



Tamannaah's past

Actor Tamannaah Bhatia, known for her glamour image, says she has grown up on unrealistic body standards

LEISURE | P2



Trump's ultimatum

President-elect Donald Trump demands release of hostages held by Hamas before his January 2025 inauguration

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Banking laws

LS passes Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which allows bank account holders to have up to four nominees

BUSINESS | P11



Bumrah puzzle

Australia's wicket-keeper is hoping that his team's batters will find a way to tackle Jasprit Bumrah in the 2nd Test starting Friday

SPORTS | P12

160 protesting farmers held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noida, Dec 3: Police Tuesday arrested more than 160 protesting farmers, including the president of Bharatiya Kisan Parishad (BKU) Sukhbir Yadav 'Khalifa', who were holding a sit-in at the 'Dalit Prerna Sthal' in Noida after their march to Delhi on land compensation and other demands was stopped a day earlier.

The protesters, who had gathered in Gautam Buddha Nagar from different parts of Uttar Pradesh Monday on the call of Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), had threatened to resume their march to the national capital if their demands were not met within a week.

Condemning the police action, the SKM said it was a violation of the Constitutional rights for peaceful protest and urged the judiciary to intervene.

Additional Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Shiv Hari Meena said that they arrested more than 160 protesters at around 1.30 pm under Section 170 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

Slamming the arrests, BKU convened an "emergency" panchayat over the matter at the Kisan Bhavan in Sisauli village of Muzaffarnagar where it decided to amplify the protest Wednesday.

The farmers had gathered near the Mahamaya flyover and left for Delhi Monday demanding proper compensation for their land acquired by the government, but were stopped by the police near Dalit Prerna Sthal, after which they sat on dharna there.

Massive traffic snarls had caused inconvenience to commuters crossing the Delhi-Noida border as police had set up multiple layers of barricades and deployed heavy security to stop the march, which coincided with Parliament's Winter Session.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



More people are raising doubts about the polling process, sir. Shall we file FIRs against them, or will you recite your poem?



OFF GUARD: Soldiers line up for the arrival of the Emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Sheikha Jawaher bint Hamad bin Suhaim Al Thani in London, Tuesday **REUTERS**

Crisis over monk

The row over the arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das snowballed into a major diplomatic crisis between India and Bangladesh Tuesday after Dhaka summoned Indian envoy and halted visa services at its Assistant High Commission in Agartala a day after an unruly mob under the banner of 'Hindu Sangharsh Samiti' breached its security barricades and vandalised the premises. In a day of fast-paced developments, Law Affairs Advisor to the interim Bangladesh government Asif Nazrul termed the vandalism as India's 'failure' and asked New Delhi to reassess its neighbour afresh after the toppling of the Sheikh Hasina regime. The MEA, on the other hand, described the incident 'deeply regrettable' and said seven persons have been arrested, while four police personnel suspended in relation to the incident. Meanwhile, a Bangladesh court deferred to January 2 the hearing on the bail petition of Das as no lawyer appeared on his behalf. The developments in the neighbouring country nevertheless, appear to be symptomatic of the simmering anger for India's unwavering support to deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina who Dhaka wants to face law for her alleged crimes



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka/Agartala, Dec 3: Bangladesh Tuesday summoned the Indian envoy to its Foreign Office while announcing the suspension of consular services at its mission in Agartala, a day after the premises were breached by protesters over the arrest of a Hindu monk in the neighbouring country.

There was drama too at a court in Chattogram, where monk Chinmoy Krishna Das' bail plea was to be heard. But no lawyer appeared for him, and his supporters later claimed that his advocates are under threat. The bail hearing in this session case will now take place January 2.

Tuesday's developments marked another low in ties between the two countries following the ouster of Sheikh Hasina as prime minister in August. India has been expressing concern over Hindus and other minorities being targeted in

Bangladesh under the interim government of Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus.

The issue also figured in the Indian Parliament Tuesday and the British House of Commons a day earlier.

New Delhi earlier called the breach at the Agartala mission "deeply regrettable". Tripura Police said seven people have been arrested and action taken against four policemen over the incident. Bangladesh had said its flag was desecrated.

Emerging from the meeting with acting Bangladesh foreign secretary Riaz Hamidullah in Dhaka, Indian envoy Pranay Verma said Delhi wanted to build a "constant stable, constructive relationship" and no single issue should stand as a barrier to bilateral ties.

"We are willing to engage with the interim government of Bangladesh," he told reporters.

Earlier, Bangladesh's Law Affairs Adviser Asif Nazrul asked New Delhi to reassess its ties with Bangladesh after the ouster of Sheikh Hasina.

The Bangladesh mission in Tripura, a state which borders Bangladesh, Tuesday announced the suspension of visa and consular services "until further notice". Md Al-Ameen, the first secretary there, cited "security reasons".

34 leopard, 3 tiger deaths in 6 yrs

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singhkhuntia Tuesday informed the state Assembly that 34 leopards and three Royal Bengal Tigers have died in the state since 2019 to 2024.

Of the 34 leopards, 17 were killed by poachers, three died after being electrocuted, one in train accident, three in road accident, and three due to diseases, the minister said, while replying to a question from Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati.

Similarly, four leopards died due to natural causes, while the reasons behind the deaths of another three leopards were not yet known, he said.

Nomination process begins for RS bypoll

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: The process of filing nominations for the December 20 bypoll to fill the lone vacant Rajya Sabha seat in Odisha began Tuesday.

The Election Commission recently announced the schedule for bypolls to fill six vacant Rajya Sabha seats. Three of these seats are from Andhra Pradesh, and one each is in Odisha, West

2 melanistic tiger cubs spotted

A rare footage of two melanistic tiger cubs roaming with their mother at Similipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj district has been captured via AI-enabled cameras, bringing cheers to wildlife enthusiasts and conservationists, according to a report Tuesday. Expressing his excitement, Chief Wildlife Warden Prem Kumar Jha has shared the news and images of the melanistic tiger cubs on social media platform X.



LEOPARDS	
17	killed by poachers
3	died of electrocution
4	killed in road, rail mishaps
3	died due to diseases
4	died due to natural causes
3	died due to unknown reasons

He informed the House that one Royal Bengal Tiger was killed by poachers and another died due to infighting among the tigers, while the government is unaware of the reason behind the death of another tiger reported during the period. According to the Odisha Ti-

ger Estimation report, there were 30 Royal Bengal Tigers in the state, and of those 27 were in Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR).

Similarly, 696 leopards were enumerated in different forest areas of the state during All Odisha Leopard Estimation, 2024, the minister added.

President unveils Pt Murmu's statue

Bhubaneswar: President Droupadi Murmu, who arrived here Tuesday on a five-day visit to the state, unveiled a statue of Santali writer and educator Pandit Raghunath Murmu in the Capital City. She also visited the Adim Owar Jarpa Jaher, a sacred place for Santals, here and offered prayers. The President was accorded a warm welcome at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA), where she landed on a special aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF) to commence her five-day long visit to Odisha. She was received at the airport by Governor Raghubar Das, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and other dignitaries.

Maha CM suspense: Fadnavis meets Shinde

Mumbai: Senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis Tuesday evening met Maharashtra's caretaker Chief Minister Eknath Shinde at his official residence in Mumbai, a day ahead of the BJP's legislature party meeting. The visit comes hours after Shinde returned from a private hospital following a health check-up. The legislature party of the state BJP will meet at Vidhan Bhawan Wednesday morning to elect its leader, a day ahead of the swearing-in of the new Mahayuti government at an open ground in south Mumbai. Fadnavis is seen as the frontrunner for the top post.

2 unexpected words are echoing across Kabul: Luxury housing

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, Dec 3: In a town that has been through it all and is clawing its way back, a man named Omidullah is looking to hit payday.

The Kabul real estate agent is selling a nine-bedroom, nine-bath, white-and-gold villa in the Afghan capital. On the roof's gable, glittering Arabic script tempts buyers and brokers with the word "mashallah" — "God has willed it."

The villa is listed at \$450,000, a startling number in a country where more than half of the population relies on humanitarian aid to survive, most Afghans don't have bank accounts, and mortgages are rare. Yet the offers are coming in. "It's a myth that Afghans

don't have money," Omidullah said. "We have very big businessmen who have big businesses abroad. There are houses here worth millions of dollars." In Kabul, a curious thing is happening to fuel the high-end real estate market. Peace, it seems, is driving up property prices.

People who spent years living and working abroad are returning home, keen to take advantage of the country's much-improved security and stability after decades of war, destruction and infrastructure decay. They include Afghans escaping deportation campaigns in Iran and Pakistan who are taking their cash with them.

Mortgages are rare because banks don't have the deposits to facilitate lending. Afghans



buy in cash or use the "gerawi option" — when someone provides a fixed sum to a landlord in return for living on his property and staying there until the landlord returns the money. People were afraid to invest in

Kabul before the Taliban takeover, according to another real estate agent, Ghulam Mohammed Haqdoost. But the country's rulers have created better conditions for the property market in more ways than one.

The city is less violent since the Taliban transitioned from insurgency to authority and foreign forces withdrew, although armored vehicles, checkpoints and militarised compounds remain common sights.

The Taliban, sticklers for an intricate bureaucracy, have pledged to stamp out corruption and regulate legal and commercial matters. That means no more dealing with warlords or bribing local officials for land purchases or construction projects. Haqdoost is happy with how easily and quickly things are getting done under the new administration.

"House prices have risen by almost 40 per cent," he said. "In the last three years, we have sold almost 400 properties. It wasn't like that before." He

said most customers bring their wives along to viewings. That's because it's women who call the shots when it comes to real estate purchases — even in a nation that critics say oppresses and disempowers women.

To make the city more attractive and livable, the municipal authority is busy building and repairing roads, installing streetlights, planting trees and removing trash. It's also developing plans to promote affordable housing and encourage home ownership.

It needs to. Kabul's population was around 500,000 at the start of the millennium. Now it is more than 5 million. Some neighbourhoods remain congested and noisy as a result, despite the municipality's best beautification efforts.

leisure



MAROON 5 ARRIVES IN INDIA FOR MAIDEN CONCERT

The American pop rock band *Maroon 5* has arrived in India ahead of their debut concert in Mumbai. The members of the band were seen waving at the paparazzi stationed at Terminal 2 of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai, Tuesday

KERRY'S ADVICE TO HER YOUNGER SELF

Hollywood star Kerry Washington wished that she had enjoyed her fame as she revealed the advice she would give her younger self. The 47-year-old actress was honoured with a star on the *Hollywood Walk of Fame* in recognition of her career spanning over three decades



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ARIES
Decisions about career and finance will keep you preoccupied today. After a hectic day, all you may want to do is relax. In that case, Ganesh may send a short but pleasurable trip your way, which is sure to rejuvenate you.

TAURUS
You must learn to get to the root of a routine to keep things fresh today, feels Ganesh. Just learn the basic psychology of people and analyse the facts. All action and decision has a motive, you will need to understand the chain to get the most out of things, advises Ganesh.

GEMINI
It's time you took stock of your personal life. Is there someone you want to propose but are afraid to do so? Ganesh advises you not to let the fear of rejection stop you from making an effort. There are strong indications that you will be accepted if you speak your heart today. So let him/her know how you feel.

CANCER
Ganesh believes that you are likely to have a heightened interest in the study of philosophy and the working of the metaphysical world. This may be mere curiosity or a part of your effort to improve your professional skills.

LEO
It's fun, fun and more fun on the horizon! Ganesh foresees you taking time out for some leisure and frolic today. Broaden your horizon with a bit of travel since you are very likely to be going on a small trip to recharge your batteries. When it comes to work – which you seem to have put on hold – it is a matter of pride for you to play the role that you essay within your company.

VIRGO
Today you need to carry on with your success without resting on your past laurels. You will also need to stay focused and organised to continue with the same success level that you enjoyed in the past. Pay attention to your relationship matters as they are the quintessential of your success and peace of mind.

LIBRA
It is very likely that you will arouse immense jealousy in others with your success and growth in business. Your business rivals may attempt to dent your credit worthiness in one way or the other. You may prefer to deal with them subtly rather than confront them openly, feels Ganesh.

SCORPIO
You may find yourself at crossroads, wondering which path to take. Crucial decisions regarding your personal life may numb your thoughts. Let this not interfere with your routine or it may lead to complications at work and with loved ones.

SAGITTARIUS
You seem to be on a self-apreciation mode today. Grooming, makeover and attracting attention in on your cards today, you make extra efforts to get that glamorous look for your self. And as Ganesh says, it will surely not go unnoticed as you bag a lot of compliments for it.

CAPRICORN
You regret spending hefty amount of money on branded items and luxuries, but you'll see a ray of hope today, feels Ganesh. Your bank account is strengthened by some heavy cash flow, and needless to say, it will give you a great relief. Now, you'll understand the value of money and curb on your urge to spend lavishly.

AQUARIUS
Today is your day! Your performance will speak for itself and everyone at work, including bosses, will appreciate your efforts, says Ganesh. Work will not seem burdensome any more, in fact you will enjoy your job like never before. You may wish to contact some old friends and be in touch with them once again.

PISCES
You are likely to feel a lot of tension and stress today. You will feel down owing to some disagreement with someone or due to some unfathomable reason. Even that special someone will be unable to chase away your blues. A little meditation will help you to bounce back and get into your daily routine, says Ganesh.

Tamannaah

on body standards

Mumbai: Tamannaah Bhatia is currently seen in *Sikandar Ka Muqaddar* on OTT and this comes after an array of releases for her this year. While Tamannaah is considered a 'Greek Goddess' and known for her glam image, the actress has also been an inspiration to many women. The reason being, Tamannaah hasn't set any unreal beauty standards and displayed her original body type always; rather than getting into the stereotypical mould. During a chat with an entertainment portal, the actress revealed why she feels the need to do so.

"It stems from the fact that I myself grew up on unrealistic body standards. I was that child who thought that being skinny is being fit. As I evolved through my journey, movies was the biggest way of learning that a natural outcome of being fit was feeling good, looking good and everything around feeling good," shared the *Bahubali* actress.

The actress went on to add, "In today's day and age, what I didn't get as a child, I feel that if I'm in a position of power today, may be some girl out there watching can see my journey and understand that beauty is nothing to do with a particular shape and size."

"Beauty is actually what you think of yourself. Largely, your entire life is a perception of it," said Tamannaah. AGENCIES



Vikrant not retiring, taking a long break

Mumbai: Actor Vikrant Massey, who earlier announced his 'retirement' from films, has now issued a fresh statement with regards to his announcement. The actor clarified that he is not retiring from films, as a major section of the media reported, and said that he is just going for a long break to focus on his health and his family.

The actor said in his fresh statement, "Acting is all I can do. And it has given me everything I have. My physical and mental health have taken a hit. I just want to take some time off, I want to better



IANS

my craft. I feel a sense of monotony at the moment".

He added, "My post has been misinterpreted that I am quitting or retiring from acting. I want to take some time off to focus on my family and health. I would be back when the time feels right."

Earlier, the actor had announced his "retirement" when he took to his social media, and shared a post.

Bhubaneswar: International Theatre (IT), a drama troupe established here in 1975 and having branches in cities like New Delhi, Dehradun, Guwahati, and Patna, organised a four-day national-level theatre festival at Rabindra Mandap Tuesday to mark its golden jubilee celebration.

On the first day of the event, Kolkata-based troupe Ha-Za-Ba-Ra-La presented the Bengali play *Aniket Sandhya*. Written and directed by Chandan Sen, the drama showcased how the present generations undermine the age-old values

Reason why Kareena keeps away from onscreen intimacy

Mumbai: Kareena Kapoor, a prominent Indian actress, surprised the industry by taking on the bold role of a sex worker in *Chameli*. This decision marked a turning point in her career, showcasing her versatility beyond glamorous roles. In a candid chat with Syed Firdaus Ashraf, she later compared her portrayal to Waheeda Rehman's iconic performance in *Pyaasa*, emphasising that she would not engage in sensationalism for its own sake.

The actress had said, "When trade people saw *Chameli*, they were like, "there wasn't enough sex appeal in *Chameli*. They don't understand that in *Pyaasa*, Waheedaji was not doing sex scenes [either]. I am sorry, you cannot expect Raj Kapoor's granddaughter to do those kinds of scenes."

