

With the blessings of Maa Samalei and cooperation of innumerable devotees, 'Samalei Prakalpa' inauguration has been successfully completed.

Heartfelt gratitude to all devotees! Come experience the divinity of Maa Samaleswari Temple with cultural festivities.









## NICOLE EGGERT REGRETS **JOINING BAYWATCH**

Actress Nicole Eggert, known for her role as Summer Quinn in Baywatch, expressed discomfort with her iconic outfits. Unaware of her lifeguard role, she opted for breast implants at 18 due to on-screen appearance concerns, later remorseful about both the decision and the movie.

## **DE NIRO ENJOYING FATHERHOOD AT 80**

Actor Robert De Niro gushed over his baby daughter in a new interview, describing being an 80-year-old father as 'great'. The two-time Oscar winner welcomed his seventh child with partner Tiffany Chen in May of last year, and they named their daughter Gia.



## FORTUNE **FORECAST**

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

> You are likely to give in to the demands of your chil-dren today. Ganesha says it is for times like this that you labour so hard. You will finish the tasks that you have been postponing for a long time. It is a good day for people in the medical field and in the public sector.

TAURUS

Ganesha finds this an excellent day for managers and administrators. If you are one, the results you will achieve by the end of the day will far exceed the efforts you put in. This is mainly because your subordinates will be enthusiastic, compliant and cooperative

## GEMINI

You will listen to your heart over your head, swept away as you will be in a flood of emotions today. This could mean that you will be unable to distinguish between good and bad. However, looking back upon your day in the evening, you are unlikely to regret any of the decisions you made, says Ganesha

### 

You will be involved in a team effort and associated with work like inspection and examination. You will base your opinions on your friends' choices. So select good friends, says Ganesha. You will spend time with close circle.

## LEO

Your natural self-confidence and capability will help you attain a position of strength today. As a result, all your tasks will be completed easily and you will reap rewards greater than your expectations savs Ganesha.

## **VIRGO**

You will be faced with serious financial problems today. You may even have to pay through your nose to get what you desire. Later in the evening, you might accomplish some short-term goals. Ganesha predicts that some vital business agreements will end your day in high spirits.

## **LIBRA**

Ganesha savs vou will be able to improve your relations abroad. There will be good news coming from friends or relatives living abroad. Your working ability

## 13th IFFB concludes with the screening of Joram Bhubaneswar: The seven-day

long Indian Film Festival Bhubaneswar (IFFB), organised by the Film Society of Bhubaneswar (FSB) here at Odissi Research Centre came to an end, Sunday.

The first screening of the last day was Mani Kaul's Siddeshwari which explores the life of Siddheshwari Devi, a classical singer from Varanasi.

Next in line was the Nepali film Bahadur by Diwa Shah. The movie showcases the woes of the working class during the nationwide lockdown imposed in India following the outbreak of the COVID pandemic.

The day continued with the repeat screening of the Malayalam film by Jeo Baby, Kaathal, centering around the captivating narrative of Mathew



Volunteers of Film Society of Bhubaneswar

and Omana, a seemingly harmonious couple residing in the serene village of Teekoy in the Kottavam district of Kerala.

The last movie of the day was Manoj Bajpayee-starrer Joram by Devashish Makhija, a story of a desperate man and his infant daughter fleeing a system that wants them crushed at any cost.

Opium by Aman Sachdeva, which got the highest number

of votes, was screened again on the last day. Addressing the audience at

the end, Subrat Beura, the honorary president of FSB, extended gratitude to the viewers and all the partners for being a part of the week-long event. PNN

## MANORANJAN DAS' BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATION 1st state-level play reading fest in City

#### BIJAY MANDAL, OP

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Natya Sangh (ONS), a confederation of nearly 150 theatre troupes of the state, in collaboration with Odisha Sahitya Akademi (OSA), organised the first statelevel Shruti Nataka Mahotsav, or play reading festival, here at Sanskruti Bhawan (Dept of Culture), Sunday.

The event was held to celebrate the centenary birth anniversary of eminent playwright Padma Shri Manoranjan Das.

Four theatre troupes from four zones under ONS presented the same number of dramas written by Das.

Nayeeka from Balasore in the north zone performed Sandhan (Direction-Susmita Rana), while the west zone's Swara of Sambalpur presented Katha Ghoda (Direction-Manas Mishra). Similarly, Golden Mig Kala Parishad of Sunabeda in the south zone and Dynamic



Members of Swara, a theatre troupe from Sambalpur, presented Katha Ghoda at Sanskruti Bhawan, Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Platform of Bhubaneswar in the east zone performed Klanta Prajapati (Direction - Samir Mohapatra) and Buxi Jagabandhu (Direction-Debabrat Pattnaik), respectively.

Among the dignitaries were legendary theatre personality Anant Mahapatra, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi president Aruna Mohanty, OSA secretary Subodh Acharya, All India Radio Director Tarunkanti Rout, ONS president Manoj Pattanaik, secretary Suvakanta Padhy, and eminent critic Sanghamitra Mishra. Odissi Research Centre chief executive officer Sikata Das,

who is also the daughter of Manoranjan Das, was also present at the event.

Natya Chetana founder Subodh Pattnaik who was in the audience gallery said, "Play reading has been a high level artistic event in many theatre centres of India and abroad where eminent theatre actors demonstrate their voice culture and high-priced tickets are sold out.'

For the uninitiated, Shruti Nataka is a public reading of a play with dramatic use of voice. It is a form of theatre without sets, props, special lighting, or full costumes.

# 'Have always aimed at being pan-Indian'

Mumbai: Actress Shruti Haasan, who was recently seen in Salaar, says that she doesn't like comparing herself to her peers in the film industry, who have made the most of the pan-India trend. She has been working in several Indian film industries since she started her career in 2005 and always took up films based on what felt organic to her.

In the last couple of years, several actors such as Ram Charan, Prabhas, Allu Arjun, and others have reached new heights of fame, thanks to the crossover between several language industries and awareness through social media and OTT.

'I have never really compared myself to a contemporary male or female actor. I have just followed a path in my career that has felt natural to me at the time,' said Shruti in an interview.

She adds, "At the time I started, there was no social media, OTT. I think a lot more people would have seen a lot more of my work, but I am happy for every journey and phase of my life.

"For me, it's not a pan-India fever. If you look back to the interviews I gave 11 years ago, I have always aimed at being pan-Indian, and I have always used that word 'pan lian'," concluded the actress

On the work front, Shruti will be

AGENCIES

seen next in the Telugu-Hindi film Dacoit

**ANYONE FINDS** 

A BALL WITH A

SNOWMAN ON IT,

IT'S MINE !!!

alongside Adivi Sesh.



I'd love to do an action film. I'd absolutely love to do period cinema. I have a special love for them. Maybe that's why I obsessively train in MMA and classical dance every day," she says.

Talking about her learning, the Made in Heaven actress adds, "Whatever happens, happens for a reason. I think it's important to respect our journey so far and not be obsessed with the idea of 'better'. I don't know about shattering stereotypes and all that, but I have definitely changed as an actor and as a human being. It is only natural. I don't think anyone is ever-changing. We are all ever-moving work in progress.<sup>2</sup>

On the work front, Sobhita will be een next in Hollywood film Monkey Man with Dev Patel. AGENCIES

the office today. In the day today you shall have a variety of good and bad experiences

### **SCORPIO**

An electric wire of 440 volts is apt to describe you today. According to Ganesha, you are in a belligerent mood today and can burst like a fireball. Meditation and yoga is likely to improve the situation. Remember, treat others the way you want to be treated by them.

PEANUTS

HFRE'S

SOMETHING

YOU SHOULD

THINK ABOUT

WHEN YOU'RE

PLAYING TENNIS

KNOW WHAT KIND OF

BALL YOU'RE PLAYING

AND WHAT NUMBER IS

GET MIXED UP WITH THE

PLAYERS NEXT TO YOU

ON IT SO YOU WON'T

MINE HAS

A LITTLE

SNOWMAN

ON IT ...

THAT'S A

NUMBER

EIGHT

τ

### SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha foresees a day full of promises. People in the creative field, especially artists are going to benefit more. Radio jockey and television anchors can make a note of this day in their diary, as it may serve as a memorable day, says Ganesha

## **CAPRICORN**

You have projected yourself as a confused individual. You may have a tendency to

remain in a double mind. But, today you'll come up with a very specific plan that will surprise many of the people around you. Be clear about what you want to do in life, how you want your life to be and make sincere efforts to achieve it, guides Ganesha.

## 

You are disappointed and you seek solace in spirituality. Don't run away from the problems: rather face them with strength and confidence, advises Ganesha, to bring your life back on track. With nationce and belief in the Almighty, you will be sail through the storm.

### **PISCES**

You will display kindness and generosity today and will do your best to help anyone in ness. At work you will receive praise for the efforts that you've put in and your dedication will be validated. Even though you intend to give utmost importance to your family, this intention will trail in the shadow of pending work which will require long hours.





## 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.

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## SOLUTIONS

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BHUBANESWAR | MONDAY JANUARY 29 | 2024



## AAP to go solo Delhi CM Kejriwal says his party will

contest all the 90 Assembly seats in Haryana on its own, but the LS polls will be fought as part of INDIA bloc NATIONAL P7

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## Space race

Iran successfully launches three satellites into space with a rocket that had multiple failures in the past INTERNATIONAL | P8



### richest man as Elon Musk lost more than \$18 billion in his net worth after Tesla stock nosedived

**BUSINESS** | P

## **Maiden Grand Slam win**

Italy's Jannik Sinner beats Daniil Medvedev to win his first Grand Slam singles title at the Australian Open in Melbourne

Guterres: UN to

punish staffers

with terror links

New York, Jan 28: United

Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres vowed

Sunday to hold to account "any

UN employee involved in acts

of terror" after allegations that

some refugee agency staffers

were involved in the October 7

ernments to continue supporting the UN refugee agency for

Palestinians (UNRWA) after nine

acts of terror will be held ac-

countable, including through

criminal prosecution," the UN

In his first direct comments

on the issue, the UN chief gave

details about the UNRWA staffers implicated in the "ab-

horrent alleged acts". Of the

12 implicated, he said, nine

had been terminated, one was

confirmed dead and the iden-

tities of the other two were

Britain, Germany, Italy, the

Netherlands, Switzerland and

Finland Saturday joined the

United States, Australia and Canada in pausing funding

to the aid agency, a critical

source of support for people

in Gaza, after the allegations

being clarified.

by Israel.

countries paused funding. "Any UN employee involved in

chief said in a statement.

Hamas attacks on Israel. But Guterres implored gov-

REUTERS

SPORTS BACK PAGE

**P1** 

## Constable held for role in ₹30L robbery attempt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, Jan 28: Police arrested two persons including a constable posted with Reserve Police, Paralakhemundi over their alleged involvement in a ₹30 lakh robbery bid on an Andhra trader here in Gajapati district.

The accused constable was identified as Tanui Kumar Sabat. president of Gajapati District Constables' Association, and his accomplice as Binod Raypalli of Saluru village in Parbatipuram Manyam district in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh.

Tanuj was suspended from service after a case was registered against him. Five mobile phones were also seized from the duo's possession. This was stated here by SDPO Madhav Chandra

Nayak in a presser, Sunday. Police said the duo was planning to loot ₹30 lakh from Vishakhapatnam-based trader T Naga Rabindranath on the pretext of exchanging ₹2,000 denominations worth ₹60 lakh with currency notes of ₹500 denomination. To lure him, they also offered to pay him ₹30 lakh out of the total amount of ₹60 lakh in exchange of the favour.

When Rabindranath came with cash as discussed, Tanuj and Binod tried to snatch the cash bag in his possession and run away. However, some local youths overpowered the accused duo and informed the police.

Police rushed to the spot and nabbed the two accused. They were taken for interrogation during which Tanuj admitted to their crime. Police registered a case and produced the two accused in the court.

**IRREGULAR** by MANJUL



SNOW RETURNS TO VALLEY: Tourists amid light snowfall at ski resort Gulmarg, in Baramulla district, Sunday. Gulmarg received a fresh snowfall breaking a two-month-long dry spell

**U-turn on de-reservation** 

### After facing backlash from several quarters and fearing a repercussion in the upcoming polls, the Centre rushed into damage control



per the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act, 2019.

After enactment of this Act, no reserved post is to be de-reserved. Ministry of Education has given directives to all the CEIs to fill up the vacancies strictly as per the 2019 Act. the Ministry of

### Nitish at it again Modi likely to visit state twice in Feb

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to visit Odisha twice in February, state BJP president Manmohan Samal said Sunday.

Modi, who is scheduled to visit Sambalpur February 3 and address a public meeting, may also BACK IN NDA. **NITISH KUMAR TAKES OATH AS BIHAR CM FOR RECORD 9TH TIME** 

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Jan 28: JD(U) president Nitish Kumar Sunday took oath





Our ideology is same. We both believe in shamelessness

### WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	29.6°C	26.6°
Min Temp	15.1℃	14.5°
Humidity	50%	679
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST		M
FOG/MIST IN THE MORNING	Ê	2
		1 June

mode prompting the Edu Ministry to post a clarification

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The Ministry of Education (MoE) Sunday clarified that no reserved posts can be de-reserved after severe outcry over draft guidelines by the University Grants Commission (UGC) proposing that any vacancy reserved for

SC, ST and OBC candidates can be declared unreserved if enough candidates from these categories are not available. 'Guidelines for The

Implementation of the Reservation Policy of the Government of India in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs)' are in the public domain for feedback from stakeholders.

The draft guidelines have been receiving backlash from several quarters. The Congress alleged there is a conspiracy to end reser-

vation given to SCs, STs and OBCs in posts in HEIs and that the Modi government is only doing politics of symbolism on the issues of Dalits, backward classes and tribals.

president Congress Mallikarjun Kharge said the BJP is "only busy in snatching the jobs of youths"

The party's General Secretary Jairam Ramesh demanded that the proposal be withdrawn immediately.

The JNU Students' Union (JNUSU) also staged a protest against it and burnt an effigy of UGC Chairman M Jagadesh Kumar. Kumar also clarified that there has been no de-reservation of reserved category positions in Central Educational Institutions (CEIs) in the past and there is going to be no such de-reservation.

Reservation in Central Educational Institutions is provided for all posts in direct recruitment in Teacher's cadre as Education wrote on X.

Later, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan clarified that not a single post will be de-reserved and there is no scope of ambiguity about reservations after the introduction of the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act, 2019.

It is important for all HEIs to ensure that all backlog positions in the reserved category are filled up through concerted efforts.

According to new draft guidelines by the UGC, a vacancy reserved for SC or ST or OBC cannot be filled by a candidate other than an SC or ST or OBC candidate, as the case may be.

However, a reserved vacancy may be declared unreserved by following the procedure of dereservation where after, it can be filled as an unreserved vacancy.

There is a general ban on dereservation of reserved vacancies in case of direct recruitment.

visit the state capital February 10 when the saffron party holds its national women's conference here, Samal said

The party has decided to hold two women's conferences, one in Madhya Pradesh and the second in Odisha in February.

The prime minister is likely to attend the women's conference in Odisha tentatively February 10. The PM has given his consent to attend it, Samal said, adding that the details of the February 10 programme will be announced soon

He said around 25,000 women from 14 states are likely to attend the Mahila Samavesh, which is being seen as an attempt by the BJP to make a dent into the trusted women vote bank of Biju Janata Dal.

Earlier in the day, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan who hails from Odisha had indicated regarding the PM's programme in the coastal region of Odisha after the tour of the western region February 3.

as Chief Minister of Bihar for a record ninth time after a dramatic volte-face, ditching the Mahagathbandhan and the Opposition bloc INDIA and forming a new government with the BJP, which he had dumped less than 18 months ago.

Kumar was sworn in by Bihar Governor Rajendra Arlekar at Raj Bhavan in the presence of senior leaders including BJP national president JP Nadda, hours after he resigned from the post, saying "things were not working well" for him in the Grand Alliance and the Opposition bloc.

BJP leaders -- Samrat Choudhary and former Speaker Vijav Kumar Sinha -- were among those who took oath of office. The two are named as Deputy Chief Ministers.

Earlier, Choudhary and Sinha were named as leader and deputy leader, respectively, of the BJP legislature party. They thanked the party's top leadership for the opportunity and vowed to "protect Bihar from the jungle raj unleashed by Lalu Prasad's RJD"

JD(U) members Vijay Kumar Choudhary, Vijendra Yadav and Shrawan Kumar also took oath apart from former CM Jitan Ram Manjhi-led Hindustan Awam Morcha's Santosh Kumar Suman and independent legislator Sumit Singh.

