in favour of SpiceJet," SpiceJet said



NO PLANS TO LOOSEN RATES: RBI

RBI maintains hawkish stance as food prices situation uncertain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 8: Governor Shaktikanta Das Friday ruled out loosening interest rates, saying inflation remains top priority as a few months of good data should not lead to complacency, even as the Reserve Bank kept key policy rates unchanged for the fifth consecutive time.

The six-member monetary policy committee of the Reserve Bank of India voted to leave the repurchase rate at 6.50 per cent and decided to keep on sucking out liquidity from the system.

Addressing reporters after the bi-monthly policy announcement at the central bank headquarters here, Das clarified that the inclusion of over-tightening in his policy statement should not be construed as anything else.

A "loosening" of the rates is not on the table at all, the governor said.

"There is no change in that stance at all," he said, underlining, "our decisions are dependent on two major parameters,



Highlights of MPC meet

RBI keeps benchmark interest rate unchanged at 6.5%

GDP growth in December, March quarters pegged at 6.5%, 6%

GDP growth projection hiked for current fiscal to 7%, from 6.5% earlier

Average retail inflation projection retained at 5.4% for 2023-24

Plans to up UPI transaction limit for payment to hospitals, educational institutions from ₹1L to ₹5L

PLANS TO HIKE E-MANDATE FOR RECURRING PAYMENTS TO ₹1L FROM CURRENT RS 15,000

that is inflation and growth, and inflation is our top priority now and we still have a distance to cover to reach 4 per cent."

He said the word risk of tightening should be read along with the previous part where "I said that a few months of good data should not push us into some kind of a complacency and the fact that inflation has come within the target range also should not lead to any kind of complacency".

Deputy governor Michael Patra also said while with the upwardly revised growth forecast of 7 per cent for the current fiscal (from 6.5 per cent earlier) shows that growth has come back to the trend level, but when it comes to inflation, which averaged at 5.5 per cent so far this year, is way off the target.

Patra went on to qualify the revised GDP forecast of 7 per cent

The primary objective of the monetary policy, as prescribed in the law, is ensuring price stability that's by maintaining inflation at 4 per cent target for a durable time. In May 2022 when we had shifted our focus from growth and the priority was given to inflation over growth that same approach continues now

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | GOVERNOR, RBI

-- driven by higher growth in the first half and the high-frequency data for October and November -- a very conservative estimate.

"As you know the first half estimates have beaten all estimates, including ours. And if you just sort of put that actual numbers and the projections we made in the last policy together, you will get a number closer to 7 per cent. But if you look at October and November high frequency data, which we use for our forecasts now they are all very

robust. So if you just take the October and November data you will exceed 7 per cent. So the projected 7 per cent is like a conservative estimate," Patra said.

He said apart from rising rural demand, the confidence for a higher growth also comes from the rising confidence of foreign investors and regulators and businesses on the country.

On the outlook on interest rates, Das said it is very difficult to give a forward guidance on the policy front, terming the future as very fickle as any shock can hit any economy.

According to the governor, the future path is expected to be clouded by uncertain food prices. CPI data for November is expected to be high five, and the MPC will be highly alert to any signs of derailing of the ongoing disinflation process.

"So we'll continue to actively manage liquidity consistent with the monetary policy stance because we do not wait for the house to catch fire and then act. Prudence at all times is our guiding philosophy," Das said.

Forex kitty crosses \$600bn mark after nearly four months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 8: India's foreign exchange reserves increased to \$604 billion as December 1, surpassing the \$600 billion mark after a gap of about four months.

The forex reserves were last above the \$600 billion mark August 11 this year.

"India's foreign exchange reserves stood at \$604 billion as December 1, 2023. We remain confident of meeting our external financing requirements comfortably," Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das said, while unveiling the December bi-monthly monetary policy Friday.

The reserves were \$597.935 billion in the preceding week ended November 24.

