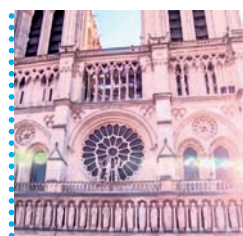




Mantra for success

Kareena Kapoor Khan says the only successful formula for a film to work is that it has to create magic

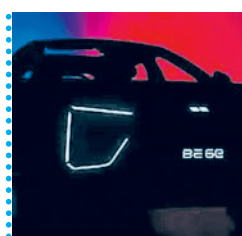
LEISURE | P2



Notre Dame reopens

France's iconic Notre Dame Cathedral reopens its doors for the first time since a fire nearly destroyed the structure

INTERNATIONAL | P10



M&M vs IndiGo

M&M to rename its new EV brand as 'BE 6' but will continue to contest strongly in court with InterGlobe

BUSINESS | P11



Top order crumbles

India totter to 128 for 5 in their second innings, still trailing Australia by 29 runs at stumps on day two of the pink ball Test

SPORTS | P12

US rejects BJP's claim of backing anti-India agenda

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: The US Saturday rejected the BJP's allegations that organisations funded by the US State Department and elements in the American 'deep state' were behind attempts to destabilise India through targeted attacks on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and business tycoon Gautam Adani.

A spokesperson at the US embassy described the allegations as 'disappointing' and asserted that the US government has been a champion of media freedom around the world.

The BJP alleged Thursday that the US deep state colluded with the media portal OCCRP (Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project) and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to 'damage' India's image.

The BJP had cited Gandhi's use of reports by OCCRP to attack the Adani Group and to accuse it of having closeness with the government. "It's disappointing that the ruling party in India would make these kinds of accusations," the US embassy spokesperson said.

"The US government works with independent organisations on programming that supports professional development and capacity building training for journalists. This programming does not influence the editorial decisions or direction of these organisations," the official said.

The OCCRP, headquartered in Amsterdam, is a media platform that largely focuses on stories relating to crime and corruption. The BJP had referred to a French media report and said it revealed that OCCRP is funded by the US State Department's USAID, along with other 'deep state figures' like George Soros and the Rockefeller Foundation.

"The United States has long been a champion of media freedom around the world. A free and independent press is an essential component of any democracy, enabling informed and constructive debate and holding those in power accountable," the US embassy official said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I admire the speed he works with - took oath yesterday and got a clean chit in all cases against him within 24 hours!

Huge cash haul by CBI in Bhubaneswar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: CBI sleuths reportedly seized a huge amount of cash and gold ornaments from a luxury car in Bhubaneswar Saturday evening. Officials of the Central probe agency along with the local police intercepted the Mercedes near a star hotel in the city.

The officials took the occupants of the car to the local CBI office for questioning regarding the source of the money.

Sources, meanwhile, claimed that the sleuths were tracking the movement of the vehicle's owner for the last three months, following tip-off about transit of high denomination and unaccounted cash.



STEELY RESOLVE: A woman confronts the police as the latter block a street during a protest against the government's decision to suspend negotiations on joining the European Union, in Tbilisi, Georgia, Saturday

AP/PTI PHOTO

Crippled healthcare

The CAG report tabled in the Assembly Saturday presented a grim picture of the state of healthcare in Odisha. A crippling shortage of specialist doctors, medical officers and nurses as against the sanctioned posts clearly fails to cater to the healthcare needs of a significant population of the state. At the same time, a clear lack of basic infrastructure such as seating arrangements and toilets for OPD patients and medical equipment for vital diagnosis leaves much scope for improvement. Such a scenario of state-run healthcare adds to the burden of the vast majority of the people who are just one disease away from poverty, thanks to the exorbitant out-of-pocket cost of private treatment. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages. However, with such a handicapped health infrastructure at our disposal, the lofty SDG 3 appears a distant dream

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: The CAG has identified several infrastructure shortcomings in Odisha's healthcare sector, noting that the human resources



available in hospitals throughout the state do not align with the Indian Public Health Standards guidelines.

In its report titled "Public Health Infrastructure and Management of Health Services in the State," presented in Assembly Saturday, the CAG painted a concerning picture of government-run healthcare facilities, which are deficient in doctors, paramedics, and medical equipment. The report revealed that the vacancy rate for specialist doctors in the state stands at 49 per cent compared to the sanctioned positions, while the vacancy for medical officers is at 40 per cent. Additionally, 30 per cent of nursing positions remain unfilled, according to the CAG.

