HERE. NOW

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ପ୍ରଦ୍ୱଥା କାଷା ପ୍ରଥମ କଣ୍ଡା घक्रीन्नना १०१४

୩ରୁ ୫ ଫେବୃଆରୀ ଜନତା ମଇଦାନ, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର

ପ୍ରଥମ ବିଶ୍ୱ ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା ସମ୍ମିଳନୀର ତୃତୀୟ ଦିବସରେ







ଗୌରବମୟ ଅତୀତର ସ୍ମୃତିଚାରଣ ଏବଂ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ ଆକାଂକ୍ଷାର ପରିକଳ୍ପନା

୨୦୩୬ରେ ଓଡ଼ିଶା : ନବଦିଗନ୍ତର ସୟାବନା ଶ୍ରୀ ସୁବ୍ରତ ବାଗଚୀ ଏବଂ ୫-ଟି ଓ ନବୀନ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଶ୍ରୀ ଭି. କେ. ପାଣ୍ଡିଆନ୍ଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ଆଲୋଚନା

ଆନ୍ତର୍ଜାତିକ ଖ୍ୟାତିସମ୍ପନ୍ନ ଫ୍ୟାସନ ଡିଜାଇନର ବିଭୁ ମହାପାତ୍ରଙ୍କ ସହ ବିଶେଷ ଚର୍ଚ୍ଚା

ଆଲୋଚନା: ପଦ୍ମଶ୍ରୀ ହରମାନ କୁଲକେ ଏବଂ ପ୍ରଫେସର ଆନ୍ନେଟେ ୟିମଡଚେନ୍

ମାନ୍ୟବର ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ନବୀନ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକଙ୍କ ଦ୍ୱାରା ସମ୍ବର୍ଦ୍ଧନା ଓ ପୁରସ୍କାର ପ୍ରଦାନ

ପ୍ରଦର୍ଶନୀ ପଡ଼ିଆକୁ ସର୍ବସାଧାରଣ ପ୍ରବେଶାନୁମତି

ସ୍ଥାନ: ଜନତା ମଇଦାନ, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର











www.worldodiaconference.org ଭାଷା ଅତୀତର ଅସ୍ତିଦ୍ୱ **= ଭାଷା ହିଁ ଭବିଷ୍ୟତ**

ଆୟୋଜକ: ଓଡ଼ିଆ ଭାଷା, ସାହିତ୍ୟ ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ବିଭାଗ

leisure



MARSHMELLO TO HEADLINE SUNBURN HOLI TOUR IN INDIA

Grammy-nominated DJ and producer Marshmello is thrilled to headline the Sunburn Holi tour in India. Expressing excitement about returning for the Holi festival, he emphasised the unique energy and passion of the Indian audience, eagerly anticipating performances in Bengaluru, New Delhi, Mumbai, and Pune March 22-25.

STERLING BROWN PREDICTS HIS LOSS AT THE OSCARS

Actor Sterling K. Brown expressed uncertainty about winning an Oscar in the Best Supporting Actor category alongside Robert Downey Jr. on The Graham Norton Show. Despite predicting Downey Jr.'s victory, Brown gracefully accepted his potential loss, praising his deserving talent.



FORTUNE **FORECAST**

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

You are very sensitive, and some people will disturb you peace of mind today. However, getting irritated will only make matters worse. Reflect in isolation what may be at the root of the problem. Ganesha says it is closer to you than you think.

TAURUS

This day you are going to be particularly conscious of your beliefs and principles. You will be very proud and sensitive, and

are not likely to brook any adverse comment or criticism. Anyone who dares to question or deride them will get a fitting response from you. Ganesha, however warns you to be more tolerant of others'

GEMINI You will be filled with concern and sensitivity towards others, and will bestow your blessings upon many. However, being too emotional is not advisable. Your emotions could get in the way of your progress at the work-front. You need to listen to your head over your heart when it comes to professional matters, says Ganesha.

CANCER Ganesha says that it will be a day of challenge. You will be tempted to plunge into a new venture. But there is no need for haste or anxiety in this regard. Pending work will be completed. Business deals and transactions will end on happy note. Translocation due to business or domestic reasons is possible.

LEO

You will be busy on the work front today. It is a good day for those who are selfemployed. Housewives will remain extremely busy with household matters. You will be able to work according to your desire though, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Close members of your familv and friends will take up most of your time today. Students will have to pay more attention to studies as exams are upcoming, and they will have to learn to balance study and free time. Ganesha says today is a good time to buy property. All in all, it is a day when you can afford to relax and let your mind pursue its interests.

Ganesha says today will be a wonderful day and bring forth a breakthrough for you. You shall get to know and learn a lot from top most officials and elderly peo ple. The higher ups in your office will give you good support today. Ganesha warns you to stay away from judicial proceedings or pleadings, as today is not a good day for fighting court battles.

SCORPIO

"It's a dream come true," you may utter these words in surprise today, feels Ganesha. Your palatial home is ready or you may just get the keys of your much desired vehicle. You may have an extended celebration by receiving or giving gifts to your closed ones.

SAGITTARIUS

No wonder, if you feel like you are stuck in a rut. Your energy level and enthusiasm has gone for a toss due to mundane routine. Unfortunately, your stars too seem to be lazy today, and there's nothing on the cards that can cheer you up. Ganesha advises to let the day pass calm ly and wait for a better tomorrow.

CAPRICORN

At times you are very direct in your approach and often end up hurting your near ones badly. Today, you'll bandage some old wounds and make efforts to restore old relationships, says Ganesha. But, your struggle to improve rapport may not be as successful as you want it to be.

AQUARIUS

The cupid may strike you today! The singles may feel the energy and excitement of budding romance. Equally blissful day for the married couples, too, as they will spend quality time with each other

PISCES

Unexpected expenses are likely to crop up today. There are strong indications that you will set out upon a journey or a picnic to some nearby place, without too much prior planning. However, the journey will be comfortable and your travel plans will go off without a hitch. Even if you don't undertake any travel today, you will find yourself poring over the memories of your earlier sojourns, says Ganesha.

ALAYA'S CANDID CONFESSION

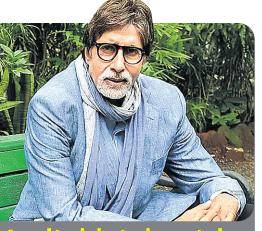
Mumbai: As Jawaani Jaaneman celebrated its fourth anniversary, actress Alaya F, shared insights into her journey in the film industry. During an interview with a media agency, she candidly discussed her initial reservations about pursuing acting, despite having familial ties to the industry.

She confessed that she actively avoided entering the field, observing her family's involvement and thinking, 'Anything but this, I don't want to do it.' Originally aspiring to become a director, her perspective shifted during a directing class that incorporated an acting component. Realising her natural aptitude for memorising lines quickly, she acknowledged possessing a genuine skill in acting.

> vealed applying to an acting school during a summer break and outlining her five-year plan to her family after securing admission. She emphasised the meticulous process of recording scenes, submitting essays, transcripts, and other requirements for the audition. Despite a three-year gap between films due to the pandemic, the *U-turn* actress expressed gratitude for the highs and lows in her career, focusing on maximising every opportunity. Looking ahead to 2024, she discussed her ambition to reach a broader audience by ex-

Recalling her transition, the Freddy actress re-

ploring mass commercial projects and continuing to select diverse roles. Reflecting on her debut alongside Saif Ali Khan, she deemed it one of the best decisions she ever made. AGENCIES



Amitabh takes [.] down memory lane

Mumbai: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan said that he never paid attention to conversations re-volving around how his films do. He insisted that one does their work and the rest will take care of itself. Big B took to his blog, where he wrote about the 1988 film *Shahenshah*, which had a historic advance booking.' He wrote, "*Shahenshah*! ...the film had a historic advance booking which has not been repeated in Hindi film history ...all cinemas were sold out by February 1, 1988—two weeks before the film's release!! ...never before! ...never again!! .. Courtesy: Ef Saikarun and his trend mark #MoDD™..."

The cine icon said that he never had this information. "Goodness this information is heartening to read ...must confess I never knew about it ...and quite honestly had never paid attention to such conversation," he said.

He then shared some wisdom about how focusing on work matters, and the rest follows. "Do your work and that's it ...the rest shall take care of itself ...if it deserves merit, it shall get it ...if it does not nothing in the world shall be around it to justify the effect ..Love and more later," he wrote. On the work front, Big B will be seen next in Kalki 2898 AD, along with Prabhas, Kamal Haasan, and Deepika Padukone.

ment addressing the flak.

clearly that none of the parties got paid for this.'

and it has. A lot of people, who had no idea of cer-

vical cancer are Googling it now, and it is trending

right now. I'm getting a lot of comments and DMs where

women are telling me that they're getting the HPV

vaccine and they're getting their pap smear test

She further mentioned, "I have not done this for publicity. I don't need publicity. I knew very well that I would face this kind of backlash, apart from knowing that I

did this because I did it for a good cause, guys. Aap

I'm being insensitive, I would like to tell you, my mother suffered cancer. She had throat cancer and I have seen this in my house

how bad it gets. Here, I was promoting something for a good

Mumbai: Actress Sanjana Sanghi recently discussed her perspective on the film industry in an interview. She also talked about life beyond movies and her idea of an ideal man.

While expressing her admiration for Priyanka Chopra Jonas and Anushka Sharma, who have openly addressed the challenges, Bechara actress highlighted the industry's tendency to glorify workaholism. She pointed out the potential toll on health and stressed the significance of investing in a life beyond films to enhance one's artistry.

Discussing her views on love, she expressed her belief in love at first sight, considering herself a hopeless romantic. She credited her parents for

Sanjana

says she's

hopeless

romantic

this perspective, as they fell in love at a young age and exclusively dated each other before marrying early. Growing up with a romanticised view of finding one's true love and soulmate from the start, she acknowledged, at 27, that love is more than just attraction; it entails significant sacrifice and commitment.

When asked about the qualities she looks for in a man, she shared that everyone has a type, a commonality among the people they date. She emphasised the importance of feeling safe with the person she's with, stating that without that sense of security, there wouldn't be a second date, regardless of the person's success or good

On the work front, Sanjana was last seen in Dhak Dhak and Kadak Singh.



SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a

manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains

8

3 9 5

2 8

6

2 3

8

3

8

1 8

9 4

6

5

4

9

the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

5

2

6

4

1

5

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

2

3

cause, a cancer which is preventable yet so many women die. In the live session with Hauterfly, I said this very Poonam defends her 'death'

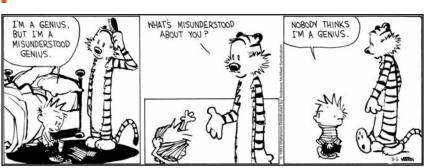
stunt geting me for doing something for a good cause. Cervical can-

She continued, "We did this to raise awareness, logon ne meri death ke baare mein suna toh aap sab log cervical cancer ke baare mein baat kar rahe the. The mo ment you got to know that I'm alive, you guys are now tar-

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



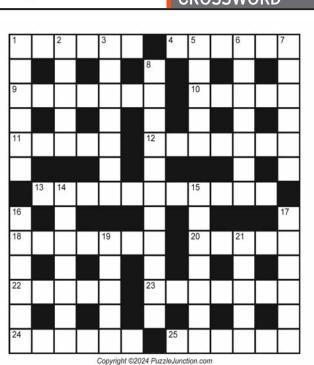
FUN UCSU

cer ke baare mein agar sab baat karte toh mujhe ye sab karne ki

zaroorat nahi padti, and guys, my PR is not involved in this." IANS

CROSSWORD

Mumbai: Actress and model



Across

- 1 Symbolic sports
- figure 4 At a crossroads
- 9 Essence
- 10 Invitee 11 Frequently
- 12 Coward
- 13 Like some
- billboards (3-8)
- 18 Type of exam 20 Shred (3,2)

22 Hockey term

Down

of length 2 Divide

23 Dumpling

25 Phrase

24 Give a pep talk

structure

1 A metric unit

- 3 Growing type 5 Imperial
- 6 Acquired relative
- 19 Stogie 21 Sewing stitch

7 Tummy

crunches (3-3)

8 Skin doctor's

specialty

example

15 Choirmaster's

aim

16 Referee

site

14 "Shmooze," for

17 Egyptian tourist

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



Won't join BJP: Kejri

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal claims BJP is trying to compel him and other AAP leaders to join the saffron party

NATIONAL | P7



Joint strikes

The United States and Britain launch strikes against 36 Houthi targets in Yemen killing many

INTERNATIONAL | P8



Sticking to status-quo

Reserve Bank likely to continue with pause on lending rate in upcoming bi-monthly monetary policy this week

BUSINESS | P9



Gill props India

Shubman Gill scores his 3rd Test century as India set England a target of 399 in the second Test

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Uttarakhand nod

for UCC draft

SHORT TAKES

Dehradun: The final draft of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) was approved by the Uttarakhand Cabinet here Sunday, paving the way for its tabling in the state Assembly whose special four-day

session begins Monday. The Cabinet

Dhami at his official residence. The final draft of the UCC running into 740 pages

passed the UCC draft at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh

in four volumes was submitted to Dhami here Friday by a five-member panel headed by retired judge.

Odisha Budget

session from today

Bhubaneswar: The Budget session of

the Odisha Assembly will commence

Monday. It will be a brief session run-

Finance Minister Vikram Keshari

ning from February 5 to 13 during which

Arukha will present an interim budget

for the 2024-2025 fiscal. This will be the

last session of the Assembly before the general elections due later this year.

Assembly Speaker Pramila Mallik con-

vened Sunday a meeting of the legisla-

tors from all parties to discuss the

Speaker sought their cooperation.

Odisha govt inks

pact with JNU

schedule of the Budget session. The

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha government

signed Sunday an MoU with Jawaharlal

Nehru University (JNU) for the establish-

varsity. The proposed Biju Patnaik Special

ment of a centre for Odia studies at the

Centre for Odia Studies aims at delving

into the leadership, governance and con-

officials said. The MoU was signed

Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit.

between Higher Education Secretary

Arvind Agrawal and JNU vice-chancellor

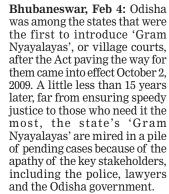
tribution of former Odisha CM Biju Patnaik

BHUBANESWAR | MONDAY FEBRUARY 5 2024



These courts were set up for the speedy disposition of justice, but have failed to do so

PNN & AGENCIES



The Law Commission, in its 114th report in 1986, had proposed that 'Gram Nyayalayas' be set up across the country to ensure access to justice for the weaker sections of the society and reduce delays in the delivery of justice. Odisha rolled out the concept in 2009 to deliver justice at their doorsteps. Currently Odisha has 20 operational 'Gram Nyayalayas' out of the 24 that have so far been notified by the state government. Odisha had received ₹524 lakh from the Centre to set up these centres.

However, the village courts are vet to fully achieve the objectives they were set up for. The



ORE THAN 45K CASES PENDING IN 'GRAM NYAYALAYAS'

fail to deliver justice

OUT OF THE 24 GRAM NYAYALAYAS IN ODISHA, 20 ARE OPERATIONAL

'Gram Nyayalayas', that were expected to reduce the pendency of cases in subordinate courts. themselves now have a huge backlog themselves. Odisha is second to Uttar Pradesh in the number of pending cases in the 'Gram Nyayalayas'

The data available in the 'Gram $\,$ Nyayalaya' portal of the Department of Justice reveals that a total of 45,874, cases are pending in the 'Gram Nyayalayas'. Among them 1,124 are civil and the remaining 44,750 are criminal cases

Many other reasons are also responsible for the poor show of village courts across the country. Sources said that in many places police officials are reluctant to file cases in 'Gram Nyayalayas'. This has led to the diminishing importance of such courts, they added.

Officials also pointed out that the lack of judicial officers are also harming the Nyayalayas. They added that unless the courts are held on a regular basis, the whole purpose of setting up of such Nyayalayas will fail.