In October 2021, the country's foreign exchange kitty had reached an all-time high of \$642 billion. The reserves took a hit as the central bank deployed the reserves to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments since last year.

The governor further said the Indian rupee has exhibited low volatility compared to emerging market economy (EME) peers in the calendar year 2023, despite elevated US treasury yields and a stronger US dollar.

"The relative stability of the Indian rupee reflects the improving macroeconomic fundamentals of the Indian economy and its resilience in the face of formidable global tsunamis," he said.

The coefficient of variation for the daily INR exchange rate vis-a-vis the US dollar was 0.66 (CY 2023), which is the lowest among peer emerging economies, including China, Malaysia, Russia, Turkey, Vietnam, South Africa and Thailand.

On the financing side, Das said foreign portfolio investment (FPI) flows have seen a significant turnaround in 2023-24 with net FPI inflows of \$24.9 billion (up to December 6) as against net outflows in the preceding two years.

Net foreign direct investment (FDI), on the other hand, moderated to \$10.4 billion in April-October 2023, from \$20.8 billion a year ago.

Net inflows under external commercial borrowings (ECBs) and non-resident deposit accounts are much higher than last year.

India's external vulnerability indicators exhibit higher resilience in comparison with EME peers.

Inflow in equity MFs plunges; SIP shines

The flow in Nov also marks the 33rd consecutive month of net inflows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: Inflow in equity mutual funds has dropped by 22 per cent month-on-month to Rs 15,536 crore in November, while small cap funds continue to see traction from investors.

This was way higher than the Rs 19,957 crore inflow seen in the category in October. Before this, the inflow was at Rs 14,091 crore in September, according to the data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) released Friday.

"Diwali festivities and bank holidays probably affected equity net flows in November," Manish Mehta, Head of Sales, Marketing & Digital Business at Kotak Mutual Fund, said.

All the categories experienced inflow in equity segments. The equity segment was also aided by six new fund launches in November which garnered Rs 1,907 crore.

Despite the decline, inflow through SIPs (Systematic Investment Plans) hit a fresh all-time high of Rs 17,073 crore last month. It continues to attract new investors by increasing awareness of the benefits of the instrument.

"With indices moving from strength to strength, boosted by high economic activity, steady GST collections, and faith in the reforms and policies undertaken by the government, investors continued their allocations into various sectors of the economy. SIP inflows hit an all-time high of Rs 17,073 crore,



INFLOW IN EQUITY MFS DROPS 22% IN NOV

SIP HITS FRESH HIGH AT OVER RS 17,000CR

bettering the Rs 16,928 crore of flows in October," Gopal Kavalireddi, Vice President of Research at Fyers, said.

On the other hand, Rs 4,707 crore were eroded from the debt-oriented categories in November, after registering a net inflow of Rs 42,634 crore in October.

Except for five categories -- money market, long duration, banking and PSU, Gilt and Floater category, all other categories witnessed net outflows.

Apart from debt funds, the quantum of net flows in Gold ETFs (Exchange Traded Funds) dropped to Rs 333 crore last month from Rs 841 crore it received in October.

Also recently, gold prices in US dollar terms scaled new highs after going past the \$2,100 per ounce mark. Given this backdrop, there could be some profit booking in the near term. However, with the perceived risks overall, flows could continue to be positive going ahead, he added.

Apart from debt funds, the quantum of net flows in Gold ETFs (Exchange Traded Funds) dropped to Rs 333 crore last month from Rs 841 crore it received in October.

