

JAI JAGANNATHA



SHREEMANDIRA PARIKRAMA PRAKALPA

Pousha Shukla Saptami
17 January 2024



With the blessings of
Mahaprabhu Shree Jagannatha,
The divine inauguration of the
'Shree Mandira Parikrama Prakalpa'
will conclude today.

17th JANUARY | 1:15 PM ONWARDS

The inauguration ceremony will be telecast live on all Odia TV channels and live streamed on the **"IPR Odisha"** YouTube Channel **7 AM** onwards.

leisure



SWIFT GIFTS FAN HER SCARF AT NFL GAME

Pop megastar Taylor Swift gifted her scarf to a fan at a Kansas City Chiefs game after deciding that the young woman was her 'good luck charm' at the National Football League (NFL) match. The 34-year-old was at the Arrowhead Stadium match last week to support her footballer boyfriend Travis Kelce.

SHANNEN DOHERTY BUSY ARRANGING HER OWN FUNERAL

Actress Shannen Doherty, who was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer, is busy making arrangements for her own funeral. She said on a podcast: "This is such a morbid conversation, but it's also so fun. I want my remains to be mixed with my dog and my dad."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Curl, massage, clip, tweeze, polish, gloss, condition... today, will you attempt to shed your old skin. A dream date may have you in jitters but Ganesh suggests that you take it easy. True relationships are not sealed by glossy kisses alone!

TAURUS
Your romantic relationship will be working on an overdrive today, says Ganesh. You will discover answers to the finer aspects of your love life. Overall, you will have a refreshingly creative outlook all through the day. It is a favourable day for those who cherish unrequited love, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today, you are likely to rack your brains to get things done. But your modesty will not do you any good. You will have to show that you are the boss, even if you are not. Your extraordinary brilliance will translate into exceptional performance and will save the day.

CANCER
Ganesh advises you to watch your back today. However, he wants to make it clear that you may be at the receiving end of others' actions. Anyway, your cautious and watchful approach will save you from needless discomfiture. In short, life will teach you priceless and precious lessons today, predicts Ganesh.

LEO
The friends we make go a long way in making us who we are, says Ganesh. Over the years, with your natural instinct to be a social charmer, you have built a fine circle of dedicated friends on whom you can bank with confidence under any circumstance. Today might be a day when you get the opportunity to make use of such friendship.

VIRGO
Today, your soul mate will both give and demand pleasant surprises, says Ganesh. Your business partners may bring in some good news. Take responsibility of your past mistakes and make plans for the days to come. Do not be shy of the advice of loved ones, as it will help you more than hinder.

LIBRA
Today, you will be in a mish-mash of emotions and feelings. Also, there are chances of accumulated feelings finding an outlet. Your capacity for emotional display may take people by surprise. However, you will also enjoy the higher responsibilities reposed on you, predicts Ganesh.

SCORPIO
While not the Trot, you shall, however, trot on the lines of radicalism today, predicts Ganesh. Learn to think as you would, and always have, but act as others would have you to, advises Ganesh. Be the maverick that you are only with those who are closest and dearest, cautions Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Setting for a new, better employment will help you fast-track your career growth. A telephonic interview might ring in a new offer. A lucrative deal with an MNC would serve well. Your dedication and devotion to work will also peak today, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
It's going to be a day of pleasant surprises. You will try your level best to help people around you, and will find it exceedingly frustrating when the results won't be as expected, says Ganesh. In fact, this may even dampen your spirit and shake your self-confidence. But try and transform your weaknesses into strengths — it will help you develop a more positive approach to life.

AQUARIUS
Eat, drink, and make merry. But watch out: don't empty your pockets in one go. Also, guard your reputation. A lot depends on your behaviour, and the big daddies may be watching you. You have a lot at stake, and there should be no regrets later. Let success be your priority for now, says Ganesh.

PISCES
You are likely to be grinding yourself under at the workplace today. A turning point will arise in romantic liaisons, though if the evening awaiting you is anything to go by, it is something you should welcome wholeheartedly, says Ganesh.

75TH EMMYS

Succession, The Bear tie with six wins



Los Angeles: Three shows dominated the 2023 Emmy Awards, *Succession*, *The Bear* and *Beef*. Each show nearly swept their respective category in the drama, comedy and limited series races.

Succession and *The Bear* tied with a leading six wins each and *Beef* followed closely with five awards, reports *Variety*. Hosted by Anthony Anderson, the 75th Emmy Awards provided multiple tributes to hit shows of the past as well as the present. The casts of series

like *Cheers*, *The Sopranos*, *Ally McBeal*, and *Martin* reunited for the night, while former cast members of shows like *Grey's Anatomy* and the ever-Emmy-ignored comedy *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* took the stage to present awards.

As per *Variety*, *Succession* won outstanding drama series, and stars Kieran Culkin (lead actor in a drama), Sarah Snook (lead actress in a drama) and Matthew Macfadyen (supporting actor in a drama) each won awards.

Writer and creator Jesse Armstrong and director Mark Mylod each won for the *Connor's Wedding* episode, in which Waystar Royco CEO Logan Roy dies. The show also won outstanding drama. *The Bear* won outstanding comedy for its first season, with Jeremy Allen White (lead actor in a comedy), Ayo Edebiri (lead actress in a comedy) taking home prizes. Creator Christopher Storer also won for writing and directing. *Beef* won the Outstanding Limited Series. Its stars Steven Yeun (lead actor) and Ali Wong (lead actress) won awards, plus creator Lee Sung Jin earned honours for writing and directing.

Aditi admits she often ignores sensible advice

Mumbai: Indie musician and actress Aditi Saigal, also known as Dot, is one of the most engaged Gen Z artistes of the country. She has shared how the social media has always been kind to her. Dot also, calls herself an artist who often ignores 'sensible advice.'

With a staggering engagement rate of 24-26 per cent on her posts, Dot, who shot to fame with her acting as well as musical talent, in Zoya Akhtar's directorial *The Archies*, has emerged as a breakthrough artiste of the year. She composes, sings and writes the lyrics of all her songs.

Dot said: "I've always said that I've been lucky enough that social media

has always been kind to me. Since the beginning, the kind of love I've gotten from people about my music has been nothing but heartwarming."

She went on to add, "Whether it's music, more films, or some other venture, it's hard not to look back at it all and be grateful to the people following along. Especially since I'm the kind of artist who often ignores sensible advice and does whatever in the world she feels like."

Dot has recently released a new single titled *Girls Night* that is going viral amongst music aficionados.



Trikanya to hit screens on Int'l Women's Day

BHUBANESWAR: *Trikanya*, a much-anticipated Odia film directed by Anupam Patnaik, will be released on International Women's Day (March 8).

Patnaik, sharing the development, said, "Block your dates this Women's Day for this sweeping anthology of love, lust and sacrifice."

The film features a stellar cast that includes Barsha Patnaik, Manoj Mishra, Aman, Sradhanjali Panigrahi, Partha Sarathi Ray, Nishanth Majithia, Sukant Rath, Nivy, and Sijan Mohapatra.

Trikanya delves into the lives of three women hailing from diverse social backgrounds and landscapes,



each grappling with their unique challenges and triumphs. Patnaik's last movie *Pratikshya* bagged the Best Odia

Film honour at this year's National Film Awards.



Mumbai: Medha Shankar, known for her role in the acclaimed film *12th Fail*, recently shared insights into the challenging phase of her life. Despite the success of the Vikrant Massey starrer, Medha recalled a time in 2020 when financial struggles took a toll on her. It was among her most difficult moments in life, she said.

In a conversation with *Instant Bollywood*, she admitted to isolating her-

self and avoiding social interactions, driven by a pursuit of personal accomplishments.

"The experience was lonely and frightening due to the uncertainties that unfolded globally. I was financially strained, my father's support was crucial for my survival in Mumbai," the actress recounts.

Despite the hardships, Medha's popularity, especially on social media, experienced a significant surge after the release of *12th Fail*. Her Instagram following skyrocketed from 3.5 lakh to an impressive 1.5 million. Her journey reflects the resilience and determination that define her both on and off the screen.

Titles shortlisted for KLF Book Awards-2024

NEW DELHI: The organisers of Kalinga Literary Festival (KLF) Tuesday announced the shortlisted titles in English for its annual KLF Book Awards, an event which showcases a diverse range of literary works across genres.

The final winners will be declared February 11, coinciding with the last day of the 10th KLF in Bhubaneswar, they informed. The three-day event will be kicked off February 9.

This year's shortlist includes notable works such as Manoj Mitta's *Caste Pride: Battles for Equality in Hindu India*, Amitav Ghosh's *Smoke and Ashes: A Writer's Journey through Opium's Hidden Histories*, Salman Rushdie's *Victory City*, Devika Rege's *Quarterlife: A Novel*, Ranjit Hoskote's *Icelight*, Gurcharan Das' *Another Sort of Freedom* and former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan's *Breaking the Mould - Reimagining India's Economic Future*, shared Rashmi Ranjan Parida, Founder and Director of KLF.

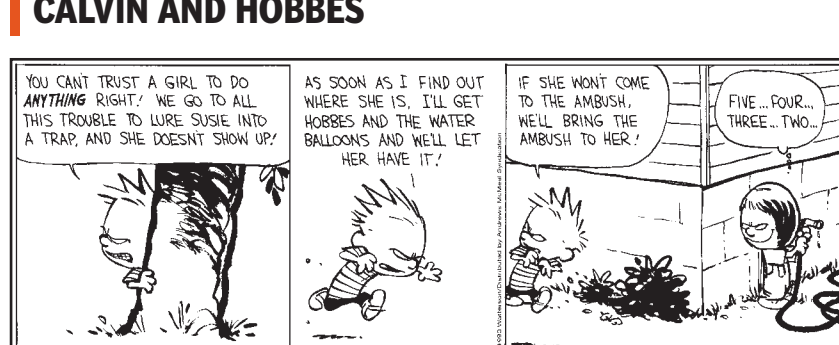


The KLF Book Awards are not just accolades but a celebration of the enduring power of literature to connect, inspire, and transform, added Parida.

PEANUTS



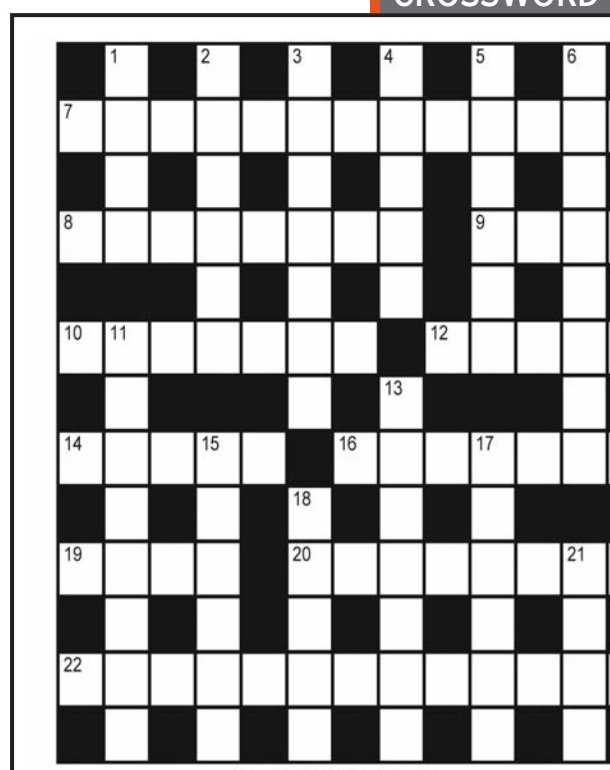
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



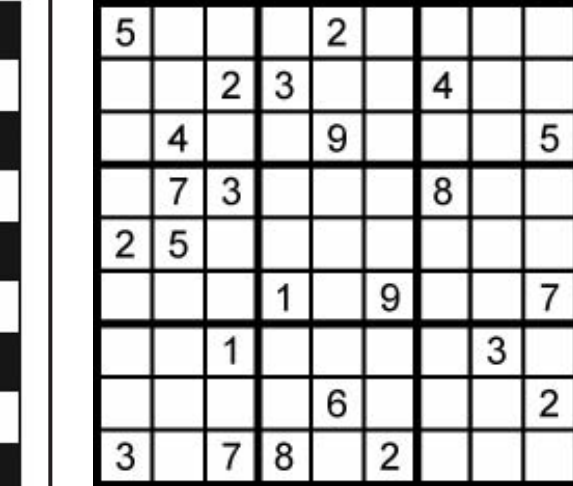
FUN post CROSSWORD



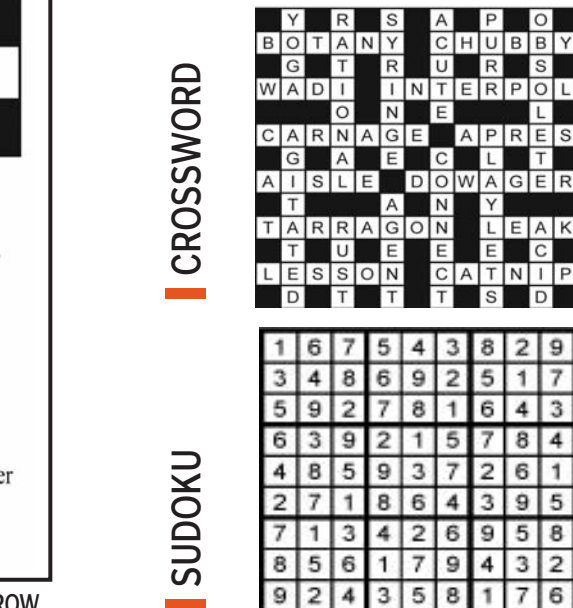
- Across**
- 7 Decorating combinations (6,7)
 - 8 Dig up
 - 9 Adam's apple spot
 - 10 A pungent gas
 - 12 Hawk's home
 - 14 Bring upon oneself
 - 16 Metal money
 - 19 Weapons
 - 20 Computers
 - 22 Flabbergasted
- Down**
- 1 Fraud
 - 2 Salad ingredient
 - 3 Unpredictable
 - 4 Singing group
 - 5 Rap session?
 - 6 Attractive
 - 11 Emperor and queen, e.g.
 - 13 Own
 - 15 Relating to bears
 - 17 Inherent character
 - 18 Milk producer
 - 21 British capacity unit

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



DSPL-549

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RELIGIOUS HEADS OF 90 INSTITUTIONS FROM INDIA, NEPAL EXPECTED TO ATTEND

'Parikrama Prakalpa' inauguration today

Puri, Jan 16: A large number of devotees from across Odisha and the country started arriving Tuesday at this seaside pilgrim town, a day ahead of the much-awaited grand opening of the 'Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa' or the Jagannath Temple heritage corridor project.

The entire pilgrim town has been beautifully adorned with flowers, decorative lights and graffiti, presenting a spectacular look.

The 'Maha Yajna' which started on Makar Sankranti Day entered the second day Tuesday and will culminate Wednesday afternoon with Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb scheduled to offer 'Purna Ahuti' (final pouring of ghee on the havan fire) between 1.30pm and 2.30pm. Soon after that, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will dedicate the project for devotees.

Brahmins and Vedic scholars are chanting different Vedas at different gates of the 12th-century Jagannath Temple since Monday.

To witness this event and have a darshan of Lord Jagannath, a

- 100 supervisory officers, 250 sub-inspector and ASI rank officials to look after security
- Project valued at ₹3,700 crore includes sub-projects like development of various buildings
- After Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb offers Purna Ahuti Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to dedicate project for the devotees

large number of devotees thronged the temple Tuesday. Starting from early morning, the devotees made a beeline on the Grand Road to visit the 12th-century shrine.

Chairman 5T Initiative and Nabin Odisha, Kartik Pandian, Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena and DGP in-charge Arun Sarangi visited here Monday and reviewed the preparedness and security arrangements made for the inauguration of the Parikrama project.

Pandian held a review meeting with district administration, senior servitors of the temple and other senior officials Monday evening and sought cooperation from all for the success of the January 17 event.



FINAL PREPARATIONS: Rituals pertaining to purification of the temple periphery in progress ahead of the dedication of Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa in Puri, Tuesday

INDIA, CHINA FORCES CLASHED TWICE AFTER GALWAN: SOURCES

New Delhi, Jan 16: At least two previously unknown incidents of skirmishes between the Indian and Chinese troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) have come to light with citations for gallantry awards conferred on Indian Army personnel mentioning them. The incidents had taken place between September 2021 and November 2022. However, there was no immediate comment on the matter by the Army.

The citations, read out at an investiture ceremony by the Army's Western Command last week, provided brief details of how the Indian troops responded firmly to the aggressive behaviour of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers along the LAC. The programme was initially uploaded on YouTube, but deleted it subsequently.

Sources said that the attempted transgressions by the Chinese forces took place in the Tawang sector. The clashes led to injuries on both sides, they added.

