

DSPL-521



Nijukti Parba

New opportunities
for our youth



Skill Development & Technical Education Department

354

New Appointments

Appointment of
10 Assistant Professors
194 Assistant Training Officers
& 150 Junior Assistants
in Skill Development &
Technical Education
Department

Higher Education Department

158

New Appointments

Appointment of
Assistant Professors
in Government College
in
Higher Education
Department

Chief Guest

Shri Naveen Patnaik

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

10th January 2024 || 5PM

Convention Centre, Lokaseva Bhavan, Bhubaneswar

OIPR-11001/13/0059/2324

leisure



DAFOE TURNED FARMER DURING HOLLYWOOD ACTORS' STRIKE

American actor Willem Dafoe had no work for almost four months last year when the SAG-AFTRA actors' union staged a walkout over pay and conditions. Now, Dafoe has revealed that he used his downtime to focus on farming - tending to the animals at his estate in Italy and growing vegetables.

KIDMAN ATE ALONE IN HER HOTEL ROOM AFTER BAGGING AN OSCAR

Actress Nicole Kidman ate alone in her hotel room the night she won an Oscar in 2002 as she recalled 'struggling' with her personal life despite the professional high.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
Today, you will turn an attentive ear to your inner voice. As a result, you will be able to execute all your plans with precision. Besides being cheerful, you will even take disappointments with a pinch of salt. Why just today, says Ganesh, you can have this rare quality for keeps.

TAURUS
You will win the heart of your family members today, forecasts Ganesh. Try and delay auction bids or sealed tenders. Job aspirants may look forward to belated success in interviews. Ganesh advises you to take abundant precautions in all critical matters.

GEMINI
Interactions with member of the opposite sex may yield positive and pleasurable results today. Public servants will get the much-needed encouragement and moral support from bosses and family members. In academics, you will be able to solve whatever problem you set your mind to.

CANCER
Today, you are likely to remain open-minded while dealing with others. However, it doesn't mean that you will always be soft on others. Later in the day, your approach may be different and stubborn. In the evening, you will enjoy the company of family and friends.

LEO
Pack your bags, and don't forget the sunscreen and the shades. Look at the stars today - Ganesh foresees for you a strong prospect of going on a tour. If not an individual backpacking adventure, then an elaborate family holiday, but travel you shall. With Lady Luck smiling upon you all day long, getting work done to the satisfaction of all is not an issue.

VIRGO
Today, find yourself rummaging through the vast recesses of your inner self. You will make fabulous money to spend on your loved ones. Face up to work pressures by indulging in corporeal pleasures. You may warrant the company of someone special to think out loud all that is inside you, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
All things passionate seem to engulf you today. It is one of those moments when chance dictates every possibility of a new romantic love episode in your life. The last time a moment like this came by, Romeo met Juliet. Ganesh expects you to try hard to please your sweetheart. Also, you may want to spruce up and pay special attention to your looks.

SCORPIO
You shall also work like a donkey and yet be smart as hell in what you do today. It is favourable if you engage in household activities - gardening, cooking, cleaning and the likes. Work pressure will be displaced by family pleasure, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Amid chaos and confusion, don't forget the direction and destination, advises Ganesh. You may be running short of time today and may not find a single moment in peace. Taking a break at this point of time won't be a crime, go for it.

CAPRICORN
Money will flow in from various quarters today, but it will also find its way out of your pockets. Keep a tab on your income and more on your expenses, says Ganesh. Situation at work may get a little trying, but you will overcome all problems by means of your innate and acquired skills, and past experience.

AQUARIUS
Planning to buy a house or vehicle? Then today's the day to make the booking. However, don't buy anything in haste. Deliberate, says Ganesh, especially when it involves a huge sum of money. You may even shift residence, or change a job, and it's very likely you will enjoy the whole process.

PISCES
Well begun is half done. With this in mind, you will set out to actively seek the cooperation of your colleagues and the sanction of your seniors to tackle some important projects, says Ganesh. The evening should find you heading out to watch a movie or doing something creative, like painting.

Kat bats for pay parity

Mumbai: Katrina Kaif delved into the persistent issue of gender pay disparity in the Indian film industry. Reflecting on her two-decade-long career, she expressed concerns about the lack of significant progress towards achieving pay parity for male and female actors.

Speaking to an entertainment portal, the *Tiger 3* actress candidly addressed the issue, acknowledging the ongoing discrepancy in remuneration between male and female-led films.

She highlighted a common argument in the industry, pointing out that box office numbers often determine the pay scale, leading to disparities in earnings between genders. Expressing her viewpoint, the actress emphasised the complexity of determining the most crucial element in creating a successful film, likening it to multiple ingredients in a dish. Kaif stressed the importance of striving for greater pay equality and advocating for a more balanced approach in the industry. Optimistic about positive changes, she noted a gradual shift towards pay parity while acknowledging the industry's supportive stance.

Sharing insights from her early days in the industry, she revealed her initial struggles with limited savings and her determination to sustain herself. She ultimately found success as a model before venturing into film.

Katrina's upcoming project, the thriller *Merry Christmas*, directed by Sriram Raghavan and starring Vijay Sethupathi, will be released in both Hindi and Tamil versions January 12, 2024.

AGENCIES



Pankaj recalls eating insects

Mumbai: Actor Pankaj Tripathi, in a recent interview, reminisced of his childhood in Bihar's Belsand.

The *Mirzapur* actor disclosed that in his earlier days, he wanted to learn swimming.

"We had a river behind our house. The river water has small black insects swimming on top of it. So, the kids in the village, they are very naughty, they told me that if I drink these insects, I will learn swimming. So, I picked up 10-12 of those insects and drank them with the water. I am thankful that my stomach didn't get upset."

In the same interview, Pankaj discussed the change in his surname. He said, "It must be the first time in history that a father got a name from his son. I was filling the admit card of 10th standard. My uncle would use the surname Tripathi and he had become an officer in

the government. There was also one Baba who had Tripathi surname, he became a professor of Hindi. Those who had my surname, Tiwari, they all were either priests or were doing farming. So, I thought this is because of the surname. I didn't want to become farmer or a priest. So I wrote my name as Tripathi in the form. But then I thought I can't write my father's name as Tiwari in the form as it might get rejected. So I changed his name too."

On the film front, he will soon be seen in *Main Atal Hoon*. The film is slated to release January 19, 2024. AGENCIES



Jacqueline finds Saudi culture incredibly rich

Mumbai: Model-turned-actress Jacqueline Fernandez off late has been making headlines for many wrong reasons. The very bubbly Jackie has, however, not let her spirit be broken. In fact, just recently, she was in Saudi Arabia for a photoshoot for the magazine *Travel+Leisure India*. On the sidelines of the shoot Jackie talked about Saudi culture.

Sharing her views on the same, the *Murder 2* actress revealed, "Saudi culture is incredibly rich and fascinating. The warmth and hospitality of the people have left a lasting impression on me. The cover shoot was a fantastic experience."

She went on to add, "The team's creativity, stunning locations, and the overall energy made it memorable. But a special shout out to the food. I absolutely enjoyed bingeing on my favourite Middle Eastern delicacies."

Back on the work front, Jacqueline Fernandez who was last seen in the Akshay Kumar - Emraan Hashmi starrer *Selfie* will next be seen in *Fateh*. Starring Sonu Sood, and directed by Vaibhav Mishra, *Fateh* will be shot at various locations across Delhi and Punjab, and a special international crew will be flown in from Los Angeles to choreograph the action sequences. AGENCIES



Ustad Rashid Khan: A vocalist with unparalleled genius

APART FROM PADMA SHRI AND PADMA BHUSHAN HONOURS, THE MUSIC MAESTRO WAS CONFERRED WITH BANGABHUSAN, THE STATE HONOUR OF WEST BENGAL

KOLKATA: Ustad Rashid Khan left an enduring legacy with his soul-stirring notes, his melodious voice echoing through time and leaving an indelible imprint on the rich heritage of

Hindustani music. Possibly the last living legend of Rampur Sahaswan, Rashid was recognised as the 31st generation of Sangeet Samrat Mian Tansen, as detailed on his official website.

Known for his mastery in the 'Vilambit Khayal' gayaki, he captivated millions of Hindustani vocal classical music enthusiasts for more than three decades.

Born in Badayun, Uttar Pradesh, Rashid's initial training was under his maternal grand-uncle, Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan. In April 1980, he relocated to Kolkata at the age of 10 when Nissar moved there

with his grandfather. His debut concert took place when he was just 11, and by 1994, he had gained recognition as a musician.

Deeply influenced by Hindustani classical music from an early age, Rashid commenced his music lessons under the guidance of his grandparent, Inayat Hussain Khan.

He weaves together a narrative deeply influenced by maestros such as Ustad Amir Khan and Pandit Bhimsen Joshi. Proficient in the art of the tarana, much like his guru Nissar Hussain, he infused his renditions with a distinctive personal touch.

While excelling in Hindustani vocals, Rashid also showcased his proficiency in playback music, contributing to blockbusters such as *My Name is Khan*, *Jab We Met*, *Isaaq*, *Manto*, *Mausam* and *Bapi Bari Ja*. He was recognised for his innovative approach, blending

Hindustani vocals with genres like Sufi and collaborating with Western instrumentalist icon Louis Banks. He engaged in 'jugalbandis' with sitar artist Shahid Parvez.

Commenting on his Rabindra Sangeet album *Baithaki Rabi*, Rashid stated, "I believe

a musician cannot complete his circle or journey without having sung Rabindra Sangeet."

"I am ready for criticism, but this is my way of imbibing Gurudev's song, internalizing the meanings and 'bhab' and interpreting in my way without deviating from the swar-alipi."

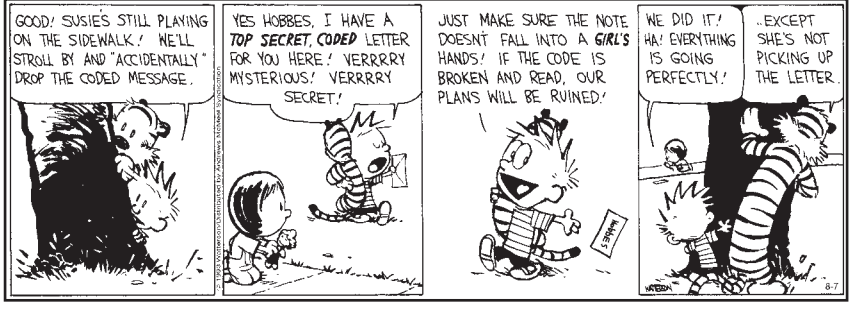
A familiar face at most of the classical concert conferences in Kolkata, Rashid Khan remained active during the Covid-19 outbreak. He hosted classical music sessions at home with his son, also a skilled classical music artist, which were streamed online. PTI

1968 - 2024

PEANUTS



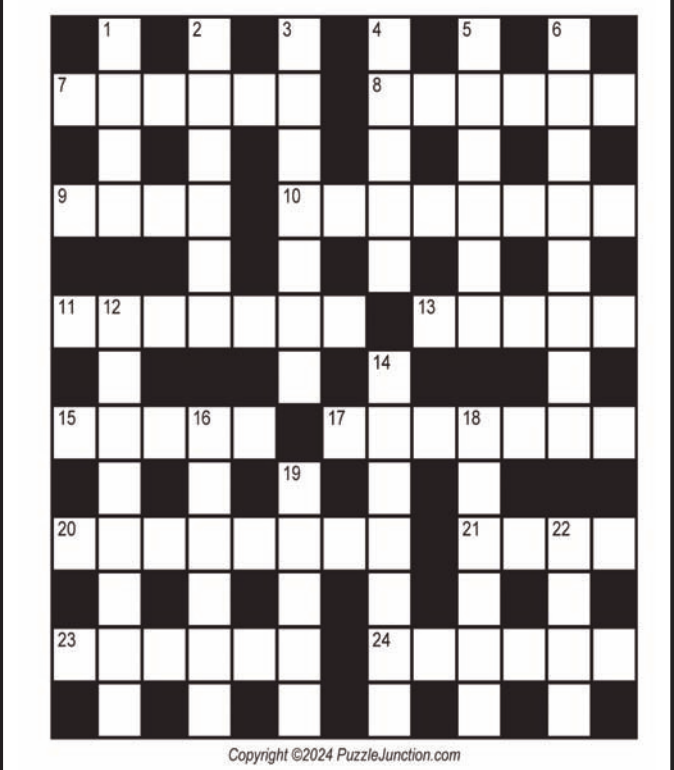
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



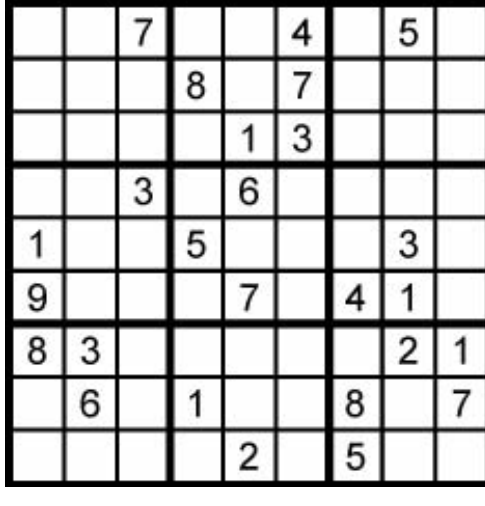
FUN post CROSSWORD



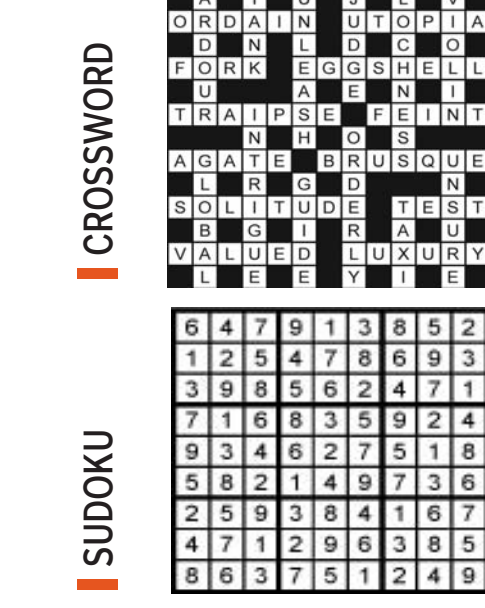
- Copyright ©2024 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 7 Ancient military hub
 - 8 Ask over
 - 9 Advantage
 - 10 Summit
 - 11 High spirits
 - 13 Tract of level wasteland
 - 15 Impertinent
 - 17 Some flights
 - 20 Wealthy
 - 21 Detest
 - 23 Gentle
 - 24 Seldom
 - Down**
 - 1 Potato
 - 2 Set straight
 - 3 Fizgig
 - 4 Economy-size
 - 5 Fly
 - 6 Kind of heel
 - 12 Child's game
 - 14 Deform
 - 16 Strait of Dover port
 - 18 Orbit
 - 19 Military wear
 - 22 Narrative

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



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



Supporting hand
State government starts online registration of students belonging to families of farmers under KALIA scholarship scheme

METRO | P2



Health hazard
A litre of bottled water contains about 2.4 lakh plastic pieces on an average and can create health problems for users

INTERNATIONAL | P8



Extra Saudi oil
Indian state refiners seek to boost imports of Saudi crude after the kingdom cuts the official selling price

BUSINESS | P9



Golden Indian pair
The pair of Rudranksh Patil and Mehuli Ghosh bags 10m air rifle mixed team gold in Asian Olympic Qualifiers

SPORTS | BACK PAGE

SHORT TAKES

Patnaik inaugurates Malkangiri airport

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated Tuesday the newly constructed Malkangiri airport constructed at a cost of ₹70 crore. This incidentally is the seventh airport in the state and is located at Katelguda under Goudaguda panchayat on the outskirts of Malkangiri town. The runway of the airport is 1,620 metres in length and 30 metres in width. "Air connectivity to Malkangiri will usher in a new era of development, open up avenues of business and tourism," the CM said. In the first phase, nine-seater aircraft are likely to operate from the airport.

P2

Singer Rashid Khan breathes his last

Kolkata: Music maestro Ustad Rashid Khan, who has been undergoing treatment at a hospital here for prostate cancer, died at a city hospital Tuesday afternoon, officials said. He was 55. "We tried our best but failed. He passed away at around 3.45pm," a doctor of the hospital where Khan was admitted informed. He had been undergoing treatment for cancer for four years.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



If all other options are exhausted, we can always take Ram Rahim route to stay out of jail

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	CHANGE	PERCENTAGE
SENSEX	71386.21	↑ 30.99	
NIFTY	21544.80	↑ 31.80	
DOLLAR	83.19	↓ ₹0.01	
EURO	91.02	↓ ₹0.12	
GOLD	₹72,316	↑ ₹221	
SILVER	₹72,366	↓ ₹61	

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	27.7°C	27.2°C
Min Temp	16.4°C	16.5°C
Humidity	92%	89%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST
DRY WEATHER VERY LIKELY



COLORFUL MOVES: Tribal women perform a dance routine at West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district during a cultural event, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

NEET-PG exam shifted to July 7

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 9: The National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Postgraduate (NEET-PG) examination has been rescheduled to July 7 this year, the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences said Tuesday here. The cut-off date for the purpose of eligibility for the exam this year is August 15, last year. The exam was earlier scheduled to be held March 3.

