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BHUBANESWAR | TUESDAY JANUARY 16 | 2024

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## S JAI JAGANNATHA

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With the Blessings of Mahaprabhu Shree Jagannatha The 'Shree Mandira Parikrama Prakalpa' will be inaugrated on 17th January 2024

The inauguration ceremony will be telecast live on

all Odia TV channels and live streamed on the "IPR Odisha" YouTube Channel 7 AM onwards









## **AISURA**



#### **MIA GOTH ACCUSED OF KICKING BACKGROUND ACTOR IN HEAD**

British actress Mia Goth is being sued for allegedly kicking a background actor in the head. According to the lawsuit, during a shoot Mia 'intentionally kicked' James Hunter in the head with her boot, which caused him to immediately experience headaches and stiffness in his neck.

#### SARAH SNOOK RECALLS **BEING BODY-SHAMED**

Australian actress Sarah Snook was body-shamed for eating a small bite of chocolate cake by a movie producer. The Succession actress, who just landed her second Golden Globe and second Critics Choice Award, has recalled the uncomfortable moment on an unnamed project when she was blasted in front of the entire cast and crew.



#### FORTUNE **FORECAST**

#### GaneshaSpeaks.com • reliability • trust 💋 accuracy FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181 ARIES

You're finally impressed by the yogis. A degree course in Art of Living? Ganesha approves. You may even fulfill a desire to begin lessons in music or dance, or something that has interested you since long. A good, good day, and it smells of

TAURUS

sweet success.

You need to be very and practical and realistic in all that you do today, urges Ganesha. You are known to be pretty emotional and sensitive and generally go by your feelings. Your mind, your reason do not normally feature in you decision making, Even minor problems, complica tions get you worked up.

#### GEMINI

Your long-term goals seem to be shaping up well. You may also expect some good news, which will change the course of your life. Play a waiting game in matters of auctions and sealed tenders. And memorise these words: Prevention is better than cure

#### CANCER

Today, you may focus your entire attention on your relationships - your ties with your parents, spouse, children, siblings and even neighbours. However, all that effort and energy may not get its due, and you may get a cold response from one or more of your relatives. Stil

#### 

The bourgeoisie feasted on cake, while the masses starved for want of a mere loaf of bread. Ganesha foresees something similar for you today, as you show the propensity to indulge in unwanted expenses. Whether it is impulsive decisions or compulsive buying, they shall not serve as an excuse on a later date when

the milk is already spilt.

#### **VIRGO**

You will be cool as a cucumber today. Nothing that happens will unsettle that composure, says Ganesha. Your loved ones will stand tall and strong behind you, and inspire you to overcome obstacles. Your work will reflect dedication, says Ganesha. Go ahead and ask for work that is intellectually taxing.



Los Angeles: The Critics Choice Awards were concluded recently, and Oppenheimer was the big winner at the ceremony. It took home eight trophies

CRITICS CHOICE

Score(Ludwig Goransson). including best picture, director (Christopher Nolan) and sup-Barbie followed with six wins, porting actor (Robert Downey including best comedy and best

Jr.) Other categories that fetched

AWARDS trophies, Barbie lands 6

CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WAS CONFERRED ON HARRISON FORD

Oppenheimer awards are Best

Acting Ensemble, Best

Cinematography: (Hoyte van

Hoytema), Best Editing (Jennifer

Lame), Best Visual Effects, Best

The ceremony shook up the

song, reports Variety.

awards race, handing best actress to Emma Stone (Poor Things) and best actor to Paul Giamatti (The Holdovers). As per Variety, there were

fewer surprises on the television side, as The Bear, Succession and Beef won big, each taking multiple acting awards and winning best comedy series, drama series and limited series, respectively

The Bear and Beef each took home four awards, and Succession landed three. Chelsea Handler hosted the Sunday night ceremony, broadcast live on the CW and held at Santa Monica's Barker Hangar: Harrison Ford accepted the career achievement award, and America Ferrera was honoured with the SeeHer Award

AGENCIES





Eminent painters Ramahari Jena, Jatin Das, poet Sitakanta Mahapatra, ex-diplomat Lalit Mansingh, Sahitya Akademi President Hrushikesh Mallick and poet Biyot Projna Tripathy released Poster Poems at the event OP PHOTO

Bhubaneswar: Jatin Das Centre of Arts (JDCA), in collaboration with Odisha Sahitya Akademi (OSA), released the Poster Poems of eminent Odia poets at an event held here on the premises of JDCA, Monday.

The works of poets Mayadhara Mansingh, Jayanta Mahapatra, Jatin Das, Sitakanta Mahapatra, Ramakanta Rath, Jagannath Prasad Dash, Debi Prasanna Patnaik, and Biyot Projna Tripathy were put in glass frames and exhibited at the event

OSA President Hrushikesh Mallick, JDCA Chairman Jatin Das, and painter Ramahari Jena were present on the occasion. Das said that the initiative will help in preserving the works and signatures of the poets forever, adding, that more such posters of poets will be created in the future. The posters will be available for sale in the coming davs, it was learned.

Speaking on the occasion, Mallick said, "Today we saw literature in imagery, which can be preserved as memory forever and can be exhibited.

### Rhea recalls her prison days

Mumbai: Four years ago, Rhea Chakraborty was declared the biggest villain of India after Sushant Singh Rajput's untimely demise. She even got arrested and had to spend nearly a month in jail.

Opening up about this episode in a conversation with author Chetan Bhagat on his show Deeptalk With Chetan Bhagat, Riya says, "I had to be in solitary confinement for 14 days. I was asked if I'd like to have lunch. I was so hungry and tired that I ate whatever was given to me.'

What was on the menu? "There was roti and cap*icum ki subzi*, which was just capsicum in water. '

The actress talked further about her jail life, "There's a canteen in jail from where you can buy biscuits. You get a money order from your family of Rs. 5,000 a month. You can buy water with the money, which is better than the tap water in jail. I used to spend Rs. 2,500 on water."

spirits

As for meal times, she answered, "You get breakfast at 6 am, lunch at 11 am and you get dinner at 2 pm because it goes with the British way of things.

Rhea said, "Most people save their dinner and have it at 7-8 pm. However, I changed my whole cycle. Yeh khana toh waise bhi khaya nahin jaayega. Garam hoga toh fir bhi khaya jaayega. Thanda toh bilkul nahin khaya jaayega. Hence, I started waking up at 4 am and finishing my dinner at 2 pm." Released on bail after nearly a month, she fulfilled

a promise to her fellow inmates by

performing a joyful dance, opting

for a 'Naagin' sequence to lift their

AGENCIES

FUN



<u>Mumbai: Senior actor</u> Amitabh Bachchan has bought a piece of land around 930 sq. metres (10,000 sq.feet) in Ayodhya, days before the Pran Pratishtha of the Lord Ram Temple, officials said here on Monday. The *Sholay* actor has bought the plot in the holy pilgrim town at a cost of Rs 14.50 crore in an upcoming scheme of The House of Abhinandan Lodha (HoABL) Mumbai, which plans to build homes in what is termed as the 'Global Spiritual Capital'.

The property is barely 15 minutes way from the Lord Ram Temple and 30 minutes from the new Shri Ram International Airport. The 7-star-rated 51-acre mix-use

posh complex called The Sarayu, near the banks of the Sarayu River, is being developed by the HoABL, said a company spokesperson. "I am look-ing forward to embarking on this journey for The Sarayu in Ayodhya. The timeless spirituality and cultural richness of Ayodhya have forged an emotional connection that transcends ographical boundarie Bachchan, 81, who has his family tree roots in Uttar Pradesh and was born in Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad), and educated there.

### Rashmika shells fitness goals

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna Monday gave major fitness goals to her fans by sharing a glimpse of her morning workout, and said that one should not forget to stretch.

Taking to Instagram Stories, Rashmika, who enjoys 41.1 million followers on the photo sharing application, dropped a picture of herself working out in a gym. She is wearing a black full-sleeved tee shirt and red shorts.

The photo is captioned: "Don't forget to stretch!! It's good for your body and you'll definitely be doing your older self a favour So don't forget to stretch ok Good morning everyoneeeee!" On the work front, she was last seen in Animal, which features Ranbir Kapoor in

a dual role as Ranvijay Singh and Aziz Haque. Senior star Anil Kapoor also plays dual characters of Balbir Singh and Kailash Petkar.

Bobby portrays the role of Abrar Haque while Rashmika plays Geetanjali Iyengar, wife of Ranbir's character. She next has Pushpa 2: The Rule, Rainbow and The Girlfriend in the pipeline. IANS

Sit back and think hard vou really want when it comes to your business enterprises, because there are many ways to go about things at work, and they all shall lead your somewhere different. The stars favour you today with a golden touch, so take it in your stride and make hay while the sun shines.





#### SCORPIO

Today, Ganesha is in the mood to give you health tips. Cultivate healthy eating habits and exercise regularly to stay away from disorders like obesity. Irregular eating habits and unhealthy lifestyle may lead to many other troubles.

#### **SAGITTARIUS**

Your friend base is slated to multiply today. At work. additional responsibilities will be thrust upon you, and you will also be given charge of new resources. Ganesha predicts you taking up the challenge and emerging triumphant in all spheres today.

#### CAPRICORN

Overcome with feelings, you may take decisions that may stand in the way of success. Don't let your sentiments ruin your future prospects because the damage done will be beyond repair, warns Ganesha. Today, there are also chances that your down-toearth nature and amiable approach will win the hearts of many.

#### AOUARIUS

You will come out top in whatever you choose to do, and success will smell honeysuckle sweet! Naturally, recognition and rewards await you. Take your friends to that trendy café: you needn't wait for a reason to party, says Ganesha.

#### **PISCES**

Major expenses are coming your way, but the good news is a lot of them can be avoided simply by drawing a line between your needs and vour wants. Exercising a little restraint now will go a long way in boosting your savings later on, says Ganesha

PEANUTS



#### **CALVIN AND HOBBES**







#### CROSSWORD

#### 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.

| 1 | 6 |   | 5 |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 7 |
|   |   |   |   | 8 |   |   | 4 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 8 | 4 |
|   | 8 | 5 |   |   | 7 |   |   | 1 |
|   |   |   |   | 6 |   | 3 |   |   |
| 7 |   |   | 4 |   |   | 9 |   |   |
|   | 5 | 6 |   | 7 |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   | 5 | 8 |   |   | 6 |

#### SOLUTIONS CASE M CROSSWOR ULL IF W ERW L COVENTRY 6 8 3 8 9 5 4 6 2 7 2 5 9 1 4 7 6 7 4 8 6 1 3 9 SUDOKU 2 3 8 9 4 9 1 6 8

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



20 Fall shade

22 Caustic

discipline

2 Sensible

16 Seating request

17 Widow



BHUBANESWAR | TUESDAY JANUARY 16 | 2024

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#### **FLYER HELD FOR ASSAULTING PILOT**

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 15: A passenger on an IndiGo flight was arrested after he assaulted a pilot when the latter was making an announcement regarding a delay in takeoff at the Delhi airport police said Monday. A purported video of the incident, which took place Sunday evening, surfaced on social media and showed Sahil Katariya hitting the pilot.

The flight took off from Delhi for Goa at 6.00pm after a delay of more than 10 hours, according to flight tracking website 'flightradar24'

The incident happened on a day dense fog majorly impacted operations at the Delhi airport with more than 100 flights being diverted, cancelled or delayed.

**Civil Aviation Minister** Jyotiraditya Scindia said unruly passenger behaviour is unacceptable and 'will be dealt with strongly' in line with existing legal provisions

Scindia however said, DGCA will issue an SOP (standard operating procedure) for airlines on better communication and facilitation of passengers to minimise discomfort in view of flight cancellations.

#### RREGULAR by MANJUL



Change your attire, captain. Then, no passenger will ever dare to lav a hand on you



PREPARATIONS IN FULL SWING: Priests perform yajna on the fourth day of rituals, Monday, for the dedication of Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa in Puri January 17 PIC: YAGNESWAR MOHANTY

## **Mystery shrouds bizman's death**

Panigrahi had been heading the industry body since 2012 and in the polls last held in 2016, he had been unanimously elected



Police bust ATM

loot gang; 5 held

Balasore, Jan 15: Police here Monday claimed that they have

managed to crack the ATM loot

heist case by arresting five mem-

bers of the gang involved in it.

The gang had allegedly broken open two ATMs at Khaira and

Soro localities and fled with close

to ₹10 lakh last Wednesday. The

five, who belong to different lo-

calities in Haryana, were ar-

rested from Bhubaneswar. More than rupees six lakh in cash and

other incriminating materials

Police said that after interro-

gating those arrested, they have

have come to know that the kingpin is still absconding. Balasore

SP Sagarika Nath said that the

miscreant would soon be nabbed.

miscreants had looted approxi-

mately ₹10 lakh from the Punjab National Bank (PNB) ATM at

Mangalpur and Axis Bank ATM

at Khaira on the intervening

night of January 11-12. They

had broken the vending machine

with the help of gas cutters.

They even bombed the kiosk

while robbing it, locals had al-

Nath informed that the mis-

creants had fled in a car after committing the loot. However, with police hot on their trails, they had to abandon the vehicle.

They then used other forms of public transport to reach the Odisha capital where they were hiding. They were trying to get away by train when they were

nabbed, Nath added

leged earlier.

It has been alleged that the

were seized from them.

POST NEWS NETWORK **MARKET WATCH** Bolangir, Jan 15: Mystery





quires suggest that he might have died after falling from a

death. While preliminary in- his body dumped on the tracks. It should also be stated that Panigrahi ended the dominance

PNN & AGENCIES Bhubaneswar, Jan 15: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik urged Monday the people of Odisha to light divas (lamp), blow conch

Blow conch shells, light

diyas January 17: Patnaik

| INDEX VARIATION |        |          |   |        |
|-----------------|--------|----------|---|--------|
| BOURSES         | SENSEX | 73327.94 |   | 759.49 |
|                 | NIFTY  | 22097.50 |   | 203.00 |
| CURRENCY        | DOLLAR | 82.91    | ₽ | ₹0.09  |
| CURR            | EURO   | 90.80    | ₽ | ₹0.18  |
| NO              | GOLD   | ₹62,533  |   | ₹171   |
| BULLION         | SILVER | ₹72,502  |   | ₹22    |

#### WEATHER

|                            | BBSR   | CTC    |
|----------------------------|--------|--------|
| Max Temp                   | 28.0°C | 26.5°( |
| Min Temp                   | 18.5°C | 17.2°( |
| Humidity                   | 70%    | 779    |
| Rainfall                   | Nil    | Nil    |
| FORECAST                   |        | M      |
| FOG/MIST IN<br>THE MORNING | Ż      | 2      |
|                            |        |        |

shrouds the death of jeweller and president of Bolangir Chamber of Commerce. Tripurari Panigrahi (60) whose body was found in a pool of blood on the railway tracks under Bijakhaman bridge near the Bolangir railway station in this district, Monday morning.

Panigrahi, the proprietor of 'Radhika Jewellers', an ornament showroom here was also into real estate business. Prior to setting up his own business. Panigrahi worked as a clerk in the regional transport office (RTO) and the local sub-collector's office. Panigrahi took voluntary re-

tirement from his government job before opening his own ornament shop. He was the president of the Bolangir Chamber of Commerce for more than a decade (since 2012) now. He is survived by his wife and two children, a son and daughter. The death of the bizman be-



came public after locals spotted the body and informed the **Government Railway Police** (GRP) personnel. The officials of the Railway police recovered the body and sent it for postmortem. "We have launched a probe into the case and are investigating all angles," IIC GRP, Pravin Kuanr said. A case has been registered in this connection and further investigations

are on, he added. Various theories are doing the rounds regarding Panigrahi's

moving train on the tracks, his family has a different opinion to offer. They said he was not scheduled to travel anywhere by train.

Police also said that there were some external injury marks on Panigrahi's body and hence foul play cannot be ruled out. Police are now waiting for the postmortem report.

Panigrahi's family mean while informed that he did not return home Sunday night and failed to inform about his whereabouts. They only got to know about his death when they were called to identify the body after being informed by GRP officials.