Out of the 14 Community Health Centres (CHCs) examined, five were found to be missing all required specialised OPD services. Additionally, basic facilities such as seating and toilet amenities for

OPD patients were deemed insufficient in the hospitals that were reviewed. In two medical colleges and hospitals assessed, only 325 beds (42 per cent) were equipped with central oxygen supply, falling short of the necessary 775 inpatient beds. The evaluation also revealed that most of the district headquarters hospitals (DHHs) did not offer services in psychiatry, skin and venereal disease (VD), dental, and trauma care. Furthermore, four out of the seven DHHs examined lacked accident and trauma care centres to enhance emergency services. A dedicated trauma care centre for Pandit Raghunath Murmu Medical College and Hospital in Baripada had not been established, leaving equipment valued at ₹3.04 crore unused, according to the report.

Moreover, none of the seven DHHs had dedicated emergency services, which included mobile X-ray and laboratory services, operating theater facilities, emergency beds, and specialised staff. Emergency equipment, such as ventilators and oxygen concentrators provided to the health facilities, remained unused due to the absence of necessary supporting infrastructure and equipment.

11,710 kids suffering from severe acute malnutrition: Parida

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: The Odisha government Saturday told the Assembly that a total of 11,710 children in the state are suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM).

Deputy Chief Minister Pravatiparida, who is in charge of the Women and Child Development department, said this in her reply to a query from BJP MLA Laxman Bag.

As per the Deputy CM's statement, tribal-populated Mayurbhanj district has reported the highest number of children suffering from SAM. The district has a total of 1,460 such children.

Similarly, 1,269 children in Keonjhar are also found to be suffering from SAM while 760 such children were identified in Nabarangpur district, she said.

Among other districts which reported higher numbers of such children include, Rayagada (645), Kalahandi (636), Malkangiri (570), Ganjam (558) and Balasore (536).

Jagatsinghpur has reported the lowest number of SAM children among the 30 districts of the state. The district has 50 malnourished children, Parida said.

Fissures in INDIA bloc

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: Questions are being raised on the future of the INDIA Opposition bloc as differences among several of its constituents are now coming to the fore and voices emerging for serious introspection by the Congress. The latest point of friction has come from Maharashtra, where the Samajwadi Party (SP) has announced quitting the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) after a Shiv Sena (UBT) leader hailed the Babri masjid's demolition.

The SP and the Trinamool Congress (TMC) were also not seen with their other INDIA bloc partners during protests on the Adani issue. There are differences among the partners on other issues both inside and outside Parliament.

Parties are now flexing their muscles within the bloc, especially after the shocking defeat of the Congress in the Haryana and Maharashtra elections.

With a 'weak' Congress after a poor poll show, some Opposition parties feel that it should introspect and be accommodative towards others. They are also speaking out against the 'dominance' of the Congress in the Opposition alliance.

Amid the disagreements on issues among the partners, West Bengal Chief Minister Ma-

mata Banerjee has expressed dissatisfaction with the functioning of the INDIA bloc while signalling her intent to take charge of the alliance if given the opportunity. The TMC supremo has said she can manage the dual responsibility of running the Opposition front while continuing on her role as the Chief Minister of West Bengal.

All eyes are now on the Congress over its next move as the principal opposition party increasingly finds itself singled out in Parliament on several issues - protests on Adani and farmers' issues, with many of its partners staying away.

SP leader Abu Asim Azmi said, "The MVA never respected us.... Uddhav Thackeray and his party had said they would leave communalism and join hands with secular forces. However, he and his party have once again hailed those who demolished the Babri masjid. The Samajwadi Party can never stay with those who want to divide people on the basis of religion."

"We were never called for the coordination meeting of the MVA. We wanted coordination like it was during the Lok Sabha polls, but the Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP) kept fighting with each other over seat sharing. That is why we (MVA) lost," he said.

When private defence exception can't be invoked in murder case

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 7: The Supreme Court in a recent ruling clarified the elements of the private defence exception in a murder case. The top court was addressing a criminal appeal filed against a judgement that convicted the accused under Sections 302, 324, 326, and 34 of the IPC. The two-judge Bench comprising Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Prasanna B. Varale, stated that to classify the accused's actions under Section 304 IPC as an offence committed in the exercise of private defence—thereby exceeding the legal limits set forth in Exception 2 to Section 300 IPC—certain elements must be established. The Bench identified the

these key components for this exception - i) The accused must be free from fault in bringing about the encounter; ii) There must be an impending peril to life or of great bodily harm, either real or apparent; iii) Injuries received by the accused; iv) Injuries caused by the accused; and v) The accused did not have time or opportunity to take recourse to public authorities.