"In supersession of NBEMS notice dated 09.11.2023 and pursuant to the receipt of NMC letter dated January 3, 2024, the conduct of NEET-PG 2024 examination, which was earlier notified to be tentatively held March 3, 2024, stands rescheduled," the NBEMS said in a notice. "The NEET-PG 2024 shall now be conducted July 7, 2024," it added.

According to the recently notified 'Post-Graduate Medical Education Regulations, 2023', the existing NEET-PG examination will continue till the proposed National Exit Test (NExT) becomes operational for the purpose of PG admission.

The NEET-PG is an eligibility examination prescribed as the single entrance examination for admission to various MD/MS and PG diploma courses.

Lady CEO kills son, held

THE ALLEGED CRIME REMINDS ONE OF THE SHEENA BORA CASE WHERE HER MOM INDRANI HAD ALLEGEDLY MURDERED HER AND BURNT THE BODY AT A DESOLATE PLACE

AGENCIES

Panaji, Jan 9: Thirty-nine year old Suchana Seth was arrested Monday night by the police in Karnataka's Chitradurga for allegedly murdering her four-year-old son and trying to dump the body by stuffing it in a bag, cops said Tuesday here. According to Seth's LinkedIn page, she is the chief executive officer (CEO) of start-up 'Mindful AI Lab' and was among the top '100 Brilliant Women in AI Ethics for 2021'.

The horrific case reminds one of the Indrani Mukherjee incident. Then, Indrani had allegedly murdered her daughter Sheena Bora and disposed the body by burning it at a secluded place. As per police reports, Sheena was never seen after April 2012. Indrani was arrested by police in Mumbai, August 25, 2015. Currently however, she is out on bail.

Goa police arrested Seth, from Chitradurga. She was brought to Goa Tuesday and remanded in police custody for six days by a court in Mapusa town, an official said.

Police said the accused had checked into a rented service apartment at Candolim in North



Goa with her son January 6. After two days, she decided to leave for Bangalore. The hotel staff hired a cab for her.

"She (Seth) checked into a rented service apartment at Candolim in North Goa January 6 along with her son," Calangute police station inspector Paresh Naik said. "After her departure the apartment staff went to clean

the room in which she stayed. They found blood stains on a towel," Naik added.

Police said they called the accused and enquired with her about the blood stains and her 'missing' son. "She told us that the blood stains were due to her periods and her son was with her friend in Margao and provided the address. However, it was fake," police said.

'Quizzard' who got answers wrong

BANGALORE: Suchana Seth is the founder of 'The Mindful AI Lab' and has been leading the organisation for over four years. She worked as an affiliate at the Berkman Klein Centre for two years in Boston. Seth was a senior data scientist at Boomerang Commerce here. She holds a Master's degree in physics specialising in Plasma Physics with Astrophysics from the University of Calcutta, where she achieved first class honours in 2008. During her college days, Seth actively participated in quiz competitions.

lice said.

"We then spoke over the phone to the taxi driver who had reached Chitradurga district. We asked the driver to take the accused to the nearest police station, which he did. When the cops searched her luggage, the body of the kid was found," Naik stated.

An offence has been registered against Seth under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 302 (murder) and 201 (destruction of evidence), and also under the Goa Children's Act at the Calangute police station in Goa, Naik informed.

Wage hike for ASHA, Anganwadi workers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Raigarh, Jan 9: Salaries of Anganwadi workers, ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activist) and Bank Mitras will be hiked soon, 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian stated here Tuesday. He added that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has sanctioned ₹400 crore for the development of Nabarangpur district while interacting with Anganwadi workers, ASHA and self-help groups (SHGs) members and the general public in this block of Nabarangpur district.

Pandian during the visit threw light on various development projects being implemented in the district by the Odisha government. He informed that ₹50 crore has been sanctioned for construction of Kundei Likhima main road connecting Umerkote and Raigarh, ₹45 crore for construction of Raigarh-Anchala road, ₹40 crore for Jodinga-Turudih road, ₹14 crore for the road connecting Bagbeda locality of this block with the borders of Chhattisgarh, ₹50 lakh for the development of the Gond community and ₹1.20 crore for the development of Bengali community.

Pandian said that the CM has also sanctioned ₹200 crore for

the development of Umerkote Assembly segment within a period of nine months. He added that a new degree college will be soon established here.

The 5T Chairman reached out to members of Mission Shakti, SHGs and local residents and received written grievances. He informed that all the issues will be looked into and solved in the next 10 days. He pointed out that banking facilities have been provided to the people in rural areas. He added that buses under the LAccMI transport system have been provided to enhance and improve connectivity.

Pandian said the pay hike of community centre employees, master book-keepers (MBKs) under the Livelihood Mission, and auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) were also under consideration by the Odisha government. Similarly, the monthly pay-out for elderly persons under the Madhubabu Pension scheme will also be increased, he informed. He added that incentives for cooks at Anganwadi centres will be hiked.

Jajpur MLA Pranab Prakash Das, Nabarangpur MLA Sadasiva Pradhani, Dabugaon MLA Manohar Randhari, Jharigaon MLA Prakash Chandra Majhi and local district officials were present during Pandian's visit here.

Lakshwadeep most searched word on Google in India since PM's visit

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Jan 9: As Lakshwadeep is turning out to be one of the most searched word on the internet, Maldives president Mohamed Muizzu has urged China to send more tourists to the archipelago nation. In the last couple of days, 14,000 Indians have cancelled hotel bookings in the Maldives, while 4,000 flight tickets have also been cancelled.

Since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Lakshwadeep, there has been a huge surge in the number of searches for the place. It became the 10th most searched word January 4 on Google in India. The worldwide search interest January 8 for Lakshwadeep was the highest in the last 20 years. This happened after some ministers from the Maldives criticised Modi on the social media after the PM urged Indians to

visit Lakshwadeep. Amid this scenario, Muizzu has turned to China to help Maldives out. At a meeting Tuesday with members of the Chambers of Commerce in Fujian province, Muizzu requested the Chinese government to promote Maldives as an attractive tourist destination.

It is clear now that present Maldives government (pro-China) is facing a serious backlash from the opposition in the country as the number of visiting Indian tourists may fall drastically.

Modi visited Lakshwadeep January 2 and 3 to inaugurate some projects. Once pictures of the PM and the exotic places he visited became viral on various social media platforms, people wanted to know more about the place. Hence the search for Lakshwadeep grew manifold on the net.

P8

France gets its first 'Jeune et gai' PM

Many see the move by Macron to nominate Attal as PM is to infuse new life to his presidency and also to woo voters sympathetic to the gay movement

AGENCIES

Paris, Jan 9: French President Emmanuel Macron named Tuesday education minister Gabriel Attal as prime minister in a bid to give new momentum to his presidency. In the process the 34-year-old became France's youngest and first openly gay head of government. Attal is popularly referred to as 'jeune et gai' (young and gay).

Macron late Monday evening had accepted the resignation of Elisabeth Borne, 62, who had served less than two years in of-

fice. The naming of the new prime minister is likely to be followed by a cabinet reshuffle which is expected to breathe new life into the final three years of Macron's mandate.

The move will not necessarily lead to any major political shift, but signals a desire for Macron to try to move beyond last year's unpopular pension and immigration reforms and improve his centrist party's chances in the June European Union ballot.

Opinion polls show Macron's camp trailing far-right leader Marine Le Pen's party by around eight to 10 percentage points. Analysts pointed out that by appointing Attal, the French president is trying to woo voters who are sympathetic to the gay rights.

Attal, a close Macron ally, became a household name as government spokesman during the Covid-19 pandemic. His ap-



Outgoing PM Elisabeth Borne with Gabriel Attal

AP PHOTO

pointment will certainly infuse new life into the Macron-led government as he is regarded as an able administrator, according to RTL Radio and BFM TV.

One of the country's most popular politicians in recent opinion polls, Attal has made a name for himself as a savvy

minister, at ease on radio shows and in parliament.

"Gabriel Attal is a bit like the Macron of 2017," said MP Patrick Vignal, referring to the point at which the President first took office as the youngest leader in modern French history, at the time a popular figure among voters.

Vignal, who belongs to Macron's Renaissance Party and first met Attal more than 10 years ago, added that the education minister 'is clear, he has authority'.

Incidentally Attal and Macron would have a combined age just below that of US President Joe Biden, who may run for a second mandate in this year's US presidential election.

Macron has struggled to deal with a more turbulent parliament since losing his absolute majority shortly after being re-elected in 2022. "The Macron-Attal duo can bring a new lease of life (to the government)," said 'Harris Interactive' pollster Jean-Daniel Levy.

But opposition leaders were quick to say they did not expect much from the change in prime minister, with Macron himself taking on much of the decision-making.

CM: Committed to brighten future of farmers' families

ONLINE REGISTRATION FOR KALIA SCHOLARSHIP BEGINS TUESDAY AND WILL CONTINUE TILL JANUARY 31

Bhubaneswar, Jan 9: "My government is committed to brighten the future of farmers' families by providing assistance to the children in professional and technical institutions," Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said as the state government Tuesday started the online registration of students belonging to farmers' families under the extended Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) Scholarship scheme.



As many as 1,789 students have so far been enrolled for the grant under the scheme which was launched in 2021-22

Students taking admission under technical/professional courses in premier institutes like IITs, NITs, AIIMS, IIMS, ICAR, IARI, IISER, IVRI, CIFE and NDRI are included under KALIA Scholarship

The registration of students will continue till January 31, the official said. The government has meanwhile modified the guidelines of the scheme and it will henceforth provide scholarship to students who undertake technical and professional courses in private institutes inside and outside state.

As per the new guidelines, which was made public Monday, scholarship will be given to those who enroll in professional and technical courses like engineering, medical, agriculture and allied subjects, nursing, diploma and different trades in ITI in government or private institutions having AISHE (All India Survey on Higher Education) code besides in pre-

mier institutions inside and outside the state like the IITs, NITs, AIIMS, IIMS, ICAR, IARI, IISER, NISER, IVRI, CIFE and NDRI and others. Earlier, it was provided to farmer's children enrolled only in government institutions within the state, the official said. The scholarship will be given for maximum two years for post graduate and four years for PhD courses. The PhD courses must be related to the eligible post-graduation courses only in government institutions inside the

state, an official release said. As many as 1,789 students have so far been enrolled for the grant under the KALIA scheme which was launched in 2021-22. The KALIA Scholarship aims to accommodate maximum number of students from the families of small and marginal farmers and landless agricultural labourers, an official said.

The scholarship amount for students in private institutions and premier institutions will be released as per the approved rates, an official release said.



REGALING POSE: Young artistes perform during Saptaranga, an event organised by Mrudugunjan at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Naveen inaugurates airport in Malkangiri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar/ Malkangiri, Jan 9: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday inaugurated the Malkangiri Airport in the southwestern part of the state.

Spread over an area of 233 acre, the airport is located in Katelguda in Goudaguda panchayat area. It has been developed at a cost of ₹70 crore, and has a 1620-meter long and 30-metre wide runway, an official said.

In the first phase, nine-seater aircraft are likely to operate from the airport, he added.

With this, the number of operational airports in the state has gone up to seven. The other



six are located in Bhubaneswar, Jharsuguda, Jeypore in Koraput, Utkela in Kalahandi, Rourkela in Sundargarh and Rangeilunda in Ganjam.

Patnaik said the new airport was a 'dream come true' for the people of the tribal-dominated

Swabhiman Anchal, once considered the hotbed of Maoist activities.

"The air connectivity to Malkangiri will usher in a new era of development, open up avenues of business and tourism, and further transform the lives

of the people in the region," he said. The authorities of the Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar have provided necessary technical assistance for operationalisation of the Malkangiri Airport, officials said.

This was Patnaik's second visit to Malkangiri in a span of three months. In October last year, the CM visited the district to launch affordable bus services.

Patnaik also announced ₹4,000-crore integrated irrigation project at Govindpalli, which will help irrigate 92,815 acre of agricultural land and provide drinking water to 1.5 lakh people.

Over 70k applications so far for Nabin Card

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 9: As many as 70,488 applicants, involving more than 1.82 lakh people, have registered for the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojna (BSKY) Nabin Card through the registration portal till Tuesday, informed an official.

"The online application for BSKY Nabin Card is going on full swing at the many common service centres throughout the state. Other than the centres, many people are also using their mobile handsets and private computers for registration," he said.

The registration portal has been open since January 6. The districts registering the most number of applications are Ganjam (9,525), Cuttack (7,359), and Khurda (7,165).

Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Commissioner-cum-



Secretary Shalini Pandit earlier had directed all district Collectors to hold campaigns to create awareness about the programme and prompt the public to register for the card.

In a letter to Collectors and District Magistrates, Pandit had said that the scope of BSKY has been expanded to make room for all those who were left out of the scheme earlier.

Notably, all eligible families can apply for the card online. The registration portal at www.bskynabin.odisha.gov.in will remain open till January 16.

5T Chairman reviews projects in 3 districts

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 9: 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian Tuesday visited Malkangiri, Nabarangpur and Koraput districts to interact with the locals and review progress of various developmental projects.

In Malkangiri, he reviewed the progress of Govindapalli Integrated Irrigation Project on Saptadhara and Garia rivers which will provide irrigation to 92,815 acre of land in Malkangiri, Mathili, Khairput and Korkunda blocks. During his last visit to Malkangiri March 28, 2023, the locals had made requests for the project. Following that, ₹ 4,000 crore had been sanctioned for the purpose.

Similarly, in Nabarangpur, Pandian reviewed the progress of Parbati Giri Mega Lift Project being built at a cost of ₹1,272 crore, which will provide irri-



gation to an area of 48,500 acre and Turi-Gunthat Irrigation Project being built at an estimated cost of ₹577 crore, which will provide irrigation to an area of 22,500 acre.

The 5T Chairman informed the public that based on petitions and feedback from his previous visits, new degree colleges have been sanctioned in Tentulikhunti, Kosagumuda, Jharigam and Raigarh blocks in Nabarangpur; Bandhugaon and Narayanpatna

blocks in Koraput and Chitrakonda block in Malkangiri. All these colleges will start functioning from the upcoming academic year, 2024-25.

In Koraput, Pandian reviewed the progress of Gupteswar temple development, Boipariguda being built at a cost of ₹20.20 crore and Jhanjabati River Barrage Project being built at a cost of ₹100 crore with irrigation potential for an area of 4,720 acre.

Man gets 10-yr RI for rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Jan 9: A local court here Tuesday sentenced a man to 10 years of rigorous imprisonment after convicting him of raping a woman.

The convict was identified as Imran Khan, 32, alias Naushad, a resident of Kuanmunda block in Sundargarh district.

The 2nd additional special judge also slapped ₹5,000 penalty on Khan. In default, Khan has to undergo an additional six months in jail, the court ruled.

The judge passed the order after examining the statements of 13 witnesses, 89 documents and other circumstantial evidence. Special public prosecutor Satyanarayan Mohapatra was pleading as the government lawyer.

According to the case diary, Khan and the survivor are neighbours and work as daily wagers. They shared a close family re-

lation and were in touch through social media.

Khan was interested in marrying the survivor's daughter and one day he expressed his desire to present a mobile phone to the girl to which the victim agreed.

As planned, Khan took the woman and her daughter to Rourkela in an auto-rickshaw to purchase the phone January 31, 2021. They stopped near a hotel where Khan left the girl in the three-wheeler and entered the hotel with her mother. There, he raped the woman in a room, which was booked by him.

Later, he abandoned his plan to buy a cellphone and came back to Kuanmunda with the survivor and her daughter. The survivor lodged a complaint of rape against Khan at Biramitrapur police station. Police registered a case and arrested Khan.

Student activists seek hosp owner's arrest

Bhubaneswar: Several student activists Tuesday staged a demonstration outside the official residence of Health Minister Niranjan Pujari, demanding arrest of the owner of Hi-Tech Hospital where three people died in an AC compressor explosion. The protesters, under the banner of the All Odisha Students' Voice (AOSV), initially took out a rally to gherao the minister's residence, but were stopped by the police, officials said.

Elderly man dies in bull attack

Jajpur: A 65-year-old man died after being attacked by a bull at Deoda village under Dharmasala police limits in Jajpur district, Tuesday morning. The deceased was identified as Alekh Mallick, a resident of Deoda village in this district. According to reports, Alekh was trying to drive away the bull that was damaging his standing crops in his field. However, it became violent and attacked Alekh who sustained grievous injuries. His family members rushed him to Dharmasala CHC where the doctors declared him dead.

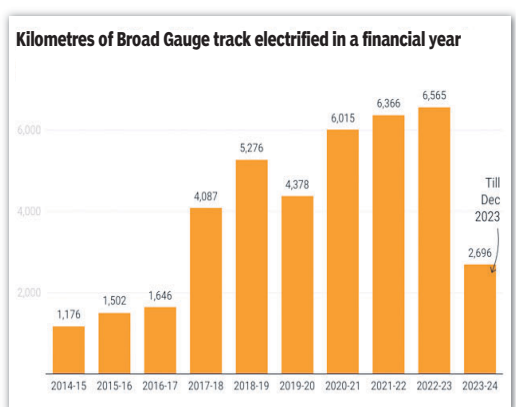
93.83% of Broad Gauge tracks now electrified

Odisha is among the 14 states and Union territories, where electrification has been completed for 100% of the BG tracks

ATRI PRASAD ROUT, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 9: In its attempt to achieve 100 per cent electrification of Broad Gauge (BG) tracks in the country, the Indian Railways has electrified 93.83 per cent of the BG network till December, 2023. With electrification of 6,577 route kilometers (RKMs) during the 2023 calendar year, 61,508 RKMs of tracks have been electrified out of the existing network of 65,556 RKMs, informed a press note recently.