Indices at fresh all-time peaks

Benchmark indexes posted their longest weekly winning streak in three years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

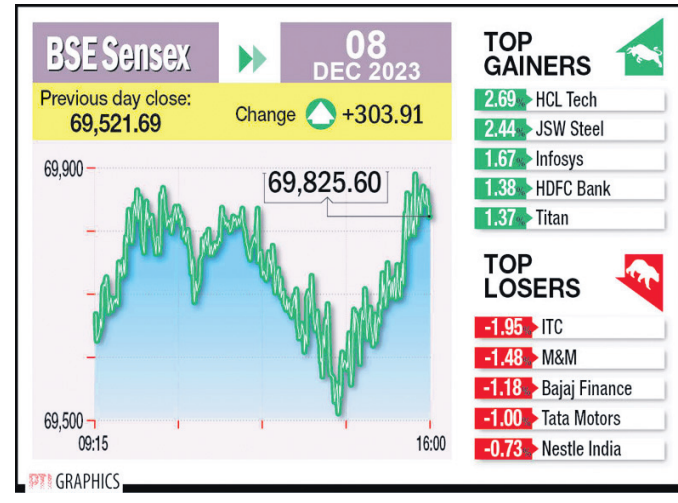
Mumbai, Dec 8: Benchmark Sensex and Nifty rebounded to close at their new lifetime highs Friday after the Reserve Bank raised the growth forecast for the current fiscal and kept policy rates unchanged, triggering heavy buying in banking and other rate-sensitive stocks.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose 303.91 points, or 0.44 per cent, to hit its new peak of 69,825.60. The index touched the highest intra-day level of 69,893.80.

The broader index Nifty also climbed 68.25 points or 0.33 per cent to reach a fresh record high of 20,969.40.

The indexes rose about 3.5% to log their best week since July 2022. The blue-chip indexes have gained for six straight weeks.

Among major Sensex movers, HCL Tech logged the biggest gain of 2.69 per cent, followed by JSW Steel (2.44 per cent) and



Infosys (1.67 per cent). Other gainers included HDFC Bank, Titan, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank.

In contrast, ITC fell the most by 1.95 per cent, Mahindra & Mahindra by 1.48 per cent and Bajaj Finance by 1.18 per cent.

Meanwhile, the turnover of derivatives in BSE Sensex scaled a new milestone of Rs 200 lakh crore on the weekly expiry of Friday. The total turnover was Rs 213.9 lakh crore as 30.6 crore contracts were traded.

Foreign institutional investors sold shares worth Rs 1,564.03 crore Thursday, according to exchange data.

Among sectoral indices, IT, tech and bankex rose by 1.08 per cent, 0.97 per cent and 0.89 per cent, respectively. On the other hand, utilities lost by 1.72 per cent and power slid 1.58 per cent.

Besides, FMCG fell 1.13 per cent, telecommunication declined 0.73 per cent, auto went down by 0.65 per cent and energy lowered by 0.64 per cent.

Govt further tightens stock limits on wheat

Wheat exports hit 7-yr low as govt sells more to calm prices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: The government Friday further tightened stock holding norms for wholesalers, retailers, big chain retailers and processors with immediate effect in order to curb hoarding and to check price rise.

Briefing media, Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra said the stock limit has been reduced to 1,000 tonne from the existing 2,000

tonne for traders/wholesalers.

The stock limit will be 5 tonne instead of 10 tonne on each retailer, 5 tonne for each depot of a big chain retailer and a total of 1,000 tonne for all their depots, he said.

In case of processors, they can hold 70 per cent of monthly installed capacity multiplied by the remaining months of 2023-24, he added.

"This has been done to prevent artificial scarcity and curb hoarding. The revised stock limits will be applicable from im-



mediate effect," Chopra said.

The traders will get 30 days time to reduce the stock to the revised limits, he added.

Ban on onion exports

The government has banned exports of onion till March next year with a view to increase domestic availability and to keep prices in check. "Export policy of onions... is amended from free to prohibited till March 31, 2024," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification. Local vendors in the national capital are selling onions at Rs 70-Rs 80 per kg.

It was June 12, the Food Ministry had imposed stock holding limits on different kinds of traders till March 2024.