Kuno national park loses its 10th cheetah

Kuno: Another cheetah died Tuesday at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh. It took the toll to 10 since the reintroduction of cheetahs in India in 2022. The cheetahs had been brought from Namibia and South Africa. So far seven adults and three cubs have died at Kuno. Eight cheetahs were brought from Namibia in September 2022 while 12 others were brought from South Africa in February 2023. However, from the beginning of the relocation project, the mission has run into rough weather with the big cats dying at regular intervals.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Trust member to perform Ram Lalla's consecration

Ceremony begins for 'pran pratishtha' of idol; PM Modi to address gathering after rituals

Ayodhya (UP), Jan 16: Despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi observing a special 11-day ritual, ahead of the Ram Temple consecration here January 22, the 'pran pratishtha' of the idol of Ram Lalla will be done by a member of the temple trust and his wife. Trust member Anil Mishra and his wife Usha has been chosen as the main 'yajman' (host) of the rituals and accordingly he and his wife will conduct the 'pran pratishtha' of the idol, officials said here Tuesday.

The run-up to the Ram Mandir consecration ceremony here began Tuesday with a series of rituals with both Anil and Usha taking part. These rituals will reach the finale with the conse-



cration, or 'pran pratishtha', of the idol of Ram Lalla.

"The 'anushthan' (rituals) has started and will continue till January 22, the day of the consecration ceremony. Eleven priests are performing the rituals

invoking all goddesses and gods," Ram temple chief priest Satyendra Das said.

Typically, the 'yajman' is the main 'host' of a 'puja' - the person on whose behalf the prayers are offered. Anil and his wife

have to attend the rituals on all days, including January 22 when Modi will be present. Anil confirmed that he is the 'yajman' for the ceremony, but declined to comment on anything else.

Earlier, there was a debate whether Modi is entitled to adopt the role of 'yajman' which usually goes to a 'householder'. However, now all speculation has been put to rest.

Modi is scheduled to deliver a speech at the end of the consecration ceremony, expected to be attended by 8,000 guests.

The trust said there are seven adhivasas in the 'pran pratishtha' and a minimum of three adhivasas are in practice. There are 121 'acharyas' who are conducting the rituals and Ganeshwar Shastri Dravid is overseeing the proceedings.

Police solve Baliana murder case; 1 held

LIVE-IN PARTNER WAS PRESSURISING DECEASED TO MARRY HER, LEADING TO THE GRUESOME INCIDENT

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: Police arrested Tuesday Sunki Rana, 36, for her alleged involvement in the murder of city-based restaurateur, Biswajit Nayak, officials said. The woman, originally a resident of Jharsuguda district, was nabbed from Puri by a team of Baliana police station personnel, an officer informed.

The decomposed body of Biswajit was found Sunday from his residence in Hirapur under Baliana police station limits. The cops also found a blood-stained wooden stick from the murder spot. Sources said that Biswajit was murdered Saturday and his body was discovered Sunday.

Senior police officials informed that Sunki had earlier spent 12 years in prison for hacking her sister-in-law to death. She was released four years back.

Biswajit, reportedly, ran a small eatery shop in VSS Nagar.



After his divorce, he and Sunki were involved in an affair. Sunki used to visit Biswajit's house on a regular basis.

Police said that Sunki visited Biswajit's residence December 30 and was staying there. She was pressurising Biswajit to marry her. They had a heated argument December 12 during which Sunki in a fit of rage attacked Biswajit with a stick. She hit him repeatedly on the head killing him on the spot. Later she concealed the stick and fled to Puri in an auto-rickshaw.

1 dead, 2 hurt in tusker attack

Jaleswar, Jan 16: A man, identified as Debendra Giri, a resident of Khunta village, was trampled Tuesday to death by an elephant which had strayed from its herd under this block of Raibania police limits in Balasore district. Two others including a woman sustained critical injuries after the same animal attacked them.

The injured were identified as Siddha Tudu, 62, of Prasadshola village and Gurubari Tudu of Badhimuhan village, both under Rasagovindpur police limits. Locals rescued the two and admitted them to the Hatigad community health centre. They were later shifted to the Balasore district headquarters hospital after their conditions deteriorated.

Debendra was attacked and killed when he went to his backyard to pluck vegetables. The pachyderm suddenly attacked and trampled him to death on the spot. Family members while searching for him found him lying dead in the backyard.

On being informed, a team of Forest department personnel drove away the pachyderm and recovered the body of the deceased. However, while it was fleeing, the tusker attacked two other persons injuring them.

800 BCE old settlement found in Gujarat

Kolkata, Jan 16: Researchers from IIT Kharagpur, ASI, Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Deccan College have found evidence of human settlement which is as old as 800 BCE (Before Christian Era) at Vadnagar in Gujarat. Incidentally Vadnagar is the native village of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

An IIT Kharagpur statement said that the study of deep archaeological excavation at Vadnagar also indicates that the

rise and fall of different kingdoms during this span of 3,000 years and recurrent invasions of India by central Asian warriors were driven by severe change in climate like rainfall or droughts.

The findings have just been published in a paper titled 'Climate, Human Settlement, and Migration in South Asia from Early Historic to Medieval Period: Evidence from New Archaeological excavation at Vadnagar, Western India' in the prestigious Elsevier journal *Quaternary Science Reviews*.

While the excavation was led by ASI, the study was funded by the

Evidence makes Vadnagar the oldest living city within a single fortification unearthed so far in India

ABHIJIT AMBEKAR | CO-AUTHOR

Directorate of Archaeology & Museums, Government of Gujarat. The excavation also received financial support from Sudha Murthy, former Chairperson, Infosys Foundation.

"Excavation in several deep trenches revealed the presence of seven cultural stages (periods) namely, Mauryan, Indo-Greek, Indo-Scythian or Shaka-



Kshatrapas, Hindu-Solankis, Sultanate-Mughal (Islamic) to the Gaekwad-British colonial rule. One of the oldest Buddhist monasteries has been discovered during our excavation," informed ASI archaeologist Abhijit Ambekar, co-author of the paper who led the excavation from 2016

"We found characteristic ar-

chaological artefacts, potteries, copper, gold, silver and iron objects and intricately designed bangles. We also found coin moulds of Greek king Apollodatus during the Indo-Greek rule at Vadnagar," Ambekar added.

Ambekar claimed that 'evidence makes Vadnagar the oldest living city within a single fortification unearthed so far in India'. Vadnagar is unique in a sense that such a continuous record of early historic to medieval archaeology with precise chronology has not been discovered elsewhere in India, he added.

FOCUS CONFLICT

DYING WORLD ORDER



Violent conflict has become the default method to settle disagreements between countries (Russia and Ukraine) and within countries (Yemen and Sudan), while the multilateral security system, headed by the United Nations Security Council, is sliding into irrelevance

despicable acts should be at the top of the priority list for the International Criminal Court prosecutor and addressed in International Court of Justice proceedings. We must halt this descent into the abyss.

The cavalier disregard for the principles and norms of international law, such as limitations on the right to self-defence, and the willful blocking of the Security Council from fulfilling its "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security," have been unconscionable. Senior UN humanitarian officials on the ground in Gaza have used phrases like "hell on earth" and "humanity giving up" to express their desperation. Few seem to be listening.

There is now a looming rupture between the West and the Arab and Muslim world, even as Western and Arab populations are directing anger toward their leaders. Dehumanising, rage-filled rhetoric emanates from all sides and reverberates on city streets, university campuses, and in small towns the world over. All efforts to build bridges of respect and under-

standing over the last few decades seem to have collapsed.

Moreover, the Arab and Muslim world has lost faith in perceived Western norms: international law and institutions, human rights, and democratic values. In their view, the West itself is showing that brute force trumps all else. Of course, the increasing belief that democracy and human rights – the liberal values that once inspired the Arab Spring – are simply tools for Western domination is music to the ears of autocrats and despots.

The war underscores two lessons. First, conflicts don't resolve themselves, and allowing them to fester is shortsighted and dangerous. UN Secretary-General António Guterres was viciously attacked by Israel after saying that Hamas' October 7 attack "did not happen in a vacuum." But he was acknowledging a truth – the pent-up humiliation and sense of injustice among the Palestinians – that most people who follow the Palestinian-Israeli conflict have long recognised.

The conflict has elicited calls for the revival of the ill-fated

"peace process" that has been limping along for decades. But the same leaders now promoting a two-state solution silently looked on as Israel devoured (through annexation and settlement expansion) most of the land that was meant for a Palestinian state. The aftermath of today's violence may very well offer the last opportunity to reach a just and lasting peace before the entire region goes up in flames.

The other important lesson is that building a more robust and equitable global security system and financial architecture requires structural reforms. For starters, the veto power of the UN Security Council's five permanent members should be drastically curtailed, if not eliminated. The US and Russia must also resume nuclear arms talks and take meaningful steps toward disarmament. It is scandalous that there is no longer a single nuclear-arms-control agreement in operation between the world's two largest nuclear powers.

The Bretton Woods institutions – the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank – must give the developing world a fair say in global decision-making and equitable access to financial resources for development. Although policymakers have been calling for such an overhaul since the collapse of the Soviet Union more than 30 years ago, no progress has been made.

We must not permit an opportunity born of war to slip through our fingers. In the absence of radical reform of the international order, the Gaza war will herald a world spiraling out of control.

The writer, Director General Emeritus of the International Atomic Energy Agency, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005, jointly with the IAEA.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

After COVID-19 struck in 2020, creating chaos and misery, I hoped that some silver lining would emerge from this global tragedy. For a time, it seemed possible. The pandemic was a powerful reminder of our common vulnerabilities, our shared humanity, and the importance of solidarity that transcends our differences and borders.

Now, however, I wonder if I was wrong even to hope. Once the pandemic subsided, we rushed back to the precipice with renewed vigor. None of the lessons of solidarity stuck, as if we were coated in Teflon. Many, if not all, of the pillars of the post-World War II global order seem to be crumbling. Violent conflict has become the default method to settle disagreements between countries (Russia and Ukraine) and within countries (Yemen and Sudan), while the multilateral security system, headed by the United Nations Security Council, is sliding into irrelevance.

Moreover, the inequality gap between the Global North and the Global South has widened, and more of the latter countries are suffering from debilitating debt burdens. This, in turn, has exacerbated poverty fuelled migration, and sown distrust. With populism and authoritarianism on the rise, attacks on human rights and democratic values have intensified and, in some cases, the veneer of elections has given these attacks spurious legitimacy. And the intensifying rivalry between the United States and China is fast becoming an end in itself.

But the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas has dealt a particularly crushing blow to the system. The gross violations of international humanitarian law to protect civilians beggar belief. In fact, the atrocities committed against civilians, first in Israel and now in Gaza, are evil in its purest form. These



Mohamed ElBaradei

THE INEQUALITY GAP BETWEEN THE GLOBAL NORTH AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH HAS WIDENED, AND MORE OF THE LATTER COUNTRIES ARE SUFFERING FROM DEBILITATING DEBT BURDENS

To Ban Or Not

A fierce debate has begun in Germany over whether the Far-Right Alternative for Germany (AfD) should be banned after some of its leaders took part in a meeting where consensus was to drive out the minorities even though the country's Constitution has provisions for banning a party that works to that end. While mainstream parties smell in it the possibility of a return of the neo-Nazis to power, many of those who are opposed to AfD believe banning the party may prove counterproductive and will ultimately benefit the outfit. Fear for a rise of the Far-Right party stems from the fact that it continues to rise and is now the second largest party in the country.

The debate was sparked by a call given by Saskia Esken, the co-chief of the ruling Social Democratic Party (SPD) for discussing a ban on the outfit if only, as she put it, to "shake voters" out of their complacency. Since then, politicians from across the spectrum have been voicing their opinions both in favour and against the ban. AfD is increasingly proving to be a threat to mainstream parties. Last summer, it robustly won a district election for the first time since being founded in 2013. Like many Right-wing ultra-nationalist parties across the globe, it has increased its popularity by harping on xenophobia. This has brought rich dividends as the party has become second in national polls and it leads in three eastern states that will hold elections this autumn. As chancellor Olaf Scholz's coalition government has struggled to navigate the multiple challenges of COVID, Ukraine, the cost of living crisis and the green transition, AfD has exploited widespread insecurity and hardship to strengthen its support base.

On 15 January, Scholz and his foreign minister, Annalena Baerbock, joined thousands of marchers participating in a demonstration in Potsdam to 'defend democracy.' The immediate trigger for the show-down was the revelation that last November, senior AfD figures met with other prominent Far-Right extremists to discuss a plan for forced mass deportations of migrants. The target of the attack included German citizens with migrant roots. Among those present was an adviser to the AfD's co-leader, Alice Weidel. Such ideas are in flagrant violation of the German Constitution, which outlaws discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity. AfD's leadership has distanced itself from the meeting, but it did not condemn those who attended it either. According to reports, the so-called 're-migration' plan was agreed in principle by participants, though there were doubts over its feasibility.

All the same, the development has made Germans sit up as they are convinced dark forces reminiscent of Hitler's Nazis are finding their way into the mainstream via the success of the AfD. In history, we rediscover the fact that Hitler's National Socialist German Workers' Party chose the path of electoral politics to exploit the people's disenchantment with established parties and grab power. Germany's domestic intelligence agency has previously termed several party organisations in eight of the country's 16 federal states as either "proven to be Right-wing extremist" or "suspected to be Right-wing extremist." The shocking nature of the latest disclosures has led to calls for the AfD to be banned by the federal constitutional court. As the legal bar is too high to achieve this goal, critics of the clamour for ban fear such a step may make AfD even more popular and help them fulfil their aim of grabbing power.

Nevertheless, many in Germany believe the ban option may be necessary to make AfD's moderate elements take control of the party. The Far-Right outfit has become a populist "vent" for a widespread resentment against the government. Addressing that will require greater political astuteness from the mainstream political class. The presence of Germany's chancellor and foreign minister on Sunday's march in Potsdam only shows how high the stakes are for the established parties. Germany may take a leaf out of India's book as a ban on an ultra-right, communal outfit in the past only helped it grow from strength to strength until it has managed to occupy centre-stage of the country's politics today.

WISDOM CORNER

- Let us learn to appreciate there will be times when the trees will be bare, and look forward to the time when we may pick the fruit. **ANTON CHEKHOV**
- Waiting is painful. Forgetting is painful. But not knowing which to do is the worse kind of suffering. **PAULO COELHO**
- You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view. **HARPER LEE**

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1893:** Hawaiian monarchy overthrown. Acting for Hawaiian sugar interests and their American allies, a committee led by Sanford Ballard Dole deposed Hawaiian Queen Liliuokalani this day in 1893 and installed a provisional government with Dole as president.
- 1929:** The cartoon character Popeye, a sailor known for his love of spinach, made his debut, appearing in the newspaper comic strip Thimble Theatre. The strip was in its tenth year when Popeye made his debut, but the one-eyed sailor quickly became the lead character, and Thimble Theatre became one of King Features' most popular properties during the 1930s. Over the years, Popeye has also appeared in comic books, television cartoons, video games, hundreds of advertisements, peripheral products ranging from spinach to candy cigarettes, and the 1980 live-action film directed by Robert Altman and starring Robin Williams as Popeye.
- 1991:** Operation Desert Storm in Iraq begins. The military campaign was launched in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. It began with the aerial bombing campaign against Iraq on 17 January 1991 and came to a close with the American-led Liberation of Kuwait on 28 February 1991.

LOL

WHERE IS MY GOAT?

There were these two guys out hiking when they came upon an old, abandoned mine shaft. Curious about its depth they threw in a pebble and waited for the sound of it striking the bottom, but they heard nothing. They went and got a bigger rock, threw it in and waited. Still nothing. They searched the area for something larger and came upon a railroad tie. With great difficulty, the two men carried it to the opening and threw it in. While waiting for it to hit bottom, a goat suddenly darted between them and leapt into the hole!



The guys were still standing there with astonished looks upon their faces from the actions of the goat when a man walked up to them. He asked them if they had seen a goat anywhere in the area and they said that one had just jumped into the mine shaft in front of them! The man replied, "Oh no. That couldn't be my goat, mine was tied to a railroad tie."

IN JEST THIS

Our blissful ignorance of plastic bottles



Melvin Durai

IF YOU'RE A REGULAR CONSUMER OF BOTTLED WATER, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT ALL THESE PARTICLES OF PLASTIC THAT YOU'RE PUTTING INTO YOUR BODY?

The phrase "Ignorance is bliss" was coined in 1742 by the English poet Thomas Gray and appears in his "Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College."

Ignorance is indeed bliss, but to live a good life, you can't just go around being blissfully ignorant. You have to strike a balance between "ignorance is bliss" and the phrase Sir Francis Bacon gave the world in 1597: "Knowledge is power." You have to try to be blissfully knowledgeable, or at least powerfully ignorant.

Ignoring some facts may ease our minds considerably. But ignoring other facts may be harmful to us in the long run. The challenge is figuring out what to absorb and what to ignore.

I contemplated this while reading about a new study on bottled water. I already knew that single-use plastic bottles are terrible for the environment. Only a few of them are actually recycled—many of the others end up in the ocean, where they spend hundreds of years trying to fit

in with the fish.

Plastic bottle: "My name is Aquafina. I'm an Eastern bottlenose."

Atlantic Salmon: "My name is Salmon Khan. I don't hang around with your kind. There's something very unfishy about you."