"Majority of States have now set up regular courts at Taluka level. Though no state has opposed setting up of Gram Nyayalayas, however reluctance of police officials and other State functionaries to invoke jurisdiction of 'Gram Nyayalayas', lukewarm response of Bar, nonavailability of notaries and stamp vendors, problem of concurrent iurisdiction of regular courts are other issues indicated by the States, which are coming in the way of operationalisation of the scheme," an official stated. He added that people will have to

depend on speedy disposition of justice by 'Gram Nyayalayas'.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Much before Poonam Pandey, I faked my own death to raise awareness about bank loan defaulters

WEATHER CTC 30.2°€ **Max Temp** 20.0°C Min Temp **Humidity** Rainfall

VERY LIKELY



Telangana man holds Odisha minor captive UP man held for spying

It has been alleged that the deceased paid ₹50,000 to free his daughter

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Belpada, Feb 4: A migrant labourer died Sunday at Sulekela village under this tehsil in Bolangir district. The deceased has been identified as Kanhu Mallick. He had recently returned from a brick kiln in Telangana. The deceased's family alleged that Kanhu was frequently tortured by the owner of the brick kiln. They added that the person has kept his 10-year-old daughter as captive. Kanhu is survived by his wife and two daughters.

Other residents informed that the brick kiln owner had demanded a hefty sum from Kanhu to release his daughter. They added that despite Kanhu giving ₹50,000 to the owner, his daughter

was not released. They said that Kanhu was also beaten up badly and forced to leave the place. With no other option, Kanhu had to return to his own village.

LOOKING CUTE: A dog all decked up for the show organised by Odisha Kennel Club at the OUAT Veterinary ground in

The family of Kanhu and other residents of the village staged a demonstration in front of the tehsil office here. They demanded the local administration look into the matter and bring the

minor back from Telangana. According to a source, Kanhu had gone to Telangana along with his family to earn a living. He was allegedly being tortured by the employer and later fell sick. Despite sickness, the owner made Kanhu work for long hours and also did not give him proper

food, other co-workers alleged. Subsequently, the owner released Kanhu, but kept his minor daughter as 'mortgage'. Locals said that Kanhu had sold his only piece land to bring his daughter back.

The accused, working at the embassy in Moscow, was passing on vital information related to the Indian Army and the Ministry of External

Affairs to ISI handlers AGENCIES

Lucknow, Feb 4: The police in Uttar Pradesh have arrested an Indian national working at the country's embassy in Moscow for allegedly spying for Pakistan's ISI, officials said here Sunday.

The Meerut field unit of UP's Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) called Satendra Siwal, who was working as an IBSA (India Based Security Assistant) in the Indian Embassy in Moscow from 2021, for interrogation, a statement released by the ATS said. Siwal, a resident of Shahmahiuddinpur



village in Hapur, could not give satisfactory answers and confessed to his crime during 'questioning', the release added.

Siwal was arrested after an FIR was registered against him at ATS police station here under Section 121A of the IPC (waging war against the country) and the Official Secrets Act, 1923,

the statement informed. The ATS in its probe through electronic and physical surveillance found that Siwal was involved in anti-India activities with the network of the ISI handlers, the agency said and added that Siwal was providing im-

portant confidential information regarding the strategic activities of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian military establishments for money. Meanwhile, the Ministry of

External Affairs (MEA) said it is aware of Siwal's arrest and is working with the investigative authorities in this case.

The ATS said it was receiving intelligence inputs from various confidential sources that the handlers of the Pakistani intelligence agency ISI, through some persons, were luring the employees of the MEA with money to obtain strategically important information related to the Indian Army that is likely to pose a huge threat to the internal and external security of India. The ATS informed that it was keeping a watch on Siwal for some time before grilling him.

MAOIST KILLED -**IN ENCOUNTER**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baliguda, Feb 4: A Maoist was gunned down during exchange of fire between the rebels and security forces in Kandhamal district, police said here, Sunday. The deceased was identified as top rebel leader, Dasuru of KKBN division who carried a reward of ₹5 lakh on his head. The slain Maoist was a native of Sukma district in neighbouring Chhattisgarh. Police also seized some Maoist literature and a .303 rifle from the place where the man was killed. He was wanted in over 22 cases, including murders of civilians and attacks on security forces

Acting on a tip-off, a police team comprising jawans of Special Operation Group (SOG) and District Voluntary Force (DVF) launched a search operation in the forests of Kakerkupa area and adjoining villages under Baliguda police limits, Saturday evening. During the operation,

LACK OF TENANT VERIFICATION LEADS TO THEFTS: COPS

In the last couple of months more than 30 theft cases have been reported from various parts of the Odisha capital and in most incidents these are suspected to be the handiwork of people from outside Bhubaneswar

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb4: The instances of daring thefts and burglaries in housing societies and private residences in secluded areas across the city, is giving sleepless nights to citizens. It has posed serious question marks on the efficacy of the Property Offence Prevention and Detection (POPD) unit-the dedicated cell set up by Commissionerate Police at every

station to deal with such crimes. Experts say the failure of cops in the POPD units - which at present are lying in a state of neglect and disarray three years after their creation - to maintain a strict tenant verification module has resulted in giving a free run to migrant workers, who are turning out to be the culprits in a majority of these offences

In 2021, the City police had launched POPD units with a 'mandate to bring about a curb in robbery, theft and dacoity cases through mandatory verification of tenants' (criminal) antecedent in every police station limit. These anti-property of-



fence units are known to be managed in all 23 police stations here, whose estimated 13 lakh population is on a steady increase.

These specialised units are supervised by ACPs in their respective zones. They are supposed to monitor the property crime graph of police stations comprising inspectors, subinspectors and constables.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), 2022 figures, the Bhubaneswar Urban Police District (UPD) recorded 602 cases of robbery, 373 burglaries and 2,058 thefts in various parts of the City.

But what has exacerbated the present situation is the occurrence of more than 30 apartment thefts in the past couple of

months, while the detection rate has been abysmally low with just a handful of arrests

A senior officer at a City police station, who spoke requesting anonymity, said a large number of culprits in burglary cases have been identified to be migrant workers who engage themselves in several odd-jobs during the day. They use the cover of the night to strike at secluded flats for robbery.

Sample this. Around eight masked miscreants armed with iron rods and knives cut the irongrilled window and barge inside a home under Nandankanan police limits November 25. The owner of the house, Rajesh Chand and his wife were sleeping with their two children in the bedroom. The couple panicked at the sight of the thieves and handed over all

valuables in the house without a murmur. The miscreants tied up the entire family with bed sheets and locked them up in the bath-

room before escaping. Even nearly three months after the chilling burglary, the police are yet to make any headway in the crime. Nandankanan police station IIC Biswaranjan Nayak said the burglary is suspected be the handiwork of a Bangladeshi gang following

meticulous recce. Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Prateek Singh said it is practically impossible for cops to maintain identification details of every tenant in the city. "Often in the aftermath of any major house burglary, the police officers solely rely on the account of locals and informers," he added. More P3



the red rebels opened fire on the cops. Police also retaliated and in the process Dasaru was killed.

Officials said that one of the jawans also suffered injuries on his hand. He was first taken to Baliguda hospital and then Sunday he was shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur. He is currently undergoing treatment and his condition is stated to be stable, Jai Narayan Pankaj, Inspector 🛶 General of Southern Range,

Berhampur, said. Pankaj also stated that the encounter continued for some time. The rebels then fled the spot taking advantage of darkness. A combing operation is continuing in the area, Pankaj added.

Biju Patnaik Spl Centre for Odia studies at JNU



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 4: The Odisha government and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi signed an MoU Sunday for the establishment of the Biju Patnaik Special Centre for Odia Studies at JNU.

With a contribution of the state government of a one-time non-recurring corpus money for the endowment amounting to ₹10 crore, the proposed Biju Patnaik Special Centre aims to delve into the leadership, governance, and contributions of visionary leader and former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik.

It plans to initiate a Master's programme covering various facets of Odia studies, strengthen cultural bonds with the Odisha diaspora, and promote contemporary Odia Literature and Art,

an official release said. The MoU was signed in pres ence of Higher Education Minister Atanu Sabvasachi Nayak, Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena, Development Biju Patnaik Special Centre plans to initiate a Master's programme covering various facets of Odia studies, strengthen cultural bonds with the Odisha diaspora, and promote contemporary Odia

Commissioner-cum-ACS Anu Garg and Odia Language Literature and culture (OLLC) Commissioner -cum -Secretary Sujata R Karthikeyan.

Literature and Art

On behalf of Odisha government. Commissioner- Cum-Secretary Higher Education department Arabind Agrawal and of JNU VC Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit signed the MoU.

The focus areas of this Special Centre include international teaching and research in Odia Language and Literature, ex-

JNU VC Pandit meets CM

JNU VC Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Odisha that have brought visible changes in every sector of Odisha. She said CM has set operative federalism. She appreciated the chief minister's efforts in promoting Odia language and culture, and expand its scope beyond Odisha. Pandit said the Special Centre at JNU will create favourable conditions for promotion of Odia language, literature and culture. Praising Biju Patnaik's role in the Indonesian freedom struggle, she said Biju Babu singlehandedly raised the glory of Odisha to the global level. She also appreciated the efforts of the chief minister to promote regional languages and culture, developing a pan Indian identity

ploring historical maritime linkages of Kalinga Empire with South East Asia, diasporic connections, and promoting contemporary Odia culture through publications and collaborative re-

Other senior officers of HE Department, Odisha and Udavnath Sahu from Adikabi Sarala Das Chair, JNU were pres-



RUN FOR WILDLIFE: Participants run at the half-marathon on wildlife conservation held near Kapilas wildlife sanctuary by Tata Steel, Meramandli in Dhenkanal district, Sunday

Nat'l green metal conference from Feb 6

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 4: The twoday National Green Metal Conference 2024 (NGMC-2024) will start here February 6.

K Murugesan, Member secretary of Odisha State Pollution Control Board and director of department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change said the conference, 'Balancing the Metal Eco Systems: Towards Green Sustainability, is a collaborative effort between the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) and the Biju Patnaik National Steel Institute (BPNSI).

He said NGMC-2024 aims to address the significant challenges posed by unsustainable development and climate change, focusing on the industrial and metal-producing sectors.

This event is a critical platform for industry stakeholders, experts, educators, institutions, and policymakers to deliberate on the future of a more sustainable metal sector.

BPNSI director Pritam S Purkayastha said that the contion that showcases the latest trends in environmental pollution control, monitoring, and the circular economy. Key focus areas will include technology advancement, alternative energy, sustainable mining, circular economy, safety management, green financing, and

nectivity to Balasore and

to Balasore and Bhadrak from

here. The railway authorities

should explore the possibility

of running a train through Bada

and Sana Jamda to these places,"

said Pattnaik. Pattnaik was more

pragmatic when he supported

the move Rourkela to be merged

with the East Coast Railways.

Jharsuguda are not part of the

ECoR. These two places and es-

pecially Rourkela are the high-

est revenue providers to South

Eastern Railways. Why we are

outside ECoR, what is the logic

no one knows," Pattnaik argued.

Education Minister and Juel

Oram, MP Sundargarh and chair-

man of the defence standing

committee for the extension of

the Maurya Express from

he thanked

Pradhan,

Besides,

Dharmendra

"Only Rourkela and

Only Utkal Express is going

Mayurbhanj from here.

issue, Sunday morning. It led to a heated exchange of words between the two when they came out of the house and fought on the street. Enraged, Pradeep stabbed Basanti with a knife.

Basanti sustained multiple

Woman stabbed

POST NEWS NETWORK

town, Sunday.

by hubby; critical

Rayagada, Feb 4: In a shocking

incident, a woman sustained

critical injuries after being al-

legedly stabbed by her husband

at Nadi Sahi locality in Rayagada

Basanti Behera wife of accused

Pradip Behera. Hearing her

screams, locals rushed her to

the district headquarters hos-

pital in Rayagada in a critical con-

dition. There she is currently

undergoing treatment.

The victim was identified as

On being informed, Rayagada police reached the hospital and launched an investigation into the incident. However, the exact reason behind the attack is yet to be ascertained. A manhunt has been launched to nab the accused, Rayagada IIC KKBK

The incident occurred when the couple had a tiff over some capacity augmentation through

injuries on her stomach and both hands. Later, Pradip fled the scene leaving his wife profusely bleeding.

Kanhar said.

E-Summit held at **IIT Bhubaneswar**

Bhubaneswar: Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar organised the 10th edition of E-Summit 'Digital Renaissance: Entrepreneurial Resurgence' from February 2 to 4 with a display of innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurial zeal. The mega annual event marked a decade of fostering innovation, collaboration and growth within the entrepreneurial ecosystem. Odisha and Chhattisgarh, Vedanta Limited President Tapan Kumar Chand

Rourkela to Sambalpur. "When I was the president of RCCI, I made several appeals for this and now finally it has been done. For that I am thankful to both of them," he said the importance of entrepreneurship

joining as chief guest spoke about

Awareness vehicles on road safety flagged off



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela. Feb 4: Two awareness vehicles titled 'Suraksha Raths' were flagged off near the office building of executive director (Works) of Rourkela Steel Plant by SR Survawanshi, ED (Works) to create mass awareness on road safety in the presence of chief general managers and head of the departments.

Speaking on the occasion Survawanshi highlighted the importance of human life in the context of road accidents. He urged everyone to abide by the road safety norms and motivate others to do the same both within the plant premises and outside

for their own betterment, family, friends, co-workers and society

A skit on road safety was staged by K Mohanty, senior technician (T&RM) and his team while a signature campaign aimed at spreading awareness was also undertaken.

Kartikeya Behera., (CRM, SSM & PP), Ravi Ranjan, CGM (Design & Shops) and K K Sengupta, CGM (C&IT) administered a pledge on road safety to all the workers and staff .

The two vehicles were decked up with colourful posters highlighting safety rules and road safety signage.

Staff of various departments also formed human chains aimed at spreading awareness among the people on road safety.

The events were conducted by the safety engineering department under the guidance of MNVS Prabhakar, CGM (Services), Asha Kartha, GM Incharge (Safety) and Abkash Behera, GM (Safety).

RDSC demands merger of Rourkela with ECoR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Feb 4: The Rourkela Development Steering Committee (RDSC) Sunday demanded the enhancement of the railways link and merger of Rourkela with East Coast Railways (ECoR).

Speaking to the media, president of RDSC and also former president of Rourkela Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) Subha Pattnaik asked how much the city would benefit from the enhanced contribution, ₹10.536 crore, in the interim budget which was presented yesterday by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

"State share, ever since the BJP government has come at the Centre, is going up and today it has crossed ₹10,000 crore. But how much Rourkela will benefit from it, one is not sure. Because we are not vocal about it," said Pattnaik.

Recounting his days as president of RCCI Pattnaik said, "At that time we participated in many railway committee meetings and put forth the demands for Rourkela and got results. We



again demand many important projects for Rourkela so that it

Speaking about the Rourkela-Bhubaneswar Intercity Express, Pattnaik urged that the ministry should look into the problems with this particular train. The said express is a single train, which leaves Rourkela early in the morning and reaches Bhubaneswar in the afternoon. And then it leaves the capital city after one and the scheduled time of arrival is

9:35pm, he added. "However, as this is a single train there is hardly any example of when this train has during arrival, it would make an inordinate delay and sometimes it has reached here as late as 1 AM in the night," said

On behalf of RDSC he advocated that "Another train should also depart from Bhuhaneswar instead of the same train returning - which reaches late every day. This will help the passengers as the train would not get late as is happening now.

Pattnaik also insisted for con-

Illegal honey-harvesting cause behind wildfires in Bhitarkanika

checked, could spell disaster for the ecosystem.

The traders do not abide by the norms and also engage locals, lured with some money, in the harvesting work.

This has been going on for several years, thereby posing a serious threat to the national park including its flora and the endangered species residing in it.

Bhitarkanika National Park is spread over 672 sq km and is known worldwide for its rich biodiversity. Out of the total area, 145 sq km is covered by dense forest which is a prohibited zone for common people.