Locals pointed out that Panigrahi was doing very well both in the jwellery business as well as in real estate. They added that he had some rivals and hence did not rule out foul play. They alleged that Panigrahi could have been murdered and

of a non-Odia group in the industry body since he took over as president in 2012. In 2016, the last time the elections to industry body were held, he had been unanimously elected. Since then due to various reasons including the spread of Covid-19, polls to the Chamber of Commerce were not conduct. However, plans were afoot to conduct elections this year, sources said.

Kishore Kumar Rath, vicepresident of Bolangir Chamber of Commerce demanded a highlevel inquiry into the case. He informed that there was no reason for Panigrahi to attempt suicide as he was quite successful in life.

Meanwhile police after the post-mortem handed over the body to the deceased's family. People from various walks of life visited Panigrahi's residence to pay their last respects. Later. he was cremated at the Bibhutipada crematorium here.

shells, beat cymbals, recite devotional hymns and perform kirtans to celebrate the inauguration of the much-awaited Temple Heritage Corridor Project in Puri, January 17.

"We can participate in this festivity by lighting divas (lamps). blowing conch shells, beating cymbals, offering prayers, reciting devotional hymns and doing kirtans at temples or our homes on the day," Patnaik said in a video message.

With the countdown for the inauguration of the Rs 800-crore project, also known as the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa, beginning Monday with the three-day yajna on Makar Sankranti, the Odisha CM appealed to people to dedicate themselves to the devotion of Lord Jagannath.

Meanwhile in a separate development, leaders of the opposition Congress and the BJP said they are unlikely to attend the inauguration programme.

**Congress Legislative Party** leader Narasingha Mishra said Monday he would boycott the inauguration event. "As the BJP is using the Ram temple in

#### SHORT TAKES

#### BSP to go solo for Lok Sabha elections

Lucknow: Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati said Monday her party would go it alone in the coming Lok Sabha elections, but she did not rule out a post-poll alliance. Talking to reporters at the state party office on her 68th birthday, she categorically denied reports in a section of the media about her retirement from politics. The BSP had contested the last Lok Sabha elections in 2019 in alliance with the Samaiwadi Party. "We suffer more losses from alliances. Most of the parties want to ally with the BSP, but this time the BSP will fight the elections alone. An alliance can be considered after the polls," Mayawati said.

Avodhya for political gains, the BJD here is using the heritage corridor project for electoral gains," he said.

Odisha BJP unit's president Manmohan Samal said Lord Jagannath does not belong to any particular political party. "The BJD has been using the lord for its political benefits," Samal said. "The inauguration event of the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa is purely a party programme," added Samal Rejecting the allegations, BJD MLA Amar Prasad Satpathy said

the inauguration of the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa is a religious programme.

"The heritage corridor is not an event of a political party as the state government, 'Gajapati Maharaj' of Puri, the temple administration and the Shankaracharya are involved. The project will bring joy to devotees," asserted Satpathy.

## 60 pregnant moms want delivery Jan 22

THE WOULD-BE MOTHERS FEEL THAT THERE CANNOT BE A MORE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION THAN THE RAM TEMPLE **CONSECRATION DAY FOR GIVING BIRTH** 

#### AGENCIES

Indore, Jan 15: Several pregnant women admitted to a hospital here want to have their deliveries January 22 to coincide with the inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. However, their requests have put the staterun hospital authorities in a fix as they do not have the necessary infrastructure to handle so many deliveries on a single day, an official informed here Monday. The idol consecration of the Ram Temple will be carried out in a grand ceremony January 22, which will attended by Prime

Minister Narendra Modi and several other dignitaries and seers. The women who have been admitted to the hospital here all have their delivery dates around that time only. They have been requesting doctors to ensure that the babies are born on that particular day

'There cannot be a more auspicious occasion than January 22. It is the ideal day for my baby to see the light of the day. I am sure the baby will have a very successful life if the birthday is January 22," said an expectant mother. She however spoke on condition of anonymity.



Most of the women, who have come forward with such a request to the doctors at the PC Sethi hospital here, have already been admitted. However, some of them are availing treatment from home. The worrying thing for the doctors however, is that whether so many deliveries can be handled on the same day.

"Some 60 pregnant women

have requested that their deliveries be carried out January 22 to coincide with the inauguration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. The pregnancy terms of these women end around January 22," Dr Virendra Rajgir, medical officer-in-charge of the state-run hospital stated Monday.

"The decision on deliveries will however be taken keeping in mind the health of the mother and child, which is of utmost importance. We cannot just take a risk, by attempting so many deliveries on a single day," Rajgir added. Such is the situation that some women whose pregnancy term doesn't end close to January 22, have also come forward with the same request.

"The doctors have given me a tentative date between January 19 and February 10 for my delivery, but I wish I give birth January 22 when the Ram Temple in Ayodhya will be inaugurated,' said Babli (30), a pregnant woman. "I have also asked the attending doctor to fulfil my request. It will be great if the delivery occurs during the consecration ceremony or any time during the day," Babli added.

**3 more doppler** radars for Odisha Bhubaneswar: The IMD will install three more doppler radars in Odisha over the next five years. director general Mrutvuniav

Mohapatra said Monday here on the sidelines of an event to celebrate the 150th Foundation Day of the department. Mohapatra said that the radars will be installed at Balasore, Sambalpur and the Odisha capital. "In this age of digital technology, anyone can know about the weather forecast of the locality using the PIN code or panchavat name through the department's mobile app and website," Mohapatra said.

## downtown

## **Guv, CM wish people** on Makar Sankranti

People celebrate harvest festival by offering prayers at temples and by taking holy dips in ponds and rivers



#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 15: People took a holy dip in ponds, tanks and rivers and visited temples across Odisha as they celebrated the harvest festival of Makar Sankranti Monday with religious fervour and enthusiasm.

Governor Raghubar Das and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik wished the people on the occasion.

Taking to social media, Patnaik wrote, "Heartiest greetings and congratulations on the occasion of the holy Makar Sankranti! May everyone's life be filled with happiness and prosperity by the blessings of Lord Jagannath."

A large number of devotees converged on the pilgrim town of Puri to have darshan of Lord Jagannath and his sibling deities on 'Makar Chourashi Besha when the deities are adorned with garlands of colourful flowers and holy basils.

The festival is also celebrated in a grand way at several other temples including Hatakeshwar temple at Atri in Khurda district, Dhabaleswar Temple in Cuttack and Makara Muni temple in Balasore.

In the state capital of Bhubaneswar, people offered

Bhubaneswar, Jan 15:

Acknowledging the contribu-

tions of farmers in the water

sector, the state government will

observe Pani Panchayat Pakhya

(Pani Panchayat Fortnight) from

In the first leg of the Pani

Panchayat, the Water Resources

department will hold Irrigation

Division (Major, Medium, MI

and LI) level functions across

117 divisions in the state Tuesday.

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

January 16 to 30.

prayers at Lord Lingaraj temple. Many were seen taking a

dip in Bindu Sagar lake. The Sun Temple at Konark also attracted numerous worshippers on the occasion. The festival marks the end of winter and the beginning of spring as the Sun moves northwards towards the Tropic of Cancer.

In the millennium city of Cuttack and steel city Rourkela, people celebrated the festival by flying colourful kites. Enthusiasts were seen flocking to various grounds to indulge in spirited kite-flying competitions, a tradition synonymous with the festival.

The Tusu festival (also known as Tusu Parab) is celebrated in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts by young girls of certain

tribal communities on this day. In South Odisha districts like Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada and Koraput, which has a sizeable Telugu population, people decorated the front of their houses with colourful rangoli and celebrated Pongal.

Besides exchanging greetings, people organised feasts in various parts of the state with sweet dishes prepared from newly harvested rice, sugar, banana, coconut, ghee and black pepper.

Pani Panchayat Fortnight starts today

#### **BJEM School** celebrates 51st **Foundation Day**

#### ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 15: Buxi Jagabandhu English Medium School celebrated its 51st Foundation Day with great fun and frolic here, Monday. The day was marked by a host of activities in which the students and school staff participated with great enthusiasm. Joining the occasion as the

chief guest K Srinivasan, Regional Officer, CBSE Bhubaneswar lit the ceremonial lamp and paid floral tributes to the statue of Buxi Jagabandhu in presence of guests Addressing the gathering,

Srinivasan said that education is the only wealth through which one can get enriched, respected and successful in one's life. He advised the students to keep making efforts with a resolution to achieve dreams.

Principal Sandhya Jena spoke about how the school, since its beginning, has been impacting social, economic and educational lives of people.

Recalling the past, the school chairman Raghunath Mishra said the school has completed 50 eventful years and now it has been blessed with a beautiful surrounding with wonderful facilities.

O' Little Wood Hall and Radhamohan Library were inaugurated by the chief guest during the event. The Makar Sankranti festival was celebrated by the cutting of Poda Pitha. The batch toppers were felicitated with mementos and certificates. There was a plethora of cultural activities performed by the students and school staff. An Odia Play 'Aloda Samparka' enthralled the audience. The teachers also presented Paika dance amid cheers.

The Pani Panchayat move-

ment in the state has come a

long way from about 700 Water

Users' Associations in 1995-2002

to more than 39,289 Pani

The Odisha Pani Panchayat

Act, 2002 has been amended to

make it more inclusive. Those in-

clude formation of Pani

Panchayats under the Mega Lift

Irrigation Projects; inclusion of

spouses of land holders to in-

crease representation of women,

e-CAD, web and mobile app-

based application for real-time

Panchavats now.



#### ATRI PRASAD ROUT, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 15: The recently released retail inflation data by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) for December 2023 showed Odisha recording the highest inflation rate among all states and Union Territories of the country.

The trend didn't come as a surprise given the state had been posting the country's highest inflation rate for the last two months. And, in the last six months, the second half of 2023, inflation in the eastern Indian state had remained high - above the national level. (Chart 1)

Inflation rate, calculated from the Consumer Price Index (CPI). captures how the price of a basket of goods and services changes over a period of time, generally on a year-on-year basis. The Reserve Bank of India has a mandate to keep the rate within 4 per cent, with a maximum legroom of 6 per cent.

it fell back to 5.02 in September. But for Odisha, the rate shot up from 3.75 per cent in June to 8.67 in July, and continues to remain above the 6 per cent mark, except for a brief climb down in September.

For consumers in the state, this has meant rapid rise in daily goods' prices. In April, OMFED hiked price of packaged milk by ₹4 per litre, citing rise in packaging, logistics and cattle feed cost. In July, tomato prices in the Capital jumped to ₹200 per kg, while prices of other vegetables like brinjals and pumpkins went up by 20 to 30 rupees. Later in October, because of inadequate supply from Andhra Pradesh, onion prices doubled within a couple of

could have affected the vegetable production. Since Odisha imports all pulses, edible oil and vegetables from other states, it could have kept the inflation rates higher compared to other states.'

Das adds that there could also be a 'low-base effect,' where a small absolute change from a low initial amount, when converted into percentage, looks large. Like, a change of 20 from an initial amount of 100, a lower base, would be 20 per cent change, whereas a change of 20 from 200, a higher base, would be 10 per cent.

Odisha's base was lower in the last two years compared to other states. So, the same amount of price rise in all states will be higher in percentage terms for Odisha," he says.

Contrary to other states, where rural inflation is often higher than urban. in Odisha inflation rate has remained consistently higher in urban areas, possibly

However, with rising inflation, the unemployment rate in urban areas has decreased, as economists have often observed have gotten used to. But it always hits harder people who have private jobs. Government employees get dearness allowances, but we don't get timely salary increments. The only option we have is to change jobs, which is now an annual hassle,' said Amaresh Mohanty who works as a sales agent in a private firm.

an inverse relationship between

the two. According to data from

the quarterly Periodic Labour

Force Survey (PLFS) urban un-

employment rate has fallen down

from 7.6 per cent in January-

March 2023 to 5.9 in July-

'Price rise is something we

September. (Chart 2)

But ripple effect of the price rise has spread well beyond the job market, even into the modest household kitchen. "Our monthly grocery bill has now gone past ₹5,000. With schools and tuitions also hiking their fees, we face the dilemma every month whether to send our kids to tuition or to serve them healthy meals," said Rashmirekha Swain.

Unemployment rate: Odisha vs India CHART-2 - Odisha — All India



ANNIV DAY: Students perform during 51st Foundation Day celebration at BJEM School in Bhubaneswar, Monday

## Amid price rise, Odisha betters on jobs' front

due to rapid urbanisation. a housewife

The district level functions wil be held January 24 and the statelevel function January 30.

The ministers will flag off Raths on the inaugural day in presence of MPs/MLAs, local panchayat and urban local body representatives and eminent persons.

Various activities such as debate, essay, painting and quiz competitions, exhibition of models among school students; Pani Panchavat Samabesha: Information Education Communication/Social Behavi oural Change Communication (IEC/SBCC) activities through exhibitions and Raths will also be organised. Banners, brochures, logo, slogan, tagline, anthem, oath have also been prepared to

create the buzz.

monitoring of Pani Panchayats and infrastructure such as field channels.

Through projects such as Odisha Integrated Project for **Climate Resilient Agriculture** (OIIPCRA), Pani Panchayats are being initiated for promotion of improved crop productivity; adoption of resilient agricultural practices and technologies.

In 2023, though the all India level inflation rate went above the 6 per cent margin in July (7.44), weeks from ₹ 30 to ₹60.

The inflation at the national level has mainly been driven by rise in price of pulses, spices, fruits and vegetables. Explaining high inflation in Odisha, economist Amarendra Das of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER) says, "El nino



#### UU students observe 2 motorcyclists injured 1st model of human eye tissue makes 'tears in a dish' Fakir Mohan's anniv by kite string in Cuttack Bhubaneswar: Residents of Utkal

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 15: Two motorcyclists were injured in Cuttack district when kite string got wrapped around their necks Monday, police said.

The incident took place near Balikuda on the Bhubaneswar-Cuttack road when they were travelling to Cuttack from Niali on a motorcycle. One person sustained injury on his neck while the pillion rider sustained injuries in his hand and palm, the police said.

It was suspected that the duo was injured by banned Chinese manja (kite string). The injured persons have been admitted to SCB Medical College and Hospital, Cuttack and their health condition is stated to be stable, they said.

team of researchers from the Netherlands has developed the first organoid model of the human conjunctiva, a tissue involved in tear production.

Our eyes produce tears to protect themselves from injuries and infections. The conjunctiva. a tissue that covers the white of the eye and the inside of the eyelids, is partially responsible for the production of these tears through the release of mucus.

This mucus allows the tears to stick to the ocular surface and protects it from pathogens.

In the study, published in the journal Cell Stem Cell, the team used cells from an actual human conjunctiva and grew them into 3D structures in a dish.

These miniature structures are called organoids and function



as real human conjunctiva. "Once we had these functioning organoids, we wanted to know how the conjunctiva is involved in the production of tears," said lead researcher Marie

Bannier-Helaouet, from the Organoid group at the Hubrecht Institute in Netherlands.

'We discovered that the conjunctiva makes antimicrobial components and therefore contributes to tear production in more ways than by simply making mucus," she added.

The researchers then altered the conditions in the dish with the miniature conjunctivae to mimic allergies.

'The organoids started to produce completely different tears: There was more mucus but there were also more antimicrobial components," said Bannier-Helaouet. Under these conditions, they

also found a new cell type in the organoids: Tuft cells.

"Similar cells have been discovered in other tissues, but not in the human conjunctiva."

The tuft cells became more abundant under the allergy-like conditions, suggesting they play a role in the eye's reaction to allergies.

Several diseases and disor-

ders affect the conjunctiva, such as drv eve disease, cancer, allergies and infections. In severe cases, dysfunction of this conjunctiva tissue can also lead to blindness.

The newly-developed organoid model opens the door for research into diseases affecting the conjunctiva.

"We can use our model to test drugs for allergies or dry eye disease, for example," Bannier-Helaouet said.