According to the new study, conducted at Columbia University and Rutgers University in the United States, when you drink water from a plastic bottle, you are also drinking numerous particles of plastic. These micro-nano plastics are so tiny, detecting their presence is like spotting an ant from a plane—and I don't mean the ant that got into the airline food.

Researchers needed to use "data science-driven hyperspectral stimulated Raman scattering (SRS) microscopy" to identify and count the particles. In a litre of bottled water, they found an average of 240,000 particles. That's almost as many particles as the average man releases into the air when he runs his fingers through his hair.

If you're a regular consumer of bottled water, how do you feel about all these particles of plastic that you're putting into your body? Are you saying to yourself, "If I knew I'd be getting this much plastic, I'd have signed up for cosmetic surgery"? Do you wish you could just be blissfully ignorant?

Blissfully ignorant is how many of us would prefer to be. That's partly because there is no evidence so far that these particles are causing any harm. In fact, they might be good for us, like nutrients of some sort. If you don't believe me, just ask the International Bottled Water Association (IBWA). The IBWA recommends 2,400 doses of microplastic every day.

Actually, the IBWA does not recommend ingesting plastic deliberately. In response to the study, here's what the IBWA said: "There currently is both a lack of standardized methods and no scientific consensus on the potential health impacts of nano- and microplastic particles. Therefore, media reports about

these particles in drinking water do nothing more than unnecessarily scare consumers."

In other words, the IBWA wants to treat the new study like a plastic bottle and put a lid on it. But scientists are all about knowledge, not ignorance. And the media is all about sharing knowledge, not just ignorance.

As consumers, we can either ignore the study or be cautious and limit our purchase of single-use plastic bottles. Even if we don't mind putting 2,400 particles of plastic into our bodies each day, we should really be concerned about putting eight million tonnes of plastic into the ocean each year.

It's not just consumers who need to make the right choice. Governments can help too. For example, last September, the US state of Massachusetts banned the purchase of single-use plastic bottles by state agencies. Imagine if all governments around the world took a stand against plastic bottles. People might actually go back to drinking water out of reusable containers.

Uphill battle

Sir, This refers to "Rahul Yatra 2.0," **Orissa POST**, Jan 16. Rahul Gandhi has embarked on his Bharat Jodo Yatra 2.0 at a time when the INDIA alliance faces an uncertain future and the Congress itself is up against many challenges. The earlier version of the yatra saw a resounding response but it failed to have any impact on electoral outcomes as is evident from the party's poor performance in recent elections in the Hindi heartland states. The yatra which will continue till March comes at a time when the Opposition bloc is struggling to put together a coherent strategy to take on the mighty BJP poll machinery. Though there seems to be some sort of consensus on Mallikarjun Kharge as chairperson of the alliance, the convenor's post is yet to be decided with a miffed Nitish Kumar refusing to play ball. Meanwhile, TMC, SP and Shiv Sena (Udhav) stayed away from the crucial virtual meeting. Add to this, the yatra began on a day when Milind Deora quit the Congress to join the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena. It was no doubt electoral compulsions that prompted the young leader's move but it is another prominent exit from the party and a blow to Congress prospects in Maharashtra. Thus, the party faces an uphill battle as the countdown begins for the battle of 2024.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Cleanest city

Sir, That Indore has been adjudged as the 'cleanest' city for the seventh time in a row, speaks volumes of the administrative efficiency and the collective will of the people of the city. One must appreciate Indore's municipal corporation's structured and systematic way of eliminating garbage dumps, and ensuring 100% household-waste segregation, converting waste to usable products, such as compost and fuel. It is understood that Indore municipal corporation has partnered with non-governmental organisations for a robust awareness campaign to change the behaviour of its citizens and instil in them the importance and values of being hygienic. The success of Indore's urban solid waste management shows that urban India can clean up if municipal bodies, NGOs, private companies and citizens come together.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

Orissa POST
B-15, Russagarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

PARIKRAMA PRAKALP
Pvt institutions urged to screen ceremony event

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The state government Tuesday urged private establishments in the state to make arrangements for screening the inauguration ceremony of the Puri heritage corridor project.

Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena said that CM Naveen Patnaik will inaugurate the project between 1pm and 3pm Wednesday, and noted personalities from across the country have been invited to it.

CHIEF SECRETARY PRADEEP KUMAR JENA REQUESTED ALL PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS, SCHOOLS AND BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCREENING OF THE LIVE TELECAST OF SRIMANDIR PARIKRAMA PROJECT FROM 12 NOON TO 3PM

The state government has already declared Wednesday as a public holiday, he said.

"Private institutions, private schools and private business establishments are also requested to make arrangements for screening of the live telecast of Shrimandir Parikrama Project inauguration," Jena said.

The Chief Minister appealed to the people to celebrate the day by lighting diyas, blowing conch shells, beating cymbals and doing kirtans.

As a part of the Rs 800-crore project, 800 metres around the 12th-century Jagannath temple has been redeveloped. Several amenities have been built for devotees as a part of it.

COPS ARREST 2 FOR ROBBERY



ACP ZONE II GIRIJA SHANKAR CHAKRA ARTY SAID THAT ACCUSED PUNIA NAYAK ROBBED BROTHERS SATRUGHNA AND SATYANANDA OF TWO GOLD CHAINS WEIGHING 50GM, AND A GOLD LOCKET BY INTIMIDATING THEM WITH A TOY GUN AND KNIFE

PUNIA DEPOSITED THE GOLD JEWELS IN EXCHANGE FOR RS 75,000 AT A PRIVATE BANK IN BHIMATANGI AREA AS HE HELD AN ACCOUNT IN THAT BRANCH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The Commissionerate Police here Tuesday claimed to have arrested two persons including a history-sheeter in connection with a gold-snatching case under Lingaraj police station limits.

Of the two accused, Narahari Nayak and Punia Nayak, the latter had earlier been booked in 22 criminal cases across the City, according to police sources. Punia had been giving the police a slip since December 28 encounter, when Mancheswar Police, in a violent shoot-out, nabbed his accomplice, Raghu Biswal.

ACP Zone II Girija Shankar Chakrabarty said a case was lodged at Lingaraj police station October 9 by the complainants, brothers, Satrugna and Satyananda Subudhi, who

run a shop in Vivekananda Marg. They alleged that an unidentified miscreant had robbed them of two gold chains weighing 50gm, and a gold locket. The accused intimidated the duo with a toy gun and knife while both were shutting the shop, he added.

Chakrabarty informed that after committing the crime, Punia deposited the gold jewels in exchange for Rs 75,000 at a private bank in Bhimatangi area as he held an account in that branch.

Following the complaint, a team comprising officials from Lingaraj police station and a special squad managed to track down Punia's details from the bank.

Efforts are being made to recover the deposited gold. The police will seek additional remand of the accused from local court for further questioning, said a police officer.

Deadline for BSKY Nabin Card extended

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The state government Tuesday extended the deadline for submission of applications for Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) Nabin Card by 10 days, according to a notification.

The application process, which started January 6, will now continue till January 26 instead of January 16, it said.

Eligible persons can register themselves on bskynabin.odisha.gov.in to get



The application process, which started January 6, will now continue till January 26 instead of January 16

benefits of the newly launched healthcare scheme, it added.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the BSKY Nabin Card December 29 to provide cashless healthcare facilities to people of rural areas in private hospitals.

All rural families of the state, except government employees, income taxpayers and those not covered under BSKY, will be eligible for the 'BSKY Nabin Card'.

They will be entitled to cashless healthcare of Rs 5 lakh per annum, and the coverage for women would be up to Rs 10 lakh in empanelled private hospitals both inside and outside the state.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



BDA's Ekamra Utsav from Feb 3

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) has planned to organise the Ekamra Utsav - A festival for celebrating Odia language and culture - from February 3 to 8 against the backdrop of three-day-long World Odia Language conference.

According to sources, the 6-day festival will celebrate the cultural richness of Odisha along with its linguistic heritage. The main event, Bhuban-E-Swar will be held at IDCO Exhibition Ground, along with food festival 'Ama Byanjan' and 'Lok Utsav'.

In Bhuban-E-Swar, citizens and delegates will experience the magical performances of artists of national and regional repute. The festival will feature



prominent figures from Indian cinema and music industry. "The cultural night has been conceptualized as a musical extravaganza and festival with live music and band performances along with other performing arts. The event will also set the stage for bigwigs from the Indian Cine and Music Industry," a BDA

release said.

Similarly, City Carnival 'Lok Utsav' will be held to celebrate the festival of Odia language, literature and culture. The theme based carnival will be celebrated in the major streets of Bhubaneswar.

The Food Festival 'Ama Byanjan' will be organised at IDCO Exhibition Ground with an aim to propagate regional Odia recipes by hosting a food festival which can add flavors to the celebrations.

The urban body will be inviting innovative food trucks, representing different districts of the state, to participate in the event. The food area will be designed as a multipurpose destination for community gathering and will include an experience zone and flea market.

Odisha 'Top Performer' in DPIIT startup rankings



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, and Textiles Piyush Goyal accorded Odisha accolade of the 'Top Performer' in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) State Startup Ranking, 2022 in Delhi Tuesday.

The DPIIT conducted 4th edition of the State Startup Ranking 2022 to fortify the collaborative efforts of states and Union Territories (UTs) in fostering a holistic and vibrant startup ecosystem.

State Startup Ranking Framework 2022 was meticulously crafted as a robust and results-driven manner to catalyse advancements in startup ecosystems of every state. The evaluation process involved a thorough assessment of responses across various parameters.

A total of 25 action points were used to map a combination of absolute, relative, and feedback-based grading in order to give a comprehensive picture

of the state startup environments.

This exercise launched in 2018 designated Odisha as the 'Top Performer' for the support extended to startups in the state. In State Startup Ranking 2021, Odisha yet again was accorded with the 'Top Performer' designation for instituting inclusive and holistic policies to help develop entrepreneurs.

"In 2022, Odisha has retained its position, which is a testament to the state's progressive initiatives in empowering the young talent who aspire to become entrepreneurs," said Startup Odisha executive chairman Omkar Rai.

Rai said, "Under the guidance of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, we are driven to not just maintain but elevate capabilities of our startup ecosystem. Odisha is wholeheartedly dedicated to creating a conducive environment with a new startup policy which is under consideration, aligning it with global best practices, focusing on ESG factors, and promoting women's entrepreneurship. Our goal is to inspire and support an increasing number of entrepreneurs on their journey"

Notably, Startup Odisha has nurtured over 1,800 startups across agritech, IT, artificial intelligence, healthcare, fintech, and biotechnology sectors out of which 42 per cent are women-led.

Odisha now hosts 27 incubators, and among them is O-Hub, the state government's own incubator, featuring an expansive four lakh square feet space.



AIM FOR SUCCESS: Tribals of Santhal community participating in an archery competition on the occasion of Makar festival organised by Maa Dharitri and Marang Buru Adivasi Yuvak Sangha at a tribal village-12 under Kharinasi panchayat of Mahakalapara block in Kendrapara district, Tuesday

Sulia Yatra held in Bolangir amid animal sacrifice

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir/Deogaon, Jan 16: The annual 'Sulia Yatra' began in Bolangir district, Tuesday.

The roads at Khairaguda as well as Badakhala, Sanakhala and Nuakhala in Kumuria of Deogaon block of the district acquired a tinge of red as tribals observed the annual festival by sacrificing hundreds of animals and birds. The rituals began late Monday night after 'Nisi Puja' was conducted by the tribal priests.

The festival is held every year

on the first Tuesday of the lunar fortnight of the Hindu 'Pousha' month by the tribals.

Folklore is that, if the deity is appeased with animal blood, there will be good rain and resultantly good harvest. However, these days, devotees whose wishes were fulfilled also offer birds and animals for the promises they made for fulfillment of their wishes.

Meanwhile, hundreds of devotees from in and outside of the state like West Bengal and Chhattisgarh also thronged the Sulia Pitha to witness the an-



nual festival and the animal sacrifices which tribals believe is an act of gratitude to the deity and meant to pay back the debt after fulfillment of their wishes.

Bolangir MLA Narasingh Mishra, former minister Surendra Singh Bhoi, AICC member Samarendra Mishra, former chairman Lakhsman

Kumar Meher, Reena Meher, block chairman Dayanidhi Khamari visited the site and paid their obeisance to 'Sulia Devata' seeking his blessings.

As per rituals, the tribals, holding weapons, took out a rally. Later, they worshipped gods and goddesses with ancient rituals. Thousands of birds and animals like cock, pigeon, fowl, goat, sheep and buffalo calf were sacrificed in this festival. However, the police personnel did not try to stop the gory ritual and their role was limited to maintaining law and order.

Govt urged to declare January 22 a holiday

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: Senior BJP leader and Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in Odisha Assembly Jaya Narayan Mishra urged Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday to declare January 22 a public holiday in the state.

Mishra, in a letter to the Chief Minister, said that 'Pran Pratishtha' and inauguration of Ram temple will take place January 22 and as the whole nation is taking part in it, including people of Odisha, Patnaik should declare the day as a public holiday in the state so that all the devotees are able to be a part of the big celebration.

Incidentally, the Chief Minister had declared January 17, the day on which the Srimandir Heritage Project would be dedicated, as a government holiday in the state. All government offices, school and colleges would remain closed January 17 to enable the devotees to participate in the programme and offer prayers to Lord Jagannath.

Enraged woman injures parents

POST NEWS NETWORK

Soro, Jan 16: In a bizarre incident, a woman here allegedly attacked her parents with a paniki (vegetable cutter) and left them critically injured after they rebuked her for talking on mobile phone at Hatigadia village under Sarasankha panchayat and Soro police limits in Balasore district Monday night.

INTERMITTENT FASTING MAY HELP SLOW BRAIN AGEING

If you want to help slow down your brain from ageing and increase your lifespan than follow diet patterns like intermittent fasting or restrict your calorie intake, suggests a study, led by researchers one of Indian-origin.

A team of scientists at the Buck Institute for 'Research on Ageing' in California have found a role for a gene called OXR1 that is necessary for the lifespan extension seen with dietary restriction and is essential for healthy brain ageing.

OXR1 gene is an important brain resilience factor protecting against ageing and neurological diseases, said the researchers in the study, published in the journal Nature

Communications.

"When people restrict the amount of food that they eat, they typically think it might affect their digestive tract or fat buildup, but not necessarily about how it affects the brain," said Kenneth Wilson, postdoctoral student at the Institute.

"As it turns out, this is a gene that is important in the brain."

The team additionally demonstrated a detailed cellular mechanism of how dietary restriction can delay ageing and slow the progression of neurodegenerative diseases.

The study, done in fruit flies and human cells, also identifies potential therapeutic targets to slow ageing and age-related neurodegenerative diseases.



"We found a neuron-specific response that mediates the neuroprotection of dietary restriction," said Professor Pankaj Kapahi from Buck Institute. "Strategies such as intermit-

tent fasting or caloric restriction, which limit nutrients, may enhance levels of this gene to mediate its protective effects," he added.

The team began by scanning about 200 strains of flies with different genetic backgrounds. The flies were raised with two different diets, either with a normal diet or with dietary restriction, which was only 10 per cent of normal nutrition.

They found the loss of OXR1 in humans results in severe neurological defects and premature death. In mice, extra OXR1 improves survival in a model of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).

Further, a series of in-depth tests found that OXR1 affects a complex called the retromer,

which is a set of proteins necessary for recycling cellular proteins and lipids.

Retromer dysfunction has been associated with age-related neurodegenerative diseases that are protected by dietary restriction, specifically Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

The team found that OXR1 preserves retromer function and is necessary for neuronal function, healthy brain ageing, and lifespan extension seen with dietary restriction.

"Diet is influencing this gene. By eating less, you are actually enhancing this mechanism of proteins being sorted properly in your cells, because your cells are enhancing the expression of OXR1," said Wilson.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	73128.77 ↓ 199.17
NIFTY	22032.30 ↓ 65.20
DOLLAR	83.16 ↑ ₹0.24
EURO	90.56 ↓ ₹0.22
GOLD	₹62,346 ↓ ₹213
SILVER	₹72,170 ↓ ₹457

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 27.8°C	27.0°C
	MIN 19.1°C	18.0°C
Humidity	84%	80%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Light to moderate rain

The 4am officer & the new dawn

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik took the historic decision to rid the Srimandir peripheries of encroachments in order to help devotees perambulate the Lord's abode in a seamless manner. The idea was conceived by the Chief Minister during his visit to Puri in the aftermath of devastating tropical cyclone 'Fani' May 3, 2019. And it was the then 5T Secretary (now 5T Chairman) Kartik Pandian who took upon himself the mantle to translate Patnaik's wish into reality. The tropical storm had uprooted hundreds of trees while countless birds and animals lost their lives. Human lives were also not spared. Amidst the doom, the Chief Minister visited the coastal city and extended all possible help from the government to help the Puri people pick up pieces and help life move on.