"This dense forest is filled with natural bounties. The area is famous for wild honey and it boasts of a record collection of 480 quintals of honey in a single year. The craze for honey harvesting among traders is the reason behind destruction of large tracts of forests in Bhitarkanika. said environmentalists Hemant Kumar Rout, Ashok Kumar Swain, Prabhu Prasad Mohapatra and SK Chand. Locals demanded that the Forest department should take an initiative to train the local residents in proper and sustainable honey collection methods and protection of bees. This will also help in availability of pure wild honey of Bhitarkanika in the market. This will also aid the Forest department in collecting more revenue and help over 5,000 locals earn their livelihood.

Cong launches portal for ticket distribution

Bhubaneswar: The Congress Sunday launched an online portal through which aspirants can apply for party tickets for the upcoming Lok Sabha and assembly elections in Odisha. AICC Odisha in-charge Aiov Kumar launched the portal 'pragaman.In' at Congress Bhavan here in the presence of former state president Prasad Harichandan and other senior leaders. Speaking to reporters, Kumai alleged that in the prevailing system developed by the BJP government, only influential persons can contest in the elections but a common man cannot contest elections in the country. "Therefore, the Congress has launched the portal so that good people, who want to work for the society, will join politics," Kumar said. "There will be no discrimination in the distribution of tickets through the portal," he added.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Jan 4: Illegal honey harvesting is the major reason behind recurring forest fires in Bhitarkanika National Park situated under Rajnagar forest division in Kendrapara

Notably, there have been as many as 11 cases of forest blazes in Bhitarkanika National Park during the last four years. This has resulted in destruction of hundreds of acres of forest land. The fire has destroyed acres of casuarina and mangrove forest cover.

With the fear over forest fires intensifying as summer season draws near, a probe was conducted to ascertain the factors causing wildfires. The probe indicated the involvement of outside honey traders responsible for the infernos. The recovery of gunny bags and match boxes in the jungle holds proof of their involvement.

The probe suggested that the traders engage locals to collect honey from the beehives. The honey collectors use firebrands to drive away bees from the hives before collecting honey. The smoke and the razing fire frighten the bees forcing them to fly away. Later, the traders pull down the hives and collect the honey. Later, they dump the firebrands in the jungle causing forest fires.

The probe also brought to the fore that four acre forest land in Barunei jungle was destroyed



in forest fires in April, 2018. Collection of honey is done usually during summer – mostly in April and May. Honey traders

major forest produce using fire-

Moreover, unabated use of firebrands for honey harvesting has led to a decline in honregularly visit jungles in Bhitarkanika and harvest the eybee population which, if not

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downtown









COLOURS OF CELEBRATIONS: A story telling session during BhuFesto at IG Park in Bhubaneswar (Pic-1), A trainer takes out his canine at the dog show at OUAT ground (Pic-2), Visitors take selfie at the First World Odia Language Conference at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar (Pic-3), the Commissionerate Police HQs illuminated with colourful lights to mark the first First World Odia Language Conference in Bhubaneswar

5T Chairman reviews projects in Puri dist

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 4: Chairman 5T and Nabin Odisha Kartik Pandian Sunday visited Puri to review the progress of various developmental works in the district and interact with students and general public.

He participated in the Nua-O Program and interacted with students of all colleges of Puri. He discussed with the students on Nua-O program providing a platform for youngsters to showcase their talent and to help achieve overall personality development in addition to their academic achievements.

Pandian emphasised the students to work hard with selfconfidence to achieve success in life. He said that the college transformation projects in the district will be completed by March. He motivated the students to aim high and mentioned about the achievements of some prominent personalities from Puri district like Prasanna Kumar Hota, Retd. Health Secretary, Govt of India; Gopal

Nanda, Ex - DG, Odisha Police; Kishore Jena, Athlete; Jayanti Behera, Paralympic athlete; Malay Kumar Mishra, Ambassador of India to the Republic of Hungary; Sudarshan Sahoo, Sculpture artist; Sudarshan Pattnaik, sand artist

Director, AIIMS Bhubaneswar. He said that so many role models have emerged from Puri district who have all been students from different government

and Ashok Mohapatra, Ex-

schools and colleges. They achieved success because of hard work and determination. He motivated the students to believe in their goals and work hard with self confidence. Pandian reviewed the progress of 650-bed Teaching Hospital, Puri at a cost of ₹309 crore. He directed the officials concerned to complete the work as per timeline.

He also reviewed the progress of Konark Heritage Area Development Project at a cost

Later, he reviewed the progress

of 10 Multipurpose Cyclone shelters at a total cost of ₹20 crore. He also reviewed other Major Temple development projects – Loknath Temple, Puri at a cost of 35.42 crore: Maa Mangala Temple, Kakatpur at a cost of ₹11.85 crore; Alarnath Pitha, Brahmagiri at a cost of ₹9.11 crore; Siruli Mahaveer temple at a cost of ₹6.02 crore; Baliharchandi temple at a cost of ₹5.41 crore; Somnath temple, Nimapara at a cost of ₹4.94 crore.

He also reviewed the progress of other projects of the district including Mega PWS, major roads and bridges and major health infrastructure projects.

Some of the major projects have been taken up after the previous visit of Pandian to Puri district in August 2023, when he attended the grievance meetings and took feedback from the public.

He interacted with the public at Bhudan Field, Talabania at Puri and received the grievances on various issues and assured early resolution.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Assembly budget session from today

TRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Feb 4: The budget session of the Assembly will begin Monday with the address of Governor Raghubar Das, an official said. The session will continue till

February 13.

Finance Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha will present the vote-on-account for the first four months of the 2024-25 fiscal, on February 8 and the appropriation bill for the vote-on-account will be tabled February 9.

Assembly Speaker Pramila Mallik Sunday convened an allparty meeting for the smooth conduct of the short-term ses-

BJP chief whip Mohan Majhi said that the party leaders would raise issues, including 'non-implementation' of central schemes such as Ayushman Bharat in Odisha and the state government's alleged negligence towards tribals.

The government has called a short-term session only to announce some schemes to woo the voters ahead of the twin polls in the state, Majhi said, alleging that many state schemes have been closed down after a few

Meanwhile, Congress legislature party leader Narasingha Mishra alleged that the Centre and Odisha government are playing politics over religion.

"The BJD and BJP are two sides of the same coin," he said.

Besides, the Congress party would raise issues such as "unemployment, lack of teachers in schools and colleges, deteriorating health system among others", Mishra said.

On the other hand, government chief whip Prasanta Muduli said, "We are fully prepared to face all questions and issues raised by the opposition for the interest of the state and its people."

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN,OP

Bhubaneswar, Feb 4: The norm to rent out a house in cities like Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai requires the tenants to produce character verification certificates from their respective native police stations before landlords.

However, the alleged laxity of Commissionerate Police in adopting a practice that scrutinizes antecedent verification of tenants, among whom migrants form a sizeable part, has been proving detrimental to the security of the denizens.

The streak of burglaries in the City is on the rise. Over the past two days, two cases of apartment thefts have been reported under Mancheswar and Pahala police stations, respectively. In an uncanny resemblance with the earlier instances, these flats too were robbed by masked men when the inmates were away.

The burglary at Kalyani Heights under Pahala police limits involved loss of gold jewellery worth ₹20 lakh and ₹15,000 cash, said a policeman. The theft at two homes in Satyabadi apartment under Mancheswar police limits, recorded a sweep of gold jewels worth ₹25 lakh. Moreover, the Nayapalli police in the past month busted two interstate burglary gangs, and made more than 8 arrests.

In both the detections, preliminary investigations revealed a striking similarity among the miscreants who hailed from different states, like Jharkhand, West Bengal, Gujarat and others, who did odd-jobs in the day, and struck at isolated apartment homes during night hours

In addition to this, the arrested individuals were later ascertained to have alleged involvements in over 7 burglaries

and robberies in the city. In the meantime, the POPD



cells depict a dismal state at police stations across the City. Incidentally, officials at many police stations admitted of not keeping an active maintenance of the identification details of the tenants, of whom migrants form a major part.

Juneja Kerketta, SI at Chandrasekharpur police station said in order to tackle rampant house robberies, the police are undertaking active night patrolling from 12:30 am till 4 am. On being asked whether tenants

were required to submit documents for antecedent verification proof with the landlords. who in turn should intimate the police, she feigned her ignorance about the same.

Echoing in a similar way, SI Subhranshu Mohapatra at Nayapalli police station said it is impractical for cops to keep verification record of every tenant. "However, the police keep a close watch on workers engaged in menial jobs, such as construction works or domestic help, to prevent any adverse situation," he

Incidentally, the city has the biggest slum cluster, Salia Sahi under Nayapalli police station jurisdiction, which reports highest instances of crime in the entire City. It has been observed in the past that the informal settlement of thousands of migrants, who arrive from different corners of the state and India in the slum, had been responsible for numerous illegal activities such as hooch trade or illegal gun running.

In a precautionary measure, the POPD unit has also created a slum-based voluntary body, Basti Mitra, which is authorized to maintain identification details of each slum inmates. This apart, the team also keeps a close vigil on freshly released or bailed convicts, and their involvement in robberies or theft.

if any. Salia Sahi Slum Community President, Jaidev Naik said there has hardly been any response whenever the police intervention is sought for initiating a crackdown against criminals. ঽ "This is double-standard," he

The role of the Basti Mitra, which is meant to coordinate with police for preventing any potential crime incident, has turned to be nothing less than just hype, Naik added.



The happiness you give makes ou happier than the happiness you receive

MONDAY | FEBRUARY 5 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR

THE MOTHER



Uttarakhand UCC

JP-ruled Uttarakhand may soon become the second state in India and the first after Independence to have a Uniform Civil Code (UCC).
Goa has a UCC since the Portuguese rule. The final draft of the UCC was approved by the Uttarakhand Cabinet Sunday, paving the way for its tabling in the state Assembly in a special four-day session that begins Monday. A state government-appointed panel that drafted the UCC had submitted its voluminous 749-page report to the Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, 2 February. "It is yet another step towards the fulfilment of a commitment made to the people of the state before the Assembly polls of 2022. The long-awaited moment has arrived..., Dhami said after receiving the draft.

Though the contents of the draft have not been made officially public, it was learnt that a blanket ban on polygamy and child marriage, a common marriageable age for girls across all faiths and enforcing similar grounds and procedures for divorce are among the major recommendations of the five-member panel, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai. Besides, boys and girls will have equal inheritance rights, registration of marriages will be made mandatory and the marriageable age for girls would be increased so that they can become graduates before marriage, while another somewhat radical proposal says couples whose marriages are not registered would not get any government facilities.

The most important clauses could be connected to Islamic practices of 'halala' and 'iddat' which could be banned. Another contentious recommendation of the panel is that the declaration of live-in relationships will be mandatory, though it will be a self declaration in a legal format.

The Scheduled Tribes which constitute 3 per cent of the Himalayan state's population have been left out of the purview of the UCC. This indicates hesitation to deal with the distinctiveness of tribal social customs. One can easily imagine what would be the consequences if a similar situation should arise in Orissa with the ST and SC being well over 40% of the total population of the state.

In a multi-religious and multi-ethnic country like India, a common personal law has always been contentious. Supporters of the BJP have been vocal in their advocacy for a UCC as it is perceived to be interfering in Moslem society. However, in the larger Hindoo fold that includes myriad tribes and castes, bringing in a common law won't be an easy task for any government just because of the sheer diversity within the Hindoo society.

Meanwhile, other BJP-ruled states are planning to use the Uttarakhand UCC draft as a template. Earlier this month, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said: "I am waiting to see the UCC bill of Uttarakhand and once that is done, we will bring the same legislation' with some modifications. The Assam government will introduce a bill to end polygamy in the state during the budget session of the Assembly beginning 5 February.

Similarly, Keshav Prasad Maurya, Deputy Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, has said that "wherever the BJP is (in power) the possibility of bringing UCC has been and will always be there," adding it will introduced "at the right time."

The timing of adopting a UCC in Uttarakhand months ahead of the Lok Sabha elections is crucial. Close on the heels of the Ram temple consecration, the ruling party at the Centre wants to whip up communal passions by raking up the UCC issue. Communal polarisation is the last resort of BJP when it fails on economic and social justice fronts.

UCC is one of the three core promises of the RSS and BJP made decades ago, and the only one that is yet to be fulfilled. The other two - construction of Ram temple at Ayodhya and the abrogation of Article 370 that took away the autonomous status of Kashmir -- have been achieved.

Apart from these religion related issues, the BJP has never offered any tangible pro poor, pro women economic policies that it intends to implement. In today's world, increase in productivity and generation of income by individual households should be considered as primary indicators of economic growth. The PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, first launched in 2020, has again been re-launched in February 2023, valid for a five year period, and is targetted to benefit 80 crore (800 million) 'impoverished population' which needs basic food for survival. That itself indicates a terrible economic environment currently in the country.

WISDOM CORNER

Love is the expression of one's values, the greatest reward you can earn for the moral qualities you have achieved in your character and person, the emotional price paid by one man for the joy he receives

Man is not the sum of what he has already, but rather the sum of what he does not vet have, of what he could have

The highest and most beautiful things in life are not to be heard

THIS DAY **IN HISTORY**

- **1852:** The Hermitage Museum in Saint Petersburg opens to the public. It is one of the world's largest and oldest museums and was originally founded in
- **1869:** The biggest gold nugget in history is found. The "Welcome Stranger" was found at Moliagul in Australia and had a calculated refined weight of
- 1924: The Greenwich Time Signal is broadcast for the first time. The "BBC pips" are 5 short and 1 long tones that are broadcast by many BBC radio stations to mark the precise start of the hour.
- 1985: Portuguese football (soccer) player Cristiano Ronaldo, one of the finest forwards of his generation, was born in Funchal, Portugal
- **2003:** US Secretary of State Colin Powell appeared before the United Nations Security Council to present evidence that Iraq possessed proscribed weapons of mass destruction and posed an immediate danger.

Parrot on plane





Unaccustomed to such slackness the man tries the parrot's approach: "I've asked you twice for a coffee, go and get it now or I'll kick vou.' The next moment, both he and the parrot have been wrenched up and thrown out of the emergency exit by two burly stewards. Plunging downwards the parrot turns to him and says "For someone who can't fly,

FOCUS POLITICS

DESTROYERS OF DEMOCRACY



Ian-Werner Mueller

CRITICS OF MILITANT DEMOCRACY INSIST THAT IF A MAJORITY WANTS TO DISPENSE WITH DEMOCRACY. THERE IS NO SAVING IT

hat should democracies do about parties that use elections and other democratic means to destroy democracy itself? One well-established, but not universally accepted, answer is to ban the party before it comes to power.

But what about individual politicians? Americans are heatedly debating that question now that various legal challenges have sought to disqualify former President Donald Trump from running for a second term, owing to his role in the January 6, 2021, insurrection at the Capitol. The same question is also preoccupying Germans who want to stop the rise of the far right. One proposal would strip individual leaders of political rights while stopping short of banning the far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) party outright.

Such measures are serious restrictions on the political process that should only ever be used as a last resort. But when an individual has a consistent record of agitating against democracy - even after plenty of warnings – disqual-ification from the democratic process is indeed justified. Otherwise, democracies place themselves in mortal jeopardy. As Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels infamously gloated: "This will always remain one of the best jokes of democracy, that it gave its deadly enemies the means by which it was destroyed."

Recognizing this fatal weakness, the political scientist Karl Loewenstein, who left Germany when the Nazis came to power, formulated the concept of "militant democracy," by which he meant a democracy that is willing and able to defend itself through prima facie undemocratic measures. His focus was on party bans, and his ideas proved influential in the drafting of West Germany's democratic postwar constitution. In the 1950s, both the Communist Party and a neo-Nazi party were prohibited.