In the long term, it may even be possible to make replacement conjunctivae for people with ocular burns, ocular cancers or maybe even genetic disorders. "We are now running pre-

clinical studies in rabbits to assess whether this approach is feasible and helpful," Bannier-Helaouet said. IANS

University's Fakir Mohan Chhatrabas (Gents Hostel-III) observed the birth anniversary of 'Byasa Kabi' Fakir Mohan Senapati here Monday with participation of more than 100 students and faculty members. Hostel warden PK Hota joined as the event as the chief guest. Speaking about the life of the legendary poet, Hota highlighted the significance of Odia language and its importance in Odia life and identity. Joining as the chief speaker, Pramod Kumar Dwivedi spoke about Fakir Mohan's place in history of the state, especially how he played an important role in the 'Odia Bhasa Andolan.' Raghunath Prusti, vice president of Utkal Alumni Association and Prabir Kumar Das lawyer and human rights activist, joined as guests of honour. Ramesh Chandra Malik, assistant professor of Odia department, coordinated the meeting and Prafulla Kumar Swain assistant superintendent of GH-III proposed vote of thanks.

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## state

# **Chorus to tag wild boars as vermin sparks debate**

wild boars have been destroying crops of the locals. The an-

imals stray into their farmlands

and also attack them in absence

of fences on the edge of the jun-

gle near the village. As a result,

local farmers are facing crop

loss and risk to their lives. They

raise the crops by borrowing

from various sources but in the

end fail to repay the loans due to

crop loss. Some people are also

rendered disabled in the attacks

who then live a life of drudgery

Mandal said that the wild boar

population needs to be controlled

to save them from the menace.

He demanded that the state gov-

ernment should slacken rules

under the Wildlife Conservation

Act in the area and save them

Suresh Kumar Sarkar, a

resident of Rajnagar, said that

wild boar attacks have grown

alarmingly in Bhitarkanika

National Park area. The Rainagar

forest division claims that there

are less than 2,000 wild boars in

Bhitarkanika but the actual

figure is much more than what

and over 50 injured critically in

wild boar attacks during the last

two years, he said. At least five

persons in Ishwarpur village

sustained critical injuries in

wild boar attack and have now

Two persons have been killed

is being claimed, he said.

from wild boar menace.

and obscurity.



#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Jan 15: Demand to declare wild boars as vermin has sparked off a debate between the villagers living inside the Bhitarkanika National Park in Kendrapara district and environmentalists.

**OrissaPOST** 

TUESDAY | JANUARY 16 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR

People living inside Bhitarkanika have been demanding to declare wild boars as vermin while environmentalists are opposing their demand. The villagers are living in constant fear as wild boars are destroying their crops, properties and also killing or critically injuring people during encounters. Fear of wild boar starts haunting the villagers when it is time to harvest crops.

Sources said that the state government could work towards declaring wild boars as vermin. The state government could write a letter to the Centre in this regard under Section-62 of the Wildlife Protection Act-1972, the sources added. The animal placed in schedule 1 and 2 of the Act can be slaughtered in the slaughter houses within a particular time period. The animal can also be poached once the restriction on its conservation is lifted. However, the environmentalists are opposing such steps.

A farmer Tapan Kumar Mandal of Mahakalapara said

#### Girl found hanging; kin allege murder

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

after pests ruin crops Boipariguda, Jan 15: The body of a young girl was found hanging from a tree under mysteri-POST NEWS NETWORK ous circumstances in a forest Bolangir, Jan 15: A farmer near Nua Ghasarda village under Boipariguda police limits allegedly has died by suicide in Koraput district. Monday morning.

become physically disabled. Lives and properties of the villagers are not secure as the wild boars stray into farmlands and human habitats all year round. Wild boar has been declared

s vermin in Bihar and Uttarakhand in 2016 and the menace has reduced drastically in these two states ever since. However, environmentalists are opposed to taking any such move against the wild boars.

Environmentalist-cum-lecturer Khitish Kumar Singh alleged that the menace of poachers is more concerning than that of the wild boars. Another environmentalist Srikant Das of Dangamal also supported his claim. They claimed that the Forest personnel have arrested more than 40 poachers during last two years.

The poachers are killing herbivores like deer, wild boars and not even sparing the marine creatures. The Bhitarkanika National Park has no large animal like tiger, leopard, bear or elephants and the wild boar is only construed as a wild animal. The presence of wild boar

discourages encroachment of forest land. They fear that declaring the wild boar as vermin will lead to sharp increase in poaching and destruction of the green cover.

When contacted, Rajnagar DFO Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav said various preventive measures are being taken to save people from the attacks of protected animals. Fences have been erected in the village end and Forest officials are also conducting regular patrolling. However, if any person gets killed or rendered critical in wild boar attack then they are being paid compensation as

per government norms. Awareness programmes are also being conducted to save people from wild boar menace. However, people also attack these animals and kill them often, he added.



UNBRIDLED JOY: A girl tries her hand at kite flying during a kite festival organised by a social outfit Sambalpur Youth at Hawa Maidan in the western Odisha town on the occasion of Makar Sankranti, Monday OP PHOTO

#### Girl child abandoned under pvt bus rescued

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 15: In yet another instance of gender discrimination, an abandoned girl child wrapped in a plastic bag was rescued from under a private bus by the helper at Champua bus stand in Keonjhar district Sunday night.

As per reports, the helper of the bus was reportedly cleaning and checking the bus when he spotted the girl child lying next to a wheel at around 9pm Sunday night. It is suspected that the baby's mother abandoned her and fled the bus stand. The woman probably left her daughter near the wheel assuming that the baby would be crushed under it when the bus would move.

The helper then informed the locals as well as the police about the incident. Police reached the spot and admitted the child to Champua Sub-Divisional Hospital. An investigation in connection with the incident is underway. The condition of the girl child is stable after primary treatment, said the doctor at the hospital.

### **Researchers find nutrition-rich** little millets in hills of Koraput

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Jan 15: Researchers from the Central University of Odisha (CUO) have identified a number of nutrition-rich little millets (Suan) cultivated by tribals of Koraput hills in Eastern Ghats that can be used to create high-value functional foods according to them.

Led by Debabrata Panda, assistant professor in the department of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources at CUO, a group of researchers studied the nutritional profile of 14 indigenous little millet genotypes.

They have identified three indigenous little millets - Mami, Kalia, and Bada - that have higher protein, fibre, ash, energy, flavonoid, vitamin C, antioxidants, iron, and zinc content, the researcher added.

The findings were published

in the International Springer Nature Journal 'Planta' January 13. The publication included con-



tributions from students Pramila Muni and Aloukika Panda, as well as scientists from the Swaminathan Foundation. Jeypore, Kartik Lenka and Prasanta Kumar Parida.

Little millets are an important climate-resilient crop domesticated in the Eastern Ghats by many indigenous tribes. However, due to modern agricultural practices, the genetic resources of little millets are gradually being depleted, warned Panda

He emphasised the need to conserve these nutrition-rich millets in their natural habitat and promote their commercial production to boost the local economy and reach a wider consumer market.

CUO Vice-Chancellor Chakradhar Tripathy and the Dean of the School of Biodiversity and Conservation of Natural Resources, SK Palita, congratulated the researchers for their outstanding contribution to millet research and tribal crops.

The deceased girl has been identified as Gauri Majhi, 19, a resident of Nua Ghasarda village.

According to reports, some villagers spotted the body and informed the police about the incident. On being informed, Boipariguda police along with a scientific team reached the spot and initiated a probe into the death. Police have seized the body and sent it for post-mortem.

Meanwhile, the family members of the deceased have alleged that the woman was murdered and then hanged from the tree in the forest.

after his crops were destroyed by member said. pests. The farmer identified as It should be stated here that Santosh Jena, 45, of Mudalsar village under Larambha police limits, consumed Santosh is fourth poison late Sunday night. He was inifarmer in this tially rushed to the Patana hospital. district to have However, when he died by suicide was being transdue to ferred to the Bhoi Bhima loan-related Medical College

Farmer dies by suicide

breathed his last. Family members of Santosh said that he had taken substantial amount of loans to raise crops on four acres of land. However, the paddy and pulses

and Hospital, he

Santosh is fourth farmer in this district to have died by suicide due to loan-related incidents. Farmers had earlier committed suicide in the district in September, November and December last year. Rajkumar Bohidar, a

he grew were destroyed by pests.

Unable to bear the agony of

repaying the loan, Santosh took

the drastic step, a family

relative of the deceased said Santosh had worked very hard to incidents grow paddy, mung and vegetables on his land. "However, due to the pest attack,

he lost the entire crop. He was worried about repaying the loan amount and he consumed poison," Rajkumar stated.

### unit at Ind-Barath thermal plant

JSW Energy commissions 350MW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 15: JSW Energy Limited Monday announced commissioning of the first unit -- having a capacity of 350 MW -- at its Ind-Barath thermal power plant in Odisha.

Following the commissioning of this unit, the company's operational capacity rises to 7,189 MW, JSW Energy said in an exchange filing.

The unit will help it further diversify its fuel mix, geographical spread and offtake arrangements, the company said.

"JSW Energy has successfully commissioned unit-1 350 MW at Ind-Barath 700 MW (2x350 MW) thermal power plant in Odisha,' the company said.

The Ind-Barath plant was acquired under the NCLT proceedings in December 2022, against the resolution plan submitted under the insolvency law in 2019.

JSW Energy said it has set a target to reach 20 GW generation capacity and 40 GWh of energy storage capacity by 2030.



## Tribals welcome GI status to Kai Chutney

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 15: Citizens of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts, mostly tribal communities, have welcomed the Geographical Indication (GI) tagging of Kai Chutney from Mayurbhanj district. The Kai or Nali Pimpudi (red ant) Chutney received the prestigious GI tag along with others indigenous items January 2.

This was achieved after Mayurbhanj Kai Society Limited applied for the GI tag in the year 2020. The Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) also submitted an application with GI Registry seeking GI tag for Kai Chutney of Mayurbhanj along with other unique items of the state. It is a popular delicacy in these tribaldominated districts and has nutritional and medicinal value.

Scientists from the OUAT, Bhubaneswar also studied extensively on the unique food item and found vitamins and minerals in it. According to the experts, consumption of the red ants helps the tribals like an immunity booster to prevent diseases.



Thousands of tribal families of these districts depend on forest for their livelihood. They go into the forest to collect the insects from trees and then sell those in the weekly markets at about 20 rupees per cone. A sour chutney is then prepared with the insects and savoured with meals.

Welcoming the tag, Sumantra Nayak, assistant professor of Dharanidhar University and a na-

tive of Thakurmunda village in Mayurbhanj district said, "It is a traditional food supplement for tribal people of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts. It was earlier a poor tribal's food. Now it has a GI

the lesser known delicacy." "GI tag to Kai Chutney is an honour to the neglected tribal communities. Other community people also eat Kai Chutney. After this

tag, which will further popularise

recognition, it will be more popular," said Bimbadhar Behera, a tribal researcher from Keonjhar.

'GI tag assigned to Kai Chutney is a great win for the tribal community. After getting forest right, they have got official recognition of their traditional food. It will indirectly preserve the forest and green vegetation as the red ants prepare their nest in the leaves and nodes of the big trees, mostly Sal, Kusuma and other species in the forest" said Dusker Barik, a social researcher.

However, the tribals have a belief that it has many medicinal values. While consuming it cures acidity, enhances eyesight and keeps the body cool, it also works as a medicine for skin diseases and provides relief to joint pain, said Vaidya Bisarad Harekrushna Mohanta, a senior ayurvedic practitioner.

Gobinda Munda, a red ant col-lector, said, "We know about the GI tag. But it is an age old tradition. We eat it as a food supplement and have a strong belief that it cures many diseases. From kids to elderly, all eat Kai mostly in the form of chutney.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary

#### In Loving Memory

66 We remember you with Pride and Gratitude. Your presence remains with us like a Blessing We miss your Love, Affection and Guidance. Your path of Righteousness will continue to inspire us.

### **V** Gopal Chandra Mohanty Ex- Principal Secretary, Law Department, Govt. of Odisha.

Ex- Chairman, State Law Revision Committee.

Fondly<sup>C</sup>Remembered by Kanak Mohanty Manoj & Bharati Mohanty, Saroj & Amrapalli Mohanty, Sanjib & Ashru Mohanty Samikhya, Samyantaka, Anwesha Staffs and Management of Xpose Advertising

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## power post

#### FOCUS POLITICS

The Divine Truth is greater than any religion or creed or scripture or idea or philosophy SRI AUROBINDO



## Rahul Yatra 2.0

ongress leader Rahul Gandhi has embarked on his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra from strife-torn Manipur, in what is seen as the party's narrative-building exercise in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections due in April-May. The 6,700-km yatra that will culminate in Maharashtra will bring to the spotlight issues such as high levels of inflation, growing unemployment, widening inequality and other social issues at a time when the BJP has deployed its entire machinery, including the pliant television media, for the 22 January Ram temple consecration ceremony at Ayodhya.

The Congress has asserted that, in the course of the yatra, the party will present a new vision for India that will be based on "harmony, brotherhood and equitability and devoid of hatred, violence and monopoly." The party starting the yatra from Manipur also gives the message that it stands in solidarity with the people of the violence-hit state. On the other hand, the Prime Minister is yet to visit the state in the wake of the violence which got nationwide attention only after some videos got leaked on social media showing women being stripped, paraded on the streets and gand raped in July 2023.

It seems appropriate for the Congress to take up this yatra to highlight the real issues plaguing the country as the party was denied the opportunity to raise these matters in the Parliament from where a majority of Opposition MPs, breaking all past records, were suspended during the last session. The yatra is also important for the party as it seeks to revive its fortunes after a poor show in the last round of Assembly elections in the Hindi-speaking states late last year.

At the launch of the yatra, Rahul had this to say: "Question arises why Nyay Yatra? Because we are going through a period of great injustice in India -- social, economic and political injustice." He went on to add: "One or two businesses have their fingers in everything and the large majority of businesses, small and medium businesses are being destroyed. Huge levels of unemployment and massive price rise is what the whole of India is facing... On the social side, the large mass of India's people -- the lower castes, Dalits and tribals -- simply do not have a say in the governance system of the country ... '

While all this may sound soothing to the ears, it is also remembered that it is the Congress, as the leader of the UPA, that gave birth to all the evil that the nation is being plagued with now.

The Nyay Yatra will cover 100 Lok Sabha constituencies in 15 states and the Congress believes it will prove to be as "transformative" as Rahul's earlier cross-country march. The party had reaped rich electoral dividends from Rahul's Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir. It helped the Congress connect with the masses and was believed to have played a crucial role in bringing the party to power in Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka. But it was immediately thereafter squandered away when Rahul, shedding his padayatra look and feel, went abroad and thought it fit to criticize India from foreign soil.

Meanwhile, it also needs to be mentioned that the party has given a strong message by deciding to skip the Ram temple inauguration event by calling it a "political event" and asserting that "religion is a personal matter." This move may further cement the party's minority votebank and win over secular Hindoos who want political parties to deliver on real issues and who do not mix politics with their religious beliefs

Whether the Congress, in its present state, will be successful in effectively countering the BJP's emotional narrative about the Ram temple ceremony with bread-and-butter issues only time will tell.