In the same interview, Kareena criticised Mallika Sherawat for suggesting that Raj Kapoor's heroines also exposed themselves. She stated, "She doesn't realise what she is talking about. She made a laughing stock of herself. She is talking about a legend. Raj Kapoor always presented a woman gracefully and tastefully." She went on to say that Mallika's film, *Murder*, had overexposure. Denying she ever criticised the film, Kareena said, "That was a publicity stunt from them [the makers of *Murder*]. It was ridiculous. I saw the film and said it was nice. I just felt that there was too much overexposure."



AGENCIES

INTERNATIONAL THEATRE'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

Aniket Sandhya showcases how modern times take a toll on values, morals



A scene from Bengali play *Aniket Sandhya*

and traditional family bonds. An active person, when arriving at his/her twilight years, becomes a liability to the family, highlighted director Sen, who has been practicing theatre for more than 40 years.

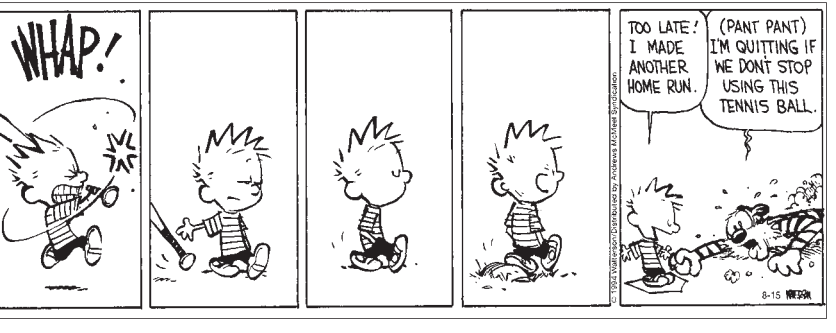
The drawing-room drama had Subhas Maitra, Prabir Dutta, Partha Chowdhury, Shuchismita Singha, and Bidisha Sen

playing key roles. Among the luminaries, Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, Ekamra MLA Babu Singh, and former Commissioner-cum-Secretary of Culture Department Manoranjan Panigrahi were in attendance. Eminent theatre personalities Ramesh Panigrahi, Manoj Patnaik, Binayaka Mishra, and Prasanna Mishra were conferred with International Theatre honours, shared IT's Director Mihir Kumar Meher. A national-level seminar was held earlier in the day to mark the occasion. PNN

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

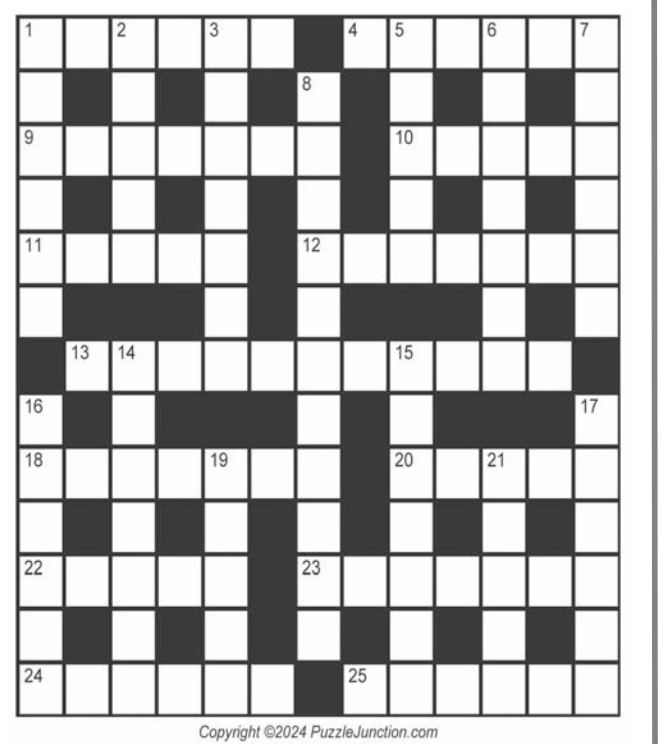


BREVITY



FUN POST

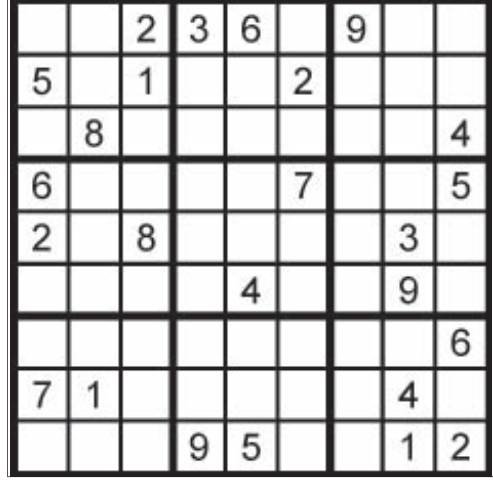
CROSSWORD



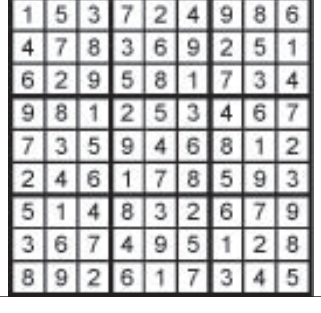
- Across
- 1 Outback, e.g.
 - 4 Medical devices
 - 9 Beat
 - 10 Coral reef
 - 11 Sign of life
 - 12 Belief
 - 13 Purchase
 - 18 Roadblock
 - 20 Astonish
 - 22 Oven emanation
- Down
- 23 Gymnast
 - 24 Cricket team
 - 25 Wardrobe
 - 6 Stipulated condition
 - 7 Like tears
 - 8 Prove
 - 14 Rust
 - 15 Horse restraint
 - 16 Pumpkin-shaped
 - 17 Sorrow
 - 19 Furious
 - 21 Trip planner's aid

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



SAFETY IN MIND: Tight security in Puri, Tuesday, ahead of President Droupadi Murmu's scheduled visit to Srimandir and Navy Day celebration at Blue Flag Beach Wednesday

Prez begins 5-day visit, unveils Pt Raghunath Murmu's statue

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: President Droupadi Murmu, who arrived here Tuesday on a five-day visit to the state, unveiled a statue of Santali writer and educator Pandit Raghunath Murmu in the Capital City.

She also visited the Adim Owar Jarpa Jaher, a sacred place for Santals, here and offered prayers.

The President was accorded a warm welcome at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA), where she landed on a special aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF) to commence her five-day long visit to Odisha.

She was received at the airport by Governor Raghubar Das, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and other dignitaries.

People standing on both sides of the roads from BPIA to Niladri Vihar area welcomed the 'daughter of the soil'. Murmu will spend the night at Raj Bhavan here, according to sources.

During her Odisha tour, she will visit Khurda, Puri and Mayurbhanj districts for various programmes.

As per the President's official itinerary, she will leave for Puri at 9am Wednesday and have darshan and perform puja at the Jagannath temple.

She will also attend the 75th anniversary celebrations of Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya in Puri, the statement said.

At noon, she will have her



lunch at Raj Bhavan in Puri and then attend the Navy Day celebrations at Blue Flag Beach in the Pilgrim City.

She will return to Bhubaneswar from Puri Thursday morning and attend the 40th convocation of Odisha University of Agricultural and Technology (OUAT) around 11am.

Thereafter, she will inaugurate the Bhubaneswar-based Judicial Court Complex around 5pm and return to Raj Bhavan around 6:30pm.

On December 6, Murmu will interact with residents of Uparbeda village, her birthplace. On the same day, she will interact with students and

teachers at Mahila Mahavidyalaya in Rairangpur.

The President will lay the foundation of Bangiriposi-Gorumahisani, Buramara-Chakulia, and Badampahar-Kendujhargarh railway lines, a tribal research and development centre, Dandbose airport and a sub-divisional hospital in Rairangpur December 7, the statement said.

Bhubaneswar Deputy Commissioner of Police Pinak Mishra said a three-tier security arrangement has been made for the President's visit. Over 40 platoons, including traffic forces, have been deployed.

NATYADHARA: DAY-3

Bhubaneswar-based theatre troupe 'Mancha Pradipa' presents Odia play 'Madhyahna re Suryasta' at Bhanja Kala Mandap in the City, Tuesday. The event was jointly organised by Culture department, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Odisha Natya Sangh



Price rise: Oppn stages walkout

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: Opposition BJD and Congress MLAs Tuesday staged a walkout from the Assembly, accusing the ruling BJP of failing to control prices of essential commodities and resolve the potato crisis in the state.

The issues were debated in the House over the admissibility of an adjournment motion moved by the Opposition on price rise of vegetables, pulses, edible oil and fuel.

The Opposition members took exception to comments made by Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister KC Patra that adverse climate conditions, rates in international and domestic markets, and less production by producing states led to rise in prices of essential commodities in Odisha.

"This government has completely failed to control the prices of commodities and is unable to meet the basic requirements of the state. The minister misled people by making a careless statement on availability and prices of potatoes in the state," Opposition Chief Whip Pramila Mallik said.

Congress members Tarasprasad Bahinipati, Ashok Das

MLAs demand salary hike

Bhubaneswar: MLAs cutting across party lines Tuesday demanded an increase in their salaries and enhanced pensions for former lawmakers. The issue was raised during the Zero Hour by Opposition Chief Whip Pramila Mallik, supported by members from both Congress and BJP. Mallik emphasised the need to increase the pension of former MLAs, saying they were struggling to manage due to rising market prices and medical expenses. She pointed out that a committee formed by the previous government had already submitted a report recommending an increase in the salary of MLAs to ₹2.5 lakh per month and the pension for former MLAs to ₹70,000 a month. Mallik also called for an increase in the MLA Local Area Development (LAD) fund from ₹3 crore to ₹5 crore. Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader RC Kadam echoed the demand, saying the fund should be increased alongside the salary and pension hikes. Congress MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati also suggested increasing health insurance coverage for journalists to ₹20 lakh, a proposal that was supported by a few MLAs. BJP's Bhaskar Madhe called for swift action on increasing MLA salaries and pensions, urging the government to implement the earlier committee's recommendations. Speaker Surama Padhy expressed her agreement that the demands of the lawmakers were genuine and directed the Parliamentary Affairs Minister to present the matter to the government.

and BJD's Byomkesh Ray, Dhruva Charan Sahu and Goutam Buddha Das came down heavily on the minister, holding him responsible for the "suffering of people".

"There have been potato crises several times after the BJP government came to power. The minister has failed to handle the situation and is now shifting blame on others," they alleged. Noting that a kg of potato is sold at ₹50 in the retail market, Bahinipati demanded that the state government provide subsidy.

"The price of pulses is ₹180 a kg and edible oil ₹190 a litre.

The government should give subsidy on essential food items as the state earns a lot from different sources like mining, GST and others," Bahinipati said.

Treasury bench members, including Saroj Padhi and Babu Singh, asserted that the Odisha government was making all efforts to control the price of essential commodities.

Patra also blamed the previous BJD government for "failing to provide irrigation to farmlands and increase production". "They (BJD) could not build the required cold storages in the state," he alleged.

Only 16/207 water projects completed: Min

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: Only 16 of 207 approved mega piped water supply projects have been completed in Odisha and the rest are in progress, Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Minister Rabi Narayan Naik told the Assembly Tuesday.

Replying to a question by BJD legislator Souvic Biswal, Naik said the projects were targeted to be completed in two years after issuance of work orders.

"However, some projects got delayed due to various reasons, including delays in the conduct of detailed engineering surveys and investigations, identification of the source of water and

approval of different departments," Naik said.

"Considering the prevailing issues and progress, steps are being taken to complete the ongoing 191 projects in three phases," he said.

Fifty-six projects were targeted to be completed by March 2025, and an additional 54 would be to be completed by December 2025, the Minister said.

A target has been set to complete the remaining 81 piped water supply projects, which were started at the end of 2022 and early 2023, by June 2026, Naik informed the House.

He also blamed the previous BJD government for the delay in the execution of



these projects.

Contractors, who do not belong to Odisha, have performed only minimal tasks such as installing pipes, ceasing operations before constructing key structures like intake wells, and purification of the water, Naik said.

The contractors have also taken away the cream of the to-

tal allocated funds, he claimed.

The Minister informed the House that the contractors have been asked to speed up the work. The government is committed to providing drinking water to all, he added.

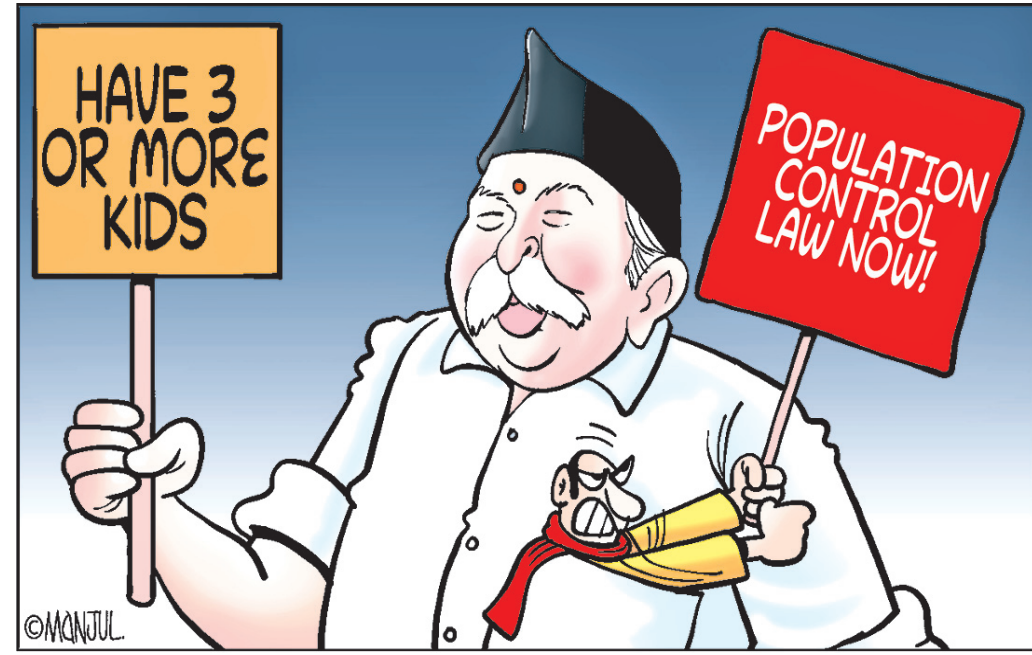
Participating in the discussion, senior BJD MLA Badri Narayan Patra said that delay in water projects is a major reason behind the defeat of several candidates during the last 2024 election.

"I have personally experienced voters' anger due to the non-completion of promised projects before elections. Candidates, who narrowly lost elections, felt that voters' dissatisfaction was caused by these postponements," he added.

Body found near tracks

Bhubaneswar: The body of an unidentified man, believed to be around 35 years, was found from a drain close to the railway tracks near Mancheswar railway crossing in the early hours of Tuesday, Government Railway Police (GRP) said. IIC of Bhubaneswar GRP Ashok Kumar Gochhayat said, "Although a suicide note was not found from the spot, medical reports suggest that the man was under the influence of alcohol when the mishap took place." It is suspected that the man jumped before a running train and died on the spot. Gochhayat said the cops, with the help of locals from nearby slums, recovered the body from a drain near the tracks. There were deep injuries in his face and arms. The cops are scanning the CCTV footage of nearby area to get details about the victim's movement and his identity. "We have sent the body to Capital Hospital for autopsy", he added.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Ektaa Kapoor meets Majhi

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: Film producer Ektaa Kapoor Tuesday called on Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and thanked him for making 'The Sabarmati Report' movie tax-free in the state.

Kapoor met Majhi at his chamber in the Assembly.

"I thanked the CM for making 'The Sabarmati Report' tax-free in Odisha. He said that all of his ministers have watched the movie. Besides, we talked about Odisha and Bhubaneswar," Kapoor said.

The film, starring Vikrant Massey, Raashii Khanna and Ridhi Dogra, has been directed by Dheeraj Sarna and produced by Shobha Kapoor, Ektaa R Kapoor, Amul V Mohan and Anshul Mohan. It was released November 15. Odisha is the seventh BJP-ruled state to exempt 'The Sabarmati Report' from entertainment tax.