Loewenstein cautioned that



When an individual has a consistent record of agitating against democracy - even after plenty of warnings - disqualification from the democratic process is indeed justified

his approach amounted to fighting fire with fire. Those who avail themselves of the militant-democracy toolkit must appreciate the risks. A democracy that defends itself by undemocratic means might well end up destroying itself. Just look at Turkey, which has always been far too quick to ban parties on the basis of ill-defined criteria.

Critics of militant democracy insist that if a majority wants to dispense with democracy, there is no saving it; and that if anti-democrats are in the minority, the system's fate should be left to the political process. Either way, they oppose high-handed, quasi-technocratic official measures that might further alienate those who are already dissatisfied with democracy.

These arguments, central to political debates immediately after World War II, have now returned with a vengeance. In the United States, Trump has been removed (provisionally) from the ballot in Colorado and Maine, on the basis of the Fourteenth Amendment. And in Germany, the Basic Law not only provides for party bans but also envisages individuals forfeiting their political rights if they try to subvert democracy.

While four cases have been brought against individuals under Article 18 of Germany's Basic Law, all have failed. But now there is serious talk of applying the same provision against Björn Höcke, the AfD leader in Thuringia, where the party is officially classified as "right-wing extremist" and yet far ahead in polls for elections this fall.

In Germany and the US, a full party ban seems a nonstarter. In America's de facto two-party system, banning the Republican Party would be tantamount to abolishing democracy (even if most of the GOP has embraced Trump's antidemocratic behavior). In Germany, the AfD has gathered so much support - it now polls at around 20% nationally - that a ban would look like a weapon of mass disenfranchisement. This problem highlights a paradox: when anti-democratic parties are small, a ban doesn't seem worth it; but when they have grown large, a ban doesn't seem possible.

Other critics have framed the dilemma even more starkly. Where there is a consensus in support of democracy, militant democracy is possible but unnecessary (West German democracy probably would have been fine even without banning neo-Nazis and Communists). But once pernicious polarization has taken hold, there will be no broad support for militant democracy, because politicians will worry that its tools will be used against them

These points are well taken But those who oppose militant democracy tend to idealize the alternative. They assume that there will be a clean political contest with a decisive result. and that another defeat for Trump would remove him from the national stage. Trump has made it abundantly clear that he will contaminate the campaign with racism and possibly calls to violence. He is likely to claim victory regardless of the election's outcome. If the result is close, he will cry fraud; if it's a landslide against him, he will claim that the whole thing was rigged. It is dangerously naive to believe otherwise.

The same logic applies in Germany. Höcke has been charged with using Nazi rhetoric, he regularly warns of a mixing of cultures, and he promotes conspiracy theories such as the "replacement" of Germans by foreigners, leading to Volkstod (dying out of a people). Having him in a campaign will not leave the political process unchanged; it also sends a message that, ultimately, a democracy is willing to tolerate figures who systematically incite fear and hatred.

Some counter that banned individuals become martyrs. But right-wing populists por tray themselves as victims no matter what, including when they lose elections. Of course no democracy should be casual about fighting fire with fire. But if a candidate has exhibited a clear pattern of antidemocratic conduct over time and doubles down after clear warnings, disqualification is justified, as it is for both Trump and Höcke.

In the US, as in Germany, an individual ban would preserve voters' ability to choose a nationalistic party that wants to permit fewer immigrants, defends traditional conceptions of family, and advocates tax cuts for the wealthy. If that is what voters want, they can still get it.

> The writer is Professor of Politics at Princeton University. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM INDO-FRENCH TIES

Where symbolism meets substance



DK Giri

INTERESTINGLY, FRANCE. **ALTHOUGH A MEMBER OF NATO AS WELL AS EU.** HAS BEEN TAKING, AT TIMES, A **STRATEGIC** POSTURE. **INDEPENDENT OF UNITED STATES**

rench President Emanuel ✓ Macron was the Chief Guest. on the 75th Republic Day celebration of India, stepping in for American President Joe Biden, who had declined the invitation. In addition to growing proximity between France and India, Macron was perhaps reciprocating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's presence at the Bastille Day celebration in Paris, on 14 July last year. Macron's last-minute response to Modi's invitation bespeaks French willingness to stand by India in symbolism as well as substance of India-France bilateralism.

Interestingly, France, although a member of NATO as well as European Union, has been taking, at times, a strategic posture, independent of the United States. That is why it aligns with India's 'strategic autonomy' in her foreign policy. New Delhi may not have common ground with USA and Russia, but it is on the same page with France. Modi-Macron interactions resulted in a joint statement that carries the convergence of perspectives like - condemnation of terror attack in Israel, the need for humanitarian assistance

in Gaza and Ukraine, nuanced differences on the war in Ukraine, concerns over the attack in Red Sea. attitude towards Houthis and Hezbollah's etc.

What is of major interest is the reiteration of French support to the newly-planned India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC) during the G20 Summit last September. Both leaders agreed that IMEC would be of great strategic importance and would significantly enhance the potential and resilience of the flow of commerce and energy between India, the Middle East and Europe. To many observers, it is obvious that the proposed IMEC is an alternative to the Belt and Road Project of China

In the current volatile international political situation, France and India have decided to stand by each other. This is quite an encouraging development for both Paris and New Delhi as there is grave tension from Morocco to Iran, in South-East Asia due to Chinese hegemony. In South Asia, Beijing plans to encircle India by seducing her neighbours. China is 'gobbling up' Maldives inch-byinch, having gripped Nepal,

Bhutan, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Sri Lanka is resisting but as India is jittery, Colombo might also fall for China. For India to resist Chinese expansionism, it needs strong partners and France is proving to be one.

Scanning the agreements arrived at during Macron's visit, there were number of deals done. In principle, France decided to support India in developing top-of-the-line defence platforms such as fighter aircraft engines, nuclear attack submarines. underwater drones, all of which are to be locally made. The idea is to make India self-reliant with a robust industrial base.

For Indian students, good news is in store. President Macron declared that he would like to have 30,000 Indian students by 2030. He said, "When this target is met, I will be the happiest President." There would be special Classes Internationales for Indian students to learn French, necessary for admission into various colleges and universities. Macron said that this was a new initiative called French for All, French for Better Future. France will continue to offer scholarships to meritorious Indian students

to be able to study there. So far, India is the largest beneficiary of French scholarships. Furthermore, France will offer five-year short stay Schengen Visa for alumni of French educational institutions.

Modi spread a red carpet for Macron by receiving him personally in Jaipur and asking his Foreign Minister to accompany Macron from his arrival to departure. Overall, Macron's visit was a success from the Indian point of view as well as for Macron who is trying to re-establish his political popularity after a shaky start to his second term. The reception and the publicity he got from India may stand in good stead for him back home.

While there may be multiple interpretations of India-French relations including the latest visit by French President, which, in fact, is the third one by Macron. France is a solid partner of India. At the end of the day that is what should count for New Delhi in its undeclared rivalry with Beijing.

The writer is Secretary General. Association for Democratic Socialism.

TO THE EDITOR Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and

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

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

Highly deserving

Sir, Veteran BJP leader LK Advani richly deserves the Bharat Ratna. An outstanding Parliamentarian and an astute politician, his contribution to public life and administration has been exemplary. When none thought the BJP could ever bag more than a handful of seats in the Lok Sabha elections, it was Advani's charisma, perseverance and homework that ensured the party steadily rose to a position of strength in the Lower House. Of course, Advani's rath yatra was a watershed moment for the BJP. The nonagenarian spent precious years building the BJP from scratch. But for Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Advani, the BJP would never have grown into a cadre-based party that could win elections on its own. The man's ability to hold the flock together against adversities, and his exceptional organisational skills, are indisputable

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Ethics in politics

Sir, The discourse surrounding morality in contemporary Indian politics is marked by a nuanced interplay of pragmatic realities and ethical considerations. As famously stated by William Clay, "In politics, there are no permanent friends or enemies; only interests are permanent." This sentiment echoes the pragmatic approach adopted by many political actors who prioritise self-interest over ethical principles. The prevailing disillusionment with morality in Indian politics stems from a history of power struggles and compromised leadership, eroding public trust. With a \$3 trillion economy and the future of millions of youth at stake, skepticism among the 1.44 billion people is palpable. The prioritisation of factors like caste and religion over value-based politics exacerbates this disillusionment, with political parties distancing themselves from ethical considerations. Despite these challenges, there is a counter-narrative that emphasises the potential efficacy of ethical leadership. Evidence suggests that leaders upholding ethical principles can attract a committed base and influence lasting policy decisions, offering a glimmer of hope amidst the prevailing cynicism. Moreover, the landscape of morality in Indian politics is dynamic, shaped by shifting public attitudes and increasing awareness about ethical issues. Movements advocating for transparency, anti-corruption measures, and ethical governance reflect a growing demand for accountability and integrity in political leadership. These evolving dynamics, coupled with a more engaged citizenry, present opportunities for nurturing a political culture that prioritises ethical principles.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

BATTLING THE ODDS

AN ACCOUNT OF EARLY ODIA WOMEN WRITERS - KUNTALA KUMARI SABAT, KOKILA DEVI AND BIDYUT PRABHA DEVI

y the early twentieth century, Odia literary landscape began boasting its dense and diverse range of boisterous writers. The only observation, however, about

this thick yield would be that women were painfully sparse in proportion due to no fault of their own. Much like any other part of the nation then, it took while for the women struggle through and, in some cases,

overcome societal apprehensions "to create a literature of their own." Given that those were the tumultuous preindependence times, it was a true ordeal for women to gain access to quality education.

But fierce souls like Kuntala Kumari Sabat (1901-1938), Kokila Devi (1896- 1936) and Bidyut Prabha Devi (1926-1977) couldn't be weighed down by just the degree of societal pressures. They chose instead to harness the tide of revolution and employ it to generate a female-led sensitivity to literature, history and the larger society.

The full-fledged urge for female education began gaining pace once Smt. Reba Roy set up the first Girls' high School in Cuttuck. It is to the credit of this school that legends like Kunatala Kumari Sabat could come to the forefront of women's struggle for literacy and independence. The beacon of Odia resurrection that Fakir Mohan Senapati had lit on the coast glowed even brighter in the spirits of these women. Sabat had multiple experiences at her hand during her stay in Burma and later in Khordha, which shaped her podoctor of excellent caliber did not limit her to the profession. If anything, then it exposed her to the plethora of ailments that women went through in their domesticity. These experiences

then found a reflection in her writings, which narrated the pain of the feminine gender explicitly and further emphasised the need for social revolution. Her works-'Utkalara Nari Samsva"

(1934), "Bharatiya

Mahila Prasanga"

"Biswa Biplabini" (1930), etc are all intricately detailed with the lives of women when bonded by matrimony at a tender age and is laced elaborately with the dual problem of caste and gender discrimination that has

a tenacious grip over the larger society. Moreover, she was even courageous to draft a poignant "Nari Dabi" in 1934, which unclouded the social and domestic locations where

women could

claim justice nu-

in literary history

ancedly. She was indeed ahead of her times for having raised her voice against evils like marital rape and subjugation of females, which rarely make an appearance in Odia literature at that junction

Sabat's reputation is certainly incomparable; however, the same cannot be alleged about many of her predecessors and contem-

Smt. Kokila Devi was one



tributions to literature often went unsung. Being widowed at an early age, Kokila Devi had had her fair share of bitter experiences that served as the foundation to her literary oeuvre. Aspirations for a better world

for women and independence from the clutches of the Britishers were a central theme of all her works. She wrote as if it was her duty to be writing about the plight of women, and that candid attitude in her narration gained her the status of activist who never even quivered once

before expressing the harshness of reality she had experienced. An illustrious example of the same would be her portraiture of "Bilasini". The practicality of life gained supremacy

in her work as she paid no false reverence to leading an idealistic life. ing widow remarriage. her revo lution-

tude unfurled itself and etched the

Sharing the same literary space and time was another lady of letters-Smt. Bidyut Prabha Devi who wrote immensely with a sentimental fervour. The romantic her remained unfettered even at the most distasteful events, and her lengthy poetic expression is testimony to the same. She had a knack for putting together even the toughest of the events in the simplest of words, which echoed the unharmonious nature of the domestic life that women around her lived through

Just like the above two dignitaries, Bidyut Prabha Devi too patriarchy and craved for nothing but creative independence. Her poems fought conservatism and made an effort towards establishing as the greater evil. A

significant portion of her poems were also dedicated to expressing the magnificence of Odisha. In "Sabita" (1947), she exhibited her patriotism in an outright romantic fashion that was idiosyncratic of her.

Beginning from fighting for their own education to voicing against the forces of discrimination. these legendary women spear headed the Odia

literary movement: however, the negligence they are facing today at the hands of the readers and populace is far more brutal than the scrutiny they had faced earlier. This claim stems from the fact that along with a strong urge for a free Odia state and better living conditions for women, these three women, in particular, shared an extremely short span of lives.

Unlike Fakir Mohan Senapati. they did not enjoy decades-long popularity. At first, they were failed by fate and now by the readers who have somehow sidelined their significance while being fastidious about whom to read. In retrospect, writer/historian Sachidananda Mohanty seems a little hasty in referring to them as "Rabati's sisters" and their writings as the "Lost Tradition". While there is some truth to his former assertion. at the same time, there is also a striping off of credits that occurs in ascribing so in the latter. These women didn't let their domesticity obstruct them and immortalised their short lives by creating a storm within the readers, and hence, as readers, we now have the balls in our court to decide the revival of the tradition that they have set forth by not just championing great ordeals but also by exposing the soreness of our own attitudes.

> Research Scholar, Centre For Comparative Literature, University of Hyderabad

Youth take the lead



anguage is not just a vehicle of thought, or a medium of expression, it is the first symbol of racial iden-

Like a perennial river, it continues to flow in succession from one generation to another.

Beginning with the collection of mystical poetries to the Sarala Sahitya and Bhagabata of Jagannath Das, Odia literature evolved and developed into its full glory over generations.

Nevertheless, the historic First World Odia Language Conference has infused new possibilities and spirit in the youth. A new lease of energy has been infused into billions of Odias for the development, protection and propagation of their language.

A matching reflection of the new energy can be found in the thousands of young talents coming from the nook and corner of Odisha who are enthusiastically participating in the World Odia Language Conference in Bhubaneswar. 'Language holds key to the future' is the core message of this language conference.

The conference showcases a wonderful gathering of the young talents who will lead the state in various fields in future.

There are certain standards to gauge the success of every event and institution. The way the youth of Odisha have expressed their enthusiasm, joy and aspirations in various aspects of this language conference, it certainly points towards the creation of a golden Odisha.

In view of the increasing affinity of the youth towards their mother tongue, many exhibition rooms have been put up at the conference. This conference has been organized with an aim to foster love, interest and spiritual knowledge among them through various competitions. A galaxy of writers, thinkers and researchers are giving their opinions in the various events organized at the conference. The representatives of Odisha's youth are also putting forward their opinion, asking questions and discussing various topics with the panellists in the interactive sessions. In the presence of renowned litterateur Padma Vibhushan Dr Sitakanth Mahapatra, Padma Bhushan Dr Pratibha Ray, the recipient of the First World Language honour Debi Prasanna Patnaik, Prof Pritish Acharya, researcher Subas Pani, researcher Bhaskar Mishra, these young students are sharing their information and knowledge, and expressing their opinions at the various

discussions. The special achievement of the First World Odia Language sage that the future of Odisha will be in the hands of right, capable and competent leaders in

the coming days. By blending the history and traditions of Odisha with the language of the digital age, the youths are presenting Odia identity in an appropriate way. The future of language lies in computer keyboards, sophisticated fonts, artificial intelligence and robots. The 'Dome of the Future' is a beautiful representation of how modern applications and technology can be used in the spread of the Odia language.

Here at the conference, the new generation is especially trying to see what can be done for the upliftment of the Odia language through the use of Artificial Intelligence and Robotics.