## Wounded Dragon

The victory of the ruling-party candidate Lai Ching-te in Taiwan's presidential election 13 January signifies the island country refuses to be cowed down by China and will not easily barter away its democracy to embrace the Red Dragon's autocracy. The result shows the people of Taiwan are ready to chart the trajectory of relations with China over the next four years in the manner and style they want it to be. Not how it was dictated by China which had tried to manipulate the outcome by warning the electorate that they had "a choice between war and peace". Simply put, China sought to cajole and cudgel the Taiwanese population to accept its domination if they wanted peace or else they would have to get ready for war or turbulent relations with it. At stake is not only the peace and stability of the 110-mile-wide strip of water between the Chinese mainland and the self-governed island nation but the entire region. Taiwan's presidential election saw an interesting battle of ideas. First, there was an attempt to create a coalition last November to unify two of the contenders-the KMT Nationalists and the Taiwan People's Party (TPP)- so as to create a formidable united front against the third, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). But the two Opposition parties soon fell apart after bickering between the two. Though the election results have clearly shown the mood of the people not to be controlled by China, there is no room for complacency for the ruling DPP as there is simmering discontent among the people, especially the youth. Taiwan is the world's major supplier of microchips for simple items like Bluetooth to the most sophisticated technology for making missiles. Yet, the people of Taiwan are suffering from burgeoning problems of shortage of housing and stagnant wages. The final result reflects the dissatisfaction of a large number of people with over half the electorate voting for the alternatives to the DPP. Nonetheless, the victory of Lai Ching-te is no mean achievement. He has managed to get over 40% of the vote, while this is the third consecutive win for his party. Significantly, many of the people who supported other parties were first-time voters. Their disillusionment with the failure of the two main parties bodes ominously for the DPP and KMT in the future. For the KMT, however, the outcome is disappointing and demoralising. The party was constantly criticized during the run-up to the election for its China policy. The people have not taken kindly the words of its leader, Ma Ying-jeou, urging the people to "trust Xi Jinping." The KMT candidate Hou Yuyi struggled to explain how his party's policy was to support unification with China at some stage, while resolutely setting its face against it happening during his watch. He intended to send across the message to the people that though he believed in Taiwan's unification with China, he did not want it to happen during his tenure should he win the election. This is construed as unacceptable ambivalence and hypocrisy. Beijing is certainly not pleased with the outcome and it regards the President-elect as a "separatist". This means China will continue its policy of largely trying to isolate the island internationally and place economic and diplomatic pressure on it. China's coldness towards Taiwan assumed new proportions since Tsai Ing-wen, the outgoing President, had come to power in 2016. In all likelihood the severed senior official links between the two will remain snapped. Taiwan is reluctant to confront the more assertive, muscular China under President Xi Jin-ping. Lai has made it explicitly clear in his victory speech that he would prefer a balancing act whereby he will not declare Taiwan's independence from China, but at the same time his government will not be subservient to China. This is a pragmatic approach that characterised his immediate predecessor's policy. US President Joe Biden and his administration have been tactful enough to support China's "one-China" principle, while pledging to defend Taiwan's preference for democracy. This is in a way an endorsement of Lai's victory which is a clear rebuff to China's claim on the island.

### **ANOTHER OPPORTUNIST** There has been much

political noise over the weekend exit of the former Union Minister of State Milind Deora from the Congress. Deora has joined the Shinde faction of Shiv Sena, named for Eknath Shinde who broke away from the original party led by Uddhav Thackeray and teamed up with the BJP to become the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. The Deora exit is largely a non-event, and probably guided by desperation to get a party ticket from somewhere for the Lok Sabha constituency of South Mumbai. This is after all the seat that Deora's late fa ther Murli Deora represented, followed by the son who later lost twice to the Thackeray-led Shiv Sena, which will claim that seat for 2024 if it goes into an alliance with the Congress. Deora will in that case be left with nothing. In that sense, Deora's exit is understandable and part of survival tactics at one level, a last-ditch attempt to remain relevant and hang on in the political space and keep alive a family legacy.

In this light, Deora need not be faulted or given credit for this switch. His new-found attacks on the Congress, calling the party anti-business, are equally understandable though in the present context it is difficult to see how this view will fetch him votes even if it brings big business to fund his election and the Shinde faction of Shiv Sena. The Deoras, first Murli and now Milind, are themselves industrialist-traders, have been close to select business families and have been noted above all as celebrity fund raisers for the party in the past. Diamond merchants brought to the stage by Murli Deora would line up with cheques for the party and a few seconds of a photo-op with Indira Gandhi. then the Prime Minister.



The Congress will be stronger if all workers know and understand that they have a national task far larger than their own ticket to fight for

The view that the Deora exit on 15 Jan was timed to overshadow the walkathon that Rahul Gandhi began in Manipur on the same day shows the pathetic side of the shenanigans being orchestrated and played out as the 2024 election nears. But there is a larger message in the exit for the Congress, and it is a message that will help strengthen the party as it comes to terms with who really it ought to depend on to rebuild and reconnect with people on its path of Bharat jodo (unity) and nyay (justice)- the headline text of Rahul Gandhi's pre-election vatra across the nation.

One of the risks of any political enterprise, and particularly the Congress that has seen success and retained power for long stretches, is that it attracts and assimilates within its fold all kinds of workers who rise over the years to take leadership roles. The BJP suffers the same. Some of them will be opportunists, yesmen and fair-weather friends who have little to do with ideological commitment, an alignment of values or an understanding of the aspirations of ordinary people. They may be powerful moneybags, well-connected networkers or lobbyists with narrow interests, seeking political sanctuary or an easy ladder to rise up within the vastness of a political party, as long as the party has power and is able to dictate the political fortunes of its members. Without power, and the capacity to raise funds for future elections, these sets of players will quickly become uncomfortable and begin to exit. Something similar has hap-

pened to the Congress in recent times, and that shows up the party's weakness in some aspects and its strength in some others. The weakness is that the party allows these players to continue, and even gives them important spots within the political establishment which are then used by phonies to improve their toe-hold, expand influence and gain acceptance with a mask that is worn to conceal the person. The Congress has been reluctant to take stiff action against some of these durbaris. There is a complex set of reasons

for this, not the least of which is that the party itself became known for corruption, and now it carries little leeway since it is anyway not in power and has no position of influence to dispense.

Yet, the Congress has been slow to discard deadwood even in its hev days. In this, the BJP has been sharp, swift and very clear - you work for the party, and the reverse need not be true. Some will argue, not incorrectly, that in the BJP you work for one man, and while that criticism may be valid, the BJP's attempt to bring in new faces, with fresh energy, is not to be dismissed lightly.

The Congress will know that it is important to listen, to have inner party democracy but not to be browbeaten by demands and threats. For example, Deora is said to have connected with the Congress through Jairam Ramesh on the prospect of losing his ticket for the 2024 elections. He sought to connect with Rahul Gandhi.

But what is to be done, if it eventually is in the interest of the Congress and the larger Opposition not to give the ticket to Deora and to hand it instead to the two-time winner from the Thackeray-led Shiv Sena? The answer is clear - Deora must make way for the party and work for anti-BJP forces. His mettle is to be tested as much here, as it is as a party candidate, should he get a ticket. This clear message can go out to all Congress workers. The Congress will be stronger if all workers know and understand that they have a national task far larger than their own ticket to fight for.

> The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Views are personal. ©THE BILLION PRESS

#### SPECTRUM HEALTHCARE

Jagdish Rattanani

**THE CONGRESS** 

HAS BEEN

**SLOW TO** 

DISCARD

DEADWOOD

**EVEN IN ITS** 

**HEY DAYS** 

## Medical oxygen remains essential

mong the most shocking stalling oxygen production maimages from the COVID-19 pandemic were of people gasping for air, unable to breathe, their blood oxygen so severely depleted that some died in ambulances lined up outside hospitals. In wealthier countries, there was a panicked rush to expand ventilator capacity to deal with the surge of people experiencing acute respiratory distress. In countries like India and Kenva, there was an even more desperate scramble to find oxygen cylinders for loved ones. In low- and middle-income countries, nine out of ten hospitals lacked the equipment to provide oxygen therapy. Seeing people dying for lack of oxygen, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, Unitaid, USAID, and other global agencies took action. Under the umbrella of the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator, we established the Oxygen Emergency Taskforce to coordinate the emergency response, broaden access, and secure supplies. Since then, the taskforce has overseen an investment exceeding \$1 billion for oxygen-related needs, primarily via the Global Fund COVID-19 Response Mechanism (C19RM). These funds have gone toward procuring oxygen cylinders and bulk storage tanks, in-

chines (known as pressure swing adsorption plants), and offering specialised training for health workers.

Tragically, this re

procedures for a wide range of conditions, including cancer, cannot be carried out without medical oxygen. It would be difficult to identify better example of an invest-

other partners, Kenya also is building a nationwide network of oxygen-production plants, bulk-storage tanks, and cylinder distribution channels to ensure that hospitals and primary-



**THERE IS A COMPELLING CASE** FOR EXPANDING **ACCESS TO MEDICAL OXYGEN EVEN WITHOUT** 

THE THREAT OF A PANDEMIC

too late for too many people, because the peak of the pandemic coincided with a worldwide shortage of oxygen cylinders. Furnishing a hospital with a sustainable oxygen supply takes many months, given the need to install sophisticated equipment and pipework; and training health workers to provide oxygen safely cannot be done overnight.

Following the acute phase of the pandemic, the Oxygen Emergency Taskforce's focus shifted toward ensuring greater access to medical oxygen on a sustainable basis, so that what happened with COVID-19 is never repeated. Moreover, there is a compelling case for expanding access to medical oxygen even without the threat of a pandemic. Lack of oxygen in lowand middle-income countries leads to 800,000 preventable deaths every year. Newborn babies die of respiratory distress syndrome. Mothers die when complications in childbirth result in hypoxemia. Acute trauma victims - from violence or traffic accidents, for example – also die from lack of oxygen. Surgical

ment that simultaneously reinforces pandemic preparedness and saves lives now. Research by the Every Breath Counts Coalition shows that hospitals that offer paediatric care with a fully functioning supply of oxygen can reduce deaths due to child pneumonia by almost half, and all children's deaths by one-quarter. To maintain the pace of

progress in expanding access to medical oxygen, the Global Fund and Unitaid, alongside other partners, have transformed the Oxygen Emergency Taskforce into a Global Oxygen Alliance, known as GO2AL. Its objectives are to provide financial support for oxygen production and supply, comprehensive technical and training assistance, and advocacy for equitable access.

National governments are also taking the lead. For example, this past April, Kenyan President William Ruto and county governors set aside \$41.7 million for a programme to distribute medical oxygen cylinders and bulk storage tanks to the country's health-care centers. With the support of the Global Fund and

care facilities have sufficient supplies.

Far too many people died from lack of oxygen during the COVID-19 pandemic, and far too many are dying unnecessarily today from other conditions because medical oxygen is not routinely available. That is why we have embarked on the most ambitious effort yet to increase access to medical oxygen in lowand middle-income countries.

To date, and thanks to the generosity of donors led by the US and Germany, the Global Fund has invested \$617 million to support 98 countries and six regional projects in their efforts to increase access to oxygen. Doing so will save millions of lives and significantly improve lowand middle-income countries' ability to respond to future disease threats.

Sadly, nothing will bring back the people who died gasping for air. But owing to our unified response to COVID-19, millions of others can be spared a similar fate.

The writer is Executive Director of the Global Fund. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

## etters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are (0) 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

#### OríssaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

#### **Connecting Sri Lanka**

Sir, Right from time immemorial bridges have changed history and the life of mankind. Bridges no wonder allow for safe and efficient travel over water, valleys, and other obstacles. Bridges reduce travel time, improve transportation options and provide access to inaccessible areas besides they are the paths to progress and prosperity. India is now witness to a number of huge and long bridges connecting hitherto inaccessible areas and providing excellent ways of transportation and communication. Some of the bridges which significantly changed the geography and life of the people in recent years are the Dhola-Sadiya 9.15-kilometer-long bridge in Assam which spans the Brahmaputra River, the 4.94 km Bogibeel road and rail bridge located in Assam, the Chenab rail Bridge - the highest in the world - expected to function soon, the upcoming Pamban Sea rail bridge, the Bandra-Worli sea link and now the very long six-lane trans-harbour 21.8 km long Atal Setu sea-link bridge which is sure to change the history and geography of Mumbai. Why not a bridge connecting India and Sri Lanka? During 2002-2004 Peace Accord, the then Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Ranil Wickremesinghe, came with such a proposal - the Palk Strait Bridge - a 23-kilometre road and rail bridge along with a tunnel connecting India's Dhanushkodi with Talaimannar on the Sri Lankan side. In 2023 both nations agreed to conduct a feasibility study for a proposed bridge connecting India and Sri Lanka. The bridge if it materialises can stupendously enhance trade, tourism, and overall connectivity between the two countries. It would economically boost both the nations. M Pradyu, KANNUR (KERALA)

#### Musical colossus

Sir, The passing away of acclaimed classical singer and researcher Dr Prabha Atre at 92 has saddened music lovers. Atre, nicknamed "Swarayoginee" and decorated with three Padma awards, was a doyen of the Kirana Gharana, among the country's most prominent lineages of Hindustani classical music. She excelled in the rendition of khayal, thumri, ghazal, dadri, bhajan, and natyasangeet. Besides, Atre composed and authored books on music and gave new 'ragas' to the music world. The music fraternity will dearly miss her! NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE











## Parikrana Prakalpa



Surya Puja, Dharitri Puja, Gow Puja, Shalaprabesha, 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)

Prakalpa 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)



SUBHASMITA MAHAPATRA | PURI

Feeling blessed after darshan of Mahaprabhu. The Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa work is of high quality. The district and temple



have a smooth darshan of deities. Earlier, we used to stand in queues for hours to enter Srimandir. Now, the air-conditioned pathway with seating facility is a great help to the elderly

DEBADATTA MOHANTY | NIMAPARA

government has made adequate arrangements to ensure senior citizens and differently-abled devotees have a hassle-free darshan of the sibling deities at Srimandir and take back pleasant memories.

state

According to Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), a special helpdesk has been set up near the temple office on Grand Road for senior citizens and differently-abled devotees. "All they (elderly or specially-abled wishing to have a darshan of the Lord) need to do is to reach the helpdesk. And the temple administration will take care of them," an official of SJTA said.

Volunteers and temple officials at the helpdesk, which is lso equipped with wheelchairs, will take the elderly and differently-abled devotees to Srimandir through special pathways, the official said, adding that dedicated rest sheds have also been put in place for the senior citizens and differently-abled.

District Social Security (DSS) Office has provided eight wheelchairs for the noble cause, DSS officer Subhranshu Moharana said, adding, "This initiative of the state government has been benefitting many."

According to the SJTA official, battery-driven auto-rickshaws will ferry senior citizens and differently-abled devotees from Jagannath Ballav to Srimandir.

"It is impractical for senior citizens and differently-abled to walk more than one-kilometre, from Jagannath Ballav to Grand Road. To address the issue, 20 battery-operated auto-rickshaws (10 by SJTA and an equal number by National Aluminium Company Limited) have made available. More such e-vehicles will be added to the fleet soon," said the official.

The official added that the e-vehi-

Spl care for elderly & differently-abled cles will drop the senior citizen or differently-abled near the helpdesk. "One family member can accompany a senior citizen or differently-abled in the e-vehicle to the helpdesk," the official need out

pointed out. Similar arrangements will be made on Sri Danda as well. "Devotees from Jagannath Ballav will also reach Srimandir through Sri Danda. Government-run e-vehicles will be available on Sri Danda for senior citizens and differently-abled free of cost," the official said.

According to Puri Municipality Executive Officer Saroj Swain, the temple administration has so far been providing special facilities to senior citizens and differently-abled during occasions like Ratha Jatra and New Year. "The state government will leave no stone unturned to ensure devotees, including the differentlyabled and senior citizens, have a smooth darshan of the Lord on the dedication ceremony of Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa," Swain said.



## END IN LASER SHO

landscape and elaborate stone works present a spectacular view of the Srimandir Parikarma from the sky

he green

niature model

based firm has been engaged for making the mini model and the special documentary. The light and sound show in the



When the additional of the second opening of Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on the auspicious occasion of Pousha Shukla Saptami, January 17, the Pilgrim City is fully decked up to greet dignitaries as well as devotees. The clip-clop sound of galloping horses will reverberate Badadanda and enthrall the devotees as arrangements are already in place for display of legends like 'Kanchi Abhiyan' through laser shows.

The Kanchi Abhiyan laser show will depict the entire episode of Lord Jagannath and His elder Lord Balabhadra's expedition to Kanchi, riding black and white horses. The show, which will be displayed on a large screen installed on the market complex building at Badadanda, will also portray how the sibling deities relished a pot of yoghurt from Manika Gouduni (milkmaid) and gave her a gem-studded ring as they didn't have money. Devotees will have a close brush with the love story of princess Padmavati and Suryavanshi King Gajapati Purushottam Deb.

Meanwhile, a spiritual ambience has been created at Pramod Udyan on the premises of Jagannath Ballav mutt here with the installation of the idols of the holy Trinity with 25 Beshas (attires) and the three chariots – Nandighosha, Taladwaja, Darpadalana.