India stands strongly against European Union's carbon tax

Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism or carbon tax will translate into a 20-35% tax on select imports into the EU, starting Jan 1, 2026

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: India will address the issue of the European Union's plan to impose a carbon tax on certain imported goods, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal Friday said, adding that "I will retaliate" if required.

The CBAM (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism) or carbon tax (a kind of import duty) will come into effect from January 1, 2026. However, from October 1

this year, domestic companies from seven carbon-intensive sectors, including steel, cement, fertiliser, aluminium and hydrocarbon products, will have to share data with regard to carbon emissions with the EU.

India's 26.6 per cent of exports of iron ore pellets, iron, steel, and aluminium products go to the EU. These products would be hit by CBAM. India exported these goods worth \$7.4 billion in 2023 to the EU.

He also said that India retaliated against the US after it imposed additional customs duties on certain steel and aluminium products.

To resolve the issues, India and the US ended all the bilateral disputes that they had in the World Trade Organisation (WTO).



The minister also asked the industry to help promote the electric vehicle mission of the country to promote sustainable growth.

There is a need to quickly replace the existing public buses and trucks in the country with electric vehicles, besides two and four-wheeler vehicles in a mission mode, he added.

Bharat will address the problem of CBAM with confidence, and we will find solutions. We will see how we can convert CBAM to our advantage if it comes in. Of course, I will retaliate. You need not worry about it

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

progress on replacement of old vehicles... Can we have more vehicles scrapped across the country? Can each one of you start demanding that in your company, all vehicles will be electric, all trucks coming into your companies will be electric," he said.

The minister said that using electric vehicles has economic value.

Citing an example of

Mumbai's Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST), Goyal said it was a perpetually loss-making body, but they are now moving to EV buses.

"Now, in a year or 1.5 years, there will be 100 per cent electric buses and...(I have been informed that) as soon as all the buses go electric, they would end losses and convert it (BEST) into a profit-making body," he said.

He appealed that every state transportation body will become a profit-making body by adopting electric mobility.

On foreign exchange reserves in the country, he said the reserves are enough for the next 5-6 years, "if we continue to have the current levels of current account deficit or trade deficit", without any threat to the Indian

economy.

Further, he said that countries like Chile and Peru are looking at trade pacts with India.

Addressing the industry at another event, Goyal said that foreign exchange can be saved through greater adoption of electric mobility.

"Imagine, if we can bring down the oil imports in the country, just think of an India, not dependent on oil imports, it can totally transform India's future," he said.

On exports, he said last year, India exported goods and services worth \$776 billion.

"Even if we stay on course at about 15-16 per cent growth, we can comfortably aspire to (achieve) \$2 trillion exports by 2030," he said, adding the world is facing challenges.

WPL auctions at Mumbai today expected to be an exciting affair

165 to go under hammer



KIM GARTH

will have a starting price of ₹40 lakh. They are Aussie all-rounders Annabel

four are utility cricketers in the shortest format of the game and will come in handy for any side.

Kashyap who has a base price of only ₹10 lakh was a member of the India under-19 squad that won the World Cup in South Africa. A bowling all-rounder, Kashyap bowls left-arm spin and can wield the willow effectively lower down the order. Devika is also a similar type of player and has already proved her prowess for

India. In the first WPL auction the UP Warriorz had bought her for a hefty ₹1.40 crore. However, she had a disappointing season following which UP released her and she is a free player again.

Vrinda on the other hand, is the latest power-hitter to emerge on the block. This Karnataka batter has been in the limelight now for quite some time due to her exceptional hitting abilities. She will certainly be the target for a number of franchises.

Former coach of the Indian women's cricket team said Friday that each team will have a specific goal in mind when they bid for the players. "I am sure Mumbai Indians would target some young players who will form the nucleus of the side in the years to come," Raman said. He pointed out that Gujarat Giants will look for two fast bowlers as they lagged behind in this department in the last edition of the WPL.

Sutherland and Georgia Wareham, South Africa's Shabnim Ismail and England wicketkeeper-batter Amy Jones.