As trains constitute one of the dominant modes of transportation in India, to reduce dependency on conventional

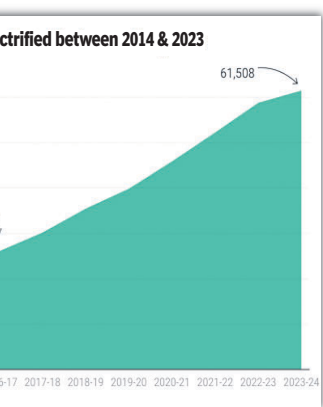


sources of energy, Railways is electrifying the BG tracks to make train services more eco-friendly, faster and efficient.

Till 2014, a total of 21,801 RKMs of Broad Gauge tracks had been electrified in the country. In 2018, Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had approved a proposal for electrification of all remaining un-electrified BG routes. The work was to be completed by 2021-22

and it was estimated that after complete electrification, consumption of diesel by the Railways would reduce by 2.8 billion litres and its energy bill would shrink by about ₹13,000 crore per annum.

According to the 'Status of Railway Electrification' report published by the Railways January 1, since the financial year (FY) 2017-18, some 35,383 RKMs of BG tracks have been electrified. While in the FY2022-



23, electrification work was completed for 6,565 RKMs of BG tracks, in FY2023-24, till the end of December, 2,696 RKMs of tracks were electrified.

Though the goal of 100 per cent electrification hasn't been achieved throughout the country, as per the report, there are 14 states and Union territories, including Odisha, where electrification has been completed for all the BG tracks. Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya

Pradesh, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are some of the states where complete electrification has also been achieved. Where Odisha has 2,855 RKMs of the electrified BG tracks as of now, Uttar Pradesh has 8,516 RKMs, Madhya Pradesh 4,881 RKMs and Jharkhand 2,558 RKMs. Assam has the lowest percentage of electrified tracks at 39 per cent, with only 982 RKMs of its 2,518 RKM of tracks having been electrified.

Explaining challenges facing the electrification work, Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav had said in Lok Sabha in August, 2023 that the completion of projects depends on factors like forest clearance by Forest department officials, statutory clearances from various authorities, geological and topographical conditions of area, law and order situation at the project site, and number of working months in a year depending on the climatic conditions.

Enterprise Odisha roadshow at Rourkela

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Jan 9: The 'CCI Enterprise Odisha' roadshow was held at World Hockey Village here in association with the Rourkela Chamber of Commerce and Industries (RCCI), Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman IPICOL Bhupinder Singh Punia said, "The Enterprise Odisha would definitely infuse a new life among all entrepreneurs of western Odisha."

He announced that CCI Enterprise Odisha will be held at Jharsuguda from January 19 to 21 and will be beneficial for startups and women entrepreneurs. Punia urged all, especially startup and female entrepreneurs to participate in the event in large numbers so as to reap the benefit out of it. Addressing the event as the guest of honour, director in-charge of Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) Atanu Bhowmik, said, "RSP is ready to contribute and help such mega events organised by CII and the state government."

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PILGRIMAGE IN COMFORT

A convention centre with state-of-the-art facilities is all set to welcome devotees on Parikrama Marg abutting the Srimandir in Puri.

Sprawling over 85,000 sq-ft land, the convention centre can accommodate 8,000 people at one go. Facilities like cloak room for safekeeping of belongings of 4,000 families, baggage scanning, pure drinking water, toilet and book store will be available at the centre that will have 10 entry and exit points for the convenience of devotees.

"The convention centre will have 10 cloak rooms, where devotees can keep their mobile phones, shoes, bags and other items before entering Srimandir to have a darshan of the sibling deities," said an official in know of the development.

However, those wishing to only enjoy the beauty and serenity of Parikrama Marg can keep their belongings near the north gate. The air-conditioned (AC) pathway built for devotees on Grand Road will be connected to the convention centre. Devotees will enter the convention centre in six rows. Those coming via Sri Danda will have to leave their vehicles at Jagannath Ballav parking facility and take an auto-rickshaw to reach Grand Road. "From there, they will enter the convention centre in four rows," said the official.

"After reaching the convention centre in 10 rows, devotees can avail the facilities like cloak room and toilet. They will enter the Srimandir through Sana Chhata Mutt," the official pointed out.

He added that those approaching from Gadanti Chhak can reach the convention centre after passing through Dolabedi Kona and Grand Centre, while those from Dolamandap Sahi and Kakudikhai will enter the convention centre after passing by the Lion's Gate and Grand Centre. According to the official, alternative arrangements will be made for days the temple expects huge footfall of devotees.

DEPTHS OF DEVOTION

The spiritual city of Puri is not only the abode of the Lord of the universe, Lord Jagannath, it is also home to numerous ancient mutts, temples and sacred ponds that have enriched the culture and history of the Pilgrim City that attracts saints and seers from all over India and abroad.

The sacred ponds are associated with the rituals of Srimandir and subsidiary deities of other temples. The gradual deterioration in the condition of these water bodies drew the attention of the state government, which undertook the restoration and beautification of the four major ponds –



Indradyumna, Markandeya, Narendra and Swetaganga.

The restoration and beautification works are being carried out vigorously and are expected to be completed in 3-

4 months time. The new-look water bodies will emerge as major head-turners and add to the elegance of Srikshetra which is being transformed under the Srimandir Heritage Corridor Project.

Several visitors make rounds of these holy ponds to enjoy their beauty, while others throng there for rituals like Tarpan (offerings to ancestors) and Mundan (tonsure) as a great deal of devotion and faith is attached to these sacred bathing places.

The pond makeover plan is being executed by the Odisha Bridge Construction and Corporation (OBCC) Ltd at an estimated cost of Rs 66.67 crore under ABADHA scheme. Under the plan, special arrangements would be made for Mundan and Tarpan rituals so that devotees don't face inconveniences during rain and summer.

This apart, roads connecting the ponds will be broadened and illuminated. The embankments will be adorned with colourful flower plants to amplify the beauty of the water bodies. The work, which started in 2022, was delayed for a while due to shortage of khandolite stones, but the OBCC has now expedited it.

While the water at Narendra, Indradyumna and Swetaganga ponds was cleaned, Markandeya tank was emptied and dredged up to a depth of 2 metres as part of the restoration plan.

Brief history and heritage of every pond have been inscribed on the boundary walls for the information of visitors. This apart, the different beshas (adornments) of Srimandir deities, Dashavatara and Sahijata idols were also carved on the wall exteriors. The walls



also depict tales of chariot works, Ratha yard, iron smith workshop and Pahandi of the four deities. The pond embankments have

been fenced with cast iron barricades for the safety of devotees. Facilities including safe drinking water and toilets will be made available for the visitors to ensure that they carry good memories with them.

Many visitors have applauded Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for taking the historic transformation initiative for the Pilgrim City. OBCC general manager Sridhar Rout said, "The restoration and beautification work of the four ponds is being carried out on war footing. The work will be completed in April or May this year."

WHEELS OF FAITH ROLL ON



It was a challenge for us to paint on 50-ft-high bamboo platform which was never done by any Pattachitra artist. It was made possible only because of the blessings of the Lord. Almost 80 per cent of the work which began December 24 is over. As local artisans and servitors, we feel fortunate to contribute out bit towards the historic project



I was at my wits end when I was given the responsibility to paint the British era water tank and draw at such a height which was never done by any Pattachitra artist before. Then the Lord gave me the courage, and it is due to His grace that the impossible feat is finally going to take shape before deadline

SANJIV KUMAR MOHANTY | CONTRACTOR

LEGEND COMES ALIVE AT 50-FT HEIGHT

Among the many ancillary infra and beautification supplements that are amplifying the splendour of the magnificent Srimandir Parikrama Prakalp is a decked-up British era overhead water tank.

The giant 50-ft-high water tank, built in 1935, is an unmissable sight for visitors while abutting the Meghanada wall on the Parikrama pathway.

The beautification work on the water tank was taken in line with the instructions of ST and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian that every stone and edifice on the premises of the Parikrama Prakalp bore the imprint of Jagannath Culture.

Accordingly, the task was handed over to the famed Pattachitra artisans of Raghurajpur, led by Universe Maharana. Their hard labour and perseverance while weathering rain, shine and bitter cold has finally bore fruit as the vintage structure now

speaks tales of the glorious Kanchi expedition by Purushottama Deva and the fabled love story of the Gajapati Maharaj and queen Padmavati.

The outer wall of the tank has been given a robust light pink coat. The circular storage atop narrates the historic events in eight thematic frames in Pattachitra art form.

It starts with the rendezvous of the Gajapati (a great devotee of Lord Jagannath) with princess Padmavati during the former's southern visit and the beginning of their love. The next frame depicts the grand reception of the Purushottama Deva at the court of the Kanchi king offering his consent to his daughter's marriage with the chivalrous Gajapati.

This is followed by a suspicious

Kanchi king despatching a spy to gather information about the Gajapati, and the former suggesting the Kanchi king to disapprove the matrimony offer. This was because the spy saw the Gajapati sweeping a chariot. Following this, the Kanchi king called a 'swayambara' for the princess' wedding, the frame narrates.

The next frame narrates the Gajapati's declaration of war against the Kanchi king, followed by the most famous legend close to every Odia's heart: Lord Jagannath and elder sibling, Lord Balabhadra, joining the Gajapati army in the historic expedition that saw Kanchi vanquished, and a victorious Gajapati returning with princess Padmavati and their fabled wedding ceremony at the Purushottam Kshetra.

The murals painted by chief artisan Universe Maharana and his aides Madhusudan Swain, Charan Nayak, Sukanta Mohapatra, Suresh Maharana, Purnachandra Patra, Hemanta Baral and Subas Pradhan have brought every aspect of the legend alive in high quality paint.



FOCUS SOCIETY

OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES



At the start of a new year, it is increasingly obvious that new, creative thinking is needed to address climate change, socioeconomic malaise, faltering development strategies, and the breakdown of globalisation as we know it. To remain relevant, economists must adapt to new realities and new demands

national trade and long-term foreign investment.

Most likely, the new globalisation model will be less intrusive, acknowledging the needs of all countries (not just major powers) that want greater policy flexibility to address domestic challenges and national security imperatives. One possibility is that the US or China will take an overly expansive view of its security needs, seeking global primacy (in the US case) or regional domination (China). The result would be a "weaponisation" of economic interdependence and significant economic decoupling, with trade and investment treated as a zero-sum game.

But there could also be a more favourable scenario in which both powers keep their geopolitical ambitions in check, recognising that their competing economic goals are better served through accommodation and cooperation. This scenario might serve the global economy well, even if — or perhaps because — it falls short of hyper-globalisation. As the Bretton Woods era showed, a significant expansion of global trade and investment is compatible with a thin model of globalisation, wherein countries retain considerable policy autonomy with which to foster social cohesion and economic growth at home. The biggest gift major powers can give to the world economy is to manage their own domestic economies well.

All these challenges call for new ideas and frameworks. We do not need to throw conventional economics out the window. But to remain relevant, economists must learn to apply the tools of their trade to the objectives and constraints of the day. They will have to be open to experimentation, and sympathetic if governments engage in actions that do not conform to the playbooks of the past.

The writer, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard Kennedy School, is President of the International Economic Association.

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Another tumultuous year has confirmed that the global economy is at a turning point. We face four big challenges: the climate transition, the good-jobs problem, an economic development crisis, and the search for a newer, healthier form of globalisation. To address each, we must leave behind established modes of thinking and seek creative workable solutions, while recognising that these efforts will be necessarily uncoordinated and experimental.

Climate change is the most daunting challenge, and the one that has been overlooked the longest — at great cost. If we are to avoid condemning humanity to a dystopian future, we must act fast to decarbonise the global economy. We have long known that we must wean ourselves from fossil fuels, develop green alternatives, and shore up our defenses against the lasting environmental damage that past inaction has already caused. However, it has become clear that little of this is likely to be achieved through global cooperation or economists' favoured policies.

Instead, individual countries will forge ahead with their own green agendas, implementing policies that best account for their specific political constraints, as the United States, China, and the European Union have already been doing. The result will be a hodge-podge of emission caps, tax incentives, research and development support, and green industrial policies with little global coherence and occasional costs for other countries. Messy though it may be, an uncoordinated push for climate action may be the best we can realistically hope for.

But our physical environment is not the only threat we face. Inequality, the erosion of the middle class, and labour-market polarisation have caused equally significant damage to our social environment. The consequences are now widely evident. Economic, regional, and cultural gaps within countries are widening, and liberal democracy (and the values that support it) appears to be in decline, reflecting rising support for xenophobic, authoritarian populists and the growing backlash against scientific and technical expertise.

East Asia and a few other countries. Together with the climate challenge, this crisis of growth strategies in low-income countries calls for an entirely new development model.

As in the advanced economies, services will be low- and middle-income countries' main source of employment creation. But most services in these economies are dominated by very small, informal enterprises — often sole proprietorships — and there are essentially no ready-made models of service-led development to emulate. Governments will have to experiment, combining investment in the green transition with productivity enhancements in labour-absorbing services.

Finally, globalisation itself must be reinvented. The post-1990 hyper-globalisation model has been overtaken by the rise of US-China geopolitical competition, and by the higher priority placed on domestic social, economic, public-health, and environmental concerns. No longer fit for purpose, globalisation as we know it will have to be replaced by a new understanding that rebalances national needs and the requirements of a healthy global economy that facilitates inter-



Dani Rodrik

ECONOMIC, REGIONAL, AND CULTURAL GAPS WITHIN COUNTRIES ARE WIDENING

Controversial Contest

Sheikh Hasina has secured her fifth term as Bangladeshi Prime Minister in an election the outcome of which was known even before a single vote was cast. Her victory was a foregone conclusion after the main Opposition, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) had announced its boycott of the poll. But, what has come as a surprise is the subsequent scandalously low voter turnout that has put a question mark on the legitimacy of the victory.

Another surprise that the poll outcome has sprung is that instead of any political party, independent candidates secured a total of 63 seats, the second highest after Hasina's Awami League (AL), which won 222, creating a problem of finding a parliamentary Opposition. The current Opposition, the Jatiya Party, managed to secure just 11 of the 300 parliamentary seats, according to the Election Commission. Almost all the winning independent contenders are people who had been rejected by the Awami League but asked by the party leadership to stand as "dummy candidates" to give the election a competitive veneer in front of the world. As such, the outcome of the election is being described by Bangladesh watchers as bizarre.

The election was one-sided, but the low voter turnout and the controversial manner in which the Election Commission (EC) changed its own figures of polling percentage have cast serious doubt on whether it was truly a participatory election. After polling closed at 4 p.m., the EC said the turnout was 40 per cent. A little earlier it had announced the figure of 28 per cent. The Opposition doubted the authenticity of even the lower figure. Reports emanating from Dhaka on the election day — January 7 — revealed polling booths in the capital itself were so empty never seen in recent past. Some analysts pointed to the confusion at the EC announcement. Former Election Commissioner, Sakhawatt Hossain summed up the situation by telling the media that it was hard to believe the turnout was 40 per cent, given the fact that the CEC gave the figure of 28 per cent at his first briefing of the media. In fact, the turnout figure shown on the dashboard at the EC headquarters hours after the briefing was 28 per cent and a photo of it was widely circulated in the country's social media drawing flak from one and all. An hour before the close of polling the EC had declared the percentage of polling was 27. The jump from 27 to 40 in a span of an hour or so was ridiculous indeed and it tarnishes the EC's reputation. Critics claim the Indian counterpart will now ensure such a goof up does not happen in the forthcoming Parliamentary election due in a few months.

Even if one goes by the Bangladesh EC figure of 40 per cent, it shows 60 per cent of the people stayed away from polling either due to fear of trouble following the BNP's boycott call or disillusionment with the ruling party.

Predictably enough AL leaders have claimed the election is a "victory of our democracy" and a "befitting reply to BNP's terrorism through the ballot paper." While the last two national elections were tainted with dozens of deaths and widespread violence, polling this time around witnessed only one death and very few clashes, making it one of the most peaceful polls in the South Asian nation's history. This prompted Hisham Kuhlail, the CEO of the Central Election Commission of Palestine, one of several foreign observers of the poll, to tell a media briefing afterwards that people of the country should be "proud of holding such a peaceful election." He, however, avoided questions about voter turnout and said he was assessing only the technicalities of the voting process — whether voters were allowed access and whether voting took place systematically.

The Russian observer Andrei Shutov also said the voting process was systematic and peaceful. "This election is legitimate," he added. The BNP slammed such "certifications". Its information and technology affairs secretary AKM Wahiduzzamane said the election was peaceful because "there were no voters", but it was not legitimate because the people did not "legitimise them through votes."

It is true that Sheikh Hasina has been instrumental in the turnaround of Bangladesh's economy. All the same her rule is characterised by ruthless crackdown on Opposition and a section of the critical media and civil society activists. This may explain the low voter turnout. If she wants legitimacy, she needs to improve her government's human rights records too.