On his way to Puri, wherever Naveen saw the hoardings of Lord Jagannath he raised his hands in deep devotion and prayed to the Lord for the well-being of the people affected by the horrific storm. On reaching Puri, he was at pains to see the periphery of Lord's abode encroached upon, creating obstructions for pilgrims to perambulate the shrine. Since temple periphery holds significance in Hindu tradition, Naveen raised concern over the issue and thought of Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa. 5T and Nabid Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian took the onerous responsibility of executing Naveen's dream project. Pandian understood how much importance needs to be placed on each aspect of the project and how much focus and dedication is required to make it a success. It is a matter of surprise that the 5T Secretary convened 51 review meetings for the Parikrama project since the preparation of the master plan. Meetings were also held with culture experts eight times, technical experts six times, design committee 15 times and several departments 22 times before preparation of a detailed blueprint of the project. A total of 15 acre government and private land around Srimandir was vacated before the commencement of the project. The residents who sacrificed their land for the dream project were adequately compensated and rehabilitated.

Braving all odds, the Chief Minister went ahead with the plan and laid foundation stone for the project November 24, 2021. Pandian was visiting Puri at least twice or thrice a week since 2019 when the idea of the project was conceived and was also having darshan of the deities. Most importantly, he was reaching Srimandir as early as 4am. He would return to the headquarters after having discussions with Puri Collector, Odisha Bridge & Construction Corporation (OBCC) Ltd officials and other officials regarding the progress of the project.

He visited more than 500 times in the last four years to take stock of the project.



Parikrama on canvas

With the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa drawing global attention, as many as 20 artists are camping on the Parikrama Marga to capture the momentous occasion of the inauguration of the dream project on canvas. The painting exhibition organised by the Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi under the aegis of Odia Language, Literature and Culture department will reflect the feelings of devotees towards the Lord. Some of the sketches show the devotees offering prayers to the Lord, while others narrate the transformation of Srimandir periphery. The team of painters led by Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi secretary Panchanan Samal said that their creative work would be displayed during the inauguration ceremony Wednesday, Samal said. "This art workshop is unique in the sense that everyone is not fortunate enough to be a part of the momentous occasion. All the artists volunteered to participate in the art expo."



JAY JAGANNATH

Not even a leaf flutters without Thy wish

The historic Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa, or Srimandir Heritage Corridor Project, will be dedicated to people Wednesday. Following inauguration by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, the corridor will be thrown open to the public in what is widely viewed as an auspicious moment to be remembered by generations to come.

The administration has stepped up preparations as Srimandir and the entire Puri have been decked up for the momentous occasion. With colourful lights glittering in every nook and corner and lighting up the night skyline, the sight is a treat for every visitor to Srikshetra which is immersed in celebrations.

Nevertheless, the dream project of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik took shape after overcoming many obstacles and legal battles. After all, it was the Lord's service, victory was destined.

The design for the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa was prepared October 19, 2018. On that very day, the state Cabinet allocated of Rs 33.38 crore towards the project, out of the total allocation of Rs 3,200 crore under Augmentation Basic Amenities and Development of Heritage and Architecture (ABADHA) at Puri. In November 2019, the government announced a special package for acquisition of land for the project, while the proposal with suggestions was announced in December. The Cultural Advisory Committee prepared the final master plan of the Srimandir Heritage Corridor Project January 21, 2021, following which the blueprint of the project was drawn with approval of the temple managing committee.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid the foundation stone November 24, 2021 following the culmination of three-day-long 'Maha Yagna' for the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa, while Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb laid the first brick for the project. On the occasion, the CM felicitated Mahants of 18 mutts and 108 private individuals who had sacrificed land for the project, and issued directions for the completion of the project in 18 months.



5T Chairman Kartik Pandian completely dedicated himself in making the CM's dream meet reality and conducted regular inspection and review of the work during his wee hour tours, for which people fondly began to refer him as the '4am officer'.

While the work on the project continued with rapid progress, some vested interests tried to sabotage for narrow political gains by filing petitions in the Orissa High Court and Supreme Court. Puri resident Dilip Kumar Baral filed a public interest litigation (PIL) in the High Court, while the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and National Monuments Authority (NMA) filed affidavits claiming the excavation and construction works around Srimandir illegal. Moreover, various other litigations were filed to cause roadblocks. However, with the blessings of the Lord, the work never stopped as no court imposed any stay; and subsequently junked the petitions. In June 2023, the apex court summarily dismissed two PILs filed by Ardhendu Shekhar Das and Sumanta Kumar Ghadai seeking immediate stay on the project work by terming those 'frivolous', 'mischievous' and 'against public interest', while imposing cash fine of Rs 1 lakh on each.

Expressing their displeasure, the SC bench, comprising Justices BR Gavai and Hima Kohli lashed out at the petitioners for indulging in self publicity by seeking to stall the project. The court observed that it did not find any ground to impose stay on the project as it did not violate any law pertaining to protection of ancient or archaeological sites.

Matters finally came to the end June 22, 2022 when an Orissa High Court bench, comprising then Chief Justice Suralidhar and Justice RK Patnaik, junked the PIL filed by Dilip Baral, and intervention petition of Ardhendu Shekhar Das and Sumant Kumar Ghadai stating that the petitions were not maintainable as the apex court had already heard the matters. Along with this, the bench also disposed of the petition filed by Subrat Kumar Tripathy challenging the NOC issued by NMA, and PIL filed by retired IAS officer Sudarshan Nayak and litterateur Bhubanananda Mohanty claiming that the project did not receive ASI clearance.

After all the petitions challenging the Srimandir Parikrama Project were thrown into the dustbin by law courts, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik took to Twitter, now X, and wrote: "Oh Lord, not even a leaf flutters without Thy wish, Jay Jagannath."

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Parikrama Prakalpa is an epoch-making step taken by the state government that would help devotees to perambulate the Srimandir in a seamless manner. Devotees are now having hassle-free darshan of the deities while special arrangements have been made for elderly and differently-abled pilgrims. Puri will feature in world map as one of the leading spiritual and tourist destinations once Parikrama Prakalpa and other infrastructure projects are thrown open to public.

BALARAM MESHA | PRIEST, PURI
KAMALINI SARU | BARIPODA

"I'm an ardent devotee of Lord Jagannath and I visit Puri at least 3-4 times a year. The transformative steps taken by the Odisha government will immensely benefit the devotees. I'm glad to see the makeover of the temple periphery."

SARADA SARANGI | KENDRAPARA
MAHESUDHAN BEHERA | CHANDRKHOL

A darshan of the Lord gives divine pleasure. I come for darshan every two months. However, I found it difficult to perambulate the temple. It is a pleasure to see the state government transforming the peripheries of the temple now and, because of that, I could happily walk around the temple this time on the Parikrama Corridor. I convey my heartfelt greetings to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

Rain signals success of yajna
The onset of rain during the yajna on the eve of the grand opening of the Srimandir Parikrama Prakalpa Tuesday, and germination of the seed at the site, has signalled the success of the project which will be unveiled today. Pt Udaynath Mohapatra said the rain during yajna indicates the blessings of Lord Indra. "Moreover, the germination of the seed is an indication that the Gods are pleased with the yajna. We are getting positive signs all over," he said.

Importance of Pradakshina
According to scriptures, perambulation of temple helps in cleansing the sins of past. There are established norms for perambulating different gods. Pt Udaynath Mohapatra said scriptures prescribe four-times perambulation of Lord Sri Krishna. Chanting the Lord's name while taking rounds on the Pradakshina Marg helps cleanse all sins.

Strong will & vision made it happen: SJTA chief

It is the strong determination of the state government under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik that helped turn the historic Srimandir Heritage Corridor Project in Puri into a reality. Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Ranjan Kumar Das said ahead of the dedication of the project, Wednesday.

The project offers expansive and unobstructed corridors around the Meghanada wall, besides offering devotees seamless visual connect with the 12th-century shrine. It will also provide amenities to the pilgrims and strengthen the safety as well as security of the temple. The project is one component of a massive initiative to transform Puri into a world heritage city. November 24, 2021, when the CM laid the foundation stone for the ambitious initiative in Puri, will be remembered as a proud day for numerous lovers of Lord Jagannath.

"Despite hurdles, work for the mega project began in 2021. Land acquisition was a major challenge before the administration. Cooperative Puri residents, however, helped us overcome it," the SJTA chief administrator said, adding that almost all the departments of the state government co-ordinated to complete the massive project within deadline.

Srimandir is a pride of numerous lovers of Lord Jagannath. "Encroachments around the Meghanada Pacheri slowly but surely dealt a blow to Srimandir's splendour. It was our responsibility to conserve this art, architecture, heritage and grandeur as they have given us an identity. To strengthen the safety as well as security of Srimandir and ensure amenities to pilgrims, the CM decided to construct the Parikrama Prakalpa," Das said.

About the facilities for devotees, the chief administrator of Srimandir said earlier devotees had to stand in long queues amid blazing sun and pounding rains to enter the 12th-century shrine for having a darshan of the sibling deities.

"As part of the project, an air-conditioned pathway with seating facility has been built. Apart from drinking water facility the shed has adequate CCTV cameras for safety and security of devotees. A reception centre with ultramodern facilities has also been built for the convenience of devotees," Das said. The SJTA chief administrator said that the project also addresses the parking issues in Puri. The Grand Road has been widened and beautified. Sri Danda - a dedicated road from Jagannath Ballav to Srimandir - has been built with special focus on providing a seamless movement of devotees. "The strong determination of the state government and the visionary leadership of the CM helped turn the Parikrama Prakalpa into a reality," Das said.



Wildlife rehabilitation centre to come up in Coimbatore

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Jan 16: The Tamil Nadu government has announced that a rescue, treatment and rehabilitation centre (RTRC) for wild animals will come up in Pethikuttai near Sirumugai in Coimbatore.

State's forest and wild life department announced that an amount of ₹19.5 crore has been sanctioned for this project.

The RTRC at Sirumugai will come up in an area of 53 hectares and will be equipped with modern operation theaters and diagnostic tools.

Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Climate Change and Forests said that

trained professionals will be in charge of the RTRC and added that this would be a centre of excellence to work at.

Speaking to media persons, she said, "There will be specialised treatment and care for injured animals including elephant calves, leopards, tigers, ungulates, birds and reptiles."

She added that the centre would focus on rewilding animals. It may be recalled that Tamil Nadu Government had announced in state assembly in September 2021 that RTRCs would be established in the state.

The government had then informed the assembly that these RTRCs would cater to the in-



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

State's forest and wildlife department announced that an amount of ₹19.5cr has been sanctioned for this project

jured, orphaned and ailing wild animals and administrative sanction was accorded for setting up RTRCs in Coimbatore, Tiruchy and Tirunelveli districts of the state.

The Tamil Nadu forest department said that Pethikuttai Reserve Forest was chosen as it was close to areas that have fre-

quent human, wild life conflict. The Tamil Nadu Government order said that the site where the first RTRC is coming up provides a calm and peaceful environment for comfort and safety of wild animals.

Its proximity to Bhavanisagar Dam ensures adequate water for large animals, including elephants.

There will be four zones of the centre, the human zone will have an administrative complex, animal care complex, staff quarters, watchtower, storeroom facilities.

The animals will be provided treatment and rehabilitation and the wild animals will be released back to the forests.

PALAMEDU JALLIKATTU

Best man and bull rewarded with car

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Madurai, Jan 16: About 42 people, including 14 tamers and 16 spectators were injured in the second major event of the Pongal 2024 Jallikattu season held at Palamedu here Tuesday.

The best tamer who embraced 14 bulls and the owner of the best bull that stubbornly refused to be subdued were each presented with the coveted Chief Minister's car as a prize.

Frenzied spectators cheered loudly whenever the dauntless tamers embraced the bulls' hump and held on as the bulls ran in the arena.

They were equally exhilarated when the bulls pounced at the Vaadivaasal (entry point where the bulls are let out into the arena), ferociously shook the sharp horns, and darted without allowing anyone to approach.

At least half-a-dozen young tamers were tossed by the raging bulls when they missed the hump and clasped the bull's neck instead. Twelve bull owners too were among the 42 injured during the bull embracing (Eru Thazhuvuthal) event at Palamedu which annually hosts the Jallikattu during the Pongal (harvest) festival.

Avaniyapuram, in the district, set the tone and tenour of the Jallikattu when it hosted the event Monday. Alanganallur is all set for the grand finale Wednesday.

P Prabhakaran of Madurai was adjudged the best tamer as he "subdued" 14 bulls and he was awarded the Chief Minister's car as first prize in recognition of his valour.

"I had won the Jallikattu during the last three consecutive years," Prabhakaran later said. He claimed that many brave and talented young men could not participate in this traditional sport. "I am very happy. I will meet the Chief Minister (M K Stalin) soon," Prabhakaran told reporters.

"I expected to continue my winning streak but I finished second this time," Chinnapatti Tamilarasan, who tamed 11 bulls, said. In the 2023 Pongal Jallikattu, this youth won the first prize.

"This time it was difficult as the best bulls were let out into the arena. I missed the first prize. I hope to win it next year," Tamilarasan said in a statement.

Warming oceans behind TN rain havoc

CLIMATE RESEARCHERS ALSO SAID THAT THE PATTERN OF AIR CIRCULATION DURING THE NEM HAS BEEN CHANGING IN THE PAST TEN YEARS, OWING TO HEAVY EMISSION OF CARBON DIOXIDE AND GLOBAL AIR CIRCULATION PATTERNS ARE INFLUENCED BY CHANGES IN GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Jan 16: In December 2023, to be precise December 17 and 18, in the course of the north east monsoon, Tirunelveli, a coastal district in south Tamil Nadu, witnessed a record breaking rainfall of 123.9 cm.

Data from the Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) states that this was 146% higher than the seasonal average of 50.3 cm.

On December 18, 2023, a weather station in Kayalpattinam in Thoothukudi district (again in South Tamil Nadu) recorded 94.6 cm, the highest rainfall ever witnessed in 24 hours during the north east monsoon (NEM) in Tamil Nadu. This new observation is equivalent to 90% of the usual rainfall received by the entire district in a year.

Such extreme rainfall is usual during severe cyclones but the record breaking rainfall in South Tamil Nadu that created havoc in the districts of Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, Tenkasi and Kanniyakumari was due to an upper air circulation as per the Regional Meteorological Centre deputy director, S. Balachandran.

Weather forecasting models can accurately predict up to and above 20 cm rainfall in a day



is absorbed by our oceans, leading to a steep rise in sea surface temperatures and these increased temperatures cause the ocean to release more moisture into the atmosphere."

Climate researchers also said that the pattern of air circulation during the NEM has been changing in the past ten years, owing to heavy emission of carbon dioxide and global air circulation patterns are influenced by changes in greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate expert and former Professor in Physics of Tiruchy government college, Dr. Selvakumar while speaking to IANS said, "The

warming potential in the atmosphere has been increasing alarmingly and the atmospheric behaviour is altered gradually due to global air circulation, which in turn has a heavy impact on oceanic air circulation."

The year 2023 was an El Nino year. El Nino is a natural phenomenon that creates a warming effect in the Pacific Ocean periodically.

and RMC predicts rainfall in three categories: heavy (6 to 11 cm); very heavy (12 to 19 cm) and extreme (20 cm and above).

According to climatologists it was the bare minimum system that caused such intense rainfall in southern Tamil Nadu. A bare minimum system is an event that is classified as a weak disturbance and extreme rainfall is not usually predicted at that time.

Rajeev Nath said that the heavy

rainfall that was witnessed in Tamil Nadu was upper air circulation and that the rains came in isolated locations such as Kayalpattinam which could be attributed to climate change.

Climate expert Sumathi Menon, while speaking to IANS said, "A majority of the heat generated due to global warming

The year 2023 was an El Nino year. El Nino is a natural phenomenon that creates a warming effect in the Pacific Ocean periodically

UP Police cell to probe complaints against lawyers

AGENCIES

Lucknow, Jan 16: On the directions of the Allahabad High Court, the Uttar Pradesh Police have set up a dedicated cell to probe complaints against lawyers.

Joint commissioner of police, law and order, Upendra Agarwal said that an officer of sub-inspector rank would be heading the desk which had been made operational at a room in his office next to RALC (Rehabilitation and Artificial Limb Centre) of KGMU.

"We are also circulating the contact number of the cell," he said. The officer said people could lodge their complaints without any fear or pressure. "If a person has to report about any lawyer indulging in crime, he may also directly report about it in the cell," Agarwal said.

Recently, an investigation by Lucknow police on the directions of the high court found that a total 15 lawyers were named in nine criminal cases filed since 2020 in the state capital. These charges included alleged involvement in property deals and land encroachment.



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These charges included alleged involvement in property deals and land encroachment

A division bench of Justice Sangeeta Chandra and Justice N.K. Johari had directed the state government to take stern action against such lawyers. The court also asked the Bar Council of India to suggest ways to check such lawyers so that the dignity of the legal profession could be maintained.

The court also directed the commissioner of income tax (TDS), Lucknow, to submit a report on lawyers working as property dealers.

RAM MANDIR INAUGURATION

Renowned instrumentalists to perform during Pran Pratishtha



ises will be decorated, and during the night, people will witness a unique ambience around the campus.

After the completion of the Pran Pratishtha ceremony, saints and invited special guests seated inside the premises will go inside to have a glimpse.

During this time, arrangements for their light refreshments and meals will be made.

He informed that the dates for the visits of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and RSS workers have also been finalised. These activities will come to Ayodhya on the designated dates.