Melanistic tiger cubs in Similipal bring joy for wildlife lovers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Dec 3: A rare footage of two melanistic tiger cubs roaming with their mother at Similipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj district has been captured via AI-enabled cameras, bringing cheers to wildlife enthusiasts and conservationists, according to a report Tuesday.

Expressing his excitement, Chief Wildlife Warden Prem Kumar Jha has shared the news and images of the melanistic tiger cubs on social media platform X.

Similipal is famous for its unique melanistic tigers, a rare genetic variation seen only in this sanctuary. The presence of these tigers draws significant attention from wildlife lovers and tourists globally. The Forest department is monitoring their movements through advanced AI camera systems continuously. Recently, the



- Similipal is famous for its unique melanistic tigers, a rare genetic variation seen only in this sanctuary
- The presence of these tigers draws significant attention from wildlife lovers and tourists globally
- The Forest department is monitoring the movement of the cubs through AI camera systems



AI cameras identified the cubs, designated as cub-1 and cub-2, belonging to the melanistic T-24 lineage. These cubs, estimated to be a year old, further emphasise Similipal's unique biodiversity.

Currently, the Similipal Tiger Reserve is home to 27 adult Royal Bengal Tigers and 12 cubs, including 13 melanistic ones. Regional Chief Wildlife Conservator of Forests Prakash Chandra Fogeneni has expressed optimism for the increasing melanistic tiger count in the sanctuary.

To support the tiger popu-

lation, two tigresses, Yamuna and Zeenat, have been relocated to the core areas of two forest divisions within the sanctuary. Both are reportedly healthy and adapting well to their new habitats. Their activities are being monitored round the clock using radio collars, ensuring their safety, while movement patterns are well-documented.

The Forest department remains hopeful about the sustained growth of the tiger population, reinforcing its commitment to biodiversity conservation, forest officials added.

Cops rescue 334 missing children

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: The Odisha Police has rescued 334 children, including 306 girls, who were reported missing from the state, during a special drive, a senior officer said, Tuesday.

The special drive was conducted under the supervision of the Crime Against Women and Children wing, Bhubaneswar from November 18 to November 23 throughout the state to rescue the missing children of Odisha, the officer said.

"Within six days, 334 children have been rescued from various parts of Odisha and outside the state. Of them, 306 are girls, Crime Against Women and Children wing IGP Shyni S said in a statement. The children were reunited with their families. Bhadrak police rescued 65 children, the highest by a district, and was the best-performing district in Odisha, the police said.

Deputy CM meets farmers, discusses Kendu leaf issue

Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo engages with farmers to address key issues and explore solutions for improving livelihoods and revitalising sugar mills in Odisha



weather this year, which led to high-quality Kendu leaf production and emphasised the need for increased farmer income. Responding to the farmers' requests, Singh Deo assured them of his support, stating, "We have heard your demands and problems and accept them sympathetically. We will present these issues to the Chief Minister and work on solutions promptly."

nesh Ram Singh Khuntia, Additional Chief Secretary Satyabrata Sahu, Chief Conservator of Forests Devidatta Vishwala Major, and other officials. Following the discussions on Kendu leaf, Singh Deo also met representatives of the Bharatiya Kishan Sangha to address issues concerning the Bolangir and Nayagarh Sugar Mills. The aim was to foster productive dialogue and identify sustainable strategies to revitalize these mills, promoting prosperity within local farming communities.

Odissi, Mohiniyattam enchant audiences

POST NEWS NETWORK

Konark, Dec 3: The 35th Konark Festival 2024's third evening showcased mesmerising classical dance performances, featuring Odissi and Mohiniyattam, against the iconic backdrop of the 13th century Sun Temple. The evening commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by Puri Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, joined by Law, Excise, and Works Minister Prithviraj Harichandan, renowned Mardala Guru Dhaneswar Swain, and other distinguished guests. The first performance featured Guru Arnab Bandopadhyay and his troupe from Darpani, Kolkata, delivering an exceptional Odissi recital. The program began with Sri Kamala Kucha Mandala, an Ashtapadi from Jayadeva's Geeta Govinda, celebrating the divine beauty of Lord Vishnu.



Artists perform during the 35th Konark Festival 2024 against the backdrop of 13th century Sun Temple on the coastline in Puri district, Tuesday

The piece, a part of Padma Vibhushan Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra's repertoire, set a powerful tone. Following this, Hamsadhwani Pallavi impressed the audience with its intricate rhythms and elegant movements. The segment concluded with Krishna Katha, an original piece by Guru Arnab Bandopadhyay, narrating Lord Krishna's divine journey as

savior, creator, and guide. The recital was enhanced by the masterful music of Pt. Bhubaneswar Mishra and Himanshu Shekhar Swain. The second half featured Guru Sunanda Nair and her group from the USA captivating the audience with their graceful Mohiniyattam performance. Their recital opened with GrapathyTalam,

a devotional piece dedicated to Lord Ganesh, followed by Kartiyayani Devi, praising the goddess of prosperity. The evening concluded with Madhurashtakam, a poetic tribute to Lord Krishna's sweetness. The elegant choreography of Sunanda Nair highlighted the profound beauty of Mohiniyattam, leaving a lasting impression on attendees.

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: Deputy Chief Minister and Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo engaged in an important dialogue with farmers from the Kendu leaf and sugarcane sectors here Tuesday. The meeting aimed to address pressing issues and promote sustainable improvements in the livelihoods and working conditions of workers integral to Odisha's forest economy. Singh Deo met with members of the Odisha Kendu Leaf Association, who shared their concerns and outlined various demands. They highlighted the positive impact of favourable

Jena urges CM to bolster defense & maritime infra

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: Congress leader Srikanth Jena Tuesday wrote a letter to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, seeking his attention towards the under-utilised defense and marine sector in the state. In the letter, Jena said, "Despite Odisha's natural and strategic advantages, including its 480-km long coastline, its potential remains under-utilised in contributing to national security and economic growth." "The recently concluded Bali Yatra festival, reminded us of our glorious maritime heritage, where our ancestors demonstrated exceptional naval and trade expertise. However, the limited

development in this sector today highlights the need for focused interventions," he added. "Given the Navy Day celebrations in presence of President of India and other senior defense personnel in Puri, I urge you to take this opportunity to present our demands to President Droupadi Murmu and lead an all-party delegation to strengthen Odisha's defense and maritime infrastructure," Jena said. The demand includes, enhancing defense educational infrastructure, establishment of a maritime university, development of defense and commercial shipyards, strengthening Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) operations in Sunabeda and revival of potential airstrips.

Jena, further added that the state has one of the lowest representations in army recruitment, which can be attributed to the lack of preparatory schools that provide specialised coaching for defense-related examinations. "There is a pressing need to establish a comprehensive, mega-scale army recruitment coaching center. Additionally, more Sainik Schools, military schools, particularly in regions such as Raipur and Koraput should be established. These institutions will prepare our youth for careers in the armed forces, reduce migration, and channel their aspirations toward serving the state and nation," Jena stated.

'ICMR working to prevent neonatal mortality'

New Delhi: The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is working on multiple projects to reduce the neonatal mortality rate, and prevent stillbirths in India, the Centre informed Tuesday. In a written reply in the Rajya Sabha, the Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Prataparao Jadhav, said that ICMR has identified neonatal mortality as a national health research priority, and it has undertaken several key research projects on the health of newborns and children. Under its 'Sankalp' programme, the ICMR aims to "strengthen, implement and monitor the target of achieving single-digit neonatal mortality." The apex body has also launched research to reduce stillbirths. "It is also developing a project on building evidence and designing solutions to prevent stillbirths in the country," Jadhav said. It also did important studies on pediatric kidney diseases and intravenous antibiotics in the treatment of uncomplicated neonatal bacterial sepsis. "The ICMR has also undertaken a project to design, implement, and optimise a model to provide comprehensive care across the first 1,000 days of life," Jadhav said.

RDWU celebrates 10th Foundation Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj emphasised the importance of preserving Odisha's language and culture amid globalisation during the 10th Foundation Day of Rama Devi Women's University (RDWU), celebrating Maa Rama Devi's 125th birth anniversary.

The event featured Berhampur University VC Geetanjali Dash as guest of honour and Infosys leader Bobby Patnaik as keynote speaker. RDWU's VC Aparajita Chowdhury, registrar Shyamali Mohapatra, and CPGC Chandri Charan Rath were also present. The annual report was unveiled, highlighting RDWU's recent B++ NAAC accreditation. Mohapatra expressed commitment to advancing in line with Maa Rama Devi's ideals. Chowdhury reaffirmed the university's mission to empower women through education, aligning with Rama Devi's legacy of empowerment and progress. Patnaik stressed the need for equal opportunities in education and skill development as essential for women's true empowerment. The celebration concluded with awards for top performers and a cultural programme.

Google Wellness Foundation launches support for elderly

POST NEWS NETWORK



Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: The Google Wellness Foundation, a City-based non-profit organisation officially began its journey Tuesday with a mission to provide care, compassion, and support to the elderly, especially those living in isolation. Registered as a trust for social service, the Foundation aims to address the multifaceted needs of seniors who often face neglect and loneliness due to socio-economic changes, including children living abroad or lack of family care. Speaking at the inaugural event, Bijay Patnaik, former Chief Secretary of Odisha and chief guest, emphasised the urgency of elderly care. "The needs of the elderly have evolved dramatically in recent years, creating a pressing demand for dedicated support," he said. Pradipta Kumar Swain, Managing Trustee and former

CEO of WATCO, Odisha, underscored the Foundation's mission to ensure that no elderly person feels abandoned. "We are not just a service provider; we are a family. Our hands-on care includes medical assistance, daily essential support, transportation to hospitals or banks, and home health services like blood sample collection and check-ups," Swain explained. The Foundation pledges to transform isolation into companionship by providing physical and emotional support to ensure dignity, comfort, and grace in the golden years. The event saw participation from prominent personalities, including Sanjay Pramanik, former Special Secretary, Sarat Chandra Mishra, water sector leader and former COO of WATCO, and social worker Saroj Nilini Parida, alongside Foundation members, who expressed their commitment to uplifting the lives of elderly citizens.

Odisha exports largest equipment to Bhutan

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: In a landmark achievement, Odisha exported its largest-ever on-road engineering equipment to Bhutan Tuesday, marking a significant milestone in the state's manufacturing and export sector under the Make-in-India initiative. The flag-off event, held at Mancheswar, was inaugurated by MSME and Fisheries & Animal Resources Development Minister Gokulananda Mallik. Speaking at the occasion, he said, "This is a moment of immense pride for Odisha. The state has demonstrated its capability in manufacturing world-class engineering equipment



and achieving self-reliance under the Make-in-India scheme." MSME department principal secretary Hemant Sharma highlighted the importance of the achievement in boosting Odisha's manufacturing sector. "This accomplishment will attract more opportunities for exporting engineering equipment produced by MSMEs. The department is committed to providing all necessary support to enhance exports and aims to establish new milestones in this domain," he remarked. The equipment was produced by East End Technologies Private Limited, a small-scale enterprise based in Chowdhury Industrial Estate. Operating since 2007, the company has consistently delivered excellence and now showcased its capabilities

on the global stage. The event was organised by Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Limited (UCCI) in collaboration with the Association of Industrial Entrepreneurs of Bhubaneswar (AIEBA). Key attendees included East End Technologies' managing director Sandeep Patnaik, UCCI vice-president JK Rath, secretary Sanjeev Mahapatra, AIEBA vice-president Subir Banerjee, and other dignitaries and industrialists. This milestone reflects Odisha's growing stature in global engineering exports and highlights the state's dedication to promoting its manufacturing sector as a key player in international markets.

BJD team warns Min on Andhra Dam project's impact

Delegation raises alarms over potential flooding and displacement in Malkangiri district due to the Polavaram project

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: A delegation of the Opposition BJD Tuesday met Union Minister for Jal Shakti CR Patil and apprised him of the potential submergence of large areas in Odisha's Malkangiri district, due to construction of a multi-purpose project in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. The delegation, led by senior leader Debi Prasad Mishra, also submitted a memorandum with the Ministry of Jal Shakti. The regional party in its memorandum mentioned that the Polavaram project is likely to impact the lives and livelihoods of thousands of tribal people, especially those from vulnerable and primitive tribes in Malkangiri. "This requires urgent atten-

tion and remedial action," the BJD said, adding, the Central government recently sanctioned ₹15,000 crore for completion of the project. The BJD, in a statement, said the project was conceived under the resolution of the Godavari Water Dispute Tribunal (GWDT), which outlined agreements between Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Madhya Pradesh. "However, significant changes have been made to the original design flood discharge capacity of the dam project. The project authorities have increased the flood discharge from 36 lakh cusecs to 50 lakh cusecs, without sufficient consideration of the backwater impact in the upstream states of Odisha and Chhattisgarh. "This shift has caused ap-



prehensions among the affected populations of Malkangiri, who are at the risk of losing their lands and homes," it said. The delegation, which reached New Delhi Tuesday, would also meet top officials of the Central Water Commission and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, and submit memoranda on the adverse impacts of the Polavaram project on Odisha. Earlier, BJD president Naveen Patnaik had formed a

Earlier, BJD president Naveen Patnaik had formed a fact-finding committee, which toured various areas in Malkangiri district and prepared a report on the possible impact of the project

fact-finding committee, which toured various areas in Malkangiri district and prepared a report on the possible impact of the project. According to the committee's report, around 200 villages in Motu and Padia blocks of the district will be inundated due to the project.

Navy divers rescue injured man from sea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Bhubaneswar, Dec 3: An Indian Navy diving team saved the life of an injured 20-year-old man from the sea near the Niladri beach in Puri, an official said Tuesday. The diving team was carrying out a recce of the beach in the morning, when they heard a distress call from a youth, whose knees were fractured after being struck by a rock while swimming, he said. Two divers rushed for help and rescued him, the Navy official said. They took him to a nearby naval ambulance point, and then to the Puri hospital for treatment.

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6 yrs on, Chandikhole oil reserve plan a pipedream

REVENUE GENERATION FROM BLACK STONE MINES AND INFLUENCE OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS REPORTEDLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE DELAY



executive engineer of Rural Development department, Jaraka Division, the state government has proposed establishment of a ground-level diesel storage depot in Barada mouza.

The executive engineer (via letter number 5076, dated-November 12, 2024) has issued a no objection certificate (NOC) to the Additional District Magistrate of Jajpur, indicating that the project would not face any major hurdles if it is established. However, details such as project costs, required land area, and other related aspects are not yet available.

Notably, five black stone quarries are in operation in Barada mouza spanning over 40 acre of land. Four of these quarries are leased to Ajit Sahu, and one to Prakash Nayak. However, operations at Ajit Sahu's quarries have reportedly ceased following a penalty notice.

The state government earns annual revenue of around ₹2 crore from these quarries in Barada mouza.

It is alleged that revenue being earned from the quarries and the influence of local stakeholders might be contributing to delays in the establishment of underground crude oil project.

Observers argue that the feasibility and execution of this project remain uncertain.

This development highlights the interplay between existing revenue-generating activities and new infrastructure proposals, which may require further scrutiny to assess long-term viability.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Dec 3: The Centre's proposal to set up a strategic oil reserve near Chandikhole in Jajpur district has failed to make any headway as the state government is yet to take a call on closure of black granite mines on the foothills of Dankari hills under Dharmasala block, a report said.

Although the establishment of India's fourth largest underground oil storage facility at Chandikhole had received approval from the Union Cabinet, an assessment report submitted by the district administration then feared that the proposed project will entail a revenue loss of ₹1,413.86 crore due to closure of 16 black granite mines. Chatters were abuzz that a vested interest group at work to stall the project.

The Dankari hills, known for their abundant reserves of

minor minerals and valuable granite stones, were initially earmarked for the oil storage facility. Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited (ISPRL) deputy CEO Ajay Das clarified that only 15 per cent of the Dankari area would be utilised for the proposed facility. Despite these assurances, the project has remained in limbo for six years.

Meanwhile, the state government has planned to establish an underground diesel storage facility in Barada mouza, adjacent to Dankari hills. Notably, Barada mouza houses five valuable black granite mines, raising concerns that these mines might need to be shut down for safety and security reasons.