WHAT THEY SAY

I am really happy to attend the **World Odia Language Conference today. Such efforts** of the state government are commendable. I am grateful to have the opportunity to speak on ancient historical and literary traditions. A language that has ancient roots and distinct evolution is called a Classical language. Odia is the first language of the Indo-Aryan language family in eastern and northern India

SIDDHARTH KUMAR SAHU

This Odisha government opportunity for us to learn about our language, and foster love for the language amongst us. I got a chance to speak on Jagannath consciousness. Shri Jagannath is the symbol of all consciousness. Mahaprabhu is the icon of Odia race and its

SATYABRATA DAS UTKAL UNIVERSIT

The First World Odia Language Conference has become possible due to the efforts of hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik. Ancient and medieval Odia literature has a long history, speciality and peculiarities. It has perfectly described art, culture and nature, and enriched Odia literature. The description of Jagannath culture in the medieval literature is a testimony to the love and affection of Odias towards their language

PRATIBHA PARIDA | CAPITAL HIGH SCHOOL, BHUBANESWAR

First World Odia Language Conference: Day III (Feb 5)

HALL-1: (PLENARY HALL) ADIKABI SARALA DAS HALL

Talk: Prof. Arlo Griffiths

Talk: Prof. Annette Schmiedchen (10.45 -11.30 am)

(10.00 - 10.45 am)

- Odisha@2036: A Space For Tomorrow (Part-1) (11.30 am - 2.00 pm) Odia@2036: A Space For
- Tomorrow (Part II) & Valedictory Function (3.00 - 5.30 pm)

HALL-2: ATIBADI JAGANNATH DAS HALL

Odia as Language in IT Age: The Opportunities and Way Forward (11.30 am - 2.00 pm)

HALL-3: KABI SAMRAT UPENDRA BHANJA HALL

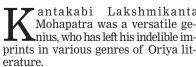
Culture and Heritage: The Soft Power of the State (11.30 am - 2.00 pm)

HALL-4: BYASAKABI

- FAKIR MOHAN SENAPATI HALL Translation: From Odia and into Odia
- (11.30 am 2.00 pm) **HALL-5: PRAKRUTI KABI GANGADHAR**
- Odia as a Language of Science (11.30 am - 2.00 pm)

MEHER HALL

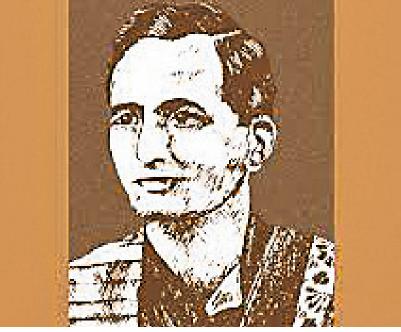
Kantakabi: The poet of Odisha's State Song antakabi Lakshmikanta the reader and makes one forget the



A leading freedom fighter and a great nationalist poet of rare caliber, Lakshmikanta's immortal patriotic songs were a perennial source of inspiration for the people of Orissa during the movement for a separate state of Orissa and the freedom struggle of India. He tried his hand at nearly all forms of literature - drama, parody, poetry, short story, novel.. you name it. His writings were characterised by an indomitable nationalistic spirit, a strong sense of humour and exquisite craftsmanship.

As a musician and an actor, he also contributed enormously to the rich tradition of the performing arts in Orissa (Odisha). Lakshmikanta, popularly known as 'Kantakabi' in the state, occupies a unique place in the socio-political-cultural life of Odisha. He made a significant contribution to Odia literature at a time when the very existence of the Odia language was under threat due to the conspiracies hatched by the neighboring states. Neither Odisha nor Odia had an independent identity then. But Odias were gradually awakened and provoked to react sharply to the unjust domination of the neighboring states through the fiery writings of the early nationalists.

The political movement for a separate Orissa province gained momentum through the tireless efforts of 'Utkala Sammilani'. Kantakabi made an immense contribution to Odia literature during this crucial phase. His composition, 'Bande Utkala Janani' was adopted as the welcome song at the Balasore session of the 'Utkal Sammilani'. The



distinguished guests on that session, Utkalamani Gopabandhu Das and Utkala Gauraba Madhusudan Das, praised the young poet highly for having penned such a powerful patriotic song. Bande Utkala' and other popular patriotic songs like 'Koti Koti Kanthe Aji' and 'Udaee Nishana Bajai Bheri' written by Laxmikanta stirred the souls of millions of Odias during their long, twopronged battle - one against the domination of the neighboring states and for an independent Odia identity, language, culture and province and the other for the freedom of India. Kantakabi contributed immensely to both struggles through his powerful writings.

 $A \ multi-faceted \ personality, \breve{K} antakabi$ dabbled in almost all genres of litera-

ture and achieved excellence of the highest order in each of them, which is a rarity. But the one piece of writing that has immortalised him is 'Bande Utkala Janani', which has attained the status of the state-song of Odisha by the people of the state. His epoch-making short story 'Buddha Shankhari' ('The Old Bangle Seller') leaves a deep imprint in the hearts of the readers. The bangle-seller's character remains, to this day, one of the finest creations in the history of Odia fiction. Even his unfinished novel 'Kana Mamu' ('One eyed Uncle') has become a landmark in the history of Odia novels. Each word of his magnum opus 'Jeevan Sangeeta' (Songs of the Soul), the outburst of a bleeding heart, finds resonance in the heart of agonies of life.

Far from being dreamy-eyed, he discovers new dimensions of reality in

'Jeevan Sangeeta'. That is why Kantakabi's songs are a source of inspiration for somebody who has lost all hope in life and gives him immense strength to face its challenges.

Kantakabi founded a literary journal named 'Dagara,' which was not only regarded highly by the contemporary intelligentsia but also adored by common readers for its unique style of writing. This distinguished man of letters was a prolific writer in English too. He once wrote a drama in English for 'The Observer' on request. A French lady was so moved by his story 'Music of the Whistle' published in 'Current Affairs' that she took it upon herself to translate it into French. He himself translated his masterpiece, 'Jeevan Sangeeta' (Songs of the Soul) into English in the forties, but it was published by the Kantakabi Centenary Committee only in 1988 - a full 35 years after his death.

Kantakabi was at once a creative writer and a critic. His caustic criticism of erring politicians and despotic feudal chiefs earned him an awe-inspiring reputation. His creative writings. on the other hand, were expressions of his free spirit unencumbered by egotism. Apart from his bountiful contribution to Odia literature, Kantakabi's family also actively participated in the freedom movement. His sister Kokila Devi, brothers Sitakanta and Kamalakanta, two sons Nityananda and Gour Chandra all participated in different phases of the freedom struggle and courted arrest time and again.

Born to Radhamani Devi and Choudhury Bhagabat Prasad Samantaray Mahapatra as their eldest son on 9th December 1888 at Dhuanpatria lane of Cuttack city, Kantakabi breathed his last on 24th February 1953. His death was mourned by legions of his admirers. His father Bhagabat Prasad was also a great nationalistic leader, who was elected to the Orissa-Bihar Legislative Council four times and served as its Deputy Speaker for two terms. As a social reformer, Bhagabat Prasad played a significant role in the eradication of the dowry system and the reduction of wasteful wedding expenses.

Kantakabi's mother, Radhamani was a voracious reader and memorised the Vedas and the Upanishads. Both father and mother had a great impact in the making of Kantakabi. The Odisha Legislative Assembly condoled the death of Kantakabi on 2nd March 1953, within a week of his sad demise. The then Chief Minister Nabakrishna Choudhury, the Opposition Leader Sradhakar Supakar and the Speaker Nanda Kishore Das expressed their heart-felt grief.

They said; "Kantakabi's death has not only created a void in the literary world, but has also irreparably damaged the public life of Orissa. Especially, his efforts to cleanse politics through satire shall be remembered by the posterity ad infinitum." Lakshmikanta was christened 'Kantakabi' not by any royal family or by the government, but by his innumerable admirers. In the nineties, Odisha became the first state in the entire country to adopt a patriotic song -'Bande Utkala Janani' - for singing at the valedictory session of the Legislative

> Prabhukalyan Mohapatra The writer is a Bhubaneswarbased freelance journalist (Odisha Review)



PHOTO POST



Icon of the Seas, the world's largest cruise ship, sails out of Government Cut between Fisher Island, right, and Miami Beach as it departs PortMiami on its first public cruise



Divers perform an underwater lion dance at the KLCC Aquaria ahead of Chinese Lunar New Year celebrations in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



Children react as Palestinians fleeing Khan Younis, due to the Israeli ground operation, move towards Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip



Guardsmen move along the Rio Grande in small boats past rows of concertina wire placed to help curb illegal crossings, in Eagle Pass, Texas



Participants take part in the 'Lokmat Maha Marathon' at Kasturchand Park ground in Nagpur



A Houthi follower carries a machine gun as he rides on a motorcycle during a parade in solidarity with the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and to show support to Houthi strikes on ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, in Sanaa, Yemen



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the 'Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra' in Bokaro



Workers spread rice grain on a field to dry them in the Sun in Nadia

REUTERS/AP/PTI PHOTOS

national



Crimes and criminals do not respect geographical borders and hence, different law enforcement agencies should not consider any border as hindrance and rather consider them as meeting points for solving crimes

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

SNOWFALL DISRUPTS FLIGHT OPERATIONS

All flights to and from Srinagar airport in Kashmir were cancelled Sunday due to snowfall in the valley, officials said. The snowfall, which began late Saturday night, had stopped briefly early in the morning, allowing clearance of the runway





Manipur, the incident of motherdaughter being burnt to death and countless other incidents of insult to women, they are not with BJP this time

AKHILESH YADAV SP CHIEF

The statements in the CAG report are being twisted deliberately by the opposition to engage in malicious

propaganda. The Trinamool Congress will not take responsibility for the Left's lack of accountability during their regime as we have followed all protocols while in power

DEREK O'BRIEN | TMC MP



thinking and culture by eliminating the deceit of appeasement and replacing it with the power of inclusive empowerment

MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI | BJP LEADER

Judge's death: Priyanka slams UP govt

New Delhi, Feb 4: Congress leader Privanka Gandhi Vadra Sunday slammed the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh after the body of a woman civil judge was found hanging in her quarters, saying she wonders what kind of fear an ordinary girl must feel living there

A murder case has been registered against unidentified people in the death of the judge in UP's Budaun district, following a complaint filed by her father. a police officer said Sunday.

In a post in X on Hindi, Priyanka Gandhi said a few weeks ago in Banda, a woman judge asked for euthanasia and now the body of another woman judge has been found in her house in Budaun.

The family of the deceased judge has raised serious questions on the probe into her death. the Congress general secretary said."If this is the condition of security of women judges under the BJP rule, then imagine with what fear an ordinary girl must be living through every day,' Priyanka Gandhi said.



According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Uttar Pradesh is number one in crimes against women, she said."Every hour, eight women become victims of crime. Uttar Pradesh has become completely unsafe for women, because all the big claims of safety are only in advertisements. The statistics of increasing crimes against women show how serious the government actually is about women's safety," the Congress

"Now only the awareness of women and society will bring them out of this whirlpool of oppression and violence," she said. The body of Civil Judge (Junior Division) Jyotsna Rai, 27, was recovered Saturday. It was suspected that she had killed herself. She reportedly left behind

Her father, who reached Budaun Saturday evening, however, claimed his daughter was killed and her killers hanged her body from the ceiling fan in her bedroom to make it look like

Being compelled to join BJP, but won't: Kejriwal



New Delhi, Feb 4: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Sunday claimed that the BJP had been AAP leaders to join the party and asserted they would not do so as they had done no wrong. The BJP dismissed his claim as an attempt to "distract and trick" the people of Delhi.

Kejriwal's remarks come at a time he has been asked to join the Delhi Police probe into his allegations that the BJP attempted to "poach" AAP MLAs and is facing summons from the Enforcement Directorate in an excise policy linked money laundering case. Addressing an event where he laid the foundation of two schools in Kirari, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief claimed that the BJP wanted them to join the party but he was firm on not doing so.

"They can hatch any conspiracy against us but nothing is going to happen. I am standing firm against them and I am not going to bow down. They

Atishi gets notice

NEW DELHI: Delhi Minister Atishi ner by the city police in connection nade by her does not have any nention of an FIR or include pena fficers who are being forced by any mention of an FIR. It does not ven include any section of the IPC Indian Penal Code) or CrPC (Code of Criminal Procedure) or PMLA Prevention of Money Laundering Act) or Prevention of Corruption

say, 'come and join BJP and we will leave you alone'. But I will never join BJP. Why should we

join BJP? If you join BJP, all sins are forgiven," Kejriwal said. The Chief Minister said they

were working to improve schools

capital and asked what was wrong in that. Later in a post on X, Kejriwal asserted that all cases against AAP leaders were

"If we had done something wrong, we would have joined BJP like others who got their cases closed. When we have not done anything wrong, why should we join BJP? All the cases filed against us are false. If not today, tomorrow, all the cases will end, he said in the post in Hindi.

He also said development works will not stop in Delhi, and "as long as are alive, we will continue to serve the country and society." Responding to Kejriwal's remarks, the BJP's Delhi unit chief Virendra Sachdeva said, "Arvind Kejriwal is afraid of investigation by probe agencies. that's why he is lying. He wants to distract and trick the people of Delhi and that's why he is dreaming about the things that will never happen.'

Kejriwal and cabinet minister Atishi have been served notices by the Delhi Police Crime Branch in connection with the allegations levelled by them that the BJP was attempting to "poach" AAP MLAs

Kejriwal has skipped five summonses issued by the **Enforcement Directorate for** questioning him in the excise policy linked money laundering case. The BJP has questioned his decision to skip the notices while the AAP has alleged that it is a conspiracy to arrest Kejriwal ahead of the Lok Sabha elections to stop him from campaigning

Ladakh shuts down as thousands march for statehood

AGENCIES

Leh, Feb 4: Ladakh witnessed a complete shutdown Saturday as many people marched demanding statehood and constitutional protections under the sixth schedule for the Union Territory

The shutdown in the region was called by the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance. Thousands marched across the main city of Leh in freezing temperatures, shouting slogans demanding statehood for Ladakh, the implementation of the sixth schedule of the Constitution, and also separate parliament seats for Leh and Kargil districts.

The shutdown was observed despite the Centre's announcement to hold talks with representatives of the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance.

The Centre has constituted a high-powered committee headed by Minister of State (Home Affairs) Nityanand Rai to address the demands of the people of Ladakh.

The people of Ladakh said they couldn't live under an unending bureaucratic rule in the Union Territory and only a full statehood - where they elect their representatives to govern the region - could fulfill their demand

Ladakh was carved out as a separate Union Territory after Article 370 was scrapped and the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated and downgraded into two Union Territories in August 2019.

But within just two years, the people of Leh and Kargil felt politically dispossessed and have jointly risen against the Centre.

In December, the Centre held its first meeting in Ladakh and asked both the bodies from Leh and Kargil to submit their

Sharad Pawar group: Ajit 'praying for uncle's death'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai/Pune Feb 4: Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar Sunday took a veiled jibe at Nationalist Congress Party founder Sharad Pawar by alluding to his age and speaking about the "sentimental appeal of a last election".

The Sharad Pawar faction hit back claiming the comments were "inhuman" and accused the deputy CM of "praying for the death" of the party founder. Ajit Pawar split the NCP in July last vear and joined the Eknath Shinde government along with eight MLAs. He has since then routinely justified his revolt by saying elders, a reference to octogenarian Sharad Pawar, should have given way to the next generation.

Attacking Sharad Pawar (83) without taking his name, the Deputy CM said, "I do not know when some people are going to stop. There might be a sentimental appeal that this would be the last election. Do not know which will be the last election.' He was speaking at a gathering in Baramati in Pune district.

Hitting back, MLA Jitendra Awhad of the Sharad Pawar faction claimed the deputy CM had "crossed all limits of decency" with his remarks."Aiit Pawar must think about his inhuman comments in which he allegedly prayed for the death of Sharad Pawar. Maharashtra now knows what kind of a man Ajit Pawar is," Awhad said.

Sharad Pawar's contribution to Maharashtra will stay on forever, Awhad said. Sharad Pawar has remained undefeated in Assembly and Lok Sabha polls since the late 1960s and is cur-



rently a Raiva Sabha member. The deputy CM also spoke about his faction's Lok Sabha plans at the gathering."You listened to a senior for so many vears. Now listen to me and vote for the Lok Sabha candidate I am going to field. I can then tell Prime Minister Narendra Modi that people have voted for my candidate. Do not forget who came to help when you were in trouble," he said

"In the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, consider me as your candidate. If you give votes to a person who belongs to my party, then I will talk to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for sizable funds for projects in Baramati, he said.

The deputy CM said he completed multiple projects efficiently and firmly believed no one had done as much for the region in the past five years."An international airport will be built in Pune soon. Talks have been held with (deputy CM) Devendra Fadnavis on it. People of Baramati have made be finance minister. Multiple projects will come up in Baramati," he

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Project Gunupur Sand Bed - I Quarry located at village Gunupur under Gunupur Tahasil of Rayagada Dist., Odisha has accorded necessary Environment Clearance from SEIAA. Odisha vide EC Identification No. EC22B001OR123629, Dated 22.07.2022 and copies of the EC are available with SEIAA, Odisha and on the websites of Odisha State Pollution

Control Board, Bhubaneswar.

JMM-led coalition MLAs return to Ranchi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, Feb 4: The MLAs of Jharkhand's JMM-led alliance exuded confidence to win the trust vote in the Assembly Monday, soon after their return to Ranchi from Hyderabad Sunday evening.

The legislators landed at the Birsa Munda Airport here in a chartered flight and were taken to the Circuit House in the city in two buses."Our MLAs are united... We have the support of 48 to 50 legislators," minister Alamgir Alam said.

JMM lawmaker Mithilesh Thakur also asserted that the JMM-led coalition will sail

through the trust vote."Many BJP legislators are also in support of the alliance in the state,' he claimed. However, Biranchi Narain, Chief Whip of the BJP, said the coalition was set to lose

the vote of confidence Monday. He said the MLAs in Hyderabad were kept under strict surveillance, which indicates that they were not confident of winning. The Champai Soren-led coalition government in Jharkhand will seek a vote of confidence Monday, the first day of the twoday Assembly session. Soren was administered the oath of office by Governor CP Radhakrishnan at

the Raj Bhavan February 2.

Everyday household items behind rising cancer cases: Experts



general secretary said.

a suicide note.

a suicide, a police officer said.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE New Delhi, Feb 4: Everyday items used in households such as plastic bottles, tea bags, beauty

products, and e-cigarettes and hookahs are contributing to the escalating danger of cancer, warned health experts on World Cancer Day Sunday. World Cancer Day is observed February 4 each year. The theme

this year is 'Close the Care Gap'. Earlier this week, the World Health Organization's cancer agency, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), in a stark warning said that new cancer diagnosis is projected to skyrocket by 77 per cent by 2050, reaching over 35 million cases an-

The agency attributed the alarming to a combination of

lifestyle and environmental factors, with tobacco, alcohol, obesity, and air pollution identified as the key culprits. According to Dr J.B. Sharma, Senior Consultant in Medical Oncology at Action Cancer Hospital, several commonly used items at home are potentially increasing the risk of cancer.

An artist gives final touches to idols of Lord Ganesha ahead of Maghi Ganesh Jayanti, at Lalbaug in Mumbai

"Plastic bottles used for drinking water may contain microplastics, and the habit of drinking hot tea from plastic bags or using white-coloured mayonnaise in food items can introduce harmful chemicals, such as epichlorohydrin, into the body, raising the likelihood of cancer," he said.

Moreover, modern technologies, while making life easier, pose risks. Using plastic utensils in ovens or consuming food



cooked in non-stick cookware can expose individuals to harmful chemicals like endocrinedisrupting agents, potentially leading to cancer. Awareness of these factors is crucial in miti-

gating the risk and promoting a

healthier lifestyle, the experts

Further everyday beauty products also raise the risk of cancer. Nail polish and nail polish removers harbour hazardous chemicals, including toluene, formaldehyde, and acetone, which are known carcinogens.

"Chemical-laden hair products, such as those containing formaldehyde and formaldehyde-releasing agents, pose a significant cancer risk. The use of certain hair straightening products can lead to both shortterm and long-term health issues," said Dr Rajit Channa, Senior Consultant in Medical Oncology at Dharamshila Narayana Superspeciality

Hospital. Recognising and avoiding these carcinogenic agents in daily beauty routines is crucial for preventing potential cancer-related complications. Further, oncologists are witnessing a surge in cancers among youth, driven by e-cigarettes. Similarly, the growing trend of hookah

consumption among the youth introduces various harmful chemicals, particularly in

flavoured variants. "The popularity of e-cigarettes as an alternative to traditional smoking is on the rise. However, the chemicals used in e-cigarettes, such as nicotine, formaldehyde, tin, nickel, lead, chromium, arsenic, and diacetyl metal, significantly increase the risk of lung cancer," said Dr Randeep Singh, Senior Consultant and Director of Medical Oncology at Narayana ঽ Hospital, Gurugram.

The experts explained that both e-cigarettes and flavoured hookahs contain dangerous chemicals like diacetyl, carbon monoxide, cadmium, ammonia, radon, methane, and acetone, elevating the risk of cancer.

international



Sri Lanka has achieved progress in its economic recovery process due to the steadfast support of citizens to a comprehensive long-term national rebuilding programme despite facing

RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | SL PRESIDENT

SUNAK SPEAKS ON RACISM

Rishi Sunak, the UK's Indian-origin Prime Minister, has said that he experienced "racism" when he was a child and his parents sent him for extra drama lessons so that he could "speak properly" without an accent to "fit in"





Israel has no intention of maintaining the occupation of Gaza or displacing civilians



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

LI OIANG | CHINESE PREMIER

The threat posed by China offers an opportunity for the US and India to make strong agreements, including a genuine

Free Trade Agreement to ensure that the two countries will look at each other as first partners

DARRELL ISSA US LAWMAKER

SHORT **TAKES**

S Korea summons **Russian envoy**

Seoul: South Korea has called in Russian diplomats to lodge complaints over Moscow's criticism of President Yoon Suk Yeol for remarks about North Korea's pursuit of a nuclear arsenal, the foreign ministry said. Chung Byungwon, South Korea's deputy foreign minister for political affairs, summoned Ambassador Georgy Zinoviev on Saturday to say that Moscow lashing out at Yoon's remarks would only have a negative impact on the relationship between the two countries, the ministry said.

Heavy rains lash Karachi

Karachi: Heavy rains lashed Karachi city for the second consecutive day Sunday, as political parties intensified their campaigning for Thursday's general elections, blaming the ruling Pakistan Peoples Party for the poor condition of civic facilities in the country's business hub. The heavy downpour that began Saturday flooded the main roads and important arteries of the largest city and led to the sewage system's collapse again. At least two casualties and a few injuries were reported in the city due to rain-related incidents, according to authorities.

Denver shooting: 2 dead, 6 injured

Denver: Two people have died following a report of an early morning shooting that injured six people in Denver Sunday, police said. The victims' names and cause of death would later be released, the Denver Police Department said in a social media post. Police said earlier that investigators were at the scene of a shooting in the 5000 block of North Orleans Court.

Senegal police fire tear gas

Dakar (Senegal): Senegal's police Sunday fired tear gas at opposition supporters who were protesting against the decision by President Macky Sall to postpone the February 25 election over a dispute between parliament and the judiciary. The protesters were staging a rally in the capital of Dakar after leading opposition leaders and candidates in the presidential election rejected Saturday's postponement. The opposition leaders had called on citizens to "defend" democracy amid a push for dialogue by West Africa's regional bloc known as ECOWAS. Analysts say the crisis is putting one of Africa's most stable democracies to the test at a time when the region is struggling with a recent surge in coups.

Houthis vow response after US, British strikes

Washington/Aden/Baghdad, Feb 4: The United States and Britain launched strikes against 36 Houthi targets in Yemen, in the second day of major US operations against Iran-linked groups following a deadly attack on American troops last weekend.

The strikes late Saturday hit buried weapons storage facilities, missile systems, launchers and other capabilities the Houthis have used to attack Red Sea shipping, the Pentagon said, adding it targeted 13 locations across the country.

They are the latest blows in a conflict that has spread into the Middle East since October 7, when the Palestinian militant group Hamas stormed Israel from the Gaza Strip, igniting a war that has drawn Tehran-backed groups into attacks on US and Israeli

targets on several fronts. The Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Sarea said the strikes "will not pass without a response and consequences.'

The Houthis did not announce any casualties.

The Yemen strikes are running parallel to an unfolding US campaign of retaliation over the killing of three American soldiers in a drone strike by Iran-backed militants on an outpost in Jordan a week ago.

On Friday, the US carried out the first wave of that retaliation, striking in Iraq and Syria more than 85 targets linked to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and militias it backs, reportedly killing nearly 40.

The violence has added to concerns of the potential for further escalation. Iran, a



Houthi tribesmen gather to show defiance after air strikes on Houthi positions near Sanaa, Yemen

- Houthis vow response after latest US, British attacks
- Strikes came a day after US retaliation in Irag. Syria
- Iran not interested in direct
- Baghdad funeral march held for 17 killed in US strikes
- Oman has 'grave concern' over '

supporter of Hamas, has so far avoided any direct role in the conflict, even as groups it backs have entered the fray from Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon.

Mahjoob Zweiri, Director of the Gulf Studies Center at Qatar University, did not expect a change in Iran's approach even after the latest US strikes.

Iran's foreign ministry said the latest attacks on Yemen were "a flagrant violation of international law by the United States and Britain", warning the continuation of such attacks was a "worrying threat to international peace and security".

putting pressure on President Joe Biden, a Democrat, to deal a blow to Iran directly.

and a menace to global trade.

enue from use of the Suez Canal.

The US has carried out more than a dozen strikes against Houthi targets in the past several weeks.

Sarea, the the group would press on.

The Pentagon has said it does not want war with Iran and does not believe Tehran wants war either. US Republicans have been

HOUTHIS SAY WON'T BE DETERRED

The Houthis, who control swathes of Yemen, say their attacks are in solidarity with Palestinians as Israel strikes Gaza. The US and its allies characterize them as indiscriminate

Major shipping lines have largely abandoned Red Sea shipping lanes for longer routes around Africa. This has increased costs, feeding worries about global inflation while denying Egypt crucial foreign rev-

spokesperson, suggested in a statement on social media that

MASSIVE STRIKE 28 killed in Ukrainian attack on

Lysychansk bakery

Moscow, Feb 4: Russia said Sunday that Ukraine killed at least 28 people, including nine women and a child, when its armed forces struck a bakery and restaurant in Russian-controlled eastern Ukraine with Western-supplied rockets.

Russian-backed officials said that Ukraine struck the bakery in the city of Lysychansk at about 1230 GMT Saturday with US-supplied High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS).

Emergency workers worked through the night searching for survivors in the rubble of what remained of the shattered Adriatic Restaurant on Moskovska Street, where Russian officials said a bakery had been set up for civilians.

"The armed forces of Ukraine opened fire on a bakery in Lysychansk," said Leonid Pasechnik, the Russian-installed head of the Luhansk region which is now controlled by Russian forces

Pasechnik said the bakery was crowded with civilians when it was struck.

Russia's emergency ministry said 10 people had been pulled from the rubble alive.

But the ministry said four more people were in an "extremely grave condition" and that it was still searching for people.

Ukraine has not yet commented on the attack. Russia took control of swathes of eastern Ukraine after President Vladimir Putin ordered an invasion in February 2022, triggering the biggest land war in Europe since World War Two.

Russia now controls around 18% of its neighbour - and considers the land it holds part of



AT LEAST 28 KILLED BY UKRAINIAN SHELLING

FOUR MORE IN INTENSIVE CARE IN GRAVE CONDITION

NINE WOMEN AND A CHILD KILLED

RUSSIAN OFFICIALS SAY US HIMARS WERE USED

Ukraine and the West say they will never accept the annexation of that territory

Russia's foreign ministry condemned the Ukrainian attack, saying the West should think about why its financial support to Kyiv was being used to kill civilians.

"According to preliminary data, the strike was carried out using Western weapons," Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said.

From the design and colour of the wrecked building and a sign matching file imagery of the area, Reuters was able to confirm the location of a video the Russian emergencies ministry shared.

It matches a location on Google Maps identified as the Adriatic Restaurant on Moskovska Street, Lysychansk.

Namibian President passes away at 82



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Harare (Zimbabwe), Feb 4: Hage Geingob, President of Namibia, one of Africa's most stable democracies, died Sunday while receiving medical treatment at a local hospital, his office announced.

The Namibian presidency said

Geingob's medical team at Lady Pohamba Hospital did its best to help him, but he died with his wife, Monica Geingos, and children by his side, in a post on X, formerly Twitter,

Angolo Mbumba, Namibia's acting president, called for calm, saying in the same post that the "Cabinet will convene with immediate effect in order to make the necessary state arrangements in this regard."

Geingob was undergoing treatment for cancer. The 82-year-old had a colonoscopy and a gastroscopy January 8, followed by a biopsy, his office said last month. He returned home January 31 from the United States where he had undergone a trial two-day "novel treatment for cancerous cells," according to his office. In 2014, he said he had survived prostate cancer.

Geingob, president of the southern African nation since 2015, was set to finish his second and final term in office this year. He was the country's third president since it gained independence in 1990, following more than a century of German and then apartheid South African rule.

After spending nearly three decades in exile in neighboring Botswana and the US as an antiapartheid activist. Geingob returned to Namibia as its first prime minister from 1990 to 2002. He also served in the same capacity from 2008 to 2012.

El Salvador votes in President election

SAN SALVADOR: Salvadorans are voting Sunday in presidential and legislative elections that are largely about the tradeoff between security and democracy. With soaring approval ratings and virtually no competition. Navib Bukele is almost certainly headed for a second term lyador's constitution prohibits replaction. Nonetheless about eight out of 10 of voters support Bukele, according to a January poll from the University of Central America. That's despite Bukele taking steps throughout his first term that lawyers and critics say chip away at the country's system of checks and balances.

ECP disqualifies Mahmood Qureshi

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's election commission has disqualified Shah Mahmood Qureshi, a close aide of jailed ex-prime minister Imran Khan, from contesting elections for five years after the former foreign minister was sentenced to 10 years in prison for leaking state secrets. The disqualification of Qureshi, 67, comes five days before the February 8 general elections, which Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party is contesting despite a state crackdown and without its famous election symbol, the bat. The announcement comes days after a special court. established under the Official Secrets Act, awarded Oureshi 10 years imprisonment in the high-profile cypher case along with Khan.

Biden wins South Carolina Democratic primary

WASHINGTON: Incumbent US President Joe Biden has secured a decisive win in the Democratic presidential primary in the crucial state of South Carolina, notching his first official victory in his largely unobstructed path to become his party's nominee for a possible rematch against Donald Trump in the November 5 election. It was the first official primary of the ruling party. South Carolina is the state that launched Biden to the Democratic nomination four years ago. Biden, 81, who is seeking reelection in the November presidential elections, received 96.2 per cent of the votes in Saturday's primary, with almost non-existent Marianne Williamson getting just 2.1 per cent of the votes.

Myanmar Border Guards seek shelter in Bangladesh

DHAKA: At least 58 soldiers of Myanmar's paramilitary Border Guard Police (BGP) escaping the junta-run country took shelter in Bangladesh amid reports of heavy gunfights between the government troops and the rebel resistance fighters, officials said here Sunday. The soldiers entered through the Tambru border in predawn hours Sunday and sought shelter from the Bangladesh Border Guard (BGB). "Fifty-eight BGP personnel took shelter in Bangladesh throughout the day since the predawn hours. Fourteen of them crossed the border with bullet wounds and are being treated at different hospitals, including health facilities in Rohingya camps," said an official familiar with the development. The official, who preferred anonymity, said the paramilitary soldiers were kept under their counterpart Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) custody in southeastern Cox's Bazar bordering Myanmar's Rakhine state while the weapons they carried were deposited in BGB cache.