WISDOM CORNER

- Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. **VICTOR HUGO**
- Joy can only be real if people look upon their life as a service and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness. **LEO TOLSTOY**
- Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you. **FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE**

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1776:** Common Sense published. Thomas Paine published Common Sense, a 50-page pamphlet that sold more than 500,000 copies within a few months and called for a war of independence that would become the American Revolution.
- 1920:** The Treaty of Versailles takes effect. Although a ceasefire had been in place since November 11, 1918, World War I officially ended with the Treaty of Versailles.
- 1929:** The first Adventures of Tintin comic book is published. Hergé's books became hugely popular in Europe and the rest of the world.
- 1999:** The first episode of The Sopranos aired on HBO, and the dramatic series, which starred James Gandolfini and Edie Falco, was later widely hailed as a classic.

LOL

The eternal pessimist

An avid duck hunter was in the market for a new bird dog. His search ended when he found a dog that could actually walk on water to retrieve a duck. Shocked by his find, he was sure none of his friends would ever believe him. He decided to try to break the news to a friend of his, the eternal pessimist who refused to be impressed with anything. This, surely, would impress him. He invited him to hunt with him and his new dog. As they waited by the shore, a flock of ducks flew by. They fired, and a duck fell. The dog responded and jumped

into the water. The dog, however, did not sink but instead walked across the water to retrieve the bird, never getting more than his paws wet. This continued all day long; each time a duck fell, the dog walked across the surface of the water to retrieve it. The pessimist watched carefully, saw everything, but did not say a single word. On the drive home the hunter asked his friend, "Did you notice anything unusual about my new dog?" "I sure did," responded the pessimist. "He can't swim."

IN JEST THIS

Don't get carried away with multitasking



Melvin Durai

SOME PEOPLE ACTUALLY WATCH MOVIES OR VIDEOS WHILE DRIVING. THEY THINK THEY ARE MASTERS OF MULTITASKING, BUT SOME OF THEM TURN INTO MASTERS OF DISASTERS

Life can get quite busy for many of us. There just aren't enough hours in the day for everything we want to do. One way to handle this is to multitask. Multitasking, according to Dictionary.com, is "the carrying out of two or more tasks at the same time by one person."

I love multitasking. In fact, I am multitasking right now. I am writing this column while watching football on TV. Yes, watching football qualifies as a "task." Anything you want to do (or need to do) is a "task." Just don't tell your spouse or partner that spending time with them is a "task." Otherwise you might have the "task" of finding another partner.

Watching football is a task that I often combine with other tasks: running on a treadmill, doing the dishes, even taking a bath. It helps that I can watch sports on my phone. But here's what I never do: I never, ever watch anything on my phone while driving.

This is common sense. But common sense is not as common as we'd like it to be. Some people actually watch movies or videos while driving. They think they are masters of multitasking, but some of them turn into masters of disasters.

Taking your eyes off the road while driving is just not wise. It's really cute when a kid riding a bicycle takes his hands off the handlebar and says, "Look ma, no hands." But it's not that cute when an adult driving a car says, "Look ma, no eyes."

There is a reason why drivers are required to have good vision. It's important to spot objects on the road. Wearing glasses or contact lenses can help you see better. But what can make you think better?

A man named Venkat recently shared a video on the social media platform X that showed an Uber driver in Mumbai multitasking. "This driver is watching videos on his mobile by putting his phone

on his lap," Venkat wrote.

The driver, apparently unaware that his passenger was capturing his multitasking on video, kept glancing down at his phone. He appeared to be wearing wireless earphones to listen to the audio from whatever video he's watching.

Uber India responded to Venkat and seemed very interested in identifying the driver. If we're lucky, he's not driving for them anymore — he's not endangering his passengers and other motorists.

Unfortunately, he's not the only driver who's willing to put lives at risk for the sake of entertainment. Another X user wrote that his wife had to get out of a car because the Uber driver was watching videos. "There is risky driving and there is totally foolish driving," he wrote. "Watching videos while driving comes in the utter foolish category."

Let me break down these categories so they are clear to everyone:

Risky driving category: This includes speeding, applying makeup while driving, and driving with your dog on your lap. Any type of distraction, including arguing with a passenger, could fall into the risky driving category.

Foolish driving category: This includes glancing at your phone to see a text message, typing a text message on your phone, and writing a column while driving (I've never done this). Driving while you're sleep deprived is also foolish.

Totally foolish category: This includes watching a movie on your phone, playing a video game, and driving while intoxicated.

If only we could build a special highway for drivers who keep falling into the last category. We can call it the Totally Foolish Expressway.

Then we might be able to smile when we see a headline like this: "Driver Watching Movie Collides with Another Driver Watching Movie."

Historic verdict

Sir, The Supreme Court's historic verdict, quashing the order of an en masse remission of the 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano rape case, is a hard slap on the face of the BJP-led Gujarat government, which acted in tandem with the prisoners and 'facilitated' their release in August 2022, totally bending the law. It is all the more outrageous and shameful that a BJP MLA in Gujarat brought in the caste-elitism in defence of the release of these criminals! Bafflingly, the eleven convicts walked free on the day of India's 75th Independence just after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rhetoric from the ramparts of the Red Fort on upholding women's rights, dignity and celebrating women power — a total antithesis to the release of the criminals! The verdict exemplifies how the SC, through its judgement, shapes the legal landscape, reiterating the primacy of justice and the rule of law. The judgement reflects the SC's dedication to ensuring that justice is dispensed with fairness, transparency, and allegiance to constitutional values.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Democratic slide

Sir, The acts of violence and boycott during Bangladesh's general elections Sunday demonstrate how, as democracy degrades, people lose faith in elections. These elections also demonstrate that even if a country's democratic system remains intact, if democratic consciousness begins to wane, elections lose their value in the eyes of people. The poor voter turnout in these elections serves as proof of this argument. Only 18.5 per cent of votes were counted in the first four hours. However, more than 100 foreign observers, including three Indians, are in Bangladesh to monitor the independence and fairness of the elections. The international community will await the report of these observers, but in terms of the domestic situation, while there may be opposition to the elections, the results are not in doubt. Sheikh Hasina has held power continuously since 2008. She is also regarded with quickly putting Bangladesh on the path to economic progress. However, its growth has not been as strong after 2022. Given the prospect of opposition non-cooperation following the elections, it is thought that the incoming government will face difficulties in bringing the economy back on track by continuing the economic reform process.

Abhijit Roy, JAMSHEDPUR

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, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



Prohibition spurs narco trade in Bihar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Jan 9: The rise in use of narcotics since the enforcement of prohibition in the state has alarmed the Bihar government. The Opposition BJP has made repeated allegations regarding the failure of enforcement of prohibition and cornered the Nitish Kumar-led state government on the issue of several illicit liquor deaths coupled with a spike in use of narcotic substances in Bihar.

It is not that the Bihar police is unaware of the widespread use of narcotic substances such as heroin, opium etc in the state, but the involvement of women and children in consumption and supply of drugs has become an even bigger cause of worry for the state police.

People from other states and small towns who go to big cities like Patna to earn a living are also falling prey to the dangerous menace of drug addiction. Several people can be found in de-addiction centres in Patna, who have been pushed into the illicit trade despite their refusal to consume, supply or sell drugs within Bihar or to other states in the country.

Worryingly, many of the victims of drug addiction and trafficking in the de-addiction centres are around 14 to 18 years of age. One of them is a 15-year-old boy who came to work as a peddler while posing to be a student. He initially got addicted to cigarettes and ultimately started smoking marijuana. He made several friends in the big city who started supplying him smack.

By the time the youth's parents came to know about his addiction to drugs, he had already fallen in the trap of consuming and supplying narcotic substances. Several young boys and girls studying in schools and



People from other states and small towns who go to big cities like Patna to earn a living are falling prey to the dangerous menace of drug addiction

Worryingly, many of the victims of drug addiction and trafficking in the de-addiction centres are around 14 to 18 years of age

colleges have also fallen into the clutches of gangs selling, supplying and consuming drugs.

It is said that drug dealers in villages and streets across Bihar have now included women in their nefarious activities. Most of such women live in slums and shanties and it is easy for them to give the cops the slip because they usually stay confined to their homes and are not easy to spot.

According to data, Patna police registered more than 50 drug trafficking cases in eastern Bihar from January to December 2023 and arrested over 110 people. Police seized 48.785 kg of ganja, 1,836 gram of smack, 8,022 injections, 45.25 grams of opium, 321 cough syrup vials and other types of narcotic substances during raids and arrests.

A police officer in Patna said, "Continuous action is taken against drug addicts and traffickers. The police has been successful in resolving several cases of drug trafficking. Just two days ago, a youth was arrested with smack from Purbhore po-

lice station area. Before this, a couple selling smack from Kankarbagh area was arrested."

Police officers also say that small peddlers of narcotic substances have been held on the basis of concrete information but arresting big drug smugglers is a challenge as they are more alert and elusive. Narcotic substances such as charas, ganja, heroin, smack etc are smuggled into Bihar through the districts which share their borders with Nepal.

The hotspots of drug smuggling in Bihar are West Champaran, East Champaran, Sitamarhi, Supaul, Araria, Bagaha and Kishanganj.

There are continuous reports of recovery of drugs across the border area with Nepal as well.

The need of the hour is not only to put an end to the smuggling of drugs but for the parents to keep an eye on the activities of their children as well. It will take the collective efforts of the law enforcement agencies and the community to save the future generations from the menace of drug addiction.

Anganwadi kids to be trained for school

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Jan 9: The Uttar Pradesh government, in line with National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, is set to launch a pilot project in 18 districts to prepare Anganwadi Centres to serve as space for pre-school learning and holistic development, with special focus on children aged 3 to 6, to make them school ready for Grade 1.

The three-month project beginning January 18 will focus on eliminating 'learning crisis' by helping Anganwadi kids attain foundational literacy and numeracy and will cover close to 12,000 AWCs in 18 districts including Ayodhya, Rae Bareilly, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Kanpur Nagar, Kaushambi, Basti, Aligarh, Ferozabad, Baghpat, Jalaun, Balrampur, Mahoba, Mau, Pilibhit,

Bhadohi, Bijnor and Shamli.

The play-based 'school readiness' module would prepare children from diverse backgrounds with age and developmentally appropriate learning experiences in a joyful and stimulating environment leading to holistic development, officials said.

The readiness module will also prepare children with the cognitive and linguistic competencies, which are pre-requisite for learning to read, write and develop number sense through a play-based approach. The readiness project consists of exemplified activities and worksheets to be introduced in initial three months or 12 weeks of Grade-1.

"Activities are designed to help children develop different competencies like helping, sharing, getting along with other children, learning to adjust to a new environment and concentrating on an activity," said an official.

Bihar to set up first incubation centre for gharials, turtles soon

A memorandum of understanding will be signed with the Wildlife Trust of India, a charity organisation, in this regard, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden PK Gupta said



Patna, Jan 9: The Bihar government has decided to set up the state's first incubation and interpretation centre for gharials and turtles, a senior official said Tuesday.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) will soon be signed with the Wildlife Trust of India, a charity organisation, in this regard, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden PK Gupta said.

"The state government has given in-principle approval for establishing the state's first 'Incubation Centre-Nature Interpretation Centre' for gharial and turtles in the Gandak river in Bettiah in West Champaran district," he said.

"The Los Angeles Zoo in the US state of California has agreed to

strengthen the ongoing conservation effort through ex-situ incubation and further release of the hatchlings back to the river safely," he said.

The Gandak river has become the second successful breeding site for gharials in India after the National Chambal Sanctuary on the Chambal river near the tri-junction of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, he added.

The Gharial Conservation Project in the Gandak river, launched by the state government in association with WTI in 2014, yielded positive results as 217 fish-eating long-snouted reptiles were sighted in its 284-km stretch as compared to just 30 before, Gupta said.

"Forest officials in West Champaran

have been asked to coordinate with the district administration, and complete all formalities for the transfer of the identified land to the Forest Department for the centre at the earliest," he said.

Gupta said that ex-situ conservation is the process of protecting an endangered species outside its natural habitat. "For instance, by removing part of the population from a threatened habitat and placing it in a new location, an artificial environment similar to the natural habitat and within the care of humans such as zoological parks and wildlife sanctuaries. Ex-situ conservation measures are required for further increasing the numbers of gharials and turtles in Gandak river," he explained.

Magh Mela to have theme-based gates

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Prayagraj, Jan 9: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed to set up theme-based gates in each sector of Magh Mela to give a grand look to the annual religious fair.

The Magh Mela will begin from January 15 and end March 8. Officials said that this will be replicated on a much grand scale during the Maha Kumbh 2025, wherein all the 22-23 sectors will have these attractive gates.

The Magh Mela will be the rehearsal for the mega religious event of Maha Kumbh 2025.

Recently, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had visited the mela area and inspected the arrangements being made for both Magh Mela and Maha Kumbh and he directed installation of thematic gates in the township.

These gates will also act as a landmark for tourists visiting the mela area. They will be designed as Elephant gate, Conch gate and Kumbh Kalash gate, etc. In

Kumbh 2019, devotees had appreciated this new experiment which had added to the grandeur of Kumbh.

After 2019, such gates were not made in the subsequent Magh Melas. Officials said the mela area will be divided into six sectors and each will have one entry gate. According to ADM, Mela, Vivek Shukla, "At present there is a plan to build one gate in every sector but we are mulling over the idea to expand the concept and maybe there will be some additional gates."

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ISPAT GENERAL HOSPITAL
Ref. No. IGH/Kit/ Tender/2024-25/00623/001 Dated: 06/01/2024
Sealed Tenders are invited from intending Tenderers for supply of dietary articles to Ispat General Hospital, RSP, Rourkela from 01.04.2024 to 31.03.2025 in respect of the items mentioned below:-

Sl. No.	Particulars	Number of items	Earnest money to be deposited	Security deposit
1.	Grocery (Loose Items)	10 Nos.	Rs.15,000/-	2.5% of order value
2.	Vegetables	23 Nos.	Rs. 15,000/-	-do-
3.	Fish	1 No.	Rs. 15,000/-	-do-
4.	Egg	1 No.	Rs. 5,000/-	-do-
5.	Fruits	8 Nos.	Rs. 5,000/-	-do-
6.	Bakery item	1 No.	Rs. 5,000/-	-do-
7.	Chicken	1No.	Rs. 5,000/-	-do-
8.	Grocery (Packet Items)	22 No.	Rs. 15,000/-	-do-

Tender form can be had from the Office of the Asst. CMO(Kitchen & HS) IGH, from 12th January 2024 (Friday) to 06th February 2024 (Tuesday) till 3pm. The tender will be received up to 4:00 PM on 06th February 2024 (Tuesday) in the Office of the Asst. CMO(Kitchen & HS) IGH, Rourkela- 769005 and opened on 4:30 PM on the same day.

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E-Auction Sale Notice

SALE OF IMMOVABLE/MOVABLE ASSETS CHARGED TO BANK UNDER SECURITISATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002.

The undersigned as Authorized Officer of State Bank of India has taken over Possession of the following property/ies u/s 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act. Public at large is informed that e-auction (under SARFAESI Act, 2002) of the charged property/ies in the below mentioned cases for realisation of Bank's dues will be held on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis on 30.01.2024 & 12.02.2024 and on the terms & conditions specified hereunder.

Date & Time of E-Auction: 30.01.2024 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M. with unlimited extensions of 10 minutes each.