Congratulating Kumar and his two deputies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asserted that the newly sworn-in NDA government in Bihar will leave no stone unturned for the state's development and to fulfil people's aspirations.

In a post on X, Modi said he is confident that the new government in Bihar will serve the people with full dedication.

Notably, no leader of the RJD, the single largest party in the assembly, was present at the ceremony.

## SHORT TAKES

## Child rape cases up 96% from '16 to '22

New Delhi: Child rape cases, encompassing all forms of penetrative assaults, have registered a rise of 96 per cent from 2016 to 2022, according to an analysis of the NCRB data by child rights NGO CRY. Discussing the potential reasons behind this surge, Subhendu Bhattacharjee, the director of research and knowledge exchange at Child Rights and You (CRY), said the improved public awareness has led to a higher number of reported cases of sexual offenses against children. The analysis conducted by CRY revealed a consistent upward trajectory in these rape incidents since 2016, with the exception of 2020. **P7** 

## **3 Americans killed in** Jordan drone attack

Columbia (US): Three American service members were killed and 'many' were wounded in a drone strike in Jordan, President Joe Biden said in a statement Sunday. He attributed the attack to Iran-backed militia groups. They were the first US fatalities in months of strikes against American forces across the Middle East by Iranian-backed militias amid the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, increasing the risk of escalation. US officials have assessed that one of several Iranian-backed groups are responsible. Biden said the United States "will hold all those responsible to account at a time and in a manner our choosing." P8

Climate activists throw soup at Louvre's Mona Lisa eral issues, including low wages.

Angry French farmers have been using tractors to set up road blockades and dumping stinky agricultural waste at the gates of government offices across France

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Jan 28: Two climate activists hurled soup Sunday at the glass protecting the Mona Lisa at the Louvre Museum in Paris and shouted slogans advocating for a sustainable food system. This came amid protests by French farmers against sev-

In a video posted on social media, two women with the words 'FOOD RIPOSTE' written on their t-shirts could be seen passing under a security barrier to get closer to the painting and throwing soup at the glass protecting Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece. "What's the most important thing" they shouted. "Art, or right to a healthy and sustainable food?" "Our farming system is sick. Our farmers are dying at work,' they added.

The Louvre employees could then be seen putting black panels in front of the Mona Lisa and asking visitors to evacuate the room.Paris police said two people were arrested following



the incident. On its website, the 'Food Riposte' group said the French government is breaking its climate commitments and called for the equivalent of the country's state-sponsored health care system to be put in place to give people better access to healthy food while providing

farmers a decent income. Angry French farmers have been using their tractors for days to set up road blockades and slow traffic across France to seek better remuneration for their produce, less red tape and protection against cheap imports. They also dumped stinky

agricultural waste at the gates of government offices.

On Friday, the government announced a series of measures that farmers said do not fully address their demands. Those include "drastically simplifying" certain technical procedures and the progressive end to diesel fuel taxes for farm vehicles.

Some farmers threatened to converge on Paris, starting Monday, to block the main roads leading to the capital.

New Prime Minister Gabriel Attal visited a farm Sunday in the central region of Indre-et-Loire. He acknowledged farmers are in a difficult position because "on the one side we say weneed quality' and on the other side 'we want ever-lower prices'."











## downtown



## Lecturers threaten to boycott Plus II exam

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: The Odisha SSB Lecturers Association Sunday threatened not to cooperate in the annual Plus II examination and evaluation if the state government does not take immediate measures to fulfill their demands within 15 days.

Lecturers of aided degree colleges appointed through the State Selection Board (SSB) have reiterated their demand for revision of grade pay (GP). The lecturers are demanding an increase in their GP from the existing ₹4,600 to ₹5,400. It is pertinent to mention here that the association members have been wearing black badges since September last year to press for their demands.

Association president Sarojakanta Nayak said, "Though we are equal with our government college counterparts in discharging duties, we are placed in a lower pay scale that doesn't commensurate with our post."

## 3 held with elephant tusks

### PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has arrested three persons after recovering two elephant tusks weighing 8.986 kg from their possession, an official said Sunday.

DRI sources said the officials raided a residence in Deogarh and arrested the three accused - Premraj Sahu and Samir Kapardar of Deogarh and Rajesh Kumar of Delhi – late January 26 night.

"The vehicle used in carry ing the tusks was also seized under the provisions of Section 50(1)(c) read with Section 9 and Sl. No. 83 of Schedule-I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972,' the official said.

The illicit trade of ivory tusks and pharynges contributes to the depletion of bull elephants, as they are often poached for their massive tusks, DRI sources said.

Elephants, classified as a Schedule I species, are afforded

stringent protection under the Wild Life (Protection) Act of 1972.

Engaging in the trade of elephant tusks carries severe penalties, including imprisonment for up to seven years along with fines. The inherent value of a bull elephant extends far beyond monetary considerations. The ecological impact of their existence, including their role in maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem balance, is immeasurable.

The DRI said it is committed to combating wildlife trafficking and enforcing the laws that protect endangered species.

This operation, DRI sources said, is a testament to its ongoing efforts to curb the illegal trade of wildlife products and preserve the rich biodiversity of the country

## **5T Chairman reviews projects in Keonjhar**

### COLLEGE TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS IN THE DISTRICT WILL BE COMPLETED BY FEBRUARY

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: 5T and Nabin Odisha Chairman Kartik Pandian reviewed the progress of various development projects and interacted with students as well as general public during his visit to Keonjhar, Sunday.

**OrissaPOST** 

MONDAY | JANUARY 29 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR

Pandian took part in the Nua-O programme at DD University ground, where he interacted with college students. The Nabin Odisha Chairman also motivated students to dream big and advised them to work hard with self-confidence as it would help them achieve success in life. The

## **CLASSIFIED** AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit in the Court of Executive Magistrate, Komna we Namely Kishorchandra Adbang, Subhadra Adbang, Parameswar Adbang, Hemantika Adbang are S/o. Late Bhagirathi Adbang @Harijan, Village-Ghostar, P.S.- Komna, Dist.- Nuapada declared that our father namely Bhagirathi Adbang, S/o. Kumuda Adbang had died on 21.10.2020. That in the Death Certificate vide registration No.- D-2020-21-01196-000748, Dt.10.11.2020 his name recorded as Bhagirathi Harijan, S/o-Kumuda Harijan. That the name of our father Bhagirathi Harijan, S/o-Kumuda Harijan and Bhagirathi Adbang, S/o-Kumuda Adbang belongs to one and the same person.

college transformation projects in the district will be completed

by February, he said. Pandian reviewed the progress of the ongoing work for redevelopment of Maa Tarini temple in Ghatagaon with an allocation of ₹50 crore

He took stock of the progress of Kanupur irrigation project, Anandapur barrage project and mega lift irrigation projects being executed with an allocation of ₹6,120 crore. Once completed, the projects would help irrigate Brahmeswar temple, Sitabinji 2,44,550 acre of land. temple and Sidha mutt, all in

Eastern Ganga era fort

ruins found near Konark

Later, he reviewed the construction of two instream stor-

age structures at Santeibhanja and Telkoi. Both the projects, being executed with an allocation of ₹96 crore, have been taken up based on the grievances and demands by the locals to Pandian during his visit to the district in

June last year. The 5T Chairman also reviewed the development of Bhimkund into a major tourist destination, which is being done with an allocation of ₹19 crore. Development of Baladev Jew temple, Gupt Ganga,

Keonjhar which are being exe-

cuted with a combined allocation of ₹14 crore, were also reviewed by Pandian.

The 5T Chairman also took stock of the progress of drinking water and road projects being executed with an allocation of ₹4.287 crore

Pandian also interacted with the public at Silsuan in Keonjhar and received grievances on various issues and assured early resolution. Some of the major projects have been taken up after Pandian's Keonjhar visit in June 2023, when he attended grievance meetings and took feedback from the public.

## 5K women take part in mini-marathon

Bhubaneswar: About 5,000 women, dressed in traditional sarees. participated in 'Pattathon' (minimarathon) Sunday under the encouragement and inspiration of KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta. The event was organised by K3 Breakfree. The event was held from 7am to 8am, with the women employees of KIIT, KISS and KIMS participating in it. The minimarathon started from Shikharchandi temple Square and concluded at KIIT Cricket Stadium. Awards were presented to the best participants by the guests including KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta The min

## Organic produce, craft items big draw at City Adivasi Mela

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: While people of the Capital city are flocking to Adivasi Mela to get a taste of local produce, people from all over the world are visiting the Adivasi Exhibition Grounds to witness and experience the traditions and culture of tribal people.

Chironji seeds, popularly known as Charoli nut, Cuddapah almond, Calumpong, Hamilton mombin of cashew family (Buchanania cochinchinensis) used in traditional medicines and many other herbal products used in skincare products and organic deodorants are attracting many youngsters as well as housewives.

Aditya Mohapatra, an IT professional, expressed happiness after purchasing a bag full of traditional spices from stalls managed by tribal shelf help groups (SHGs) from Kandhamal.

"I love to come to this event every year with my mom. We buy extra quantity to stock in home and use it for months as we wait for the next year to collect more items. I am happy that the tribal SHGs from interior pockets of the state are coming here despite challenging weather conditions and have opened their stalls for our convenience," he

'Tribal Art and Craft' with handcrafted products on offer.

The Idital painting of Lanjia Saura, from Rayagada, which had received prestigious GI tag from the Registrar of Geographical Indications, Chennai, is also available for visitors to purchase.

'We are committed to taking tribal products to global platforms and this time the Kapadaganda Dongaria Kondh Embroidered Shawl and Idital painting of Lanija Saura have received international recognition and we will be adding more to the list in future," said SC, ST Development, Minorities, and Backward Classes Welfare Department commissioner-cumsecretary Roopa Roshan Sahoo.

Satvaiit Das, another visitor said, "Apart from tribal products we are also lucky to witness the tribal and PVTG1 ifestvle through 'Tribal Huts' and our children enjoy it the most. We are very grateful to organisers and especially the Academy of Tribal Language and Culture (ATLC) for bringing us this annual event on tribal heritage of the state."

coming here I could gather insights into culture, tradition and practices of tribal communities and especially the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) of the state. It's a wonderful experience for me and my teammates.

Participating in the fair, Kasturi Kadraka from Maa Thakurani SHG under the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) in Rayagada said, "Since 2018, our organisation is participating in the Adivasi Mela and during the fair we do business of over ₹3 lakh and this year we are expecting more."

The SHG collects pepper, cinnamon, bay leaves, turmeric, types of millets and other minor forest produce from tribal communities in hills around Chatikana under Bisamkatak blocks.

al SHG groups from 22 Sever ITDAs and 17 Micro Project

Agencies (MPAs) for PVTGs from

73,0



I Sri Akshvava Kumar Pradhan, S/o- Late Durga Charan Pradhan, At-Kathakhunta, P.O.-Kokalaba, Via-Narasinghpur, Dist.-Cuttack, PIN-754032 I was Service in defence & Retired. My wife's name is Nibedita Pradhan & her Date of Birth is 24.06.1972. But my service document is mentioned only Nivedita and Date of Birth 18.11.1974. So her correct name is Nibedita Pradhan and Date of Birth is 24.06.1972 in my Aadhaar & Certificate.

#### ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Cuttack, Jan 28: Cuttack chapter of Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (IN-TACH) has found ruins of a possible Eastern Ganga era fort and maritime archaeological remains of an ancient port city near Balukhanda sanctuary close to Konark-Puri marine drive road in the Puri.

The remains of the fort first came to notice of a local IN-TACH member Satyajit Swain who reported about the findings. A five member team of the Cuttack Chapter conducted several visits to the site to document ruins of the medieval era fort and the lost port city. The remnants of the fort were discovered near the Garudeswara Temple of Khalakatapatana vil-

lage in Konark block of Puri. As per sources, the maritime remains at Khalakatapatana were earlier reported by researchers and some archaeological excavations had been conducted in the past. However, the INTACH team excavated additional archaeological evidence from the site.

"Large number of fragmented potteries that include Chinese Celedon, Egg white glazed ware, dark grey pottery, black red pot-

tery, knobbed ware, red ware were found at the site. Some of the potteries share possible connections to Roman, African, Chinese and South East Asian cultures. Khalakatapatana was a port town, a hub of maritime trade in the medieval era, as it had the advantage of being situated at mouth of the Kushabhadra River." said a member

According to Deepak Kumar Nayak, who was leading the team, local legends say that the ancient name of Khalakatapatana was Dihapatana and it was within the territory of Gadarupasa, a greater Gada (fort) under the Eastern Gangas.

There were 16 forts established by the Gangas around the Konark Sun Temple to provide security to its grand architecture. Accounts of Bayachakada (a palm-leaf manuscript that describes the building operation and financial expenditure of Konark temple) mentions about Gadarupasa where a camp was formed for architects involved in construction of the temple. The brick wall of the fort is

visible at many places along with base of a temple or palace. Fragmentary stone blocks, huge stone pillars and some ancient statues were also found at the site.

the participation of prominent figures such as Odisha Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board (OB & OCWW) Chairman Shreemavee Mishra, BMC Mayor Sulochana Das and Kadambini Editor Itirani Samanta.

The?

added.

SMART CLASS ROOM

Carlota Maso, who is from Spain and is currently working in a City-based NGO. Odisha State Volunteer and Social Workers Association, said, "I'm from a foreign land, but after

across the state are participating in Adivasi Mela this year. There are 66 stalls under the umbrella of 'Tribal Haat,' selling organic products and 15 stalls under

## **MSMEs hail new policy**

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: Owners of micro. small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have welcomed the state government's announcement of the Odisha Public Procurement Preference Policy, 2023. "The dynamic policy of the government shall definitely go a long way in motivating the existing small manufacturing enterprises and the same has also resulted in fulfilling a long-cherished demand of local entrepreneurs,' said Smarajit Mohanty, president of Orissa Small Scale Industries Association (OSSIA).

"After a long waiting period of eight years, this policy has seen the light of the day and we, the MSME fraternity, are thankful and grateful to our Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, MSME Minister Pratap Keshari Deb, MSME Principal Secretary Saswat Mishra and all other officials of the department," Mohanty added.

## IN SYNC: Students from Markandeswar Sahi Girls' High School perform classical dance during an event organised by

## FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion-Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

Daya Jyoti in Puri, Sunday





## state

## Three hardcore Maoists surrender

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Jan 28: In a significant development, three Naxalites, including two women surrendered before the Sukma police in Chhattisgarh bordering Malkangiri district, police said Sunday. The three who have surrendered are Dudhi Sukdi, Dudhi Deve and Madvi Hadma. They were active in Chintagufa area of Chhattisgarh. Among the three, Deve was carrying a reward of ₹1 lakh on her head, the officials said.

As per information provided by the police, the Naxalites surrendered before police and officials of CRPF's 50th battalion here Saturday evening. They said that they were disappointed with the 'inhuman and hollow' Naxal ideology, the way the camps were being run and that they did not see any development work being carried out. They also said that they did not like how the poor tribals were tortured and the way innocents were being killed.



A senior police official said that the three will be provided facilities as per the surrender and rehabilitation policy of the Chhattisgarh government. The three cadres told police that they were impressed by Chhattisgarh government's rehabilitation schemes for Naxalites.



THIS VARIETY OF FISH PREYS ON OTHER SPECIES AND DUE TO THEIR VORACIOUS EATING HABITS CAN CAUSE ECOLOGICAL IMBALANCE



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Jan 28: Illegal cultivation of Pacu and various other varieties of fish and the mushrooming of prawn gherries are posing a serious threat to the natural habitat of Bhitarkanika National Park in this district. environmentalists have alleged. Environmentalist Ashok Kumar Samal said that illegal cultivation of Pacu fish, popularly known as 'Roopchandi' has blossomed significantly in the reserve forest area for the past five years. "Ecological balance is being affected due to Pacu fish farming in nullahs and

Samal asserted. Worth mentioning, Pacu fish is a type that can be compared to the deadly Piranhas found in

ponds within the forest area.'

South American rivers. Like the Piranhas, its Indian variety can also consume bovine carcasses in a matter of few minutes. They are also known to prey upon other species posing a threat to the environment, said zoologist Devi Prasad Sahu.