This apart, pictures and information related to the earthen pots used for preparation of Mahaprasad in the Lord's Kitchen will be put on display. The articles meant for day-to-day use (not in use now) will also be exhibited. The photographs of Lord's devotees Balaram Das, Srijayadev, Srichaitanya, Bandhu Mohanty, devotional lore of Dasia-Bauri and the historic Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath amid Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 will also be on display.

Devotees will get an opportunity to see two significant 'Beshas' (attires) – Raghunatha Besha and Nagarjuna Besha - of the deities at Pramod Udyan on the sidelines of the heritage corridor project inauguration.

The enchanting Raghunatha Besha' was held on Ratna Singhasan (bejeweled throne) of Srimandir nine times with the last one April 26, 1905. This ritual is performed on two occasions - when Lord Ram's birthday

falls in Pushya Nakshatra and Abhishek Utsav of Lord Ram falls in

Baisakha

month. Although such coincidence has occurred several times post 1905, the Besha could not be adorned owing to some reasons. In this Besha, Lord Jagannath is decorated as Lord Ram with His left leg on Singhasan and right resting on the ground. The deity poses in Veerasana with bows and arrows in hands. Similarly, Lord Balabhadra dons the attire of Laxman with bows and arrows, holding the umbrella covering Lord Jagannath.

This apart, Nagarjuna Besha of the deities will also be performed to mark the occasion of public dedication of Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa. In years when the 'Panchaka', the last five days of the Kartik month, is observed for six days, the 'Nagarjuna Besha' is observed on the sixth day. The 'Nagarjuna Besha' of the Trinity was last held in 1994 and lakhs of devotees thronged Puri to catch a glimpse of the deities in golden warrior attires, wielding a range of weapons including plough, wheel and mace.

Meanwhile, emphasis is being laid on hospitality of invitees who have already arrived in the Pilgrim City to attend the event. The state government and the Puri administration are leaving no stones unturned to give lakhs of devotees arriving in the Holy city a memorable experience. Walls of prominent buildings and boundary walls have been painted with several themes of Odia art, culture and tradition. The trees and buildings decorated with colourful lights are a treat to the eyes. Buildings on both sides of Badadanda painted in light pink colour amplify the beauty of Srikshetra.

The intricately-designed wall abutting the Meghanada wall provides protection to the swanky walkway sporting modern amneties like cloakroom, shelter pavilion, information desk, ampithratre, cultural stage and security ring.

All these and more have found place in a mini model on the Jagannath Ballav complex replicating the entire Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa that offers visitors a peek into the features of the magnificant project. The model will be on display from January 17, the inaugural day of the project, till January 22.

Needless to say, visitors will be able to appreciate the sea of differences between the Parikrama Marg and the surroundings five years ago, and their pres ent status.

From January 17 till February 6, a special documen-

tary depicting the making of the Parikrama Prakalpa, the 2020 Ratha Jatra sans devotees and many legends associated with the Lord of the Universe which will be played on a giant 60 ft X 10 ft screen at the exhibition centre. A Delhievening that will follow the public dedication ceremony of Parikrama Prakalpa promises once-a-lifetime experience to devotees in

Srikshetra. The fabled love story of Gajapati Purushottam Deb and Padmabati, his historic Kanchi expedition and subsequent vanquishing of the southern

kingdom would be displayed in the light and sound, and laser show on the walls of the municipality market complex in the vicinity

> of Badadanda. The light and sound show is yet another step towards making the public dedication event memorable for the millions of devotees of the Lord, with suggestions from 5T Chair man Kartik Pandian.

Gaurav Giri, an official from the Delhi-based agency presenting the show, said that the attire

show, chariot show, the replica of Parikrama Marg, screen show and light and sound show will be conducted at the German Hanger conference hall which will be open for devotees till January 22.



Sarpanch Noor Jahan Begum and Panchayat Samiti member Chandrika Samal welcome the Arpana Rath as members of Muslim community take lead during the tour of the chariot in Charingal GP of Badachna block in Jajpur district

#### **OrissaPOST** TUESDAY | JANUARY 16 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR

## **PHOTO POST**

PTI

AP



Madras Regiment jawans perform 'Kalaripayattu', an Indian martial art form, during an Army day programme at Annadale Ground in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh



People try to take control of a bull as they participate in the 'Jallikattu' event as part of 'Pongal' celebrations, at Avaniyapuram in Madurai district, Tamil Nadu



From front row left, Denmark's Crown Prince Christian, King Frederik X and Queen Mary, back row from left, Princess Benedikte, Prince Joachim and Queen Margrethe attend Folketingsalen, the Danish Parliament, at Christiansborg Castle, in Copenhagen . Denmark's new King Frederik X has visited the Danish Parliament on his first formal day on the job



A man clicks a selfie with a kite, bearing an image of Lord Ram, during a kite festival organised on the occasion of 'Makar Sankranti' at Marine Drive in Mumbai, Maharashtra





PTI

PTI

AP

**P6** 

Opposition councilors shout slogans over special meetings on discussion on to vest the power of standing commitee to the House till their formation and to discuss and decide issues relating to de-sealing at local shopping centres at the Civic Centre in New Delhi PT

Greek Orthodox faithful holds up a wooden crucifix after retrieving it in the Golden Horn during Epiphany day in Istanbul, Turkey. By tradition, a crucifix is cast into the waters of a lake or river, and it is believed that the person who retrieves it will be freed from evil spirits and will be healthy through the year



Camel mounted contingent of Border Security Force (BSF) during rehearsal for the Republic Day Parade 2024 at the Kartavya Path in New Delhi







## national



#### Our country with its diverse culture, different languages and religions is an outstanding example of unity in diversity

#### **AAP, CONG SEAL ALLIANCE** FOR C'GARH MAYORAL POLLS

The AAP and the Congress forged an alliance Monday for the upcoming Chandigarh mayoral polls. Under the arrangement, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will fight for the mayor's seat while the Congress will contest the posts of senior deputy mayor and deputy mayor, senior Congress leader Pawan Kumar Bansal said



## uote

I have received the invitation for the 'Pran Pratishtha' (consecration ceremony) programme to be

held January 22 in Ayodhya. I have not taken any decision yet on attending the programme because right now I am very busy with my party's programmes MAYAWATI BSP SUPREMO

There is a ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC), but from the attempts made to infiltrate, it is clear that the terror infrastructure across the border is intact. Attempts to

infiltrate have been foiled by the Arm GENERAL MANOJ PANDE CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF

The least developed countries and developing nations are suffering more. We have to become more resilient to

climate change and hazards KIREN RIJIJU UNION MINISTER

#### SHORT TAKES

#### Nitish attends Lalu's Makar Sankranti feast

Patna: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Monday treated himself to a Makar Sankranti feast hosted by RJD president Lalu Prasad, belying recent speculations that the alliance between the two had hit a rough patch. Prasad's younger son and heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav, who is also the state's deputy CM, expressed delight over the visit of the chief minister and made light of the speculations of a rift in the ruling Mahagathbandhan.

#### Haryana declares Jan 22 dry day

Chandigarh: The Haryana government has declared a 'dry day' January 22 in view of the 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya. The announcement was made by Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar here Monday. An official release quoting Khattar said all liquor establishments in the state will be closed January 22.

## Uddhav faction moves SC Modi speaks to Putin; discusses global issues

In his verdict last week, Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar had rejected the disqualification petitions filed by both Uddhav Thackeray's and Eknath Shinde's camps

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 15: The Uddhav Thackeray faction of the Shiv Sena Monday moved the Supreme Court challenging Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar's order declaring the Sena bloc led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde as the "real political party" after its split in June 2022

The speaker had also rejected the Thackeray faction's plea to disqualify 16 MLAs of the ruling camp, including Shinde.

In his ruling on the disqualification petitions January 10. the speaker had not disqualified any MLA from the rival camps. The ruling further cemented Shinde's position as the chief minister, 18 months after he led

a rebellion against Thackeray, and added to his political heft in the ruling coalition, which also consists of the BJP and the NCP (Ajit Pawar group), ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in summer and state assembly elections due in

the second half of 2024. Narwekar had said no party leadership can use provisions

#### **APPROPRIATELY SENSITISE STAFF AT AIRPORTS: DGCA**

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 15: Aviation watchdog DGCA Monday asked airlines to publish accurate realtime information regarding flight delays and appropriately sensitise staff at airports to suitably communicate with passengers amid fog-related disruptions at airports.

Against the backdrop of a significant number of flights getting delayed and cancelled and passengers facing tough times, the regulator has come out with a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Earlier in the day. Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said all stakeholders are working roundthe-clock to minimise fog-related disruptions in flight operations and that DGCA will come out with SOPs to ensure "better communication and facilitation of passengers to minimise discomfort in view of flight cancellations and delays due to adverse weather". The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Monday said that airlines should be required to publish accurate real-time information regarding delays in their flights.



#### Shinde-led Sena **moves HC**

Mumbai: Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena has moved the Bombay High Court challenging the legality of the decision taken by the Maharashtra Assembly Speaker to not disqualify 14 MLAs belonging to the rival faction headed by former CM Uddhav Thackeray. Petitions filed January 12 by Bharat Gogavale, the chief whip of the ruling Shiv Sena against the 14 MLAs, said they were challenging the "legality, propriety and correctness" of the January 10 order passed by Speaker Rahul Narwekar dismissing the disqualification petitions submitted by him against the rival camp Assembly members. Gogavale has sought the HC to declare the Speaker's order as "bad in law", quash it and disqualify all the 14 MLAs of the Shiv Sena (UBT) from the lower house of the state legislature.

of the 10th Schedule of the Constitution (anti-defection law) to quell dissent or indiscipline within a party. The Shinde group had the support of 37 out of the

total 54 Sena MLAs when party split in June 2022, the speaker had noted.

The Election Commission had given the 'Shiv Sena' name and

'bow and arrow' symbol to the Shinde-led faction in early 2023. In his order on the disquali-

fication petitions filed by Shinde-led Sena and the rival Thackeray faction against each other's MLAs, Narwekar had said Sunil Prabhu of the Sena (UBT) ceased to be the whip from June 21, 2022 (when the party split) and legislator Bharat Gogawale of the Shinde group became the authorised whip.

"All the petitions seeking disqualification of MLAs are rejected. No MLA is being disqualified," Narwekar had said. The speaker had also held that

the Shiv Sena 'pramukh' (chief) did not have the power to remove any leader from the party. He did not accept the argument that the will of the party chief and the will of the party were synonymous.

The 1999 party constitution submitted to the Election Commission was the valid constitution for deciding the issues and the Thackeray group's contention that the amended constitution of 2018 should be relied upon was not acceptable, he had added.





Modi conveyed his best wishes for Russia's Presidency of BRICS in 2024 and assured India's full support, the MEA statement said, adding that the two leaders agreed to remain in touch.

Russia assumed BRICS presidency from January 1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 15: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin Monday agreed to chalk out a roadmap for future initiatives to further strengthen the "special and privileged strategic partnership" between the two nations.

Modi said he had a "good conversation" with Putin and exchanged views on various regional and global issues, including Russia's Presidency of the BRICS in 2024.

Last month, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Russia, during which the two countries decided to step up military and technical cooperation, including manufacturing of modern weaponry.

"Had a good conversation with President Putin. We discussed various positive developments in our Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership and agreed to chalk out a roadmap for future initiatives. We also had a useful exchange of views on various regional and global issues, including Russia's Presidency of the BRICS," the Prime Minister said on X. Later in a statement, the Ministry of External Affairs said Modi and Putin reviewed progress on a number of issues of bilateral cooperation in follow-

up to recent high-level exchanges between the two countries. "They positively assessed the developments in bilateral rela-

tions and agreed to develop a roadmap for future initiatives to further strengthen the India-Russia Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership," the MEA statement said.

Modi also conveyed his best wishes for Russia's Presidency of BRICS in 2024 and assured India's full support, the MEA statement said, adding that the two leaders agreed to remain in touch. Russia assumed BRICS presidency from January 1, 2024.

During his visit to Russia last month, Jaishankar held a "wideranging and useful" meeting with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov.

Jaishankar said he and Lavrov discussed the international situation and contemporary issues and exchanged views on the Indo-Pacific, the Ukraine conflict, the Gaza situation, Afghanistan and Central Asia, BRICS, SCO, G20 and the UN.

Addressing a joint press conference with Jaishankar in Moscow, Lavrov had said he had talked with Jaishankar about the prospects of military and technical cooperation, including the manufacturing of modern weaponry. "We also have [taken] specific steps in this area," Lavrov had said.

Jaishankar had also called on Putin, who invited Modi to visit Russia.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with supporters during the 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' in Manipur



#### 8 ultras surrender

Agartala: Eight militants of the National Liberation Front of Tripura (NLFT) surrendered before security forces Monday, police said. With this, a total of 26 NLFT militants have laid down their arms since last year, they said. "Five hardcore NLFT militants surrendered before DIG (Intelligence) Krishnandu Chakraborty at the state police headquarters. They deposited one each Chinese pistol and rifle with 17 live rounds. Bangladeshi SIM cards and walkie-talkies," an officer said.

There should also be appropriate sensitisation of the airline staff at the airports to suitably communicate with and continuously guide and inform the passengers about flight delays, according to a release. This also comes amid an incident of a passenger assaulting an IndiGo pilot as he was making a flight delay announcement onboard an aircraft that was bound for Goa.

## UP Cong chief, other leaders pay obeisance to Ram Lalla

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ayodhya, Jan 15: Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajay Rai and other party leaders paid obeisance to Ram Lalla in Ayodhya after taking a holy dip in the Saryu river on Makar Sankranti festival Monday. While the Congress top brass

has declined an invitation to the January 22 consecration ceremony at the Ram temple in Ayodhya, the party's Uttar Pradesh unit stuck to its plan to offer prayers in the holy city on Makar Sankranti.

"I prayed to Lord Ram that God gives wisdom to everyone, everyone lives in peace and there is happiness and prosperity in the country," the UP Congress chief said after offering prayers.

Rai, Congress MP Deepender Hooda and AICC in-charge of Uttar Pradesh unit Avinash Pandey took a holy dip in Saryu river and visited the makeshift temple of Ram Lalla and the Hanumangarhi temple.

The BJP took a swipe at the Congress leaders, calling them opportunists who can do anything for politics, but the opposition party hit back.

Hooda and Pande said they were on a religious trip and refused to answer media's questions regarding top party leaders declining the January 22 Pran Prathistha ceremony invitation.

In his response, Rai said they have come to the pilgrim centre on the "more" auspicious occasion of Makar Sankranti.

"Isn't the statue of the deity a more auspicious day of Makar Sankranti," Rai told reporters.

Ram 'pran prathistit' ... We have come to pay respect to the god on

#### ED summons Kavitha

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate has summoned BRS leader K Kavitha for a fresh round of questioning in connection with its probe into the Delhi excise policyinked money laundering case, official sources said Monday. The 45-year-old daughter of former Telangana CM K Chandrashekhar Rag has been asked to depose before the agency in Delhi Tuesday, they said. Sources, however, said that she may not depose before the agency and has communicated her decision to the investigating officer through an email. "There is a Supreme Court order that has said that the ED cannot summon K Kavitha in this case, her lawyer Nitesh Rana told PTI.



Aurangabad (Bihar): Four persons. three of them travellers from adjoin ing Jharkhand, were Monday killed in Bihar's Aurangabad district where a dispute over car parking snowballed into a full-blown clash between two sides, a police officer said. According to Aurangabad DSP Mohd Amanullah Khan, the incident took place in Nabinagar locality where a shopkeeper took exception to a motorist parking his car in front of his premises. An occupant of the car allegedly pulled out a gun and opened fire, killing an elderly person, which provoked locals who beat up the occupants of the car, three of whom have died while two sustained injuries, the DSP said.