Sl. No.	Name & Address of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Mortgagee (s)	Property Details & Name of the owner of the property	Outstanding dues for recovery of which property/ies are being sold / Demand Notice date	Reserve Price EMD Bid Increment Amount
1.	Borrower: Mr. Mohammad Gulam Mahiuddin, S/o- Mohammad Ali Raza Quadri, At: Rathipur, P.O.: Khandra, Via: Jatni, Dist.: Khurda, Odisha, PIN-752050.	All that part and parcel of the property situated at Mouza: Panchagaon, Tahasil: Jatni, P.S.: Bhubaneswar, Hal P.S.: Airfield, P.S. No.: 30, Sub Registrar, Jatni, Dist.: Khurda, in Khata No.: 469/409, Plot No.: 390, Area: Ac.0.555dec., Khata No.: 469/408, Plot No.: 392, Area: Ac.0.115dec., Total Area: Ac.0.670dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, out of which undivided impartible interest measuring Ac.0.00881dec. i.e. 384 sqft., Flat No.: 607, Carpet Area: 833 sqft., Built up Area: 943 sqft., Super Built up Area: 1226 sqft., in 6th Floor, Block-B, Type-2BR of the apartment named and styled as "BAISHNODEVI ENCLAVE", title in the name of Mohammad Gulam Mahiuddin . Bounded by- North: Corridor, South: Pathway, East: Pathway, West: Pathway.	₹ 30,54,592/- including interest up to 13.04.2022 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. / 16.04.2022	₹ 22,00,000/- ₹ 2,20,000/- ₹ 50,000/-
2.	Borrower: Sri Rabinarayan Mohanty, S/o- Niranjan Mohanty, Plot No.: 433/1689, Nuasahi, Nayapalli, Lane-4, Opposite Union Bank of India, Bhubaneswar, Dist.: Khurda, PIN-751012 (Odisha)	All that part and parcel of the property situated at Mouza: Panchagaon, Tahasil: Jatni, P.S.: Bhubaneswar, Hal P.S.: Airfield, P.S. No.: 30, Sub Registrar, Jatni, Dist.: Khurda, in Khata No.: 469/409, Plot No.: 390, Area: Ac.0.555dec., Khata No.: 469/408, Plot No.: 392, Area: Ac.0.115dec., One Mouza, Two Khatas, Two Plots, Total Area: Ac.0.670dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, out of which undivided impartible interest measuring Ac.0.01010dec. i.e. 440 sqft., Flat No.: 606, Carpet Area: 921 sqft., Built up Area: 1077 sqft., Super Built up Area: 1400 sqft., in 6th Floor, Block-B, Type-2BR of the apartment named and styled as "BAISHNODEVI ENCLAVE", title in the name of Sri Rabinarayan Mohanty . Bounded by- North: Flat No. 605, South: Pathway, East: Corridor, West: Pathway.	₹ 37,91,563/- including interest up to 26.10.2022 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. / 26.10.2022	₹ 24,00,000/- ₹ 2,40,000/- ₹ 50,000/-
3.	Sri Narasingha Panda (Borrower: HTL & Guarantor: S.S. Enterprises), Sri Sudarshan Panda, (Prop.: S.S. Enterprises & Co-Borrower: HTL & Guarantor: S.S. Enterprises), All are at Badasahi, Padmapur, Dist.: Rayagada, PIN-756025, Odisha.	(1) All the part & parcel of property consisting of Land & Building in Khata No.: 69/1073, Plot No.: 58/1280, Area: Ac.0.010dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, Mouza: Padmapur, Tahasil: Gunupur, PS: Padmapur, Dist.: Rayagada, standing in the name of Sri Narasingha Panda & Smt. Jangyaseti Panda .	₹ 41,37,517/- including interest up to 31.07.2022 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. / 01.08.2022	₹ 13,50,000/- ₹ 1,35,000/- ₹ 25,000/-
(2)	All the part & parcel of property consisting of Land in Khata No.: 69/1324, Plot No.: 65/2/1527, Area: Ac.0.016dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, Mouza: Padmapur, Tahasil/PS: Padmapur, Dist.: Rayagada, standing in the name of Sri Narasingha Panda .		₹ 5,00,000/-	₹ 50,000/- ₹ 25,000/-
4.	Borrower: Mr. Sunil Kumar Mohapatra, S/o- Padmalatha Mohapatra / Guarantor: Mr. Anil Kumar Rath, S/o- Sadasiba Rath, Both are residing At: Poshal, PO: Hakapada, Via: Beroboli, Dist: Puri, PIN-752016 (Odisha).	All the part & parcel of the property consisting of Land & Building situated in the Dist: Puri, P.S.: Delanga, Tahasil: Delanga, Mouza: Poshal, Khata No.: 247, Plot No.: 693, Area: Ac.0.190dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, standing in the name of Mr. Anil Kumar Rath .	₹ 42,91,082/- including interest up to 27.05.2020 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. / 28.05.2020	₹ 84,53,000/- ₹ 8,45,300/- ₹ 50,000/-
5.	Borrower: Mr. Jagannath Mangaraj, S/o- Ramesh Chandra Mangaraj, At: Gadadhara Sagar, P.O.: Jatni, Via: Jatni, Dist.: Khurda, Odisha, PIN-752050.	Land & Building at Mouza: Tikatala, Khata No.: 538/217, Plot No.: 804, Area: Ac.0.110dec., Khata No.: 538/225, Plot No.: 799/2301, Area: Ac.0.020dec., Total Area: Ac.0.130dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, Tahasil: Bolagarh, P.S.: Begunia, Dist.: Khurda, in the name of Jagannath Mangaraj . (1) Plot No. 804 is bounded by- North: Plot No. 803 & 800, South: Plot No. 799 & 805, East: Plot No. 799 and West: Plot No. 805. (2) Plot No. 799/2301 is bounded by- North: Plot No. 500, South: Seller, East: Road and West: Jagannath Mangaraj.	₹ 30,35,009/- including interest up to 20.06.2022 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. / 28.06.2022	₹ 16,50,000/- ₹ 1,65,000/- ₹ 25,000/-
Date & Time of inspection of the properties: 29.01.2024 between 11.00 AM to 04.00 PM				
STATUTORY 15 DAYS SALE NOTICE TO BORROWER/GUARANTORS FOR SUBSEQUENT SALE UNDER RULE 8(6) & 9(1) AS PER SARFAESI ACT 2002				
Date & Time of E-Auction: 12.02.2024 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M. with unlimited extensions of 10 minutes each.				
6.	Borrower: M/s. Tulsi Bakery, Prop: Sri Bhubani Sahoo, S/o- Late Chandramani Sahoo / Co-Borrowers & Guarantors: 1) Smt. Kabita Sahoo, W/o- Bhubani Sahoo, 2) Sri Hemanta Sahoo, S/o- Bhubani Sahoo, All are At: Sitaram Chhak, PO: Jatni, Dist.: Khordha, PIN- 752050 (Odisha)	Land & Building situated in Dist.: Khorda, SRO: Jatni, Tahasil: Jatni, P.S.: Jatni, P.S. No.: 75, at Mouza: Kudiary, Khata No.: 126(P), Area: Ac.0.018 dec. i.e. (North to East from Ac.0.460dec. & West from Ac.0.072dec.) and another Area: Ac.0.018dec. i.e. Mouza: Kudiary, Khata No.: 1436, Gharabari Plot No.: 126(P), Total Area: Ac.0.036dec., in the name of Smt. Kabita Sahoo . Bounded by- North: Sitaram, South: Rest part of the seller, East: Bhajar Ali & West: Road.	₹ 52,78,231/- including interest up to 10.08.2023 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. / 11.08.2023	₹ 71,73,000/- ₹ 7,17,300/- ₹ 50,000/-
7.	Borrower: M/s. Dipika Rice Mill, Prop: Sri Batakushna Palo, S/o- Sri Basudev Palo / Guarantor: Sri Baidyanath Tripathy, S/o- Late Ulla Tripathy, Both are At/PO: Netanga, Via: Gobara, Bhanjanagar, Dist.: Ganjam, PIN-761124 (Odisha)	(1) Open Land situated at Mouza: Netanga, Tahasil: Ghumsar, Dist.: Ganjam, vide Khata No.: 1658/19, Plot No.: 2994, Area: Ac.0.460 dec., in the name of Sri Batakushna Palo . (2) Open Land situated at Mouza: Netanga, Tahasil: Ghumsar, Dist.: Ganjam, vide Khata No.: 1658/19, Plot No.: 5008, Area: Ac.0.130 dec. & Plot No.: 5010, Area: Ac.0.080dec., in the name of Sri Batakushna Palo .	₹ 85,10,928/- including interest up to 30.03.2019 with further interest & incidental expenses, costs, charges etc. / 30.03.2019	₹ 9,00,000/- ₹ 90,000/- ₹ 25,000/- ₹ 5,00,000/- ₹ 50,000/- ₹ 25,000/-
Date & Time of inspection of the properties: 09.02.2024 between 11.00 AM to 04.00 PM				
STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE TO BORROWER/GUARANTORS FOR SALE UNDER RULE 8(6) & 9(1) AS PER SARFAESI ACT 2002				
For detailed Terms & Conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in the State Bank of India, Secured Creditor Website: www.sbi.co.in , https://bank.sbi/web/sbi-in-the-news/auction-notices/sarfaesi-and-others , https://ibapi.in and for auction login into: https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp For further details and any query please contact : Sri Kishore Chandra Sethi (Authorised Officer): Mob.: 8249010373 & CCO: Sri Santosh Kumar Naik, Mob.: 8018764291				
Date : 09.01.2024 Place : Bhubaneswar				
				Sd/- Authorised Officer, State Bank of India



A person dives from a springboard during a hot summer day at Sea Point swimming pool in Cape Town, South Africa



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi in Tavistock, London



A kitemaker Manmohan Chee prepares a large kite ahead of Lohri in Amritsar, Punjab



A vendor prepares tea for customers at a wholesale vegetable market in Jalandhar, Punjab



Parrots at a bird show in Nadia, West Bengal



A potter prepares earthen lamps in Jaipur ahead of the consecration ceremony at Shri Ram Janambhoomi Temple in Ayodhya



Tourists pose for photos at Taj Mahal on a cold and foggy winter day in Agra, Uttar Pradesh

national

of the day quote

The influence of China has been increasing everywhere. It is increasing its influence in Nepal, which is our neighbour. It has already had influence over Pakistan. Its influence is increasing in Bangladesh. China has encircled us

Lord Ram is Maryada Purushottam and our life starts with the name of Ram. We would go to Ayodhya after the pran pratistha ceremony

The BJP is scared that if the opposition contests the Lok Sabha elections unitedly, it will pose a challenge for the party

Chlorine gas leak from cylinder causes panic in Dehradun

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, Jan 9: A chlorine gas leak in the Jhajhra area of Dehradun triggered panic Tuesday morning, forcing people to leave their homes, officials said.

The gas leaked from a cylinder kept in a vacant plot of land, they said, adding that security officials rushed people to safety after being informed about the incident and no damage was reported. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has asked officials to investigate the storage of poisonous gas cylinders near a residential area. The district control room here was informed about the incident in the morning, the officials said. The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) commandant, accompanied by chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear experts with necessary equipment, rushed to the spot and found out that one of the four cylinders kept in the plot was leaking, the officials said.

National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and fire brigade personnel were also called to the spot, the officials said, adding that people living in the nearby areas were rushed to safe locations. The cylinder found leaking was buried in the ground after filling it with water, an NDRF official said.

UP declares Jan 22 as dry day; schools, colleges to remain shut

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, Jan 9: The Uttar Pradesh government Tuesday declared a holiday for all educational institutions in the state January 22, the day of the consecration ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Terming the occasion as a "national festival", Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that liquor shops in the state should be closed on that day.

"Considering the significance of the consecration ceremony of the eagerly awaited new idol of Shri Ram Lalla in Ayodhya Dham, the CM has declared holiday in educational institutions January 22," an official release issued here said.

During his visit to Ayodhya Tuesday, the chief minister held a meeting with officials of the temple trust - Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust - and was informed about the vedic rituals for the Pran Pratistha (consecration ceremony), which would start after Makar Sankranti.

Chief Minister Adityanath also directed officials to extend all necessary cooperation to the trust in making security and other arrangements for the ceremony, the release said.



I believe in festivities that take along people from all communities and speak about unity. The BJP is doing it (Ram Mandir inauguration) under court instruction but doing it before Lok Sabha polls as a gimmick show

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

CONG HOLDS SEAT-SHARING TALKS WITH INDIA BLOC PARTIES

The Congress Tuesday held preliminary talks for seat-sharing in upcoming Lok Sabha elections with the Shiv Sena (UBT) and Nationalist Congress Party for Maharashtra and with the Samajwadi Party for Uttar Pradesh

OPPOSITION PARTIES MEET UNITED WE STAND!



Maharashtra awaits Sena vs Sena verdict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 9: The political temperature rose in Maharashtra Tuesday ahead of the crucial verdict by the assembly speaker on the cross-petitions by Shiv Sena factions seeking disqualification of each other's MLAs following a split in the party, an outcome which will decide the way forward for the Eknath Shinde government and also the regional outfit's rival groups.

On the eve of the verdict, the opposition Shiv Sena (UBT) upped the ante as its president Uddhav Thackeray said his party has filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court objecting to a recent meeting between Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, who is among the MLAs whose disqualification has been sought, and speaker Rahul Narwekar as both sides engaged in a verbal spat.

Narwekar is slated to deliver his much-awaited verdict on the disqualification pleas at 4 pm January 10 (Wednesday). Vidhan Bhavan officials said, more than 18 months after the Shiv Sena suffered a vertical split, a political development that resulted in a change of guard in the state. "If the judge (Narwekar) is going to meet the accused, what should we expect from that judge,"



Thackeray asked, speaking to the media at his residence 'Matoshree' here. The affidavit before the SC was filed Monday, the former CM said. Thackeray's ally and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) founder Sharad Pawar, too, said that when someone who is hearing a case meets the person against whom the case is being heard, it "leaves room for doubt".

Hitting back, Narwekar said Thackeray should know for what purposes a speaker could meet a Chief Minister.

"If he still levels such allegations, then his motive is very clear. There is no rule that a speaker, while hearing disqualification pleas, cannot do any other work," Narwekar contended. The speaker met Shinde at 'Varsha', the Chief Minister's official residence in south

Mumbai Sunday. Thackeray noted that the two had met in October last year too. Narwekar's ruling will decide whether "democracy exists in the country or not" or whether the two (speaker and chief minister) will "murder" democracy, said the Shiv Sena (UBT) leader.

"We have filed an affidavit asking whether there is collusion between the judge and the accused," Thackeray said, asking whether there would be further delay by the speaker in giving the ruling. Thackeray, who stepped down as CM in June-end 2022 following the split in the Shiv Sena, a party founded by his father late Bal Thackeray in 1966, maintained the speaker never goes to meet the Chief Minister. It is the speaker who summons the latter, the former CM remarked.

Modi, UAE Prez hail rapidly transforming bilateral ties; 4 MoUs inked on summit eve

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gandhinagar, Jan 9: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and United Arab Emirates President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan held a bilateral meeting here Tuesday and hailed the rapidly transforming India-UAE partnership, officials said.

Four MoUs were signed between India and the UAE in the presence of the two leaders, including one between the Gujarat government and DP World, a multinational logistics company based in Dubai, they said. This was the fourth meeting between Modi and Al Nahyan in less than seven months.

"Giving a boost to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership! PM @narendramodi held warm discussions with HH @MohamedBinZayed, UAE President and Ruler of Abu Dhabi in Gandhinagar. In their 4th meeting in less than 7 months, the leaders hailed the rapidly transforming India-UAE partnership and reaffirmed their commitment to a shared and prosperous future," said Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal in a post on social media platform X.

Giving details about the MoUs in another post, Jaiswal said three of the agreements between India and the UAE were on investment cooperation in renewable energy sector; innovative healthcare projects and food park development.

Drugs worth ₹100 crore seized in Assam, 4 held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Jan 9: In the biggest drug haul in Assam different types of the contraband valued at over Rs 100 crore was recovered in Karimganj district in the southern tip of the state Tuesday and four peddlers were arrested, the police said.

The operation was conducted jointly by the special task force of Assam police and Karimganj district police.

The drugs were brought into Assam from Mizoram and three persons from that state were among the four arrested, the police said. "This is probably the largest drug seizure in eastern India in terms of market value.

The drugs confiscated is worth at least Rs 100 crore in the market," STF deputy inspector general Parthasarathi Mahanta told PTI.

He was quick to add that prices of narcotics have gone up due to continuous and effective operations and aggressive actions by Assam Police. Asked about details of the operation, Mahanta said "We got an input about movement of drugs from Mizoram and initiated the operation."

"The police team searched the vehicle and recovered 5.1 kg of heroin, 64,000 Yaba tablets and four packets of foreign cigarettes concealed inside the side body panels of its trunk," he added.

ED chief holds meeting over assault on officials during raid

Kolkata: Enforcement Directorate (ED) chief Rahul Navin Tuesday held a meeting with its officers in Kolkata over a mob attack on the agency offices during a raid in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district last week. Issues such as how to arrest the absconding Trinamool Congress leader, near whose Sandeshkhali residence the officials were assaulted, were discussed at the meeting, ED officers said. The raid was in connection with the ration distribution scam. ED Special Director Subhash Agarwal, officers of the agency who are probing the scam, CISE and CRPF officers and Income Tax director Pankaj Kumar were present at the meeting, a source said. Personnel of the central forces accompanying the ED team were also attacked by the mob. Three ED officers had to be hospitalised following the assault. Additional directors of Kolkata Zonal Offices Vinod Sharma and Sudesh Kumar Sheoran also attended the meeting. "At the meeting, discussions were held on the strategies for arresting the accused TMC leader of Sandeshkhali who has been absconding since last week. Discussions were also held on the report on the attack filed by the ED," the officer told PTI.

RAILWAYS LAND-FOR-JOBS CASE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 9: The Enforcement Directorate Tuesday filed its first charge sheet in the railways land-for-jobs linked money laundering case, naming as accused RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav's wife and former Bihar chief minister Rabri Devi and their MP daughter Misa Bharti among others, official sources said.

Yadav's another daughter Hema Yadav (40), an alleged "close associate" of the Yadav family Amit Katyal (49), railway employee and

More trouble for Lalu's family



alleged beneficiary Hridayanand Chaudhary, two firms A K Infosystems Pvt. Ltd. And A B Exports Pvt. Ltd., through their common director Shariqul Bari, have also been named in the charge sheet.

The complaint, with over 4,700 pages including annexures, has arrayed seven accused. It was filed before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Delhi that has listed the matter for January 16, the sources said.

Special Judge Vishal Gogne directed the ED to file an e-copy of the charge sheet and documents today itself. Katyal was arrested in this case by the ED in November last year while Lalu Prasad Yadav was summoned by the agency but is yet to depose. However, his son and Bihar

Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav had deposed once before the agency. He has been asked to appear again before it. The agency is expected to file supplementary charge sheets in the case. Rabri Devi (68), RJD Rajya Sabha MP Misa Bharti (47), and two other daughters of Lalu Prasad Yadav and Rabri Devi - Chanda Yadav and Ragini Yadav - have been questioned in this case by the ED.