Members of the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) of Pakistan stage a protest demanding release of their leader

'Unprecedented catastrophe': Chile wildfires kill many

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Santiago (Chile), Feb 4: Firefighters wrestled Sunday with massive forest fires that broke out in central Chile two days earlier, as officials extended curfews in cities most heavily affected by the blazes and said at least 64 people were killed.

The fires have been burning with the highest intensity around the city of Vina del Mar, where a famous botanical garden founded in 1931 was destroyed by the flames on Sunday. At least 1,600 people were left without homes.

Several neighbourhoods on the eastern edge of Vina del Mar

have been devoured by flames and smoke, trapping some people in their homes. Officials said 200 people have been reported missing in Vina del Mar and the surrounding area.

The city of 3,00,000 people is a popular beach resort and also hosts a famous music festival during the southern hemisphere's summer.

Rodrigo Mundaca, the governor of the Valparaiso region, said Sunday that he believed some of the fires could have

intentionally caused, replicating a theory that had also been mentioned Saturday by President Gabriel Boric.

"These fires began in four points that lit up simultaneously," Mundaca said. "As authorities we will have to work rigorously to find who is responsible."

The fires around Vina del Mar began in mountainous forested areas that are hard to reach. But they have moved into densely populated neighbourhoods on the city's periphery despite efforts by Chilean authorities to slow down the flames. On Saturday President Gabriel Boric said that unusually high

deadliest of

the fires were in

where authorities

people to evacuate

their homes

temperatures, low humidity and high wind speeds were making the Valparaiso region it difficult to control the wildlfires in central Chile, which urged thousands of

areas. Officials are asking

have already burnt through 8,000 hectares of forests and urban

clared in Vina del Mar, and the neighbouring cities of Quilpe and Villa Alemana as part of an effort to prevent looting. The fires broke out during a week of record high temperatures in central Chile. Over the past two months, the El Nino weather pattern has caused droughts and high temperatures

people in areas affected by the fires

to evacuate their homes as quickly

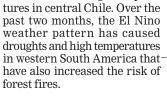
as possible, while those further

from the fires are being told to stay

at home in order to facilitate the

transit of fire engines and am-

bulances. Curfews have been de-



business



There has been a huge value creation in public sector enterprises which has been due to robust performance, growth prospects, capital restructuring, consistent dividend policy as well as a calibrated disinvestment strategy, amid a positive **Indian economy context**

TUHIN KANTA PANDEY | DIPAM SECRETARY

FPIS INVESTMENT IN DEBT MARKET OVER 6-YEAR HIGH

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have injected over ₹19,800 crore in the country's debt market in January, making it the highest monthly inflow in more than six years, on the back of inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Index.





SpiceJet will do its business over the want to connect many tourist destinations, religious tourism, medical tourism, places like

AJAY SINGH | SPICEJET CHIEF

We have gone on a sustainability initiative which spans across the next few years. By mid of this calendar year almost

close to 50 per cent of our energy consumed will be 'green energy' at a company level PRASAN FIRODIA FORCE MOTORS MD

Tata Steel is acutely aware of the impact of its proposal to wind down the heavy end of Port Talbot on the individuals and on the local community associated with our steel works, and we will meaningfully consult with our employees and work to provide them

a fair, dignified, and considerate

KOUSHIK CHATTERJEE TATA STEEL CFO

RBI likely to maintain status-quo on rate

IT IS ALMOST A YEAR SINCE THE CENTRAL BANK HAS KEPT THE REPO RATE STABLE AT 6.5 PER CENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 4: Close on the heels of the interim budget which maintained the status quo on policy front, the Reserve Bank is likely to continue with the pause on the short-term lending rate in its upcoming bi-monthly monetary policy this week as retail inflation is still near the higher end of its comfort zone, say ex-

It is almost a year since the Reserve Bank has kept the shortterm lending rate or repo rate stable at 6.5 per cent. The benchmark interest rate was last raised in February 2023 to 6.5 per cent from 6.25 per cent to contain inflation driven mainly by global developments.

The retail inflation in the current financial year has declined after touching a peak of 7.44 per cent in July, 2023, it is still high and was 5.69 per cent in December 2023, though within the Reserve Bank's comfort zone of 4-6 per cent.

RBI Governor-headed Governor Shaktikanta Das will announce the decision of the six-member panel February 8.

Madan Sabnavis, Chief Economist, Bank of Baroda, said the MPC is likely to maintain an unchanged approach in terms of both rate and stance.

'This is so as inflation, as per the December data, is still high and there are pressures on the food side. This is notwithstanding the fact that core inflation has

Going by RBI's forecasts on inflation it would remain above 5 per cent till June end and come down subsequently.

"Also with growth being robust, there is less pressure to think of a rate cut at this time. In fact, the RBI has indicated that the transmission of the 250 bps cut in rates is still not complete and hence there is reason for a pause," Sabnavis said.

It would be interesting to see if there are any revisions in the forecasts of GDP and inflation

The government has mandated the central bank to ensure

Oil PSUs to invest FMCG cos report single-digit volume growth

the retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

On expectations from the RBI on monetary policy, Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, Head Research and Outreach, ICRA, said the CPI-based inflation is expected to moderate in FY'25, although a well-distributed monsoon will

"We don't expect any change in rates or stance in the upcoming review. Our baseline expectation is that the earliest rate cut could be seen in August 2024 with a stance change in the preceding review," she said.

Goldman Sachs report expects the RBI to keep the policy reporate unchanged until the third quarter of calendar 2024 (Q3 CY24).

"With Q1 CY24 headline inflation still above the RBI's target, we maintain our view that the RBI will keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent at the February 8 policy meeting, continue with hawkish guidance, and reiterate the 4 per cent inflation target. We further expect the RBI to retain its tight liquidity stance," it said.

Arbitrator quashes Sony's application against Zee

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 4: Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd Sunday said the Singapore Arbitration Centre has denied Sony Group's plea seeking a restrain against the Indian media company's move to the NCLT for enforcing the merger that was called off by the Japanese company's Indian arm.

An Emergency Arbitrator of Singapore International Arbitration Centre denied the interim relief sought by Culver Max and BEPL (Bangla Entertainment Pvt Ltd) to restrain Zee Entertainment Enterprise Ltd (ZEEL), observing it lacks jurisdiction to pass such an order, ZEEL stated in a filing to stock exchanges.

"We wish to inform that the Emergency Arbitrator has passed an award dated February 4, 2024 denying the application for emergency interim relief filed by Culver Max and BEPL and has determined that the Emergency Arbitrator has no jurisdiction or authority to injunct the Company from approaching the NCLT to implement the Merger Scheme since these are matters which fall within the statutory system and are for the NCLT to decide," it added. Sony had last month terminated the merger agreement with ZEEL to merge its two Indian entities - Culver Max Entertainment (earlier known as

Sony Pictures Network India)

and BEPL.

Sony Group Corporation (SGC) had said ZEEL did not satisfy the merger conditions and initiated arbitration proceedings before SIAC claiming USD 90 million (around ₹748.5 cr) as a termination fee. While, ZEEL filed a petition before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), seeking a direction to Sony group to implement the merger scheme.

ZEEL had also initiated appropriate legal actions to contest the claims of USD 90 million filed by Sony Group before SIAC.

SHORT **TAKES**

Red Sea: No impact on trade in India

New Delhi: There is no adverse impact on India's exports and imports so far due to the Red Sea crisis, an official said. The official said that the transportation cost has increased as the shippers are taking a long route. "There is no impact in volume terms so far. Only the transportation cost is up. It has risen for all the countries. It has not affected the trade adversely so far. We have to see the long term demand, but it will depend on the FU and the US. the official added. These two regions account for over 30 per cent of the country's total exports. However, exporters said that they are keeping their fingers crossed as due to the significant jump in freight cost, India's exports may be impacted.

Adani's \$1.2bn copper plant

New Delhi: Billionaire Gautam Adani-led group is building the world's largest single-location copper manufacturing plant at Mundra in Gujarat, which will help cut India's dependence on imports and aid energy transition. The USD 1.2-billion facility will start operations of the first phase by March-end and full-scale 1 million tonnes capacity by FY29 (March 2029), Kutch Copper Ltd **Managing Director Vinay** Prakash said. India joins China and other nations that are rapidly expanding production of copper, a metal crucial for transition away from fossil fuels. Technologies critical to the energy transition like electric vehicles (EVs), charging infrastructure, solar photovoltaics (PV), wind and batteries, all require copper.

Mcap of most valued firms up

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms climbed ₹2.90 lakh crore last week, with Reliance Industries emerging as the lead gainer, amid optimism in equities. Last week. BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 1,384.96 points or 1.95 per cent. From the top-10 pack, Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Infosys, LIC, State Bank of India, and Hindustan Unilever were the gainers, while Bharti Airtel and ITC faced erosion of their valuation. The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms stood at ₹2.90.267.98 crore. The mcap of Reliance Industries jumped ₹1.38.290.85 crore to reach ₹19,72,028.45 crore.

Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will start its three-day come down," he said. deliberations February 6.

₹1.2L cr in FY25 PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 4: ONGC, IOC and other oil PSUs will invest about ₹1.2 lakh crore in the coming fiscal starting April 1 in oil and gas exploration, refineries. petrochemicals and laying pipelines to meet the needs of the world's fastest-growing energy consuming nation. The investment proposed in 2024-25 is 5 per cent higher than ₹1.12 lakh crore spent by the state-owned oil firms in the current fiscal year that ends March 31, according to Budget 2024-25 documents.

Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) has a planned capital spending of ₹30,800 crore in the next financial year. This expenditure in finding new reserves of oil and gas and bringing to production discoveries it has already made, is slightly higher than ₹30,500 crore capex in 2023-24 fiscal (April 2023 to March 2024). It is developing discoveries on both east and west coasts of the country.

The top oil producer's overseas arm, ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL) will invest 68 per cent more at ₹5,580 crore in 2024-25 in oil and gas operations abroad when compared with the previous fiscal.



Indian Oil Corp (IOC), the country's top oil refiner, will be the top spender with an investment outlay of ₹30,910 crore, with the bulk of it in expansion and upgrade of its seven refineries that produce fuel. This outlay also includes ₹3,299 crore in the petrochemical business and another ₹236.48 crore in the small oil and gas exploration portfolio it has.

Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) has proposed a 30 per cent higher capital spending at ₹13,000 crore, two-thirds of which will be in its core refining business.

Gas utility GAIL India Ltd will see its planned investment decline to over ₹8,000 crore in 2024-25 from ₹9,750 crore in the previous fiscal as most of its pipeline grid expansion projects are nearing completion.

Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL), a subsidiary of ONGC, will invest ₹12,500 crore in FY25, marginally higher than ₹12,000 crore in the previous Companies such as HUL, ITC, Marico, Dabur, and Godrej Consumer

Products said urban

markets continued their moderate growth, while consumer demand from rural India remained subdued

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 4: Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies have reported single-digit volume growth with improved margins in most segments during December quarter, helped by moderating commodity inflation, though operating environment remained challenging.

Some of the companies also eported a decline in their topline numbers, as they extended the benefits of softening commodity prices to the consumer by lowering the prices, which had a bearing on their gross sales numbers.

Companies such as HUL, ITC, Marico, Dabur, and Godrej Consumer Products said urban markets continued their moderate growth, while consumer demand from rural India remained subdued even as they expect an improvement in coming quar-



as lotions, oils and creams. Hindustan Unilever (HUL) reported a muted growth in consolidated net profit at ₹2,508 crore and its sales were marginally down to ₹15,259 crore.

"Overall, FMCG demand trends have largely remained stable and similar to what we saw last quarter. While market volumes grew at high single digits year-on-year, this came on a base period where volumes declined in mid-single digit," said HUL CEO & MD Rohit Jawa in his latest earnings call.

Echoing the view, Marico said. "General trade continued to drag as it grappled with liquidity and profitability constraints, while alternate channels grew healthily." Marico's India business posted a volume growth of 2 per cent in the third quarter year on year though its turnover was down 3 per cent to ₹1,793 crore. "During the quarter, demand

trends were stable with no vis-

ible improvement from the preceding quarter. Rural demand remained soft, while urban demand steadied its moderate growth trajectory," said the earnings statement from Marico which owns brands like Saffola, Parachute, and Livon, among others. ITC, which owns brands such as Aashirvaad, Sunfeast, Fiama etc, said it had a resilient performance in FMCG segment amidst subdued demand condi-

business was up 7.6 per cent. "While certain commodity prices declined on a YoY basis, the cost table remains elevated compared to pre-pandemic levels:

tions. Its revenue in the FMCG

commodities such as wheat, maida, sugar etc. witnessed sequential uptick in prices," it said. Godrej Consumer Products

Ltd (GCPL)'s India sales in the December quarter grew by 9 per cent to ₹2,160 crore, while the volume grew by 12 per cent. "We continue to deliver steady performance in Q3FY24 despite challenging market conditions. Our quality of profit continues to improve consistently on the back of superior growth in higher margin countries and categories,' said GCPL CEO and Managing Director Sudhir Sitapati.

However, Dabur India said its rural demand grew 200 basis points ahead of urban in the December quarter. Its India business ended the third quarter with a volume growth of 6 per cent. "Moderating inflation coupled with buoyant consumer sentiments and our focussed investment in distribution footprint expansion in rural India helped demand from the hinterland bounce back for Dabur,' said Dabur India CEO Mohit Malhotra. The company, which owns brands such as Dabur Chyawanprash, Dabur Honey, Dabur PudinHara and Dabur Amla, reported a 6.2 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at ₹506.44 crore and its revenue from operation went up 7 per cent to ₹3,255.06 crore.

Paytm Payments Bank meltdown, its meaning

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 4: Son of a schoolteacher from Aligarh district in Uttar Pradesh, Vijay Shekhar Sharma was enamoured by Jack Ma-run Alibaba's focus on smartphones rather than desktop computers, when he built a digital payments company that would let Indians pay for vegetables, pay utility bills or buy cinema tickets using their mobile phones. Sharma, the poster boy of

India's fintech boom, also set out to build an Alipay-like mobile marketplace to go alongside the payments business, allowing businesses to sell goods from matchbox to iPhones online. With fame came a set of controversies for arguably the most high-profile of a wave of Indian tech entrepreneurs. But none like the one now. The current crisis where the Reserve Bank has ordered Paytm Payments Bank to halt most of its business, is an existential one.

Here is a breakdown of Paytm Payments Bank crisis:

What was the recent RBI action against Paytm Payments bank all

about? The regulator last week ordered Paytm Payments Bank

Ltd, a restricted bank that can take deposits but cannot lend, to not take any further deposits or conduct credit transactions or carry out top-ups on any customers accounts, prepaid instruments, wallets, cards for paying road tolls after February

Paytm wallet customers can use money till the time their balance is exhausted. They cannot add money after February 29. And in case RBI does not relent, top-up for Paytm wallet will stop and transactions through it would no longer can be carried.

So what is Paytm Payments Bank, and who owns it?

Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL) is an associate of One97 Communications Limited (OCL). One97 Communications holds 49 per cent of the paid-up share capital (directly and through its subsidiary) of PPBL. Vijay Shekhar Sharma has a 51 per cent stake in the bank. PPBL commenced operations as a payments bank with effect from May 23, 2017. Paytm Payments Bank offered digital banking, including savings accounts, current accounts, fixed deposits with partner banks, and balance in wallets, UPI, and FASTag, among other services. Paytm



Wallet, which comes under PPBL, leads the segment. As per RBI's provisional data for December 2023, Paytm Wallet users carried out 24.72 crore transactions worth over ₹8,000 crore for purchase of goods and services while 2.07 crore transactions were carried out for transferring over ₹5,900 crore.

What happened and what it means for customers?

The RBI January 31 directed the Paytm Payments Bank to stop accepting deposits or top-ups in customer accounts, wallets, FASTags and other instruments after February 29. Withdrawal or utilisation of balances by its

customers from their accounts. including savings bank accounts. current accounts, prepaid instruments, FASTags, National Common Mobility Cards, are to be permitted without any restrictions, up to their available balance. Paytm Wallet users can continue to carry on transactions till February 29. However, after February 29, they will be able to use their existing balance till the time it is exhausted but not add any money to their

What are the alternatives for users?