Typically, each day around 4,000 to 5,000 activists will stay for a day and then return. This plan will continue until the end of February.

Accommodation arrangements for those invited have been made in the Karsewakpuram, Manirama Das Chavni's Natural Healing Centre, and the Tirthpuram area near Maniparvat. Rooms have also been booked in some ashrams, Dharamshala, individual home-stays, and hotels.

Rai said that 53 guests representing 50 countries from around the world, who have been invited to the event, will be attending the Pran Pratishtha ceremony.

Efforts will be made to ensure that the person who arrives on a particular day can return on the same day, without any pressure to stay overnight. He stated that it is under consideration to allow media entry after the darshan of all householders and saints January 22. From January 23 onwards, anyone coming to Ayodhya will be able to have a darshan of Lord Ram.

struments will be played in the temple, representing the rich diversity of Indian musical heritage.

Among these, there will be pakhawaj, dholak (percussion instruments) and flute performances from Uttar Pradesh as well as veena performance from Karnataka, Sundari from Maharashtra, Alghoza from Punjab, Mardala from Odisha, Santoor from Madhya Pradesh, Pung from Manipur, Nagada and Kali from Assam, Tambura from Chhattisgarh, Pakhavaj from Bihar, Shehnai from Delhi, Ravanhatha from Rajasthan, Shri Khol and Sarod from Bengal, Ghatam from Andhra, Sitar from Jharkhand, Santoor from Gujarat, Nadaswaram, Thavil, Mridang, and Hudka from Uttarakhand.

These musical performances will take place during the mantras for Pran Pratishtha.

It is noteworthy that such distinguished individuals are voluntarily coming forward to contribute their talents at this significant moment.

Rai said that the entire prem-



Monkeys sit on a wall during a cold and foggy morning in Ayodhya district, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

GYANVAPI ROW

SC allows cleaning of 'wazukhana'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: The Supreme Court Tuesday allowed a plea moved by Hindu women plaintiffs for cleaning the water tank in the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi that is located in an area that has been sealed.

A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra ordered the cleaning of the water tank under the supervision of the Varanasi district magistrate.

The direction came after Additional Solicitor General Madhavi Divan, appearing in the court on behalf of the Uttar Pradesh government, sought permission for the cleaning of the tank, saying there were dead fish in it.

The top court also noted in its order that a similar plea has been filed by the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid Committee, the management body of the mosque, before a trial court in



Varanasi. The Varanasi district court had, July 21 last year, directed the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to conduct a "detailed scientific survey" - including excavations, wherever necessary - to determine if the mosque located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple was built upon a temple.

The mosque's "wazukhana" (a small reservoir where devotees

perform ritual ablutions), where a structure claimed by the Hindu litigants to be a "Shivling" exists, will not be part of the survey, following an earlier Supreme Court order protecting that spot in the mosque complex.

Hindu activists claim that a temple existed earlier at the site and was demolished in the 17th century on the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. eT-M-KUR-PUJ-COL-243-2024
NAME OF WORK : CLEANING AND HOUSEKEEPING OF NEW WEST STATION RAILWAY AND BNR COLONIES AND COLLECTION, SEGREGATION AND DISPOSAL OF 700 GFT. GARBAGE FROM STATION AND COLONY PREMISES TO A DUMPING YARD AS PER LOCAL MUNICIPALITY GUIDELINES FOR DURATION OF THREE YEARS (i.e. 1096 DAYS).
Advised Value : ₹ 2,06,28,646.69.
EMD : ₹ 2,53,200/-, **Tender Document Cost :** ₹ 11,800/-, **Period of Completion :** 36 Months.
Bidding Start Date : 18.01.2024
Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1530 Hrs. of 01.02.2024.
 Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
 Complete information including e-Tender documents and corrigendum is available in website www.ireps.gov.in
Sr. Divl. Mechanical Engineer/
PR-988/O/23-24 Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/
E-Tender/121, Dt. 11.01.2024
Tender No. etenderestatur-395-2023, Dtd.: 04.01.2024
DESCRIPTION : MISCELLANEOUS REPAIRS TO C-TYPE (TYPE-IV), E-TYPE (TYPE-III) & F-TYPE (TYPE-I) QUARTERS SUCH AS SUNKEN SLAB REPAIRING, SEEPAGE WALL PLASTERING, WATER PROOFING TREATMENT, REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGED DOORS AND WINDOWS, DRAINAGE SYSTEM, SEWERAGE LINE AND OTHER ALLIED WORKS AT RAIL VIHAR COLONY, CHANDRASEKHARPUR, BHUBANESWAR.
Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 230.79 Lakh, **EMD :** ₹ 2,65,400/-
Completion Period : 12 (Twelve) Months
Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1500 Hrs. of 29.01.2024.
 No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
 Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tender is available in website : www.ireps.gov.in
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) /
PR-989/O/23-24 Khurda Road

national



The Modi government is drumbeating and telling us to celebrate National Startup Day. But our startup entrepreneurs, creative people and our jobless young have been pushed to the wall, since the launch of 'Startup India' in 2016 by PM Modi

YS SHARMILA APPOINTED ANDHRA CONGRESS CHIEF

The Congress Tuesday appointed YS Sharmila, the daughter of former Chief Minister Y S Rajasekhara Reddy, as the new president of the party's Andhra Pradesh unit. Sharmila, the sister of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, had joined the Congress January 4 in Delhi in the presence of Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi



WAR ROOMS AT AIRPORTS

In the last few days, there were incidents of a passenger assaulting an IndiGo pilot at the Delhi airport and passengers of an IndiGo flight sitting on the tarmac of the Mumbai airport amid long flight delays due to fog



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Amid fog-related flight disruptions, the civil aviation ministry has asked Delhi, Mumbai and four other metro airports to report about incidents three times a day and these airports as well as airlines will also set up war rooms to address passenger issues.

In the last few days, there were incidents of a passenger assaulting an IndiGo pilot at the Delhi airport and passengers of an IndiGo flight sitting on the tarmac of the Mumbai airport amid long flight delays due to fog. Against this backdrop, aviation regulator DGCA Monday issued a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) after Scindia said all stakeholders are working round-the-clock to minimise fog-related disruptions.

thrice daily for all the six metro airports." Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai and Kolkata are the metro airports.

War rooms will be set up by airports and airline operators at the six metro airports to address any issues with regard to passenger inconvenience with immediacy. Also, sufficient CISF manpower availability will be ensured round-the-clock, Scindia said.

With respect to the Delhi airport, the minister said runway RWY 29L has been made CAT III operational Tuesday.

The operationalisation of RWY 10/28 as CAT III at the airport will be done after re-carpeting work.

IndiGo, MIAL get notices

New Delhi: Aviation security watchdog BCAS has issued show cause notices to IndiGo and Mumbai airport operator MIAL over the incident of passengers having food on the airport tarmac Sunday, according to official sources. Many passengers rushed out of an IndiGo aircraft at the Mumbai airport, sat on the tarmac, and some were also seen having food there as soon as their diverted Goa-Delhi flight landed after a long delay Sunday. Both IndiGo and MIAL were not proactive in anticipating the situation and making the appropriate facilitation arrangements for passengers at the airport, as per the notices issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS). The notices have been sent for passenger mistreatment, they added. The sources said the aircraft was allotted a remote bay C-33 instead of a Contact Stand, an aircraft parking stand that is suitable for walking passengers to and from an aircraft from an allocated boarding gate. This further added to passenger woes and deprived them the opportunity to avail basic facilities like rest rooms and refreshments at the terminal, they added.

Pannun gives fresh threats before R-Day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Jan 16: Designated terrorist G S Pannun Tuesday gave a veiled threat to Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and police chief Gaurav Yadav as he asked gangsters in the state to join the banned outfit Sikhs For Justice and stop top political leaders from attending the Republic Day parade.

In an email sent to some journalists and two videos accessed by PTI, Pannun compared Mann with former Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh, who was assassinated in a bomb blast August 31, 1995. The blast, which claimed the lives of 17 others, was carried out by the banned terrorist group -- Babbar Khalsa International.

Pannun also equated Yadav, the director general of Punjab Police, to assassinated police officer Gobind Ram, who was killed in a bomb blast in 1990. Punjab police officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Pannun and his organisation have issued threats in the past as well and all necessary precautions have been taken to ensure "tight security" for all VIPs in the state.

SC stalls survey of Shahi Idgah mosque

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: The Supreme Court Tuesday stayed the operation of Allahabad High Court order that allowed a court-monitored survey of the Shahi Idgah mosque complex adjoining the Krishna Janmabhoomi temple in Mathura.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta stayed the implementation of the December 14, 2023 order by which it had agreed to the appointment of a court commissioner to oversee the survey of the mosque premises which, the Hindu side claims, hold signs suggesting that it was a temple once.

However, the Apex court made it clear that proceedings before the High Court in the dispute including the maintainability

of the suit under Order 7 Rule 11 of the Civil Procedure Code (CPC) will continue.

The bench said there are certain legal issues which have arisen and questioned the "vague" application made before the High Court for appointment of a court commissioner for the survey. "We have reservations about the application. Look at the prayer. It's so vague. Read it. You can't file a vague application for appointment of court commissioner. You cannot make an omnibus application like this. You have to be very clear what you want the local commissioner to do in application under Order 26 Rule 9 of CPC," Justice Khanna told senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for Hindu bodies like Bhagwan Shri Krishna Virajman and others.

It's a Modi function: Rahul on Ayodhya event

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chiephobozou (Nagaland), Jan 16: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Tuesday alleged that the Ram temple consecration event in Ayodhya has been made into a "Narendra Modi and RSS-BJP function" with an "election flavour", as he strongly defended the decision of his party's top leaders to decline the invite to the ceremony.



wear it on their shirt".

"The issue frankly is that the RSS and the BJP have made the January 22 function a completely political, Narendra Modi function. It is difficult for us to go to a political function which is designed around the PM and the RSS. We made it clear whoever would like to visit the

Ram temple among our partners, among our parties is more than welcome to do so," he said.

The former Congress chief's remarks at a press conference during the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra here came days after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former party chief Sonia Gandhi and the party's leader in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury declined the invitation to the Ram temple consecration ceremony event January 22 in Ayodhya.

Hitting back, the BJP said the Ram temple is a deeply felt emotion by Hindus in every corner of the country and no one wants Rahul Gandhi to interpret how they should practice their beliefs.

Mamata to lead 'rally for harmony'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 16: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced Tuesday that she will lead a 'rally for harmony' in Kolkata January 22, the day on which the Ram temple consecration ceremony will be held in Ayodhya.

Banerjee, the chief of the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC), said she would begin the procession from the Hazra crossing in south Kolkata after paying obeisance to Goddess Kali at the Kalighat temple.

"Many people have been asking me about various temples, but I have nothing to say. I have always said that religion is personal, but festivities are for everyone. January 22, I will visit the Kalighat temple and offer 'puja'. Following that, we will hold an inter-faith rally from Hazra Crossing to Park Circus Maidan," she told a press conference at the state secretariat.

"This has nothing to do with any other programme," she said, referring to the consecration ceremony. The march, to be organised by the TMC, will touch upon places of worship of different religions, including mosques, churches and gurdwaras, before culminating at the Park Circus Maidan where a public meeting will be held, she said. Banerjee asked party workers to organise similar rallies in all the districts of the state. She said that 'Pran Pratistha' or consecration is not the job of politicians but of priests.

GOVT. OF ODISHA No. O-2228
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION-I, KEONJHAR
 Tel. 06766-258094 (O), Mail: eerw1_kjr@yahoo.com
"e" Procurement Notice for Building Works
Identification No. Online NCB-17/2023-24

1. Name of the Work : 12 Nos. Building Work; 2. Total Number of Work : 12 Nos.; 3. Estimated Cost : Rs.46.53 Lakhs to Rs.46.56 Lakhs; 4. Class of Contractor : B Class; 5. Period of Completion : As per Annexure of e-Procurement Notice No. 17/2023-24. 6. Other details:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding	Last Date & Time of seeking Tender	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/S.E., R.W. Division-I, Keonjhar
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-I, Keonjhar	Building Online NCB No. 17	Dt.20.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	Dt.30.01.2024 up to 5.00 P.M.	Dt.29.01.2024 up to 5.00 P.M. at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the Website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
 OIPR-25110/11/0031/2324 Sd./- Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division-I, Keonjhar

SCHEDULED TRIBES AND SCHEDULED CASTE DEVELOPMENT, M & BCW DEPARTMENT
Odisha Model Tribal Education Society (OMTES), Bhubaneswar
Advertisement inviting application from students for admission in Eklavya Model Residential Schools

No.CAD-3690:- Applications are invited from meritorious students for the entrance examination for enrollment in the Class- VI for the academic year 2024-25 in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) established by the Government of India and managed by OMTES in the districts of Koraput, Rayagada, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur, Jajpur, Malkangiri, Nuapada, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Sundargarh, Kalahandi, Deogarh, Jharsuguda and Balasore districts. 30 girls and 30 boys will be admitted in each school on merit basis. Out of the total 60 seats in each school, 10 percent seat shall be reserved for other students such as children of people affected by LWE/insurgencies/covid, children of widows, children of divyang parents and others like children of land donors and orphans on a preferential basis. As per the Government rule, there is a provision of reservation of seats for the students with disabilities. If such students do not apply, the said seats shall be filled by other eligible students.

A maximum number of 10 seats shall be reserved for children of government doctors/ paramedics working in blocks having EMRS and children of EMRS staff. This benefit will be available only to the eldest two surviving children.

Last date for receipt of application is 31.01.2024. The above category of students should fill up the given application form in plain paper and send it to the Principal or District Welfare Officer of the concerned Eklavya Model Residential School within the prescribed date. Applications received after the due date will not be entertained. Application form and related details are uploaded in Website of Department of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes Development (<https://stsc.odisha.gov.in>) Website of Odisha Model Tribal Education Society i.e (www.omtes.org). Applicants will be informed about the selection process through advertisement.

Sl. No.	District	Name of EMRS	Address of recipient of application form
1	Mayurbhanj	EMRS, Dhanghera	Principal, EMRS, Dhanghera
2	Sundargarh	EMRS, Bhawanipur	Principal, EMRS, Bhawanipur
3	Rayagada	EMRS, Sirguda	Principal, EMRS, Sirguda
4	Koraput	EMRS, Pungar	Principal, EMRS, Pungar
5	Keonjhar	EMRS, Ranki	Principal, EMRS, Ranki
6	Gajapati	EMRS, Chandragiri	Principal, EMRS, Chandragiri
7	Kandhamal	EMRS, Mahasing	Principal, EMRS, Mahasing
8	Nabarangpur	EMRS, Hirri	Principal, EMRS, Hirri
9	Sundargarh	EMRS, Lahuni para	Principal, EMRS, Lahuni para
10	Sundargarh	EMRS, Laing	Principal, EMRS, Laing
11	Jajpur	EMRS, Rampilo	Principal, EMRS, Rampilo
12	Malkangiri	EMRS, Malkangiri	Principal, EMRS, Malkangiri
13	Nuapada	EMRS, Nuapada	Principal, EMRS, Nuapada
14	Sambalpur	EMRS, Kuchinda	District Welfare Office, Sambalpur
15	Bolangir	EMRS, Dumberbahal	District Welfare Office, Bolangir
16	Rayagada	EMRS, Bikrampur	District Welfare Office, Rayagada
17	Mayurbhanj	EMRS, Bangiriposi	District Welfare Office, Mayurbhanj
18	Mayurbhanj	EMRS, Karanjia	District Welfare Office, Mayurbhanj
19	Sundargarh	EMRS, Karmunda	District Welfare Office, Sundargarh
20	Kalahandi	EMRS, Dhanrabhata	District Welfare Office, Kalahandi
21	Mayurbhanj	EMRS, Bahalda	District Welfare Office, Mayurbhanj
22	Kandhamal	EMRS, Phiringia	District Welfare Office, Kandhamal
23	Keonjhar	EMRS, Gidhibasa	District Welfare Office, Keonjhar
24	Koraput	EMRS, Konga	District Welfare Office, Koraput
25	Deogarh	EMRS, Kalamati	District Welfare Office, Deogarh
26	Jharsuguda	EMRS, Kirmira	District Welfare Office, Jharsuguda
27	Balasore	EMRS, Saladahara	District Welfare Office, Balasore
28	Sundargarh	EMRS, Lathikata	District Welfare Office, Sundargarh
29	Gajapati	EMRS, Gumma	District Welfare Office, Gajapati
30	Rayagada	EMRS, Chandrapur	District Welfare Office, Rayagada
31	Malkangiri	EMRS, Mathili	District Welfare Office, Malkangiri
32	Koraput	EMRS, Kotpad	District Welfare Office, Koraput

Special Note: (1) It is reiterated here that students belonging to Scheduled Tribe category should apply by attaching their caste certificate in the application form.
 Sd./- Director ST, TB and SC Development Department, M & BCW Department, Government of Odisha
 OIPR-26009/11/0008/2324

ZILLA SWASTHYA SAMITI, DHENKANAL
 DISTRICT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT UNIT
 NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION
CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

Notice No.161 Date:12.1.24
 No.E-744:With reference to this office Tender Notice No.04, dated 02.01.2024 for Housekeeping/Security and Mechanized Laundry System under Nirmal Scheme, the last date of submission of proposal to be read as 24.01.2024 time 11.30 AM instead of 23.01.2024 time 05.30 PM as mentioned in page No.3 of all tender notices. The above proposals will be opened on the same date at 12.00 Noon. In Section 6 of the security services tender notice, the No. of Security Supervisor (Skilled) is to be read as at DHH-5, SDH-2 in total-7 (1 Security Supervisor for every 20 Security Guards) instead of 10 and 4 in total-14 respectively as mentioned in page No.25. All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged.
 Sd./- CDM & PHO-cum-District Mission Director, Dhenkanal
 OIPR-10059/11/0015/2324

Government of Odisha "e" procurement Notice
 e-mail ID- rw_sambalpur@yahoo.co.in; Phone No. 0663-2401850
 No. 339, dated. 12.1.24

Bid Identification No. TENDER ONLINE SBPR-17 OF 2023-24
 No.O-2221:-

- Name of the Work : Road Works as per DTCN available in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
- Total No. of Work : 01 (One) No.
- Estimated Cost : Rs.41.96 lakhs
- Period of Completion : 01 (One) Calendar month
- Period and time of availability of bid : 20.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M. to document in the portal for bidding 29.01.2024 upto 5.00 PM
- Date and time of opening of Tender : 30.01.2024 at 11.00 AM
- Name and address of the officer : S.E.R.W. Divn. Sambalpur inviting bid
 (1) Other details can be seen from detailed notice inviting tenders, available in website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
 (2) Corrigendum if any shall only be published in the website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
 Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Sambalpur
 OIPR-25076/11/0025/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, JHARSUGUDA
 E-mail: eejiharsuguda@gmail.com
"e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. SE MID JSD 06/2023-24

No. 82/MID Date: 10.01.2024
 No. A-1219: The Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Jharsuguda on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids through e-procurement to be received in online mode only for the works as detailed in the table below.