The alleged scam pertains to the period when Lalu Prasad Yadav was the railway minister in the UPA-1 government.

Delhi trying out bio enzymes as solution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 9: The Delhi government is exploring the use of bio enzymes to address the issue of air pollution with a pilot project conducted in Rohini and Wazirpur showing a reduction in particulate matter pollution by 30 to 55 per cent.

"While the application of bio enzymes for wastewater treatment and reducing contamination at landfill sites is known, this is possibly the first instance of using this method to combat air pollution in India," said Podilapu Mounica Kavya, Senior Executive (Operations), R R Geocycle Private Limited, the

AIR POLLUTION CRISIS



firm that conducted the pilot in December.

During the pilot, a solution created by dissolving the bio enzymes in water in a 1:5000 ratio was sprayed in Rohini and Wazirpur using anti-smog guns of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the Public Works Department in three eight-hour

cycles from December 16 to December 24, a report submitted by the firm to the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPC) said.

The results revealed a 55 per cent drop in PM2.5 levels and a 32 per cent decrease in PM10 levels on average, it said.

However, within three hours of discontinuing spraying of the bio enzymes, PM2.5 levels rose by 62 per cent and PM10 levels by 51 per cent on average.

The continuous spraying of the solution for seven hours showed better results with the PM2.5 and PM10 levels dropping by 60 to 65 per cent.

The concentration of nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide also

decreased notably while ozone levels showed an increase, according to the report.

Indonesia has also experimented with bio enzymes to control air pollution in Jakarta and Bali. R R Geocycle Private Limited's Kavya said the cost of bio enzymes is Rs 2,000 per litre and spraying them across Delhi would amount to an expenditure of Rs 40 crore over 45 days.

Mukesh Khare, a professor at IIT-Delhi and a researcher on air pollution issues, said that using bio enzymes to reduce air pollution is unheard of.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, DHENKANAL DHENKANAL - 759001 (ODISHA) E-mail: dhenkanalm.hud@gmail.com No. 87/Devsec Date: 05.01.2024 CORRIGENDUM No. C-2307: It is hereby informed to this office EOI for "Drone Survey and Quantification of Legacy Waste at Dhenkanal Municipality" vide Notice No. 5135/Dt.26.12.2023 has been made. Details can be seen from district website www.dhenkanal.nic.in and also from Dhenkanal Municipality website: www.dhenkanalmunicipality.com. Sd./- Executive Officer Dhenkanal Municipality OIPR-13146/11/0045/2324

Government of Odisha No.B-1580: "e" Procurement Notice OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, KORAPUT (R&B) DIVISION, KORAPUT Bid Identification No. S.E.(R&B) KPT-14/2023-24 1. Name of the Work : Building Works 2. Total No. of Works : 1 No. 3. Estimated Cost : Rs.33.63 Lakhs 4. Period of Completion : 04 (Four) Months 5. Date & Time of availability : From 11.01.2024 at 11.00 hours of bid document to 25.01.2024 upto 17.00 hours. in the portal 6. Last date/time for receipt of : 25.01.2024 upto 17.00 hours bids in the portal 7. Date of Opening of Tender : 29.01.2024 at 12.00 hours 8. Name and address of the : Superintending Engineer, Officer Inviting Bid Koraput (R&B) Division Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal https://tendersorissa.gov.in. Sd./- Superintending Engineer Koraput (R&B) Division OIPR-34096/11/0015/2324

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER GAJAPATI IRRIGATION DIVISION, PARALAKHEMUNDI, DIST-GAJAPATI, ODISHA Phone/Fax:06815-223249, Email Id:eeepkdgpt@gmail.com e-Procurement Notice No. SE-GID-04/2023-24 No.A-1171:1. Type of Work: Flood Protection & Building Works. 2. Form of Contract: Percentage Rate, 3. Period of Completion: 06 (Six) to 08 (Eight) Calendar Months. Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Bid Amount Rs. in Lakhs Availability & Submission of Bids online Superintending Engineer, Gajapati Irrigation Division, Paralakhemundi GID-01, 02, 03, 04, 05 & 06/ 2023-24 (Total 06 (Six) Nos. of Works) Varies from Rs.07.04 lakhs to 46.27 lakhs to 22.01.2024 at 10.00 A.M. to 22.01.2024 5.30 PM Date of opening of the Technical & Financial Bid: 24.01.2024 at 11.00 AM. Further details can be seen from the Govt. website www.tendersorissa.gov.in. Date of Lottery (if required): 31.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M. OIPR-32417/11/0014/2324 Sd./-Superintending Engineer, Gajapati Irrigation Division, Paralakhemundi

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, R.W. DIVISION, ANANDAPUR, SALAPADA, KEONJHAR e-Procurement Notice for Building Works Identification No. Online-12/SERW/AND/2023-24 E-mail address: eerw_anandapur@yahoo.co.in No.371, Dt.08.01.2024 No.O-2161:1.Name of the Work: Construction of Building Works for the year 2023-24. 2. Total No. of Works: 14 (Fourteen) No. (Percentage Rate Tender) 3. Estimated Cost: Approx. Estimate Cost Rs.40.20 Lakhs to Rs. 42.30 Lakhs. 4. Class of Contractor: Class 'B'. 5. Type of Tender: Single Cover. 6. Other details: Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of Tender Online for Bidding Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification Date & Time of opening of tender: Office of the Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Anandapur Date & Place of receipt of bid cost & bid security Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Anandapur Online 12/ SERW/AND/ 2023-24 11.01.2024 at 10.00 AM 19.01.2024 upto 5.00 P.M. 18.01.2024 upto 5.00 P.M. 20.01.2024 at 11.30 A.M. The bidder shall transfer online the cost of bid and EMD in column No.-4 & 6 in Annexure-I, respectively through a process as mention in DTCN. Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in & www.tenders.ori.nic.in. OIPR-25055/11/0014/2324 Sd./-Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Anandapur

SNIPPETS

Kerala Youth Cong state president held, remanded

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Youth Congress President Rahul Mamkootathil was arrested by police and brought here Tuesday for allegedly leading the violent attacks during a recent march to the state secretariat. This led to widespread protests by workers of Congress and its youth outfit in the state and sparked sharp reactions by senior party leaders including KPCC President K Sudhakaran and Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly V D Satheesan. Later in the day, a local court here remanded Mamkootathil in judicial custody till January 22, after considering a medical report that indicated he had no major health issues.

ED raids multiple locations in UP

Lucknow: The Enforcement Directorate Tuesday raided multiple locations in Bulandshahr city of Uttar Pradesh as part of a money laundering investigation against alleged "land mafia" Sudhir Kumar Goyal and his associates, official sources said. The searches are being undertaken under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after the ED filed a case in January this year against Goyal and his associates.

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, DEOGARH DIVISION Phone No. 06641-291002 (Office) Email: dfo.deogarh@odisha.gov.in SHORT TENDER NOTICE Tender No. 01 Dated: -18.01.2024 No. MM-409- Divisional Forest Officer, Deogarh Forest Division on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites sealed tenders from reputed intending Manufacturing Firms/ Dealers/ Suppliers having valid GSTIN and PAN Registration No. for supply of 147 units of Integrated Solar Street Lights (LED Light + Battery both integrated and standalone solar panel) at various day-tourism locations at Pradhanpat Waterfall, Kurudkote Waterfall, Deojaran Waterfall and Gohira Dam of Deogarh Range and Bhai-Bhauini Waterfall of Reamal Range of Deogarh Forest Division. The tender papers with detailed terms and conditions will be available in the Office of DFO, Deogarh on payment of Rs. 1,000/- (One thousand) only in cash or Account Payee Bank Draft in favour of Divisional Forest Officer, Deogarh Forest Division during office hours from 10.01.2024 to 18.01.2024 till 05.00 pm. The Tender Papers can be submitted at the below mentioned address on or before 18th January, 2024 latest by 05.00 pm by Speed Post/ registered post/ by hand only. The tender will be opened in the office of the undersigned on 19th January, 2024 at 11.30 AM. Post/Courier: Divisional Forest Officer, Office of the DFO, Deogarh Forest Division, At: - Traffic Chowk, Pin-768108. Email-id: dfo.deogarh@odisha.gov.in Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer Deogarh Forest Division OIPR-08041/11/0010/2324

international

of the day quote

There will be no pardon for ex-President Jair Bolsonaro's supporters who rioted in the capital a year ago

LUIZ INACIO LULA DA SILVA BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT

Beijing expressed its solemn position, demanding that the United States change its misunderstanding of China and return to a rational and pragmatic China policy

WANG YI CHINESE DIPLOMAT

Navy officials and sailors must mercilessly bury (the enemy) at sea if the enemy stages yet another provocation

SHIN WON-SIK SOUTH KOREA'S DEFENCE CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

People's Democratic Party wins election

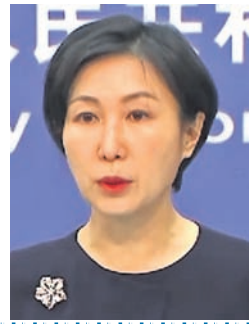
Thimphu: The People's Democratic Party won the most seats in Bhutan's parliamentary elections Tuesday and will form the new government as residents hope politicians make good on promises to fix the economic crisis in the Himalayan nation. Latest figures from the Bhutan Broadcasting Service, a national broadcaster, showed the PDP had won 30 of the 47 National Assembly seats to return to power, and the Bhutan Tendrel Party had secured 17. It was the country's fourth general elections since its transformation from a traditional monarchy to a parliamentary form of government in 2008. The Election Commission of Bhutan will make its final declaration Wednesday.

B'desh Cabinet to take oath Thursday

Dhaka: Bangladesh's new Cabinet is expected to take oath Thursday, a day after the newly-elected parliament members are to be sworn in, officials said Tuesday. President Mohammad Shahabuddin will administer the ministers' oath of office on Thursday, a Bangabhaban presidential palace spokesman said. Meanwhile, Cabinet Secretary Mahub Hossain said Members of Parliament-elect would be sworn in Wednesday at the Jatiya Sangsad, where parliamentary speaker Shirin Sharmin Choudhury would administer the ceremony. Ruling Awami League president, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, is widely assumed to be the premier for the fifth term, fourth consecutively, as her party's new parliamentary committee is expected to elect her for the position in a meeting Wednesday shortly after their oath of office at the Jatiya Sangsad.

US citizen arrested

Moscow: A US citizen has been arrested on drug charges in Russia, officials said Tuesday, a move that comes amid soaring Russia-US tensions over Ukraine. The arrest of Robert Woodland Romanov was reported by the press service of the Moscow courts. It said the Ostankino District Court ruled Saturday to keep him in custody for two months on charges of preparing to get involved in illegal drug trafficking pending an official investigation. It didn't offer any details of the accusations. There was no immediate comment from the US Embassy in Moscow. Russian media noted that the name of the accused matches that of a US citizen interviewed by the popular daily Komsomolskaya Pravda in 2020.



China congratulates Bangladesh for holding general elections as scheduled and we congratulate Awami League on winning the elections

MAO NING CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

JOINT EFFORT

Debt-ridden Sri Lanka's navy is preparing to join a US-led operation to protect merchant vessels sailing in the Red Sea against attacks by Houthi rebels, a Sri Lankan navy spokesman said Tuesday



Imran arrested in case linked to 2023 attack

Islamabad: Jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan was Tuesday arrested in a case related to the attack on the Pakistan Army headquarters in Rawalpindi on May 9 last year, soon after his release warrant was issued in the cipher case. An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Rawalpindi had summoned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, who is already behind bars in cipher and graft cases, in May 9 cases on Tuesday. However, Khan attended the court's proceedings via video link as he could not be produced in the court by Adiala jail authorities owing to security concerns. Judge Ijaz Asif of the Anti-Terrorism Court Rawalpindi conducted hearings of at least 12 cases linked with the May 9 riots against Khan and others.

EARTH SHATTERED GLOBAL HEAT RECORD IN 2023

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Jan 9: Earth last year shattered global annual heat records, flirted with the world's agreed-upon warming threshold and showed more signs of a feverish planet, the European climate agency said Tuesday.

In one of the first of several teams of science agencies to calculate how off-the-charts warm 2023 was, the European climate agency Copernicus said the year was 1.48 degrees Celsius (2.66 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times. That's barely below the 1.5 degrees Celsius limit that the world hoped to stay within in the 2015 Paris climate accord to avoid the most severe effects of warming.

And January 2024 is on track to be so warm that for the first time a 12-month period will exceed the 1.5-degree thresh-



old, Copernicus Deputy Director Samantha Burgess said. Scientists have repeatedly said that Earth would need to average 1.5 degrees of warming over two or three decades to be a technical breach of the threshold.

The 1.5 degree goal "has to be (kept) alive because lives are at risk and choices have to be made," Burgess said. "And these choices don't impact you and I but they impact our children and

our grandchildren."

The record heat made life miserable and sometimes deadly in Europe, North America, China and many other places last year. But scientists say a warming climate is also to blame for more extreme weather events, like the lengthy drought that devastated the Horn of Africa, the torrential downpours that wiped out dams and killed thousands in Libya and the Canada wildfires that fouled the air from North America to Europe.

For the first time, nations meeting for annual United Nations climate talks in December agreed that the world needs to transition away from the fossil fuels that are causing climate change, but they set no concrete requirements to do so.

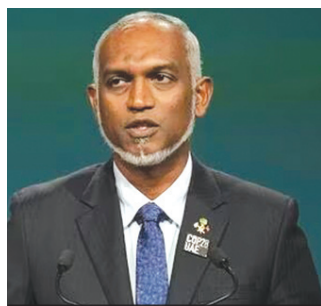
Copernicus calculated that the global average temperature for 2023 was about one-sixth of a degree Celsius (0.3 de-

grees Fahrenheit) warmer than the old record set in 2016. While that seems a small amount in global record-keeping, it's an exceptionally large margin for the new record, Burgess said. Earth's average temperature for 2023 was 14.98 degrees Celsius (58.96 degrees Fahrenheit), Copernicus calculated.

"It was record-breaking for seven months. We had the warmest June, July, August, September, October, November, December," Burgess said. "It wasn't just a season or a month that was exceptional. It was exceptional for over half the year."

There are several factors that made 2023 the warmest year on record, but by far the biggest factor was the ever-increasing amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere that trap heat, Burgess said. Those gases come from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas.

Muizzu urges China to send more tourists



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Jan 9: Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu Tuesday appealed to China to "intensify" efforts to send more tourists to his country, amid a spate of cancellation of reservations by Indian tourists after a diplomatic row erupted over the derogatory remarks by his ministers against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

On the second day of his five-day state visit to China, Muizzu in his address to the Maldives Business Forum in Fujian Province Tuesday termed China as the island nation's "closest" ally. "China remains one of our closest allies and development partners," he said.

He praised the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects launched by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2014, saying that they "delivered the most significant infrastructure projects witnessed in Maldivian history", according to his speech. He urged China to bolster the flow of its tourists to the Maldives.

"China was our (Maldives') number one market pre-Covid, and it is my request that we intensify efforts for China to regain this position," according to a read-out posted on his official website. Also, Maldivian media reported that the two countries have signed a USD 50 million project to develop an integrated tourism zone in the Indian Ocean island.

Muizzu's appeal for more Chinese tourists came amid a diplomatic row following the derogatory remarks by some Maldivian ministers against Prime Minister Modi after he posted a video of him on a pristine beach during his recent visit to Lakshadweep.

According to data released by the Maldives Tourism Ministry earlier, India has remained the largest tourist market for the country in 2023

Muizzu's appeal for more Chinese tourists came amid a diplomatic row following the derogatory remarks by some Maldivian ministers against Prime Minister Modi

Muizzu's government suspended three deputy ministers for their derogatory posts on social media. Also, the Maldives Association of Tourism Industry (MATI) strongly condemned the derogatory comments.

According to data released by the Maldives Tourism Ministry earlier, India has remained the largest tourist market for the country in 2023. The highest number of visitors to the Maldives were from India, with 209,198 arrivals, followed by Russia in second place with 209,146 arrivals, and China in third place with 187,118 arrivals.

In 2022, India remained the top Maldives tourism market, with 240,000 arrivals. Russia followed closely in second place with 198,000 tourists, and Britain ranked third with over 177,000 arrivals. Before COVID, China held the top spot with over 2.80 lakh tourists but is currently struggling to revive its domestic and foreign tourism due to a nearly four-year lockdown policy and the continued slowdown of its economy.

As a result, Chinese tourists who travelled abroad for holidays in millions before COVID are now restricting themselves given the economic slowdown. After concluding his Fujian visit, Muizzu Tuesday arrived in Beijing where he is expected to hold talks with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Ke Qiang.

Maldives Foreign Minister Moosa Zameer, who is accompanying Muizzu, said the President will participate in high-level meetings and discussions over the course of the next three days. "Our focus is on conveying the Government's priorities and exploring avenues for enhanced collaboration with China," he said in a post on X.



Taiwan's Nationalist Party presidential candidate Hou Yu-ih waves to supporters from a motorcade in Taipei, Taiwan. Taiwan holds presidential and parliamentary elections Saturday that China has described as a choice between war and peace

S Korea passes law to ban dog meat

REUTERS

Seoul, Jan 9: South Korea's Parliament passed a bill Tuesday to ban the eating and selling of dog meat, a move that will end the controversial centuries-old practice amid growing support for animal welfare.