#### AI start up CEO non-cooperative, say cops

Panaji: The police custody of AI start up CEO Suchana Seth, accused of killing her four-year-old son, was extended by five days Monday after a Goa court was told she was not cooperating with the probe. Seth was produced before Goa Children's Court after her initial remand of six days expired. Police told the court it was vet to find the motive of the crime and also needed to confront her with details of the statement provided by her estranged husband Venkat Raman. Seth (39) was arrested from Chitradurga in Karnataka on January 8 while she was travelling in a taxi with the body of her son, who she is alleged to have smothered to death in a Candolim-based service apartment, stuffed in a bag. She was brought back to Goa and a court in Mapusa town had remanded her in police custody for six days.

### Over 24.8cr moved out of multidimensional poverty: Report

According to the NITI discussion paper, multidimensional poverty in India declined from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28%t in 2022-23, showing a reduction of 17.89 percentage points, with about 24.82 crore people moving out of the bracket during this period

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 15: As many as 24.82 crore people moved out of multidimensional poverty in nine years to 2022-23, with Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh registering the largest decline, Niti Aayog said in a report Monday.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a tweet on X said: "Very encouraging, reflecting our commitment towards furthering inclusive growth and focussing on transformative changes to our economy. We will continue to work towards all-round development and to ensure a pros-

perous future for every Indian."

The national multidimensional poverty measures simultaneous deprivations across three equally weighted dimensions of health, education, and standard of living that are represented by 12 sustainable development goalsaligned indicators, according to NITI Aayog

These include nutrition, child and adolescent mortality, maternal health, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, housing, assets, and bank accounts. The National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) by Niti Aayog uses the



Alkire Foster methodology to assess the decline in poverty rates. However, the National MPI covers 12 indicators while global MPI covers 10 indicators.

At the state level, Uttar Pradesh topped the list with 5.94 crore people escaping poverty followed by Bihar at 3.77 crore and Madhya Pradesh at 2.30 crore. All 12 indicators of MPS have shown re-

markable improvement during this period. Addressing reporters here after the release of the paper, NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand said 24.82 people who escaped multidimensional poverty in nine years translates into 2.75 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty every year. "Government has a goal to bring down multidimensional poverty to below 1 per cent and all efforts are being made in that direction," NITI Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam said. The paper said India is all set to reach single-digit poverty levels during 2024.

It also shows that the pace of decline in poverty head count ratio using the exponential method was much faster between 2015-16 to 2019-21 (10.66 per cent annual rate of decline) compared to the period 2005-06 to 2015-16 (7.69 per cent annual rate of decline). According to the paper, poorer states record a faster decline in poverty, indicating reduced disparities.

The paper also said India is likely to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1.2 (reducing multidimensional poverty by at least half) much ahead of 2030. According to Chand, growth in the agriculture sector in these nine years has accelerated compared to any other period.

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that, Smt. Salita Nag, W/o. Saroj Kumar Nag, Ro.-Thakurpali, PO-Sargarh, PS- Loisingha, Dist- Balangir has sworn an affidavit on dt. 19.12.2023 and has reported to IIC, Loisingha PS. Balangir on dt.26.12.2023 regard-ing loss of original link Regd. Sale Deed No. 3022 dt.25.06.1979 of Registering Officer, Loisingha.

nt. Salita Nag, W/o. Saroj Kumar Nag has applied to the LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD. Sambalpur to avail loan on the above property by mortgaging the said property documents. All concerned therefore, having any claim over the property

chased under the said document Regd. Sale Deed No. 3022 dt.25.06.1979 of Registering Officer, Loisingha is required to file her claim with the undersigned within 15(Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that, the property having link with the said document/s is/are free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as a mortgager and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15(Fifeen) days of publication of this notice.

Sd./- A.K. Debta, Advocate, LIC Housing Finance Ltd, At/Po.- Modipara, PS.-Sambalpur, Dt. 11.01.2024 Town, Dist.-Sambalpur, Mobile No.9437158519.



## international



At this moment, what is required is, first of all, to cover the expenses of the war and to allow us to continue the war and complete it BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | ISRAEL PM

#### **UN SEEKS \$4.2 BN FOR UKRAINE**

The United Nations appealed Monday for \$4.2 billion to help people in Ukraine and displaced outside the country this year, saying that people on the front lines have 'exhausted their meagre resources' and many refugees also are vulnerable



Houthi missile hits US

Taiwan's democracy has set a shining example for the world, a democratic success story based on transparency, the

rule of law and respect for human rights and freedoms

STEPHEN HADLEY FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR OF THE US

I'm not interested in being vice president. I'm running to be president, and I'm running to win, and we wil

NIKKI HALEY INDIAN-AMERICAN SENIOR REPUBLICAN PARTY LEADER



#### SHORT TAKES

#### Two students found dead in US

Amaravati/Hyderabad: Two students- one from Wanaparthy in Telangana and another from Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh- were found dead in their Connecticut accommodation in the US recently, a family member said Monday. The students were identified as G Dinesh (22) from Wanaparthy in Telangana and Nikesh (21) from Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh. Family members of the Telangana student are clueless about the cause of his death and also of his roommate's.

#### Polls can't be postponed: ECP

. . . . . . . . . . .

Islamabad: Pakistan's election commission Monday rejected a resolution passed by the Senate earlier this month seeking a delay in the February 8 general election, stating that all arrangements have been completed and it won't be "advisable" to put off the planned polls. January 5, the upper House of Parliament



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, Jan 15: A missile fired from Yemen struck a USowned ship just off the coast of Yemen in the Gulf of Aden, less than a day after Yemen's Houthi rebels fired an anti-ship cruise missile toward an American destroyer in the Red Sea, officials said.

Suspicion immediately fell on the Iranian-backed Houthis, though the rebels did not immediately acknowledge carrying out the assault on the Gibraltar Eagle. It marked the latest attack roiling global shipping amid Israel's war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

The Houthis have targeted that crucial corridor linking Asian and Mideast energy and cargo shipments to the Suez Canal onward to Europe over the war, attacks that threaten to widen that conflict into a regional conflagration.

The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations, which oversees Mideast waters, said Monday's attack happened some 110 miles (177 kilometers) miles southeast of Aden. It said the ship's captain reported that the "port side of vessel hit from

above by a missile". Private security firms Ambrey and Dryad Global told The Associated Press that the vessel was the Eagle Gibraltar, a Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier. The ship is owned by Eagle Bulk, a Stamford, Connecticut-based firm traded on the New York Stock Exchange. The firm did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

Satellite-tracking data analysed by the AP showed the Eagle Gibraltar had been bound for the Suez Canal, but rapidly turned around at the time of the attack. The US Navy's Mideastbased 5th Fleet did not immediately respond to a request for



Private security firms Ambrey and Dryad Global told The Associated Press that the vessel was the Eagle Gibraltar, a Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier

comment. Yemen's Houthi rebels did not acknowledge any attack, though they have fired missiles previously in that area. Sunday's attack toward the

American warship also marked the first US-acknowledged fire by the Houthis since America and allied nations began strikes Friday on the rebels following weeks of assaults on shipping

in the Red Sea. It wasn't presently clear whether the US would retaliate for the latest attacks, though President Joe Biden has said he "will not hesitate to direct further measures to protect our people and the free flow of international

The Houthi fire Sunday went in the direction of the USS Laboon, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer operating in the southern reaches of the Red Sea, the US military's Central Command said in a statement. The Houthis did not immediately acknowledge that attack either.

The missile came from near Hodeida, a Red Sea port city long held by the Houthis, the US said. "An anti-ship cruise missile was fired from Iranianbacked Houthi militant areas of Yemen toward USS Laboon," Central Command said. "There were no injuries or damage

Bulk, a Stamford,

Stock Exchange

Connecticut-based firm

traded on the New York

reported." The first day of US-led strikes Friday hit 28 locations and struck more than 60 targets with cruise missiles and bombs launched by fighter jets, warships and a submarine. Sites hit included weapon depots, radars and command centres, including in remote mountain areas, the US has said.

The Houthis have yet to acknowledge how severe the damage was from the strikes, which they said killed five of their troops and wounded six others. US forces followed up with a

#### Arevalo sworn in as **Guatemala President**

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

Guatemala City, Jan 15: Bernardo Arevalo was sworn in as Guatemala's President Monday minutes after midnight despite months of efforts to derail his inauguration, including foot-dragging and rising tensions right up until the transfer of power

Arevalo arrives in the presidency after winning August's elections by a comfortable margin. But nothing has been straightforward since, with Attorney General Consuelo Porras and the establishment forces observers say she represents throwing one legal challenge after another at Arevalo and his party.

Despite hundreds of Arevalo's supporters pressuring lawmakers to follow the constitution, even clashing with riot police outside the congress building Sunday, the inauguration process dragged for hours into the night before he took the oath of office just past midnight.

A progressive academicturned-politician and son of a Guatemalan President credited with implementing key social reforms in the mid-20th century, Arevalo takes office with expectations of confronting Guatemala's entrenched corruption. But it will not be easy.

He has little support in congress and Porras' term as the country's top law enforcement official extends to 2026, though Arevalo has said one of his first orders of business will be to request her resignation.



## Taiwan loses Nauru

**THE GOVERNMENT OF** THE TINY PACIFIC **ISLAND NATION OF NAURU SAID THAT 'IN THE BEST INTERESTS' OF THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE IT WAS SEEKING FULL RESUMPTION OF** DIPLOMATIC **RELATIONS WITH CHINA AND WOULD CUT TIES WITH TAIWAN** 

#### REUTERS

Sydney/Taipei, Jan 15: Taiwan lost one of its few remaining diplomatic allies Nauru to China Monday, just days after it elected a new president, and accused China of attempting to pressure it while it affirmed the will of Taiwanese to go out into the world.

China claims Taiwan as its own territory with no right to state-to-state ties, a position Taiwan strongly disputes, and the two have for years traded accusations of using "dollar diplomacy" as they compete for diplomatic recognition.

Taiwan security officials said before Saturday's election that China was likely to continue to whittle away at the handful of countries - now down to a dozen – that maintain formal diplomatic ties with Taipei. Lai Chingte, repeatedly criticised by China before the poll as a dangerous separatist, won the election for the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and will take office

The government of the tiny Pacific Island nation of Nauru said that "in the best interests' of the country and its people it was seeking full resumption of diplomatic relations with China and would cut ties with Taiwan. Nauru has recognised China before, between 2002 and 2005.

China and the United States

have in recent years stepped up their competition for influence in the Pacific. In 2019, Kiribati and the Solomon Islands both ditched Taiwan for China in the space of a week. The US affirmed that its commitment to Taiwan is "rock solid" after Saturday's election, in comments delivered by former U.S. National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley Monday during a trip to the island.

Taiwan's Deputy Foreign Minister Tien Chung-kwang told a hastily arranged media briefing after Nauru's announcement that the news had come suddenly. Beijing specifically chose the sensitive timing after the election to target Nauru, Tien said, calling the move "ambushlike" and equivalent to a "a blatant attack on democracy", just as many countries were offering congratulations to Taiwan on the smooth voting process.

"Taiwan did not bow to the pressure. We elected what we want to elect. That's unbearable for them," he added.

China had offered Nauru, with a population of 12,500, money far in excess of what Taiwan provides its allies, Tien said.

"Once again, it proves that China's trying everything they can - money diplomacy - to repress us," he said.

A senior Taiwan official briefed on the matter, speaking on condition of anonymity as they were not authorised to speak to the media, said Beijing is offering Nauru \$100 million a year.

### Ukraine destroys Russian spy plane



not immediately respond to a written request for comment. The Ukrainian defence ministry valued the A-50 aircraft at \$330 million. Kviv's statements did

strike Saturday on a Houthi radar site. Shipping through the Red Sea has slowed over the attacks



commerce as necessary".

resolution seeking a delay in the general election, citing cold weather and security concerns, increasing the political uncertainty in the country. The resolution, tabled by independent Senator Dilawar Khan, received overwhelming support in the Senate but was slammed as "unconstitutional" by major political parties. It was passed with only 14 lawmakers out of the Senate's 100 members in attendance.

#### Lanka arrests 10 **Indian fishermen**

Colombo: The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested 10 Indian fishermen and seized their trawler for allegedly poaching in the island nation's waters. an official statement said Monday, two days after 12 fishermen from India were apprehended on similar charges. The fishermen were arrested, and their trawler seized Sunday north of Point Pedro, Jaffna, the Sri Lanka Navy said in a press release.

#### REUTERS

Kyiv, Jan 15: Ukraine said Monday it had destroyed a Russian Beriev A-50 spy plane and an Ilyushin Il-22 airborne command post in the Sea of Azov area, dealing a blow to Russian military operations in occupied southern Ukraine.

"Ukraine's Air Force destroyed an enemy A-50 long-range radar detection aircraft and an enemy IL-22 air control centre," army chief Valeriy Zaluzhnyi wrote on the Telegram messaging app. "I am grateful to the Air Force for the perfectly planned and executed operation in the Azov Sea region!"

Reuters was unable to verify the statement independently. The Russian defence ministry did not say how the planes had been destroyed.

The A-50, which first came into service near the end of the Soviet era, is a large Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft that can scan an area several hundred kilometres across for enemy aircraft, ships and missiles.

Some Russian military bloggers said the downing of the aircraft would be a huge loss for Russia's air force, since there was a limited number of the planes in service. "It will be another dark day for the Russian Aerospace Forces and Air Defense," wrote Rybar, a blogger with nearly 1.2 million subscribers that supports and provides running commentary on Russia's war in Ukraine.

"There are not many A-50s. And the specialists operating them are generally rare. If an aircraft of this type is hit, the crew will not be able to escape." It was not clear how many A-50s Russia has in service.



Supporters of Jamaat-e-Islami chant slogans during a protest against Israeli airstrikes and to show solidarity with Palestinian people living in Gaza, in Karachi, Pakistan

## 9-year-old Indian-American girl one of 'world's brightest'

#### Jaishankar meets Iranian counterpart

Tehran: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Monday held wide ranging discussions with Iranian counterpart Hossein Amirabdollahian here and their discussion focused on the long term framework for India's involvement with the strategically vital Chabahar port and the North-South connectivity project. Jaishankar, who is in the Iranian capital as part of the ongoing high-level exchanges between the two sides, also called on Iranian President Dr Fhrahim Raisi and conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

PREESHA FIGURED IN THE LIST AFTER THE **RESULTS OF ABOVE-GRADE-LEVEL TESTS OF OVER 16,000 STUDENTS FROM MORE THAN 90 COUNTRIES AROUND THE** WORLD WERE ASSESSED

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Jan 15: Preesha Chakraborty, a nine-year-old Indian-American schoolgirl, was named in the 'world's brightest' students list by the prestigious Johns Hopkins Centre for Talented Youth, based on the results of above-grade-level tests of over 16,000 students across 90 countries.

Preesha is a Warm Spring Elementary school student in

Fremont, California, and took the US-based Johns Hopkins Centre for Talented Youth (JH-CTY) test in Summer 2023 as a Grade 3 student, a media release said Monday.

Preesha figured in the list after the results of above-gradelevel tests of over 16,000 students from more than 90 countries around the world were assessed, it said.

She was honoured for her exceptional performance on the



SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test), ACT (American College Testing), School and College Ability Test, or similar assessments as part of the CTY Talent Search.

Less than 30 per cent of students qualify each year for either High Honors or Grand Honors/SET based on their test scores. She aced in the test's verbal and quantitative sections - on par with the 99th percentile of advanced Grade 5 perform-ances - and bagged the Grand Honors, according to the press release.

The achievement qualifies Preesha for more than 250 Johns Hopkins CTY's Online and On-Campus Programmes for advanced students in grades 2-12 in mathematics, computer programming, chemistry, physics, reading, and writing.

Preesha is a lifetime member of the universally renowned Mensa Foundation, the oldest high-IQ society in the world, where membership is open to people who score at the 98th percentile or higher on a standardised, supervised IQ or other approved intelligence test.

She achieved this accomplishment at age six by securing 99 percentiles in the national level NNAT (Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test), which assesses K-12 students for gifted and talented programmes. Preesha loves travelling, hiking, and mixed martial arts outside of studies.

According to her parents, Preesha has always been passionate about learning and has consistently displayed exceptional academic abilities."This is not just recognition of students' performance on one test, but a testament to their curiosity and capacity for learning," Amy Shelton, Executive Director of the CTY, said.