- Name of the Works : Civil Construction Work
- Total No. of Works : 13 (Thirteen) Nos.
- Estimated Cost : Rs.7.85 Lakh to Rs.49.99 Lakh (Detail list of work annexed)
- Class of Contractor : As mentioned against work
- Period of Completion : As mentioned against work
- Date & time of availability of Bid : 31.01.2024 to 15.02.2024 during office hours
- Last date/time for receipt of Bid : 15.02.2024 during office hours in the portal
- Date/Time of Opening of Technical Bid : 16.02.2024 at 10.00 A.M. at Office of the S.E., M.I. Divn., Jharsuguda
- Name & address of the Officer Inviting the Bid : Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Jharsuguda
- Mode of Payment of Bid Cost & Bid Security : Online
 Sd./- Superintending Engineer M.I. Division, Jharsuguda
 OIPR-32291/11/0008/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
Tel Irrigation Division, Sonepur
 E-mail: eeeldivn2022@gmail.com
E-procurement Notice No - EE, TID, SNP -14/2023-24

No.A-1215:The Executive Engineer, Tel Irrigation Division, Sonepur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites online Percentage rate tenders in single cover system to be received in online mode only for the works as detailed below.

- Name/Nature of the work : Road and Canal Lining works
- No of Works : 03 Nos
- Class of Contractor : 'C' & 'B' Class (Odisha PWD or relevant class of other licensing Authority.)
- Bid Identification No. : EE, TID, SNP -14/2023-24
- Estimated Cost : From Rs. 32.24 lakhs to Rs 48.96 Lakhs
- Period of Completion : As per mentioned in Col No. 6 of NIT
- Date & time of availability of bid documents in the Portal : From 17.01.2024 (10.00 AM) to 29.01.2024 (05.30 PM)
- Last date/time for receipt of bids in the Portal : In portal -29.01.2024 from 10.00 A.M up to 05.30 P.M.
- Date of Opening of Bid : On Date 30.01.2024 (11.00 AM onwards in the Office of the undersigned)
- Name of the Officer inviting Bid : Executive Engineer, Tel Irrigation Division, Sonepur (Dist.-Subarnapur)
 Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
 Sd./- Executive Engineer, Tel Irrigation Division, Sonepur
 OIPR-32362/11/0012/2324

ZILLA PARISHAD, BARGARH
 E-mail ID:ori-dbagarh@nic.in, Telephone No:06646-234499
 Letter No.196, Date:12.01.2024
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

No.CAD-3706:The District level Committee (DLC) "NUA-O" Fest Bargarh, Odisha invites sealed expression of interest from registered and experienced agencies to apply for organizing Food Arrangement for "NUA-O" fest on 29th January 2024 at Bargarh. The bids should reach the undersigned by Speed Post/ Registered Post/ by hand. The last date for submission of tenders is 21.01.2024 upto 5.00 PM. Details regarding terms & conditions and submission of bids can be downloaded from the district website of Bargarh: www.bargarh.nic.in.

- Opening Date for submission of EOI: dt. 13.01.2024
- Last date for receipt of Bid Paper: 21.01.2024
- Opening of Bids: Dt.22.01.2024 in presence of bidders.
- Cost of processing Fees-2,500/- (Non-Refundable) & EMD: Rs.10,000.00 in shape of DD in favour of CDO-cum-EO, Zilla Parishad, Bargarh.

Sd./- CDO-cum-EO, Zilla Parishad, Bargarh
 OIPR-19244/11/0010/2324

Office of the Jaleswar Municipality, Jaleswar
 Ph: (06781) 222407; E-mail - jaleswaramunicipality@gmail.com
 No. 374 Date: 11.01.24

EOI for Conducting Survey, Estimation and Preparation of DPR for Gausala Project

No.C-2366:- The Executive Officer, Jaleswar Municipality on behalf of Jaleswar Municipal Council invites expression of interest (EOI) for "Conducting Survey, Estimation and Preparation of DPR for Gausala Project for Jaleswar Municipal Area" from registered and eligible firm / Consultant for tendering their bids in sealed cover addressed to the Executive Officer, Jaleswar Municipality. The details of EOI may be downloaded from the websites <https://baleswar.nic.in/> / www.jaleswaramunicipality.in and can be submitted in sealed envelope containing hard & soft copies by hand or can be dropped in the specified Drop Box at the Office of the Executive Officer, Jaleswar Municipality.
 EOI Downloading & Submission date : 12.01.2024 at 11 AM to 18.01.2024 till 5.00 PM
 EOI Opening date : 18.01.2024 at 5.30 PM
 OIPR-13126/11/0022/2324 Sd./- Executive Officer, Jaleswar Municipality

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.CAD-3704
SAMBALPUR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
SAMBALPUR
 Email ID: secretarysdasbp@gmail.com
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Bid Identification No. SDASBP-08/2023-24 Dt.12.01.2024

01. Name of the Work	: 1 No. Work
02. Type of Bid	: Single Bid System
03. Estimated Cost	: Rs.17.45 lakhs
04. Period of Completion	: 3 (Three Months)
05. Class of Contractor	: 'C' Class / 'D' Class
06. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	: From 11.00 AM of dt.17.01.2024 to 5.00 PM of 29.01.2024
07. Last date/time of receipt of bids in the portal	: 5.00 PM of 29.01.2024
08. Date & Time of opening of Bids	: At 11.00 AM of 30.01.2024
09. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Engineer Member, Sambalpur Development Authority, SMC & SDA Office Building, Durgapali, Dist.- Sambalpur-768006

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in
 Sd./- Engineer Member, SDA, Sambalpur
 OIPR-13240/11/0014/2324

Odisha Lift Irrigation Corporation Ltd.
 (A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
L.I. DIVISION, BARGARH
 E-Procurement Notice - EE/O LIC/BGH-12/2023-24
 E-mail - eeolicbh@gmail.com, Ph.- 06646-246126
 No. 651/Dated: 16.01.2024

- Name of the tender inviting Officer: Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Bargarh
- Name of the work: Power supply, Installation of pump sets and Energisation of 01 Nos. of L.I. Projects in Sohela Block of Bargarh District.
- No. of Packages: 01 No.
- Tender Amount: Varies from 33.16 Lakhs
- Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal for online bidding from 10.00 hrs. dated 18.01.2024 to 17.00 hrs dated 29.01.2024.
- Last date and time of receipt of bids in the portal upto 17.00 hrs. Dated- 29.01.2024
- Last date and time of clarification upto 17.00 hrs Dated - 29.01.2024
- Date of opening of bid at 10.00 hrs. Dated-30.01.2024
- Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal of Govt. of Odisha i.e. www.tendersodisha.gov.in
- Subsequent corrigendum/addendum if required shall be available in the above portal.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Bargarh
 OIPR-32509/11/0009/2324

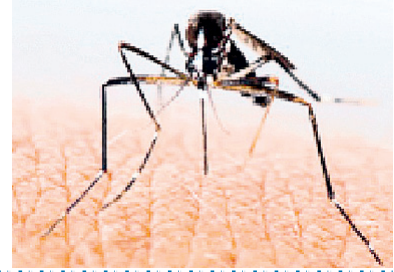
international



Delivering modernisation to more than 1.4 billion people will be a remarkable achievement in human history, one that will provide continuous impetus to the development of China and the wider world

DENGUE SCARE IN SL

Over 5,000 dengue cases have been reported in Sri Lanka so far in January, according to the latest update released by the National Dengue Control Unit (NDCU) Tuesday



of the day quote

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 | ISRAELI PM

The climate crisis is a universal threat to humankind and we all have a responsibility to deal with it as rapidly as we can



JOHN KERRY | US SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL ENVOY FOR CLIMATE

I am only going to support a bill that works. As currently drafted, this (Rwanda) bill does not work



SUELLA BRAERMAN | UK MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Iran bombs militant group bases in Pak

Tehran: Iran launched attacks Tuesday targeting what it described as bases inside Pakistan for the militant group Jaish al-Adl. The state-run IRNA news agency said missiles and drones were used in the attack. Pakistan did not immediately acknowledge the attack. Jaish al-Adl is a Sunni militant group which largely operates across the border in nuclear-armed Pakistan.

Dangerously cold temps blast US

Buffalo (US): Dangerously cold temperatures affected much of the Rockies, Great Plains and Midwest Tuesday, with wind chills below minus 30 degrees (minus 34.4 Celsius) in many parts of the central US. More than 1, 20,000 US homes and businesses were without power early Tuesday, most of them in Oregon, Texas and Louisiana, after widespread outages that started Saturday. Classes were cancelled Tuesday for students in Portland and other major cities including Chicago — home to the nation's fourth-largest public school district — Denver, Dallas, Fort Worth, Texas, in New York's Hudson Valley, across New England and in the Washington, DC, region.

Estonia police nab Russian professor

Tallinn (Estonia): Police in Estonia arrested a Russian professor teaching at the Baltic country's most prestigious university on suspicions of spying for Moscow, officials said Tuesday. Estonian Internal Security Service, or security police, said it launched an investigation into Vyacheslav Morozov, a Russian national and professor of international politics at the University of Tartu, for his alleged involvement in intelligence activity meant to undermine the country's national security.

Boat mishap: Eight dead, 100 missing

Abuja: Eight passengers were confirmed dead and an estimated 100 were missing after their overloaded boat capsized in north-central Nigeria. It is the latest in a series of deadly boat accidents that increasingly point to regulatory failures. The passengers were being conveyed from Niger state's Borgu district to a market in the neighbouring Kebbi state Monday afternoon when the boat overturned in the Niger River.

48 prisoners escape

Quito: At least 48 inmates escaped from a prison in the northern city of Esmeraldas in Ecuador amid the "internal armed conflict" in the country declared January 8. The escape was "evidenced" Sunday when the national police and the armed forces carried out a search operation in the prison.

TRUMP TRIUMPHS IN IOWA

Despite facing a number of legal challenges, Trump, 77, won the Iowa caucuses in a landslide with Governor Ron DeSantis of Florida securing a critical but distant second-place finish in the contest that took place amidst blistering cold

AGENCIES

Washington, Jan 16: Donald Trump scripted a decisive victory in the Iowa caucuses, cementing his status as the frontrunner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, a contest that also saw Indian-American entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy ending his bid and backing the former US president. Iowa is the first of the state-by-state contests where Republican Party voters pick their candidate who will almost certainly face Joe Biden, a Democrat, in the November 5 presidential election.

Despite facing a number of legal challenges, Trump, 77, won the Iowa caucuses in a landslide with Governor Ron DeSantis of Florida securing a critical but distant second-place finish in the contest that took place amidst blistering cold. Trump won 51 per cent of the votes, an unprecedented margin, kickstarting his bid to win his party's third consecutive presidential nomination. Trump's victory was the largest margin in the history of Iowa's Republican presidential caucuses, easily surpassing the previous winning margin of 12.8 per cent set in 1988 by the late Senator Bob Dole. With about 94 per cent of the



TRUMP CLAIMS THAT HIS 2020 ELECTION LOSS TO BIDEN WAS DUE TO WIDESPREAD FRAUD AND HAS VOWED, IF ELECTED AGAIN, TO PUNISH HIS POLITICAL ENEMIES AND INTRODUCE NEW TARIFFS ON IMPORTS. HE HAS ALSO VOWED TO END THE UKRAINE-RUSSIA WAR IN 24 HOURS

results that have been recorded, CNN reported that Trump will receive 20 of Iowa's 40 delegates. DeSantis is estimated to get eight delegates, Haley to get seven delegates and Ramaswamy will receive two delegates. There are 3 delegates unallocated. There are a total of 2,429 delegates up for grabs in the Republican primary season. A candidate needs the backing of at least 1,215 delegates to win the nomination. Thanking "the great people of Iowa", an ebullient Trump said, adding that "it would be

Trump is facing an unprecedented 91 criminal charges across four indictments and trials

Some of the cases could occur in the coming months, including one in Washington set for March 4 accusing him of illegally trying to upend his 2020 election loss to Biden

Meanwhile, 38-year-old biotech entrepreneur Ramaswamy suspended his presidential campaign following his poor showing in the Iowa Caucus and announced his endorsement of its winner Trump

so nice if we could come together and straighten up the problems of the world".

"It's going to happen soon," he said, amidst cheers from his supporters.

Trump also sought to patch things up with Ramaswamy and said "He did a hell of a job. He

came from zero, and he has a big per cent."

Out of the total votes, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis came in second with 21.2 per cent of the votes polled, as against 51 per cent by Trump. Indian-American former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley came a close third

Iran strike triggers row with Iraq as fears of regional turmoil grow

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Irbil, Jan 16: Iran fired missiles late Monday at what it claimed were Israeli "spy headquarters" near the US consulate in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil, and at targets linked to the extremist group Islamic State in northern Syria.

Four civilians were killed and six injured after missiles hit an upscale area near the consulate in Irbil, the seat of Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdish region, according to the security council of the Kurdish regional government. Israel did not immediately acknowledge the attack in Irbil and its embassy in Washington did not return a request for comment on the Iranian allegation regarding the Mossad. The strikes come at a time of heightened tensions in the region and fears of a wider spillover of the ongoing war in Gaza. Since the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war October 7, Iranian-backed militias in Iraq have launched near-daily drone attacks on bases housing US Forces in Iraq and Syria, which the groups have said was in retaliation for Washington's support of Israel, and in an attempt to force US troops to leave the region. The United States strongly condemns "Iran's reckless mis-



sile strikes" in Irbil, said State Department spokesman Matthew Miller. A US defence official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details that had not been made public said the US tracked the missiles, which hit in northern Iraq and northern Syria, and no US facilities were struck or damaged in the attacks. The official said initial indications were that the strikes were "reckless and imprecise." However, the full extent of the damage from the strikes could not be independently assessed. An Iraqi security official said Irbil

was targeted with "several" ballistic missiles but did not give further details. An official with an Iranian-backed Iraqi militia said 10 missiles fell in the area near the US consulate. He said the missiles were launched by Iran's Revolutionary Guards. Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity. In 2022, Iran claimed responsibility for a missile barrage that struck in the same area near the sprawling US consulate complex in Irbil, saying it was retaliation for an Israeli strike in Syria that killed two members of its Revolutionary Guard.

Korean Air, Cathay Pacific aircraft clip wings at Japan airport

AGENCIES

Tokyo, Jan 16: A Korean Air plane carrying 289 people hit a parked Cathay Pacific aircraft while taxiing to a runway at northern Japan's New Chitose Airport but caused no fire or injuries Tuesday, a local fire department said.

The incident happened only two weeks after a high profile collision between a Japan Airlines airliner and a coast guard plane on a runway at Tokyo's Haneda Airport. Airline passengers had to make an emergency exit due to a fire and five of the six crew members on the smaller plane were killed.

On Tuesday, the KAL plane had just started moving away from its parking spot to head to a runway for takeoff when it bumped into the empty Cathay Pacific plane parked next to it, according to the Chitose City Fire Department.

None of the KAL plane's 276 passengers and 13 crew members were injured.

It said the main left wing of the KAL airliner came into contact with the vertical stabilizer of the Cathay Pacific plane. No other details, including the extent of the damage to the aircraft or what caused the taxiing aircraft to hit the parked one, were immediately available.

Global cooperation needed to curb climate crisis: WEF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Davos, Jan 16: Disasters intensified by the climate crisis may lead to \$12.5 trillion economic losses and 14.5 million deaths worldwide by 2050, a new World Economic Forum analysis warned Tuesday.

But, there is still time for global stakeholders to take decisive and strategic action to counter these forecasts and mitigate the health impacts of climate change globally, it said. The report, Quantifying the Impact of Climate Change on Human Health, developed in collaboration with Oliver Wyman, was released at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2024. It analysed the climate crisis

MATTER OF CONCERN

Floods were found to pose the highest acute risk of climate-induced mortality, accounting for 8.5 million deaths by 2050

Droughts, indirectly linked to extreme heat, are the second-highest cause of mortality, with an anticipated 3.2 million deaths

Heat waves take the highest economic toll at an estimated USD 7.1 trillion by 2050 due to the loss in productivity

through a new lens by providing a detailed picture of the indirect impact climate change will have on human health, the global



economy and healthcare systems around the world.

"While there has been much discussion about the impact of climate change on nature and

the global economy, some of the most pressing consequences of the Earth's rising temperatures will be on human health and the global healthcare system,"

SNIPPETS

Avalanches trap 1K people in China

Beijing: Rescuers evacuated tourists Tuesday from a remote skiing area in northwestern China where dozens of avalanches triggered by heavy snow have trapped more than 1,000 people for a week, state media said. The avalanches have blocked roads, stranding both tourists and residents in a village in Altay prefecture in the Xinjiang region, close to China's border with Mongolia, Russia and Kazakhstan. Those injured were being airlifted out on a military helicopter while supplies such as food and fuel were being flown in. State broadcaster CCTV said a snow-blocked road linking Hemu village to major roads was cleared on Tuesday, enabling vehicles to enter and tourists to drive themselves out.

Zelensky in Davos

Davos: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky huddled with corporate executives and world leaders in a frenzied first full day of the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in the Swiss ski resort of Davos, where top officials from the United States, European Union, China, the Middle East and beyond spoke Tuesday about tackling conflict and embracing technology like artificial intelligence. Zelensky is endeavoring to keep his country's long and largely stalemated defense against Russia on the minds of political leaders, just as Israel's war with Hamas, which passed the 100-day mark this week, has siphoned off much of the world's attention and sparked concerns about a wider conflict in the Middle East.

Sunak faces Conservative rebellion in Parl

London: UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak faced rebellion from senior lawmakers in his Conservative Party Tuesday over his stalled plan to send asylum-seekers on a one-way trip to Rwanda, a controversial and expensive policy that the British leader has made central to his attempt to win an election this year. To do that he needs to unite his fractious party, which trails far behind the Labour opposition in opinion polls. But the liberal and authoritarian wings of the Conservatives — always uneasy allies — are at loggerheads over the Rwanda plan. Moderates worry the policy is too extreme, while many on the party's powerful right wing think it doesn't go far enough. In a blow to Sunak, two deputy chairmen of the Conservative Party said they would vote to toughen up the government's flagship Safety of Rwanda Bill in the House of Commons this week. Lee Anderson and Brendan Clarke-Smith announced they would back amendments seeking to close down asylum-seekers' avenues of appeal against deportation to Rwanda.

of the day quote

Green hydrogen may be the last mile in the net-zero journey for many sectors, especially in India

GAUTAM ADANI | CHAIRMAN, ADANI GROUP

I don't think we need to wait till 2028 to become a five trillion dollar economy, and if you look at what is happening, it should happen much before 2028

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION MINISTER

I am going tough on other countries. I have told them very categorically that if you will impose these barriers on us, we will put two. This will be reciprocal

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

HDFC Bank Q3 profit rises 34%

New Delhi: Largest private sector lender HDFC Bank Tuesday reported a 34 per cent jump in its standalone net profit to ₹16,373 crore for the third quarter ended December 2023. The bank had earned a net profit of ₹12,259 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal year. Its total income on a standalone basis rose to ₹81,720 crore in the October-December quarter of FY24 against ₹51,208 crore in the year-ago period, HDFC Bank said in a regulatory filing. On a consolidated basis, the bank's profit increased 39 per cent to ₹17,718 crore from ₹12,735 crore. The consolidated total income rose to ₹1,15,015 crore from ₹54,123 crore at the end of the same quarter the previous year. On the asset quality side, the bank witnessed a marginal increase in gross non-performing assets (NPAs) to 1.26 per cent of the gross loans by the end of December 2023 from 1.23 per cent a year ago.

Maruti hikes vehicle prices

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India Tuesday said it has increased prices of its entire model range with immediate effect. An estimated weighted average of increase across models is 0.45 per cent, the auto major said in a regulatory filing. This indicative figure is calculated using ex-showroom prices of models in Delhi and will come into effect from January 16, 2024, it added. Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) sells a range of cars starting from Alto to Invicto, priced between ₹3.54-28.42 lakh (ex-showroom).

TCS to train staff with Gen AI skills

Mumbai: Country's largest IT services exporter TCS will train its entire staff of over 5 lakh software engineers on the upcoming Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) opportunity, as per a senior official. As a business opportunity, Gen AI is in its 'early days' right now and the use cases are smaller right now, head of the company's recently created 'AI.Cloud' unit Siva Ganesan told PTI. The company, which had disclosed a few months ago about being engaged in 250 generative AI powered projects, is also using the intelligence gleaned from Gen AI for making its ongoing work for clients faster, he added. "So it's probably smaller use cases right now. It is a matter of time before the huge transformation that we also talk about that supplements assets and augment come by. Is there a timeline to that, I think for right now it is wait and watch, we have to see in the coming quarters right of the game unfolds," he said.



The markets are expecting central banks to cut rates pretty aggressively. I think that's a bit premature to make that conclusion

GITA GOPINATH | IMF DEPUTY MANAGING DIRECTOR

SAMSUNG FAMILY MEMBERS SELL SHARES TO PAY INHERITANCE TAXES

Three members of Samsung Group's founding family have sold their shares worth \$2 billion in group affiliates, including Samsung Electronics, in an apparent bid to pay inheritance taxes.



Jump in freight rates to hurt trade

INDIA NEEDS OWN SHIPPING LINE, SAY EXPORTERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Freight rates have skyrocketed by up to 600 per cent due to the Red Sea crisis which would hurt the world trade, say Indian exporters while suggesting the government should start its own shipping line of global repute.

The freight hike issue was flagged in the meeting of the Board of Trade (BoT) chaired by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal Tuesday, Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said.

He said "It is a serious issue" and the problem will hurt the global demand for goods besides pushing inflation in different countries.

The situation around the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a crucial shipping route connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean, has escalated due to recent attacks by Yemen-based Houthi militants.

Due to these attacks, the shippers are taking consignments through the Cape of Good Hope, encircling Africa, resulting in delays of almost 14-20 days and also higher freight and insurance costs.

"At some places, the freight rates have jumped by 600 per cent," Sahai said adding "We request for developing an Indian Shipping Line of global repute". Kolkata to Rotterdam freight increased from USD 500 to USD 4,000 now due to the Red Sea crisis.

According to the FIEO, India's outward remittance on transport services is increasing with rising exports.

"We remitted over USD 80 billion as transport service charges in 2021. As the country moves towards the goal of USD 1 trillion in exports, this will touch USD



200 billion by 2030. A 25 per cent share by the Indian Shipping Line can save USD 50 billion year on year basis," he added.

The Indian private sector may be engaged to develop such shipping lines as this will also reduce arm twisting by foreign shipping lines, he said.

Around 80 per cent of India's merchandise trade with Europe passes through the Red Sea and substantial trade with the US also takes this route. Both these geographies account for 34 per cent of the country's total exports.

The Red Sea strait is vital for 30 per cent of global container traffic and 12 per cent of world trade. About 95 per cent of the vessels have rerouted around Cape of Good Hope adding 4,000-6,000 nautical miles and 14-20 days to journeys.

The commerce ministry has called an inter-ministerial meeting on the crisis Wednesday.

Senior officials from five ministries - external affairs, defence, shipping and finance (department of financial services) and commerce - will participate

in the deliberations.

Exports to Europe, the east coast of the US and Latin America are facing problems due to the crisis.

Due to attacks, shipping lines have reduced their movement through the Red Sea and are taking the longer route via the Cape of Good Hope, encircling the African continent.

The trade route of Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, the Suez Canal,

and the Red Sea is shorter and faster than the Cape of Good Hope route, making it the preferred option for most shipping companies.

The route starts from major Indian ports like Mumbai, JNPT, or Chennai, heads westward through the Arabian Sea, enters the Red Sea, and navigates through the Suez Canal into the Mediterranean Sea.

From there, ships can reach various European ports, depending on their destination.

The Cape of Good Hope route is longer and slower, but it avoids the potential for delays or disruptions at the Suez Canal.

It is typically used for bulk cargo shipments where time is less critical or when political instability in the Middle East raises concerns about using the Suez Canal.

The route starts from the same Indian ports, heads southward across the Indian Ocean, rounds the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa, and then sails northward along the west coast of Africa before entering the Mediterranean Sea and reaching European ports.

Trade deficit may turn volatile: Report

New Delhi: India's trade deficit may turn volatile in the coming months given the supply-side disruptions in the Red Sea due to the attacks on commercial ships by Houthi rebels in retaliation to Israel's action in Gaza, according to a report by global investment bank, Nomura. The report said that India's merchandise trade deficit narrowed to \$19.8 billion in Dec from \$20.6 billion in November as exports posted a 0.96 per cent growth while imports contracted by 4.9 per cent. "However, with the escalation in the Houthi attacks in the Red Sea, ships are now being forced to avoid the Suez Canal route to Europe. This impact is expected to show up in a slowdown in exports during Jan," the report said. It said that the sharp rise in transit costs and transportation times are likely to hit Indian trade, especially with Europe and the US, with news reports suggesting that some 65 per cent of exports to Europe are now having to use the longer route around the Cape of Good Hope. "Surging freight and insurance costs are likely to hit exports, already evidenced by news reports that daily petroleum exports to Europe have fallen by over 70 per cent," it said.

BIZ BUZZ

BoM Q3 profit jumps 33.61% to ₹1,036cr

Bhubaneswar: Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) posted a 33.61 per cent jump in net profit at ₹1,036 Crore for the December quarter. Total business grew by 18.89 per cent to ₹4,34,404 crore. Total deposit grew by 17.89 per cent to ₹2,45,734 Crore. The gross advances increased by 20.20 per cent to ₹1,88,670. Credit-Deposit (CD Ratio) improved by 76.78 per cent. Net NPA declined to 0.22 per cent. Provision Coverage ratio improved to 98.40 per cent. Net interest income of the Bank increased by 24.56 per cent to 2,466 Crore. Net Interest Margin (NIM) increased to 3.95 per cent. Return on Assets (ROA) improved to 1.55 percent. Return on equity (ROE) improved to 24.51 per cent. Capital Adequacy Ratio stood at 16.85 percent with Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) ratio of 12.92 per cent. Operating profit of the Bank grew by 27.32 percent to 2,012 Crore.



RBI panel for minimum fee on state govt guarantees

PANEL ALSO SUGGESTS THAT STATE GOVERNMENTS MAY CONSIDER FIXING A CEILING FOR INCREMENTAL GUARANTEES ISSUED DURING A YEAR AT 5 PER CENT OF REVENUE RECEIPTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 16: A Reserve Bank working group has suggested that state governments should charge a minimum fee for guarantees extended by them on loans taken by their enterprises, local bodies, and cooperative institutions.

Keeping in view the inherent risks associated with the guarantees extended by the state governments on their fiscal health and to the banking system, it was decided during the 32nd Conference of the State Finance Secretaries held in July 2022 to set up a Working Group, the RBI said in a statement Tuesday.

The Reserve Bank has released the Report of Working Group on State Government Guarantees' on its website.

State governments are often required to sanction, and issue, on behalf of various state enterprises, cooperative institu-

tions, urban local bodies, and other state-owned entities, guarantees in favour of their lenders which are generally commercial banks or other financial institutions.

There is a specific ceiling of 0.5 per cent of GDP for additional guarantees to be issued by the Central Government in a financial year as stipulated under the FRBM Act.

A guarantee is a type of contingent liability protecting the investor/ lender from the risk of default by a borrower. Guarantees are usually sought when the investors/lenders are unwilling to bear the risk of default.

"State governments may consider charging a minimum guarantee fee for guarantees extended and additional risk premium may be charged based on the risk category and the tenor of the underlying loan," is on the major recommendation of the group.



The panel has also suggested that state governments may consider fixing a ceiling for incremental guarantees issued during a year at 5 per cent of Revenue Receipts or 0.5 per cent of Gross State Domestic Product, whichever is less.

The group also suggested that the word 'Guarantee' should include all instruments, which create an obligation, contingent or otherwise, on part of the state government.

Further, the purpose for which government guarantees are issued should be clearly defined. "There should not be any distinction made between Conditional/Unconditional, Financial/Performance guar-

Stock markets snap 5-day winning run



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 16: Stock markets snapped their five-day winning run Tuesday with the benchmark Sensex declining by 199 points due to profit-taking in IT and oil shares and weak global trends.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 199.17 points or 0.27 per cent to settle at 73,128.77. As many as 20 Sensex shares declined while 10 advanced.

The key index opened lower but staged a recovery in late-morning deals to touch its all-time intra-day high of 73,427.59. But the barometer failed to hold onto gains in the second half due to profit-taking in the broader market and retreated by 367.65 points or 0.50 per cent to a low of 72,960.29.

The Nifty touched its all-time intra-day high of 22,124.15 before closing lower by 65.15 points or 0.29 per cent at 22,032.30. As many as 33 Nifty shares closed in the red while 17 advanced.

In the last five days, the BSE benchmark rallied 1,972.72 points or 2.76 per cent, and the Nifty jumped 584.45 points or 2.71 per cent. Both Sensex and Nifty closed at record high levels Monday.

Among the Sensex firms, HCL Tech fell the most by 2.05 per cent. Wipro dropped by 1.93 per cent, NTPC by 1.84 per cent, Reliance Industries by 1.43 per cent, Infosys by 1.27 per cent, Tech Mahindra by 1.17 per cent and TCS by 1.06 per cent. IndusInd Bank, Sun Pharma, M&M, Power Grid, Bharti Airtel, and SBI were also among the losers.

IT stocks fell on profit-taking after rallying sharply in the past two sessions.

Tata Steel, Titan, Maruti, Larsen & Toubro, ITC and JSW Steel were among the gainers.

HDFC Bank gained 0.42 per cent ahead of its financial results which were announced after market hours. The largest private sector lender reported a 34 per cent jump in its standalone net profit to ₹16,373 crore for the October-December period of 2023-24.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled lower while Shanghai ended in the positive territory.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.68 per cent to USD 78.68 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹1,085.72 crore Monday, according to exchange data.

Insurance sector's premium income to double by FY34: Report

The report said over the next five years, the total insurance premium income of domestic insurer are likely to grow 7.1 per cent annually in real terms, which is well above the global average growth of 2.4 per cent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 16: The domestic insurance sector is on course to log in over 7 per cent annual growth over the next decade and the premium income is likely to double to around USD 450 billion by financial year 2033-34, an industry report said Tuesday.

The total premium income will more than double over the

next decade (2024-34) from the present USD 224 billion, and insurance penetration will increase from 3.8 per cent currently to 4.5 per cent by FY34, Swiss Re Institute said in a report.

The report further said over the next five years (2024-28), the total insurance premium income of domestic insurer are likely to grow 7.1 per cent annually in real terms, which is



well above the global average growth of 2.4 per cent, 5.1 per cent in emerging markets and 1.7 per cent in advanced markets, the

report said.

The more than double of the global average growth of the domestic industry is on the back

of a resilient domestic economy which will remain the fastest growing large GDP for the next five years, along with the rising awareness about the need for insurance and the very low penetration now along with the low insurance-to-GDP ratio of 3.3 per cent, which will also increase to 4.5 per cent, the report said.

Growth will continue to be led by life market which currently accounts for about three quarters of total insurance premium income at USD 163 billion and is forecast to grow at an annual average of 6.7 per cent during FY24-28, while non-life premium, including health, is expected to expand by an average of 8.3 per cent from USD 61 billion in FY24, the report said.

The report also flagged the low risk protection citing the rising incidences of natural calamities such as earthquakes, floods, cyclones, drought and wildfires, with regular frequencies and said with an average annual economic loss (loss to insurance companies in terms payout) of USD 8 billion over the past decade.

As much as 93 per cent in the country is uninsured, it added.

The report said if the Bhuj quake were to have happened now, the economic loss would have been USD 30-40 billion, as against USD 100 million then (given the larger size of the economy now) and the actual insured loss would have been USD 4 billion, as against USD 4 million then.

SHORT TAKES

Avani lies seventh

Melbourne: Avani Prashanth picked two birdies against one lone bogey towards the end of her first nine, to be 1-under 72 and finish tied seventh after the first round of the Australian Amateur Championships. Avani, the runner-up at the Australian Masters of Amateurs last week, is three shots behind leader Aina Fujimoto (69) at 4-under here at Keysborough Golf Club. Sandeep Yadav, the 2023 Indian National champion, opened with a steady start of 1-under 71 as the Indian Golf Union's team had mixed results on the first day.