Samal further stated that natural flora and fauna. the presence of various types of animals, reptiles and birds are the main source of attraction for tourists from both India and abroad at Bhitarkanika. However, with the illegal cultivation of Pacu fish and the mushrooming of prawn gherries, a major part of the forest area is going under the control of unscrupulous traders. "They are not concerned about the environment, but only about profits," Samal alleged

Social activist Pratap Padhi, on the other hand, pointed out that these traders really do not care about the law. "Many public interest litigations have been filed in the Orissa High Court from time to time for protection of Bhitarkanika. Later, emphasis was given for the eviction of the shrimp enclosures within the national park. The Orissa High Court has appointed advocate Mohit Agarwal as amicus curiae to take stock of the environment in Bhitarkanika. Despite this, the numbers of fish and shrimp enclosures have increased," Padhi pointed out.

Environmentalist Prabhuprasad Mohapatra alleged that the forest land within the national park has become a source of vote bank for local politicians. "People have been encroaching land, cultivating fish, hunting animals and destroying trees with impunity. If steps are not taken to prevent these developments, the park will lose much of its sheen," said Mohapatra.

However, ranger Pradosh Maharana asserted that the number of shrimp and prawn farming enclosures within the forest area has decreased considerably. However, he said that he had no idea about Pacu fish collection. Maharana assured that he will look into the matter.





POST NEWS NETWORK

UNNINO

Bhanjanagar, Jan 28: Supply of drinking water to this town as well as irrigation facilities in its vicinity may suffer in the very near future. This is because the water reservoir in this locality of Ganjam district has dried up considerably in the last couple of years due to insufficient rainfall. It has been particularly scanty since September 15, last year. Officials informed that the reservoir currently has only 25 per cent water of its total capacity.

This town requires 35 lakh litres of drinking water for its inhabitants, most of which comes from the reservoir. However, in the near future there is ample chance for disruption of water supply. Lack of rainfall has not only affected the reservoir which supplies water to this town, but also the one at Landesisahi village. The reservoir at the village situated on the outskirts of this town, has also seen a substantial drop in water level.

It is apprehended that if the situation persists then drinking water supply as well as ir-

## **POLITICKLE** by MANJUL



## Water scarcity looms large in Bhanjanagar Accident claims 2 lives in Rourkela POST NEWS NETWORK

rigation will be severely hit.

Unless the water level goes up,

farmers in the Rabi season may

experience crop losses, people

in the know of things pointed out.

couple of years is also causing

another headache to the local

administration. They are ap-

prehensive that in case of a for-

est fire, there will not be sufficient

When contacted, Nityananda

Behera, assistant engineer of

Bhanjanagar public health de-

partment (PHD) said that the

area might experience problem in drinking water supply if rainfall does not occur soon. He

however, pointed out that steps

will be taken to avert the crisis

and added that efforts are on to

assess the volatility of the

Forest officer of North

Ghumusar division, Sudarshan

Behera said it will be a chal-

lenge for the department to

check forest fires if rainfall

does not occur quickly. However,

steps are being taken in advance

so that forest fires can be pre-

vented from the beginning

situation.

of summer.

water to douse the flames.

The low rainfall for the last

POST NEWS NETWORK Rourkela, Jan 28: Two persons were killed when the bike they were travelling on met with a head-on collision with a truck Saturday night in Sundargarh district. The accident took place near Uparbahal Chowk on NH-

143 under the jurisdiction of the Bonai police station. Police said Sunday that the two deceased, a man and a woman, were travelling on the bike when the accident occurred. The bike and the truck collided and both the riders were run over by the truck and died on the spot. One of the deceased has been identified as Pradeep Munda, the man who was driving the bike. However, the identity of the woman is yet to be established.



Immediately after the accident, enraged locals blocked the highway causing a huge traffic jam. Later senior police officials of Bonai including SDPO Swaraj Devta held discussions with the irate crowd. Following assurances from the police that measures will be put in place to prevent accidents, the agitation was withdrawn. "We immediately\_ rushed to the spot and held discussions with the people. After we assured them that proper measures would be put in place, they withdrew their agitation,' Devta said.



BOOK FAIR: Visitors flipping through the pages at a book fair held at PHD ground in Ainthapali of Sambalpur, Sunday

BEYOND

## Street food festival tantalises taste buds

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Jan 28: The three-day 'Eat Right Street Food Festival' (ERSFF), organised here by the Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) and Rourkela Smart City Limited (RSCL) ended January 26 with a lot of fun.

This was the second edition of the food festival held for the first time last year during the Hockey World Cup. Like last year, this edition was also a big hit among the Steel City residents. There were over 30 stalls in the festival which was held near the picturesque and newly-renovated Basanti pond.

The festival was initially set to be held in the second week of December but was postponed due to the cholera outbreak.

This time, though for some the cost of the foods was little prohibitive, the prices could not deter the massive crowd converging there to enjoy the culinary delicacies. "I am enjoying it. The prices are a little high, still this is once in a year opportunity. So just forget the price and enjoy it," said Deepa, a college-goer. Another lady who also com-

plained about the price said, "A

small cup of gajar halwa costs



₹35, but the taste is mind blowing and far better than what I do at home." Though no official data was

available, still unofficial sources claimed that business worth more than ₹20 lakh was done. Interacting with the media, then ADM, Rourkela Subhankar Mohapatra had said, "We have postponed the festival to a future date for the cholera situation in the city. It will be held once the situation improves."

ОР РНОТО

The most sought after delicacies were chicken tandoori and mutton biriyani. "I savoured both of them. They were absolutely out of the world," said Santosh Das, who was there with his family. Besides, 'vegetable 3D', 'raj kachori', 'pao bhaji' and 'paneer tikka' were in demand. In addition, the traditional gup chup or gol guppa was also loved by the visitors.

## Truck driver dies in road mishap

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bangiriposi, Jan 28: One person died when the driver of an onion-laden truck lost control of the vehicle and it turned turtle. Trying to jump out from the vehicle, another person got trapped under the truck and breathed his last. Two others also suffered serious injuries, officials said Sunday. The deceased was also a driver, they said and added that the two used to drive the vehicle in turns.

The deceased was identified as Salimuddin, 42, a native of Sutahat village in Haldia area of neighbouring West Bengal. Locals said that the Dwarasuni

ghati road on the highway where

the accident occurred has turned

into death trap with reports of frequent deaths and critical injuries of the commuters due to accidents.

Police said the onion-laden truck (Regd No- WB- 25- J-4720) was heading towards Kolkata when due to the failure of the brakes it crashed against the sidewall on the Dwarasuni ghati

Salimuddin was rescued from under the truck by locals and rushed to the community health centre here. However, he was pronounced dead on arrival. Police and firefighters rescued the two injured and took them to the hospital also. Currently they are undergoing treatment there. Sources said that they may be shifted to some other hospital Monday.

road and overturned.

However, surprisingly some locals without showing any compassion for the victims were seen ransacking the truck and running away with onion sacks. Some were even seen trying to rob the injured. The inhuman act has drawn flaks from various quarters.

## NGT to probe illegal sand mining

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 28: The National Green Tribunal's (NGT) Kolkata bench has formed a committee to inquire into the illegal sand mining on Kusei riverbed near Deogaon under Ghashipura tehsil in Keonjhar district.

Those who have been included in the committee are a senior scientist of Orissa State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB), a senior scientist of state Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), Collector-cum-District Magistrate, Keonjhar or his representative not below the rank of additional district magistrate (ADM). The panel is to probe into the allegations of unchecked sand mining using machines (excavators) from Kusei riverbed leased out near Deogaon. The NGT bench has asked the committee to submit its report within four weeks.



The NGT constituted the committee, January 19, 2023 following a petition filed by Tapas Kumar Bal of Deogaon through his counsel Sankar Prasad Pani. The petitioner alleged that the lessee has been extracting and transporting one thousand cubic metres per day in five Hyva trucks, but the quantity that has been permitted was seven thousand cubic metres per year. The lessees had transported 960 truckloads of sand in one month from September 8, 2023 to October 8, 2023 from Kusei San quarry, the petitioner mentioned in his complaint.

The NGT ordered the committee to inspect the site and submit a report with regard to the allegations made within four weeks. The NGT appointed OSPCB as the nodal agency to provide all logistic support for filing the report of the committee. The bench of Justice B Amit Sthalekar (judicial member) and Dr Arun Kumar Verma (expert member) has listed the case for hearing March 11, 2024.

The petitioner alleged that illegal mining has been going on beyond the permitted lease area which has affected the environment and caused pollution. The Kusei river intersects Jajpur and Keonjhar districts. The lessee is using heavy machines and earthmovers to extract sand from the river bed violating the rules and guidelines on sand mining, the petitioner alleged. 

قُرْتُه عَبْرَيْهِ مَعْبُورُ مَعْبُورُ مَعْبُورُ مَعْبُورُ مَعْبُورُ مُعْبُورُ مَعْبُورُ مَعْبُورُ مَعْبُورُ مَعْبُورُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُولُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُونُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُونُ مُعْبُونُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُونُ مُعْبُونُ مُعْبُورُ مُعْبُونُ مُعْبُقُ مُعْبُعُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُنُهُ مُعْبُعُنُهُ مُعْبُعُنُهُ مُعْبُعُنُهُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُنُهُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُنُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعُنُهُ مُعْبُعُنُهُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُمُ مُعْبُعُنُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْنُ مُعْبُعُنُ مُعُنُ مُعْبُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُنُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعْبُعُ مُعُنُهُ مُعُنُهُ مُعْبُ مُعْبُ مُعَالُهُ مُعَنَا مُعُنُهُ مُعُنُهُ مُعُنُهُ مُعُنُ مُعُ

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the **BANK OF BARODA** under the Securityisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice together with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment within **60** days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **POSSESSION** of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the date mentioned below. The Borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **BANK OF BARODA** for an amount stated herein below plus further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment. **The Borrowers's attention is invited to provision of subsection (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.** 

ROURKELA MAIN BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrowers	Description of the Immovable Property	Demand/ Possession Notice Date	Total Dues as on		
Mr. Kishore Chandra Jena, 2) Mr. Kishore Chandra Jena, S/o: Mr. Ram Chandra Jena, Both are residing at Flat No.: A1 (101), 1st Floor of Block No.: II, Vyas Residency, Vedvyas, Rourkela, PIN-769041 & Present Address: BMC Bhawani Enclave, Flat No.: 2A, Blcok-2, Near		01.11.2023 / 25.01.2024	thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment		
Place: Sambalpur, Date : 29.01.2024 Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda					



## power post

## FOCUS MOBILITY

The heart's words fall back nheard from Wisdom's throne.

**SRI AUROBINDO** 

## Nitish Again

itish Kumar has done it yet again. The JD(U) leader took oath for a record ninth time as the Chief Minister of Bihar along with the BJP's Samrat Chowdhury and Vijay Sinha as ministers, Sunday. This is the fourth time in the last eleven years that the Bihar Chief Minister, once known as 'Susashan Babu', has changed alliances, something that has gradually dented his image and earned him the moniker 'Paltu-Ram.' These developments have also harmed the prospects of the JD(U) which has been constantly losing seats in the Bihar Assembly. The party had won 115 out of 243 seats in 2010 Assembly polls, which reduced to 71 in 2015 and 43 in 2020.

Nitish had first left the 17-year-old alliance with the BJP in 2013 when the saffron party named Narendra Modi as its prime ministerial candidate for the 2014 Lok Sabha polls and joined hands with the Congress and the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) of Lalu Prasad Yadav, who was once his bête noire. The JD(U) again returned to the NDA camp in 2017 following corruption taint on his then deputy Tejashwi Yadav. Five years later, he was once again in the Grand Alliance, which also had three Left parties this time apart from the Congress and the RJD. This means in the last five years itself, Nitish has swapped alliances thrice. After this, Union Home Minister and BJP leader Amit Shah had announced that the BJP's door was closed forever for Nitish Kumar and called him 'Aaya Ram Gaya Ram' (turncoat). Even Nitish Kumar had said on record that he "would rather die than join hands with the BJP." However, the old saying that there are no permanent 'bed fellows' in politics holds true for someone like Nitish even today.

After snapping ties with the RJD for the second time, Nitish said: "I was facing difficulties in working with this alliance. When I explained this to party members, they advised me to resign." On the Opposition INDIA bloc, Nitish said: "I have been working hard to make a successful, meaningful (INDIA) alliance, but no one else (in the alliance) has been doing anything...

Irrespective of the fading popularity of Nitish Kumar among the voters of Bihar, his exit from the INDIA alliance may not be seen as a setback for the Opposition which is going to face the ruling BJP in the Lok Sabha elections due this April-May. Nitish abandonment comes at a time when the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress and the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party have declared that they would have no seat-sharing arrangement with the Congress for the Lok Sabha polls in West Bengal and Punjab, respectively. Nitish Kumar, who organised meetings for the INDIA bloc, was viewed by the Opposition to be a fierce fighter against the BJP until the very end. However, a sudden change in his stance at this critical juncture may not damage the bloc as would normally be viewed. This may make the BJP's argument that the Opposition bloc is an unsteady coalition more shrill but credibility of Nitish will nullify anything positive that could be read into his constant acts of changing sides.

Rather, the BJP may have some explanation to do about its reasons for accepting, back in its fold, this Aya Gaya Ram who may again dump the party after the 2024 elections. The obvious reason could be that Bihar sends 40 MPs to the Lok Sabha and the JD(U)-RJD-Congress combine was appearing formidable to the BJP. That is why despite, some state BJP leaders opposing the idea of accepting Nitish Kumar back again, the party's central leadership may have given their approval to this decision after considering the broader perspective. In reality, the BJP had notched up the best possible number of Lok Sabha seats that it can in the Northern states after Pulwama in 2019. A better performance may not be possible this time through as politics and aspirations of people have changed, economy has deteriorated and even the Ram temple has not really caught the imagination of the youth of India to the extent as had been hoped for. Taking Nitish back may seem strategically wise but the acceptance also shows a weak underbelly.

# **SHYING AWAY FROM EVs**

n the early 1990s, every selfrespecting American yuppie and retired suburban couple bought an electric bread maker, with sales hitting four million units. But the fad soon faded as these amateur bakers discovered that stuffing a precise quantity and ratio of flour, eggs, butter, yeast, and salt into a metal box takes time and costs much more than strolling to the corner bakery. Are plug-in electric vehicles (EVs) the bread makers of our day? Despite Tesla founder Elon

Musk's entrepreneurial bril-

liance and billions of dollars

in government subsidies to sup-

Todd G. Buchholz **EV DOUBTERS** LIKE TOYOTA – WHICH **INSTEAD BET ON HYBRIDS – NOW** 

port EVs, it appears that consumers still prefer to drive to a gas station for a five-minute fillup than to retrofit their garage and suffer the range anxiety that comes from hunting for a charging station in the parking lot of an abandoned shopping mall. JD Power reports that 21% LOOK of public chargers do not work in any case. As consumers start PRESCIENT to shy away from EVs, their choice will affect not just the car industry, but US-China relations, state budgets, and com-

modity prices. The evidence is rolling in fast. This month, Hertz, which purchased 100,000 Teslas to great fanfare in 2021, executed a squealing 180-degree turn and began dumping one-third of its EV fleet, taking a \$245 million charge against its earnings. Its pledge to buy 175,000 EVs from GM will likely go up in smoke, too. Outside of wealthy, trendy communities, consumers are walking past plug-in EVs and snapping up hybrids and gasoline-powered engines instead.

In the fourth quarter of 2023, EV sales crawled up by just 1.3%. According to Edmunds, EVs tend to sit on dealer lots for about three weeks longer than gasoline-powered cars. With Mercedes Benz EQS units



**Despite Tesla founder Elon Musk's** entrepreneurial brilliance and billions of dollars in government subsidies to support EVs, it appears that consumers still prefer to drive to a gas station for a five-minute fill-up than to retrofit their garage

declared last October that peo-

ple are "finally seeing reality."

Automobile unions surely are

relieved, considering that EVs

require 90% fewer parts and

30% fewer manhours to man-

None of this diminishes the

ingenuity of EV engineers and

designers. Watching smart cars

race and then parallel park

themselves, it's hard to believe

that they were once dismissed

as golf carts with hood orna-

ments. Musk has been called

many things – some of them

unprintable - but his cars out-

run Porsches, his rockets soar

past NASA's, and his brushes

with insider trading leave

Securities and Exchange

Commission lawyers in the dust.

ways wins. EVs face obstacles

even beyond physics and con-

sumer inertia: namely, a faulty

electrical grid. More Americans

today are spending more hours

sitting in the dark. The US

Administration reports that be-

tween 2013 and 2021, the average

Information

Energy

Still, that does not mean he al-

ufacture.

languishing for four months, the company's chief financial officer recently acknowledged that the market is a "pretty brutal space." Customers are staying away despite a price war in which Ford, Tesla, and GM slashed EV prices by 20%, on average, leading Ford to lose \$36,000 on each unit sold.