"These students have demonstrated enormous potential, and now we encourage them to seek out experiences and communities that help them challenge and stretch their knowledge, connect with other young scholars, understand diverse perspectives, think critically, and  $\rightarrow$ pursue their goals confidently," Shelton said.

Founded in 1979, CTY is a centre for innovation dedicated to advancing the field of gifted education through research on +testing, programmes, and other support for advanced learners.







## business



There have been severe external shocks (Russia-Ukraine war. Israel-Hamas war, oil prices, Houthi attacks) since 2020. But despite these. Indian macrofundamentals have strengthened in this period ASHIMA GOYAL | MPC MEMBER, RBI

#### **OYO GOES THE SPIRITUAL WAY**

Hospitality tech platform OYO Monday said it is planning to launch 400 properties in major spiritual destinations like Ayodhya, Varanasi, Tirupati, and Katra-Vaishno Devi by the end of this year. The planned expansion in major spiritual hotspots across the country has been fuelled by a surge in domestic travel and rising interest in spiritual tourism, OYO said



Sensex breaches

73K for the

first time; Nifty

goes past

22K mark

TOP

GAINERS

6.26 Wipro

4.52 ONGC

3.08 HCL Tech

2.42 Bharti Airtel

2.44 Infosys

LOSERS

-3.63 HDFC Life

-1.27 Hindalco

-2.39 Bajaj Finance

-1.18 Bajaj Finserv

-1.00 Eicher Motors

TOP

**FIVE-DAY WIN RALLY** 

Change () +202.90

22,097.45

Investors richer

became richer by Rs

9.68 lakh crore in five days

Dalal Street investors

record peaks

NSE Niftv

Previous day close:

21,894.55

22,125

21.975

09:15

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

row, the 30-share

BSE Sensex

jumped 759.49

points or 1.05 per

cent to settle at a

lifetime closing

Mumbai, Jan 15: Benchmark

Sensex closed above the 73,000

Rising for the fifth day in a

GRAPHIC

uote

Business worth Rs 1 lakh crore is expected to be generated with the consecration ceremony of Ram temple in Ayodhya on January 22

PRAVEEN KHANDELWAL NATIONAL SECRETARY GENERAL, CAIT

Inflation and uncertainty about the direction of the global economy did not seem to be a deterrent for institutional i nvestments in India in

2023 LATA PILLAI SENIOR MD & HEAD OF CAPITAL MARKETS, JLL

The growth of the food services industry in India holds immense potential. The industry not only plays a pivotal role in contributing to

government revenue but is one of the largest employers in the country KABIR SURI PRESIDENT, NRAI

#### SHORT TAKES

#### Avaada to invest ₹40K-cr in Guj

New Delhi: Avaada Group Monday said it has committed investments worth Rs 40.000 crore for development of 6,000 MW hybrid wind-solar projects in Gujarat. The agreement was signed in the presence of Guiarat Chief Minister Bhupendrabhai Patel on the sidelines of the Vibrant Guiarat Global Summit 2024 on January 10-12 at Gandhinagar. a company statement said. According to the statement, Avaada Group has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the

Guiarat government. This strategic alliance aims to set up hybrid wind-solar projects with an aggregate 6.000 MW (6 GW) capacity in the state with an investment of about Rs 40.000 crore.

Volvo Car hikes ICE prices by 2%

## NINE-MONTH HIGH WPI INFLATION SINGES Indices touch Wholesale inflation rises to 0.73% in Dec; food, veggies turn costlier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 15: The wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation rose to a nine-month high of 0.73 per cent in December 2023, mainly due to a sharp rise in food prices.

The WPI inflation was in the negative zone from April to October and had turned positive in November at 0.26 per cent. In December 2022, it was 5.02 per cent.

"Positive rate of inflation in December 2023 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, machinery & equipment, other manufacturing, other transport equipment and computer, electronics & optical products etc," the commerce and industry ministry said in a statement Monday.

The last high level of WPI inflation was recorded in March 2023, when it was 1.41 per cent. In December 2023, food inflation rose to 9.38 per cent from 8.18 per cent in November.

Within food articles, items that contributed significantly to wholesale inflation were paddy, pulses and vegetables.

Inflation in vegetables and pulses was 26.30 per cent and 19.60 per cent respectively, while in paddy it was 10.54 per cent in December 2023

Domestic air traffic

rises 8.34% in 2023

Mumbai, Jan 15: India's do-

mestic air passenger traffic grew

8.34 per cent year-on year to 15.20

The total domestic passenger

volumes in the year-ended

December 31, 2022 were recorded

at 12.32 crore, as per the

Directorate General of Civil

Aviation (DGCA) data released

The domestic air passenger

traffic in December 2023, however,

crore in calendar year 2023.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Monday.

Within vegetables, onion inflation was 91.77 per cent and has been consistently in double digits since August 2023. Potato continued to be in deflation at (-

| INFLATION (Base:             |   |                     |                |  |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------|----------------|--|
| and (2011-12 =100)           | All<br>Commodities                        | <b>0.73</b><br>5.02 | 151.6          |  |
| Wholesale<br>Price Index     | Primary<br>Articles                       | <b>5.78</b><br>2.67 | 182.9          |  |
| for DECEMBER 2023            | Food<br>Articles -1.02                    | 9.38                | 191.3          |  |
|                              | Non-Food -4.73<br>Articles                | 4.01                | 163.1          |  |
| (Prov) 0.73% WPI(Prov) 151.6 | -2.41<br>Fuel & Power                     |                     | 154.2<br>18.09 |  |
| NOV 0.26% NOV 152.9          | - <b>0.71</b><br>Manufactured<br>Products | 3.37                | 140.1          |  |

WPI

)24.08 per cent in December. In the fuel and power seg-

ment, inflation was (-)2.41 per cent, as against (inflation was )4.61 per cent in November 2023. In in the negative

manufactured prodzone from April to ucts, inflation was (-)0.71 per cent. as Oct and had against (-)0.64 per turned positive cent in the previous month in Nov Barclays in its report

said the wholesale inflation trajectory shows input costs remain under control and the momentum in food and manufactured product prices eased significantly.

"We expect RBI to begin monetary easing from June, with three 25 basis points rate cuts in the current calendar year," Barclays said.

~

66

The Reserve Bank in its bimonthly monetary policy last

**Despite fading of** supportive base, WPI inflation is expected to remain range bound around 1 per cent for the remainder of this fiscal with continued easing in global commodity prices RAJANI SINHA CHIEF ECONOMIST. CAREEDGE

at sub-1.5 per cent levels in February-March 2024, unless there is a sharp increase in global commodity prices," ICRA said. India Ratings & Research

Principal Economist Sunil Kumar Sinha said wholesale inflation continues to be bemanufactured products, having 64.23 per cent weight, is still

in January 2024.

"However, in view of retail inflation still being higher than RBI's comfort level, India Ratings and Research expects RBI to maintain a pause of the policy rate in the near term." Sinha said.

Core inflation was still in a deflationary mode at -0.5 per cent in December 2023, which is the 10th consecutive month of deflation due to the lower input costs (especially of commodities) in the manufacturing sector. Retail or consumer price based inflation (CPI) print for December rose to a 4-month high of 5.69 per cent, as per data released last week.

nign as its largest component, in deflation.

Ind-Ra expects wholesale inflation to come in at 1.1 per cent

level for the first time while broader Nifty scaled the 22.000point peak Monday as key stock indices stayed on the recordbreaking run powered by a rally in IT shares, Reliance and HDFC Bank.

high of 73,327.94. of market rally. In five days, During the day, it the BSE benchmark rallied rallied 833.71 1,972.72 points or 2.76 per points or 1.14 per cent. During this time, investors' wealth surged Rs cent to hit an alltime intra-day 9.68.544.93 crore to reach a fresh record high of Rs peak of 73,402.16. 3,76,09,510.01 crore. The Nifty climbed 202.90

points or 0.93 per cent to settle at a new closing high of 22,097.45. During the day, it zoomed 221 points or 1 per cent to reach a lifetime intra-day high of 22,115.55.

A strong rally in IT shares Infosys, TCS, Wipro and HCL Tech after better than expected Q3 results helped the indices scale new record high levels. Oil & gas and energy sector shares also boosted the rally.

"The market gained momen tum, led by the uptick in the IT index with the growing optimism about increased discre-

G

Despite a

global

slowdown, we

are in the

positive zone

and the trade

deficit has also

come down

SUNIL BARTHWAL

COMMERCE SECRETARY

doing well. We hope to beat the

global trends in the January-

March quarter also. Yes, we are

waiting and watching what is

happening in the Red Sea,"

Commerce Secretary Sunil

Barthwal told reporters here

and expressed confidence that the

country's goods and services ex-

tionary spending and strong deal wins. The US bond yield edged lower as market participants bet on the FED easing cvcle, which is expected to start in March," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services

Among the Sensex firms, Wipro jumped over 6 per cent after the IT company's December quarter earnings beat estimates.

The other prominent gainers were HCL Technologies, HDFC Bank. Infosys. Tech Mahindra, Bharti Airtel and Reliance Industries.

Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Motors, Tata Steel and Axis Bank were among the laggards.

IT majors were on the front foot while select heavyweights from banking and energy baskets also aided the uptick, according to Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.67 per cent and smallcap index rallied 0.11 per cent. Among the indices, IT jumped 1.79 per cent, teck climbed 1.79 per cent, oil & gas\_ (1.70 per cent), energy (1.66 per cent), telecommunication (1.41 per cent) and financial services (0.81 per cent).

ports would cross last year's fig-

export sectors that have recorded

negative growth included pe-

troleum products, ready-made

garments of all textiles, chem-

icals, and leather products.

Sectors which are in the positive

zone include plastic, electronic

goods, engineering items, and

timated value of services ex-

port has contracted to \$27.88 bil-

lion, as compared to \$31.19 billion

riod, however, these exports rose

to \$247.92 billion as compared

to \$239.5 billion in April-

During the nine-month pe-

According to the data, the es-

During December 2023, key

ure of \$776 billion.

gems and jewellery.

in December 2022

December 2022

Canara holds 'MSME Outreach Programme' Bhubaneswar: Under the guidance of General Manager and Circle Head Jagdish Chander, Canara Bank has organised "MSME Outreach Programme" at all regional office centers namely Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur.

Sambalpur and Bhadrak. At Bhubaneswar, the event was inaugurated by P Thakur Naik, DGM, Bhubaneswar Circle and Mahamava Prasad Roy AGM & RO Head, Bhubaneswar, The meet was attended by 40 MSME customers. Office bearers of Mancheswar Industrial Area Pramod Kumar Dash, Vice President, and Nikunj Chhotray, Secretary, Odisha Plastic Pipes Manufacturing Association also attended the meeting. A presentation on

latest MSME schemes of the bank was displayed to all customers and sanction letters were handed over to 10 customers. The executives of the bank discussed MSME proposals with the prospective customers and gave their consent to mobilize loans to the eligible proposals

instantly. Several entrepreneurs lauded the efforts made by Canara Bank in extending timely financial support to them. Nikunj Chhotray, Secretary, Odisha Plastic Pipes Manufacturing Association praised the efforts made by the bank in the growth of MSME sector and for the customer centric approach. A total of 18 fresh proposals amounting to Rs 34.25 crore FB and 23 crore NFB were sourced.



to rise marginally owing to the base effect, but remain below 1 per cent in January 2024 (+4.8 per cent in January 2023), and print

prices

month held interest rates steady and flagged risks of rising food inflation in

November

December.

Rating agency

ICRA said the

uptick in WPI in-

flation was led by

items pertaining to

fuel, food and crude,

even as manufactured

non-food items re-

mained in deflationary zone

Looking ahead, the early data

for January 2024 depicts a se-

quential fall in domestic prices

of most food items, as well as a

softening in global commodity

"ICRA projects WPI inflation

for the 10th straight month.

and

New Delhi: Volvo Car India Monday said it has increased prices of its conventional engine vehicles by 2 per cent but has kept the prices of its electric vehicles unchanged. Following the price hike of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles, the XC60 is now priced at Rs 68.9 lakh, the S90 at Rs 68.25 lakh and the XC90 at Rs 1,00,89,000, Volvo Car India said in a statement. Prices of EV offerings, XC40 Recharge and C40 Recharge remain unchanged at Rs 57.9 lakh and Rs 62.95 lakh respectively, it added.

#### **RIL sells REC Solar** Norway for \$22mn

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New Delhi: Reliance Industries Ltd Monday said it will sell REC Solar Norway AS to Oslo listed Elkem ASA for around \$22 million. REC Norway is a wholly-owned unit of REC Solar Holdings and is involved in the manufacturing of kerfbased polysilicon in the Scandinavian country. In October 2021, a unit of Reliance acquired Norway's solar panel manufacturer at an enterprise value of \$771 million as the Indian oil-toretail conglomerate sought to extend its dominance into alternative energy.

Incentives for electrolyser mfg

New Delhi: Reliance Electrolyser Manufacturing, Jindal India and John Cockerill Greenko Hydrogen Solutions are among the six firms who have emerged as successful bidders for getting incentives to set up facilities to manufacture electrolysers, a critical component required for green hydrogen production

as against 1.27 crore flown by all local carriers in 2022.

Of the total domestic passenger traffic, no-frills carrier IndiGo flew 9.19 crore with a market share of 60.5 per cent, followed by full-service carrier Air India, which transported 1.47 domestic passengers and commanded 9.7 per cent market share.

Another full-service carrier Vistara, which is a joint venture between Air India and Singapore airlines had a 9.1 market share in 2023 with 1.38-crore passengers while Tata Group subsidiary airline AIX connect flew 1.08 crore passengers with a market share of 7.2 per cent, according to data

Similarly budget carrier SpiceJet share in the total domestic passengers during 2023 stood at 5.5 cent as it transported a total of 83.90 lakh passengers in the period under review.

Akasa Air flew 62.32 lakh passengers with a market share of 4.1 per cent, DGCA data show.

Akasa Air, however, recorded the highest on-time performance from four key metro airports 'Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bangalore' as on an average 72.7 per cent of its flights took off or departed on time during 2023, according to data.

Also, the maximum number of complaints were reported against SpiceJet at 422, out of the total 712 complaints, as per the data.



#### rose 23.36 per cent at 1.37 crore. Trade deficit contracts as exports edge up in E

*The exports are struggling* on account of demand slowdown in Western countries. besides geopolitical tensions

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi Jan 15: The country's exports edged up 1 per cent to \$38.45 billion in December 2023 while the trade deficit narrowed to a three-month low of \$19.8 billion, official data released Monday showed. Imports declined by 4.85 per

cent to \$58.25 billion in December last year due to a dip in crude oil shipments.

The previous low in trade

deficit - the difference between imports and exports - was recorded in September at \$19.37 billion. In December 2022, it was \$23.14 billion.

Crude oil imports declined by 22.77 per cent to about \$15 billion during the month under review.

However, gold imports jumped 156 per cent in December 2023 to \$3 billion. Crude oil imports in April-December 2023-24 declined by about 19 per cent to \$128.6 billion while gold imports surged by 26.64 per cent to about \$36 billion in April-December 2023.

Exports during April-December this fiscal dipped by 5.7 per cent to \$317.12 billion. Imports contracted by 7.93 per cent to \$505.15 billion, leaving a trade deficit of \$188.02 hillion

sectors so far.

energy sector, the minister ex-

He further stated that an in-

The minister said that Rs 7.4

lakh crore would be invested in

the power sector while Rs 9.65

He also said that India's power

generation capacity will increase

to over 800GW from about 428 GW

at present. India has planned to

bid out 50GW of renewable en-

ergy projects every year.

vestment of Rs 17.05 lakh crore

is in the pipeline in the power and

renewable energy sectors.

plained.

lakh crore.

The Rs 16.93 lakh

crore investment in-

cludes Rs 11.2 lakh crore

in sectors like genera-

tion, distribution and

transmission while Rs

### India invested ₹16.93L-cr in RE, power; ₹17.05L-cr in pipeline

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi, Jan 15: A

whopping investment of Rs 17.05 lakh crore is in the pipeline in power and renewable energy sector, 5.73 lakh crore in the renewable

which has attracted around 16.93 lakh crore of investment since 2014, Union minister R K Singh said Monday.