There are over 20 banks and non-banking entities that offer wallet service. The leading ones

after PPBL wallet include Mobikwik, PhonePe, SBI, ICICI Bank, HDFC, Amazon Pay etc.

Similarly, there are 37 banks comprising all the known public and private sector banks like SBI, HDFC, ICICI, IDFC, Airtel Payments Bank which are authorised to provide FASTag. Customers can recharge FASTag online using their banks mobile banking, internet banking or third party apps like Google Pay, PhonePe etc.

Why did Paytm Payments Bank come under RBI lens?

The banking regulator had been frequently flagging off issues. According to sources, money laundering concerns and questionable dealings of hundreds of crores of rupees between popular wallet Paytm and its lesser-known banking arm had led Reserve Bank of India to clamp down on Vijay Shekhar Sharma-run entities. Sources further said that PPBL had lakhs of non-KYC (Know Your Customer) compliant accounts and in thousands of cases single PANs were used for opening multiple accounts. There were instances of the total value of transactions -running into crores of rupees, much beyond regulatory limits in minimum KYC pre-paid instruments raising money laundering concerns, sources said.

What has been the company's response to the RBI's action?

While users have the option to switch to other wallets, and FASTag services etc being provided by other vendors, Paytm management has said that PPBL is in discussion with RBI to comply with their direction for continuing the business. Paytm has said that its financial services such as loan distribution, insurance distribution and equity broking are not in any way related to PPBL and are expected to be unaffected. Paytm sees an impact of ₹300-500 crore on its annual operational profit.

How has One97 Communications' shares responded?

Following the RBI's crackdown, shares of One97 Communications Ltd, which owns Paytm brand, slumped 40 🔌 per cent in the last two days. The stock tanked 20 per cent to ₹487.05, its lowest trading permissible limit for the day, on the BSE Friday. In two days, the company's market capitalisation— (mcap) eroded by ₹17,378.41 crore to ₹30,931.59 crore.

Daunting task awaits England

England ended at 67 for one at stumps with Crawley and night watchman Rehan Ahmed in the centre, still needing for 332 runs for a famous victory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam, Feb 4: India's questionable batting approach left the door ajar for England's bazballers to go for a record yet achievable 399-run target in the second Test here Sunday, the hosts once again allowing their fearless opponents to come back into the game

Like the series opener, India had the opportunity to bat the Englishmen out of the match after Shubman Gill's 104 off 147 balls but their inexplicable batting approach in the final session of third day raised the visiting team's hopes

India ended with 255 all out in their second innings.

On expected lines, England came out attacking through openers Zak Crawley (29 batting off 50) Ben Duckett (28) before R Ashwin had the

left-han-

caught

in his first over England ended at 67 for one at stumps with Crawley and night watchman Rehan Ahmed (9 batting) in the centre, still needing for 332 runs

for a famous victory. Though the odd ball is keeping low, there doesn't seem to be any demon in the pitch and England will be backing themselves to gun down the taring, hopefully we can get get and take the ball in the right areas a 2-0 series lead in the se-

Ğill is

Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam, Sunday

confident of an

Indian victory in

'Not an easy

wicket to bat on, you

have to apply your-

self. The ball is turn-

West

Indies getting to

395 in Bangladesh

two years ago re-

mains the highest

chase recorded in Asia.

'Definitely pleased

but I left a few out

done with a few

more runs," Gill

said after third

there. We could have

this Test

"It's about 70-30 at the moment, the morning session is a big one. We've seen some movement for the fast bowlers, I think if we get the ball in the right areas we'll be okay," Gill said.

India, who were 227 for six at tea and led England by 370 runs, could only manage 28 runs in 14.3 overs with their long tail not wagging again.

Rather than going for strokes, the likes of R Ashiwn (29 off 61) and Jasprit Bumrah (0 off 26 balls) were happy to bat time, not helping the team's cause eventually.

In the first innings, barring double centurion Yashasvi Jaiswal no batter crossed 40 and in the second innings, the highest individual score after Gill's hundred was 45 from Axar Patel.

While James Anderson (2/29) was relentless in his opening

spell, the inexperienced spin trio of Shoaib Bashir (1/58), Rehan Ahmed (3/88) and Tom Hartley (4/77) bowled the bulk of the overs in the absence of Joe Root, who did not come out to field in the last two sessions after getting hit on his right little finger.

India's bizarre tactics came after Gill overcame a lean patch to score his third Test hundred

India made 97 runs in the afternoon session courtesy an 89run stand between Gill and Axar. Gill, who had completed his half century before lunch, continued to attack the spinners.

He survived two close DRS calls in successive overs soon after his arrival into the middle.

The first 30 minutes of the morning session belonged to Anderson, who continues to lord over batters at 41 vears of age



Indian players and coaches during the doubles match between India and Pakistan at the Davis Cup World Group I play-off tie, in Islamabad, Pakistan,

Islamabad, Feb 4: Indian Davis Cup team capped its historic visit to Pakistan after 60 years by sealing its place in World Group I as it blanked Pakistan 4-0 with Yuki Bhambri and Saketh Myneni recording a comfortable victory and Niki Poonacha making a winning debut, here Sundav.

It was India's eighth win

event, dubbed as World

Cup of tennis, and now it

will compete in World

Group I in September this

year while Pakistan will

stay in Group II

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Taking the court with a 2-0 lead in pocket, Bhambri and Myneni subdued the home team of Muzammil Murtaza and Aqeel Khan 6-2 7-6(5) in the doubles rubber to extend India's dominance of Pakistan in the tournament.

Ageel replaced Barkat Ullah in the side. The idea was to have an experienced player for the do-or-die match, the defeat in which would have clinched India the tie.

However, Bhambri and bigserving Myneni did not put a foot wrong in the match in which they were not troubled by their rivals much. The gulf in quality in the two teams was apparent.

Myneni's big serves were too hot to handle for the home team. Myneni hardly lost a point on his serve and was also superb at the

The Indian players' returns were also better as several times Bhambri sent down winners between the two Pakistani players.

The 28-year-old Poonacha was

then asked to play the dead fourth rubber against Muhammad Shoaib, who he beat 6-3 6-4. The fifth match was not played.

India blank Pakistan 4-0,

Shoaib struggled with his serve but had a terrific backhand. Realising Shoaib's strong point, Niki did not feed many balls to his backhand and comfortably logged the win. Shoaib also struggled to contain unforced errors, giving many free points to the Indian.

It was India's eighth win in as many meetings in the event, dubbed as World Cup of tennis and now it will compete in World Group I in September this year while Pakistan will stay in Group II.

The Indian team adapted well to the tough conditions and the heavy securities around them, not letting the restrictions on their movement have an adverse impact on them.

The Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) did well in creating a safety net around the players, as several agencies worked in tandem to ensure that the historic tie went without any untoward incidents.

'The organisation was spot

on. All the arrangements were good. We thank Pakistan Tennis Federation for being wonderful hosts," India captain Zeeshan Ali said.

Bhambri and Myneni had a tight grip over the contest from the beginning. They broke Aqeel in the first and fifth games for a commanding 4-1 lead. In game one, Ageel hit a backhand long and wide to be down two breakpoints. While Myneni hit wide on first, he found and easy volley winner on Aqeel's feeble

The Pakistani stalwart again dropped serve in game five. His overheas flat smash flew over the baseline at 30-all and Bhambri sent down a crushing forehand winner between the two players to close the game.

Murtaza went down by three set points in game seven but saved all as the two players finally got some rhythm.

The second set was 5-5 on serve. In between Murtaza saved three break chances in game five. It boiled down to a tiebreaker in which a few errors from the Indians got the Pakstanis ahead 4-2.

In dialogue with IOC on hosting Olympics: Usha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 4: The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) Sunday said that it is in active dialogue with the Future Host Commission of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) regarding the country's bid to host the Olympic Games in 2036.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced India's desire to host the 2036 Games during the IOC Session in Mumbai October 14 last year. But, this is the first time the IOA officially said that it has started a formal dialogue with the Future Host Commission of the IOC

Though the funding for hosting the Games and building infrastructure will come from the government, it's the IOA (as the concerned National Olympic Committee) which has to officially express the country's interest to host the Olympics and enter into a dialogue with the

"The IOA is in active dialogue with the Future Host Commission of the IOC regarding hosting the 2030 Youth Olympics and the 2036 Olympic Games in India as per the vision of the Honourable Prime Minister," IOA president PT Usha said in a statement, which was, though, issued on another matter.

Usha was making the statement on the matter of the controversy surrounding the appointment of the IOA Chief Executive Officer. This was the first time that Usha officially commented on the IOA engaging with the IOC after the Prime Minister's announcement in October last

She had earlier told PTI during the Hangzhou Asian Games in early part of October that India should bid for the 2036 Olympics. Until recently, cities wanting to host the Olympics had to put together costly proposals and compete with other cities in a bidding process but the system has been overhauled by the IOC following referendum defeats and scandals.

Under the new system, Future Host Commissions will launch informal and confidential exchanges with potential host cities. There will be 'feasibility assessments', which 'highlight opportunities and challenges.

Nerves were there to see: Anderson

MOMENT OF THRILL: Ravichandran Ashwin celebrates wicket of England's batter Ben Duckett during

third day of the second Test match between India and England at Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam, Feb 4: Veteran England pacer James Anderson Sunday found India's batting approach in the second innings cautious and said "nerves were there to see" as the mighty hosts were not sure of a safe target against their 'Bazball' approach.

England were set a target of 399 on day three but in the afternoon session, it seemed they would end up chasing a lot more.

India were 227 for six at tea for a lead of 370 runs, but could only manage 28 runs in 14.3 overs in the final session with their long tail not wagging again. "I think the nerves were there

to see today, the way they batted, they didn't know how many enough was. They were quite cautious, even when they had a big lead," said Anderson after close of play. England need another 332 runs

for a record chase in Asian conditions, having ended the day at 67 for one in 14 overs.

Anderson seemed supremely confident about his team's



chances in the game, reflecting the mindset of the players under Ben Stokes' leadership. In 2022, England had chased down 378 against India in Birmingham.

'The chat last night from the coach (Brendon McCullum) was that if they get 600, we were going to go for it. It makes it very clear to everyone that we will try to do it tomorrow.

"I know there are 180 overs left in the game, but we will try to do it in 60 or 70. That's the

way we play, and we saw that tonight with Rehan (Ahmed) going out and playing his shots.

"He wanted to get out there and chase those runs down, even tonight. We have set our stall out, tomorrow will be no different, we will play the same way we have (played) the last two years.

"Whether we win or lose, it's not relevant because we are extremely competitive and want to win every game we play, but

we want to play in a certain way," said the 41-year-old who was England's best bowler across the two innings.

England have revolutionised the way Test cricket is played with their uber-aggressive approach and Anderson said the style has put doubts in the opposition's mind.

There's been moments throughout the last 2 years, particularly in the last 12 months, that makes us think we're doing something well because the way teams have reacted.

"I don't know if intimidating is the right word, but it's putting different thoughts in opposition's minds and captain's minds. It definitely felt like that today - it felt like they were unsure what a good score would be against us.

"The wicket is still pretty good, the odd one's keeping low but you expect that. Also what we've seen today is Shubman played brilliantly - it does show there's still scores to be made out there,"

Harry Kane scores his 24th Bundesliga goal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Munich, Feb 4: Harry Kane scored one of the easier goals of his career as Bayern Munich rallied from a goal down to beat Borussia Moenchengladbach 3-1 in the Bundesliga Saturday.

Bayern stayed two points behind league leader Bayer Leverkusen, which beat Darmstadt 2-0. Bayern and Leverkusen play next week in a game which could play a crucial role in the title race.

Kane scored his 24th Bundesliga goal of the season to give Bayern the lead in the 70th minute. Thomas Müller challenged goalkeeper Moritz Nicolas for a high ball and it went loose, leaving Kane with plenty of space and time to nod it into the net.

Leroy Sané twice missed good chances for Bayern early on but Gladbach took full advantage when Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer played a poor pass, launching a quick attack which ended

FIH PRO LEAGUE

with Nico Elvedi scoring.

Nineteen-vear-old Bayern midfielder Aleksandar Pavlovic leveled the score just before halftime off a one-two with Müller. Pavlovic has started back-toback Bundesliga games in place of the injured Joshua Kimmich and scored in both.

After Kane's goal, Matthijs de Ligt made sure of the win with a header in the 86th.

Odisha FC climb back to top with a convincing win

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Feb 4: Title contenders Odisha FC bagged three points with consummate ease when they brushed aside citymates Sports Odisha 3-1 in the Indian Women's Football League (IWL) at the Capital Football Arena Sunday. The winners led 2-0 at halftime.

On paper, the match was deemed the Odisha Derby. In reality, it was a sheer mismatch as the top-ranked team in the league table was pitted against a side struggling to avoid finishing at the bottom. There was no change of fortune at the end of the tie.

Odisha FC moved to the top with 19 points from seven matches, while Sports Odisha continued to be the bottom spooners having collected only two points from eight outings.

In the first meeting between the two teams in the IWL in December, Odisha FC beat Sports Odisha 4-0.





With as many as nine internationals in their ranks, Odisha FC were by far the superior side and exhibited this on every part of the pitch. After a few challenge-free runs through both flanks, the winners opened their scoring in the eighth minute when Indumathi Kathiresan ran down the left to cross the ball in the six-yard box. Lynda Kom, who was following the movement, was left unchallenged and it made her task of pushing the ball in easier.

That Odisha FC had to wait until the add-on time of the first session to score their second goal was a surprise. Because their dominance in the match was so complete, Sports Odisha could hardly make a decent movement in the rival area. Odisha FC goalkeeper Shreya Hooda never had to collect the ball, let alone

make a serious save. But then, Sports Odisha should get credit for breaching the mighty defence of Odisha FC in the second half, when Manisha Naik reduced the margin for the losers. This was only the second goal against Odisha FC in the entire campaign.

Indian women lose 1-3 against Netherlands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Feb 4: Indian women's hockey team's penalty corner woes continued as it fell to its second consecutive defeat at the FIH Pro League, losing 1-3 to the Netherlands here Sunday.

Navneet Kaur was the lone goal-scorer for India, who were guilty of squandering as many as six penalty corners. Yibbi Jansen (3rd, 34th minute) and Fay van der Elst (21st) etched their name on the scoresheet for the Netherlands. India had lost to China Saturday.

India's goalkeeper Savita Punia was called to action right from the get-go, saving successive shots at her goal. Soon after, the Netherlands were awarded a penalty corner and this season's leading goalscorer, Jansen, powered a shot down the middle of the goal to give the Netherlands an early lead.

India continued to look for a



chink in Netherlands' armour but Laura Nunnink initiated a counter-attack and sprayed a quick pass to Fay van der Elst who dove to deflect the ball past Savita and restored Netherlands' lead.

Both teams went on to earn a couple of penalty corners but the scoreline remained 2-1 at the end of the first half. The Netherlands piled pressure on India in the third quarter, eventually earning a penalty corner and Jansen let loose a powerful drag flick to beat Savita and make it 3-1.

Dutch men's hockey team arrive in City

INDO ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Feb 4: The World No.1, the Netherlands men's hockey team arrived in Bhubaneswar, Odisha Sunday ahead of the crucial cluster of matches for FIH Hockey Pro League 2023/24 in India.

The FIH Hockey Pro League 2023/24 (men) is scheduled to take place at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium in Bhubaneswar from February 10 to 16, before moving to the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, where the league will continue from February 19 to 25. Five national teams-Ireland, The Netherlands, India, Spain and Australia -will participate in the India leg of the FIH Hockey Pro League 2023/24 (men), facing each other once in Bhubaneswar and once

The Netherlands will play their first match of the FIH Hockey Pro League February 10 against Ireland, followed by India on the next day.

in Rourkela.

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