At the same time, state governments have been pumping EVs with enormous subsidies, even as their own budgets are bleeding red. California still pours \$7,000 into each new EV (on top of the maximum \$7,500 federal credit), despite reporting a record \$68 billion budget deficit. New Jersey sends a \$4,000 check to EV buyers, despite shrinking revenues. How long can these states keep the money spigot open?

EV doubters like Toyota which instead bet on hybrids now look prescient. Over the past year, Toyota's share price outperformed GM's by 40%. After taking flak from enthusiasts and Wall Street analysts, Toyota chairman Akio Toyoda

duration of a blackout doubled from 3.5 hours to more than seven hours, while their frequency jumped by nearly 20%. No wonder people are reluctant to tie their mobility to a wall plug, especially given doubts about the reliability of renewable-energy sources like solar and wind, which will always be vulnerable to clouds and stagnant air.

The US is not alone, of course China's BYD ("Build Your Dreams") automaker recently earned headlines for selling three million EVs last year, compared to Tesla's 1.8 million. Yet the wobbly Chinese economy is vulnerable to weaker US sales. The Chinese government and private sector have bet big on battery production and on countries like Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cuba, and Russia, which mine lithium, cobalt, cadmium, and other key minerals. But will China continue to buy off African political leaders as these commodity prices slump? How long will that spigot stay open?

The 1990s bread-machine fad never benefited from public subsidies, government mandates, or furious discounting to gain market share. If it did, perhaps it would have continued for a few more years. EVs have been promoted by presidents, governors, the IRS, and tech wizards. But the public isn't listening. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who looked great in a 60-horsepower jeep, warned that "you don't lead by hitting people over the head: that's assault, not leadership." In the automobile market, the internal combustion engine is still in the lead.

The writer is a former White House director of economic policy under President George W. Bush and managing director of the Tiger hedge fund. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

## SPECTRUM WORKPLACE

## Coworking spaces need reboot

WISDOM CORNER



Work going bust has global coworking industry valued at \$14 billion. WeWork was sent some shockwaves across the coworking overleveraged to sustain its 777 locations across 39 countries. A debt of this magnitude is not

prudence and a clear, unambiguous pathway to profitability are super important factors for the success and sustenance of any business.

highlighted certain challenges in the coworking industry, there are still immense opportunities for growth and innovation. One such opportunity lies in the emergence of niche and specialised coworking spaces. These spaces cater to specific industries, interests, or communities, offering tailored services and amenities. From creative studios for artists to healthcare-focused workspaces for medical professionals, niche coworking spaces can meet the unique needs of their target audience. By providing specialised resources, networking opportunities, and industry-specific events, these spaces can thrive in a competitive market and attract members seeking a more focused environment. As technology advances and remote work becomes increasingly popular, these shared working environments are here to stay. In the future, coworking spaces will be crucial hubs for professionals seeking professional infrastructure and support without being tied down to a specific location. In addition, coworking spaces that prioritise eco-friendly practices will attract environmentally conscious entrepreneurs who value both productivity and sustainability.

- prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE
- Joy can only be real if people look upon their life as a service and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness LEO TOLSTOY
- If you reveal your secrets to the wind, you should not blame the wind for revealing them to the trees.

KAHLIL GIBRAN

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1819:** British East India Company administrator Stamford Raffles established the port of Singapore. Keen to attract Asian and European traders to the new port, Raffles directed that land along the banks of the Singapore River, particularly the south bank, be reclaimed where necessary and allocated to Chinese and English country traders to encourage them to establish a stake in the port-settlement.
- **1845:** American author Edgar Allan Poe's The Raven was first published, appearing in the New York Mirror: a melancholy evocation of lost love, it became one of the best-known poems in American literature. The poem, often noted for its musicality, stylised language, and supernatural atmosphere, tells of a distraught lover who is paid a mysterious visit by a talking raven. Its publication made Poe popular in his lifetime, although it did not bring him much financial success.
- **1886:** German mechanical engineer Karl Benz patented the first practical automobile powered by an internal-combustion engine. His Benz Patent Motorcar from 1885 is considered the first practical modern automobile and first car put into series production. His company Benz & Cie., based in Mannheim, was the world's first automobile plant and largest of its day. In 1926, it merged with Daimler Motoren Gesellschaft to form Daimler-Benz, which produces the Mercedes-Benz among other brands.
- **1964:** The British film Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb, a landmark Cold War farce directed by Stanley Kubrick, was released in theatres. The film is often considered one of the best comedies ever made and one of the greatest films of all time
- **2002:** George W. Bush coined the term "axis of evil" as part of his State of the Union Address. He described Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as an "axis of evil" for their attempts to develop nuclear, chemical, or biological weaponry. The term used to describe "regimes that sponsor terror" became exemplary for the terminology used by the Bush administration to promote its "war on terror."



Priyadarshi Nanu Pany

**COWORKING SPACES ARE STILL THE BEST BET FOR A TRIBE OF YOUNG WORKERS WHO DON'T FEEL LIKE GETTING GLUED TO A 9-TO-5 DESK** 

nal. Flex spaces or coworking spaces are still alive, and thriving. There are WeWork's competitors which are still clocking a healthy revenue growth and some even maintaining occupancy rates of around 80 per cent.

What counts is the long-term repercussions of WeWork's bankruptcy and not its immediate shocks. Once valued at \$47 billion, WeWork has been synonymous with coworking just as Google is to search and ChatGPT's name is to Generative AI. Adam Neuman, the former CEO of WeWork was hailed as the poster boy of the coworking industry. He envisioned to build a community of networkers who collaborate in a communal setting as opposed to building brick and mortar working spaces. That's an infectious concept and coworking spaces are still the best bet for a tribe of young workers who don't feel like getting glued to a 9-to-5 desk.

However, developers of coworking or flex office spaces have important lessons in WeWork's debacle. At the time of its bankruptcy filing, WeWork reported a ballooning debt of \$18 billion, higher than the size of the

only staggering, it doesn't bode well for sustainable business.

Previously, WeWork faced a massive financial pitfall in 2019 when its valuation nosedived seven-fold. The company had then sacked thousands of its staff and let go its then CEO Adam Neuman. Overvaluation can bring in the quick megabucks but it doesn't sustain or empower any business. We have seen the fate of an overvalued Paytm stock and the drubbing it took after its listing on the capital markets. Some tech stocks worldwide have faced the carnage in valuations after a cycle of overhype.

WeWork's case should serve as a timely reminder to its peers on the perils of chasing valuations instead of reinforcing business with strong fundamentals. One notable flaw in WeWork's business model was clinching longterm rental agreements with commercial real estate players. The company hoped to finance the deal with collections from members using its coworking spaces. That strategy didn't click as the count of members shrunk when COVID-19 quarantined people to their homes. Fiscal

In any business, success is hard earned. Some startups move up the valuation curve swifter than others. But this phenomenon shouldn't induce others to brazenly compete in the valuation race. What's more important is focusing on business fundamentals and ensuring a steady stream of cash. There is no onesize-fit-all recipe for business success. In a post-pandemic world where the work-worker-workplace equations have changed, the concept of coworking or flex spaces resonates with many. Coworking spaces are a viable option for the top IT companies who are looking to expand into Tier-II and Tier-III locations. With a hybrid workforce, coworking spaces are even more useful for keeping costs down.

The demand for flexible offices or coworking spaces will keep increasing as more young professionals join the workforce and take over decision-making positions within corporations. Globally, the number of coworking operators has grown from just three in 2005 to 22,400 in 2019 and is projected to exceed 40,000 by 2024.

The writer is Founder &

## Oldest champ

CEO, CSM Tech.

Sir, Rohan Bopanna deserves accolades for becoming the oldest Grand Slam champion in the Open Era. The Indian veteran, aged 43, reached the pinnacle of glory at the Australian Open partnering Matthew Ebden. The India-Aussie pair humbled the Italian pair of Simone Bolelli and Andra Vavassori in 🔺 straight sets. This win is Bopanna's first men's doubles Major triumph and his second Grand Slam title overall. Age proves to be no limitation for Bopanna once more. NJ Ravi Chander. BANGALORE

While WeWork's bankruptcy

## Source of stigma



### TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are 101 requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

Orissapost B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Sir, Leprosy, caused by Mycobacterium leprae, persists as a historic ailment, causing disfigurement and nerve damage. World Leprosy Day, held annually on the last Sunday of January, crucially dispels myths, advocates for equality, and highlights its impact on over 200,000 individuals yearly. With more than 600 new cases daily, including 50 in children, the fear and lack of knowledge contribute to over 3 million undiagnosed cases globally. Early detection and multidrug therapy are vital for affected individuals to lead healthy lives. Commemorated by the WHO in 1954, World Leprosy Day urges both local and global decision-makers to eliminate leprosy as a public health threat. This infectious disease affects the skin, nerves, respiratory tract, and eyes, prompting a day dedicated to shifting perceptions, combating societal stigmatisation, and advocating for increased funding. The 2024 theme, "Beat Leprosy," transcends medical considerations, aiming to transform leprosy from a source of stigma into an opportunity for compassion and respect. The WHO's 2021-2030 strategy focuses on zero leprosy, emphasising infection, disease, disability, and stigma, with global and national research playing a pivotal role. World Leprosy Day, a poignant annual reminder, mobilises global initiatives to eradicate leprosy as a public health threat. Organisations worldwide unite, raising awareness, organising events, and discussing symptoms to eliminate the disease and support affected individuals. This day acts as a call to action, advocating for a shift in perceptions, addressing societal stigmatisation, and securing increased funding for leprosy control and elimination.

Collaborative endeavours aim to create a future where leprosy no longer poses a barrier to indi-

viduals leading healthy and dignified lives.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD



## Darjeeling hills to get school service commission

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Jan 28: In order to combat the acute shortage of teachers in the hills of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong in North Bengal, a spate regional school service commission has been constituted for the hills.

The term of the regional school service commission exclusively for the hills will be till January 2028. The seven-member commission will be headed by retired teacher and Kalimpong resident Vijay Kumar Rai, ac cording to a notification issued by the West Bengal Education Department.

## TMC DEMANDS **RELEASE OF CENTRAL** FUNDS DUE TO BENGAL



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 28: The Trinamool Congress Sunday took out a rally in the metropolis, demanding the immediate release of MGNREGA funds due to the state by the Centre

Thousands of TMC activists and senior party leaders took part in the rally that started from Golpark area and culminated at Hazra Crossing, in south Kolkata

Senior minister Firhad Hakim and Rasbehari MLA Debashis Kumar were among those who led the march.

"The youth and students have taken to the streets today in protest against the anti-people policies of the Narendra Modi government, which wants to weaken organisations like the Election Commission," Hakim said. "Depriving a state of its rightful dues is akin to disrespect of the Constitution," he said. The saffron party only knows how to "politically torment its opponents through the ED and CBI", Hakim alleged.



Welcoming the development, the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration's (GTA) chief

executive and Bharatiya Gorkha Prajatantrik Morcha (BGPM) chief Anit Thapa said that the long-standing demand for the hills has been finally fulfilled. 'The commission will work to strengthen The the education term of the system in West Bengal.

regional school The people service commission of the hills have started exclusively for the realizing hills will be till how important it is to

have a cordial relationship with the state government," said Thapa, whose party has a political understanding with the rul-

Another popular leader from the hills, Harka Bahadur Chhetri, also welcomed the decision for a separate regional school service commission for the

> of teachers in the staterun schools in the hills smoother. At the same

## Punjab seeks Israel's help for virus-free horticulture



#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, Jan 28 : With depleting rivers and groundwater, high pesticide dependence, climate risks and unsustainable cropping patterns like paddy growing, Punjab seeks Israel's support to develop agri-infrastructure, minimise production and price risks and provide high-yielding and disease-free horticultural varieties that require

less water. According to Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann rice is not even the state's staple food and its cultivation depleted Punjab's groundwater. Agriculture experts foresee a

major threat to the country's food security if the state's groundwater goes

drv as it has already reached the depths INDEPENDENCE, PUNJAB of 150-200 metres in most places. BOWL OF THE NATION AND Groundwater HAS MAINLY TWO CROP

contamination is another concern in Punjab that is not getting public attention. To reduce farm

distress, as a majority of the growers of Punjab

are small and marginal farmers with declining and fragmenting landholdings, the state government last week explored opportunities to collaborate with Israel as it excels in advance farming technologies.

This collaboration with Israel would benefit local farmers as it would give them access to the latest farming technologies and teach them sustainable practices through centres of excellence.

It would also build on existing partnerships in horticulture projects with the need for a digital revolution.

Also an attempt was initiated o provide farm-to-market tech-

January 23 in Chandigarh, the state's Horticulture Minister Chetan Singh Jauramajra highlighted that underground water was depleting rapidly -- a critical issue that needs urgent attention.

SINCE INDIA'S

HAS BEEN THE FOOD

SYSTEMS -- WHEAT

AND PADDY

FARMING EXPERTS SAY

THAT IT TAKES 3,800-5,000

LITRES OF WATER TO

PRODUCE ONE KG OF RICE

huge value.

Chetan Singh Jauramaira highlighted key areas for collaboration, including digital solutions for pest control, climate and soil monitoring systems. use of Artificial Intelligence

Punjab Agro Industries Corporation Ltd launched last

year that was brewed in Goa, has

failed to make waves despite its

spokesperson told IANS that

during the meeting with Hadas

Bakst, Political Domestic

Advisor, Embassy of Israel,

A Punjab Government

(AI) for crop vields, decision support systems, drones for harvesting and spraying, as well as precision farming software

solutions. The discussion touched upon the potential of yearround cultiva-

tion in greenhouses and hydroponic farming to address the increasing demand for food, the spokesperson told IANS.

The minister focused on extending sensor technologybased irrigation systems and innovative storage solutions for efficient and sustainable farming.

Addressing the need for advancements in citrus cultivation, he proposed the integration of byproduct technologies to manage biowaste effectively.

On an average, a single piece of kinnow mandarin contains 45-50 per cent juice and the rest of the percentage is peel, rag and seeds, which is of no use so far. With the introduction of new machinery at processing units. the management of biowaste of citrus such as extraction of limonin, peel oil, etc., will help a lot.

## **Rahul urges WB to fight against injustice**

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Siliguri (WB), Jan 28: Amidst differences in opposition bloc INDIA over seat sharing with TMC in Bengal for Lok sabha polls. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Sunday called on the Bengal and Bengalis to spearhead the battle against prevailing injustices in the nation.

statement. Rahul's delivered during the ongoing 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' in North Bengal, followed closely after Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Baneriee's announcement that her party would contest the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections independently in the state.

Expressing gratitude for the warm reception in West Bengal. Rahul Gandhi remarked, "Bengal holds a special place. Bengal led the ideological fight during the Independence struggle. It is the duty of Bengal and Bengalis to lead from the front to combat injustice, foster unity, and curb hatred in the present circum-

stances. He emphasised, "If you don't rise to the occasion, people will never forgive you. It is not about any single individual: it is about Bengal showing the way and leading in this fight."

Although Gandhi refrained from directly naming any political entity, his comments elicited diverse reactions from



both the TMC and other political quarters.

'Yes, he is correct that Bengal has historically been at the forefront of pivotal movements, notably against British rule. Mamata Banerjee halted the BJP's momentum in the 2021 assembly polls and played a significant role in forming the opposition coalition. However, it was the Bengal Congress leadership that compromised with the saffron camp in the state,"remarked TMC spokesper-

son Shantanu Sen. Conversely, the BJP state spokesperson criticised Gandhi's remarks as divisive, stating, "It is astonishing how Rahul Gandhi can make such remarks that hint at sub-nationalism. This is unexpected from a leader of a national party." Gandhi's statement coincides with efforts by the Congress leadership to placate Mamata Baneriee, whom they regard as an "important pillar"

The Congress leadership has recently exuded confidence in finding a way forward to resolve the stalemate in the state.

Addressing a gathering in Siliguri, where the yatra paused for the night before resuming from Uttar Dinajpur Monday, Gandhi lambasted the BJP government at the Centre for allegedly fomenting hatred and violence while prioritizing corporate interests over those of

He said, "The Union government has made a mockery of the youths who wanted to join the

of the opposition coalition.

the poor and the youth.

spread across the country. It will serve no purpose. Instead of spreading hatred, we have to work towards spreading love and justice for our vouths. The Union government is working only for big corporations and not for the poor and the youth,' he said in a statement.

Accusing the BJP and RSS of propagating hatred and violence. Gandhi underscored the essence of the yatra, stating, "The word 'Nyay'(justice) has been attached to the yatra because injustice prevails across the country."

"We aspire for an India where We want an India where hard work is honoured. Today, how-

to proceed to Islampur in Uttar Dinajpur district before entering Bihar in the afternoon.

The yatra had entered Bengal on Wednesday from Assam and had traversed through Cooch Behar district before a two-day recess

The yatra is scheduled to travel 6,713 km over 67 days, traversing 110 districts across 15 states before concluding in Mumbai March 20 or 21

armed forces by introducing the Agniveer (Agnipath) scheme, a short-term recruitment scheme for the armed forces.'

"Hatred and violence are being

even the poorest can dream big and realise their aspirations. ever, Indian youth struggle to secure employment," he added.

On Monday, the yatra is set

ing Trinamool Congress in the hills.

time, the school boards January 2028 in the hills will be able to operate with bigger autonomy," Chhetri said. Currently, there are around 1,000 primary schools, 300 junior high schools and 700 high schools

hills. "This will make the process of appointment

## 10.77L ration cards

**Punjab** restores

#### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, Jan 28: Ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, the Punjab government announced restoration of 10.77 lakh ration cards to enable their holders to avail the benefits of the ration being supplied under the Public Distribution System (PDS).

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, here.

The Chief Minister told the media that these cards were earlier deleted during the verification process. However, keeping in view the larger public interest, the Cabinet has decided to restore these cards.

As per this decision all these beneficiaries will be able to derive the benefits of

RATION CARD

the PDS and door to delivery of ration schemes being started by the state government The Cabinet also gave green signal to

a new transfer policy for the teachers. This policy has been streamlined to ensure the teachers contribute zealously in the teaching works rather than running pillar to post for their

transfers. This policy facilitates teachers, having family members suffering from chronic diseases, to apply for the transfer throughout the year to take care of their families. The Cabinet also gave nod to extend CM Di Yogshala

2.2702000

THE CABINET ALSO GAVE GREEN SIGNAL TO A NEW TRANSFER POLICY FOR THE TEACHERS THIS POLICY HAS BEEN STREAMLINED TO ENSURE THE **TEACHERS CONTRIBUTE** ZEALOUSLY IN THE TEACHING WORKS RATHER THAN RUNNING PILLAR TO POST FOR THEIR TRANSFERS

campaign to 15 more districts - Barnala, Faridkot, Fatehgarh Sahib, Ferozepur, Fazilka, Gurdaspur, Kapurthala, Mansa, Moga, Sri Muktsar Sahib, Pathankot, Rupnagar, SBS Nagar, Tarn Taran, and Malerkotla

This health-oriented initiative is already getting massive response after its launch in

nine cities of the state under Phase I. With this pro-people initiative, the scheme will now cover the entire state so approval was given for recruitment of addi-

tional trainers and other staff for the scheme.

Also a nod was accorded to enhance the financial assistance to ex-servicemen and their widows who are above 65 years and took part

in World Warl and World War Il but were sent home without any pensionary benefits. Now their pension hiked from ₹6,000 to ₹10,000.

At present, 453 beneficiaries are availing benefits under this policy of the government. This hike will be effective from July 26, 2023.



Pet's groomer Sreyashee Bhaumik takes care of a dog during the inauguration of spa and beauty care salon for the pets in Kolkata, West Bengal PTI PHOTO

nology to facilitate the marketing of kinnow, the state's flagship citrus fruit with an average annual production of over 5 lakh tonnes, mainly in the South Malwa belt, in case of a bumper crop.

Field reports say this year the kinnow mandarin had bumper production but farmers stared at poor income as they fetched an average rate of ₹9-10 per kg, compared to ₹20-25 per kg they got in the previous year when the crop was not bountiful.

This season 47,000 hectares of land was brought under kinnow production. Also the kinnow flavoured gin, a product of

He asked to introduce new patented citrus varieties, rootstocks resistant to pests and the cultivation of new crops like dragon fruit and raspberries.

In the vegetable sector, the minister advocated for the introduction of seedless varieties of melons, single-picking varieties of peas and tomatoes suitable for mechanisation and brinjal varieties resistant to fruit and shoot borers.

## Mann launches dedicated force to check road mishaps

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann named

various prominent personalities, including former president Giani Zail Singh, Congress leader Rajesh Pilot, and actor and comedian Jaspal Bhatti, who died in road accidents

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jalandhar, Jan 28: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann Saturday rolled out a dedicated 'Sadak Surakhya Force' (SSF) to streamline traffic movement and check road accidents in the state.

Addressing a gathering on the launch of the SFF here, he said Punjab is the first state to constitute such a force.

He expressed concern over fatalities in road accidents. According to data, he said, road accidents claim 17-18 lives in Punjab every day.

"More than 500 people die every month and nearly 6,000 people die (in road accidents) in a year," he added.

Mann named various prominent personalities, including former president Giani Zail Singh, Congress leader Rajesh Pilot, and actor and comedian Jaspal Bhatti, who died in road accidents.

He said that 65 per cent of these deaths take place on national and state highways, adding that most of these fatal accidents take place when the presence of police on these roads is minimal.

Mann also flagged off 129 hi-tech vehicles of the SSF. He said SSF personnel will be deployed every 30 kilometres on roads to protect people.

'This is a historic occasion as Punjab has become the first state to launch this ambitious scheme to save the precious lives of people," the chief minister said. It will go a long way in saving the lives of people and streamlining traffic move-



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann with Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav, AAP MP Sushil Kumar Rinku and others during the launch of Sadak Surakhya Force (SSF) in Jalandhar, Punjab PTI PHOTO

ment, he added.

The idea for forming this force did not come overnight but it was the result of a serious review of this serious problem, Mann said, adding when he was an MP, he had raised the issue of road accidents in Lok Sabha. Since then, he said,

it was on his mind to form a force to save the lives of people in the coming days. "Today, my dream has come true," he said. With the constitution of this force, police will be able to discharge their duties far more effectively, the chief minister said. The SSF will be instru-

mental in saving people's lives and now monthly data will be analysed to judge the working of the force. The data will be shared with people every month, he said. Driving licenses of those who repeatedly violate traffic rules will be cancelled. This is the need of the hour, he said in a statement.

The SSF has been launched as a plan for road safety for covering 5,500 km of state and national highways, said Mann.

Patrolling vehicles fitted with specialised equipment to check drunken driving and overspeeding will be deployed on these routes.

These vehicles will also have a complete medical kit for providing emergency treatment to any person in need.

The force will be duly connected with trauma centres to ensure that people get the necessary medical help in time. Punjab minister Balkar Singh, MP Sushil Rinku, Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav and Additional Director General of Police A S-Rai were among those present on the occasion.









Boats sail as confetti explodes in the air during the traditional opening rowing parade, part of the Venice Carnival in Italy



A balloon takes part in the 44th International Hot Air Balloon Festival in Chateau-d'Oex, Switzerland



A man dressed as 'Pepino', a carnival character, dances as part of a ceremony marking the beginning of the carnival in Bolivia



Artistes who participated in the 75th Republic Day parade perform during a meeting with President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi





**P6** 



Snow covers the roofs of the so-called 'Alter Flecken' (old spot), the historic core of Freudenberg with its half-timbered houses from the 17th century in the heart of the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia near the city of Siegen, Germany



Border Roads Organisation personnel along with engineers and workers during the breakthrough ceremony of Nowshera tunnel project, in Jammu & Kashmir. The tunnel is being constructed on Jammu-Poonch highway



A man works to extinguish a blaze in an area of a forest fire in Nemocon, Colombia



People visit a vintage car exhibition in Kolkata









# national



The three parties (JD(U). **RJD and BJP) together** have betrayed the people of Bihar on the issues they spoke about, the promises they made and (they) talked about their political ideology. Kumar's role is big in this ASADUDDIN OWAISI AIMIM PRESIDENT

## **SOREN VISITS DELHI**

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren went on an unplanned visit to Delhi after the Enforcement Directorate issued fresh summons, asking him to join the investigation in a money laundering case. Soren travelled to the national capital Saturday night, triggering speculations





I have been continuously warning about the increasing drug traffic in Tamil Nadu. The Tamil Nadu police department's

'Operation Ganja' to curb drug trafficking, did not seem to have reduced drug trafficking

EDAPPADI K PALANISWAMI AIADMK GENERAL SECRETARY

The government is committed to creating a better justice ecosystem in the country with the cooperation of the judiciary

ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL UNION LAW MINISTER

The ecosystem of corruption and middlemen has been dismantled and youngsters have immense opportunities to realise their potential JAGDEEP DHANKHAR VICE PRESIDENT

## SHORT TAKES

### Body of Delhi ACP's son found

New Delhi: The Delhi Police has recovered the body of the son of an Assistant Commissioner of Police who was allegedly pushed into a canal in Haryana by two of his friends over a financial dispute, officials said Sunday. The main accused Vikas Bharadwaj has also been arrested, they said. The body of the ACP's son was allegedly thrown into the canal by two men, including a clerk working with a lawyer in the Tis Hazari Court, while returning from a wedding, police said. 26-year-old Lakshya Chauhan had gone to attend a marriage function in Haryana's Sonepat Monday along with two of his friends -- Vikas Bharadwaj and Abhishek, police had said Thursday.

## 19 Jharkhand girls rescued

AAP to go solo in Haryana, join INDIA bloc for LS polls: Kejriwal 6

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Jan 28: Delhi Chief Minister and AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal Sunday said his party will contest all the 90 Assembly seats in Haryana on its own, but the Lok Sabha polls will be fought as part of the INDIA bloc.

The Lok Sabha polls are due in April-May while the Assembly elections are due in October."Today people only have trust in one party, which is the Aam Aadmi Party. On one side. they see Punjab, and on the other, our government in Delhi. Today Haryana is seeking a big change. In Delhi and Punjab, people made this big change earlier and now people there are happy," he said at his party's 'Badlaav Jansabha' in Haryana's Jind.

The AAP will contest all the 90 Assembly seats in Harvana on its own, but the Lok Sabha polls will be fought as part of the INDIA bloc, Kejriwal said."AAP will contest on all 90 seats and we will form the next government in Haryana and make it number 1 state in the country," he said.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was also present at the event. Kejriwal said Haryana is looking for a 'big change' as the people of the state are 'fed up' with all the parties that have ruled here. They have tested all the other parties and these parties have only filled their own coffers, the AAP national convener alleged.



Only the AAP can provide round-the-clock power supply and other facilities to people like it has done in Delhi and Punjab, he said. "Can the Congress, the BJP and the JJP do this? They cannot. Only the AAP can do this," Kejriwal said. The Delhi Chief Minister said the rival parties used to say that

if people will get zero bills then they won't get power supply. "There used to be seven to eight hours power cuts daily earlier in Delhi and Punjab, but now the people are getting round-theclock power supply. In Haryana too, we will end your power cuts," Keiriwal said

The BJP-JJP coalition is in power in Haryana and its government is led by Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar. Targeting the BJP-led Centre, the Delhi Chief Minister accused it of using all its might to arrest him and said he is not scared of going to jail.

Kejriwal alleged that 'they have used all its might to arrest him'. "They have left the Income Tax Department, the CBI, the ED and the Delhi Police after me," Kejriwal said.

"I am not scared of going to jail. I belong to Haryana and I want to tell them that do not try to scare a 'Harvanawala'. I am the son of Haryana. I have the blood of Haryana inside me, I am not scared of jail," he added. It seems like the country's biggest terrorist is Kejriwal, he said.

"I am not a terrorist. These people are terrorists who have kept inflation so much high. Today, inflation is the biggest terror in every household. People are not able to meet their household expenses," Kejriwal said.

# at Delhi temple

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: A 45-yearold woman died and 17 people were injured when a stage set up for a religious function at the Kalkaji temple here collapsed in the early hours of Sunday, police said.

The tragic incident occurred around 12:30 am, they said and the deceased has been identified as Tina, a resident of Tughlakabad extension. According to police, a 'jagran' (religious function) was organised at the Mahant Parishar of Kalkaji temple Saturday and around 1,600 people attended it.

The temple management had hired event planners to organise the jagran.

No arrests have been made so far, police sources said. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal condoled the death of the woman and wished for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"The accident that happened last night during a 'jagran' at the Kalkaji temple is tragic. A woman has died, may her soul rest in peace. I wish for the speedy recovery of the 17 injured people," Kejriwal said in a post on 'X' in Hindi.

"I appeal to people of Delhi to take special care of safety standards in any kind of big event and make arrangements in such a way that no untoward incident happens," he added.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (southeast) Rajesh Deo said no prior permission had been granted for the event at the temple.

## 1 dead, 17 hurt as stage collapses OPPN PARTIES ATTACK NITIS



RJD supporters protest against JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar, outside RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav's residence in Patna

The parties

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The Congress, RJD and other parties of the INDIA bloc Sunday slammed Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for 'betraying' the opposition alliance ahead of Lok Sabha elections after he joined hands with the BJP, with some even calling him a 'chameleon' and 'Paltu Ram' for frequently changing sides.

The parties warned that the people of Bihar will

give a 'befitting reply' to Kumar and the warned that the BJP, with his former deputy and RJD people of Bihar will leader Tejashwi Yadav even saying give a 'befitting that JD(U) is all set to reply' to Kumar and be 'finished in Lok the BJP, with his Sabha polls'. The BJP, however,

former deputy and said its alliance with **RJD leader Tejashwi** Kumar was 'natural' and asserted that the Yadav even saying 'double engine gov-ernment' of the NDA that JD(U) is all set would benefit Bihar. to be 'finished in Party leaders also Lok Sabha polls' claimed that the INDIA bloc would

soon disintegrate as the alliance has 'no ideological basis'.

Leaders of the Congress, RJD, DMK, JMM, TMC, CPI(ML)-L and AAP attacked Kumar after the INDIA bloc received a major setback with his stunning volte face, less than 18 months after he parted ways with the BJP and formed the 'Mahagathbandhan'

quently changes political partners, is giving a tough competition to chameleons in changing colours." The people of Bihar will not forgive this 'expert of betrayal' and those who are making him dance to their tunes, he said. Ramesh, however, said the INDIA bloc is strong, and 'we

will unitedly fight against the BJP and all parties like DMK, NCP, TMC and SP will fight it together'

The TMC said Kumar is 'known for his po-

litical somersaults at regular intervals' and asserted that people will respond to such 'opportunism'."It is unfortunate that he has decided to quit the opposition grouping INDIA and is likely to join the NDA. The people will give a befitting reply to such political opportunism. Trinamool

Congress MP Sougata Roy said.

Many opposition leaders like Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said they knew that Kumar could defect."There are many people like 'Aaya Ram, Gava Ram' in the country," Kharge said referring to the expression used for political turncoats. Kharge said if Kumar wanted to stay, he would have stayed.

'Therefore, we already knew

this, but we did not say anything

to keep the INDIA bloc intact.

Lalu Prasad ji and Tejashwi

Yadav ji had already given us

this information. Today, it has be-

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav

said Kumar was a 'respectable'

but 'tired' leader and warned

the BJP that the septuage-

narian did not like to share

come true," Kharge said.

'credit' with allies.



**Ranchi:** As many as 19 girls from Jharkhand, including 14 minors, were recently rescued from various locations in Delhi. This rescue operation followed the arrest of two traffickers from the state's Sahebganj district just days prior, according to an official statement Sunday. The rescued girls aged between 12 and 18 years belong to Borio block in Sahebganj district. Nodal officer of Integrated Rehabilitation-cum-Resource Centre, New Delhi. Nachiketa had received information January 23 that traffickers lured several girls from Borio block and brought them to Delhi, the statement said. Following the arrest of the traffickers, Sahebganj SP Kumar Gaurav sent a team to Delhi with documents recovered from the traffickers' houses, the release said. On the basis of information found in the documents, a rescue operation was conducted and the airls were freed from different locations of the national capital, it stated.

People from different countries take part in a procession on the occasion of the 8th International Conference and Gathering of Elders organised by International Centre for Cultural Studies (ICCS), in Dibrugarh, Assam PTI PHOTO

government in Bihar.

Lashing out at Kumar, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said it is clear that a 'political drama' is being created to divert attention from his party's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. He said it is clear that the Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) and the BJP are 'scared' of the yatra being undertaken by Rahul Gandhi, which is set to enter Bihar.

In a post on 'X' in Hindi, Ramesh said, "Nitish Kumar, who fre-

women can now be seen in im-

portant positions in India."There

is a focus on greater inclusion of

the marginalised sections of so-

ciety. Equally inspiring is the

confidence of the younger pop-

ulation to succeed in their pro-

fessional lives," he said.

## **'Narwekar** to chair panel to review anti-defection law'

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 28: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla Sunday said a committee chaired by Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar has been set up to review the anti-defection law.

Birla made this announcement during the valedictory session of the 84th All India Presiding Officers' Conference here

The anti-defection law, enshrined in the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, was enacted to curb frequent switch of political parties by legislators. It provides for the disqualification of elected legislators from the legislature if they voluntarily switch parties or vote against the party's direction.

However, when two-thirds of elected members of a party agree to 'merge' with another party, they are exempt from disqualification.

Recently, Narwekar ruled in favour of Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena by quashing the disqualification petitions against the Maharashtra MLAs filedby the Shiv Sena faction led by Uddhav Thackeray.

#### The Supreme Court of India Chandrachud said Sunday as the country. Prime Minister Prime Minister Narendra Modi of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled he flagged issues like 'adjourn-Narendra Modi was the chief being presented a memento by Tribes 'is quite low both at the came into existence January ment culture' and long vaca-Chief Justice of India, Justice guest for the occasion. The CJI Bar as well as on the Bench'. 28, 1950. It initially functioned DY Chandrachud during the 75th tions. He also stressed on inalso highlighted the demographic Terming it as a 'momentous ocfrom the Parliament House becreasing the representation of year celebrations of the Supreme changes undergoing in India and casion' in the history of the nafore it moved to the present Court of India, in New Delhi, Sunday marginalised sections and probuilding here. said that women. traditionally tion. CJI Chandrachud said that

JUDICIARY NEEDS TO BEGIN 'DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS': CJI

Child rape cases soar by 96% from 2016 to 2022: CRY analysis

The analysis conducted by CRY revealed a consistent upward trajectory in these rape incidents since 2016, with the exception of 2020. Between 2021 and 2022 alone, there was a 6.9 per cent increase in such cases

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: Child rape cases, encompassing all forms of penetrative assaults, has registered a rise of 96 per cent from 2016 to 2022, according to an analysis of the NCRB data by child rights NGO CRY.

Discussing the potential reasons behind this surge, Subhendu Bhattacharjee, the director of

research and knowledge exchange at Child Rights and You (CRY), said the improved public awareness has led to a higher number of reported cases of sexual offences against children.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The judi-

ciary's ability to remain rele-

vant as an institution requires

it to recognise challenges and

begin 'difficult conversations',

Chief Justice of India DY

He said enhanced trust in reporting mechanisms, coupled with increased accessibility through dedicated helplines, online portals, and specialised agencies, has encouraged vic-



tims and their families to step forward and report such cases. The analysis conducted by CRY revealed a consistent up-

viding a level playing field to

The CJI was speaking at a

function organised by the

Supreme Court on the occasion

of the inauguration of the

Diamond Jubilee Year of the es-

tablishment of the Apex court in

first-generation lawyers.

ward trajectory in these rape incidents since 2016, with the exception of 2020. Between 2021 and 2022 alone, there was a 6.9 per

cent increase in such cases.

under-represented in the legal

profession, now constitute 36.3 per

cent of the working strength of

CJI Chandrachud called for the

inclusion of diverse sections of the

population into the legal profes-

sion, noting the representation

the district judiciary.

In a detailed examination encompassing all forms of penetrative assaults, including those covered by the Indian Penal Code and special and local laws, the overall increase stands at 96.8 per cent from 2016 to 2022, according to the analysis.

In 2022 alone, 38,911 cases of child rape and penetrative assaults were reported, marking a significant increase from 36,381 cases in 2021. The numbers for 2020 were 30,705, and for 2019, 31,132. In 2018, 30,917 cases were registered, while 27,616 cases were reported in 2017. The year 2016 saw 19,765 recorded cases,

according to NCRB data. Bhattacharjee attributed the

> positive trend in reporting to recent legal reforms and policy changes aimed at strengthening laws against sexual offences targeting children. He emphasised the role played by extensive media coverage of high-profile cases and the active involvement of communities and civil society organisations in creating a supportive environment.

> He noted that gradual shifts in societal attitudes toward discussing and addressing sensitive issues like child sexual abuse have contributed to breaking the 'culture of silence'.





international 



Qatar

hosts

### **PTI COULD FACE BAN**

Jailed Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party could be banned if its founder and former prime minister and other top brass are convicted in the cases relating to the May 9 violent incidents and violation of the Secrets Act in the cipher case, according to a media reports Sunday



uote

A bipartisan bill would be good for America and help fix our broken immigration system and allow speedy access for those who deserve to be here, and Congress needs to get it done JOE BIDEN US PRESIDENT

The United States is currently reviewing our Venezuela sanctions policy, based on this development and the recent political targeting of democratic opposition candidates and civil society MATTHEW MILLER

US STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN

AGENCIES

\$40 million.

procurement fraud, confirmed

by Ukraine's Defence Ministry,

will have a huge resonance in a

country beleaguered by Russia's

The fight to root out endemic

corruption remains a major

issue as Ukraine presses its bid

to secure membership in the

tigation, former and current high-

ranking officials of the Ministry

of Defence and heads of affili-

ated companies are involved in the

embezzlement." The embezzle-

ment, it said, involved the pur-

European Union.

nearly two-year-old invasion.

Many agreements have been reached on the border (with India) except for Kalapani. Limpiyadhura Lipulek, and Susta

N P SAUD MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF NEPAL

## SHORT TAKES

### UK to pause funding for UN aid agency

London: The UK is "temporarily pausing any future funding" for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the British government has said in a statement. It came after Israel accused some of the UN agency's employees of participating in the attack launched by Hamas on southern Israel October 7, 2023, Xinhua news agency reported. The country's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said in the statement on Saturday that the UK was "appalled" by the allegations, and the funding for the agency would be halted "whilst we review these concerning allegations".

### **33 killed in** traffic crashes

Islamabad: Separate traffic Afghanistan have left at least 33 people dead and 16 others injured, authorities said Sunday. Ten collisions occurred in the Sorabi district of Kabul province, on the main highway linking the Afghan capital, Kabul and the eastern Nangarhar province, killing 17 people, including two children and four women, said Khalid Zadran, spokesman for the Kabul police chief. Ten others were injured in the crashes and they were hospitalised for treatment, Zadran said.

## **Ukraine uncovers** massive fraud in arms procurement

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was elected on an anti-corruption platform in 2019, long before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022

Both the president and his aides have portrayed the recent firings of top officials, notably that of van Bakanov, former head of the State Security Service, in July 2022, as proof of their efforts to crack down on graft

chase of 100.000 mortar shells for Kyiv, Jan 28: Ukraine's SBU sethe military The SBU said a concurity service said Saturday it tract for the shells was clinched had uncovered a corruption with Lviv Arsenal in August 2022 scheme in the purchase of arms - six months into the war - and payby the country's military toment was made in advance, with talling the equivalent of about some funds transferred abroad. But no arms were ever pro-The announcement of mass vided, the statement said, with

some funds then moved to other foreign accounts. The statement said five individuals had been served "notices

of suspicion" - the first stage in Ukrainian legal proceedings both in the ministry and the arms supplier. One suspect, it said, was detained while trying to cross the Ukrainian border.

The SBU said late Saturday Corruption within the milithat five people have been tary has been a particularly sencharged, with one person desitive issue in Ukraine as it tries tained while trying to cross the to maintain wartime public Ukrainian border. If found guilty, morale and present its case to they face up to 12 years in prison. ioin the 27-nation EU. Defence The SBU said an investigation Minister Oleksii Reznikov was had "exposed officials of the dismissed last September over Ministry of Defence and manvarious corruption cases despite agers of arms supplier Lviv enjoying a solid reputation in Arsenal, who stole nearly 1.5 bilrepresenting Ukraine in its dislion hryvnias in the purchase of cussions with Western allies. shells." "According to the inves-

Although he was not alleged to have engaged personally in corruption, several cases hit the military under his stewardship, one for supplying troops with food, another over procuring suitable clothing for servicemen.

**SNIPPETS** 

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Abuja. Jan 28: West African nations Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have withdrawn from the regional economic bloc known as ECOWAS, their respective juntas announced Sunday, accusing the bloc of "inhumane" sanctions to reverse the coups in their nations

The juntas said in a joint state ment read out on state television in all three countries that they have "decided in complete sovereignty on the immediate withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)," alleging that the bloc has "moved away from the ideals of its founding fathers and pan-Africanism' after nearly 50 years of its establishment.

"Furthermore, ECOWAS, under the influence of foreign powers, betraying its founding principles, has become a threat to its member states and its pop-



ulations whose happiness it is supposed to ensure," their statements read.

Widely seen as West Africa's top political and regional authority, the 15-nation bloc of ECOWAS — formed in 1975 to "promote economic integration" in member states — has struggled in recent years to reverse rampant coups in the region where citizens have complained of not benefitting from rich natural resources.

The bloc's regional court also ruled last year that juntas lack the power to act in place of elected governments on behalf

of their nations. Sunday's announcement is

the latest twist in a series of events that have deepened political tension in West Africa since it experienced its latest of a string of coups — in Niger last year. It also comes as the three nations have formed a security alliance after severing military ties with France and other European nations and turning to Russia for support. The joint statement accused

ECOWAS of failing to assist those three countries in fighting "existential" threats like terrorism — the common reason

**IT'S NOT IMMEDIATELY C** HOW THAT PROCESS OF THE **COUNTRIES' WITHDRAWAL** FROM THE BLOC WOULD BE **CARRIED OUT** 

ECOWAS DIDN'T IMMEDIATELY **RESPOND TO AN ASSOCIATED** PRESS INQUIRY, THOUGH THE **BLOC HAS SAID IT ONLY RECOGNISES DEMOCRATIC** 

cited by their militaries for de posing their democratically elected governments.

**GOVERNMENTS** 

"When these States decided to take their destiny into their own hands, it (ECOWAS) adopted an irrational and unacceptable posture in imposing illegal, illegitimate, inhumane and irresponsible sanctions in violation of its own texts," the statement noted

Rather than improve their situations, the juntas said the ECOWAS sanctions have "further weakened populations already bruised by years of violence.3

## **Clashes erupt** in Maldives Parl

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Male, Jan 28: Clashes broke out in Maldives' Parliament Sunday between pro-government MPs and opposition lawmakers over differences over the approval of four members of pro-China President Mohamed Muizzu's cabinet.

The main opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) decided to withhold parliamentary approval for four members of President Muizzu's cabinet ahead of the voting on the cabinet

Subsequently, pro-government MPs initiated a protest, obstructing the parliamentary sitting from proceeding, according to local media reports.

During the clash, an altercation occurred between Kanditheemu MP Abdulla Shaheem Abdul Hakeem Shaheem and Kendhikulhudhoo MP Ahmed Easa when the former tripped and knocked down Easa.

Shaheem had also sustained injuries on his head when the two parliamentarians fell near the chamber during the scuffle. Minority leader Moosa Siraj had attempted to stop the altercation. Shaheem has now been taken to the hospital, according to the reports. The decision of the opposition MDP and The Democrats' parliamentary group not to approve some members of President Muizzu's cabinet, has led to the ruling party Progressive Party of Maldives and People's National Congress (PPM/PNC) coalition affiliated parliamentarians to disrupt parliament proceedings and enter the chambers of the Speaker, the report added. A video viral on social media shows MPs gathered near the speaker's chair and engaged in a physical altercation

## Three US troops killed, many hurt in Jordan drone attack

#### AGENCIES

Columbia (US), Jan 28: Three American service members were killed and "many" were wounded in a drone strike in Jordan, President Joe Biden said in a statement Sunday. He attributed the attack to Iran-backed militia groups.

They were the first US fatalities in months of strikes against American forces across the Middle East by Iranian-backed militias amid the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, increasing the risk of escalation. US officials were still working to conclusively identify the precise group responsible for the attack, but have assessed that one of several Iranian-backed groups are re-

sponsible. Biden said the United States "will hold all those responsible to account at a time and in a manner our choosing. There was no immediate reaction from Jordan, a kingdom bordering Iraq, Israel, the Palestinian territory of the West Bank, Saudi Arabia and Syria.

US troops long have used Jordan as a basing point, and the attack took place in northeast Jordan near the Syrian border. US Central Command said 25 service members were injured the attack in addition to the three killed

Some 3,000 American troops typically are stationed in Jordan. Jordanian state television quoted Muhannad Mubaidin, a government spokesman, as insisting

## UK says warship repelled Houthi drone attack

London: A British warship, the HMS Diamond, repelled a drone attack on Saturday from Yemen's Houthi group in the Red Sea, British



the attack happened outside of the kingdom across the border in Syria. The conflicting information could not be immediately reconciled. Since Israel's war on Hamas in

the Gaza Strip began, US troops in Iraq and Syria have faced drone and missile attacks on their bases. The attack on Jordan marks the first targeting American troops in Jordan during the war.

Biden, who was in Columbia, South Carolina, Sunday, was briefed by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, national security adviser Jake Sullivan, and principal deputy national security adviser Jon Finer, White House press secretary Karine Jean-

Pierre said. N Korea fired several

cruise missiles: South vious round of cruise missile

### 4 die in shooting

Los Angeles: Four people are dead following what police in Los Angeles characterised as a murder-suicide in the Granada Hills area Saturday. Officers responded shortly before 7 p.M. To a report of a shooting in the 11600 block of Lerdo Avenue and found four people who were pronounced dead at the scene. Investigators determined the shooting was a murder-suicide, the Los Angeles Police Department said. After receiving the call. there was no answer when the officers arrived and knocked at the door, police said.

## Quake jolts Japan

Tokyo: An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 4.8 olted Tokyo, Kanagawa Prefecture and other surrounding areas in Japan Sunday morning, the country's weather agency said. The quake occurred at 8:59 a.m. local time with the epicentre in Tokyo Bay at a depth of 80 km, measuring 4 on the country's seismic scale of 7 in central Tokyo and the eastern part of Kanagawa, the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) was quoted by Xinhua news agency as saying. No tsunami warnings were issued, JMA added.



China allows Philippines to

supply troops at disputed reef

Beijing/Shanghai: The Chinese coastguard said it had made "temporary special arrangements" to allow the Philippines to deliver supplies to troops at a grounded World War Two-era vessel at a disputed reef. The Chinese coastguard has previously deployed vessels to block missions by the Philippines to supply troops on the transport ship, which has become a military outpost at the Second Thomas Shoal, 190 km (118 miles) off the Philippine island of Palawan. In a statement on its official WeChat account late on Saturday, the Chinese coastguard said it had allowed necessary supplies, but also that it would resolutely defend China's sovereignty and maritime rights and interests at the Second Thomas Shoal and its adjacent waters. China, which claims sovereignty over almost the entire South China Sea. points to a line on its maps that cuts into the exclusive economic zones of Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia

officials said. "Deploying her Sea Viper missile system, Diamond destroyed a drone targeting her with no injuries or damage sustained to Diamond or her crew," the Ministry of Defence said in a statement Sunday. "These intolerable and illegal attacks are completely unacceptable and it is our duty to protect the freedom of navigation in the Red Sea."

## 9 Pak labourers shot dead in Iran

Islamabad: Pakistan has sought a comprehensive investigation into the killing of nine of its nationals in a brutal attack in Iran that occurred days after the tensions between the two nations following a tit-for-tat cross-border fire. Nine Pakistani workers were gunned down and three

others were injured by unidentified attackers who opened indiscriminate fire on them in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan province near the border with Pakistan on Saturday. Iran's Mehr news agency reported that "according to witnesses, unknown armed men killed nine non-Iranians in a house in the Sirkan neighbourhood of Saravan city" in Sistan-Baluchestan province. No group or individual immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Pakistan's Foreign Office has demanded a comprehensive investigation into the attack and swift prosecution of those responsible for it.

Seoul, Jan 28: South Korea's military said Sunday that North Korea fired several cruise missiles from waters off an eastern

military port, in the country's latest weapons demonstration in the face of deepening tensions with the United States, South Korea and Japan.

The South's Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't immediately say how many missiles were fired or how far they flew. It wasn't

immediately clear how the launches were conducted, although the North has previously tested cruise missiles from sea assets. The launches were the North

Korea's third-known launch event of 2024, following a pre-

tests on Jan. 24 and a Jan. 14 testfiring of the country's first solidfuel intermediate range ballistic missile.

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula have increased in recent months as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un continues

to accelerate his weapons development and issue provocative threats of nuclear conflict with the US and its Asian allies. The US, South

Korea and Japan in response have been expanding their combined military exercises, which Kim portrays as invasion rehearsals, and sharpening their deterrence strategies built around nuclear-capable US assets.