As much as 80 GW of thermal power generation capacity is under construction which we will have by 2030, Singh told reporters, adding that about 99 GW of renewable energy is under construction, at present.

Briefing reporters on new rules called Electricity (Amendment) Rules 2024, Singh said that as much as Rs 16.93 lakh crore has been invested in power and renewable energy

Deficit shrinks to \$19.8bn xports \$38.45br mports

dip to 58.25bn in the first three quarters as against \$212.34 billion in April-December 2022

India's merchandise exports have lingered in the last several months except for October. "The whole globe is facing an adverse condition. Globally the picture is quite bad, but India is



Microsoft's market cap stood at \$2.887tn, its highest ever, while Apple's valuation is at \$2.875tn

REUTERS

Washington, Jan 15: Microsoft has eclipsed Apple to become the world's largest company by market capitalization, driven by its deep focus on generative artificial intelligence (AI), a sector that has garnered increasing in-

vestor favour. The tech giant, which along with Nvidia and Amazon placed a significant emphasis on AI, has experienced substantial market surges over the past year. Notably, Microsoft's market value has risen by over \$1 trillion.



Microsoft's market cap stood at \$2.887 trillion, its highest ever, while Apple's market cap was \$2.875 trillion as of Friday's close after peaking at \$3.081 trillion December 14

Microsoft has incorporated



OpenAI's technology across its suite of productivity software, a move that helped spark a rebound in its cloud-computing business in the July-September quarter. Its AI lead has also created an opportunity to challenge Google's dominance of web search.

Apple, on the other hand, is facing challenges with waning demand, including for its flagship product, the iPhone.

The company is particularly struggling in China, a key market where economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic has been sluggish and competition 🗎 from a resurgent Huawei is intensifying, impacting its market share.

Other AI-focused tech players such as Nvidia, Meta witnessed a big jump in their market cap in the past year.





## **OrissaPOST**

## Double delight for Yogesh, <sup>-</sup> India's gold rush continues



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, Jan 15: Indian shooters' gold rush continued in the Asia Olympic Qualifiers with Yogesh Singh winning the top prize in individual as well as team event of the men's 25m centre fire pistol competition

here Monday. Yogesh claimed the individual gold medal after shooting 573, finishing ahead of silver winner Muad Al Balushi of Oman (570) and Indonesia's Anang Yulianto (567). The other two Indian participants in the event, Pankaj Yadav (567) and Akshay Jain (564), ended fourth and sixth respectively. The Indian trio aggregated 1704 to bag the team gold ahead of shooters from Oman and Indonesia.

In the qualifiers for shotgun in Kuwait City, Lakshay settled for the bronze medal after shooting 33 in the six-man final. He was

placed fourth in qualification with a score of 119. Iran's Mohammad Beyranvand (40) claimed the gold medal after prevailing in shoot-off with China's Yuhao Guo.

Commonwealth Games gold medallist Shreyasi Singh had to be content with a fifth-place finish in the final of women's trap, having managed 19 points. Shreyasi had qualified for the final in fourth position with a total of 115 across five rounds.

Taipei's Wan-Yu Liu (44) won the gold medal in women's trap and China's Xinqiu Zhang (39) settled for silver. Kazakhstan's Mariya Dmitriyenko (30) ended with bronze.

The Indian trio of Shreyasi, Manisha Keer and Bhavya Tripathi, however, won the silver medal in the women's trap team event with a total of 328, finishing behind China and ahead of Kazakhstan.

### Journey to the dream Vinicius hat-trick fashions Real triumph ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris: Just one league match into 2024, Paris Saint-Germain are already putting more daylight between the defending champions and their rivals for the French league title. Despite plaving against 10 men in the second half, PSG were far from impressive as they resumed their league campaign Sunday with a 2-0 win at last season's runnerup Lens to extend their lead at the top to eight points. Forward Bradley Barcola was just as decisive for PSG. first by breaking the deadlock near the half-hour mark, then by earning the foul that led to Lens defender Jonathan Gradit's sending off iust before halftime. Kylian Mbappe wrapped up PSG's win in the closing stages with his 19th league goal this season.



Rivadh (Saudi Arabia), Jan 15: Vinicius Junior did his best Cristiano Ronaldo impression in Saudi Arabia, scoring a hattrick and leading Real Madrid to a 4-1 rout of Barcelona and the Spanish Super Cup trophy.

Vinicius scored his three goals in the first half as Real beat Barcelona to lift their first trophy of the season Sunday. After his first goal, the Brazil forward imitated the trademark celebration of the former Real great, with Ronaldo reportedly at the Riyadh stadium. "It was for Cris, because he is my idol and now he is playing here," said Vinicius.

Rodrygo also scored for Real. who now have 13 Super Cup trophies, one less than the Catalan club. It was Real's second Super Cup triumph since the tourna-



STUNNING OUTING: Vinicius Junior (2nd from left) celebrates Real Madrid's victory with his teammates, Sunday

SHORT TAKES

#### **PSG beat Lens**

Another American, 25th-seeded Seb Korda, defeated Vit Kopriva 6-1, 6-4, 2-6, 4-6, 6-2. Five-time finalist Andy Murray lost to Tomas Martin Etcheverry 6-4, 6-2, 6-2 while Gael Monfils defeated Yannick Hanfmann 6-4, 6-3, 7-5, Four-time major winner

Naomi Osaka later makes her much-anticipated comeback to Grand Slam tennis after the birth of her daughter. The Japanese player takes on Caroline Garcia of France in the first round in the last match on Rod Laver Arena.

was the important thing. I lost myself at the beginning."

Third-seeded Daniil Medvedev, the 2021 and 2022 finalist at

Melbourne Park, advanced to

the second round when his op-

ponent Terence Atmane retired

early in the fourth set suffering

from cramps. Medvedev had

dropped the first set but was leading 5-7, 6-2, 6-4, 1-0 when the

'It's quite funny because when

I was feeling tired in the third set,

I looked up the other end and saw he was cramping," Medvedev

said. "The conditions were fine

but it has not been hot these

seven days and then it was hot

Stefanos Tsitsipas, who lost last

year's Australian final to Novak

Djokovic in three sets, advanced

with a 5-7, 6-1, 6-1, 6-3 win over

Zizou Bergs. Stan Wawrinka, the

2014 Australian Open champion

and three-time Grand Slam win-

ner, was beaten 6-4, 3-6, 5-7, 6-3, 6-

Ben Shelton, a quarterfinalist

here 12 months ago, beat Roberto

Bautista Agut 6-2, 7-6(7-2), 7-5.

0 by Adrian Mannarino.

today, so you get more stressed.3

22-year-old Atmane quit.



# **COCO ADVANCES IN OZ OPEN**

Melbourne, Jan 15: With increased confidence in her serve thanks to some advice from Andy Roddick, Coco Gauff began her quest for back-to-back Grand Slam singles titles with a 6-3, 6-0 victory over Anna Karolina Schmiedlova at the Australian Open Monday.

The 19-year-old American, who won her first major at the US Open in September, wrapped up victory in exactly one hour. "I was a little nervous the first set," fourth-seeded Gauff said. "I think I did well returning then I found my serve toward the end (of the set). When I was nervous at 3-3, I told myself: I feel good, I look good, so just have fun'. That was able to relax me a little bit'."

Gauff dropped just one point on her serve in the second set and said that former No.1 Roddick had recently given her some serving tips.

"It was really cool," she said. "He's a really chill guy. I met him before but never to that level. I went to Charlotte (North Carolina) for two days. It was a really good two days. I think that my serve has improved. He's probably one of the best servers in history.'

Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova was beaten 6-1, 6-2 by Dayana Yastremska. Seventh-seeded Vondrousova missed the Adelaide tune-up event with a hip injury and struggled on serve throughout, hit ting seven double faults. "I didn't practice because I was injured," she said. "I think that



#### POST NEWS NETWORK

reaming for something is quite easy, but to live the dream ... is not every one's cup of tea. One needs to sacrifice a lot, work way more than his/her ability to make the dream a reality.

Rohit Kullu, a 16-year-old from Sundargarh, is just doing that – trying to make his father's dream. which he now made his own, a reality. Starting from basic and making it to one of the best Hockey High-Performance Centers might be a tough task. but doing so in a short span of time is even tougher. And Rohit is proving that nothing is impossible if you have the hunger and dedication.

Rohit is now training at the Odisha Naval Tata Hockey High Performance Centre (ONTHHPC) and he has been selected for the upcoming Khelo India Youth Games, to be played in Tamil Nadu, January 19-31.

His journey is a tale of willpower and dedication converging. The teen hockey prodigy is demonstrating the belief that where there is a will, there is a way.

Rohit belongs to a family of five, including two siblings. His mother is a homemaker, while his father works in the railway. "It was fascinating for me when my father used to narrate stories of his hockey days. I wanted to make my father proud and turn his dream into reality," said Rohit.

The spark within Rohit ignited during the 2018 FIFA World Cup when his father shared stories of his state-level hockey adventures. Driven by a desire to make his father proud, Rohit immersed himself in grassroots -hockey. Early mornings, with 3 or 4 am wake-up calls, one might

1

It's heartening to see a grassroot talent from Kahupani center (Sundargarh) of our Hockey HPC making his way to bigger league from scratch in such short span of one year. His never say die attitude makes him a good prospect for time ahead **RAJIV SETH** 

#### **ONTHHPC Project Director**

spot him in the hockey field.

Starting with humble beginnings, during extremely rough practices, Rohit would stitch his footwear, enduring the challenges of rigorous practice and even borrowed hockey sticks from friends. "There was a time when, due to tough training, my shoe would tear off within a week, and I would get scared to

ask my parents for a new pair," shared Rohit. Amid doubts and worries,

Rohit's pillar of strength was his parents, who encouraged him to chase his goals. Rohit recollected moments of doubt when the weight of expectations loomed large. "I had my lows; there came a time when I didn't feel like practicing as it was not reaching up to the mark. However, I overcame the setbacks," said Rohit.

He turned resilient with the help of coach Laxmi's guidance. His selection for the Netherlands tour in October 2023 with the Indian sub-junior team became the talk of the town. He was one of the two Odisha players in the squad. During the Malaysia tour for the Mirnawan Cup 2023, Rohit brought golden success, adding

another star to showcase. Now, Rohit is all prepped up and is focusing on the upcoming KIYG. His journey stands as a testament to the victory of passion over difficulty.

ment was moved to Saudi Arabia four years ago. Robert Lewandowski scored Barcelona's goal to make it 2-1 in the first half.

The "clasico" between the Spanish powerhouses was a rematch of last year's Super Cup final that Barcelona won 3-1 for their first trophy with coach Xavi Hernandez and without Lionel Messi. Madrid had also won at Barcelona in the first "clasico" of the season in October in the Spanish league.

Barcelona played a man down from the 71st after defender

#### Odisha bag three points after their draw against MP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 15: Odisha opened their account in the Ranji Trophy 2024 after they played out a draw against Madhya Pradesh in their second Elite Group D match in Indore, Monday. Odisha have now three points, thanks to their first innings lead against MP. They had lost to Baroda in their campaign opener. Resuming the day on 246/6, MP were bowled out for 318 with

overnight batter Harsh Gawli (167. 276b, 25x4) being the top scorer. Sunil Roul (5/100) bagged a fivewicket haul. With 180-run behind Odisha's first innings total of 498,

MP were enforced follow-on. MP declared their second innings on 291/4, setting up a 112run target, with Himanshu Mantri (119, 153b, 19x4) being the top scorer. Yash Dubey (91, 149b, 11x4) and Shubham Sharma (48, 41b, 5x4, 3x6) also played crucial knocks. In reply, Odisha reached 38/1 when the match ended ending it in a draw. Skipper Shantanu Mishra (33 n o, 25b, 2x4, 2x6) was looking good during his stay.

Ronald Araujo was shown a second yellow card for a foul on Vinicius. Real were already winning 4-1 at the time.

The victory added to Real's momentum as Carlo Ancelotti's team remain unbeaten in 21 consecutive games in all competitions. Their last setback was a 1-3 loss at Atletico Madrid in the Spanish league in September.

In contrast, the defeat adds to Barcelona's troubles and increases the pressure on Xavi, whose team haven't played well recently. They trail second-placed

Real by seven points in the Spanish league, with Catalan opponent Girona another point ahead at the top having played an extra game.

It didn't take long for Real to take control of the match, with Vinicius scoring his first goals since a long injury absence in the seventh, 10th and 39th minutes. It was Vinicius' third match since being out from November because of an injury picked up with Brazil's national team in a World Cup qualifier.

Vinicius opened the scoring

England series not in Iyer's mind

after an assist by Jude Bellingham, dribbling past Barcelona goalkeeper Inaki Pena before finding the open net. The second goal came in a breakaway after an assist by Rodrygo, and the third was a penalty kick he converted after being pulled down by Araujo.

Lewandowski had moved Barcelona within a goal with a shot from inside the area in the 33rd. Rodrygo's goal came in the 64th after a pass by Vinicius was deflected by Barcelona defender Jules Kounde inside the area.

Sachin concerned New Delhi: Sachin Tendulkar

Monday dismissed the video as "fake" where he is seen promoting a gaming application that lures users for easy money. The video shows Tendulkar talking about the merits of the application, saying he did not know that money making has become so easy and that his own daughter uses the platform. Tendulkar posted the video along with a message in which he expressed concern about misuse of technology. "These videos are fake. It is disturbing to see rampant misuse of technology. Request everyone to report videos, ads & apps like these in large numbers," Tendulkar, 50, posted on social media platform X. The voice used in the video matches Tendulkar's. "Social Media platforms need to be alert and responsive to complaints. Swift action from their end is crucial to stopping the spread of misinformation and deepfakes," he wrote further.

#### Yuvi's record broken

Shivamogga: Karnataka's Prakhar Chaturvedi Monday broke Yuvraj Singh's 25-year-old record for the highest score in the U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy final with an unbeaten 404 off 636 balls against Mumbai here. Yuvrai had smashed 358 for Punjab in a game against Bihar back in 1999. India's World Cup winning captain MS Dhoni was part of that Bihar squad. The highest individual score in India's premier U-19 domestic event is Maharashtra against Assam in 2011-12. Chaturvedi's epic effort player to score 400 in the final of #CoochBehar Trophy with his

"See, right now I'm being in the present. I have finished the match Mumbai, Jan 15: Shreyas Iyer which I was asked to play (Ranji is neither losing his sleep over game against Andhra). I came,

> control, I can't be focusing on that. Coming here and winning the match was my focus and that's what we did today (Monday)," Iyer told reporters after Mumbai's emphatic win.

Iyer, after a poor series in South Africa where he seemed like a 'walking wicket', was instructed by selectors to go and play Ranji Trophy for Mumbai as he is a part of the Test team. Iyer scored a run-a-ball 48 as Andhra bowlers tried to exploit his weakness against short ball. Asked about the Test series,

Iver replied he isn't looking that far ahead. "It's important to take one match at a time, not think about five-match Test series. The team is only for the first two games. The motto would be to perform in the first two games and then look forward to the rest of the games.'

Iyer, a master player of slow bowling, is expecting turners against England with first Test starting January 25. What Iyer found most satisfying during 145 plus overs of fielding, across two Andhra innings, was his fit-

against England. But other than that, it was just for my match fitness, to stay on the field as long as possible, that's what mainly I was focusing on because especially after my injury, it has been tough for me to stick on the outfield for long. So this was great practice for me.

snub for the Afghanistan T20Is and I executed, so I am happy nor is he overtly worried about with what I'm doing. the upcoming England Test se-"Something that is not in my ries after a forgettable run in

ness "I'm assuming that we would be getting turning wickets

Vijav Zol's 451 not out for included 46 fours and three sixes. "Karnataka's Prakhar Chaturvedi becomes the first splendid 404\* knock against Mumbai," posted the BCCI on X.



Iyer was not picked for the

ongoing T20I series against

Afghanistan and people in know

of things said that his missing

out had more to do with Indian

top-order being stacked with



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

South Africa.

right-handers.