Eating dog meat was once seen as a way to improve stamina in the humid Korean summer. But the practise has become rare - largely limited to some older people and specific restaurants - as more Koreans consider dogs as family pets and as criticism of how the dogs are slaughtered has grown.

Activists say most dogs are electrocuted or hanged when slaughtered for meat, though breeders and traders argue there has been progress in making the slaughtering more humane. Support for the ban has grown under President Yoon Suk Yeol, an animal lover who owns six dogs and eight cats with first lady Kim Keon Hee, also a vocal critic of dog meat consumption.

Pet ownership has also climbed over the years.

Satellite launch prompts Taiwan alert

REUTERS

Taipei/Beijing, Jan 9: Taiwan's government sent out an island-wide alert Tuesday, saying a Chinese satellite had flown over southern Taiwan airspace in what was described by Taiwan's foreign minister as a provocation days before a pivotal election.

The security alert sent to mobile phone users in Taiwan said the Chinese satellite had flown over Taiwan airspace, around the same time Chinese state media confirmed the launch of a science satellite.

The short message from Taiwan's defence ministry was sent after 3 pm local time. The "presidential alert" described the projectile as a "satellite" in Chinese, and a "missile" in English. Taiwan's defence ministry later blamed "negligence" for the mistaken reference to a missile. It also said the rocket had passed at high altitude over Taiwan airspace.

Chinese state news agency Xinhua said China had launched "a new astronomical satellite" called the Einstein Probe from



the southwestern province of Sichuan. China had not previously announced the satellite launch and did not offer any details on its flight plan. China made two satellite launches on consecutive days in early December from a launch site in Inner Mongolia. Neither of those had flown over Taiwan or triggered an alert.

China's state media described the probe as a small satellite dedicated to high-energy astrophysics and astronomy. Taiwan's Foreign Minister Joseph Wu who was giving a press conference to dozens of foreign reporters at the time of the alert, described the launch as a provo-

cation towards Taiwan, just like the recent cases of Chinese balloons spotted over the island.

"All these kinds of tactics are classified as grey-zone activities, (and) continue to remind the people here in Taiwan that there is a danger of war between Taiwan and China," he said. "With these kinds of threats against Taiwan I think we should be clear eyed, we should not be provoked."

Taiwan's main opposition Kuomintang Party criticised the alert, saying it had misled the public. The alert did not impact foreign exchange markets and did not cause fluctuations in the Taiwan dollar, four traders said.

Taiwan's defence ministry accused China Saturday of threatening aviation safety and waging psychological warfare on the island's people with the recent spate of balloons. Taiwan has complained for four years of stepped-up Chinese military action such as fighter jets regularly flying over the strait as part of a "grey zone" strategy attempting to wear down Taiwan with offensive actions that stop short of full-blown conflict.

A litre of bottled water could contain 2.4 lakh plastic pieces: Study

RESEARCHERS FROM COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY ANALYSED THREE POPULAR BRANDS OF BOTTLED WATER SOLD IN THE US, MEASURING PLASTIC PARTICLES DOWN TO 100 NANOMETRES IN SIZE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 9: A litre of bottled water could contain about 2.4 lakh plastic pieces on average, which is about 10 to 100 times greater than previous estimates that mainly concerned plastics of larger sizes, according to a new study.

While microplastics range from a micrometre - a millionth of a metre - to 5 millimetres, nanoplastics are smaller than a micrometre and are measured in billionths of a metre. Researchers from Columbia University

analysed three popular brands of bottled water sold in the US, measuring plastic particles down to 100 nanometres in size.

They detected about 1.1-3.7 lakh plastic fragments in each litre - 90 per cent nanoplastics and the rest microplastics. Their findings are published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

"Previously this was just a dark area, uncharted. Toxicity studies were just guessing what's in there," said study co-author Beizhan Yan, an environmental chemist at Columbia Climate



School's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. "This opens a window where we can look into a world that was not exposed to us before," he said.

In recent years, microplastics have been documented to be present in soil, drinking water,

food and even polar ice. Formed when larger plastics break down into progressively smaller bits, these plastics find their way into humans and other creatures, with potential effects on their health and ecosystem.

In this study, the team also

determined the type of plastics they were, targeting seven common ones, along with charting their shapes for biomedical purposes. They found a common one - polyethylene terephthalate or PET. Water bottles are made of this material.

Another type of plastic the researchers found was polyamide. A type of nylon, polyamide was found in greater quantity than PET. They said the nylon could have come from the plastic fibres that are supposed to purify the water before it gets bottled.

Other common plastics they found were polystyrene, polyvinyl chloride and polymethyl methacrylate - all used in various industrial processes. However, the seven plastic types the researchers searched for accounted for only about 10 per cent of all

the nanoparticles they found in the bottled water samples.

The researchers said they had no idea what the rest were. The results indicated "the complicated particle composition inside the seemingly simple water sample", they wrote.

For the study, the researchers developed a technique called stimulated Raman scattering microscopy which involved probing samples with two simultaneous lasers tuned to make specific molecules resonate. They then used algorithms to analyse and interpret the data.

The team is now going beyond bottled water. "There is a huge world of nanoplastics to be studied," said study co-author Wei Min, a Columbia biophysicist and a co-inventor of the microscopy technique.

of the day quote

There is not going to be a broader industry-wide norm saying you can't hire from each other



RAJESH NAMBIAR
COGNIZANT INDIA CMD

With partners forming the heartbeat of our organisation and shaping our success in India, we will continue to make meaningful investments that bridge a better future for all partners



SUSHANT DASH
TATA STARBUCKS CHIEF EXECUTIVE

In an era where hybrid and flexible work culture take centre stage, space management plays a very crucial role for enterprises



KARAN VIRWANI
CEO OF WEWORK INDIA

SHORT TAKES

EV sales jump 49% in 2023

Mumbai: Electric vehicle sales in India jumped 49.25 per cent year-on-year to 15,29,947 units in 2023, according to a data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers' Association (FADA) Tuesday. The EV industry had recorded a total sales of 10,25,063 units in 2022, as per the data. The two-wheeler sales grew 36.09 per cent to 8,59,376 units in the just-concluded year against 6,31,464 units in 2022, it said. The e-three-wheeler sales volumes surged 65.23 per cent year-on-year to 5,82,793 units from 3,52,710 units sold in 2022. E-commercial vehicles sales rose 114.16 per cent year-on-year to 5,673 units in 2023 compared to 2,649 vehicles in the preceding year. Electric passenger vehicle sales grew 114.71 per cent to 82,105 units last year against 38,240 vehicles in 2022, as per the FADA data.

Tata Motors global wholesales up 9%

New Delhi: Tata Motors Tuesday said its global wholesales, including that of Jaguar Land Rover, rose 9 per cent year-on-year to 3,38,177 units in the December quarter. Global wholesales of Tata Motors' commercial vehicles and Tata Daewoo range in October-December period of FY24 were at 98,679 units, up 1 per cent over third quarter of FY23, the company said in a regulatory filing. The company's global sales of all passenger vehicles, including electrical vehicles, were at 1,38,455 units, up 5 per cent year-on-year. Global wholesales for Jaguar Land Rover were 27 per cent higher at 1,01,043 units. Jaguar wholesales for the quarter stood at 12,149 vehicles, while Land Rover wholesales for the quarter were at 88,894 vehicles.

Adani Ports raises ₹500cr via bonds

New Delhi: Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) Tuesday raised ₹500 crore by issuing non-convertible debentures on private placement basis. Billionaire Gautam Adani's firm in a regulatory filing said it has accepted bids aggregating to ₹500 crore for two listed bonds, with one maturing in five years and the other in 10 years. "The company raised ₹500 crore today i.e. January 9, 2024 by allotment of 50,000 rated, secured, listed, redeemable, non-convertible debentures (NCDs) of face value of ₹1,00,000/ each on private placement basis," it said. The NCDs will be listed on the wholesale debt market segment of BSE. APSEZ is the largest port developer and operator in India.



Of the 300 million Indian homes, 140 million are yet to buy their first TV... So, it doesn't mean that if OTT has come, TV will go. They will co-exist

HARIT NAGPAL | TATA PLAY MD AND CEO

'INDIA-MADE' IPHONES WORTH ₹65,000CR EXPORTED IN 2023

As India doubles down on local manufacturing, Apple assembled iPhones worth more than ₹1 lakh crore in India in 2023, out of which it exported iPhones worth approximately ₹65,000 crore to other countries, according to industry sources.



OMCs to ask for extra Saudi oil after sharp price cut

Indian Oil, the country's top refiner, and Bharat Petroleum, are looking at lifting an additional 1 million barrels of oil each from Saudi Aramco in February

REUTERS

New Delhi, Jan 9: Two Indian state refiners are seeking to boost imports of Saudi crude oil after the kingdom cut the official selling price of its key export grade for February to the lowest in 27 months, company sources said.

Indian Oil Corp, the country's top refiner, and Bharat Petroleum Corp, are looking at lifting an additional 1 million barrels of oil each from Saudi Aramco in February, the sources said.

Saudi Aramco typically notifies Asian buyers of their monthly crude allocations by the 10th of every month.

Indian oil companies did not respond to Reuters emails seeking comments, while Saudi Aramco declined to comment.

IOC is seeking more oil from Saudi Arabia and West Africa partly as it is facing problems in buying Russian light sweet crude Sokol because of challenges in payments, one of the sources said.

India, the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, has been gorging on Russian crude, sold at a discount after western nations shunned purchases from Moscow.

That led to Russia becoming



top oil supplier to India, knocking Iraq and Saudi Arabia to second and third place, data obtained from trade sources showed.

Washington last month sanctioned ships and vessel operators for the sale of Russian oil at above the \$60-per barrel cap set by the Group of Seven nations and tightened rules, including heightened scrutiny by banks and service providers to ensure that cargoes do not breach the price cap.

Following the sanctions, several tankers meant to deliver Sokol crude to India have been diverted in the past two months

depressing India's Russian oil imports in December to an 11-month low.

India's oil minister Hardeep Singh Puri recently said that the decline in India's import of Russian oil was due to unattractive prices and not payment issues.

IOC used to receive 6-7 cargoes of Sokol oil every month under its annual deal with Rosneft.

The refiner may ask for additional supplies under its term deals with West African producers Nigeria and Angola to make up for loss in Russian oil supply, the source said.

White collar hiring dips in Dec: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 9: White collar hiring in India witnessed a 16 per cent decline in December compared to the year-ago period due to cautious hiring sentiments in IT, BPO, education, retail and healthcare sectors, a report said Tuesday.

"We observed marginal sequential growth of 2 per cent in December hiring activity compared to November, driven by non-IT sectors. However, the IT sector continued to be significantly impacted pulling the overall index down by 16 per cent against last year signalling a longer wait for a complete recovery in IT hiring," Naukri.Com Chief Business Officer Pawan Goyal said analysing the Naukri JobSpeak Index.

According to the Naukri JobSpeak Index, sectors like BPO, education, retail, and healthcare displayed cautious hiring sentiments, witnessing a year-on-year decline of 17 per cent, 11 per cent, 11 per cent and 10 per cent, respectively in job offers in December. Hiring in the IT sector reflected the trend seen in the second half of 2023, the report noted.

The sector witnessed a decline of 21 per cent in hiring during December 2023, against the same month last year and a fall of 4 per cent compared to the preceding month of November 2023.

However, full stack data scientist, IT infrastructure engineer, and automation engineer

were some of the job roles that saw decent hiring despite a cautious job market for the IT industry, it added. Although new job offers in the oil and gas sector were not spectacular in December 2023, it stayed at the level witnessed in the same month a year ago. The Naukri JobSpeak is a monthly index representing the state of the Indian job market and hiring activity on new job listings and job-related searches by recruiters on the resume database of Naukri.Com.

Meanwhile, the report found that the hospitality sector continued its growth momentum in new job offers with a 4 per cent increase in hiring compared to December last year.

The job growth for this sector is highest in Mumbai and Delhi-NCR. Senior professionals with over 16 years of experience emerged as the most sought-after candidates for hiring in the sector. The pharma sector saw an increase of 2 per cent in hiring in December 2023 compared to the corresponding month of 2022, it said, adding that the sector experienced maximum growth in new job offers in Ahmedabad, Vadodara, and Mumbai.

The report also revealed that non-metro cities outshined their metro peers in terms of hiring in December 2023. Vadodara registered an annual growth of 3 per cent in new job offers last month, the report said, adding that the growth is noticeably better than that of metros.

Zee missed deadline to pay \$200mn cricket fee to Disney

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 9: Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd has missed a deadline to pay \$200 million to Walt Disney Co's India unit for TV rights of cricket matches, according to people familiar with the matter, as the firm tries to preserve cash ahead of a likely collapse of its mega merger with Sony Group Corp, reports said.

The Mumbai-based media firm didn't pay the instalment due early January citing a cash crunch, the people said, asking not to be named as the information is not public. Disney has sought explanation from Zee on why the payment was skipped, they said, adding the tranche was part of the over \$1.4 billion Zee agreed to pay for the license agreement signed in August 2022, Bloomberg reported.

Defaulting on the payment to Disney unit poses fresh headaches for Zee, including possible legal wrangles, even as it deals with the fallout of a collapsing merger with the Sony Group. Zee hasn't furnished bank guarantees for the sum that was to be paid as per the contract, according to one of the persons familiar with the issue.

Bloomberg News reported Monday that Sony was planning to send a deal termination notice to Zee, which said Tuesday that it was still working toward closing the merger.

IPO deals may touch \$50bn in 2024: Kotak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 9: The IPO and deal-making activities are likely to be brisk this year and may even surpass the record set in 2021 with around USD 50 billion funds being raised across equity issuances and deals, according to Kotak Investment Banking.

Addressing the media here, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer S Ramesh said, led by new-age tech companies, the primary market is likely to see brisk activities this year, coupled with overall funding market, will see an inflow of about USD 50 billion.

Domestic funds pumped in USD 25.8 billion into the market in 2023 and this may touch USD 50 billion, he said, adding that Nifty's one-year forward premium is at a record high of 20.1x, the highest among emerging markets, and there is room to go up with the 10-year average premium at 17.7x.

V Jayasankar, a managing director with the company, said he expects more large Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) to hit the market this year.

Election-related volatility is unlikely to impact primary market activities for long because normally poll-related issues should end within two-three months. There were a total of 59 IPOs in 2023, and close to ₹53,000 crore was raised from the main-board.

Market rebound loses steam in fag-end trade



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 9: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty Tuesday closed moderately higher after a fag-end sell-off minimised the handsome gains posted in early trading.

Besides, investors opted for profit-taking ahead of the start of corporate earnings season and macroeconomic data announcements later this week, traders said. After rising sharply during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex trimmed most of the gains during the fag-end trading and ended marginally higher by 30.99 points or 0.04 per cent at 71,386.21. During the day, it jumped 680.25 points or 0.95 per cent to 72,035.47.

The Nifty also gave up most of the intra-day gains and closed

31.85 points or 0.15 per cent up at 21,544.85. During the day, it climbed 211.45 points or 0.98 per cent to 21,724.45.

Larsen & Toubro was the biggest gainer on the Sensex chart, rising 1.55 per cent, followed by Bharti Airtel, HCL Tech, Tata Motors, Sun Pharma and Tata Steel. On the other hand, Nestle, Asian Paints, Bajaj Finserv, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.37 per cent, and the midcap index rose 0.07 per cent. Among the sectoral indices, realty jumped 2.52 per cent, power rallied 1.10 per cent, auto (1.02 per cent), healthcare (0.90 per cent), capital goods (0.89 per cent) and consumer discretionary (0.68 per cent).

WB PRESIDENT BATS FOR MORE PVT INVESTMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 9: World Bank president Ajay Banga Tuesday batted for removing barriers to private sector investment, saying it is key to tackling challenges before the global economy as neither the governments nor multilateral banks have trillions of dollars in their coffers.

Speaking to World Economic Forum Founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab in a podcast ahead of the WEF Annual Meeting in Davos next week, Banga said the immediate challenges before the world are conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine as also the debt situation in several emerging markets.

In the longer term, the major challenges remain poverty and inequality as also those related to the environment, the former Mastercard chief said.

Banga, also a member of the World Economic Forum's Board of Trustees, will be among the key global leaders at the five-day WEF Davos summit beginning January 15.

Asked what could be the solutions to the problems of inequality and poverty, Banga said, "The best way to solve, aside from creating better access, is a job because jobs give you not



just earning and breaking out of the cycle but also dignity."

"And I think dignity is a part of human development, not just economic development, that we have to pay a great deal of attention to," he said.

He also said that technology is a great enabler.

"I think if you go back in time, and when I was younger ... You wanted to learn about something different, you had to buy the Encyclopedia Britannica. That was expensive. And then comes Google and search, and, all of a sudden, knowledge is democratised and available to everyone," he said.

Banga said that technology, and now data and AI, are great enablers to breaking through the power of incumbency if done the right way.

"We have to put guardrails around how these work, but done the right way, this could be very helpful," he added.

Talking about the role of the

private sector, Banga said the big challenges before the world cannot be solved without the private sector.

"If you look at the estimates just for renewable energy in the world, they run into trillions of dollars every year that need to be invested to make the necessary change in the way in which our future growth can be less energy emissions-heavy. Now, there aren't trillions of dollars in government coffers. There aren't trillions of dollars in multilateral banking coffers," he said.