However, there are a number of cricketers, who till now have been unknown entities, but have the ability to start a bidding war among the franchises. They are Mannat Kashyap, Devika Vaidya and Vrinda Dinesh (all from India) and Chamari Athapaththu (Sri Lanka). Experts believe that all the

Only 2 cricketers have the highest base price of ₹50 lakh - Deandra Dottin of West Indies and Kim Garth of Australia

56 capped players up for grabs among the five franchises

60 players, including 21 overseas cricketers, were retained across five franchises



DEANDRA DOTTIN

Mhambrey lauds 'artist' Shami

Bowling coach in awe of the skills both Shami and Bumrah have been displaying consistently

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 7: Mohammed Shami possesses a rare ability of landing the ball in an upright seam position every single time and no coach in the world can create such a fast bowling 'artist', gushed India's bowling coach Paras Mhambrey. Shami, who finished on top of the bowling charts with 24 wickets from seven matches in the ODI World Cup, has been India's go-to bowler both in ODIs and Tests.

Mhambrey is one of the quietest back-room workers in the current Indian set-up. He doesn't want to take any credit for Shami's success. He was asked whether India get another talent like Shami.

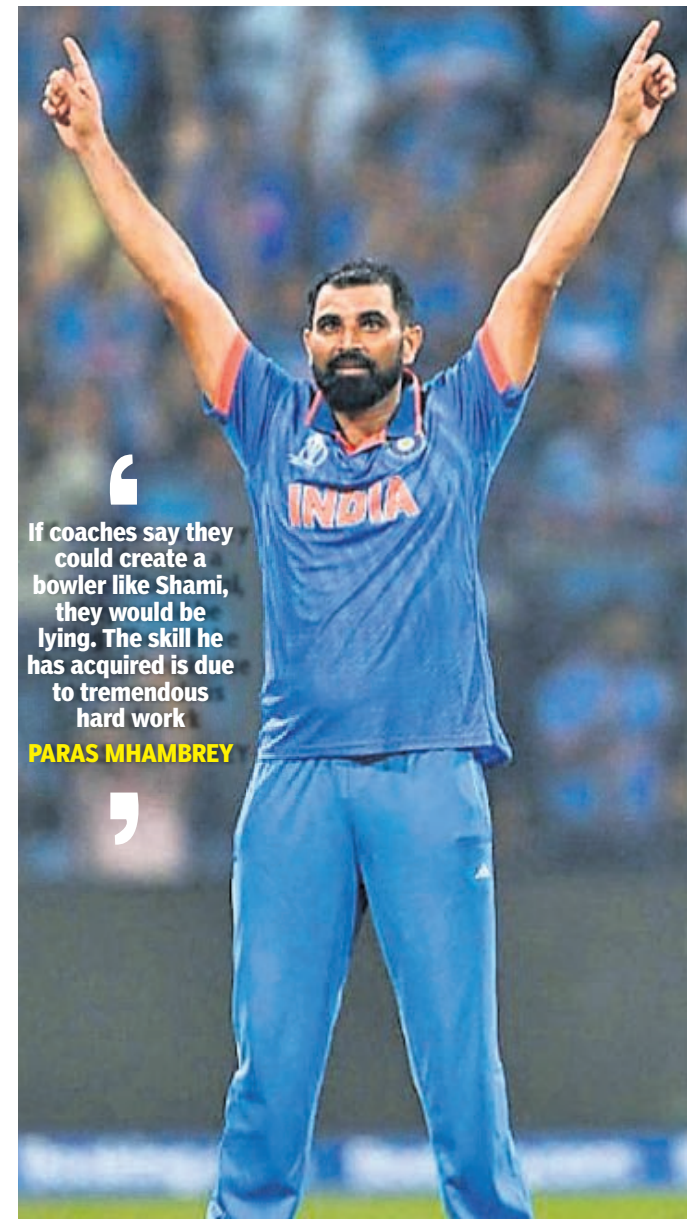
"Well, if I tell you that coaches could create a bowler like Shami, then I would be lying. If a bowler can land it on upright seam every time then every other bowler in the world will be Shami," Mhambrey said before leaving for the tour of South Africa with the Indian T20 squad Thursday.