According to the prosecution, in 2006, supporters of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Left Democratic Front clashed over a dispute regarding the drawing of their election symbol near a library in Kunappalli, Pathaikkara in Kerala. A criminal case involving non-bailable offences was filed against the UDF supporters in



connection with this incident. The appellant, along with other accused individuals who were supporters of the Indian Union Muslim League, harboured animosity and intended to murder the deceased. They waited at Mukkilaplavu Junction for the deceased's arrival. Around

8:45 pm, when the deceased and another individual arrived, the first accused allegedly attempted to strike the deceased on the head with a tamarind stick.

The victim managed to defend himself from the attack, seizing the stick from the first accused and began striking him

on the forehead and back with it. At that moment, the first accused drew a knife and stabbed the victim in the left side of the chest, the back of the head, and the left shoulder. Another individual was also injured during the altercation. Consequently, a case was filed against the accused. The trial court found the appellant guilty of murder. Three appeals were subsequently submitted to the High Court, all of which were dismissed. The Supreme Court in view of the above facts, held, "The deliberate act of stabbing vital parts of the body, coupled with the force used, indicates that the appellant must have been aware of the likely fatal consequences of his actions. Under the provisions of Section 300 IPC, an in-

intention to cause such injuries that are sufficient in the ordinary course of nature to cause death qualifies as murder, and even if ingredients other than intention to cause murder are proved, mere knowledge of the result of fatal actions is enough to ascribe culpability to the accused person."

The court noted that even if it is assumed that the appellant acted in self-defence, stabbing the victim multiple times in critical areas such as the chest and heart exceeds what is acceptable under the right to private defence. Consequently, the court determined that, with the conviction under Section 302 of the IPC upheld by all courts, the minimum sentence mandated is life imprisonment, as stipulated by the law.

leisure

WYATT RUSSELL TO JOIN SPIELBERG'S NEXT

Actor Wyatt Russell, best known for his role as John Walker in Marvel's *The Falcon and The Winter Soldier*, is in advanced talks to join Steven Spielberg's upcoming movie for Amblin Entertainment and Universal Pictures. The highly anticipated film is set to release in 2026.



STRANGER THINGS ACTOR MARK WITHERS DIES

Mark Withers, who was best-known for his roles in *Stranger Things*, *Dynasty* and multiple other TV shows has died at the age of 77 following a battle with pancreatic cancer, as confirmed by his daughter Jessie Withers.



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ARIES
You will experience a profound connection with the cosmos today. And you will be very grateful to the almighty for showing his grace on you. Your love for your kith and kin deepens today, says Ganesha, and you will spend extravagantly on them.

TAURUS
Much to the disappointment and annoyance of your friends and associates, you are likely to act unduly possessive and self-centred about persons and objects, warns Ganesha. Be sure, your overprotective attitude is not likely to amuse anyone. To make matters worse you will possibly ignore their well-founded resentment and instead of setting matters right, you will be running after material gains.

GEMINI
You will be more inclined towards religious teachings and rituals today. You will probably visit a place of worship and spend some time there and this will bring you mental peace and calm. However, you still need to do justice to your duties, says Ganesha.

CANCER
Today, you will put your heart and soul into whatever task you take up. But the results may not be too forthcoming. However, that should not be a reason for you to get dejected or anxious. You will get your due sooner or later.

LEO
You will need to keep from being agitated today. Let your spouse or business partner take critical decisions if you aren't in the right frame of mind. Decisions you take today may have to be rethought of later. Important meetings will proceed smoothly, but you will not be able to commit to any final conclusions or contracts.

VIRGO
Appreciate the things that people do and try your best to inspire them to achieve greater success, says Ganesha. Put on your thinking cap and contemplate seriously. Simply criticising others will only hurt you. Be as level-headed as you can and keep pegging on towards your targets.

LIBRA
Ganesha says you will try to attain prestige in society today. This prestige will come to you via the field of communication or by your own thought processes. In your free time you will be able to learn about various topics of interest to you. Ganesha wishes you all the very best in life.

SCORPIO
Till now you have experienced all the highs. Today you may come across the lows of the professional world. The equation between your boss, colleagues and you may get slightly disturbed. However, you will make it up by evening. Freshers may look for some career opportunities.

SAGITTARIUS
Upholding all that is right and just will be the highlight today. You will be in the right spirits to fight injustice and discrimination. The day promises to be as splendid as your will. