

JAI JAGANNATHA



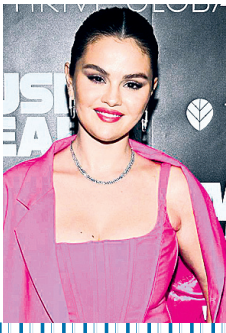
Inauguration ceremony of the
'Shree Mandira Parikrama Prakalpa' begins with the auspicious

MAHA YAJNA

15th Jan 2024



leisure



SELENA FEELS EMPOWERED BY ARIANA GRANDE'S MUSIC

Singer-actress Selena Gomez is a true fan of Ariana Grande's music. *The Only Murders in the Building* actress made a guest DJ appearance on 'SiriusXM Hits 1' and gushed about how the *Thank U, Next* singer has a catalogue of songs that always put her in a great mood and makes her feel empowered.

DAN LEVY TURNED DOWN KEN'S ROLE IN BARBIE

Actor and co-creator of *Schitt's Creek*, Dan Levy, recalls turning down the role of one of the Kens in Greta Gerwig's *Barbie* film, which ended up being a box office success and a nominee and winner of several awards, due to a scheduling conflict.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today, you may be stumped by some mysterious and wonderful event. That, or you may encounter an unexpected yet advantageous incident. It may not exactly be path-breaking, but it is sure to make you take stock of things. Also, you may find it difficult to meet deadlines today. Nevertheless, let people know how important your work is, says Ganesh.

TAURUS

Hoist the sails and prepare to leave port. Your sugar-coated words will seal business deals with ease, predicts Ganesh. The activity and action may slow down as the day progresses. Resist the urge to get sentimental as it could lead to conflicts that will haunt you in the days to come, warns Ganesh.

GEMINI

You will tend to be religiously inclined today, feels Ganesh. For this purpose, you may spend some time visiting a temple, mosque or church. You are also likely to go shopping, and chances are that this too is for a religious purpose. May God bless you, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Today, you will be at the centre of all your plans. Your responsibilities at home are likely to be unnecessary digressions for you, with your help-yourself-only attitude. However, you may feel that you are not getting enough returns of your hard work. Ganesh advises you to become more responsible at home, and your family's love and affection will make up for the insufficient returns.

LEO

If you are wondering whether you'll get the carrot or the stick today, then Ganesh has some good news for you: the day promises to bring only rewards for you. This will be especially true for your workplace, where your innate talents get recognised today.

VIRGO

A sudden bend in the journey of life is important to understand it better, says Ganesh. Excellence will drone on throughout the day today. Top on the list are money matters and your loved ones - not necessarily in that order! Much of your time may be spent in appeasing the Gods.

LIBRA

Get a bigger wallet, since it is very likely that today shall prove to be a money-making day for you. It might be through some sort of a partnership deal that this may happen, predicts Ganesh. Destiny lends you a helping hand and guides you in your goals. But it is your sentiments that may darken your thoughts today. Don't stress yourself out too much, and try and keep your expectations under control.

SCORPIO

Two words will define your day - eloquence and elegance. Sweet talk and compliments may take you a long way, but do not become complacent and get carried away with your success. Sometimes, saying the right thing may be more beneficial than saying what the other person wants to hear. Communicate carefully, advises Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Friendship with a few like-minded people is likely to develop today. You shall spend a large share of your time discussing issues like attitude, beliefs and values. Those with whom you will enjoy sharing their ideas and opinions, and casting them in a new mould.

CAPRICORN

Paradise is where patience leads you, success is the other terminus, says Ganesh. Keeping your cool will benefit you in more ways than you would have imagined, so think twice before you unleash your vengeance on your foes. You are also likely to have a heart-to-heart conversation with your beloved and make him/her feel wanted.

AQUARIUS

Today, you will understand the value of your job. You decide to do away with everything that has been hampering your work till now. You realise you need to set some long-term goals in your career. Grab the opportunity while the intention lasts, says Ganesh.

PISCES

Your inherent talents, competitive colleagues and supportive superiors will spur you on to great heights at the workplace, beginning today. Make sure that you do not get carried away by little victories, says Ganesh. There is many a slip between the cup and the lip!

Mumbai: Actress Shilpa Shetty, who is set to star as a cop in Rohit Shetty's maiden OTT series, *Indian Police Force*, said she would love to have a scenario where women in India can also portray characters like Gal Gadot and Scarlett Johansson do, and even said the audiences are ready to see women actors in action avatars on the screen.

Shilpa for more female actors in action avatars

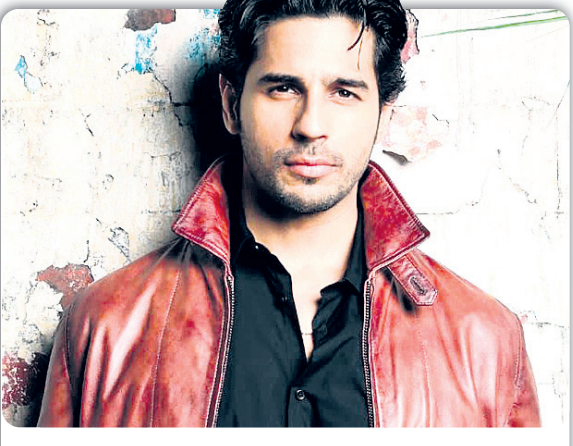


Unlike Hollywood, there is a dearth of female action films in Hindi cinema, says the *Indian* actress, who hopes the scenario will change in the coming future.

"It is because of the budget that we don't make female action films here, and also, we are still in a male-dominated society. I would love to have a scenario where women in India can also portray characters like Gal Gadot and Scarlett Johansson do. I would love to do a film like *Long Kiss Goodnight*. I wish filmmakers would take this opportunity now, as good content is being made. Whether it is for OTT or films, people are ready for this," the *Sukhee* actress told PTI.

According to Shilpa, her role was originally intended for a male actor, but the filmmaker decided to cast her instead. "I'm the only female cop in the cop universe that he sets in the series. He has treated the character as a character and not made any changes as per the gender, which is brilliant," she said.

"It was so well-written, and it was tough on paper, and even tougher as an artist to portray. She is a hard nut to crack. She is in a senior position, assertive, and authoritative. So, it's an amazing part to sink your teeth into," she concluded. PTI



Mumbai: Actor Sidharth Malhotra, in an exclusive interview emphasised his preference for allowing his work to speak for itself rather than depending on public relations efforts to build an aura.

During the chat, he was questioned about his deliberate and calm approach to his career, especially in comparison to his contemporaries, who often make numerous announcements.

In response, the *Shershaah* actor shared, "It's been almost 11 years now, so after the first few years, you realise that eventually, it's what you bring on screen that matters. The previous chatter is not really relevant because you can build up as much as you want. You could be vocal, showcasing I've got this, this, and this together," this is what I can do. I believe in demonstrating what one can do, and there is a sense of confidence and security in knowing that you bring something valuable to the table, something that lends itself to the larger screen and a particular tonality of action."

He attributed his mindset to learnings from the initial years of his career, drawing on his background and upbringing. The *SOTY* actor emphasised the importance of staying focused on one's work and not getting distracted by external factors. He stressed that the key lies in delivering a good performance and being in sync with directors. Rather than building up a certain PR image or an aura beforehand, the *Mission Majnu* actor finds it more effective to come up with the content and receive genuine responses.

In conclusion, he expressed, "To me, a closed fist is stronger."

SID WANTS HIS WORK TO SPEAK

Ananya admits being a people-pleaser

Mumbai: Though neither Ananya Panday nor Aditya Roy Kapur have confessed their relationship, in a recent interview, actress Ananya spoke about the kind of movie she would want to do with Roy Kapur and also talked about her tendency to place her self-worth in the hands of others and her qualities as a girlfriend.

During the interview, the *Liger* actress was asked about the possibility of working with Aditya Roy Kapur in one of his films. After a moment of contemplation, she expressed her interest in a light-hearted romantic comedy like *OK Jaanu*. She cited the fun atmosphere on the film set and highlighted the scarcity of such light-hearted rom-coms in recent times.

Further, during the conversation, she was also asked if she puts her self-worth in the hands of others, and the actress admitted being a people-pleaser. She said that she tends to place her self-worth in the hands of various people, not just her partner. Acknowledging her inclination as a people-pleaser, she emphasised her desire for others, including directors, family, friends, and audiences, to perceive her positively. Recognising this trait, she expressed the need to act upon it.

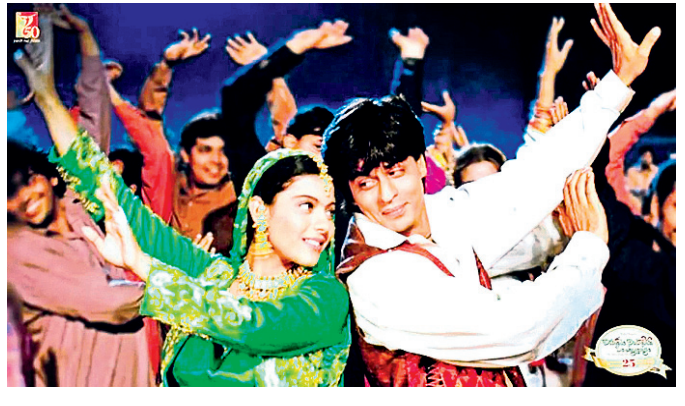


She also shared insights into her qualities as a girlfriend, admitting that possessiveness is a trait she dislikes about herself in that role. Additionally, she acknowledged occasionally engaging in activities she may not prefer simply to align with her partner's interests. On the positive side, she described herself as protective and consistently supportive in a relationship.

GLOBAL HONOUR FOR INDIAN MOVIE

ACADEMY RECOGNITION FOR DDLJ

Mumbai: In a surprise for fans, The Academy shared a video clip of a song from the 1995 film *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*. Taking to Instagram Saturday, The Academy posted a brief video from the song *Mehndi Laga Ke Rakhna*, featuring Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol. It also called the film 'classic'.



Posting the video, The Academy wrote, "Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol are performing the classic song *Mehndi Laga Ke Rakhna* from 1995's *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*."

Reacting to the post, a fan said, "The Academy posting this

makes me emotional. These two have contributed so much to

Bollywood, and I look forward to the day that they are honoured

as well!" "*DDLJ* is the longest-running movie in the history of Indian cinema. Legacy of Shah Rukh Khan," wrote an Instagram user.

Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge is a 1995 musical romance film written and directed by Aditya Chopra in his directorial debut and produced by Yash Chopra's Yash Raj Films. The film starred Shah Rukh Khan and Kajol in lead roles and also starred Amrith Puri, Farida Jalal, Satish Shah, Himani Shivpuri, Anupam Kher, Parmeet Sethi, and Mandira Bedi, among others.

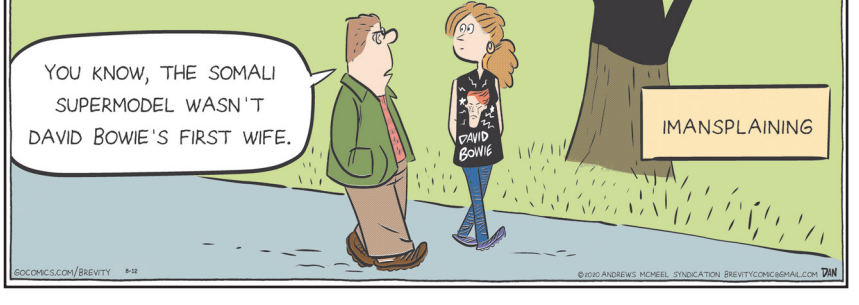
PEANUTS



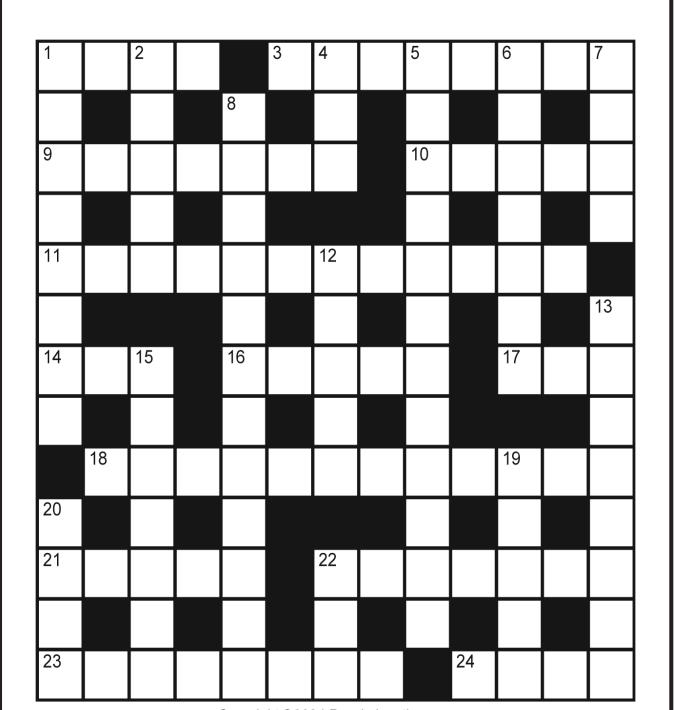
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



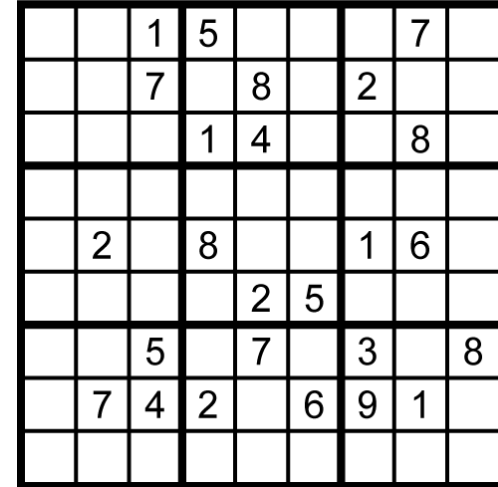
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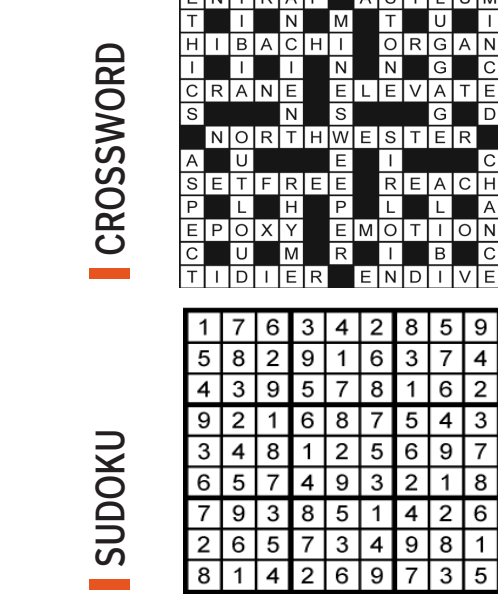
- Across**
- 1 Carryall
 - 3 Clear soup
 - 9 Relaxation
 - 10 Cattle farm
 - 11 Staffordshire dog breeds (4,8)
 - 14 Pouch
 - 16 Leguminous plant
 - 17 Reverence
 - 18 Boxer's class
 - 21 Tedious (2-3)
 - 22 Indicates
 - 23 Lady Godiva city
 - 24 Reeled
 - Down**
 - 1 Bottle gourd
 - 2 Calm
 - 4 Be in debt
 - 5 Razor type
 - 6 Roman goddess of wisdom
 - 7 Canyon sound
 - 8 Type of health supplement
 - 12 Helicopter part
 - 13 Throw away
 - 15 Russian dramatist
 - 19 Clutch
 - 20 Stylish
 - 22 Elton John, e.g.

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



Academy tribute
The Academy surprises fans by sharing *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge's* song *Mehndi Laga Ke Rakhna* on Instagram, calling it a 'classic'

LEISURE



DAVOS 2024
National security advisors of several countries meet to discuss a peace formula for Ukraine and pushed for early restoration of peace

INTERNATIONAL | P8



ONGC's deep-water win
In a big push for India's energy security, ONGC has discovered two significant natural gas reserves in the Mahanadi basin block

BUSINESS | P9



Chirag, Satwik lose
Chirag Shetty and Satwik Rankireddy lose in the doubles final of the Malaysian Open to their Chinese opponents

SPORTS | BACK PAGE

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BHUBANESWAR | MONDAY JANUARY 15 | 2024

P1

Ex-lecturer poses as Vig SP in ₹7.6L fraud

Bhubaneswar, Jan 14: The Commissionerate Police has arrested a former lecturer for cheating a contractor of more than ₹7 lakh by impersonating a senior IPS officer and Superintendent of Police (SP) in the state Vigilance department, said Goutam Kisan, the ACP Zone-V Sunday.

The police have identified the accused as Manoj Kumar Majhi (34) of Krushnaprasad area in Puri district.

On May 31, 2023, Manoj Kumar Choudhury, a native of Rayagada district, filed a complaint at the Cyber Police Station in Bhubaneswar that an unknown person had duped him of ₹7,60,000. Based on the complaint, the Cyber Police registered a case and launched an investigation into the matter. Police later nabbed Majhi near his village and seized ₹2.6 lakh in cash, six ATM cards and other incriminating materials from his possession.

"The accused contacted the complainant, Choudhury, a contractor, over telephone identifying himself as a senior IPS officer and the SP in the Vigilance

department. During the conversation, he told Choudhury that several projects of the Vigilance department would start soon and asked him whether he was interested in doing the building work," ACP Kisan said.

When Choudhury expressed his interest in the building work of the Vigilance Divisional Office at Therubali and Rayagada, Majhi asked him to pay ₹5 lakh as advance which he paid accordingly in April last year. Later, he again took ₹2.6 lakh from Choudhury to help him get the buildings' contract after a few days. However, he later started avoiding Choudhury following the receipt of the advance money and also switched off his mobile phone. Finding no other way, Choudhury finally lodged a complaint with the police.

"The accused Majhi used to work as the psychology lecturer at a college in Udala area of Mayurbhanj district. However, later he started cheating people through various means. We have so far found his involvement in five other cases of cheating including one case registered by the Economic Offence Wing of the state crime branch," added Kisan.



100 DAYS OF WAR: With the US Capitol in the background, demonstrators rally during the 'March on Washington for Gaza' at Freedom Plaza in Washington, as the Israel-Hamas war completed 100 days

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, sir. We're not here for the longest bridge. Just wanted to experience the country's costliest toll

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	29.6°C	27.5°C
Min Temp	16.3°C	15.0°C
Humidity	77%	75%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST

DRY WEATHER VERY LIKELY

SHORT TAKES

Parikrama: Jan 17 declared holiday

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha government has declared January 17, the day of the dedication of Srimandir Parikrama Prakaip in Puri, as a public holiday. All government offices, schools and colleges of the state will be closed Wednesday, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a statement. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced this to facilitate people's participation in the inauguration of the Jagannath temple heritage corridor project at Puri, it said.

Fog disrupts flight operations in Delhi

New Delhi: A total of 10 flights were diverted, nearly 100 delayed and some cancelled at the Delhi airport Sunday morning as low visibility conditions due to dense fog disrupted operations. An official said a total of 10 flights, including 2 international flights, were diverted to Jaipur between 4.30am and 12 noon. Nearly 100 flights, including overseas services, were delayed and some of the flights cancelled due to the bad weather, the official said. Through social media, airlines said their flight schedules might be impacted due to adverse weather conditions.

Withdraw troops by March 15: Maldives

AGENCIES

Male, Jan 14: Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu has asked India to withdraw its military personnel from his country by March 15, a senior official here said Sunday, nearly two months after Male sought their removal. According to the latest government figures, there are 88 Indian military personnel in the Indian Ocean archipelagic nation.

In a press briefing, Abdulla Nazim Ibrahim, the public policy secretary at the President's Office, said that President Muizzu has formally asked India to withdraw its military personnel by March 15, the SunOnline newspaper reported.

The Indian government did not immediately confirm the media report or comment on it.

"Indian military personnel cannot stay in the Maldives. This is the policy of President Dr Mohamed Muizzu and that of this administration," he said.

Maldives and India have set up a high-level core group to negotiate the withdrawal of troops. The group held its first meeting at the Foreign Ministry



Headquarters in Male Sunday morning.

The meeting was also attended by Indian High Commissioner Munu Mahawar, the report said. Nazim confirmed the meeting and said the agenda for the meeting was the request to withdraw troops by March 15.

Soon after taking oath as the President of the Maldives November 17 last year, Muizzu, who is regarded as a pro-China leader, formally requested India to withdraw its military personnel from his country, saying the Maldivian people have given him a 'strong mandate' to make this request to New Delhi.

The request for the withdrawal of Indian military personnel

Muizzu's party loses Mayoral poll in Male

In a setback to Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, the pro-India opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) has secured a landslide victory in the capital Male's Mayoral election. The MDP candidate, Adam Azim, has been elected as the new mayor of Male, a post held by Muizzu till recently. Muizzu resigned from the position to contest the presidential elections last year. The Maldives media reported Azim's win as a "landslide" and "victory by a large margin". The poll on Saturday was marked by a low turnout, according to reports.

comes amid a row between the two nations in the backdrop of derogatory comments posted by three deputy ministers of the Muizzu government against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Muizzu suspended the three ministers after their social media postings, which stirred concern in India and calls for a boycott by Indian tourists who ranked highest in numbers followed by Russia. Chinese tourists figured third.

BHARAT JODO NYAY YATRA BEGINS Will bring back peace, says Rahul in Manipur

AGENCIES

Thoubal, Jan 14: Terming Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 10-year governance as "anyay kaal" (period of injustice), Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Sunday embarked on the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra from Manipur's Thoubal district with a promise to bring peace and harmony in the ethnic violence-hit state.

The violence that broke out in the northeastern state in May last year has claimed more than 180 lives and rendered thousands homeless.

Addressing a public meeting in Thoubal, which is south of Manipur capital Imphal, Gandhi also hit out at PM Modi, saying perhaps for the BJP and the RSS, Manipur was not a part of India.

"Lakhs of people faced losses, but the Prime Minister has not come here to wipe your tears, hold your hand or embrace you. Maybe for Narendra Modi, the BJP and the RSS, Manipur is not a part of India. Your pain is not their pain," Gandhi said.

"We understand the pain that the people of Manipur have been through, we understand the hurt, the sadness. We will bring back harmony, peace and affection for which this state was known," he said.



The yatra will cover a distance of 6,713 km, straddling 100 Lok Sabha constituencies and 337 assembly segments and covering 110 districts. It will conclude in Mumbai March 20 after 67 days.

Earlier, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge also slammed the prime minister, saying that he came to the northeastern state only to seek votes and not to share the grief when the people of the state are in pain.

"Modi has time to drive by the sea, take a dip in the sea but has not come to Manipur. Modi keeps chanting 'Ram, Ram', but he should not do it to seek votes. The BJP mixes religion and politics, and incites people," he said at the launch of the yatra.

"The BJP has 'Ram' on its lips but carries a knife by their side. They should not have such an approach towards people," the Congress president said.

Deora quits Congress, joins Shinde-led Sena

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Jan 14: In a setback for Congress in Mumbai ahead of Lok Sabha polls, former Union minister Milind Deora Sunday quit the party to 'walk the path of development' and joined the Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, ending a 55 years old association of the Deora family with the Grand Old Party.

With Deora resigning just before the start of the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, the Congress alleged that the timing of the announcement of his departure from the party was determined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for headline management to counter the yatra, and asserted that it would have no impact.

The former Mumbai South MP announced his decision to resign from the primary membership of the party on social media platform X in the morning hours Sunday.

"Today marks the conclusion of a significant chapter in my political journey. I have tendered my resignation from the primary membership of the Congress, ending my family's 55-year relationship with the party. I am grateful to all leaders, colleagues and karyakartas for their unwavering support over the years," Deora stated. In the afternoon, Deora joined the Shiv Sena in the presence of Eknath Shinde in a function at Varsha, the official residence of the chief minister.

Denmark gets new King after Queen's historic abdication

AGENCIES

Copenhagen, Jan 14: Denmark's prime minister proclaimed Frederik X as king Sunday after his mother Queen Margrethe II formally signed her abdication, with massive crowds turning out to rejoice in the throne passing from a beloved monarch to her popular son.

Margrethe, 83, is the first Danish monarch to voluntarily relinquish the throne in nearly 900 years. Many thousands of people gathered outside the palace where the royal succession was taking place, the mood jubilant as the Nordic nation experienced the first royal succession in more than a half-century, and one not

caused by the death of a monarch. Wearing a magenta outfit, Margrethe signed her abdication during a meeting with the Danish Cabinet at the Christiansborg Palace, a vast complex in Copenhagen that houses the Royal Reception Rooms and Royal Stables as well as the Danish Parliament, the prime minister's office and the Supreme Court.

Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen next proclaimed Frederik king from the balcony of the palace before thousands of people. The abdication document was presented to Margrethe as she sat at a massive table covered in red cloth around which royals and members of the Danish government were seated.