This scenario has sparked skepticism about the viability of the proposed underground diesel storage project, leaving its success uncertain.

According to a letter from the



HITTING THE BULL'S EYE: Women participate in an archery competition held at Baripada Stadium on the occasion of Mayurbhanj Mahotsav, Tuesday

BeMC Commissioner faces irregularity charges

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Dec 3: More than 20 corporators of Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) have accused the municipal commissioner of serious financial irregularities, claiming misuse of funds to benefit an 'illegitimate' entity.

In a grievance letter submitted to the Chief Minister through Ganjam Collector Dibya Jyoti Parida, the corporators alleged fund transfer of ₹62,96,975 (via cheque number 101534, dated Nov 14, 2024) to a delisted trust. They claimed this was done without the consent of the Collector, state government, or the corporators' council.

The corporators suspect the funds were diverted from Harishchandra Yojana, which is



intended to support post-death rituals for the general public. They also objected to the installation of a statue of a former Prime Minister, instead of a deity's idol, in a pond traditionally used for Hindu rituals, stating this act has hurt public sentiments.

Additionally, the corporators alleged that despite repeated appeals from the public and former MPs and MLAs to secure

project allotments before the imposition of the election code of conduct, sanctioned projects were deliberately stalled under the pretext of the model code being in effect.

Concerns were raised over the non-utilisation of MPLAD (Members of Parliament Local Area Development) and MLALAD (Members of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development) funds for essential

initiatives, such as pond renovations and other municipal services, indicating alleged mal intention by BeMC authorities.

They further highlighted the prolonged delay and eventual cancellation of the tender for road construction connecting Lochapada and Siddharth Nagar, which has disappointed residents. Although the tender had been approved considering the area's needs, its abrupt cancellation has raised questions about the intentions of the municipal authorities.

The corporators accused the BeMC authorities of monopolistic and unruly behaviour, which they claimed has fostered dissatisfaction among residents and local representatives. They urged the state government to address their grievances promptly.

Cattle-laden truck seized; 2 arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Dec 3: Police Monday night arrested two persons for illegally transporting cattle in a 16-wheeler truck near veterinary hospital at Basudevpur chhak in this district and rescued 35 bovines. They have also seized the vehicle.

The accused were identified as Sheikh Farid, 35, and Marshid Khan, 36, both residents of Gujdarada village under Bhadrak Rural police station.

Acting on a tip-off that 35 cows were being smuggled in a cruel manner in a 16-wheeler truck on Basudevpur-Jamujhadi road, Bhadrak SP Madhkar Sandeep Sampat asked Basudevpur police to take swift action. A team of Basudevpur police intercepted the vehicle near High School Chhak but the smugglers tried to push the vehicle towards the police and fled with the truck.

However, the cops chased the vehicle and managed to stop it near the veterinary hospital and arrested the driver and helper of the truck. Informed, Basudevpur IIC Lopamudra Nayak rushed to the spot to take stock of the situation. Police also seized two different number plates being used in the truck. A case (No 903/24) was registered at Basudevpur police station in this regard.

Farmers block NH-26 over irrigation woes



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhawanipatna, Dec 3: Farmers under the banner of 'Krushak Sachetan Manch' Tuesday blocked Bargarh-Borigumma NH-26 in Kalahandi district, demanding release of water from Indravati dam's lift canal for Rabi season.

The farmers protested the decision of the Indravati project authority, which had allegedly decided not to release water due to low water levels in the reservoir caused by inadequate rainfall in the catchment area during the previous monsoon.

The protest, led by farmers from Koksara and Dharamgarh blocks, began early in the morning near Moter Chowk, disrupting vehicular movement on the highway.

'Krushak Sachetan Manch' president Siba Prasad Pradhani questioned how farmers would

be able to cultivate crops if the canal water is not released during Rabi season.

The road blockade lasted for 12 hours. Pradhani warned that if their demands are not met, the farmers would decide on further action at a meeting of the outfit scheduled later this week.

Pranaya Pradhan, executive engineer of Indravati Lift Canal System, said the canal was inaugurated in 2021 at a cost of ₹986.71 crore to irrigate over 25,000-hectare land in 88 villages under Koksara, Dharamgarh and Jaipatna blocks by lifting water from Mangalpur barrage.

While Rabi irrigation is usually provided based on the water available in the reservoir, Pradhan said this year's poor monsoon rainfall had significantly reduced the water level, making it impossible to supply water to the lift canal for Rabi season.

Kho Kho meet at FMU

BALASORE: The East Zone Inter University (Men's) Kho-Kho tournament kicked off Tuesday at the Fakir Mohan University here. A total of 660 players from 44 universities in West Bengal, Jharkhand, Manipur, Bihar, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim and Assam are participating in the tournament. The four-day tournament was inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor of the University Professor Santosh Kumar Tripathy. In his inaugural address, Professor Tripathy urged the students to uphold the values of sportsmanship. All the 44 teams participating in the tournament took part in a march past which was watched by the vice-chancellor and other dignitaries present during the opening ceremony. Professor Tripathy also asked the students to enjoy irrespective of whether they are losing or winning. Others present on the occasion were PG Council chairman Prof Bhaskar Behera, Registrar Kukumina Das, Student Welfare Director Dr Nihar Ranjan Raut and Sports Council Director Dr Pabitra Mohan Nayak.

63 migrant workers get new ration card

CHHATRAPUR: Sixty-three migrant Odia workers received ration cards at a function held at the NAC office in Chhatrapur, officials said Monday. The labourers had applied over e-labour portal 'PARASHRAM' for the cards, they said. On the occasion, chief guest, MLA Chhatrapur Krushna Chandra Nayak, distributed the new cards in the presence of the NAC executive officer Prasanna Kumar Dash, NAC Chairperson Sarmita Pradhan and Vice Chairperson G Papa Rao. As per the government scheme, the card holders will now receive dry ration at a subsidised rate, irrespective of their location. The facilities under the card are in line with the Central government's "one nation one card" scheme.

Headmaster injured in electric scooter fire

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhamnagar, Dec 3: Paresh Sahu, the headmaster of Kaithadhi Primary school under this block in Bhadrak district suffered critical injuries after his e-scooter burst into flames, officials said Tuesday. The incident happened Monday afternoon when Sahu was leaving

school for the day. Eye-witnesses said that the e-scooter burst into flames when Sahu was trying to start it. Even though students panicked, Sahu himself rescued many of them and brought them out of the school building. While bringing out one of the students, Sahu suffered severe burn injuries on his face and body.

Locals present at the spot rushed Sahu to a nearby medical facility where he is currently undergoing treatment. His condition is stated to be critical. The villagers alleged that though it is compulsory to have a two-wheeler stand in each school, it has not been constructed in this educational institution.

Man gets 20-yr RI for raping minor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasure, Dec 3: A local court in Balasure district Tuesday sentenced a man to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) for abducting and raping a minor girl in 2022.

Special POCSCO judge Ranjan Kumar Sutar, relying upon 22 witnesses and 40 exhibits, sentenced the 26-year-old accused, along with a fine of ₹6,000, special public prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda said.

In default of the payment, the

convict has to undergo another two-year jail term, he said.

According to the prosecution, the case was reported from a village in Simulia area, where the accused kidnapped the 16-year-old girl from her house January 19, 2022 and raped her. The family members lodged an FIR after failing to trace the girl.

2 NIT researchers represent India at BRICS meet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Dec 3: Two National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela faculty members represented India at the recently-concluded 9th BRICS Young Scientist Forum (YSF) 2024 held in Russia.

Prof Madhuresh Dwivedi, Associate Professor in the Department of Food Process Engineering, and Prof Medha Nayak, Assistant Professor in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, represented the country at the prestigious event which was held from November 25 to 29 in Sochi, Russia.

The forum brought together over 150 young scientists and innovators from BRICS nations—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, along with new members Iran, Egypt, the United Arab Emir-



PROF. MEDHA NAYAK



PROF. MADHURESH DWIVEDI

ates, and Ethiopia.

Prof Dwivedi contributed to the thematic area of 'Nature-like and Convergent Technologies as Drivers for a Sustainable Future,' while Prof Nayak shared her research on 'Human-Elephant Interactions

within the framework of Digital Humanities'.

Through their participation, the two scientists highlighted the vital role of Indian researchers' young scientists in addressing global challenges through innova-

tive approaches.

Meanwhile, Prof K Umamaheshwar Rao, Director, NIT Rourkela congratulated the duo and said, "Their participation in the prestigious event reflects their expertise and commitment to advancing knowledge in their respective fields."

Sharing the joy, Prof Dwivedi thanked NIT Rourkela and the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and said, "It is a moment of pride when the nameplate of your seat (at the event) doesn't bear your name but proudly displays INDIA. No other experience can match the joy and honour it brings. It was a great opportunity for me to talk on the topic of Nature, like convergent technology and its applications in Food Process Engineering to achieve sustainability and the goal of zero hunger."

Prof Medha Nayak said, "This was for the first time humanities and social sciences was included in the scientist forum. Therefore, it was a moment of pride to represent India as a social scientist. I would like to thank the expert committee from DST, GoI (Government of India) for selecting me to be a part of the forum."

She said meeting fellow representatives from other countries opened doors for collaboration and co-learning.

For reference, an expert committee from the DST, GoI, had selected a delegation of 12 young scientists from India. The BRICS YSF serves as a vital platform for international collaboration and innovation among young researchers, driving efforts toward a sustainable and inclusive future, a statement from NIT Rourkela said.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender No.: e-T-M-CD-BBS-BT-18-2024
NAME OF WORK: ANNUAL MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION CONTRACT (AMOC) OF BIO TOILETS (DRDE TYPE) IN COACHES OF COACHING DEPOT, BHUBANESWAR FOR A PERIOD OF FOUR YEARS.
Advised Value: ₹ 5,87,600/-, EMD: ₹ 5,87,600/-, Tender Document Cost: ₹ 11,800/-, Period of Completion: 48 Months.
Bidding Start Date: 05.12.2024
Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1530 Hrs. of 19.12.2024.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete information including e-Tender documents and corrigendum is available in website www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Coaching Depot Officer/ PR-776/P/24-25 Bhubaneswar

EAST COAST RAILWAY
File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/24-25/E-Tender/84 & 85
Date: 27.11.2024
(1) Tender No: e-Tendersouthkur-246-2024, Dtd. 20.11.2024
DESCRIPTION: PROPOSED FORMATION WORKS, EXTENSION OF BRIDGES & SIDE DRAINS IN CONNECTION WITH PROVISION OF ONE ADDITIONAL LINE WITH HIGH LEVEL PASSENGER PLATFORM AT DOWN LINE SIDE OF PALASA STATION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx Cost of the work (₹): 1152.22 Lakh, EMD (₹): 7,26,100/-
(2) Tender No: e-tendersouthkur-251-2024, Dtd. 22.11.2024
DESCRIPTION: PROVISION OF 16 NOS GOOMTIES (AUTO CUM GATE GOOMTY) IN CONNECTION WITH AUTO SECTION IN BHUSANDPUR-BALUGAON (BSPD-BALU) SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION AEN BALUGAON OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx Cost of the work (₹) 701.10 Lakh, EMD (₹): 5,00,600/-
Completion period: 18 (Eighteen) Months (for Sl. No. 1) & 10 (Ten) Months (for Sl. No. 2).
Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1500 Hrs. of 13.12.2024 (for Sl. No. 1) & At 1500 Hrs. of 16.12.2024 (for Sl. No. 2).
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website: www.ireps.gov.in
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderers(s)/ bidder(s) can participate on e-tendering.
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) / Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY
'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS
Tender Notice No. PCMM/EP/2024/25/125, Date: 02.12.2024
SL. NO. 01: TENDER NO. 05246308A, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: SUPPLY OF 48 OFC (ARMOUR), QUANTITY: AS PER TS.
SL. NO. 02: TENDER NO. 07241106A, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: BED SHEET MILL MADE WHITE BLEACHED, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.
SL. NO. 03: TENDER NO. 03241050, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: KNUCKLE (HTE) ETC, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.
SL. NO. 04: TENDER NO. 03243815A, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: SECONDARY SPRING FOR GENERATOR CAR, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.
SL. NO. 05: TENDER NO. 02241681, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: PINION SHAFT 21 TEETH FOR WAG 9, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.
SL. NO. 06: TENDER NO. 03243833, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: SECONDARY SPRING FOR LHB COACHES, QUANTITY: 126 Nos.
SL. NO. 07: TENDER NO. 02241207A, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: RADIATOR UNIT OIL COOLER RADIATOR, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.
SL. NO. 08: TENDER NO. 04241129, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: BLIND SOCKET ASSEMBLY WITH LOCKING ARRANGEMENT, QUANTITY: 676 Nos.
SL. NO. 09: TENDER NO. 06245009, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: RATE CONTRACT FOR MANUFACTURE AND SUPPLY OF 6400 MM CURVED SWITCH, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.
SL. NO. 10: TENDER NO. 03243860, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: INTERCOM GANGWAY MOUNTING, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.
Tender Opening Date: 16.12.2024 (for Sl. No.1 & 2), 20.12.2024 (for Sl. No.3), 19.12.2024 (for Sl. No.4), 23.12.2024 (for Sl. No.5), 30.12.2024 (for Sl. No.6 & 9), 17.12.2024 (for Sl. No.7), 09.12.2024 (for Sl. No.8) & 06.01.2025 (for Sl. No.10).
Regarding detailed notice, EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.ireps.gov.in and www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in.
Principal Chief Materials Manager/ PR-776/P/24-25 Bhubaneswar

FOCUS SOCIETY

THE TECHNO-REALISTS



If you can always smile at life, life will always smile at you. THE MOTHER

Brain Rot

TS Eliot once characterised modern man as an individual with "headpiece filled with straw" for stuffing his mind with things that are worthless. It was an indictment of the moral and intellectual decay of those times. Now, in the age of the internet the human brain is subjected to indescribable assault as it is turned into a storehouse of mindless contents dished out almost every fraction of a second by social media. This is a sordid reality of present day life and the Oxford English Dictionary has sought to crystalize this moment in our lives by announcing "Brain Rot" as the Oxford Word of the Year 2024. It very eloquently addresses the concerns over endless social media consumption and mind-numbing content. Brain Rot is defined as the supposed deterioration of a person's mental or intellectual state, especially viewed as the result of overconsumption of online content that are considered trivial or unchallenging. However, despite its present rise to prominence, its first recorded use was in Henry David Thoreau's book Walden in 1854.

Over 37,000 people voted to help choose the winner from a shortlist of six words drawn up by Oxford University Press (OUP), the publisher of the Oxford English Dictionary. Incidentally, this year marks the 20th anniversary of selecting the word - or sometimes two words - that in some way sums up the most striking trend of human thoughts during a given year.

For this year six words contended for the coveted pride of place. Interestingly, all six contenders - slop, brain rot, demure, romantasy, lore and dynamic pricing - on the shortlist have one thing in common - the internet. "Slop" refers to anxieties about online phenomena, while "brain rot" is caused by consuming too much "slop" and other material. Social media has also popularised the old-fashioned words such as "demure," "lore" and "romantasy," the latter meaning a blend of romance and fantasy so much loved by BookTok. A "BookTok" is a member of the BookTok community on TikTok, which is a sub-community dedicated to books and literature. The word "dynamic pricing" relates to skyrocketing costs of tickets for fans in virtual queues.

Perhaps it is a reflection of the times we are living in that the list of words ignore the eventful year in real life which witnessed elections in the UK, the US and other countries. Some of the words that gained currency during the run-up to the elections are - "cat lady", "supermajority", "MAGA" (Make America Great Again), "Trumpism" and "weird." Any of these could have been included as contenders. The OUP has often linguistically responded to global events with new coinages such as "post-truth" following Donald Trump's 2016 win, "climate emergency" chosen in 2019 and the "vax" that won the spotlight in 2021 following upheavals in 2020 caused by COVID-19.

It is pertinent to remember that writers from Shakespeare to JK Rowling have been supplying new words for centuries. It is no surprise that the internet is now taking over since new technology requires new words and new ways of saying things. It is worth remembering that the invention of the telephone had given rise to the usage of "hello" and "hi". In fact, during the past two decades the words that have captured the mind globally are "podcast" and "selfie."