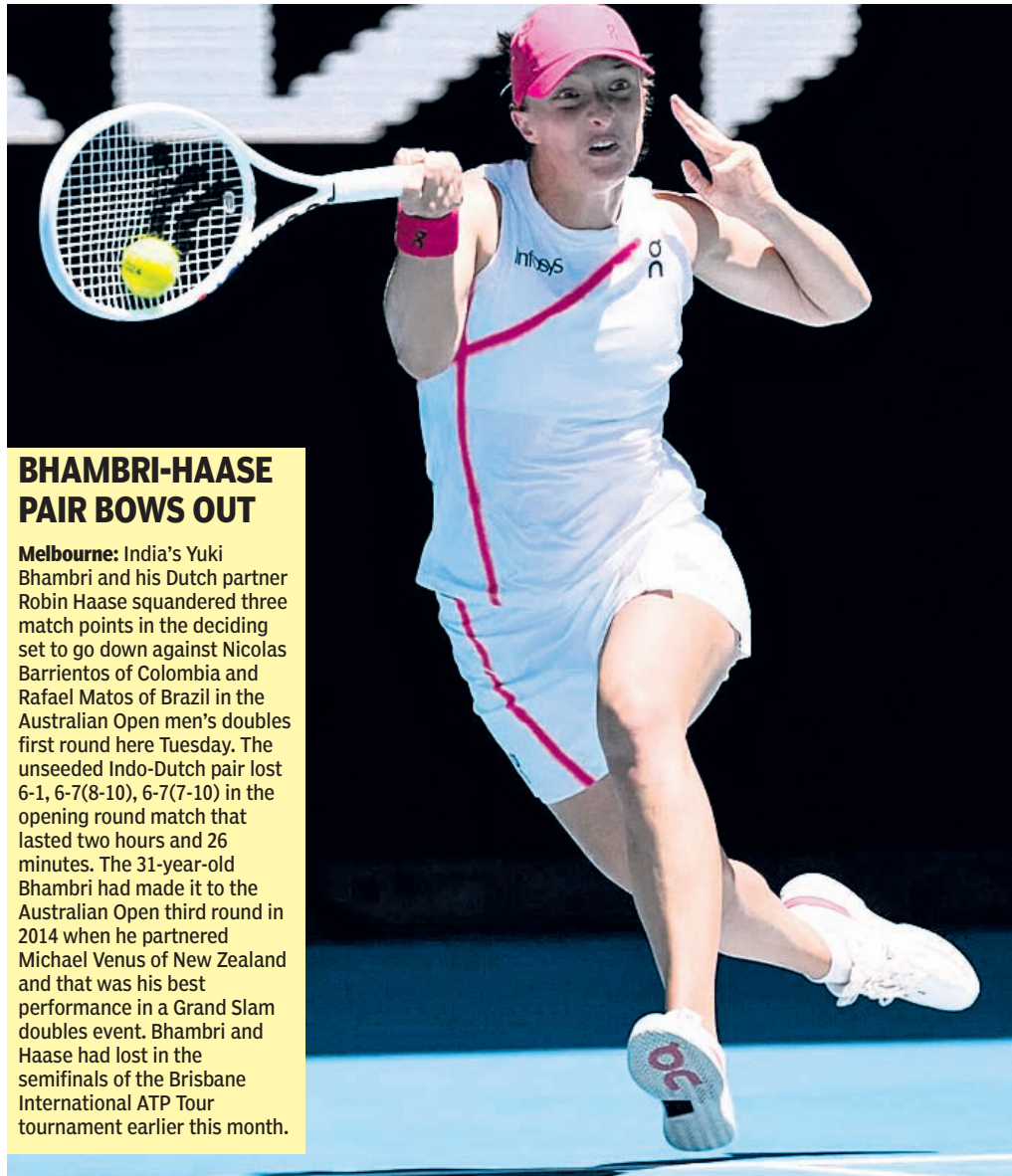
Afridi, Williamson out

Karachi: Young Pakistan fast bowler Abbas Afridi was Tuesday ruled out of the third T20I while hosts New Zealand lost the services of their captain Kane Williamson for the remainder of the five-match series. The Pakistan team management confirmed in a statement that a low grade abdominal muscle strain to the 22-year-old right-arm pacer will keep him out of the third T20I, with a decision on his availability for the remaining two matches to be taken later. Williamson, on the other hand, suffered a hamstring strain on his right leg during the second T20I and will sit out for the remainder of the series in order to be fit in time for New Zealand's two-Test series against South Africa starting February 3.

Blazers reign supreme

Bhubaneswar: Berampur Blazers emerged champions of the 2nd Odisha Roll Ball League Championship (ORBL Season 2) held at the BDA Buddha Jayanti Park Roll Ball Ground here, January 14-15. Blazers humbled Baleswar Beamers 14-2 in the final to claim the title. Blazers' Pritish Aryan Jena scored 11 goals in the final match and also became the highest goal scorer of the tournament by scoring 51 goals. Puri Pacers finished their campaign as second runners-up after beating Bhubaneswar Bulls 9-4. **Berampur Blazers squad:** Pritish Aryan Jena (icon player), Gunjan Rout, Kamal Krishna, Adheev Chanduka, Aniket Pati, Anish Tripathy, Dev Kumar Nayak, Nafisa Naaz, SP Arnab Mohanta & Seyash Adhikari.

Swiatek passes Kenin test



BHAMBRI-HAASE PAIR BOWS OUT

Melbourne: India's Yuki Bhambri and his Dutch partner Robin Haase squandered three match points in the deciding set to go down against Nicolas Barrientos of Colombia and Rafael Matos of Brazil in the Australian Open men's doubles first round here Tuesday. The unseeded Indo-Dutch pair lost 6-1, 6-7(8-10), 6-7(7-10) in the opening round match that lasted two hours and 26 minutes. The 31-year-old Bhambri had made it to the Australian Open third round in 2014 when he partnered Michael Venus of New Zealand and that was his best performance in a Grand Slam doubles event. Bhambri and Haase had lost in the semifinals of the Brisbane International ATP Tour tournament earlier this month.

associated press
Melbourne, Jan 16: Top-ranked Iga Swiatek survived an early test of her Australian Open title hopes when she held off 2020 champion Sofia Kenin 7-6(7-2), 6-2 Tuesday in the first round. Kenin served for the first set at 5-4, but could not close it out. Swiatek rallied to take it in a tie-breaker and then broke Kenin's serve five games later. "It wasn't easy to find my

rhythm. I felt a little bit off and Sofia did everything to keep it that way, huge respect to her," Swiatek said. "I managed to get my level up in the second set." Swiatek, aiming for a fifth major title but first in Australia, faces another former finalist in her tough bracket at the top of the women's draw. Danielle Collins, the runner-up here two years ago, beat 2016 champion Angelique Kerber 6-2, 3-6, 6-1.

"A tough little bracket that we have!" Collins said of the first two rounds. "I was like, 'Wow, I get really great draws now. But, if you're trying to win a Grand Slam, you kind of have to beat everyone.'" Kerber was one of three past Australian champions making their returns to Melbourne Park for the first time as mothers. She joined four-time major winner Naomi Osaka as a first-round

Nagal stuns Bublik to sail into second round



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Jan 16: Indian tennis ace Sumit Nagal stunned World No.27 Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan in straight sets to enter the Australian Open second round for the first time in his career here Tuesday. The 26-year-old Nagal, who made it to the main draw through the qualifiers, beat 31st seed Bublik 6-4, 6-2, 7-6(7-5) in a gruelling match that lasted two hours and 38 minutes.

Nagal's win Tuesday was the first time in 35 years that an Indian beat a seeded player in a Grand Slam. The last time it happened was back in 1989 when Ramesh Krishnan won over Mats Wilander, the then world number one and defending champion at the Australian Open. The win also ensured Nagal's first ever progression to the second round of the season's first Grand Slam. In 2021, he had lost 2-6, 5-7, 3-6 to Lithuania's Ricardas Berankis in the opening round. The World No.137 Indian will be playing in the second round of a Grand Slam for the second time in his career. In the 2020 US Open, Nagal had lost to second seed and eventual champion Dominic Thiem 6-3, 6-3, 6-2 in the second round. Nagal was off to an impressive

start as he broke Bublik in the first game of the match but he also failed to hold on to his own serve next as the scoreline read 1-1. The Indian then broke his opponent's serve twice to take the opening set 6-4 in 42 minutes. Nagal played even better in the second set as he broke serve of his opponent twice while holding his own all through to win 6-2 in 43 minutes. In the third set, both the players held their serve till the seventh game when Nagal broke his opponent to take a 4-3 lead. He then cruised ahead at 5-3. The Indian then served for the match at 5-4 but failed to hold. The third set went into the tie-breaker with Nagal eventually winning 7-5. Nagal had made it to the main draw with a 6-4 6-4 win over Slovakia's Alex Molcan in the tournament's qualifying final Friday. Nagal made his Slam debut in the 2019 US Open against the iconic Roger Federer. He took a set off the Swiss giant but lost the match 6-4, 1-6, 2-6, 4-6 eventually. In the first round of the 2020 US Open, Nagal had beaten American Bradley Klahn 6-1, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1 to become the first Indian to win a Grand Slam singles match after Somdev Devvarman (2013).

Manisha goal saves Sports Odisha's day against HOPS



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 16: Manisha Naik's strike late in the match helped Sports Odisha salvage a point in their Indian Women's League (IWL) match against HOPS FC at the Capital Football Arena here, Tuesday. The match ended 1-1. In a gripping showdown, both the teams failed to break the deadlock in the first half. However, Frederica put HOPS ahead after the hour-mark before Manisha dashed the visitors' victory hopes with the equaliser. It was the Bhubaneswar-based

side's first point of the season. Despite some entertaining actions, the first half remained goalless. A frantic second half ensued with both teams' eagerness to gain the upper hand. In the 67th minute, a looping ball from the left flank was masterfully headed into the back of the net by Frederica to give HOPS FC a 1-0 lead. Sports Odisha proceeded in full throttle, seeking an equaliser and their efforts paid off in the 84th minute. Subhadra took a strike from outside box, and Manisha pounced on the rebound to find the equaliser.

India maul Italy, reach Olympic Qualifier semis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, Jan 16: Udit Duhan capped her milestone 100th international appearance with a double strike that took India closer to a Paris ticket after hosts thrashed Italy 5-1 to enter the semifinal of the FIH Olympic Qualifier here Tuesday. Udit (first minute, 55th), Deepika (41st), Salima Tete (45th) and Navneet Kaur (53rd) were the goal scorers for Indian team as it finished second in Pool B with two wins from three games behind United States, who remained unbeaten. Italy got a consolation goal just at the stroke of the final hooter when Camilla Machin converted a penalty corner. India will take on Pool A toppers Germany in the semifinals Thursday, while USA will be up against Japan. The top three teams will qualify for the Paris Olympics. Earlier, USA pipped New Zealand 1-0, while Japan edged past Chile 2-0. Germany outplayed Czech Republic 10-0 in the first match of the day.

Rajawat sets up Prannoy date

WORLD NO.30 SHUTTLE KNOCKS SEN OUT OF INDIA OPEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 16: Priyanshu Rajawat shocked Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen in an all-Indian clash to join HS Prannoy in the second round of the India Open Super 750 badminton tournament here Tuesday. Rajawat, World No.30, rallied from a game down to edge out an erratic Sen, ranked 19th, 16-21, 21-16, 21-13 in a 75-minute opening round match here. It was a second straight first-round exit for Sen, which further jeopardises his Olympic qualification chances. Prannoy, the World No.9 Indian, dished out a compact game to outwit Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei, ranked 13th, 21-6, 21-19 in a 42-minute match at the KD Jadhav Indoor hall earlier in the day. Prannoy will take on Rajawat in the second round. Prannoy got into a nice rhythm right at the start, mixing his half smashes, drops and tosses from the back court. Chen struggled to negotiate the length of the shuttle that Prannoy was play-



ing and ended up committing too many errors. Soon, the Indian had an overwhelming 11-2 lead at the break. He continued to dominate the rallies as Chen surrendered the opening game meekly in the end. A small crowd had gathered by the time Prannoy took the court and chants of 'HSP' and 'India' filled the air in the stadium. Prannoy, who was silently going about his business till then, started celebrating his points gusto in the

second game which had begun on an even note. However, he found himself 11-16 down when Chen stepped up and started playing some good cross-court shots from the back. Just when it seemed the match will go into the decider, Prannoy fought back to be at 16-16 with a precise net return. The Indian played more soft shots and drew Chen to the nets, extracting errors from his opponent to eventually nose ahead.

PANT BATS AT NETS, SHOWS BETTER FITNESS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Jan 16: Rishabh Pant Tuesday gave another hint of improving fitness and match-readiness while batting for some 20 minutes at the Chinnaswamy nets before his Indian teammates entered the venue for practice. Clad in black shorts and T-shirt, Pant faced throwdowns from NCA staff, dishing out some drives on the off-side and a few nudges to the on-side. He exchanged a few words with Indian team's side-arm specialist Raghu before proceeding to meet other members like Virat Kohli, Rinku Singh among others. Pant is continuing his recovery at the NCA from a horrible car accident in late 2022, an accident that forced him to have ligament reconstruction surgeries. Pant is expected to return to action during the IPL 2024 as he has been named as Delhi Capitals captain.



MESSI, BONMATI BAG TOP HONOURS AT FIFA AWARDS

ARGENTINE PIP HAALAND IN TIE-BREAKER TO BE 'THE BEST' MEN'S PLAYER OF 2023

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Jan 16: Lionel Messi landed another prestigious award in football — barely. The Argentina star needed a tie-breaker with Erling Haaland to win FIFA's best men's player prize Monday. He has national team captains to thank. The voting breakdown showed Messi and Haaland with 48 points each after voting by a global panel of national team coaches and captains, selected journalists, plus fans online. The tiebreaker was whoever had more first-place or "5-point" scores from the votes of national team captains. That category was 107 to 64 for the Inter Miami forward. Neither player showed up at the awards ceremony at Hammersmith Apollo theater

in west London. Kylian Mbappe, the third finalist, skipped it too. Messi had moved from PSG to Inter Miami and led the David Beckham-owned team to a little-known Leagues Cup title — all while single-handedly elevating football's relevance in the United States. The 36-year-old Argentine also topped Haaland and Mbappe for his eighth Ballon d'Or award last October. World Cup champion Aitana Bonmati showed up — and cleaned up. The 25-year-old Spain playmaker was named FIFA's best women's football player, building on her Ballon d'Or award last October, which followed a UEFA award in August. And that was after she led Spain to World Cup glory and Barcelona to the Champions League title. She was named



player of the tournament for both competitions. Bonmati won Monday over Spain teammate Jenni Hermoso and Colombia star Linda Caicedo. "The Best" awards represent FIFA's version of the older and more prestigious Ballon d'Or prize. The women's eligibility period covered performances



from August 1, 2022 through the World Cup final last August. Spain's women won their first World Cup by beating England 1-0 in the final in Sydney. Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola was named best men's coach, and England coach Sarina Wiegman took the women's prize. Messi secured the FIFA award

for the eighth time in 15 years. He had won it last year, too, after leading Argentina to the 2022 World Cup title. Fans voted overwhelmingly for Messi, and journalists favored Haaland. The Man City striker had a slight edge in the votes from national team coaches. The national team captains leaned towards Messi. The men's award did not consider the World Cup, which ended 13 months ago. It recognized achievements from after the tournament through August 20. Messi and Mbappe helped PSG win the French league title, but the team underperformed in the Champions League and French Cup — exiting both competitions in the round of 16. That means Messi's exploits in the United States surely swayed some voters. The goals kept coming — 10 in seven games to lead the MLS club to their first-ever trophy by winning the Leagues Cup final August

19, one day before FIFA award eligibility period ended. Messi's figures in France after the World Cup were good but unspectacular: nine goals and six assists in 22 games across all competitions. Haaland and Mbappe could make good arguments that they deserved to win. Haaland scored 28 goals in 36 games in all club competitions from after the World Cup through the end of the 2022-23 season as a driving force in Manchester City winning the treble. The 6-foot-4 striker then scored three goals in two appearances for Norway in June. Mbappe scored at nearly a goal-per-game clip in the period of eligibility for PSG and then for France in European Championship qualifying in March and June. The best goalkeeper awards went to Ederson of Brazil and Manchester City, and Mary Earps of England and Manchester United.

MATCHDAY
INDIA vs AFGHANISTAN
3RD T20 INTERNATIONAL
TIME: 7 PM
TELECAST: SPORTS18 NETWORK
STREAM: JIO CINEMA

The 26-year-old had attended the Capitals camp in November last year, besides being present at the franchise's auction table at Dubai in December. Sourav Ganguly, the Capitals' director of cricket, too had exuded confidence in Pant's return in this year's IPL. "He's (Pant) good now. He will play in the IPL next season. There's still time for him to get down to practice. By January (2024), he'll get even better," Ganguly had said during the DC camp at Jadavpur University Salt Lake Campus. Pant's last appearance for India was in a Test match against Bangladesh at Mirpur in December 2022.