Frederik, who was in a ceremonial military uniform adorned with medals, sat beside her. After signing it, Margrethe rose and gestured to Frederik to take her

World's first Australian-born queen

For the first time, Aussies found themselves witnessing one of their own, Princess Mary of Denmark, rise to the rank of queen when her husband, Crown Prince Frederik, was proclaimed king of the Nordic nation Sunday. Mary's unlikely journey from a law student in Tasmania to European royalty as the world's first Australian-born queen has captivated Danes and Australians alike for over two decades. The then Mary Donaldson was 28 years old and working as a real estate agent when her chance meeting with the Danish prince occurred at a Sydney pub during the 2000 Olympics. The announcement of their engagement in 2003 marked the beginning of what is considered in Australia a fairytale romance, and her succession to the title of queen consort has many Australians brimming with excitement and anticipation.

place. "God save the king," she said as she left the room.

The abdication leaves Denmark with two queens; Margrethe keeps her title while Frederik's

Australian-born wife becomes Queen Mary Frederik and Mary's eldest son Christian, 18, has become crown prince and heir to the throne. Christian handed

Margrethe her walking stick as she departed her abdication ceremony.

Citing health issues, Margrethe announced on New Year's Eve that she would step down, stunning a nation that had expected her to live out her days on the throne, as is tradition in the Danish monarchy. Margrethe underwent major back surgery last February and didn't return to work until April.

Even the PM was unaware of the queen's intentions until right before the announcement. Margrethe had informed Frederik and his younger brother Joachim just three days earlier, the Berlingske newspaper wrote, citing the royal palace.

Bizman's decomposed body found, murder suspected



The deceased has been identified as Biswajit Nayak, 43, of Sagua village in Balakati area under Baliana police limits

mediately rushed to the spot found putrid smell emanating from the room. Upon being informed, police reached the spot and recovered the body wrapped in the blood-stained blanket.

The police team, along with the scientific team and dog squad, has launched an investigation into the matter.

Meanwhile, a 35-year-old woman who was reportedly staying at Biswajit's house as a caretaker for the last around four months is absent for the last few days. Locals claimed that she was seen leaving the village on Friday.

"The body has some injury marks on the face but no stabbing injuries on any part of the body. We suspect that someone hit his forehead with a heavy object like a wooden log. The actual reasons for his death can only be ascertained after the receipt of the postmortem report. The investigation is on into the matter," said Jubaraj Swain, the Inspector In-Charge (IC) of Baliana police station.

the deceased's mother has been residing in Puri.

"The deceased Biswajit was staying alone for the past two years after his wife reportedly eloped with another youth. His nine-year-old son has been studying at a residential school in Puri. On Saturday morning, the deceased's younger brother who was working at Dhamra in Bhadrak district tried to contact his brother over phone but Biswajit neither picked up the phone nor replied to the messages sent by his brother," said a police official.

Suspecting something wrong, the deceased's brother on Saturday evening reportedly asked his step brother staying in Bhubaneswar to check why the deceased wasn't responding to his calls. His step brother who im-

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Jan 14: The decomposed body of a hotelier was found wrapped in a blanket at his residence in the Baliana area located on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar late Saturday evening.

The deceased has been identified as Biswajit Nayak, 43, of Sagua village in Balakati area under Baliana police limits. The victim owns a restaurant in VSS Nagar.

It is suspected that an unknown miscreant murdered him and later wrapped his body in the blanket before fleeing from the spot.

Sources claimed that Biswajit's father along with his second wife and sons stays in another house at the same village while



LEGALLY SPEAKING: Orissa High Court Bar Association president Dharanidhar Nayak addresses the All Odisha Bar Association Meet 2024 organised at Convention Hall of the Association in Cuttack, Sunday

5T Chairman visits pilgrim town

Kartik Pandian inspected all elements of Srimandir Parikrama and instructed the officials concerned to ensure regular cleaning and security

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 14: 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian visited the pilgrim town of Puri Sunday and inspected different works of the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa ahead of its inauguration January 17.



During his early morning visit to the seaside pilgrim town, Pandian inspected the sites of Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa,

Shree Marga, Shree Jagannatha Vihar, Shree Setu, Samanga Parking and facilities being created for the devotees.

The 5T Chairman inspected all elements of Parikrama and instructed the officials concerned to ensure regular cleaning and security. He also inspected Shree Marga, Shree Jagannath Ballav Vihar, Shree Setu and Samanga Parking and discussed the smooth arrival and movement of pilgrims from Samanga Parking to the Parikrama.

Pandian also reviewed the exhibition arena and discussed on the themes to be displayed.

During the visit, Collector, SP, MD OBCC and other senior officials of the district administration and executing agency were present.

Primary school teachers threaten stir from Jan 29



Bhubaneswar: The Primary School Teachers' Association in Odisha has threatened to go on strike again from January 29 if the state government fails to fulfil their three-point charter of demands. Speaking to media persons on Sunday, president of the Association Brahmananda Maharana said following their strike in September, 2023, an inter-ministerial committee had assured of taking steps for fulfilling the demands by December. But the government has failed to take any steps on its assurance of meeting the demands. "We will wait till January 27 for the government action on our demands. If no step is taken till then, we will again resort to agitation from January 29," Maharana said. As part of the agitation, hundreds of teachers from across the state will assemble at the Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar and stage a demonstration, he added. The teachers' demands include equal pay for equal work, abolition of the new pension scheme and adoption of the old one and counting the contractual teachers as regular staff by paying them six-year's increment. Maharana said if the government does not initiate any step after our agitation January 29, the teachers will intensify the strike all over the state. It may be noted that the primary school teachers had resorted to mass leave for around 10 days in September last year to press their demands.



SKETCHING SKILL: Students participate in drawing competition organised by AIDS0 at Railway Settlement High School in Cuttack, Sunday

KRUSHI ODISHA 2024

Focus on product packaging & marketing: Guv to SHGs

Das said that development of any country is not possible without the involvement of women

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 14: Joining the concluding day of Krushi Odisha 2024 as the chief guest here Sunday, Governor Raghubar Das urged women farmers to use modern machinery and asked the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) to focus on better packaging and marketing of their products.

"Development of rural areas will accelerate the development of the country and Odisha will become a prosperous state by 2047," he said at valedictory function of the farmers' event organised by state Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare department.

Das further said that the de-



velopment of any country is not possible without the involvement of women. "The contribution of the women of our country is unparalleled all over the world. More and more women farmers are now engaged in agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, etc. Productivity has increased due to the increased emphasis on agriculture. That is why the state government is getting the Krushi Karman Award. It is a matter of pride for the people of the state," he said. "Women farmers, who have been deprived of benefits because they don't own the land, have contributed immensely to development of the sector. In

tribal areas, the contribution of women is much higher than that of men," Das said.

Speaking on the occasion, Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain said, "The Krushi Machinery Fair will be organised at the block level in the coming days. Earlier, the fair organized at the sub-division level has been very successful. About ₹1,400 crore of machinery transactions have been done and subsidies worth ₹500 crore have been transferred. The state government is focusing on giving money to farmers, generating employment and increasing production."

During the event, several memorandums of understandings (MoUs) were signed between premier institutions of agriculture and other fields, to cater to a wide range of needs, starting from training of women farmers to increasing their income.

Obesity may up risk of blood cancer by over 70%

The research published in Blood Advances revealed that individuals with obesity are more likely to have monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS) – a benign blood condition that often precedes multiple myeloma



They found that being obese was associated with 73 per cent higher odds of having MGUS, compared to individuals with normal weights. This association remained unchanged when accounting for physical activity. However, highly active individuals (defined as doing the

equivalent of running or jogging 45-60 minutes per day or more) were less likely to have MGUS even after adjusting for BMI class, whereas those who reported heavy smoking and short sleep were more likely to also have detectable levels of MGUS. MGUS, characterised by an abnormal protein produced by

plasma cells, is a known precursor to multiple myeloma. Most people with MGUS exhibit no significant symptoms and are not immediately ill. Rather, the presence of MGUS serves as a warning to monitor for the potential development of more critical conditions, like multiple myeloma, that MGUS can turn into.

"These results guide our future research in understanding the influence of modifiable risk factors, such as weight, exercise, and smoking, on cancer risk," explained Lee.

"Before we can develop effective preventative health strategies to lower the risk of serious diseases like multiple myeloma, we first need to better understand the relationship between MGUS and potentially modifiable risk factors like obesity."

Rly Min reviews Cuttack station

Bhubaneswar: Union Railways, Communications and Information and Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnav Sunday inspected the Bhadrak-Bhubaneswar railway section to review safety and traffic facilities and take stock of the ongoing infrastructure work. During the inspection, he advised officials to complete the infrastructure related projects in time to avail passengers the best of amenities. Later, Vaishnav visited the Cuttack and Bhubaneswar railway stations and reviewed progress of the ongoing infrastructural works for redevelopment of these stations as per global standards. Vaishnav expressed his happiness over the progress of the construction work.



CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, NILOFAR NASRIN wife of Sk. Samsuj Zama, At-Galapolo Road, Aradbajar, PS- Sahadevkhunta, Dist-Balasure, Odisha, Pin-756001 declare by this affidavit No.240, Dated 10.01.2024 that now onwards I shall be known as NILOFER NASRIN for all future purposes.

Researchers find that obesity may increase the risk of developing multiple myeloma – a blood cancer of the plasma cells – by more than 70 per cent. Smoking habits and exercise may also impact one's likelihood of developing multiple myeloma, said the team from Massachusetts General Hospital in the US.

The research published in Blood Advances revealed that individuals with obesity are more likely to have monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS) – a benign blood condition that often pre-

cedes multiple myeloma. "While significant advancements have been made in therapeutics for multiple myeloma, it remains an incurable disease, often diagnosed after patients have already experienced end-organ damage," explained David Lee, from Massachusetts General Hospital.

The team enrolled 2,628 individuals from across the US who were at elevated risk of developing multiple myeloma, based on self-identified race and family history of hematologic malignancies, between February 2019 and March 2022.

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19 ISS structures on Mahanadi

Projects to ensure supply of water to the river during non-monsoon seasons



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, Jan 14: A total of 19 new in-stream storage structures (ISS) will be built in the state to keep the water supply constant in the Mahanadi and other rivers during the summer and winter seasons, sources informed here Sunday. The in-stream structures will be built at a cost of ₹10,000 crore. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will lay the foundation stones for all the projects through video conferencing, January 20.

The ISS projects will come up in 13 districts. They are Subarnapur, Bargarh, Bolangir, Boudh, Kalahandi, Sambalpur, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Keonjhar, Khurda, Puri and Sundargarh.

In the first phase, an ISS will be built at Godhaneshwar under Birmaharajpur block of Subarnapur district and another near Khairamal under Kantamal block of Boudh district. The two projects will be built at a cost of ₹1,950 crore. The projects constructed on Mahanadi riverbed will provide huge relief to residents in Subarnapur and Boudh districts.

Administrative officials of both the districts are on their toes for the foundation stone laying ceremony after a letter from Bhakta Ranjan Mohanty, engineer-in-chief of Water Resources department was issued January 10.

Subarnapur District Collector Bimalendu Ray and SP Amaresh Kumar Panda visited Godhaneshwar Sunday to take stock of the situation. A function will be held at Jatesingha High School ground under Birmaharajpur block for inauguration of the Godhaneshwar project.

The Water Resources department had floated a tender for the purpose in August, last year after its proposal for construction of ISS received the approval of the Odisha government.

It should be stated here that the Mahanadi river is known as the lifeline of Odisha. Water flow in the Mahanadi has drastically declined during the non-monsoon season after the Chhattisgarh government constructed multiple barrages on the upstream of the river.

Earlier, the Odisha government had prepared a master

plan to utilise the water of Mahanadi river and its distributaries. It had planned to construct multiple barrages in Mahanadi river in 2017. After a preliminary survey, the technical advisory committee also gave its approval to the projects. However, the implementation of the projects got delayed due to unknown reasons.

Later, Sonepur MLA and former Finance Minister Niranjana Pujari while presenting the budget for FY 2023-24 had announced construction of Godhaneshwar and Khairamal barrage projects.

A detailed project report (DPR) worth ₹1024.81 crore was prepared for construction of ISS at Godhaneshwar. Similarly, the Water Resources department in Boudh had prepared a detailed DPR worth ₹925.59 crore for construction of the ISS at Khairamal.

However, implementation of the projects got delayed due to lack of administrative clearance. However, it got a short in the arm when ST and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian visited Boudh district recently. He visited the confluence of Mahanadi and Tel rivers at Rameswar and took stock of Khairamal project. He assured that the projects will soon receive administrative clearance.

Notably, the Godhaneshwar project will be bigger than Khairamal project. The projects when completed will help in increase in groundwater level, water conservation, drinking water supply, fish cultivation, tourism, supply of water to industrial plants and growth of hotel industries.

Vaishnav says he won't contest from Balasore

PNN & AGENCIES

Balasore, Jan 14: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said Sunday he will not contest the Lok Sabha elections from the Balasore constituency, putting speculations to rest. Speculations were rife that the BJP may field Vaishnav, a Rajya Sabha MP, from the Balasore seat in the Lok Sabha elections. He was the district collector of Balasore as an IAS officer.

"I will not contest from Balasore. We have Pratap 'Nana' here," Vaishnav told reporters, referring to sitting BJP MP Pratap Sarangi, who is a former Union Minister.

The speculations were further fuelled by Vaishnav's extensive visits to various places in this district and attending public programmes. He visited the Balasore railway station Sunday morning, and asked officers to write 'Baleswar', as the place is known in Odia, instead of 'Balasore' in signages.

Vaishnav also visited Jhadeshwar Shiv temple here along with Sarangi. He donated an ambulance to the Balasore district hospital and also went to the AIIMS satellite hospital nearby.



It should be stated here that last week, when Vaishnav visited Cuttack district, he did not rule out the possibility that the BJP may field him from the Cuttack seat in the Lok Sabha polls.

Mediapersons again raised the topic here Sunday. "I am a disciplined worker of the party and I perform whatever task it assigns to me. Recently, the party asked me to work in the Madhya Pradesh elections which I did," Vaishnav said.

Vaishnav was also the district collector of Cuttack. The Cuttack seat is at present held by six-time BJD MP Bhartruhari Mahtab.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Crew of seized Vietnamese ship falls into sea, injured

22 KG OF COCAINE WAS SEIZED FROM THE VESSEL DECEMBER 1

PNN & AGENCIES

Paradip, Jan 14: A crew of the Vietnamese cargo ship, which had been detained following the seizure of cocaine worth ₹220 crore at the port here, was injured after he fell into the sea Sunday, police said.

Twenty-one Vietnamese crew members have been detained on the ship, which is anchored 4.5km away from the port under the supervision of the Customs department.

Various sources indicated that the crew member had tried to die by suicide.

Police said around 3.00am, the crew member fell into the sea from the ship. However, it was not clear immediately whether he accidentally fell into the sea, attempted suicide or tried to escape, police said.

"After getting information about the incident, we rushed to the spot and rescued him. He was first admitted to the port



hospital and later shifted to a private hospital in Bhubaneswar," said Santosh Kumar Jena, the sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) of Paradip.

Jena informed that the crew member sustained injuries on his face and hand. He added that the condition of the person is stable. "An investigation is underway to ascertain how the person fell into the sea," Jena stated.

However, various other sources indicated that the person had tried to die by suicide. However, he failed to do so, due to the prompt rescue work carried out by the people present in other ships close to the seized vessel.

In the biggest drug haul in Odisha, 22kg of cocaine was seized from the ship December 1. The ship, 'MV Debi', reached here from Indonesia on the way to Denmark. Since then the ship has remained here.

Youth dies while playing cricket

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Jan 14: In a tragic incident, a 28-year-old breathed his last Sunday while playing cricket at Manatri village under Baisinga police limits in Mayurbhanj district. The deceased has been identified as Bikash Kar, 28, son of Baiyanath Kar, a resident of the same village under Baisinga police station limits.

According to information available from other locals, Bikash was playing at the Manatri mini stadium when tragedy struck. While trying to stop a ball he collapsed in a heap. Initially his friends tried to revive him, but when they failed they rushed him to the hospital. However, doctors pronounced Bikash dead on arrival.



On being informed, police reached the spot and sent the body to the Pandit Raghunath Murmu Medical College and Hospital (PRMMCH) here for post-mortem after registering a case of unnatural death. It is being suspected that Bikash suffered a massive heart attack during the game and died. A pall of gloom prevailed in the village after the news of his untimely death spread.

International team lauds Gopalpur tussar village



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rasulpur, Jan 14: Gopalpur village under this block in Jajpur district and famous for its tussar fabrics had much to celebrate Sunday as an international team on handicrafts visited the place. The five-member team examined the weaving of tussar fabrics, the exquisite craftsmanship and methods to obtain a smooth and shiny finish for the product. They also talked at length about the market demand for tussar fabrics. Officials said that the team was made up with representatives from the US, Australia, Brazil and Switzerland.

Tussar silk sarees of Gopalpur village are world famous due to the specialised weaving techniques adopted by the weavers who have learnt this craft from their ancestors and are practicing it for generations. Approximately 500 weavers in Gopalpur have been eking out their livelihoods by weaving tussar silk sarees.

The team members after their arrival visited the workshop of 'Maa Tarini Weavers Cooperative

Society'. They enquired from the weavers about the weaving process. They also appreciated the calendaring machine used in weaving and enquired about its operation from president of the society Rebatu Guin and senior members Ashok Guin and Ramesh Das. The visitors stated that they will try their best for tussar fabric to gain worldwide popularity. If that happens, the demand for the products will grow and subsequently the incomes of the weavers will increase. They also purchased large quantities of tussar fabric from the weavers.

The visit of the team assumes significance with the start of an international handicraft summit at Jajati Hotel in Jajpur Road. The team members visited various handicrafts and handloom units in the district before the start of the summit. Deputy director Ashutosh Mohanty of Cuttack textile zone, additional director Prakash Chandra Mohanty of district handicraft department and other members accompanied the delegates.

Learning emporium launched in Kandhamal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Daringbadi, Jan 14: A learning emporium (a centre displaying study materials) was inaugurated at the Dasingbadi Upper Primary School under this block in Kandhamal district, officials said Sunday. The emporium was unveiled Friday, the officials added.

Daringbadi block education officer Rasananda Kar was present as chief guest and inaugurated the learning emporium at a function organised on the school premises. Subarna Sahana of 'Piramal Foundation' presided over the meeting.

In the first phase, the learning programmes have been launched at Dasingbadi, Chhadakhia and Janabadi Upper Primary Schools. The programme will be launched at other schools in the district at a later stage, officials informed.

CRCC Anil Nayak conducted the entire programme which was attended by Belasen Pradhan, headmaster of Daringbadi UP School, Baliarsingh Mohanty, headmaster of Chhadakhia UP School and Sukant Kumar Pradhan, headmaster of Janabadi UP School.

INTRODUCING

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Speculation rife over Oram's future

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Jan 14: Speculations about the political future of five-time MP Jual Oram is on the rise. Discussions are raging from all quarters that he may not be nominated again to contest on an MP ticket. Instead he may be asked to contest as a BJP candidate from an Assembly constituency in Sundargarh district.

There can be no doubt that the Sundargarh Lok Sabha constituency is the cynosure of all eyes. Despite Oram being a heavyweight candidate, other BJP leaders have the opinion that none are bigger than the part. A senior BJP leader, who attended the two-day party conclave here recently said, "BJP has proved time and again that we cre-



Jual Oram



Kusum Tete

ate political leaders. So more than the person, it is the party as a whole which matters."

Other sources also indicated that in the recent past there have been some deliberations regarding Oram's nom-

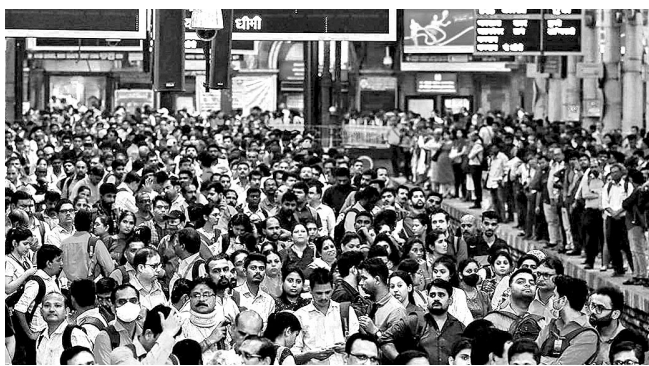
inations. MLA Kusum Tete's name has been doing the rounds as the MP candidate of the BJP. A few months back Shankar Oram, the Birmatrapur MLA, also expressed his desire to contest as an MP ticket.

Some insiders pointed out that the usual confidence and flamboyance associated with Oram have been missing for some time now. In the recent past, Oram has also been maintaining a stoic silence over the issue. Whenever the topic of renomination has come up, Oram's answer has been, "I am a dedicated soldier of the BJP. I will do whatever the party asks me to do."

Oram's bane has been the Bonai Assembly constituency where the CPI (M) has established its dominance. In fact some of Oram's critics are of the opinion that he helps the CPI (M) in Bonai so that no other BJP leaders can come up in Sundargarh district. No one knows how much credence the theory has, but it is a fact that the way ahead for Oram has some thorns.

FOCUS ECONOMY

INDIA'S JOBS CHALLENGE



With tens of millions of highly educated young people joining the workforce every year, unmet expectations and growing social unrest threaten to turn the country's much-anticipated 'demographic dividend' into a disaster

one-fifth of national income.

Consequently, mass consumption has remained constrained, which may explain the government's unwillingness to conduct consumer-spending surveys. This contributed to a sharp decline in domestic investment, which fell from a peak of 42% of GDP in 2006-07 to roughly 31% in 2022-23. Moreover, basic human-development indicators, particularly those related to nutrition, have remained poor and even worsened in recent years, related to low public spending on health, education, and social protection.

Regrettably, creating more high-quality jobs does not appear to be one of the Modi government's top priorities. Instead, the government's economic strategy has focused on "incentivizing" a select group of corporate investors through taxpayer-funded subsidies and regulatory changes. The needs of the vast majority of micro, small, and medium-size enterprises, which employ most of India's workforce, are often overlooked. Moreover, these companies have been adversely affected by policy mistakes such as the demonetization project that abruptly nullified 86% of India's currency in 2016 and the poorly designed and hurriedly implemented Goods and Services Tax of 2017.

Without far-reaching reforms aimed at boosting employment and guaranteeing living wages, India will struggle to achieve genuine economic success. The general election due in April and May offers Indian voters a chance to reorient the economy toward a more sustainable, equitable path. They must not squander it.

The writer, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, is Co-Chair of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

India seems to be everyone's favourite growth story nowadays. Despite valid concerns about the accuracy of official statistics, the Indian economy is projected to expand by 6.3% in 2024—an undeniably remarkable feat given that its GDP exceeds \$4.1 trillion. While it remains a lower-middle-income country with a per capita income under \$3,000 (at market exchange rates), India's rapid growth suggests that its economic potential may be greater than expected.

But any optimism about India's economic prospects must be tempered by its inability to address two related challenges. The first is the unequal distribution of the benefits of rapid economic growth, which have accrued predominantly to the top 10-20% of income earners.

India's failure to release any consumption figures since 2011-12 has made it difficult to produce reliable estimates of potential increases in inequality and poverty. Such estimates rely heavily on consumer expenditure surveys, typically conducted every five years. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government scrapped the 2017-18 survey because the findings did not align with its preferred narrative. The government has refused to conduct subsequent surveys, even though up-to-date data are vital for informed policymaking.

Moreover, the decennial census, which was meant to be completed in 2021, has been postponed indefinitely. Consequently, neither the government nor citizens know how many people there are in India, where they live, or their living conditions and employment status. Nevertheless, various indicators suggest that the incomes of top earners have increased sharply while the wages of most workers, especially those in the bottom half of the distribution, have stagnated or declined.

The second major challenge facing India is that rapid GDP growth has not created enough jobs to accommodate its youth-

ful population. With tens of millions of highly educated young people joining the workforce every year, unmet expectations and growing social unrest threaten to turn the country's much-anticipated "demographic dividend" into a disaster.

India has long struggled with low job creation, especially over the past decade. According to the government's own labour force surveys, the country's worker-to-population ratio has declined from 38.6% in 2011-12 to 37.3% in 2022-23. Official statistics also show that the female workforce participation rate has fallen to just 20.8%. But even this figure is inflated, as the government includes "unpaid helpers in family enterprises" in its definition of workers.

This approach to labour data is unique to India. Categorising unpaid helpers as "self-employed," even though they earn no income, runs counter to international best practices, which clearly define employment as work that is remunerated, either in the form of wages and salaries or earnings from self-employment. Moreover, other forms of unpaid labour in India, such as housework and caregiving, are not classified as employment. Notably, women who

continue to perform the vast majority of household labour are not considered part of the workforce.

Excluding unpaid workers reveals a far lower workforce participation rate than official figures suggest. In 2022-23, 48% of men in India were engaged in paid employment, compared to just 13% of Indian women, resulting in one of the world's lowest female workforce participation rates.

This underscores the biggest shortcoming of India's much-vaunted growth model: its inability to generate employment opportunities, even relatively low-paid and poor-quality jobs, despite rapid increases in aggregate GDP. It should come as little surprise, then, that real wages have remained largely stagnant over the past decade.

Notably, even among agricultural workers, who experienced the highest real wage growth (albeit at a modest average annual rate of 0.9%), real wages actually declined between 2014-15 and 2021-22 in major states like Haryana, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu. Meanwhile, about half of India's workforce remains employed in low-productivity sectors that account for just



Jayati Ghosh

INDIA HAS LONG STRUGGLED WITH LOW JOB CREATION, ESPECIALLY OVER THE PAST DECADE

Unfriended Maldives

It was only expected that the relationship between India and Maldives would come under strain following the victory of pro-Chinese Mohamed Muizzu in the recent presidential election of the archipelago. In fact, a key plank of his poll campaign was the "India Out" slogan and gearing the country's foreign policy towards China. His immediate predecessor had maintained strong relations with India. But, none could perhaps anticipate the ties between the two neighbors would deteriorate so quickly.

The row started with a visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Lakshadweep, an archipelago off the coast, some 400 kms from Kerala, to promote domestic tourism. The Prime Minister praised the natural beauty of Lakshadweep in a series of posts on X (Twitter). On the face of it such expressions from the PM are nothing unusual. He has every right to look after his country's interests. That he needed to be far more tactful for the sake of diplomacy and forestalling Chinese advances in a highly geopolitically strategic and charged area is another matter. India seems to merrily get into such traps repeatedly that are laid by China with the help of its friends in not only the Maldives but also other countries in the neighborhood. Modi's visit was followed by his supporters' seemingly engineered comparison that claimed the Indian islands were far superior in beauty and more economical for tourists and those tweets, obviously, sparked anger among some officials in the Maldives, who viewed the comparisons of Lakshadweep as an attempt to downgrade the importance of their country as a tourist destination for Indians and other nationals. It is noteworthy that Maldivian economy is greatly dependent on international tourism.

In a rather unusual showdown Mariyam Shiuana, a deputy minister in Muizzu's cabinet fired the first salvo against the Indian Prime Minister calling Modi a "puppet of Israel," a reference to the close ties between India and the Jewish state amid the controversial Israel-Hamas war. She then wrote - "What a clown" - in response to a video of Modi walking along a beach in Lakshadweep, tagging her comment with #VisitMaldives.

Indian social media reacted even more furiously and urged Indian tourists to boycott the Maldives. The Maldives government apparently did not want to precipitate any crisis and Shiuana's post has since been deleted, while she and two other officials from the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Information and Arts were suspended for their remarks. But the damage had already been done. The calls in India for a boycott of Maldives have become shriller. One of India's largest online travel platforms has said that it would no longer be accepting any bookings for the Maldives in a very patriotically worded statement. Bollywood has also joined the chorus of protest and many celebrities are urging Indians to engage in local tourism. Actor Amitabh Bachchan also promoted travel to Lakshadweep in a post on X, while referencing another post by former cricket star Virender Sehwag that called the Maldives officials' comments "a dig at our country."

On social media Indians are posting about their cancelled trips to the Maldives and urging one another to go to Lakshadweep instead. According to one unverifiable report there has been a manifold increase in searches in an Indian travel booking site for Lakshadweep since Modi's visit. Indians made up 11 per cent of tourists to the Maldives last year—ranking as the nationality with the largest number of visitors to the tourism hotspot.

India had tried to be diplomatically correct after the victory of "anti-Indian forces" in the Maldives and the Modi government sent a Minister to Muizzu's swearing in. Also, there was a Modi-Muizzu meet at the COP28. However, India's internal politics seems to be taking a toll of its external relations. Muizzu is the first President not to make India his first port of call after assuming power. Even former President Yameen, who is credited with launching the "India Out" movement and gravitating towards Beijing, visited Delhi first in 2014. On the other hand, Muizzu has kept up pressure as part of his electoral pledges for the withdrawal of India's military personnel, even though India has explained the role of the military in ensuring security for trade and commerce in the region. Today, the Maldives government has formally ordered the withdrawal of Indian military personnel from the island nation by 15 March. This is a great diplomatic loss for India. It also marks the loss of one more friendly nation for India.

This latest turn of events shows that India has been consistently failing in mature diplomacy and that's damaging the country on a long term basis.

WISDOM CORNER

- Let us try to teach generosity and altruism, because we are born selfish. **RICHARD DAWKINS**
- There lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds. **ALFRED LORD TENNYSON**
- Truth is ever to be found in simplicity, and not in the multiplicity and confusion of things. **ISAAC NEWTON**

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1892:** The rules of basketball are published. Canadian James Naismith invented the sport for his gym class at YMCA in Springfield, Massachusetts.
- 1919:** Polish-born German revolutionary and agitator Rosa Luxemburg, cofounder of the German Communist Party, was arrested and murdered in Berlin for fomenting a communist uprising known as the Spartacus Revolt.
- 1973:** Nixon orders ceasefire in Vietnam. The fighting continued anyway until the capture of Saigon by the Vietnam People's Army on April 30, 1975.
- 1992:** Croatia and Slovenia are internationally recognised as independent nations. The Yugoslav federation effectively collapsed as a result.
- 2001:** Wikipedia, the free Internet-based encyclopaedia that operates under an open-source management style, debuted; it was founded by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger.

LOL

TWO ROACHES

Two roaches were munching on garbage in an alley when one engages a discussion about a new restaurant.

"I was in that new restaurant across the street," said one. "It's so clean!



The kitchen is spotless, and the floors are gleaming white. There is no dirt anywhere—it's so sanitary that the whole place shines." "Please," said the other roach frowning. "Not while I'm eating!"

SPECTRUM BUDGET

Hopes from a 'bare-bone affair'

The Union Budget 2024 may not be a glittering box but could reveal a lot on the Hindutva economy driving the country on to the fast track. Over the decades a norm has evolved of presenting an interim budget lest the incumbent government could take an advantage in elections. Being the election year, it does not prevent the new budget from coming out with certain surprises as the Constitution does not have any provision for an interim statement of accounts. It will be in that sense a normal budget and the government is within its right to include any proposal.

All sectors may have a platter and it may go far beyond hackneyed tax reforms. There is elation in official circles about the GDP numbers that is hoped to touch 7.3%.

There are hopes that in view of the impending elections and unpopularity of the vehicle scrapping policy, government might extend the lives of vehicles, particularly cars and tractors, as these hit largely the lower strata, or upcoming middle class and farmers the most. The western Uttar Pradesh

farmers, strong supporters of BJP, are up in arms to protect their diesel tractors. It is hurting the country's economy. Most in the government and even in the organisations related to the NDA want that such moves which lead to unpopularity must be rectified. They believe that it gives the Opposition an edge on populist issues such as vehicle scrapping, apparently a move by the automobile makers' lobby to boost their profits. Besides, farmers are sensitive to many new developments. Their Kisan Samman Nidhi or farmers' pension of ₹6000 a year may see an increase to ₹8000. The allocation of ₹60000 crore a year might go up in the range of ₹70000 crore.

Concerns have been expressed over the high petrol road cess and tormenting road toll collections. The NHAI needs about ₹1.25 lakh crore a year, but the total collections are several times more in the range of ₹7 to 10 lakh crore a year. This is hurting businesses. Transporters want it replaced by an annual contribution on each truck and allowing free movement of non-commercial vehicles. Lower rates

and no tolls are also stated to check inflation and boost domestic tourism.

Some of the key political concerns are the poor, women, youth, farmers, and tribals, as the BJP-NDA aims a third term in office over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's stress on "inclusive growth". The Union Budget 2023 too had stressed on these sectors. It is believed to have paid dividends politically in the recent elections to five States—Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Mizoram. There is speculation that schemes meant for these sections of society might get more emphasis. Education and skill development might get attention to address the aspirations of the youth.

It would be interesting to watch how Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tailors her budget speech on February 1 on this focal point. Political concern for women is also because it's now believed that they direct the polling trend significantly.

Additionally, tribals and other backward classes have stood largely with the ruling combine. It might not be a surprise

to see special programmes being announced for them. Prime Minister Modi while flagging off the Vikasit Bharat Sankalp Yatra at Khunti in Jharkhand had specifically mentioned that some sections which were not beneficiary of many schemes would now be on the government's agenda. They may get a substantial share of allocations and it could be the same for the hills and the North-East. Ekalavya Model schools too may get further attention to connect with the people in remote areas.

Sitharaman herself has downplayed expectations stating that it would be a "bare-bone affair." This means the major concern is to have the appropriation bill passed to keep the wheels moving till June. Practically it may focus on fiscal discipline, check on expense limits, no major tax reforms though populist policy shift and future path reset is possible. It could do certain course corrections to address the growing debt for an economy touching four-trillion mark. Many hopes even from bare bones!



Shivaji Sarkar

IT COULD DO CERTAIN COURSE CORRECTIONS TO ADDRESS THE GROWING DEBT FOR AN ECONOMY TOUCHING FOUR-TRILLION MARK

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, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Tools of oppression

Sir, This refers to "ED summons Kejriwal Jan 18" (Orissa POST, January 14). May I ask what is wrong in this? It is always not convenient for a Chief Minister to make himself available at the office of the ED. If the motto of the ED is not to harass the Chief Minister, the officials of the ED could have come to his office and questioned him. In any case, harassment is not permitted. The ED has to have enough materials to question Kejriwal. But the ground reality is that both the ED and CBI are doing overtime just to satisfy some vested interests. The ruling party at the Centre has made these two investigating agencies as their tools of oppression, which the people disapprove of.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

Rising sea levels

Sir, Maldives is the lowest lying country in the world and a number of techniques are used to protect islands against flooding and erosion. Nevertheless, the country is expected to be entirely submerged by 2100. According to the World Bank, with "future sea levels projected to increase in the range of 10 to 100 cm by the year 2100, the entire country could be submerged." Researchers from the University of Southampton, the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia (UEA) and TEDI-London, working with Maldivian scientists, show that using simple engineering principals to raise islands or build new ones can help small island nations like the Maldives. This approach is consistent with existing practice in the Maldives, as well as demographic trends—the capital Malé and neighboring islands are attracting a rapidly expanding population as other islands are abandoned. Re-claiming land and creating new islands is an established practice in the Maldives, typically built two metres above sea level. The researchers suggest building higher islands up to six metres or more above sea-level to safeguard against long-term risk from sea-level rise and storms. They also recommend building new islands that the population could slowly move onto in an adaptive manner, including taking account how rapidly sea levels rise. This approach would work best when combined with climate stabilisation.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Parikrama Prakalpa

MONDAY | JANUARY 15 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR



REDEVELOPED SWARGADWAR

The much talked-about redevelopment of Swargadwar – ‘the gateway to heaven’ – is among the host of initiatives of the state government, under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, to transform Puri into a world heritage city. It is believed that cremation at Swargadwar helps one’s soul merge straight with the divine, a phenomenon described as ‘Baikuntha Prapti’. This belief is further bolstered by the fact that ocean wind blowing over Swargadwar moves in the direction of Srimandir and touches Patitapabana, the flag fluttering atop the 12th-century shrine.

Over the time, various factors, including encroachments, led to shrinking of space at the crematorium much to the inconvenience of people coming there to perform the last rites of their near and dear ones.

In 2019, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced an initiative to upgrade facilities and streamline services at Swargadwar with an initial allocation of ₹5 crore. Naveen also ordered removal of a memorial dedicated to his father – legendary leader and former CM Biju Patnaik – at Swargadwar to ensure further development of the crematorium with more space that would benefit crores of Hindus.

“Swargadwar is a holy land of faith. It will be developed in line with the development work going on in Puri town. Biju babu resides in the hearts of crores of Odias. Whatever was there at Swargadwar in the name of Biju babu will now be used in the service of the people of Odisha,” the CM had said.

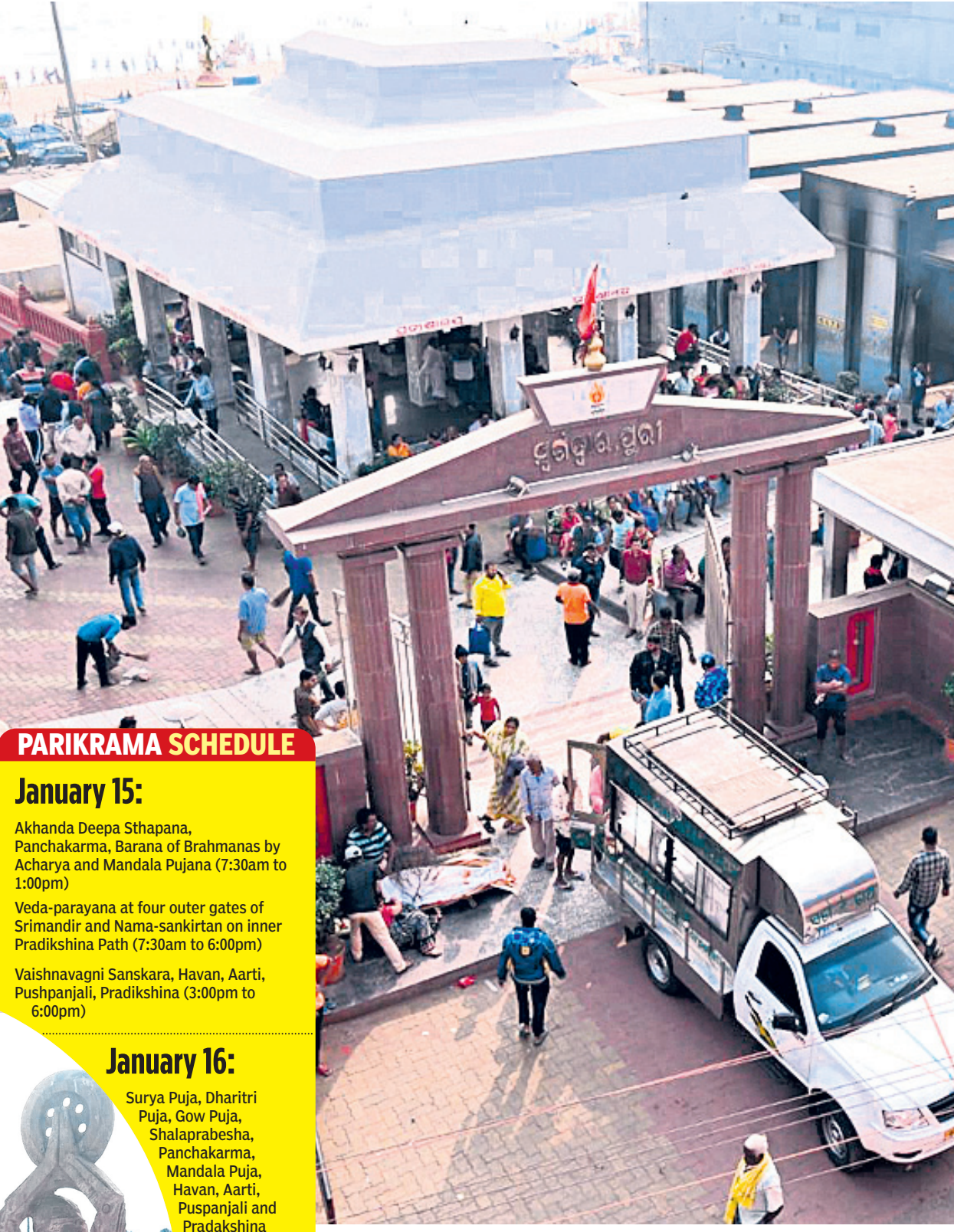
The redevelopment work began in February 2020 and completed and opened for public in May 2021 under the direct supervision of 5T Chairman Kartik Pandian.

The upgraded Swargadwar, sprawling over 1.3 acre land, has 28 funeral pyre platforms, wood storage facility, registration counter, manager’s room, restrooms for pallbearers, cafeteria, drinking water and toilet facilities. Metal barricades have been raised around the cremation ground and CCTVs installed for enhanced security. Landscaping has been done to improve the aesthetics, while the entire ground has been illuminated properly.

The state government has introduced a single window system to provide all facilities to the people who want to cremate bodies at the seashore cremation ground. Besides, over 100 volunteers have been helping the bereaved people there.

State government’s efforts have helped bringing down the expenditure to cremate a body to ₹4,000 from ₹10,000.

At least ₹12.07 crore has been spent over cremations at Swargadwar under Harischandra Yojana between May 15, 2021 and December 12, 2023.



PARIKRAMA SCHEDULE

January 15:
 Akhanda Deepa Sthapana, Panchakarma, Barana of Brahmanas by Acharya and Mandala Pujana (7:30am to 1:00pm)
 Veda-parayana at four outer gates of Srimandir and Nama-sankirtan on inner Pradikshina Path (7:30am to 6:00pm)
 Vaishnavagni Sanskara, Havan, Aarti, Pushpanjali, Pradikshina (3:00pm to 6:00pm)

January 16:
 Surya Puja, Dharitri Puja, Gow Puja, Shalaprabhesha, Panchakarma, Mandala Puja, Havan, Aarti, Puspanjali and Pradakshina (07:30am to 6:00pm)
 Veda-parayana at four outer gates of Srimandir, and Nama-sankirtan on inner Pradakshina Path (07:30am to 6:00pm)

January 17:
 Surya Puja, Dharitri Puja, Gow Puja, Panchakarma, Vastu Shodhana, Adhibasa and Havan (7:30am to 1:00pm)
 Veda-parayana at four outer gates of Srimandir and Nama-sankirtan on inner Pradakshina Path (7:30am to 6:00pm)
 Prakaralpa Lokarpana- Unveiling of plaque by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik (1:15pm to 1:30pm)
 Yajna Poornahuti, Aarti and Pushpanjali by Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb (1:30pm to 2:00pm)
 Nama-sankirtan procession on inner Pradkshina Path (2:00pm to 2:30pm)
 Felicitation ceremony (2:30pm to 3:00pm)



ADDING SHEEN TO THE MARVEL



As the historic Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa set to catapult Puri into a world heritage city, Arka Kshetra Konark in the neighbourhood has also prominently found place in the larger developmental canvas of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and 5T Chairman Kartik Pandian who has been hailed as the architect of the state’s transformation. Work is on to spruce up the heritage precincts of Konark as a larger part of the transformation initiative in the Pilgrim town.

The CM has laid special emphasis on the development of the Sun Temple precincts as it will not only enhance its security and conservation, but will also attract more tourists. Keeping that in mind, the state government, under the 5T initiatives, has announced the Konark heritage corridor project.

Apart from amplifying the glory of the Black Pagoda, the initiatives will also boost the experience of tourists and enhance liveli-

hood of local business community in Puri district and the entire state as well. Side by side, care has been taken to ensure that the development of infra in the peripheries should be in sync with the ancient heritage of the Sun Temple, while laying stress on the convenience of the travellers. Accordingly, the state government in 2021 had announced to make six-lane outer ring road of 3.5 km, work on which is progressing rapidly. Once complete, the road is poised to bring about drastic change in the traffic problems in Konark. The road between Konark and Chandrabhaga has already been made six-lane, while plans are afoot to develop all roads connecting Konark and build various points for the transportation of tourists between Bhubaneswar and Konark.

The eviction of hawkers who had occupied the roads up to the main gate of the Sun Temple, much to the inconvenience of visitors, was a big achievement for the state government. The government has plans to rehabilitate the hawkers in some other place. Likewise, the CM has instructed to clear 30 acres in front of the temple for landscaping along with creation of an entry plaza for visitors replicating the Black Pagoda. Along with this, a multi-modal hub is being built behind Konark hospital for parking of vehicles which will be complete soon. The CM has also instructed for redevelopment of the Konark open-air theatre, beautification of heritage precincts along with construction of a dedicated pathway for visitors in order to make the infra at the world heritage site international standard.

The magnificent Sun Temple stands as a testimony to the splendour of Kalingan architecture. The 13th century edifice, built by king Langula Narasigha Deb of Ganga dynasty, draws tourists from across the world for its grandeur and incredible architectural marvel. Dedicated to the Sun god, the temple is a tribute to the master craftsmanship of the artisans and sculptors of Odisha. The Konark temple received UNESCO heritage tag in 1984. A majority of the tourists coming to Puri also visit Konark temple and Chandrabhaga beach. In fact, the Bhubaneswar-Konark-Puri tourist circuit is also known as the Golden Triangle.



Puri station to mirror Srimandir architecture

The redeveloped Puri railway station will reflect the architectural features of the famed Srimandir and have all modern amenities for the convenience of passengers, according to the firm engaged for the work. Giving an update on the station redevelopment project, the firm said the work is expected to be completed by July next year.

The station is being rebuilt in accordance with the Kalingan architecture. “Since the iconic Jagannath Temple is a living example of Kalingan architecture, the exterior of the station will reflect that,” Prateek Rath of Rath Architectonic said. The Indian Railways awarded the station redevelopment contract to Rath Architectonic in July 2022 and the construction work was started in January 2023.

Manonjaya Rath of the firm said, “In Kalingan architecture, basically a temple is made in two parts, a tower and a hall. The tower is called ‘deula’ and the hall is called ‘jagmohan’.... The design of the Puri railway station reflects the concept of ‘deula’ at the entrance and ‘jagmohan’ in the concourse at the rear, which is a 115-metre-by-30-metre space with a height of 18 metres.”

He said local materials and natural stone used in the Kalingan temple architecture have been adopted in the design of the station. “One of the most striking features of Kalingan architecture is its use of stone, which was quarried from nearby hills. The stone was cut and polished to perfection, and then used to create intricate sculptures, carvings, and architectural features. The temples and other structures were built using a combination of different types of stone such as sandstone, granite and laterite. These materials have been integrated into the design of the Puri railway station,”

Manonjaya said. According to Prateek Rath, the station is being redeveloped keeping in mind the passenger footfall

I feel blessed to be a part of the team engaged in the Parikrama Prakalpa. Lucky are those who get a chance to serve the Lord

BIKRAM MAHARANA | SCULPTOR

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik’s name will be etched in golden letters on the pages of history for executing the Parikrama Marg and Meghanada wall works. I personally believe the congregation of godly saints and holy men in the inaugural ceremony is a good omen for Shreekshetra

DURGAMADHAV KAR | PRINCIPAL, ODISHA COLLEGE OF ART & CRAFTS, PURI

40 to 50 years from now. “At present, around 6,000 to 7,000 passengers frequent the station daily. The redevelopment will enhance the capacity to 40,000, which is the projected footfall in 2060-65,” Prateek said. According to the Prateek, the station, which is proposed to have three floors, will offer world-class amenities, starting from easy access to station, convenient and spacious parking to accommodate more than 500 cars, energy-efficient building and physical as well as automatic ticket counters and waiting lounge. “Since the station is close to the sea and it is a cyclone-prone area, the whole structure is such that it will withstand even 250 to 300 kmph wind,” he said.



ARPANA RATHS GO PLACES



REVAMPED ATHARANALA



Demonstrators rally during the March on Washington for Gaza at Freedom Plaza in Washington



A Ukrainian serviceman of the 128th separate mountain assault Transcarpathian brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine takes part in tank drills, amid Russia's attack on Ukraine, in Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine



Helen, a 5-year-old migrant girl from Venezuela travelling with her family and seeking asylum in the US, covers herself from the cold at the border between Mexico and the US, in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico



Karnataka State Police personnel during a training programme organised by the Surgical Society of Bangalore for the policemen to perform CPR-First Aid, in Bangalore



Devotees cover the Yamuna river with sarees as they perform 'Chunari Manorath' ritual on Makar Sankranti in Mathura



Houthi honour guard carries the coffins of the fighters killed in the US and UK air strikes during their funeral in Yemen



Prime Minister Narendra Modi feeds cows at his residence in New Delhi



People participate in 'Mataka' race competition during the International Camel Festival in Bikaner

international



We are on the path to victory and we will not stop until we achieve victory
BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | ISRAEL PRIME MINISTER

NEPAL, INDIA EXPRESS COMMITMENT

Nepal and India have expressed a commitment to implementing bilateral initiatives aimed at further strengthening the seamless cross-border connectivity, as the officials from the two sides met to discuss ways to fortify the economic and commercial linkages



of the day quote

Vivek started his campaign as a great supporter, 'the best President in generations,' etc. Unfortunately, now all he does is disguise his support in the form of deceitful campaign tricks
DONALD TRUMP | FORMER US PRESIDENT



The climate crisis is a universal threat to humankind and we all have a responsibility to deal with it as rapidly as we can
JOHN KERRY | US SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY FOR CLIMATE



Attacks against international shipping in the Red Sea area are not acceptable as they endanger the safety and security of global supply chains and negatively impact the economic and humanitarian situation worldwide
ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL



SHORT TAKES

SL cops to persist with drug bust

Colombo: Sri Lanka police Sunday said that they would launch a new phase of the controversial drug bust operation despite concerns raised by the UN Human Rights chief over its fairness. Police said they were targeting 42,248 suspects identified criminals. "All police stations must work 24 hours a day for the next one month to arrest 42,248 suspects and bring them to justice," a statement said.

5 die trying to cross English Channel

London: At least five illegal migrants were killed in French waters early on Sunday when their boat overturned while trying to cross the English Channel, authorities said. Around 70 people were trying to board a small boat attempting to launch near Wimereux beach, Pas-de-Calais, when it overturned, media reports said. A tugboat patrolling the coast attended the scene and found the five bodies.

Lanka arrests 12 Indian fishermen

Colombo: The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested 12 Indian fishermen and seized their trawlers for allegedly poaching in the island nation's waters, an official statement said Sunday. The fishermen were arrested, and their three trawlers seized Saturday off the coast of Karainagar in the northern Jaffna peninsula, the Navy said in a release. They were escorted to the Kankesanthurai harbour for further action, it said. The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with Lankan Navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats in several alleged incidents of illegally entering Sri Lankan territorial waters.

5 Pak soldiers killed in bomb explosion

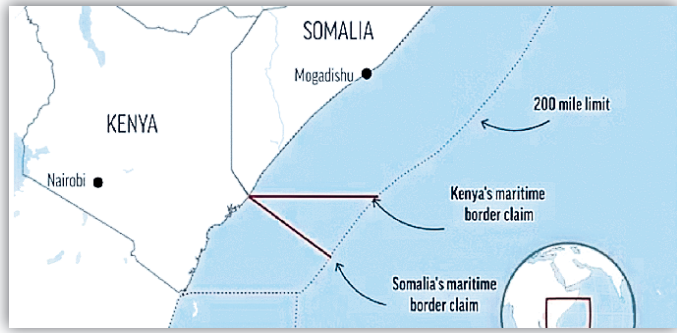
Islamabad: Five Pakistani soldiers were killed and two others, including an officer, injured after an improvised explosive device (IED) blast targeted a security vehicle in the Buleda area of Balochistan's Kech district, the media reported. Separately, security forces killed four militants in two intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan and Dera Ismail Khan districts, Dawn reported. In the Kech incident, the security forces vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb while returning to the Gillisar checkpoint after patrolling, the Dawn reported.

2 Navy SEALs missing after night mission off Somalia coast

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Jan 14: Two US Navy SEALs are missing after conducting a nighttime boarding mission Thursday off the coast of Somalia, according to three US officials.

The SEALs were on an interdiction mission, climbing up a vessel when one got knocked off by high waves. Under their protocol, when one SEAL is overtaken the next jumps in after them. Both SEALs are still missing. A search and rescue mission is underway and the waters in the Gulf of Aden, where they were operating, are warm, two of the



Map shows the Kenya-Somalia coastline and disputed area AP PHOTO

US officials said. The US Navy has conducted regular interdiction missions, where they have intercepted weapons on ships that were bound for Houthi-controlled Yemen. The mission was not related to Operation Prosperity

Guardian, the ongoing US and international mission to provide protection to commercial vessels in the Red Sea, or the retaliatory strikes that the United States and the United Kingdom have conducted in Yemen over the past two days, the official said Saturday.

It was also not related to the seizure of the oil tanker St. Nikolas by Iran, a third US official said.

The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss details that have not yet been made public.

Besides the defence of ships from launched drones and mis-

siles shot from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, the US military has also come to the aid of commercial ships that have been the targets of piracy.

In a statement Saturday, US Central Command said that search and rescue operations are currently ongoing to locate the two sailors.

The command said it would not release additional information on the Thursday night incident until the personnel recovery mission is complete.

The sailors were forward-deployed to the US 5th Fleet area of operations supporting a wide variety of missions.

N KOREA LAUNCHES BALLISTIC MISSILE, SOUTH KOREA SAYS



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seoul, Jan 14: North Korea fired a ballistic missile toward the sea Sunday, its first missile launch in about a month, it's neighbors said.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the launch occurred Sunday but gave no further details like how far the weapon flew. Japan's Defense Ministry also said it detected a possible ballistic missile launch by North Korea but gave no other details.

It is the North's first missile launch since it test-fired its Hwasong-18 solid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missile, the North's most advanced weapon, December 18. The Hwasong-18 is designed to strike the mainland US.

Sunday's launch came days after North Korea fired a barrage of artillery shells near the tense sea border with South Korea, prompting South Korea to conduct similar firing exercises in the same area. In recent days, North Korea has also been escalating its warlike rhetoric against its rivals. Earlier this week, leader Kim Jong Un called South Korea "our principal enemy" and threatened to annihilate it if provoked.

Experts say Kim will likely further raise animosities by test-firing more missiles to try to raise the stakes in the standoff with his rivals and influence the results of South Korea's parliamentary elections in April and the US Presidential election in November.

In a key ruling party meeting in late December, Kim vowed to expand his nuclear arsenal and launch additional spy satellites to cope with what he called US-led confrontational moves.

DAVOS 2024

Ukraine peace top concern

THE MEETING SAW MANY PARTICIPANTS ECHOING INDIA'S POSITION THAT WAR CAN NEVER BE A SOLUTION AND THAT DIALOGUE WAS A MUST TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Davos, Jan 14: National security advisors of several countries met here Sunday to discuss a peace formula for Ukraine and pushed for early restoration of peace in the war-hit country, with the host Switzerland asserting that India can play a key role with its influence and relations with Russia.

The meeting also saw many participants echoing India's position that war can never be a solution and that dialogue was a must to resolve the situation.

Addressing a press conference after the meeting, Swiss foreign minister Ignazio Cassis said Russia would be asked to join the peace plan discussions at some point in time but to bring Russia on the table would require mediation by some countries. He said restoring peace is the ultimate objective. The Swiss Federal Councillor for Foreign Affairs said currently, Russia is not willing to make any con-



cessions, but there is no alternative to bringing both countries to the table for which a collective momentum would be required from more than 100 countries, including those from outside Europe.

"Stakes are very high, and we need to go ahead. Without a dialogue, we cannot reach a satisfactory objective. History shows that war is not a solution," Cassis said. Replying to questions, he said participation from BRICS countries, including India, is very important, as these are the countries, which have got some

relations continuing with Russia. He also lauded the position taken by countries like India, saying their actions are facilitating this collective movement.

"They may be far away (physically from the conflict zone), but they can play an important role as they have influence. China can also play a key role, and we will have to work to involve China in these meetings," he said. Asked whether Switzerland can help bring China and Russia on the table, Cassis replied in the affirmative, saying, "Yes, I do see our role to do this".

RESTLESS VOLCANOES



Mount Marapi volcano spews volcanic ash during an eruption as seen from Nagari Bukik Batabuah in Agam, West Sumatra province, Indonesia



A volcano spews lava and smoke as it erupts in Reykjanes Peninsula, Iceland. The eruption Sunday morning came after a swarm of earthquakes near the town of Grindavik, the Icelandic Meteorological Office said. The community was evacuated overnight

Republicans battle cold in Iowa

REUTERS

Des Moines, Iowa, Jan 14: A highly anticipated poll set the tone for a final full day of campaigning in ice-cold Iowa Sunday, with Donald Trump maintaining a big lead and Nikki Haley overtaking Ron DeSantis for second place in the Republican presidential race.

Organisers of the poll pride themselves on taking an accurate snapshot of the mood of Iowa voters. The survey provided a strong indication that Trump was poised to do well in Monday's caucuses, the first voting contest on the road to the presidential election in November.

A victory would give Trump, 77, an important big step toward securing the Republican nomination to face the Democratic incumbent, Joe Biden, 81, in a rematch of their 2020 battle. It would be evidence that many Republicans are willing to look past Trump's mounting legal problems and inflammatory rhetoric.

PRESIDENTIAL RACE



Trump plans a Sunday rally in Indianola, a suburb of the capital Des Moines, but the weather forced him to cancel one in the city of Cherokee. The former president canceled two events Saturday, appearing in the evening on a campaign livestream.

"We are leading by a lot in all the polls and you have to get out," Trump told his supporters. "We need to send a message most importantly for November."

DeSantis and Haley, who was Trump's UN ambassador, both need to do well enough in Iowa to give them some momentum for the next contest, in New Hampshire January 23.

The DeSantis campaign predicted a strong performance Monday night, despite the slip in the widely watched poll.

His battle increasingly bitter, Haley and DeSantis begin Sunday in Dubuque in the east

The Des Moines Register/NBC News poll released late Saturday gave Trump 48%, though his lead slipped by 3 percentage points from the December poll

Former South Carolina Governor Haley was second at 20%, up 4 points, followed by Florida Governor DeSantis with 16%, down 3 points

of the state near the Mississippi River, followed by another DeSantis event around 300 miles (500 km) away in Sioux City.

From 7 p.m. CST Monday (0100 GMT Tuesday), Iowans will gather for two hours in school gymnasiums, bars and other locations to debate the Republican candidates before ranking them in order of preference.

Results are typically announced within a few hours. With temperatures plunging, one question facing the candidates was whether their supporters would be sufficiently motivated to brave the cold and show up to caucus.

War of words after Taiwan election

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taipei (Taiwan), Jan 14: A war of words erupted the day after Taiwan's presidential and parliamentary elections, with Taiwan Sunday accusing China of making "fallacious comments" and China criticising the US for congratulating the winner.

The verbal sparring highlighted the seemingly intractable divide over Taiwan's fate, a major flashpoint in US-China relations that risks leading to an actual war in the future.

The victory of Lai Ching-te in Saturday's election was a setback for China's efforts to bring Taiwan under its control. His Democratic Progressive Party advocates maintaining the status quo, in which Taiwan governs itself but refrains from declaring formal independence — a move that could trigger a Chinese

military response. China, meanwhile, calls for what it terms a "peaceful reunification", but that seems increasingly unrealistic as most Taiwanese have come to oppose becoming part of China. Taiwan said as much, taking issue with China over its often-repeated line that Taiwan is a domestic Chinese issue.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a statement on the election that "the Taiwan question is China's internal affair" and "the basic fact that Taiwan is part of China will not change". Taiwan said that statement "is completely inconsistent with international understanding and the current cross-strait situation. It goes against the expectation of global democratic communities and goes against the will of the people of Taiwan to uphold democratic values.

Heartbreak for Satwik, Chirag

INDIAN DUO FALLS AT THE FINAL HURDLE IN THE MALAYSIAN OPEN BADMINTON TOURNAMENT



SO NEAR YET SO FAR: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (in front) and Chirag Shetty during their doubles final at the Malaysian Open badminton tournament in Kuala Lumpur, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kuala Lumpur, Jan 14: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty faltered at the finishing line to end their dream run at the Malaysia Open Super 1000 badminton tournament with a narrow loss in the men's doubles final against World No. 1 pair China's Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang here Sunday.

third loss against the Chinese duo in the last four meetings. Satwik and Chirag squandered an opening game advantage and an 11-7 lead in the decider to go down 21-9, 18-21, 17-21 to Liang and Wang in the summit clash which saw both the pairs displaying some exquisite strokeplay. "We are happy with how we played in the tournament but a little disappointed that we couldn't control our nerves," Satwik said after the match.

"Coach (Mathias Boe) said that we should keep the racket up and move our foot. We knew they would come back, we should have been calmer; but they played exceedingly well in the third game," Chirag said. The Indians dominated the proceedings early on, cruising to a 5-1 lead with the help of some angled returns and accurate placements. They built on that and had a seven-point advantage at the break. After resumption, Satwik and Chirag built up an 18-9 lead and they closed out the game without any problem. It was time for the Chinese pair to run up a 8-2 lead in the second game and they soon made it 11-6 at the break. After resumption, the Indians started to draw out errors from their opponents to make it 15-17. A short serve from Satwik gave two game points to the Chinese and Liang sealed it with a lethal return to roar back into the contest. The decider started with the same breathtaking speed with the Indians up 4-2 after Liang was called for a service fault for height. The Indians had a four-point lead 11-7, at the interval, but failed to cash on it. However, after resumption, Wang played brilliantly and soon it was 12-all. Satwik seemed to falter a bit in the end as he conceded a few points on the flat pushes. It helped the Chinese duo built up a 19-16 lead and they closed out the match without any problem.

Djokovic cruises past Prizmic

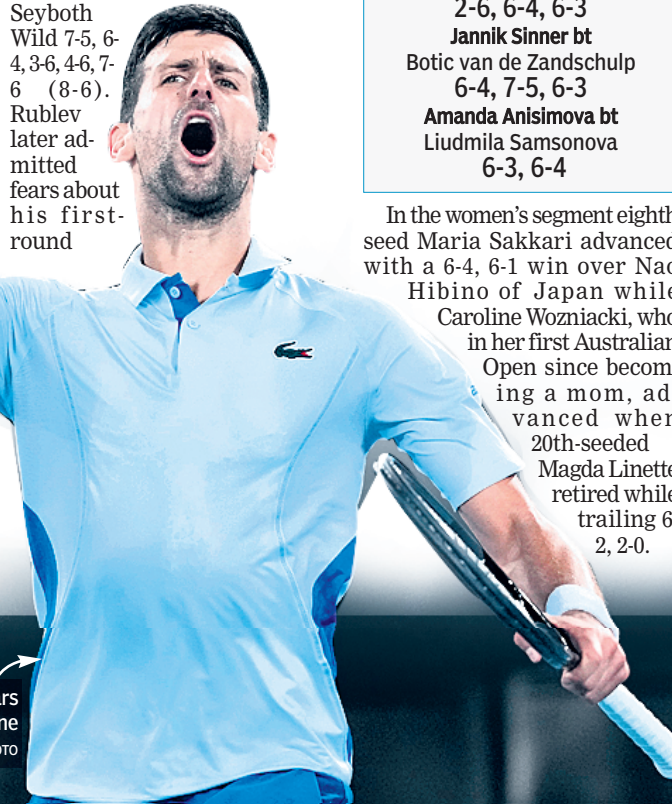
FIRST-TIMER PRIZMIC TAKES A SET AGAINST THE 10-TIME DEFENDING CHAMPION, BUT SERB KEEPS HIS COOL TO WIN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Jan 14: Until he took on defending champion Novak Djokovic at Rod Laver Arena on opening Sunday here, Dino Prizmic had never played a Grand Slam match. The 18-year-old Croatian qualifier, who was born seven months after Djokovic made his Grand Slam debut in 2005, made the happy feeling last as long as he could. He even unsettled the Serbian at times, before Djokovic won 6-2, 6-7 (5-7), 6-3, 6-4.

The first set played out just about as expected. From there, it became quite a ride. Prizmic took the second set off Djokovic and went up a break in the third, stunning a capacity crowd before the world's No. 1-ranked player broke back and took the set. Prizmic didn't give up even when he trailed 0-4 in the fourth

set. He saved a breakpoint before getting a service break back. He saved three match points at 3-5 down and made Djokovic serve it out. He then saved a further two match points before the match ended in four hours and one minute. "He deserved every applause, every credit he got tonight," Djokovic said. "Amazing performance for someone who is 18 years old and never had the experience of playing on a big stage. Kudos to him," the Serbian added. In another match, fifth-seeded Andrey Rublev needed four hours to beat Thiago Seyboth Wild 7-5, 6-4, 3-6, 4-6, 7-6 (8-6). Rublev later admitted fears about his first-round



JOB WELL DONE: Novak Djokovic roars in delight after his victory at Melbourne Park, Sunday

Table with 2 columns: Player Name and Score. Includes names like Leylah Fernandez, Barбора Krejcikova, etc.

In the women's segment eighth seed Maria Sakkari advanced with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Nao Hibino of Japan while Caroline Wozniacki, who in her first Australian Open since becoming a mom, advanced when 20th-seeded Magda Linette retired while trailing 6-2, 2-0.

SHORT TAKES

Resilient Indian eyes defeat New Zealand

Ranchi: India rose from the ashes Sunday to tame New Zealand 3-1 with a spirited performance in their second pool match of the FIH Women's Olympic Qualifier to keep alive their hopes of securing a ticket to the Paris Games. The hosts had lost their first match of the tournament to the US 0-1 Saturday. Sangita (first minute) and Neha (12th and 14th) got the goals for India. Overall, the Indian eyes displayed a much better standard of hockey than they did Saturday. The outstanding performer for the team was Salima Tete who was involved in most of the Indian attacks with her quick runs and dribbling abilities.

De Bruyne inspires Man City triumph

London: A football masterclass by Kevin De Bruyne helped Pep Guardiola's Manchester City beat Newcastle 3-2 at the St James Park. De Bruyne came in as a substitute in the second half with City trailing 1-2. He scored a goal himself and then set up Oscar Bobb's stoppage time winner. Bernardo Silva gave City the lead with a fantastic goal, but Newcastle hit back with goals from Alexander Isak and Anthony Gordon.

Gold rush continues

Jakarta: Indian shooters continued to hit the bull's eye in the Asia Olympic Qualifiers here Sunday, with Yogesh Singh winning the men's 25m individual standard pistol gold before combining with Amit Kumar and Om Prakash to claim the team event. Yogesh shot 572 to clinch the standard pistol gold and then partnered with Amit (565) and Prakash (553) for the team gold in the event, bringing India's overall podium finishes to a whopping 32, including 14 gold and 10 silver. It marks India's most successful outing in the continental tournament.

Shaun retires

Sydney: Australian cricketer Shaun Marsh announced Sunday his retirement from professional cricket, with the Melbourne Renegades' fixture against Sydney Thunders in the Big Bash League Wednesday being his last assignment. "I have loved playing for the Renegades. I've met some great people over the last five years, and the friendships I've made will last a lifetime," Marsh, 40, said in a statement.

Odisha take command

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 14: Odisha are poised to take a first innings lead against Madhya Pradesh in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group D encounter being played in Indore. At stumps on the third day, Sunday, hosts Madhya Pradesh were 246 for the loss of six wickets in reply to Odisha's massive first innings score of 498.

Resuming at their overnight score of 493 for eight, Odisha were bowled out with the addition of only five runs to their total. However, after that the Odisha bowlers delivered with tight control to keep a check on the opposition batters. On a pitch that did not have much life, the Odisha bowlers bowled with a lot of discipline.

Pacer Sunil Roul (3/76) was the pick of the Odisha bowlers. He was well-supported by his counterparts Prayash Singh (2/55) and Suryakant Pradhan (1/46). All the three bowled with a lot of discipline, never allowing the Madhya Pradesh bats to take control.

The situation for Madhya Pradesh could have been worse had it not been for an unbeaten century by Harsh Gawli (137 batting, 242b, 19x4). He stood tall as the other MP bats failed to tackle the Odisha bowlers. Gawli and Saransh Jain (40) added 101 runs for the

fifth wicket to take the team to a position of respectability. Roul came back late in the day to dismiss Jain and Aryan Pandey (17) and helped Odisha regain the initiative. Earlier in the day Subhanshu Senapati (277) failed to add to his overnight score and was dismissed. Harshit Rathod (60 n o) remained unbeaten as the innings came to a close after just eight deliveries.



Sunil Roul

CHHETRI ASKS MATES TO FOCUS ON UZBEK MATCH

INDIA CONFIDENT OF PUTTING UP GOOD SHOW AGAINST SUPERIOR RANKED UZBEKISTAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Doha, Jan 14: Talismanic Indian forward Sunil Chhetri has urged his teammates to look forward and focus on the match against Uzbekistan after the 0-2 loss to heavyweights Australia in their AFC Asian Cup opener here Saturday.

The Blue Tigers put up a gritty show to hold the Asian giants for a goalless stalemate in the first half. However, in the end the superiority of the Australians prevailed and they won. "There are pros and cons to this game. It's not easy to play the best team in Asia," Chhetri was quoted as saying Sunday by the AIFF website. "We are not used to playing superior sides like these, as we don't play against them very often, so you never know what to expect," Chhetri added.

The Indian skipper, who began his career in 2005, failed to add to his tally of 93 goals but he said the focus is now on their match January 18 against Uzbekistan. "It's a mixed bag of feelings right now. Once we watch the



A tense moment in front of the Indian goal during the game played Saturday

videos, perhaps we will gain more confidence and work on the things that we could have done better," Chhetri stated. "Uzbekistan are not Australia, but they're a good side nonetheless. So it will be a big challenge in that game too," added the Indian skipper. India have two more matches left in the group with Syria being their last group stage opponents. Not all is lost for the Blue Tigers as they still can qualify for the

Mohun Bagan edge out Hyderabad FC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 14: Australian Dimitrios Petratos scored from the spot in the dying minutes of the match to hand Mohun Bagan Super Giants a 2-1 win over Hyderabad FC in the Kalinga Super Cup football tournament here Sunday. It was their second successive win in the tournament. While the Kolkata giants have six points from two matches, Hyderabad are virtually out of the competition after losing both their matches.

Hyderabad opened the game on a bright note and took an early lead through Ramlhunchunga after a disastrous miscommunication between Michael Hamill and Arsh Anwar Shaikh in the Mohun Bagan goal in the sixth minute of the game.

Although Mohun Bagan controlled the majority of ball possession, it was Hyderabad who had the better opportunities in the first half. Apart from a Petratos free-kick which was comfortably saved by Hyderabad custodian Kattimani in the 24th minute, Mohun Bagan failed to create clear opportunities to hit back.

In the second half Mohun Bagan were the better side. They equalised when Jeremy scored an own goal in the 88th minute. Two minutes later the referee awarded Mohun Bagan a penalty when Hugo Boumous was fouled inside the penalty area by Mark Zothanpua and the ever-reliant Petratos stepped in to convert and help his side win.

Jaiswal, Dube ensure victory

INDIA ACHIEVE UNASSAILABLE 2-0 LEAD IN 3-GAME SERIES AGAINST AFGHANISTAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, Jan 14: Riding on a flurry of mighty maximums Yashasvi Jaiswal (68, 34b, 5x4, 6x6) and Shivam Dube (63 n o, 32b, 5x4, 4x6) smashed Afghanistan's bowlers to smithereens as India made short work of a 173-run target to win the second T20I by six wickets here Sunday. With the victory, India also completed their 15th T20 bilateral series win on the trot.

Earlier Gulbadin Naib (57, 35b, 5x4, 4x6) top-scored for Afghanistan before the lower-order batters Mujeeb Ur Rahman (21, 9b) and Karim Janat (20, 10b) chipped in with useful contributions to lift Afghanistan to 172 all out.

However, the spectators went home a tad disappointed as both Rohit Sharma (0) and Virat Kohli (29) failed to get going. In his first T20I since November 2022, Kohli began with a lovely boundary before Jaiswal smashed Fazaalq



TWO TO TANGO: Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shivam Dube have a mid-pitch conversation during their partnership Sunday

Farooqi for two sixes. Having switched ends, Mujeeb leaked 19 runs with Jaiswal collecting three fours and Kohli one. However, Naveen-ul-Haq cut short Kohli's highly promising stay at the crease by having the maestro caught at mid-off.

Dube and Rinku Singh completed the formalities. Asked to bat first, Afghanistan scored at a brisk pace, but went on losing wickets at regular intervals and that set them back. Arshdeep Singh (3/32) was the most successful bowler for India, but it was left-arm spinner Axar Patel (2/17) who really put the brakes on the Afghan batters. Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi (2/37) took two wickets, but at times was guilty of bowling short. Bishnoi was introduced early on and he took a wicket with his first delivery dismissing Rahamanullah Gurbaz (14). However, then Naib attacked Bishnoi by hitting him for a six and back-to-back boundaries in an over that the leg-spinner conceded 18 runs. Brief scores: Afghanistan 172 (Gulbadin Naib 57, Arshdeep Singh 3/32, Axar Patel 2/27, Ravi Bishnoi 2/37) lost to India 173 for 4 in 15.4 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 68, Shivam Dube 63 n o) by six wickets.

Aditya, Rutuparna emerge champions



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 14: Aditya Satpathy and Rutuparna Choudhury won the men's and women's singles crown at the 10th Utkal Odisha Open tennis tournament which concluded at the Kalinga Stadium here Sunday. Both the finals were tame affairs with Aditya and Rutuparna winning their matches in straight sets.

In the men's singles final Aditya trounced compatriot Ashutosh Das 6-0, 6-1. Aditya broke his opponent's service six times during the match and never lost his serve once. In the women's final, Rutuparna defeated Prisha Das 6-2, 6-3. In the second set, Das put up a fight, but overall Rutuparna was too strong for her.

The under-14 boys' and girls' singles titles were bagged by Swastik Mohanty and Shazfa Wania. Swastik defeated Aahaan Mishra 6-4, 6-3 while Shazfa overcame Sanrachana Das 6-4, 6-3. Principal Secretary, MSME, Saswat Mishra was present as chief guest and distributed the prizes along with other dignitaries who attended the event.

Table with 2 columns: Match/Category and Result. Includes names like Satirtha Patnaik, Asutosh Das, etc.