The only way this is going to work is by getting private sector capital, private sector innovation in generating technology, their people, their ambition to make a return on their capital, but to come to the party where it's possible that there is a good business model, he said.

On barriers to private sector investment, Banga said there are many reasons, starting from regulatory certainty and policy certainty from a particular country.

He said the World Bank can help with that by imparting knowledge-building capacity to those countries to help create the regulatory and policy certainty that a private investor tries to get some idea of when they put money in.

Google Trends data can help gauge inflation fears: Report

Based on Google Trends data, the study concludes that inflation anxiety has been easing over 2023, but remains higher than 2018-2021 period

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 9: Google search interest regarding the prices of just three vegetables - tomatoes, onions, and potatoes (TOP) -- has turned out to be a useful indicator of price anxiety in India, according to an ICRA study released Tuesday.

The study, titled 'Quickonomics', uses Google Trends data on TOP price searches as a proxy for price anxiety and observes how they are increasingly useful in gauging inflationary expectations -- a key factor in monetary policy making.

Especially, since these food prices have kept the headline inflation under pressure in India and are also instrumental in keeping inflation volatility high,

the report states.

Based on Google Trends data, the study concludes that inflation anxiety has been easing over 2023, but remains higher than during 2018-2021.

Within TOP, onions and tomatoes show a super spike in Google search interest every few years. Search interest in potato prices is comparatively range-bound and devoid of super spikes, as per the trends data for the past five years.

According to the study, fewer losses from potatoes, because of better storage, have kept prices and search anxiety on their prices range-bound. Tomatoes and onions lack adequate storage and face higher losses in comparison.

"We find that the Google Trends index based on searches



for 'inflation' is strongly correlated with inflation expectations of households based on the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) survey, and hence, a good proxy for inflation anxiety in the econ-

omy," the study states. Inflationary pressures in the Indian economy may be tracked in three ways.

First, is by looking at the actual data. CPI inflation is re-

leased by the National Statistical Office (NSO) and the daily retail price data is released by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.

Second, is the data on inflation expectations of households based on surveys, conducted by the RBI.

The study finds Google Trends as a third interesting source. "We take this as a proxy for inflation anxiety, based on Google web search requests by consumers for prices of commodities key to their consumption and those they believe are witnessing an upturn in prices," the ICRA report states.

November CPI inflation made headlines again, as it rose to 5.6 per cent from 4.9 per cent in October. Food inflation jumped to 8.7 per cent from 6.6 per cent, with vegetables inflation soaring

17.7 per cent, followed by pulses. This is the second price shock in vegetables in the current fiscal.

Uncertainty on food prices is, thus, likely to haunt the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) again. While there is little that the MPC can do to control food inflation, persistent food inflation can become generalised and enter headline inflation, requiring a monetary policy response. Hence, there is a need to closely watch food prices, the ICRA report says.

"We find that the Google Trends index based on searches for 'inflation' is strongly correlated with inflation expectations of households based on the RBI's survey, and hence, a good proxy for inflation anxiety in the economy," the ICRA report concluded.

Juggernauts finish group stage campaign with win



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Jan 9: Odisha Juggernauts ended their group stage campaign with a comfortable 34-23 victory over Mumbai Khiladis at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium here, Tuesday.

Chennai Quick Guns, on the other hand, secured a dominating 38-21 victory over Gujarat Giants to seal the top spot in the standings. Thus, Chennai will take on Telugu Yoddhas in the semifinal, while the title holders Odisha Juggernauts will meet Gujarat Giants in the other semifinal, Thursday.

Mumbai Khiladis started the match with their first defending batch of Hrushikesh Murchavade, Sabin M, and Pratik Devare securing two dream run points. But Juggernauts made quick work of the second batch to end Turn 1 with a 12-2 lead.

Turn 2 kicked off with Juggernauts' first defending batch of Debendra Nath, Vishal

and Nikhil Sodaye securing a dream run point. Their second batch of Vishal Oram, Sobhag Sriganda and Visag S did one better by getting two dream run points. The match, at the end of the first innings, looked tantalisingly poised with the scores at 15-14 in favour of Juggernauts.

Juggernauts turned the tide in their favour by making quick work of the first two Khiladis batches. That meant that they carried a 15-point lead into the final turn. Manoj Kumar was the pick of the attackers for Juggernauts with six points.

And if there was a glimmer of hope for Khiladis, Juggernauts' opening batch of Mahesha P, Niranjan Samal and MD Mirajul killed it with a superb defensive display. They ran rings around the Khiladis attackers, securing five dream run points and spending five minutes and 20 seconds on the mat. Mahesha, in particular, was impressive, as he eluded the Khiladis attackers for two minutes and 33 seconds.

Australia eves win series

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Navi Mumbai, Jan 9: Australia Women skipper Alyssa Healy saved her best for the last to hand India a crushing seven-wicket defeat in the third and final T20I as the visitors bagged the series 2-1 here Tuesday.

Healy opted to field after calling it correct, and the bowlers responded to her decision to keep India to a modest 147/6. The stylish batter then returned to crack a 55 (38b, 9x4, 1x6) to lead Australia's march to a series win, and as for India this was their fourth consecutive T20I series loss at home since September 2019. India have succumbed to South Africa, Australia and England in this interim.

Chasing 148, Australia raced to 85/1 at halfway mark courtesy Healy's onslaught and Beth Mooney's 52 not out (45b, 5x4). A nearly-packed house at the DY Patil Stadium was left disappointed when Indian players failed to bring forth a collective performance — like they did in the first game.

Pooja Vastrakar dismissed Tahlia McGrath (20) and Ellyse Perry on consecutive balls in the 16th over to create some excitement, but Mooney and Phoebe Litchfield (17 n o) took Australia over the line.

Earlier, Richa Ghosh's brisk 34 (28b, 2x4, 3x6) saved India Women the blushes who posted 147/6. India squandered a rollicking start to lose four wickets for six runs and were tottering at the halfway stage after Shafali Verma (26) and Smriti Mandhana (29) set



Alyssa Healy (L) gives a fist bump to her opening partner Beth Mooney during their partnership in the series-deciding third T20I, Tuesday

the stage for a strong first-innings total.

India were 51/1 after the powerplay but slipped to 66/4 after 10 overs losing wickets in a cluster. But Ghosh's knock gave India a fresh lease of life as India added 81 runs in the second half.

Additionally, vital contributions from Deepti Sharma (14), Amanjot Kaur (17) and Vastrakar's six off the innings' last ball gave India a total to fight with.

Shafali smashed three fours off Kim Garth in the fourth over to mark a strong start for India, adding 39 for the first wicket. But Australia came roaring back to strike thrice with Annabel Sutherland (2/12) bouncing out Rodrigues, who was caught at deep square leg.

Ashleigh Gardner took a superb low forward diving catch when Mandhana hit one towards deep midwicket off Georgia Wareham (2/24). With the responsibility of shepherding a faltering innings falling on Harmanpreet Kaur's shoulders, the skipper disappointed yet again with the bat. This left India gasping for breath from 60/1 to 66/4. Ghosh and Deepti then teamed up to lift India out of trouble with a 33-run stand for the fifth wicket.

BRIEF SCORES
India Women 147/6 (Richa Ghosh 34, Smriti Mandhana 29, Shafali Verma 26; Annabel Sutherland 2/12, Georgia Wareham 2/24) lost to Australia Women 149/3 (Alyssa Healy 55, Beth Mooney 52 n o; Pooja Vastrakar 2/26) by 7 wickets.

Rudranksh, Mehuli pair up for gold



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, Jan 9: The pair of Rudranksh Patil and Mehuli Ghosh won the 10m air rifle mixed team event to maintain the Indian shooting contingent's dominance in the Asian Olympic Qualifiers here Tuesday. Rudranksh and Mehuli triumphed after prevailing over China's Shen Yufan and Zhu Mingshuai 16-10 in the final.

In the 10m air pistol mixed team event, however, India settled for the silver medal with the duo of Arjun Cheema and Rhythm Sangwan finishing second behind Vietnam's Thu Vinh Trinh and Quang Huy Pham in the battle for the top prize. They lost 11-17.

India also won the junior event in the mixed team air rifle discipline when Isha Anil Taksale and Ummamahesh Maddineni defeated the Chinese pairing of Chu Ziqing and Pan Bowen 17-11 in the gold medal match-up.

In the same event, the pair of Abhinav Shaw and Anvii Rathod defeated local favourites Masayyu Putri Fadillah and Paskalis Steven Farrel Saverio 16-10 to claim bronze. At the end of day two of competitions, India's tally stood at an impressive six gold, two silver and two bronze, for a total of 10 medals.

SHORT TAKES

New HI HPD

New Delhi: Hockey India (HI) Tuesday announced the appointment of Herman Kruis as the new high performance director (HPD) with the Dutchman serving in the position till September. He will oversee the national junior and senior programmes of HI, including the coaches education pathway among other tasks, an HI release said. The Dutchman has over two decades of coaching experience, and was earlier appointed as coach of Indian men and junior women's teams to oversee their preparations for the FIH Men's Junior World Cup and FIH Women's Junior World Cup respectively. Kruis is a certified FIH coach-educator. "He will oversee the various programmes run by Hockey India including the junior and senior programmes," said HI president Dilip Tirkey.

Kolkata sides win

BHUBANESWAR: East Bengal FC rode on Cleiton Silva's brace to start their Super Cup football campaign with a fighting 3-2 win over Hyderabad FC at the Kalinga Stadium here Tuesday. Later in the day, Mohun Bagan Super Giant edged past Sreenidi Deccan 2-1. The first Group A fixture saw Hyderabad draw level twice through Ramhlunchhunga and Nim Dorjee Tamang before Saul Crespo scored the winning goal for East Bengal in the 80th minute. Mohun Bagan SG had to toil hard against Sreenidi Deccan in the other Group A tie. Sreenidi Deccan drew the first blood after William Oliveira converted from the spot in the 28th minute. However, Jason Cummings found the equaliser in the 39th minute, and Armando Sadiku scored the winner in the 71st to help the Kolkata giants take home three points.

'Unsatisfactory' rating

Dubai: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday rated the Newlands pitch for the second Test between India and South Africa as "unsatisfactory" after it ended inside five sessions. The decision was made under the ICC Pitch and Outfield Monitoring Process. Only 642 balls could be bowled in the match. "The pitch in Newlands was very difficult to bat on. The ball bounced quickly and sometimes alarmingly throughout the match, making it difficult to play shots," said Chris Broad, the match referee for the Test, in his report submitted to the ICC. "Several batters were hit on the gloves and many wickets also fell due to the awkward bounce," Broad further wrote. Subsequently, the Newlands was awarded one demerit point. AGENCIES

Nat'l Sports Awards: Shami, Sheetal draw rousing applause



(From L): Para-canoeist Prachi Yadav receives her Arjuna Award from President Droupadi Murmu; Sheetal Devi and Mohammed Shami with their awards at the Rashtrapati Bhawan, Tuesday



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 9: India's best-performing athletes were on Tuesday conferred with the national sports awards by President Droupadi Murmu in a regal ceremony where cricketer Mohammed Shami and para archer Sheetal Devi walked in to a rapturous applause at the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Shuttlers Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy were chosen for the coveted Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna award for a breakout 2023, during which they won their maiden Asian

Games gold — a first for India in badminton —, while also clinching the Asian Championships title and the Indonesia Open Super 1000 title. The duo is currently playing in Malaysia Open Super 1000 and therefore skipped the function.

The awards ceremony, usually held on August 29 to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand, was deferred because of the Hangzhou Asian Games from September 23 till October 8 last year.

An atmosphere of gaiety pervaded the Rashtrapati Bhawan as 26 athletes and para-athletes

were finalised for the Arjuna Awards this year, with teenager pistol ace Esha Singh the only one to miss the ceremony.

The 19-year-old Esha is competing in the Asian Olympic Qualifiers in Jakarta and, on Monday, had qualified for the Paris Olympics after winning the individual and team gold in 10m air pistol.

The imprint of the Asian Games last year, and India's record haul of 107 medals there, was evident in the ceremony as a majority of the athletes, who walked to the dais, were medal winners in Hangzhou.

The Durbar Hall reverberated with the claps of the dignitaries when para archer Sheetal Devi, winner of three gold medals at the Para Asian Games in Hangzhou, walked up to collect her Arjuna.

The 16-year-old is the only international para-archery champion without upper limbs due to a rare medical condition called Phocomelia. The President held Sheetal's award and the scroll as the teenager soaked in the atmosphere and the splendour of the hall.

Murmu then walked down the podium to present the Arjuna to wheelchair-bound para-canoeist

Prachi Yadav, winner of gold in Hangzhou, once again drawing a huge round of applause.

Shami, who is currently recovering from an ankle injury, was there to receive the honours and the crowd duly acknowledged his achievements by giving him and his art the pride of place with an ovation. The pace bowler took 24 wickets in seven World Cup games last year.

While the Khel Ratna comes with a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh, the Arjuna and Dronacharya awards include a cash prize of Rs 15 lakh.

THE RECIPIENTS

MAJOR DHYAN CHAND KHEL RATNA AWARD: Chirag Shetty and Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy (badminton).

ARJUNA AWARD: Ojas Pravin Deotale (archery), Aditi Gopichand Swami (archery), Murali Sreesankar (athletics), Parul Chaudhary (athletics), Mohammad Hussainuddin (boxing), R Vaishali (chess), Mohammed Shami (cricket), Anush Agarwalla (equestrian), Divyakriti Singh (equestrian dressage), Diksha Dagar (golf), Krishan Bahadur Pathak (hockey), Shushila Chanu (hockey), Pawan Kumar (kabaddi), Ritu Negi (kabaddi), Nasreen (kho-kho), Pinki (lawn bowls), Aishwary Prapat Singh Tomar (shooting), Esha Singh (shooting), Harinder Pal Singh Sandhu (squash), Ayhika Mukherjee (table tennis), Sunil Kumar (wrestling), Antim Panghal (wrestling), Naorem Roshibina Devi (wushu), Sheetal Devi (para archery), Iluri Ajay Kumar Reddy (blind cricket), Prachi Yadav (para canoeing).

DRONACHARYA AWARD (regular category) for outstanding coaches: Lalit Kumar (wrestling), RB Ramesh (chess), Mahaveer Prasad Saini (para athletics), Shivendra Singh (hockey), Ganesh Prabhakar Devrukkar (martial arts).

DRONACHARYA AWARD (life-time category) for outstanding coaches: Jaskirat Singh Grewal (golf), Bhaskaran E (kabaddi), Jayanta Kumar Prashant (table tennis).

DHYAN CHAND AWARD FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT: Manjusha Kanwar (badminton), Vineet Kumar Sharma (hockey), Kavitha Selvaraj (kabaddi).

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD (MAKA) TROPHY: Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (overall winner university); Lovely Professional University, Punjab (1st runner-up); Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra (2nd runner-up).

Srikanth stuns Christie to enter second round

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kuala Lumpur, Jan 9: India's Kidambi Srikanth progressed to the second round of Malaysia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament with a come-from-behind win over World No.5 Indonesian Jonatan Christie here Tuesday.

The 30-year-old, who has been going through a lean phase for quite some time, notched up a stunning 12-21, 21-18, 21-16 win over sixth seed Christie in the opening round match that lasted an hour and five minutes. The former World No.1 will face Hong Kong's NG Ka Long Angus next. Srikanth has often struggled to sustain the pressure in a three-



game match to make a number of early exits but he looked in fine fettle this day as he kept attacking despite losing the opening game, to come out victorious.

The women's doubles pair of Tanisha Castro and Ashwini Ponnappa advanced to the second round after beating the American pair of Francesca Corbette and Allison Lee 21-13, 21-16 in the opening round.

The Indian pair takes on the seventh seeded Japanese duo of Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara in the next round. Matsumoto and Nagahara had beaten the Indian pair of Rutaparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda 21-12, 21-11 in the first round. In women's singles, Aakarshi Kashyap lost to Zhang Yi Man of China 15-21, 15-21 in the opening round. The men's doubles pair of MR Arjun and Dhruva Kapila also lost their opening round match 16-21, 19-21 to the Chinese Taipei pair of Fang-Chih Lee and Fang-Jen Lee.

Joy in Schumacher household

AGENCIES

London, Jan 9: Joy and happiness finally found their way into Schumacher household after just over a decade as the German Formula One (F1) great Michael Schumacher is reportedly able 'to sit at the dinner table' with his family.

Speaking to 'bettingsites.co.uk', retired star Johnny Herbert said: "I hear bits only second hand. I hear, from those within F1, he does sit at the table for dinner but don't know if that is true. I can only read between the lines. We haven't heard much from the family and understandably so. That has always been very much a part of Michael and the family's way to keep everything very private, very secretive. "(So) we'd all love to know that

things are moving on in a positive way. But because we don't have any information, we can only assume that he is not yet in a position where there is a chance of a recovery," he said further.

The seven-time World Champion was involved in a tragic skiing accident in December 29, 2013 that left him in a medically induced coma. The condition of Schumacher, who was put into an artificial coma and underwent several surgeries, has been shrouded in mystery ever since, with only brief updates coming from his inner circle. "In my opinion, and I must stress this, because we haven't heard anything from the family, it shows that unfortunately he is probably in the similar situation as he was straight after the accident," said Herbert.