"It is a skill that Shami has acquired with tremendous hard work and developed himself into the bowler that he is. Delivering ball after ball on the seam and with that perfect wrist position and getting it to move either ways is a rare skill set. A lot of bowlers, even if they land deliveries on the seam, will see the ball straightening up after pitching. Frankly speaking Shami is an artist," Mhambrey said.

The former India pacer also spoke about another brilliant operator Jasprit Bumrah in the same vein.

"Even Bumrah with his unusual action gets the ball to move in or away with same action. This is an art and lot of hard work and dedication goes into perfecting it," Mhambrey pointed out.

The way Shami and Bumrah



If coaches say they could create a bowler like Shami, they would be lying. The skill he has acquired is due to tremendous hard work

PARAS MHAMBREY

have managed to dominate the batters around the world is something that has surprised Mhambrey. Many would be envious of their success.

"I think in Test matches, we had Bumrah, Shami and Ishant (Sharma), who created this kind of magic but frankly speaking, if you ask me now if I would have expected this kind of dominance, I wouldn't have dreamt of this level of performance,"

Mhambrey stated. "I mean to bowl out Sri Lanka for 50 and then to repeat it against a team like South Africa, score 320-odd and bowl them out for 80. That was surreal. Obviously with an attack like ours, we expected them to do well, but to put up such a performance on the biggest stage for such a sustained period was something that was really commendable," the bowling coach added.

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Dec 8: All eyes will be on women cricketers when the auction of the Women's Premier League (WPL) will be held here Saturday. Five franchises, namely Royal Challengers Bangalore, UP Warriorz, Gujarat Giants, Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals will bid for a total of 165 players.

Among the cricketers who will go under the hammer, 61 will be foreigners and the remaining Indians. There will be 56 capped players among those who will be up for grabs. There will be 15 cricketers who will be from Associate Nations. All the teams will have a wage cap of ₹13.5 crore. It is expected that there will be a fierce bidding war for some of the international as well as domestic players.

The highest base price has been fixed at ₹50 lakh. Only two cricketers have been kept in this segment. They are Kim Garth of Australia and Deandra Dottin of the West Indies. Four others

SHORT TAKES

Kulkarni scripts facile victory

Dubai: Arshin Kulkarni (3/29 and 70 n o) starred with both bat and ball to help India beat Afghanistan by seven wickets in their Asian Cricket Council Under-19 Asia Cup match here Friday. After being put in by India skipper Uday Saharan, Afghanistan scored 173 in their 50 overs. The other wicket-takers for India were Raj Limbani (3/46) and Naman Tiwary (2/30). In reply, India lost two quick wickets for 10 runs and were reduced to 32/2 inside eight overs. But Kulkarni held fort and steered the side home with a responsible knock. He was well-supported by Musheer Khan (48 n o, 53b, 3x4). They added 98 runs for the fourth wicket.

Gokulam start on disappointing note

Kozhikode: Gokulam Kerala FC's campaign to win the title fourth time in a row started on a disappointing note as they were held goalless by former champions Sethu FC in the opening match of the Indian Women's League (IWL) 2023-24 at the EMS Corporation Stadium here Friday. Sethu FC coach Kanan Vitthal Priolkar was definitely a satisfied man at the end of the game as he had earlier said that his main target was to get a point from the game. His team adopted defensive tactics right from the start and in the end it paid dividends. Gokulam however, will have to blame themselves as they missed a number of sitters during the game.