The question is whether the word of the year is a mere PR stunt or a worthwhile pursuit. The answer is language is dynamic. It is constantly evolving. The exercise of choosing a word reflecting a key tendency of human pursuits during a year is laudable as it is a reminder of progress or its opposite.



Nicholas Agar & Stuart Whatley

MODERNITY HAS MADE IT BOTH EASY AND EXCITING TO IMAGINE TECHNOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS APPEARING OUT OF NOWHERE

"It's actually going to be easy to cure aging and cancer," insists David Sinclair, a researcher on aging at Harvard University. Similarly, Elon Musk continues to claim that he will soon land humans on Mars and deploy robotaxis en masse. Major corporations have set carbon-neutrality targets based on highly optimistic forecasts about the potential of carbon-removal technologies. And, of course, many commentators now insist that "AI changes everything."

Amid such a confounding mix of hype and genuine technological marvels, are entrepreneurs, scientists, and other experts getting ahead of themselves? At the very least, they betray a strong preference for technological solutions to complex problems, as well as an abiding belief that technological progress will make us healthier, wealthier, and wiser. "Give us a real world problem," writes Silicon Valley doyen Marc Andreessen in "The Techno-Optimist Manifesto," "and we can invent a technology that will solve it."

But, as we note in our book How to Think About Progress, this attitude is heavily influenced by what we call the "horizon bias": the propensity to believe that anything experts can envisage accomplishing with technology is imminently within reach. We owe this optimism to technology's past successes: eradicating smallpox, landing a man on the moon, creating machines that can outperform chess grandmasters and radiologists.

While these highlights dwell permanently in our collective memory, offering strong inductive evidence for the power of human ingenuity, we forget (or are oblivious to) all the times that technology promised to solve some problem but didn't. Just as history is written by the victors, the story of technological progress features mainly the breakthroughs that panned out, creating the impression that Technological Man consistently accomplishes whatever



Just as history is written by the victors, the story of technological progress features mainly the breakthroughs that panned out, creating the impression that Technological Man consistently accomplishes whatever he sets out to achieve.

he sets out to achieve. The horizon bias affects us all, but it is most consequential in those with enough expertise to be able to offer scientific and technological solutions to big challenges in the first place - especially if they are trying to sell us something. The hazard lies in convincing yourself that you can anticipate every discrete step needed to reach an ambitious goal like "curing" cancer or colonizing Mars. Such "knowing" instills confidence in the speaker as much as it inspires hope in the non-expert listener.

Moreover, it is one thing to promise tourist trips to Mars, and quite another thing to claim that you will invent a time-travel machine. The first ambition at least seems doable, and that is more than enough for any optimist to run with. Mere possibility can be a powerful force in forecasting and decision-making, because we usually fail to recognise that our sense of possibility expands with ignorance. The less you know about biology or space travel, the more you believe can be achieved in those fields. For all we know, anti-aging research really will allow people who are alive today to live for hundreds of years.

This is the blind spot that Silicon Valley hype-artists love to exploit, especially after breakthrough moments like the

release of ChatGPT or the success of mRNA vaccines against COVID-19. It is on such occasions that we look to the horizon and embrace or revise our ambitions. Perhaps the science behind the vaccines will also offer "the cure" for cancer?

But this is a facile mode of thinking: because we can only speculate about the later stages of the sequence needed to reach a hoped-for destination, we have a license to gloss over the messy contingencies that are inevitable in the course of research and development. Succumbing to the horizon bias, we can say things like, "All we would need to do to address climate change is ramp up R&D in carbon-capture technologies until we have found a way to make them affordable and viable at scale." Precisely because we don't yet know what technical and scientific advances this would require, we can imagine it as eminently feasible.

Doing so feels better than conceding that a problem may remain beyond our control, or at least for longer than we expect. But we should resist the temptation. The persistence of the horizon bias means that there is both a rational and an ethical case for maintaining a realistic skepticism about technology. Too much confidence can create moral hazard. Why worry about carbon emissions if we can anticipate

that direct air capture or some kind of carbon-eating nanobot will eventually be deployed to reverse climate change?

Moreover, we should be wary of a psychological tendency that leads us systematically to overestimate our ability to solve big, generation-defining problems with technology. As the bibliographer of science fiction IF Clarke put it almost 50 years ago, we harbor an "eternal desire that the power of man over nature shall always be as instant and as absolute as his will." Modernity has made it both easy and exciting to imagine technological solutions appearing out of nowhere. Though we know we should not bet everything on such expectations, it is all too tempting to envision solutions that would make problems like climate change, pandemics, and cancer just go away.

This tendency can hamper our ability to prepare for an intrinsically uncertain future. Proper preparation demands that we not rely on a grievously biased sample of past experiences. As we confront big global problems, we must avoid acting like gamblers who remember only those rare occasions when they hit it big, not the more numerous occasions when the house swallowed their money.

To be sure, the horizon bias does not imply that technological solutions to civilizational problems won't emerge soon. Some lone genius could crack the problem of cancer or climate change tomorrow, falsifying pessimistic claims about the future. Nonetheless, claims about what our rational expectations ought to be will remain valid. If you announce that you have just bought a lottery ticket and simultaneously bid on a mansion that you cannot afford, no one will commend you for your financial judgment, even if you win.

Nicholas Agar is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. Stuart Whatley is Senior Editor at Project Syndicate.

WISDOM CORNER

A man's delight in looking forward to and hoping for some particular satisfaction is a part of the pleasure flowing out of it, enjoyed in advance. But this is afterward deducted, for the more we look forward to anything the less we enjoy it when it comes. ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

We seek true individuality and the true individuals. But we find them not. For lo, we mortals see what our poor eyes can see; and they, the true individuals, - they belong not to this world of our merely human sense and thought. JOSIAH ROYCE

If a man walks in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer. But if he spends his days as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making the earth bald before her time, he is deemed an industrious and enterprising citizen. HENRY DAVID THOREAU

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1533: Ivan the Terrible proclaimed grand prince of Moscow. On this day in 1533, the three-year-old who became Ivan the Terrible was proclaimed grand prince of Moscow upon the death of his father, Grand Prince Vasily III, with his mother ruling in Ivan's name until her death in 1538.
1791: First Sunday paper published. The Observer, a British newspaper became the first newspaper in the world to be published and read on a Sunday.
1918: U.S. President Woodrow Wilson departed for France to attend the Paris Peace Conference, where, following the cessation of hostilities in World War I, the League of Nations was established and the Treaty of Versailles was drafted.
1969: American civil rights leader Fred Hampton, a charismatic member of the Black Panthers, was shot and killed during a police raid in Chicago; his death caused public outrage, and the ensuing investigations brought greater scrutiny of the FBI's attempts to dismantle the Panthers and other Black organizations.

IN JEST THIS

Right exercises to make you a better chess player



Melvin Durai

DON'T WORRY ABOUT LOSING. YOU MAY LOSE YOUR KING OR YOUR QUEEN, BUT YOU'LL BE A WINNER IN THE LONG RUN

India's D Gukesh is currently challenging China's Ding Liren in the World Chess Championship. Only 18, Gukesh is attempting to become the world's youngest male chess champion.

If he defeats 32-year-old Liren, Gukesh would be India's second world champion, following in the footsteps of Vishwanath Anand, a five-time world chess champion.

The World Chess Championship has created so much interest in the sport that I decided to write a special chess advice column, answering questions from people of all ages. Some are trying to become better chess players, while others are trying to become better chess parents.

QUESTION: My husband and I are expecting our first child, a boy who will be born in just three months. I've heard that it's important to start children on chess at a very young age. Is there something I can do

to expose my son to chess while he's still in my tummy? Should I swallow a few chess pieces, so he can get familiar with them?

ANSWER: Your son is actually in your womb, not your tummy, so swallowing will not help much - and it's not worth the risk anyway. Instead, it would be wiser to get your husband to speak directly into your abdomen, using words such as "gambit," "endgame" and "checkmate." After your son is born, you can introduce him to chess pieces and make him sleep on a large chess board.

Q: I will be playing in my first chess tournament in Pune next month, but I am not sure what to wear. I've noticed that Gukesh likes to wear suits for his matches. Should I wear a suit too? Will it help me win my matches?

A: It's not what you wear that matters, it's how you feel. Dressing your best can make you feel more confident. But

it's also important to feel comfortable. If you don't feel comfortable in a suit, you might play better in just a nice shirt. Don't forget to wear pants.

Q: I am thinking of buying the book "1001 Chess Exercises for Beginners." But before I do that, I wanted to ask you what exercises you recommend for chess?

A: I recommend running and dumbbell curls. Running can help you improve your endurance. Some chess games last several hours and can be quite tiring. The more endurance you have, the better you'll perform. Dumbbell curls can develop your arm muscles and help you lift the chess pieces, not to mention the winner's trophy.

Q: My daughter wants to be a grandmaster one day and is practicing chess for three hours a day. What food can I feed her to help her play better? I've heard that fish is a good brain food, but she doesn't like fish at all.

A: Yes, fish has been linked to better brain power, but so have other foods, including green vegetables, colorful berries, beans, nuts and seeds. Dark chocolate is also good for the brain. In general, a balanced diet is good for athletic performance - and it's also good for chess.

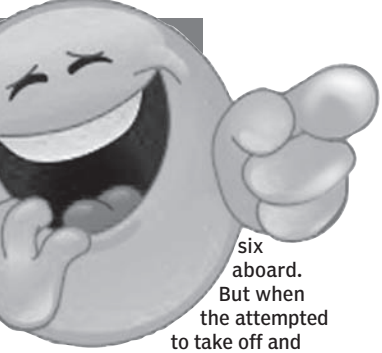
Q: I am 12 years old and want to become a chess champion. What is the best way to become a chess champion? Does it help to have good chess genes? My father was good at chess in his school days.

A: Whether you have good genes or eat lots of beans, the best way to become a chess champion is to eat, breathe and sleep chess. Most importantly, once you have learned the rules of chess, you need to play lots of chess. You can play online, play against your father, or play in tournaments. Don't worry about losing. You may lose your king or your queen, but you'll be a winner in the long run.

LOL

FLYING HUNTERS

Two hunters got a pilot to fly them into the far north for elk hunting. They were quite successful in their venture and bagged six big bucks. The pilot came back, as arranged, to pick them up. They started loading their gear into the plane, including the six elk. But the pilot objected and he said, "The plane can only take four of your elk; you will have to leave two behind." They argued with him; the year before they had shot six and the pilot had allowed them to put all aboard. The plane was the same model and capacity. Reluctantly, the pilot finally permitted them to put all



six aboard. But when they attempted to take off and they crashed into the wilderness. Climbing out of the wreckage, one hunter said to the other, "Do you know where we are?" "I think so," replied the other hunter. I think this is about the same place where we landed last year!"

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 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



Bhopal's hapless souls

Sir, It is a matter of disgrace and shame that tonnes of toxic waste are still lying unremoved from the premises of Union Carbide India Limited in Bhopal despite four decades having passed since the world's worst industrial disaster took place in the city. It is all the more deplorable that both the central and state governments continue to pass the buck on disposal of these wastes even after 40 years of the tragedy. Reportedly a 'peer review committee' was formed in 2010 to examine government studies, which recommended a comprehensive reassessment of the whole tragedy. But, sadly it seems the recommendations remain on paper even after 14 years. It is high time the Madhya Pradesh government addressed the issue of toxic wastes and the continuing contamination of the UCIL surroundings, rehabilitation of the victims and more compensation for their sufferings. Until this is done, Bhopal's hapless souls, whose world turned topsy-turvy on that fateful night 40 years ago, will have no closure. Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Positive decision

Sir, Quashing a notice by district authorities, the Madras High Court allowed a farmer from Tamil Nadu's Dharmapuri district to erect a statue of the late Father Stan Swamy. The petitioner, Piyush Sethia, had proposed to build a stone memorial commemorating Swamy on his private land. Swamy was an 84 year-old Jesuit priest who worked for tribal rights in Jharkhand. He was implicated in the Bhima-Koregaon case and imprisoned under the draconian UAPA in 2020. Swamy passed away in jail due to post-COVID complications in 2021. Sethia, who works on cooperative watershed development and farming, had said that Swamy taught "sustainable farming and lifestyle practices" to farmers of his village. Calling Swamy his mentor, Sethia said he wanted to commemorate his lifelong work to "protect the welfare of the Adivasi communities." Sethia contended that a notice from district officials sent to him in July 2021 had prevented him from building the memorial. Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

40 yrs on, survivors still fight for justice

A large number of protestors and survivors, holding placards, marched towards the now defunct Union Carbide factory site raising slogan "Bhopal Ka Insaaf Karo"



BHOPAL GAS TRAGEDY

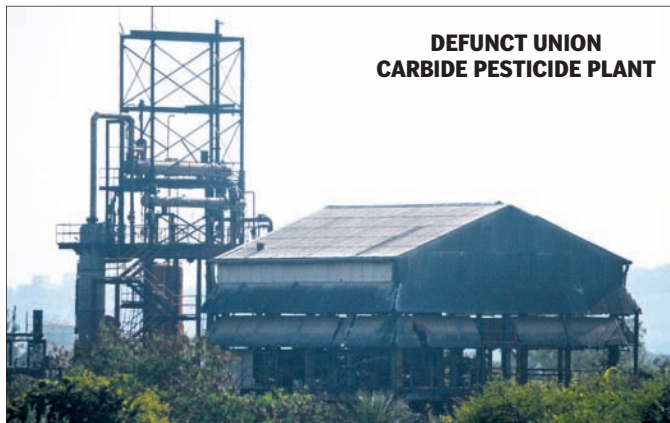
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Dec 3: Organisations representing survivors of the Bhopal gas tragedy Tuesday took out a protest march to mark the 40th anniversary of one of the world's biggest industrial disasters and demanded an end to the 'injustice' faced by them.

An all religion prayer was also held in the Madhya Pradesh (MP) capital to pay homage to victims of the catastrophe.

On the intervening night of December 2 and 3, 1984, the highly toxic gas methyl isocyanate (MIC) leaked from Union Carbide's pesticide plant here, killing 5,479 persons and maiming more than five lakh others.

Governor Mangubhai Patel, along with representatives of different religions paid homage to the gas tragedy victims at the Central Library, Barkatullah Bhawan, in old Bhopal area.



DEFUNCT UNION CARBIDE PESTICIDE PLANT

Those present on the occasion observed a two-minute silence as a mark of respect to those who lost their lives in the tragedy, an official said.

Demanding justice for the victims, former vice chancellor of the Bhoj Open University, Kamalakar Singh said the disaster happened decades ago, but the survivors and their children

were still dealing with the fallout, including health, environmental and economic problems.

"The disaster still continues to kill and disable the new generation. The perpetrators responsible for this continue to enjoy a happy and rich life," he said.

The people of Bhopal are still seeking justice and accountability from the corporations that waged genocide in their city 40 years ago, Singh said.

The world must know that the disaster is continuing, causing chronic illnesses, disabling the next generation (of survivors), and environmental damage that keeps unfolding, he said.

"This was a corporate crime and it should not be a story where the message is that the world's worst industrial disaster resulted in corporations getting away. The story should be about how this can be fixed, how justice can be given, how accountability can be realised," he said.

Meanwhile, a large number of women and men, holding placards, marched towards the now defunct Union Carbide factory site while raising the slogan "Bhopal Ka Insaaf Karo".

The protest march participants, carrying an effigy of 'corporate crime' at the abandoned

factory site, denounced various regional, national and international leaders and relief organisations for their continued involvement in the 'denial' of justice and a life of dignity to survivors of the catastrophe.

Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationery Karmchhari Sangh president Rashida Bee alleged that successive US presidents have actively protected the Union Carbide Corporation and the Dow Chemical company from prosecution in India.

"We wish that US President-elect Donald Trump puts an end to the long history of injustice in Bhopal in his effort to 'Make America great again'. We hope Trump will take action against the Union Carbide Corporation and the Dow Chemical company," she said.

The Dow Chemical Company had acquired the Union Carbide Corporation.

Balkrishna Namdeo, from the Bhopal Gas Peedit Nirashrit Pensionbhogee Sangharsh Morcha, claimed all scientific studies were now pointing out the ongoing illnesses and continuing deaths among the half-a-million survivors and health impacts on their children.

Bhopal Group for Information and Action representative Rachna Dhingra claimed the Dow Chemical's business in India has increased more than 10 times under the present regime at the Centre.

In 10 years, the groundwater in Bhopal, which should have been cleaned up by Dow Chemical according to the polluter pays principle, has moved 3 kilometre into the city, she further claimed.

Dow Chemical is selling Union Carbide's properties to Indian PSUs for the last two years and claiming that US corporations are not answerable to Indian courts, Dhingra alleged.

CYCLONE FENGAL AFTERMATH

TN battle with inundation woes, CM announces relief



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Dec 3: Several districts in Tamil Nadu adversely battered by torrential rains were battling with inundation woes, badly damaged roads, and lack of access to essential commodities Tuesday.

In certain areas like Arasur in Villupuram district, people confronted with depleted essential commodities, resorted to a sudden agitation demanding the essentials.

Chief Minister MK Stalin, who chaired a meeting at the Secretariat here, announced a flood relief of ₹2,000 each to the family ration cardholders in Villupuram, Cuddalore, and Kallakurichi districts which bore the brunt of damage caused by Cyclone Fengal. The sum was meant to compensate livelihood loss of the people owing to unprecedented rain in the three districts for more than two days.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Stalin earlier in the day and enquired about the flood situation in parts of the state and assured him of all possible support from the Centre.

As per an estimate by the Tamil Nadu government, the cyclone caused unprecedented devastation in 14 districts extensively damaging roads, electricity lines and causing heavy inundation. The sudden deluge not only inundated vast areas but also displaced the population and severely impacted the infrastructure.

The 'catastrophic event' resulted in the loss of 12 human lives, 2,416 huts, 721 houses and 963 cattle. Widespread damage was also caused to agriculture and horticulture crop and irrigation systems, the state government said.

At Arasur, 18 people who took shelter in a temple that was damaged due to rain were rescued. The NDRF personnel successfully evacuated people and livestock marooned in a village in Cuddalore district.

In a tragic incident in Thiruvannamalai district, seven persons, including five children trapped in a house smashed by a boulder that fell on a residential house after rolling down from the top of Annamalaiyar Hill following a mud slip December 1, were found dead during a rescue operation.

Their bodies were recovered December 2 evening following a nearly 24-hour rescue operation, said police.

Stalin condoled the deaths and announced a solatium ₹5 lakh each to their kin Tuesday.

The meeting chaired by the Chief Minister here decided

to extend relief assistance to the rain-hit people in Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Thiruvannamalai, Cuddalore, Dharmapuri, and Krishnagiri districts, and extend ₹5 lakh as compensation each to the families who lost their kin due to cyclone or floods.

The government has decided to provide ₹10,000 as compensation for damaged huts, give priority to constructing houses under the Kalaignar Kanavu Illam (housing scheme) for completely damaged huts, and also announced compensation for farmers for the loss of crops in the rain-fed areas, loss of cattle, goats and sheep and chicken.

State Water Resources Minister Duraimurugan said in a statement that water from the Sathanur dam in Thiruvannamalai district was released after five flood alerts were issued and that the timely action and also the precautionary steps taken by the state government averted a major catastrophe.

What was meant to be a day to distribute welfare aid and console the flood-ravaged families, turned into an ill-starred day for Forest Minister K Ponnudiy.

Some unidentified persons threw mud at him and his entourage during his visit to Iruvelpattu village in Villupuram district. But, he dismissed the incident as 'politically motivated' and said that the people in the area had nothing against him.

Ponnudiy later told reporters that the mud was flung from behind when he, his son Gautham Sigamani, and collector C Palani, were returning from the village. He did not prefer to lodge a formal complaint in connection with the incident as he "didn't wish to do politics" he said.

During an interaction with reporters here, State Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments department Minister PK Sekar Babu, accused a political party member and her relative of throwing mud to obstruct Ponnudiy from distributing relief to the flood-affected people. He, however, did not name the party.

Reacting, BJP state chief K Annamalai commented that such was the current state of affairs in Tamil Nadu. "Today, the public's frustration reached a boiling point as a corrupt DMK Minister, Thiru Ponnudiy, visited a flood-affected area and was met with a barrage of mud. This is a gentle reminder for DMK about what is on the offing," he said in a post on social media platform X.

UGC chairman bats for semester system

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, Dec 3: University Grants Commission (UGC) chairman M Jagadesh Kumar said recently that higher education institutions should adopt the semester system instead of holding annual examinations for better evaluation of students and improving their learning process.

Considering the student learning process, those universities in the country should adopt the semester system where students are still evaluated through the annual examination system, he said. "We want continuous assessment of students in higher education institutions. If you conduct exams just once a year, students do not get feedback to improve their learning process. Therefore, the semester system has been adopted globally," Kumar told reporters in Indore.

Students should also be evaluated on the parameters such as examinations held between semesters, different exercises, participation in discussions, and homework assignments, he added.

The UGC chairman said at least 6,300 colleges and universities will benefit from the 'One Nation, One Subscription' scheme, which he believes will strengthen the research structure in higher education institutions. The Union cabinet recently approved the 'One Nation, One Subscription' scheme to provide nationwide access to scholarly research articles and journal publications.

Kumar participated in the regional conference of autonomous colleges organised by UGC and Indore's Devi Ahilya University on the topic of 'Implementation of New National Education Policy'. The UGC chairman further said the new NEP will promote social justice, equality, and employment in the country as per the basic spirit of the Constitution.

Madras HC junks plea of TFAPA

AGENCIES

BAN ON FILM REVIEWS FOR 3-DAYS POST RELEASE

Chennai, Dec 3: The Madras High Court has declined to grant an interim order to restrain individuals or social media channels from reviewing films within three days of their theatrical release.

Justice S Southar, while hearing the petition filed by the Tamil Film Active Producers Association (TFAPA), questioned the feasibility of such a restriction, stating, "Reviewers are entitled to review any film; it is their opinion."

Advocate Vijayan Subramanian, representing TFAPA, argued that certain individuals, under the guise of film reviews, defame directors, actors, and producers, causing damage to their reputations. The association sought restrictions on these activities and requested the court to issue directions to the City Police Commissioner



to prevent YouTube channels from entering cinema theatres for the purpose of film reviews. The petition highlighted the lack of regulation and self-discipline on social media platforms, leading to defamatory remarks and coordinated efforts to manipulate film ratings, a practice known as "review bombing."

TFAPA claimed these actions, often motivated by personal or business rivalries, negatively influence public opinion and harm box-office collections before the audience forms its own judgment. The judge refused to issue a blanket order or directions in this regard, emphasising the importance of freedom of expression.

Notices were issued to the Union and state governments,

as well as YouTube, for their response. The case has been posted for further proceedings after four weeks.

The petition follows growing concerns among Tamil filmmakers about the impact of early reviews on their films' commercial performance.

TFAPA and the Tamil Nadu Producers Council have called for guidelines to regulate online film reviews and urged the owners to ban YouTube reviews from conducting interviews on their premises.

Ratapani notified as 8th tiger reserve

The tiger reserve has the core area of 763.812 sq km and buffer area of 507.653 sq km, located in Raisen district

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Dec 3: The Madhya Pradesh government has notified Ratapani forest in Raisen district as a tiger reserve in the state, officials said Tuesday.

It is the eighth tiger reserve in the state after Kanha, Satpura, Bandhavgarh, Pench, Sanjay Dubri, Panna and Veerangana Durgavati.

The state government issued the notification for Ratapani reserve Monday.

With the formation of the tiger reserve, wildlife can be managed in a better way by receiving

ing a budget from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), an official release said.

The total area of the Ratapani Tiger Reserve (RTR) will be 1,271.465 square kilometre, it said. Following directives of Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, the Ratapani forest has been declared as the eighth tiger reserve of the state, the release said. The RTR has the core area of 763.812 sq km and buffer area of 507.653 sq km, it said.

Nine villages, geographically located in the tiger reserve, are not included in the core area in the notification of the sanctuary, the release said.

With the formation of the RTR, its entire core area is within the boundary of the Ratapani Tiger Sanctuary. This will not change the current rights of the villagers, it said.

Ratapani forest is located in

Raisen district, adjoining state capital Bhopal.

NTCA's technical committee approved the proposal to designate Madhav National Park in MP's Shivpuri district also as a tiger reserve December 1.

The state government is yet to issue a notification for it. The Kuno National Park is the only abode of cheetahs in the country. It is located in Sheopur district and is close to the Madhav National Park.

As per the 'Status of Tigers: Co-predators and Prey in In-

dia-2022' report released by the NTCA and Wildlife Institute of India, the tiger population in Madhya Pradesh is estimated to be 785, the highest in the country, followed by Karnataka-563 and Uttarakhand-560.



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People of Wayanad have not received financial support. They have gotten very little support

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS MP

SC SLAPS ₹50K COST ON CENTRE

The Supreme Court Tuesday imposed a cost of ₹50,000 on the Centre for filing an appeal against an order of the Armed Forces Tribunal...



of the day quote

After the coup in Bangladesh, the violence and atrocities being committed by the new government...



MAYAWATI | BSP CHIEF

Two youths were attacked by seven to eight local boys in this area. Manish was stabbed multiple times...



ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP SUPREMO

We can reduce import of fossil fuels by encouraging alternative fuels



NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

WELL-PLANNED CONSPIRACY: AKHILESH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sambhal/New Delhi, Dec 3: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav Tuesday alleged a "well-planned" conspiracy by the BJP for the violence in Uttar Pradesh's Sambhal...

Raising the Sambhal issue in Parliament, Yadav alleged that police personnel fired from official and personal weapons, killing innocent people...

Violence erupted during a second survey November 24 as protesters gathered near Shahi Jama Masjid and clashed with security personnel...

SAMBHAL VIOLENCE



that ensued.

Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajay Rai said Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi along with the five other Congress MPs...

Curbs under section 163 (power to issue order in urgent cases of nuisance or apprehended danger) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha

Sanhita (BNSS) were set to expire Sunday and have now been extended till December 31.

When asked about the Rahul Gandhi's visit to Sambhal, Superintendent of Police of Sambhal Krishan Kumar told PTI, "Section 163 of the BNSS is already imposed in Sambhal."

Inside Parliament, Akhilesh Yadav demanded the suspension of guilty officials and registration of a murder case against them to ensure that there is no such "violation" of

Violence erupted during a second survey November 24 as protesters gathered near Shahi Jama Masjid and clashed with security personnel

Four people died and several others were injured in the violence that ensued

the Constitution again. While he spoke in Lok Sabha, his uncle and Ram Gopal Yadav raised the matter in Rajya Sabha and echoed similar views.

Ram Gopal Yadav said Sambhal was converted into a police zone and people were baffled why it was being done. When Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said certain parts of his statement would not go on record...

The Uttar Pradesh bypolls were first shifted to November 20 from November 13 and a local civil judge (senior division) ordered the survey of the Mughal-era Shahi Jama Masjid on the same day a pe-

tion was filed claiming that a temple once stood at the site, he elaborated.

The court passed the order November 19 without listening to the mosque committee and it is surprising that the local administration reached for the survey within a couple of hours, he said.

"It is not without basis when we say that the government does not follow the Constitution," he said. Everyone cooperated and the survey was completed. Muslim groups started preparing to argue their case in the next hearing...

However, the administration said November 23 that another survey would be carried out the next day. Muslim groups suggested that another survey should be done only after the court passes another direction but the administration was "dictatorial", he said.

While the mosque committee showed patience during the survey November 24, the circle officer abused locals and ordered a lathi-charge when asked for reasons by locals, Akhilesh Yadav alleged.

Women constitute 4.4 per cent of CAPF, Assam Rifles: Govt



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 3: Women constitute nearly 4.4 per cent of the 9.48 lakh strong Central Armed Police Forces and Assam Rifles with their numbers increasing from 15,499 to 42,910 in the last 10 years...

In response to a question, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said 4,138 women personnel are likely to be recruited in the CAPFs and Assam Rifles in 2025.

"It is a constant endeavour of the ministry to increase the number of women in CAPF. It is noteworthy that number of women in CAPF has gone up from 15,499 in 2014 to 42,190 in 2024," the reply said.

In terms of percentage, CISF has the highest representation of women at 7.02 per cent in total force strength of around 1.51 lakh followed by 4.43 per cent in SSB, 4.41 per cent in BSF, 4.05 per cent ITBP, 4.01 per cent in Assam Rifles and 3.38 per cent in CRPF, it said.

The minister said 835 women personnel have been recruited in CAPF and Assam Rifles in 2024 while 5,469 are in the process of recruitment. In response to a separate question on women's representation in state and Union Territory police forces...

The minister said it is primarily the responsibility of the state governments and Union Territory administrations to recruit more women police personnel.

SHORT TAKES

Student jumps from hostel, dies

Jaipur: An MBBS student committed suicide by jumping from the hostel roof at BR Ambedkar Medical College in Udaipur Tuesday.

Show-cause notice to DIAL

New Delhi: State-owned AAI has issued a show cause notice to Delhi airport operator DIAL seeking an explanation on certain structural weaknesses detected during the study by an IIT Delhi team...

Former CBI director Vijay Shankar dies

New Delhi: Former CBI director Vijay Shankar breathed his last Tuesday after prolonged illness, his family said. He was 76.

Bihar extends land survey timeline

Patna: The Bihar government has provided significant relief to the public regarding ongoing land survey issues by extending the survey timeline by six months.

7 newly elected MLAs take oath

Jaipur: Seven newly elected MLAs of Rajasthan were sworn in Tuesday, with Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devani administering the oath of office in his chamber.

INDIA-CHINA TIES

EAM highlights key devpts in Lok Sabha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 3: India Tuesday said it is committed to remaining engaged with China to find a fair and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary issue but the relations will be contingent upon strictly respecting the sanctity of the LAC and following pacts on border management...

In a statement in the Lok Sabha, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said the disengagement of troops has been achieved in "full" in eastern Ladakh through a step-by-step process, culminating in Depsang and Demchok, and India now expects the commencement of talks on remaining issues that it had placed on the agenda.

India was and it remained very clear that the three key principles must be observed in all circumstances, he said explaining: "one: both sides should strictly respect and observe the Line of Actual Control (LAC), two: neither side should attempt to unilaterally alter the status quo, and three: agreements and understandings reached in the past must be fully abided by in their entirety".



We remain committed to engaging with China through bilateral discussions to arrive at a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable framework for a boundary settlement

S JAISHANKAR

to consider de-escalation, that would address the massing of troops along the LAC with associated accompaniments," he said. "It is also evident that the management of the border areas will require further attention in the light of our recent experiences."

"In the coming days, we will be discussing both de-escalation as well as effective management of our activities in the border areas," he said.

SC stays death penalty of man

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday stayed the death sentence of a 30-year-old man convicted of the rape and murder of a 19-year-old engineering student in Jharkhand's capital Ranchi.

LeT terrorist killed in encounter

Srinagar: A Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist, allegedly involved in an attack near a tunnel construction site in Jammu and Kashmir's Gagangir in October this year, was killed in an encounter with security forces in the Dachigam forest area here Tuesday, officials said.

Engineering seat-blocking scam: 10 held

Bangalore: Ten people, including a staff member of the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA), have been arrested for their alleged involvement in an engineering seat-blocking scam, police said Tuesday.



Boats seen at the beach amidst a forecast by the India Meteorological Department that Bengaluru and other parts of Karnataka will continue to receive rainfall owing to Cyclone Fengal in Mangalore, Karnataka

Cancer misinformation extremely prevalent in India: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 3: Online misinformation about cancer is widespread and can potentially mislead individuals, causing harm and therefore trust in science and medical professionals is crucial, says a new report.

The report, titled 'Health Misinformation Vectors in India,' was released during the Health of India Summit at the Shangri-La Hotel here.

It analysed health-related social media content posted between October 2023 and November 2024 and identified four key areas prone to misinformation: cancer, reproductive health, vaccines and lifestyle diseases, including diabetes and obesity.

Experts from Spotlight, the Data Intelligence unit of DataLEADS, a New Delhi-based digital media and technology

company, along with doctors from First Check, a global health fact-checking initiative, conducted the analysis. The report highlighted key trends in health-related misinformation, including a growing reluctance towards conventional medicine.

Faith and local traditions also influence health-seeking behaviours, they added. The report sought to raise awareness of the dangerous health misinformation spreading in India and the various ways it manages to avoid scrutiny and thrive.

"Health misinformation has far-reaching consequences, impacting medical decisions,



delaying treatments, eroding trust, and even costing lives," said Dr Sabba Mahmood, co-founder of First Check. "People with life-threatening diseases are particularly vulnerable to misinformation because they are often desperate and willing to try anything to save themselves and their fam-

ily members," she added. Regarding reproductive health, the authors wrote, "conversations about abortion through illegal and unproven methods that are often harmful and fatal, go unchecked on nearly all (social media) platforms." The authors also drew attention to videos circulating

The report highlighted key trends in health-related misinformation, including a growing reluctance towards conventional medicine

online that offer tips on issues such as conceiving a boy child and sexual dysfunctions in men.

They suggested consulting an andrologist instead of taking online recommendations, which they said could be "severely detrimental to a man's wellbeing".

The experts also emphasised

that, while no science-backed method exists for conceiving a boy or girl, such content online can reinforce gender preferences in society. The report also highlighted how generative AI, including chatbots, has made detecting health-related misinformation increasingly difficult by making it appear more "credible and believable".

The authors urged policymakers to impose stricter regulations on health-related content and strengthen misinformation countermeasures. They also called for an upskilling of local health workers to counter misinformation at the village level. The experts also advocated for leveraging technology to increase health literacy, such as by enhancing algorithms to prioritise credible health information and remove harmful content promptly.

national



The growth rate is declining. There are no jobs for the youth. The condition of the manufacturing sector is worrying. Inflation has drained the pockets of the common people. The gap of economic inequality is widening

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

BOMB SCARE AT TAJ MAHAL

An email threatening to blow up the Taj Mahal was received by the regional office of Uttar Pradesh Tourism here Tuesday which later turned out to be hoax, a police official said



of the day uote

The conviction rate will go up with the implementation of the new criminal laws that will then lead to a drop in crimes



AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

The governor is yet to invite anyone to form the government, but the BJP's state president declares the date of swearing-in that would take place at Azad Maidan



SANJAY RAUT | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

Amit Shah is currently in Chandigarh. We may hold political discussions tonight. We will talk about what is happening



SUNIL TATKARE | STATE NCP CHIEF

POST OF THE DAY



BIGGEST BIG BREAKING UNITED INDIA Alliance protest against BJP Government on Adani

case BJP not ready to debate on Gautam Adani why? Everyday Congress MP giving letter Lok Sabha speaker but last 7 days rejected Why BJP Government saving Adani?

@AshishSinghKilji

SHORT TAKES

Govt blocked 1,700 Skype IDs

New Delhi: The Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), a wing of the Ministry of Home Affairs, has identified and blocked more than 1,700 Skype IDs and 59,000 WhatsApp accounts used for digital fraud, Lok Sabha was informed Tuesday. Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Bandi Sanjay Kumar also stated that the 'Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System', launched under I4C in 2021, enables immediate reporting of financial frauds to prevent the siphoning off of funds by fraudsters and so far, over ₹3,431 crore has been saved in more than 9.94 lakh complaints.

India, UK review ties

New Delhi: India and the UK Tuesday reviewed their ties with a focus on the early conclusion of a mutually beneficial free trade pact, boosting counter-terror cooperation and enhancing defence ties. At the second edition of the India-UK 2+2 foreign and defence dialogue held here, the two sides agreed to revitalise the ties by identifying new focus areas of collaboration. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said both sides discussed the entire gamut of strategic partnership and emphasised the importance of a sustained high-level engagement to advance the dynamic relations.

Justice Manmohan appointed SC judge

New Delhi: Delhi High Court's Chief Justice Manmohan was Tuesday appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court. "In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (2) of Article 124 of the Constitution of India, the President is pleased to appoint Shri Justice Manmohan, Chief Justice, High Court of Delhi, to be a Judge of the Supreme Court of India, with effect from the date he assumes charge of his office," read the official notification.

ISKCON urges B'desh to ensure lawyers' safety

AGENCIES

Kolkata, Dec 3: International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) Kolkata Tuesday appealed to the Bangladesh government to ensure the safety of lawyers willing to represent Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das in an ongoing case, following a brutal attack on his advocate.

ISKCON Kolkata spokesperson Radharamn Das Monday claimed that Ramen Roy, who was defending Chinmoy Krishna Das, was attacked by a group of Islamists at his home in Bangladesh. A Bangladesh court Tuesday deferred to next month a hearing on the bail petition of the Hindu monk, arrested on a sedition charge, as no lawyer appeared on his behalf. Das criticised the Bangladesh government over "no lawyer appearing as defence counsel" for the Hindu monk and said it is against the premise of basic human rights.

"It is really frustrating to see that there was no defence lawyer. Is this justice? Is this how you provide free and fair justice? We would urge the Bangladesh government to look into the matter," Das said.

According to Das, no new lawyer has come forward to represent Chinmoy Krishna Das following the attack on Roy, citing safety concerns.

"No new lawyer has come up to fight his case till now. Those who want are afraid that they might face the same consequences as Roy. We would request the Bangladesh government to provide lawyers who are willing take up the case with adequate safety and security," he said.

"It must be ensured that such targeted attacks are dealt with sternly. The situation is deeply



B'desh mission in Agartala suspends visa services

Agartala/Kolkata: The Bangladesh Assistant High Commission in Tripura's capital Agartala Tuesday announced the suspension of all visa and consular services with immediate effect until further notice because of "security reasons", a day after the mission's premises was breached by a group of people protesting against the arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das in Dhaka. Amid escalating tensions between the two countries, Dhaka summoned the Indian envoy posted there to protest against the alleged vandalism of its mission in Tripura.

alarming and high-lights the hostile environment faced by those supporting justice for minorities in Bangladesh," he added. In a post this evening, Das claimed another lawyer Regan Acharya, who had represented Das on the first day, too has been attacked. "The day when Chinmay Krishna Prabhu was first arrested and produced in court one of his lawyers was Regan Acharya. After the hearing his chamber was vandalised and he was attacked brutally. In this video his name on the signboard of his chamber

is visible in Bengali. How can anyone lawyer appear for #ChinmoyKrishnaDas when they are being targeted? As per report & video received from Bangladesh #SaveBangladeshi Hindus," he posted on X. According to Radharamn Das, Roy's only "fault" was defending Chinmoy Krishna Das in court, and a group of Islamists ransacked his home. The attack left Roy critically injured, and he is currently in the ICU, fighting for his life, ISKCON Kolkata spokesperson claimed.

Leader of Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari Tuesday said human rights have been violated in Bangladesh as lawyers of arrested Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das could not appear in a court in the neighbouring country as they were allegedly beaten up by fundamentalists there

Chandigarh leads the way in embracing new criminal laws

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Dec 3: Chandigarh has become the country's first administrative unit where 100 per cent implementation of the three criminal laws has been done with Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday saying these new legislations are becoming protector of citizen's rights and the basis of ease of justice.

The laws - Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam - came into effect on July 1, replacing the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act, respectively. Chandigarh has become the country's first administrative unit where 100 per cent implementation of the

three laws has been done.

Speaking on the occasion, the prime minister said the new criminal laws represent a concrete step towards realising the ideals enshrined in the Constitution for the benefit of all citizens. He said the new laws came into effect at a time when country is moving ahead with the pledge of "Viksit Bharat" and 75 years of adoption of Constitution have been completed, thus the launch of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, rooted in constitutional values, is a significant occasion. He said these laws signify the end of colonial-era laws.

The colonial-era laws were the medium of atrocities and exploitation committed by the British when they ruled over India, Modi added.



A pair of migratory birds at a wetland in Pampore area of Pulwama district of south Kashmir

PTI PHOTO

CJI recuses from pleas over EC selection panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 3: Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna Tuesday recused himself from hearing a batch of pleas challenging the exclusion of the CJI from the panel meant for selecting the chief election commissioner and election commissioners.

At the outset, the CJI, who was sitting on the bench with Justice Sanjay Kumar, told the advocates appearing for six separate petitioners that he couldn't hear the pleas now.

"List the matter before a bench of which I am not a part of," the CJI said. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan and lawyer Prashant Bhusan said the previous bench headed by Justice Khanna had issued the notice and passed interim orders in the matter and they had no objection if he continued hearing the matter.

Justice Khanna, who became the 51st CJI after former CJI D Y Chandrachud demitted of-



Justice Khanna, who became the 51st CJI after former CJI D Y Chandrachud demitted office, said the cases would now be listed before another bench in the week commencing January 6, 2025

ice, said the cases would now be listed before another bench in the week commencing January 6, 2025.

Additionally, the bench instructed the union government and the Election Commission

to file their responses to the raised challenges. The bench, which issued notices on the pleas, had not agreed to the contention that the new law on appointment of the CEC and the ECs be stayed.

Devendra Fadnavis meets Shinde at CM residence

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 3: Senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis Tuesday evening met Maharashtra's caretaker Chief Minister Eknath Shinde at his official residence in Mumbai, two days ahead of the swearing-in of the new Mahayuti government at an open ground here.

The visit comes hours after Shinde returned from a private hospital after health check-up. It was the first face-to-face meeting between the two leaders after the duo, along with NCP chief Ajit Pawar, met the top BJP leadership in Delhi last week. Fadnavis, seen as the frontrunner for the top post in the new BJP-Shiv Sena-NCP government, met Shinde at the latter's official residence 'Varsha'.

Preparations for the oath-taking ceremony scheduled to be held at Azad Maidan on the evening of December 5 are in full swing. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, about 2,000 VVIPs and some 40,000 supporters will attend the event. Shinde, who had been staying at his private residence in Thane for the last few days, visited the hospital in the morning. "I came for a check-up. My health is in good condition," he told reporters while leaving the hospital for 'Varsha'. A doctor said Shinde had throat issues. "The CM had a fever and infection, which caused weakness. He also underwent an MRI scan as a precautionary measure," he said.

Shinde, whose party, Shiv Sena, is a constituent of the BJP-led Mahayuti coalition, has been unwell for the last few days. His decision to head to his village in Satara district last Friday had sparked speculation that he was unhappy over the way the new government was shaping up.

Following the BJP-led Mahayuti's landslide victory in the November 20 elections, the new Maharashtra government will be sworn in Thursday.

ADANI ROW

Oppn stages protest on Parliament premises



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 3: MPs of several INDIA bloc parties protested on the Parliament premises Tuesday over the Adani issue and reiterated their demand for a probe by a joint parliamentary committee into the matter.

MPs of the Congress, AAP, RJD, Shiv Sena (UBT), DMK and the Left parties, among others, raised slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi and demanded accountability. Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, AAP's Sanjay Singh, RJD's Misa Bharti and Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Arvind Sawant also participated in the protest on the steps leading to the Parliament's Makar Dwar.

In a post on Facebook, Gandhi said, "Protesting at Makar Dwar, Parliament complex, today, asking the real question: Who benefits from Adani's billions, Modi ji? The Prime Minister's silence speaks volumes." The Congress and some other Opposition parties have been demanding a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) probe following the indictment of Adani Group chairperson Gau-

tam Adani and other company officials by US prosecutors on bribery and fraud charges.

However, some other Opposition parties, especially the TMC, have not attached the same priority to the Adani row and from the start wanted Parliament to discuss a host of different issues, including unemployment, price rise and the Centre's alleged discrimination against Opposition-ruled states in fund allocation.

The TMC has skipped Opposition meetings on formulating the INDIA bloc's joint strategy during the session.

The Samajwadi Party has been attaching the highest priority to the Sambhal violence issue, which it raised in Parliament Tuesday.

The Congress has said that Adani's indictment in a US court on bribery and fraud charges "vindicates" its demand for a JPC investigation into the various "scams" involving the billionaire industrialist's conglomerate. Gandhi has sought Adani's immediate arrest. The Adani Group has dismissed all allegations as "baseless".

EVM ROW

Maha village scraps 'repoll' plan with ballot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Solapur/Mumbai, Dec 3: A section of villagers from Maharashtra's Malshiras Assembly segment seeking "re-election using ballot papers" gave up their plan Tuesday after intervention by police and administration, NCP (SP) leader Uttam Jankar who won the seat said.

State Congress president Nana Patole alleged that officials used police to block villagers under BJP's pressure, raising serious concerns about the credibility of EVMs.

Earlier, residents of Markadwadi village under the Malshiras segment in Solapur district had put up banners claiming a "repoll" will be held on "ballot papers" December 3. The village is part of the Malshiras assembly constituency, where Jankar defeated BJP's Ram Satpute by 13,147 votes in the November 20 polls.

Though Jankar won the seat, Markadwadi residents claimed the quantum of votes polled by the NCP (SP) leader was less compared with Satpute, expressing doubt about Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs).

The Malshiras sub-divisional magistrate Monday imposed prohibitory orders, under section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, from December 2 to 5 in the area.

Tehsildar Vijaya Pangarkar rejected the villagers' plea seeking re-poll using ballot papers.

"The Assembly elections were conducted lawfully, and no objections were raised during voting or counting. Conducting a ballot paper poll now is illegal and beyond the scope of the election process," Pangarkar said Tuesday. Later, Deputy Superintendent of Police (Malshiras division) Narayan Shirgavkar said they had a detailed meeting with the villagers and NCP (SP) leader Jankar.

international



We're not asking countries to choose between us and Russia and China. We're simply looking for reliable, sustainable, verifiable investment opportunities that the people of Angola and the people of the continent can rely on

PRINCESS OF WALES RETURNS TO OFFICIAL DUTIES The Princess of Wales helps kick off the emir of Qatar's trip to Britain Tuesday as the UK government enlists one of the most popular royals to ensure the success of a state visit by the leader of a key ally, even as the princess recovers from cancer treatment



of the day quote

The Pakistan Armed Forces, with the resolute support of the nation, are fully capable of safeguarding the territorial integrity and sovereignty of our beloved motherland against the entire spectrum of threats

We will seek to get sufficient consensus on decisions that need to be taken by the G20

The attempt to organise the Mideast in Georgia is already over. I would call on everybody to keep quiet

'ALL HELL TO PAY'

Trump's ultimatum to Hamas

President-elect Donald Trump demands the release of hostages held by Hamas in Gaza before his January 2025 inauguration, warning of severe consequences



New York, Dec 3: President-elect Donald Trump is demanding the immediate release of Israeli hostages still being held in Gaza, saying that if they are not freed before he is sworn into office for a second term there will be "HELL TO PAY."

Those responsible will be hit harder than anybody has been hit in the long and storied history of the United States of America. RELEASE THE HOSTAGES NOW!

harder than anybody has been hit in the long and storied history of the United States of America. RELEASE THE HOSTAGES NOW!

release deal before he returns to office early next year. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office declined comment. But the country's president, Isaac Herzog, welcomed Trump's comments in a social media post.

Biden's game-changing defence deal with India

20 US government or 25 contractor representatives will be required to travel to India temporarily for the implementation of this sale to provide technical support and management oversight



Washington, Dec 3: The Biden Administration Monday notified the Congress of its decision to approve the sale of MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopter Equipment and related ones at an estimated cost of USD1.17 billion.

of the United States of America January 20, 2025. According to the notification, India has requested to buy 30 Multifunctional Information Distribution System-Joint Tactical Radio Systems (MIDS-JTRS).

SHORT TAKES

Nepal, China sign nine-point agreement

Kathmandu: Nepal and China Tuesday signed a nine-point agreement as Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli met President Xi Jinping in Beijing when the two leaders discussed connectivity, industrial development, infrastructure development and trade and tourism among other issues.

SK parl rejects president's martial law declaration

Seoul, Dec 3: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol declared martial law late Tuesday, vowing to eliminate "anti-state" forces as he struggles against an Opposition that controls the country's parliament and that he accuses of sympathising with communist North Korea.

NATO's chief sidesteps Ukraine's membership

Mark Rutte says the priority is helping Kyiv defend itself

Brussels, Dec 3: NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte Tuesday sidestepped questions about Ukraine's possible membership in the military alliance, saying that the priority now must be to strengthen the country's hand in any future peace talks with Russia by sending it more weapons.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that extending alliance membership to territory now under Kyiv's control could end "the hot stage" of the almost 3-year war in Ukraine, where Russian forces are pressing deeper into their western neighbour.



ington in July, leaders of the 32 NATO member countries insisted that Ukraine is on an "irreversible" path to membership. But some, led by the United States, have balked at moving forward while the war rages and before the country's borders are clearly demarcated.

Ukraine to join. NATO was founded on the principle that an attack on any ally should be considered an attack on them all, and the alliance has consistently tried to avoid being dragged into a wider war with nuclear-armed Russia.

Death sentence upheld for property tycoon

Hanoi: A court in Vietnam Tuesday upheld a death sentence for real estate tycoon Truong My Lan after rejecting her appeal against a conviction for embezzlement and bribery in a high-profile \$12 billion fraud case, state media reported.

CHINA'S SWIFT NUCLEAR WEAPONS BUILDUP

American defense analysts have consistently identified China as the foremost threat to US national security. They have referred to Beijing as a "systemic challenge," a "pacing threat," and even a "peer adversary," citing China's extensive military expansion, aggressive actions in the Asia-Pacific region, and its global strategy of economic coercion.



regional balance. As Beijing's coercion campaign threatens U.S. allies, Washington must implement a countervailing strategy that arrays the United States' competitive advantages against China's distinct vulnerabilities. China may have already started wielding its nuclear power as an initial foray in its larger worldmaking project, but the United States still has an opportunity to nip these global ambitions in the bud.

considers itself hemmed in by hostile coastal states that are backed by a global naval power. Also like its antecedents, China's continental position—straddling a type of land-sea boundary that the twentieth-century Dutch American strategist Nicholas Spykman dubbed the Eurasian "rimland"—raises the possibility that a poorly executed Chinese strategy could ignite a cataclysmic war with the United States and its Asian allies.

SNIPPETS Indian ship captain receives maritime bravery award London: Captain Avhilash Rawat has received the 2024 International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea for the "extraordinary courage" shown in a Red Sea rescue mission earlier this year.

China bans export of key minerals to US Bangkok: China announced Tuesday it is banning exports to the United States of gallium, germanium, antimony and other key high-tech materials with potential military applications, as a general principle, lashing back at US limits on semiconductor-related exports.

Sri Lanka nabs 18 Indian fishermen

Colombo: The Sri Lanka Navy has arrested 18 Indian fishermen for alleged illegal fishing in the island nation's territorial waters and seized their fishing trawler. The fishermen were arrested Monday in a special operation conducted by the Sri Lanka Navy in the Vettalaikerni area in the north.



The long voyage time due to ships taking longer routes through Cape of Good Hope has impacted global trade, including Indian exports
PIYUSH GOVAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

INSURANCE AT ₹59 PER YEAR

PhonePe Tuesday announced the launch of a new and affordable insurance plan for dengue and malaria on its platform, starting at just ₹59 per year. The affordable health coverage plan offers comprehensive year-round coverage of up to ₹1 lakh for medical expenses related to vector and air-borne diseases. This insurance cover also ensures users, especially in tier-II and tier-III cities, are financially protected against unexpected medical expenses caused by such illnesses throughout the year.



of the day quote

Indian banks have performed exceptionally well in recent years. Highest-ever net profit of Rs 1.41 lakh crore was achieved in 2023-24 & Rs 85,520 Crore in the first half of 2024-25. Today, all the public sector banks have turned profitable



NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

Credit planning should adopt a bottom-up approach to convey the needs of the centres and then designing a plan best suited to address those



SWAMINATHAN J | RBI DEPUTY GOVERNOR

We hope to expand our loan under the affordable housing segment to Rs 5,000 crore by this year-end to touch Rs 15,000 crore by March 2027



GURISH KOUSGI | PNB HOUSING FINANCE MD AND CEO

SHORT TAKES

GST hike report impacts stocks

New Delhi: Shares of ITC, Varun Beverages and Godfrey Phillips India ended lower Tuesday after the Group of Ministers on GST rate rationalisation decided to hike tax on sin goods like aerated beverages, cigarettes, tobacco and related products to 35 per cent from the present 28 per cent. The stock of ITC declined 1.02 per cent to settle at Rs 472.30 on the BSE. During the day, it went lower by 3 per cent to Rs 462.80. VST Industries' stock dipped 2.27 per cent to Rs 318.30 in intraday but recovered the lost ground and ended at Rs 327.90, up 0.68 per cent. Shares of Varun Beverages dropped 1.86 per cent to settle at Rs 621 apiece after tumbling 5.18 per cent to Rs 600 during the day. Godfrey Phillips India slipped 1.71 per cent to finish at Rs 5,659.50. Intra-day, it fell 3.16 per cent to Rs 5,575.50.

Swiggy's loss narrows in Q2

New Delhi: Food and grocery delivery platform Swiggy Tuesday reported narrowing of consolidated net loss at Rs 625.53 crore for the second quarter ended September 30 on the back of continued growth of food delivery business. The company, which is declaring its quarterly results to stock exchanges for the first time since it went public last month, had posted a consolidated net loss of Rs 657 crore in the year-ago period. In a regulatory filing, Swiggy said at consolidated group level, it expects to achieve "positive adjusted EBITDA by the third quarter of FY26." Swiggy's revenue from operations increased to Rs 3,601.45 crore in the September quarter, from Rs 2,763.33 crore in the corresponding period last year.

Godrej Properties raises ₹6K-cr via QIP

New Delhi: Realty firm Godrej Properties Ltd has raised Rs 6,000 crore by selling shares to institutional investors, including Singapore sovereign wealth firm GIC and SBI Pension, through qualified institutional placement (QIP) route as it looks to expand business amid strong demand for residential plots and apartments. November 27th, the company launched its QIP issue to raise up to Rs 6,000 crore. The company has raised this amount by diluting nearly 8 per cent of equity through the QIP issue, which was closed Monday.

RBI asks banks to bring down inoperative accounts urgently

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 3: The RBI has asked banks to 'urgently' reduce the number of inoperative or frozen accounts by taking necessary steps and also report their numbers quarterly.

Expressing concern over the rising sums of money lying in such accounts, the RBI said its supervisory inspections have revealed a slew of problems due to which accounts are becoming inoperative or get frozen.

The Department of Supervision, RBI, recently conducted an analysis, which revealed that the number of inoperative accounts/unclaimed deposits in several banks was on the higher side vis-a-vis their total deposits as well as in absolute terms, it said.

"The banks are ...advised to take necessary steps urgently to bring down the number of inoperative/frozen accounts and make the process of activation of such accounts smoother and hassle free," a notification to chiefs of all the banks said.

Banks may look at enabling seamless updation of KYC (know your customer) through mobile/internet banking, non-home branches and Video Customer Identification Process, it suggested.

The notification said it has observed instances where the accounts of underprivileged beneficiaries of state-run cash transfer schemes have been frozen due to other factors such as pending updation/ periodic updation of KYC, even though such beneficiary accounts are required to be segregated to facilitate uninterrupted credit of



scheme funds.

Asking banks to take an "empathetic view" in such cases, the notification said banks may also organise special campaigns for facilitating activation of inoperative/frozen accounts.

Apart from this, the banks may also facilitate Aadhaar updation for customers through branches providing Aadhaar related services, it said, adding that instructions have been issued to state level banking committees to proactively monitor the situation in their respective jurisdictions with a view to minimise customer inconvenience.

The RBI analysis revealed that accounts were getting inoperative with deposit accounts being unclaimed due to variety of reasons including inactivity for a long time or pending updation/periodic updation of KYC.

"Reportedly, there were instances of customers facing inconvenience when they approached the bank branches for activation of inoperative accounts including inadvertent errors in customer details such as mismatch in name, etc," it said.

It was also observed that a few banks have a large pendency of accounts that are due for updation/ periodic updation of KYC, resulting in such accounts getting frozen for further transactions as per bank's internal policies, the central bank said.

The notification said progress in reduction of inoperative/frozen accounts and the special efforts made by the banks in this regard may be monitored by the Customer Service Committee (CSC) of a bank's Board and asked banks to report the same quarterly to the respective Senior Supervisory Manager (SSM) through DAKSH portal, starting from the quarter ending December 31, 2024.

Banks are required to place the notification on inoperative accounts before the CSC of the Board at their next meeting along with a monitorable action plan for compliance, it said.

BANK ACCOUNT HOLDERS ALLOWED FOUR NOMINEES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 3: The Lok Sabha Tuesday passed the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which allows bank account holders to have up to four nominees in their accounts.

Another proposed change relates to redefining 'substantial interest' for directorships, which could increase to Rs 2 crore instead of the current limit of Rs 5 lakh, which was fixed almost six decades ago.

The Bill piloted by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was approved by a voice vote.

Replying to the debate on the Bill, Sitharaman said depositors will have the option of successive or simultaneous nomination facility, while locker holders will have only successive nomination.

She also said that since 2014,



the Government and the RBI have been extremely cautious, so that banks remain stable.

"The intention is to keep our banks safe, stable, healthy, and after 10 years you are seeing the outcome," Sitharaman said.

The bill proposes to increase the tenure of directors (excluding the chairman and whole-time director) in cooperative banks from 8 years to 10 years, so as to align with the Constitution (Ninety-Seventh Amendment) Act, 2011.

India tops global list for mobile malware attacks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 3: In a startling revelation, India now tops the list for mobile malware attacks globally, surpassing the United States and Canada, with a disappointing step-up from its previous third-place ranking, according to a report.

The Zscaler ThreatLabz 2024 Mobile, IoT, and OT Threat Report analysed a dataset comprising over 20 billion threat-related mobile transactions and associated cyber threats, between June 2023 to May 2024.

"India has become the top global target for mobile malware attacks, accounting for 28 per cent of the total, surpassing the United States (27.3 per cent) and Canada (15.9 per cent). This significant jump from its 3rd place ranking last year underscores the critical need for Indian enterprises to adopt robust security measures, especially amid the rapid digital



transformation and increasing cyber threats," the report said. With nearly half of mobile attacks being trojans (malware that tricks users into downloading and running malicious software), the financial sector is particularly vulnerable. The report revealed a 29 per cent increase in banking malware attacks and a staggering 111 per cent rise in mobile spyware attacks.

"Most financially motivated malware attacks are highly capable of bypassing Multifactor Authentication (MFA) and frequently leverage phishing vec-

tors, such as fake login pages for different financial institutions, social media sites, and crypto wallets," it said.

Phishing attempts targeting mobile customers of major Indian banks, such as HDFC, ICICI, and Axis banks, have increased, according to ThreatLabz analysts. These clever attacks deceive mobile users into disclosing critical bank information by using phoney banking websites that closely mimic the real ones, it said.

Previously, similar tactics were used to spread Android-based

phishing malware through fake card update sites, leading to widespread financial fraud. The Indian postal service has also become a target for attackers. Using SMS messages, they direct mobile users to phishing sites that prompt them to input credit card details. These fraudulent schemes often exploit common scenarios like missing packages and incomplete delivery addresses, capitalising on the urgency created by such messages, the report noted.

"Legacy systems and unprotected IoT/ OT (Internet of Things/Operational Technology) environments are becoming prime targets for cybercriminals. We see a significant rise in hacking campaigns targeted at these environments," said Suvabrata Sinha, CISO-India, Zscaler.

The report also indicated a concerning global trend, with over 200 malicious applications discovered on the Google Play Store.

India among top 10 exporters of high-value products

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 3: India has recorded a sharp increase in exports for several key product categories with the country maintaining or improving its rank among the top ten global suppliers, in export values exceeding \$1 billion in 2023, according to figures released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry Tuesday.

"From dominating the global market in precious stones to making inroads in advanced sectors like semiconductors and electrical components, India's export performance reflects the country's growing economic prowess," the official statement said.

The country's strategic focus on electronics and semiconductors has yielded impressive results.

Exports grew from \$0.23 billion in 2014 to \$1.91 billion in 2023, achieving a global market share of 1.40 per cent and securing the 9th position, a significant jump from 20th in 2014, the official figures show.

"This progress highlights India's growing role in the

global semiconductor supply chain, supported by efforts to enhance domestic manufacturing and innovation," the statement observed.

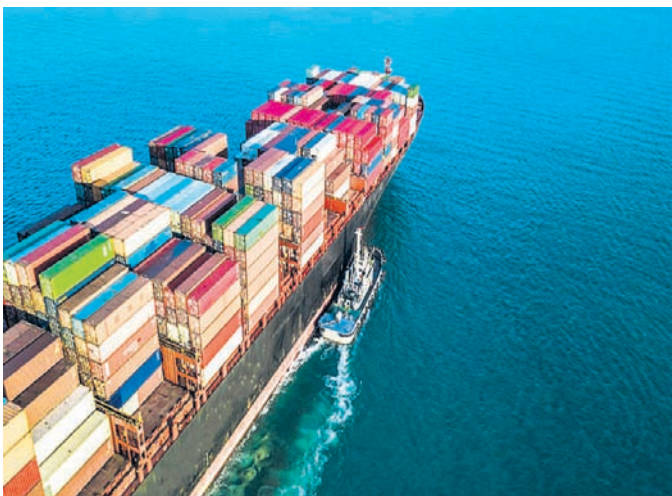
In the export of precious and semi-precious stones, India has established itself as the world leader, with its global share surging from 2.64 per cent in 2014 to an astounding 36.53 per cent in 2023.

Exports valued at \$1.52 billion highlight India's centuries-old craftsmanship and adoption of modern technology in gemstone processing.

Exports of parts for electric motors and generators have also shown significant growth, reaching \$1.15 billion in 2023, with a global share of 4.86 per cent, elevating India to 6th place from 21 in 2014 globally.

This growth aligns with the rising global demand for renewable energy and electric vehicle components, positioning India as a key supplier in this transformative industry.

The petroleum sector (Petroleum Oils and Oils Obtained from Bituminous Minerals) has seen a dramatic rise, with export values increasing from



\$60.84 billion in 2014 to \$84.96 billion in 2023, capturing a global market share of 12.59 per cent.

This significant leap has propelled India to the position of the second-largest global exporter, driven by advanced refining infrastructure.

The government's forward-looking initiatives, such as the New Foreign Trade Policy, PLI Schemes, and many others, play a pivotal role in

enhancing India's competitiveness on the global stage.

"As India diversifies its export portfolio and strengthens its global presence, it is poised to achieve its vision of becoming a global economic power by 2047," the Commerce Ministry said. In the agrochemical sector, India has achieved notable success, particularly in insecticides, rodenticides, and fungicides.

By 2023, exports reached \$4.32

billion, marking a global market share of 10.85 per cent, up from 5.89 per cent in 2014.

Investments in research and development, coupled with compliance with international agricultural standards, have positioned India as the third-largest exporter globally.

This growth underscores India's pivotal role in supporting sustainable agriculture.

India's sugar exports have also witnessed exceptional growth, with the country's share in the global market for cane or beet sugar rising from 4.31 per cent in 2014 to 12.21 per cent in 2023.

Export values reached \$3.72 billion in 2023, cementing India's position as the second-largest sugar exporter.

Strong production bases and favourable agricultural policies have enabled India to cater to growing demand, particularly in Southeast Asia and Africa, strengthening its agricultural economy.

The electronics manufacturing sector has shown significant advancements, reflected in the exports of electrical transformers and related com-

ponents, which grew from \$1.08 billion in 2014 to \$2.85 billion in 2023.

India's global market share increased to 2.11 per cent in 2023, and it is in 10th position, up from 17th in 2014.

India has made remarkable strides in rubber pneumatic tyre exports, which reached \$2.66 billion in 2023.

Its global market share rose to 3.31 per cent, securing the 8th position, a notable leap from 14th in 2014.

This growth reflects India's emphasis on quality, cost competitiveness, and the ability to serve diverse markets, particularly in emerging economies.

Similarly, exports of taps, valves, and similar industrial products reached \$2.12 billion in 2023, capturing a 2.16 per cent global market share and earning India the 10th position globally.

Additionally, India's exports of coal tar distillation products reached \$1.71 billion in 2023, capturing a 5.48 per cent global market share and securing 4th place globally showcasing its importance in industrial value chains.