## Iran launches 3 satellites into space amid tensions

While Iran has not intervened militarily in the conflict, it has faced increased pressure within its theocracy for action after a deadly Islamic State suicide bombing earlier this month and as proxy groups like Yemen's Houthi rebels conduct attacks linked to the war

#### ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, Jan 28: Iran said Sunday it successfully launched three satellites into space with a rocket that had multiple failures in the past, the latest for a programme that the West says improves Tehran's ballistic missiles

The launch comes as heightened tensions grip the wider Middle East over Israel's continued war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip, sparking fears of a regional conflict.

While Iran has not intervened

militarily in the conflict, it has faced increased pressure within its theocracy for action after a deadly Islamic State suicide bombing earlier this month and as proxy groups like Yemen's Houthi rebels conduct attacks linked to the war. Meanwhile, Western nations remain worried about Iran's rapidly expanding nuclear programme.

Footage released by Iranian state television showed a nighttime launch for the Simorgh rocket. An Associated Press analysis of the footage showed that it took place at the Imam



Khomeini Spaceport in Iran's rural Semnan province.

"The roar of the Simorgh (rocket) resonated in our country's sky and infinite space,"said Abbas Rasooli, a state TV reporter, in the footage. State TV named the launched satellites Mahda, Kayhan-2 and Hatef-1. It described the Mahda as a research satellite, while the Kayhan and the Hatef were nanosatellites focused on global positioning and communication respectively

Iran's Information and Communications Technology Minister Isa Zarepour said the Mahda had already sent signals back to Earth

There have been five failed

launches in a row for the Simorgh programme, a satellite-carrying rocket. The Simorgh, or "Phoenix," rocket failures have been part of a series of setbacks in recent years for Iran's civilian space programme, including fatal fires and a launchpad rocket explosion that drew the attention of former US President Donald Trump.

The footage showed the rocket launched Sunday bore the slogan "We Can" in Farsi, likely referring to the previous failures.

The Simorgh is a two-stage, liquid-fuelled rocket the Iranians described as being designed to place satellites into a low Earth orbit.

However, the US intelligence community's 2023 worldwide threat assessment said the development of satellite launch vehicles "shortens the timeline" for Iran to develop an intercontinental ballistic missile because it uses similar technology. That report specifically cites the Simorgh as a possible dual-use rocket.

The United States has previously said Iran's satellite launches defy a UN Security Council resolution and called on Tehran to undertake no activity involving ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons. UN sanctions related to Iran's ballistic missile programme expired last October.

Under Iran's relatively moderate former President Hassan Rouhani, the Islamic Republic slowed its space program for fear of raising tensions with the West. However, in the time since, the 2015 nuclear deal Rouhani shepherded with and tensions have been boiling for years with the US.













# business

REUTERS

sources said.

New Delhi, Jan 28: India is

seeking to distance itself from

its largest arms supplier after

Russia's ability to supply mu-

nitions and spares was hobbled

by the war in Ukraine, but must

step carefully to avoid pushing

Moscow closer to China, Indian

Russia supplied 65% of India's

weapons purchases of more than

\$60 billion during the last two

decades, according to the

Stockholm International Peace

Research Institute, but

the Ukraine war has-

tened the impetus

to diversify its

weapons base.



India's multi-alignment

will continue, to

straddle ties with

**Russia and balance it with** 

the West, but it will

SWASTI RAO | EURASIA EXPERT,

not be an equal

distribution

MANOHAR PARRIKAR

Weapons,

from Soviet or

**Russian-origin tanks to** 

INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE

STUDIES AND ANALYSES

We expect capex on infrastructural projects to continue. aiding the automotive sector. The policy push for green mobility should remain a key focus for the government, encouraging faster adoption of electric vehicles **SANTOSH IYER** | MD AND CEO, MERCEDES-BENZ

## **GAS DEMAND TO RISE 6%: IEA**

**COMMITMENTS NOT** 

MET BY RUSSIA

And there has been more than a

vear's delay in Russia's delivery of

bought in 2018 for \$5.5 billion

minister has said.

parts of an air defence system India

Last year, India and the United

States signed a deal for General

Electric to produce engines in

India to power its fighter jets.

the first such US concession to

a non-ally. They also plan to "fast-

track" technology co-operation

and co-production in areas rang-

ing from air combat to intelli-

gence, they said at the time.

India's natural gas demand is expected to rise by 6 per cent in 2024 with a rise in consumption in fertiliser units, power generation and industrial sectors, according to the International Energy Agency. Following the 7 per cent YoY decline observed in 2022, primary gas supply rose by 5 per cent in 2023, with growth primarily driven by the petrochemical, power generation, refinery and industrial sectors



## **FPI INFLOWS** ₹ best performing Asian money in Jan

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Jan 28: After an extremely stable 2023, the Indian rupee started on a promising note in 2024, as it turned out to be the best-performing Asian

All other Asian currencies depreciated by around 1.4 per cent-4 per cent during the month. The local currency regained its ground against the greenback on the back of foreign portfolio

The rupee displayed remarkable stability against the US dollar in the year 2023, marking the least volatility witnessed in nearly three decades. The local currency experienced a marginal depreciation of 0.5 per cent against the greenback. The last time the Indian unit exhibited such stability was in 1994, when it appreciated by 0.4 per cent.

The stability was attributed to the Reserve Bank of India's timely intervention in the foreign exchange market, both in terms of selling and buying dollars. Market participants said that the timely intervention protected the local currency from weakening further to 84 per US dollar during the year.

2022, one of the largest purchasers of its oil. Halting such trade would push Moscow closer to Beijing, the only other major

currency in January so far by appreciating by 0.1 per cent, despite 2 per cent rise in the dollar index.

inflows, said market participants.

it raises questions if Russia will be able to give us spare parts,' said Swasti Rao, Eurasia expert at the state-run Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. "It is fuelling the diversification.'

India is eyeing French jets for its latest aircraft carrier and wants to make submarines with French, German or Spanish technology, and fighter jets with American and French engines, the sources said.

economy it deals with. "Arms purchase buys you influence," said the retired security official. "By shutting them out you make them subservient to China." Trade with Russia in energy and other areas would help "keep it as far away as

possible from China," added Unnikrishnan, the analyst. Russia's arms exports have largely stabilised since the Ukraine war's early disruptions, which fuelled concerns about India's operational readiness, the officials said, but the fears have not entirely dissipated.

"As the Ukraine war stretches

**CLOSER TO BEIJING** India must walk a fine line in ties with Russia, as the largest buyer of its arms and, since Mcap of 7 of top-10

## FPIs take out ₹24,700cr

Foreign investors have started the New Year with a cautious approach opting to book profits in the Indian equity markets as they touched all-time high levels

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have dumped Indian equities worth ₹24,700 crore so far this month, owing to surging bond yield in the US

On the other hand, they are bullish on the debt market and infused ₹17,120 crore in the debt market during the period under



In terms of sector. FPIs were sellers in auto & auto ancillary, media & entertainment and marginally in IT. and they bought in oil and gas, power and selectively in financial services VK VIJAYAKUMAR CHIEF INVESTMENT

#### Research India, said. On a bullish stance in the debt markets, experts said that the announcement by JP Morgan Chase & Co. In September last vear that it will add Indian government bonds to its benchmark emerging market index from June 2024 influenced the inflow

# **ARMS India pivots away from Russia**

The world's biggest arms importer is slowly turning West as US looks to strengthen ties in the Indo-Pacific region, hoping to contain an ascendant China by weaning the South Asian nation off a traditional dependence on Russia

markets, and markets are likely to witness stockspecific actions during the ongoing earnings seasor

uote

VINOD NAIR HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEOJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Going forward, global market

factors like the

policy rate decisions

of maior countries

will affect the

We see a good demand environment, government spending on infrastructure, the housing sector and

real estate is seeing an upsurge. So, overall we remain optimistic about the overall prospects of our sector BHARAT PURI MD. PIDILITE INDUSTRIES

The Original Equipment Manufacturer trajectory is boding very well for the replacement market ARNAB BANERJEE MD & CEO, CEAT LTD

SHORT TAKES

### Bansal quits Flipkart

New Delhi: E-commerce major Flipkart co-founder Binny Bansal has resigned from the company's board, according to a company statement. The development comes after around six months of Bansal selling an entire stake in the company. "I am proud of the Flipkart Group's achievements over the past 16 years. Flipkart is in a robust position, with a strong leadership team and a clear path forward, and with this confidence, I have decided to step aside, knowing the company is in capable hands. I wish the team the best as they continue to transform experiences for customers, and I remain a strong supporter of the business." Bansal said. He co-founded the e-commerce firm with Sachin Bansal in 2007.

## PNB raises its profit guidance

New Delhi: Enthused by a stellar performance in the



#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The ongoing attacks on shipping vessels by Houthi militants in the Red Sea have not impacted the flow of crude oil to India but freight has gone up due to rerouting via the Cape of Good Hope, Petroleum Hindustan Corporation Ltd (HPCL) chairman Pushp Kumar Joshi said.

India, the world's third-biggest oil importer, gets a bulk of its Russian supplies through the Red Sea. Russian supplies made up for over 35 per cent of India's total crude imports in 2023, amounting to 1.7 million barrels per day.



Longer disruptions at the crucial Red Sea trade route may hurt manufacturing lines of some sectors like electronics, automobiles, chemicals. consumer

## erodes by ₹1.16L-cr PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 28: The combined market valuation of seven of the top-10 most-valued firms eroded by ₹1.16 lakh crore last week, with HDFC Bank emerging as the biggest laggard.

In the holiday-shortened week, the BSE benchmark fell by 982.56 points or 1.37 per cent.

Of the top-10 most-valued firms, Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), Hindustan Unilever, ITC and State Bank of India were the laggards, ICICI Bank, Infosys and Bharti Airtel emerged as the gainers.

eroded by ₹19,173.43 crore to

₹13.93.439.94 crore and that of

State Bank of India plunged by

₹16,599.77 crore to ₹5,46,989.47

In the ranking of the most-

valued firms. Reliance Industries

retained the number one position

followed by TCS, HDFC Bank,

ICICI Bank, Infosys, Bharti

Airtel, LIC, Hindustan Unilever,

ITC and State Bank of India.

crore.

crore.

curity official who recently retired, as inmilitary cluding platforms such as the most advanced Kamov helicopters and Sukhoi and MiG fighter jets, with the added fillip of joint

among

them

senior se-

а

'We are not an aircraft carrier and likely to sign any surface-to-air missile major military with deal systems, make up more Russia," said than 60% of India's Nandan Unnikrishnan, a Russia expert at hardware New Delhi think tank

the Observer Research Foundation. "That would be a red line for Washington." That view comes despite Moscow's offers, described by manufacturing in India.

Russia has publicly urged

India to step up defence ties, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi has turned his focus to domestic production with Western technology, experts and officials said. MAKE IN INDIA

Such efforts would better fit Modi's "Make in India" programme to encourage domestic manufacturing, as he makes a rare bid for a third term in general elections due by May.

India expects to spend nearly \$100 billion on defence orders over the next decade, its defence

most-valued firms

#### There has been no progress on a 2015 deal for India, Russia to jointly make Kamov Ka-226T helicopters in India, with 200 going to its defence forces. Instead, in 2022, India started inducting combat helicopters made by state-run Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd Indian Air Force last year said that Russia had been unable to meet its commitment on delivery of a major platform it did not identify

third quarter, state-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) has raised its profit guidance to ₹7,000-7,500 crore for the current financial year. Earlier, the second largest lender had set a profit estimate of ₹6,000 crore for the ongoing fiscal. With a 253 per cent jump in the net profit in the third quarter, the bottom line of the bank in the three-quarters of FY24 crossed ₹5.230 crore. The bank has revised the earlier profit target of ₹6,000 crore to ₹7.000-7.500 crore for the current financial year, PNB MD and CFO Atul Kumar Goel said.

Russian ships and cargoes are not being prime targets of the attacks at this stage however rerouting of ships around the southern tip of Africa instead of transiting through the Suez Canal and Red Sea has led to ships taking longer voyages, resulting in the shortage of ships and rise in freight charges.

In a post-third quarter earnings call with investors, Joshi said HPCL has tied up crude oil supplies till mid-April and it does not see any supply disruptions.

HPCL meets 44-45 per cent of its crude oil needs on term contracts with national oil companies such as those in Saudi

goods and machinery, **Global Trade Research Initiative said** 

Arabia and Iraq. The remaining is on the spot or from the current market, he said.

"Term crude has not been impacted (due to the Red Sea crisis)," he said, adding the spot imports are on DES basis where the shipping is arranged by the supplier. "The spot supplies too are not impacted.'

HPCL, he said, has "already tied up crude requirements till fiscal year end (in March) and the first couple of weeks of April."

The market valuation of review, data with the deposito-HDFC Bank fell by ₹32,661.45 ries showed. crore to ₹10.90.001.31 crore.

According to the data, Foreign LIC's valuation tumbled by Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have ₹20,682.74 crore to ₹5,71,337.04 pulled out ₹24,734 crore from Indian equities this month (till The market valuation of TCS January 25).

Before this, FPIs made a net investment of ₹66.134 crore in the entire December and ₹9,000 crore in November.

"The rising bond yields in the US is a matter of concern, and this has triggered the recent bout of selling in the cash market,' VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

"The rally in global stock mar-

STRATEGIST, GEOJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

kets was triggered by the Fed pivot which saw the 10-year bond yield falling from 5 per cent to around 3.8 per cent. Now the 10-year bond is back at 4.18 per cent, which indicates that the Fed rate cut will come only in H2 of 2024." he added. Moreover, uncertainty over the

interest rate scenario also prompted them to stay on the sidelines and wait for further cues, before taking investment decisions with respect to investing in emerging markets like India, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director-Manager Research at Morningstar Investment in the country's bond markets in the past few months.

FPIs made a net investment of ₹18,302 crore in the debt market in December, ₹14,860 crore in November, and ₹6,381 crore in October, data showed.

Overall, the total FPI flows for 2023 stood at ₹1.71 lakh crore in equities and ₹68,663 crore in the debt market. Together, they infused ₹2.4 lakh crore into the capital market.

The flow in Indian equities came following a worst net outflow of ₹1.21 lakh crore in 2022 on aggressive rate hikes by the central banks globally. Before the outflow, FPIs invested money in the last three years.

## WORLD'S RICHEST Arnault overtakes Musk again

## **MUSK LOSES \$18BN AS TESLA STOCKS NOSEDIVE LAST WEEK**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

San Francisco, Jan 28: Bernard Arnault, chairman and CEO of global luxury goods company LVMH, has returned as world's richest man as Elon Musk lost more than \$18 billion in his net worth after Tesla stock nosedived last week, wiping over \$73 billion off the company's market value.

According to Forbes' real-time billionaire list, Arnault and his family's net worth grew to \$207.8 billion after a \$23.6 billion increase, passing Musk's \$204.5 billion.

LVMH shares were up over 13 per cent on their last close Friday. The market cap of LVMH reached \$388.8 billion, compared to Tesla's \$586.14 billion market cap.

The 74-year-old Bernard Arnault first surpassed Musk in December 2022.



#### ARNAULT WEALTH - \$207.8BN MUSK WEALTH - \$204.5BN

In December last year, Tesla and SpaceX CEO returned as the world's richest man, recapturing the title from French luxury tycoon Arnault.

With a combined net worth of about \$426 billion at the time, Musk and Arnault had lunch in Paris in June last year. They met at Cheval Blanc, a luxury hotel chain owned by Arnault's LVMH.

Meanwhile, Tesla shares plunged more than 11 per cent last Friday, wiping \$73 billion off the company's market value hours after it warned of slowing growth in electric car sales and an existential threat from

the world's most valuable automaker said its sales growth this year "may be notably lower" than last as it continued developing the "next-generation" vehicle, likely a lower-priced model.

Chinese rivals.

In an earnings presentation,

GIC launches 'Cashless Everywhere'

eneral and health in-surance companies pro-Jude coverage to millions of citizens through health insurance policies. In the event of hospitalisation, policyholders need not pay for treatment out of pocket with a cashless facility where insurance companies commit to covering the treatment costs at the hospital, provided the claim is admissible.

This cashless facility is currently available only at hospitals where the respective insurance company has an agreement or tie-ups. If the policyholder chooses a hospital without such an agreement, the cashless facility is not offered, and the customer has to go for a reimbursement claim, further delaying the claim process.

In order to ease the burden of policyholders who get treated in a hospital not in the network of the Insurance Company, the General Insurance Council, in consultation with all the General and Health Insurance Companies,



is launching the "Cashless Everywhere" initiative.

Under Cashless Everywhere, the policyholder can get treated in any hospital they choose, and a cashless facility will be available even if such a hospital is not in the network of the Insurance Company.

This Cashless Everywhere is subject to: For elective procedures, the customer should intimate the Insurance Company at least 48 hours prior to the admission. For emergency treatment, the customer should intimate the Insurance Company within 48 hours of admission. The claim should be admissible as per the terms of the policy and the cashless facility should be admissible as per the operating guidelines of the Insurance Company.

Speaking on the initiative, Tapan Singhel, MD and CEO of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance and Chairman of the General Insurance Council, said: "It has been the constant endeavour of the GI Council to simplify the lives of policyholders and bring positive changes that benefit them. With this in mind, we are announcing "Cashless Everywhere", to make customers' lives easy. Today if you see only about 63% of customers opt for cashless claims while the others have to apply for reimbursement claims as they might be admitted to hospitals that are outside their Insurer/TPA network. We feel this puts a significant amount of stress on their finances and makes the process long and cumbersome. We wanted to make the whole journey of claims a frictionless process, which will not just improve the policyholder's experience but will build greater trust in the system. This we feel will encourage more customers to opt for health insurance. We also see this as a step towards reducing and in the long run, eliminating fraud, which has been plaguing the industry in a big way and reducing trust in the system.-Overall, it's a win-win for all the stakeholders".











# **Debutant Hartley hurts India** Left-arm spinner claims 7 wickets as India lose first Test by 28 runs

Left-arm spinner claims 7 wickets as India lose first Test by 28 runs



MAN OF THE MOMENT: England players, including captain Ben Stokes, celebrate with Tom Hartley after the dismissal of Rohit Sharma in the first Test PTI PHOTO

Hyderabad, Jan 28: The pushback started by incandescent Ollie Pope (196, 278b, 21x4) was given its perfect conclusion by debutant left-arm spinner Tom Hartley (7/62) whose soul-ripping spell fashioned England's memorable 28-run win over India on the fourth day of the first Test here Sunday.

AGENCIES

India's chase of 231 went horribly south once Hartley spun into India's top-order, igniting a rot that saw India getting bowled out for 202 in the final over of the day. England now lead the fivematch series 1-0.

This is India's fourth defeat in home Tests since 2013 and the approach during chase was in complete contrast to how Pope tackled Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja with a lot of intent. The spin twins have never been lethal on surfaces which aren't exactly dustbowls and England's second innings batting show won't do their reputation any good.

Earlier, Pope's brilliant knock took England to 420 in their second innings, and gave them a substantial lead and genuine hopes of stretching India. And missal as he is one of the betterequipped batter in this batting unit to negate spin. In-form KL Rahul (22) looked

greater pinch with Iyer's dis-

all set for another impact innings, but Root pinned him on the back-foot as the batter attempted a whip on the on-side. The DRS also went against Rahul.

Skipper Rohit Sharma (39) looked in good space but Hartley's guile had him stationed in front of the wicket when the ball thudded on to his pads. Ashwin (28) and KS Bharat (28) stemmed the slide for a while with a 58-run alliance for the eighth wicket. However, Hartley again got the better of them. However, their assiduousness was a marker for some of their top-order teammates but it remained just that.

But for getting into a position from where they can dictate the course of the match, England, resuming from 321 for six, should be indebted to Pope, who ballooned his overnight 148 to 196, before Jasprit Bumrah (4/41) denied the England batter a welldeserved half century.

England's lead was a good 126 when play ended Saturday, but they needed more to give a fight to India. Pope did that in the company of equally resolute Rehan Ahmed (28) and Hartley (34). With Ahmed, Pope added 64 runs for the seventh wicket and then made 80 off 106 balls with Hartley on his side for the eighth wicket.

BRIEF SCORES England 246 and 420 (Ollie Pope 196, Jasprit Bumrah 4/41) beat India 436 and 202 (Rohit Sharma 39, Tom Hartley 7/62) by 28 runs. of the match, leaving his team in a state of frenzy and the oppo-

Jubilant East Bengal players pose at the Kalinga Stadium Sunday after winning the final against Odisha FC

KALINGA SUPER CUP 2024

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: Kolkata football heavyweights East Bengal were Sunday crowned champions of the Kalinga Super Cup after beating Odisha FC 3-2 in the final played here Sunday. Brazilian Cleiton Silva scored the decisive goal in extra time to end East Bengal's trophy drought that had lasted nearly for 12 years. The last time East Bengal had won a trophy at the national level was the Federation Cup in 2012.

Despite both sides having multiple chances to score, neither could convert as the match ended 2-2 after regulation time and also after the end of the first half of extra time.

for 1st Grand Slam crown

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cleiton struck the winner for East Bengal in the 111th minute

Fall was given the marching nents shocked.

Cleiton capitalised on a mistake from the Odisha FC goalkeeper and came up with a neat finish at a crucial juncture of the match, slotting the ball into the bottom-right corner with a left-footed shot.

Odisha FC tried desperately for an equaliser in the remaining minutes but the East Bengal defence was up to the task, marking their opponents and not letting them have a clear look at goal.

East Bengal deserved credit for how they went about their task after they lost Shouvik following a second yellow card of the night. Odisha, though, also had been playing with 10 men from the 69th minute after Mourtada

order following his second offence of the night. The victorious East Bengal team will be nominated to play

in the prestigious Asian Champions League 2 preliminary stage of AFC 2023-24 season. However, it was Odisha FC

PHOTO BIKASH NAYAH

who took the lead when Diego Mauricio scored an opportunistic goal in the 39th minute. OFC went into the breather with a 1-0 lead.

However, the visitors retorted strongly in the second session with goals from Nandhakumar Sekar (52nd) and Saul Crespo (62nd) who converted a spot-kick. However, Odisha FC equalised when Jahouh stepped up to take a penalty and converted it from the spot in the 98th minute.

## SHORT TAKES

## Xavi decides to leave Barcelona

Barcelona: Xavi Hernández won't continue as Barcelona's coach after this season. He said he shouldn't continue as he can't get the team out of a slump. Xavi announced his decision Saturday, minutes after Barcelona lost to Villarreal 3-5 in the Spanish league, leaving the club 10 points adrift of leader Real Madrid. "I would like to announce that June 30 I will cease being the coach of Barça," Xavi said. "As a Barcelona fan, I can't allow this situation to continue, we need a change of course and of dynamics," he added. Xavi aid he made the dec 'several days ago', and the defeat against Villarreal prompted him to make the announcement.

POST NEWS NETWORK

## Odisha eye outright win Sinner subdues Medvedev Magnificent knock by Sandeep Pattanaik

swings game in favour of hosts

Cuttack, Jan 28: A brilliant knock of 150 (276b, 18x4, 2x6) by opener Sandeep Pattanaik and some useful contributions from Anurag Sarangi (70 n o, 92b, 8x4, 1x6) and Biplab Samantray (46, 137b, 2x4) put Odisha in a commanding position at stumps on the third day of their Ranji Trophy Group D encounter against Himachal Pradesh here Sunday



England did do something which

was even unthinkable Saturday.

deep burn in Indian hearts as

they stumbled against a 25-year-

old rookie Lancastrian with a

combined experience of three

international matches on a pitch

that did not hide any demons.

Three dismissals showcased the

travails of Indians on the day -

Shubman Gill (0), Yashasvi

Jaiswal (15) and Shreyas Iver

(13) fell to their own ineptitudes.

All the three showed that they

were indecisive in handling the

turning ball and perished rather

cheaply. India could have felt a

In fact, this defeat will leave a

Sandeep Pattanaik

volved in a crucial stand of 143 runs for the fourth wicket with Biplab. It helped Odisha seize the initiative. After the two fell in quick succession, it was the turn of Anurag to hold the in-

Melbourne, Jan 28: Jannik Sinner stormed back from two sets down to beat Daniil Medvedev in a gruelling five-set Australian Open final here Sunday and in the process winning his first Grand Slam. The

Italian fourth seed was blown off course in the first two sets but recovered to win 3-6, 3-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 in three hours and 44 minutes. The result is a bitter blow for the Russian third seed, who has now lost a second Australian Open final after being two sets up, following his defeat by Rafael Nadal in 2022 Medvedev came into the match boasting a 6-3 winning record against the 22-year-old, but had lost the past three matches. The Russian had played three gruelling five-setters at Melbourne Park and spent nearly six hours longer on the court than Sinner before the final. However, looking fresh, Medvedev was quickly into his stride, unsettling the usually calm Sinner, who was unable to find any sort of rhythm. The Italian, playing in his first Grand Slam final, was broken just twice in the entire tournament in the



## **ODISHA EVES** – **ROUT MIZORAM**

#### POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 28: Twin centuries by Tanmayee Behera (126, 104b, 14x4, 2x6) and Kusum Tiriya (110, 109b, 11x4) helped Odisha rout Mizoram by 301 runs in a match of the Women's U-23 ODI Trophy played Sunday at Thane. The Odisha eves 346 for the loss of four wickets in their quota of 50 overs and then bowled out Mizoram for a paltry score of 45 in 39 overs. Taranna\_ Pradhan (3/12) was the most successful bowler for Odisha.

Both Tanmavee and Kusum literally toyed with the Mizoram bowlers scoring runs at will. The two had a partnership of

more than 200 runs and that was

enough to take Odisha past the

fered some more resistance.



### **Contrasting wins** for Lebrun, Cheng

Mapusa (Goa): World No. 8 Felix Lebrun of France and Chinese Taipei's Cheng I-ching registered stunning victories to clinch the singles titles in their respective categories at the World Table Tennis Star Contender tournament here Sunday. Lebrun lost the first two games before making a magnificent comeback to beat the World No. 7 Hugo Calderano by 4-2 (9-11, 9-11, 13-11. 11-0. 15-13. 11-7) in the men's singles final. Meanwhile, in the women's singles final, Cheng I-ching, who finished as runner-up in the competition last time, had a fairly comfortable outing as she defeated Germany's Nina Mittelham 4-0 (11-8, 11-8, 17-15, 11-6) in straight sets to win the title.

### **ICC withdraws** SLC suspension

Colombo: The ICC board lifted Sunday the suspension of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) with immediate effect. SLC was suspended in November for being in serious breach of its obligations as an ICC member, in particular, the requirement to manage its affairs autonomously and ensure that there is no government interference in the governance, regulation and/or administration of cricket in Sri Lanka. The ICC board have been monitoring the situation since the suspension and are now satisfied that SLC are no longer in breach of membership obligations.

Odisha, who had conceded a first innings lead of 38 runs to the visitors, scored 425 for the loss of eight wickets before declaring their innings. It meant they set a victory target of 388 runs for Himachal Pradesh to win the game. Chasing the huge target. Himachal were 33 for the loss of one wicket, still needing another 355 runs on the last day of the game. The balance has definitely swung Odisha's way as they have a chance to

of the season. Sandeep, who batted with a lot of determination, was in-

nings together. He stitched together two small but useful partnerships with Aasirwad Swain (18) and Harshit Rathod (25) to take Odisha past the 400-run mark. Himachal also did not help their cause by conceding

36 extras, 27 of them being byes. The only wicket to fall in the Himachal second innings was claimed by Biplab who dismissed Ankush Bains (5).

Brief scores: Odisha 138 and 425 for 8 decl (Sandeep Pattanaik 150, Anurag Sarangi 70 n o, achieve their first outright win Rishi Dhawan 3/82); Himachal Pradesh 176 and 33 for 1. Match to continue.

THAT SURREAL FEELING: Jannik Sinner is all smiles as he holds aloft the Australian Open trophy after winning the men's singles final Sunday AP PHOTO

run-up to Sunday's title decider but Medvedev doubled that tally in the first set.

The third set was tighter and went with serve until the decisive 10th game. Sinner put a forehand passing shot wide PTI PHOTO at the end a 31-shot rally, missing out on the chance to earn two set points, but his chance came again and this time he took it to seal the set.

The momentum was now with Sinner and Medvedev, who re-

300-run mark. Minnows in women's cricket, Mizoram, were never expected to win the game. quired strapping for his foot, However, they could have of-

had to fight hard to hold early in the fourth set. However, Sinner duly restored parity.

With the tension mounting, both players stayed solid on serve until the sixth game, when Medvedev dumped a backhand into the net to give Sinner three breakpoints. A forehand crosscourt winner gave the Italian the crucial break and he went on to take his first championship point.



## Indian eves finish 2nd best

#### AGENCIES

Muscat, Jan 28: India lost 2-7 to the Netherlands in the final to finish runners-up at the FIH Hockey5s Women's World Cup here. Jyoti Chhatri (20th) and Rutuja Dadaso Pisal (23rd) scored for India in the summit clash that was played late night Saturday.

Janneke van de Venne (second, 14th), Bente van der Veldt (fourth, 8th) and Lana Kalse (11th, 27th) struck a brace each for the Netherlands, while Sosha Benninga (13th) was the other goal-getter.

For their exemplary performance in the tournament, Hockey India announced Sunday a cash award of Rs 3 lakh for each player and Rs 1.5 lakh each for the support staff.

The Dutch women were up 6-0 in the first half and even though the Indian eves tried to make a match of it in the second, by scoring twice, it was not enough.

Both teams probed for their chances after the start and it wasn't long before the Netherlands found an opening. Janneke van de Venne took a long-range shot which deflected off the Indian



goalkeeper Rajani Etimarpu into the goal to hand Netherlands the lead. Moments later, Bente found herself unguarded in front of the Indian goal and smashed the ball into the net.

The Dutch continued their dominance and scored four more times to go into the interval quite comfortable

India opened their account five minutes into the second half as Jyoti found some space and struck a shot from distance to beat Netherlands' goalkeeper Kiki Gunneman. Rutuja then made it 2-6. After the goal, India had a couple of chances, but could not utilize.

## **Disappointing show**

Cape Town: The Indian men's hockey team ended their tour of South Africa with a disappointing 1-5 drubbing at the hands of the Netherlands here Sunday. Abhishek (39th) scored the lone goal for India while Jip Janssen (10th, 28th), Duco Telgenkamp (16th), Tjep Hoedemakers (21th), and Koen Bijen (35th) were on target for the Dutch side, who are the world's top-ranked team. The Dutch were 4-0 up at half time and the match was good as over for the Indians.

## Panwar creates new world record

#### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cairo, Jan 28: Indian Olympian Divyansh Singh Panwar set a new finals' world record in the men's 10m air rifle and picked up the country's second gold medal in the ISSF World Cup here Sunday. The 21-year-old shot 253.7 at the Egypt International Olympic City Shooting, bettering Chinese Sheng Lihao's 253.3, set at the Asian Games in Hangzhou last year.

Divyansh had shown early form by topping qualification with a world-class 632.4, before bossing the 24-shot final with sensational precision shooting, leaving the silver-winning Italian Dani Sollazo 1.9 points behind. Not only did Divyansh not shoot any score below 10, two of his shots, the fourth and sixth were perfect 10.9s.

"I am happy to win gold after a long time. I had been shooting well in recent times but was missing out on the gold. This will surely give me confidence coming into an important year," said Divyansh after his win.



Gujrathi joins co-leaders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wijk Aan Zee (The Netherlands), Jan 28: Grandmaster Vidit Gujrathi yet again defied the odds to take sole lead defeating overnight leader Nodirbek Abdusattarov of Uzbekistan in the 12th and penultimate round of Tata Steel Masters chess tournament here Sunday. The first super tournament of the year was thrown wide open with Grand Swiss winner Gujrathi's victory.

The Indian is now in a five-way lead going into the last round alongside compatriot D Gukesh, Wei Yi of China, Anish Giri of Holland and Abdusattarov -- who all have 7.5 points apiece.

Giri probably has the best chance with his decent tie-break to annex the crown for the second time running as he takes on tailender compatriot Max Warmerdam. He starts as a huge favourite in the final round but the same cannot be said of other co-leaders.

R Praggnanandhaa drew with Gukesh despite a wild game out of a Nimzo Indian defense. The players fought hard and it looked as though Praggnan and had an edge too at some point but Gukesh thwarted those attempts to steer the game to a draw.

Gujrathi started with the Queen pawn and faced the Ragozin defense. Coming out with an opening surprise, the Indian won a pawn on move 17th and though the technical part remained in the ensuing endgame Gujrathi made sure that it remained under control.

In other important games of the day, Wei Yi defeated women's world champion Wenjun Ju, while Jorden Van Foreest simply blundered in an equal position -( to hand over the full point in a platter to Giri.

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