Injured Ngidi ruled out of T20 series

Durban: South Africa pacer Lungi Ngidi was Friday ruled out of the three-match T20 series against India with a left lateral ankle sprain. He has been replaced by Beuran Hendricks. The 27-year-old Ngidi has been released from the squad and will return to his provincial team where he will undergo his rehabilitation with the 'Momentum Multiply Titans' under the supervision of the Proteas medical team, a Cricket South Africa (CSA) statement said. He will be "further assessed by the medical team" December 14. Hendricks, the 33-year-old left-arm pacer, last played for South Africa in the shortest format back in 2021. AGENCIES

Indian eves outwit Korea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Santiago (Chile), Dec 8: India came from behind to outwit Korea 3-1 in the ninth-12th place classification match of the Junior Women's hockey World Cup here Thursday.

Ropni Kumari (23rd minute), Mumtaz Khan (44th) and Annu (46th) scored for India, while Jiyun Choi (19th) was the goalgetter for Korea.

In the opening quarter, Korea dominated possession and secured the first penalty corner, but they could not utilise the chance. The Indian eves, opting for counter-attacks, kept Korea's defence busy but couldn't convert their promising entries into the opposition circle. As a result, the first quarter ended goalless.

The second quarter mirrored the intensity of the first, with India and Korea persisting in their attacking plays. Choi broke the deadlock with a precise penalty corner strike, but India swiftly responded through Ropni, who equalised from another penalty corner. Both the teams went into the breather with the score tied 1-1.

In the third quarter, India dominated the proceedings by keeping possession and troubling Korea's defence rigorously. The strategy paid dividends as Mumtaz brilliantly slotted the ball home from a penalty cor-

SAVITA TO LEAD

New Delhi: Goalkeeper Savita Punia will continue to lead the Indian women's hockey team, while veteran forward Vandana Katariya will be her deputy as Hockey India announced Friday a 22-member team for the upcoming Five-Nation Tournament in Spain from December 15-22. The other teams in the competition are Ireland, Germany, Spain and Belgium. The squad: (Goalkeepers): Savita Punia, Bichu Devi Kharibam; (Defenders): Nikki Pradhan, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary, Gurjit Kaur, Akshata Abaso Dhekale; (Midfielders): Nisha, Vaishnavi Phalke, Monika, Salima Tete, Neha, Navneet Kaur, Sonika, Jyoti, Baljeet Kaur; (Forwards): Jyoti Chhatrri, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, Vandana Katariya, Beauty Dung Dung and Sharmila Devi.

ner to give her team the lead.

India intensified their attacks and extended their lead early in the fourth and final quarter of the game as Annu netted a superb field goal, securing a two-goal advantage for her team.

The victory means that India, who had earlier bowed out of title contention after finishing third in Pool C, will stand a chance to finish ninth in the tournament when they take on either Chile or USA in their last match Saturday.

Second Odisha Masters at Cuttack starts December 12

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: The Odisha Masters badminton tournament will be played December 12 to 17 at the JN Indoor Stadium in Cuttack, the state Sports department said in a release Friday. This is the second time, the tournament will be hosted by Odisha. It is a BWF Super 100 tournament with a total prize money of USD, 1,00,000.

Last edition's defending men's champion Kiran George and women's winner Unnati Hooda have confirmed their participation in the event. The added attraction of the event will be the doubles pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Tressa Jolly. The two have already beaten some of the best doubles team in the world and are expected to win the title in this event.

Sports secretary Vineel Krishna is happy that Odisha will be hosting the tournament again and he expects it to be a huge success.

"We are looking forward to hosting yet another edition of the Odisha Masters in Cuttack. Badminton is a priority for us, and we have undertaken nu-



Kiran George will be one of the prime attractions at the Odisha Masters

merous measures towards the promotion of the game. While infrastructure is crucial, competition is equally important," Krishna said in the release.

"With excellent badminton players from around the world descending upon Odisha for the competition, it will serve as an inspiration for our own budding shuttlers to strive for the highest level of the

'Spiderman' Paul hangs up his gloves

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Dec 8: One of the greatest Indian goalkeepers of all time, Subrata Paul, 36, decided to call it quits Friday, bringing curtains on a glittering career spanning 16 years. "Thank You Spiderman. Blue Tigers custodian hangs up his gloves today," the All India Football Federation posted on 'X'.

Paul, who made his debut against Lebanon in the World Cup Qualifiers in 2007, had 65 appearances for India. He earned the sobriquet 'Spiderman' for his heroics under the bar against heavyweights South Korea in the 2011 Asian Cup in Doha when India had qualified after a gap of 27 years. Overall, Paul made more than 35 saves in the whole tournament and became one of the stars of the team since.

Paul captained the Indian team under coach Stephen Constantine in the 2018 World Cup Qualifiers. Under him, India made the second round defeating Nepal on aggregate. At the club level, he represented both the city's Big Two - Mohun Bagan and East Bengal. He also played for Danish Super League side FC Vestsjaelland and became the fourth Indian player to play professional football abroad.

West Ham sink profligate Spurs

AGENCIES

London, Dec 8: Early-season Premier League pacesetters Tottenham Hotspur slipped to a fourth defeat in five matches, going down 1-2 to West Ham after throwing away the lead yet again Thursday.

Ange Postecoglou's team had raced out of the blocks at the start of the campaign, playing a dazzling brand of attacking football and winning eight of their first 10 games to top the table. But their momentum has slowed dramatically in recent weeks and they now find themselves nine points behind leaders and bitter London rivals Arsenal.

Spurs came into the match in buoyant mood after an enthralling 3-3 weekend draw against champions Manchester City and they started in style at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.



James Ward-Prowse (L) got the winning goal for West Ham against Spurs

Cristian Romero put the home side ahead early, just reward for their dominance, but the visitors equalised through Jarrod Bowen shortly after half time and James Ward-Prowse completed the turnaround in the 74th minute of the game. Delighted West Ham manager

David Moyes said his side had the ability to give top sides a 'bloody nose'. "Huge performance because of the quality of the opposition. We were up against it tonight and in the first 15 minutes, we had to dig in. Thankfully we just about scraped it," Moyes said after the game.

Odisha script easy win over Tripura

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 8: As expected, Odisha defeated Tripura by an innings and 60 runs in their U-16 Vijay Merchant Trophy match which ended Friday at the Mangaldai Sports Association Stadium in Assam.

Resuming at their overnight score of 68 for eight, Tripura still needed another 74 runs to avoid innings defeat. However, they were all out for 82 leaving Odisha winners by a huge margin. Jogeswar Bag who had claimed four wickets Thursday bagged another one Friday to return with figures of five for 18.

In the first innings also Tripura had been dismissed for 82 after which Odisha had scored 224 to bag a huge first innings lead.

WORLD CUP FINAL PITCH RATED 'AVERAGE' BY ICC

Same rating for most India match pitches

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 8: The pitch at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, which hosted November 19 the ODI World Cup final between India and Australia, has been rated 'average' by the International Cricket Council (ICC). ICC match referee and former Zimbabwe batter Andy Pycroft, however, rated the outfield as 'very good'.

Australia won the World Cup beating India by six wickets on a pitch which was slow and sluggish. After the match, the Indians had allegedly said that the pitch did not behave as they expected it to do so in the second session. Most Indian players complained that batting had become easy

on the Ahmedabad pitch in the second session.

The pitches used in India's league matches against South Africa, England, Pakistan and Australia in Kolkata, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Chennai respectively were also rated as 'average' by the ICC.

However, the Wankhede Stadium pitch on which India faced New Zealand in the semi-finals received a 'good' rating. There were media reports ahead of that match suggesting that the hosts had switched pitch, offering a used surface instead of a fresh one.

The ICC also gave an 'average' rating to the Eden Gardens pitch in Kolkata which hosted the second semifinal.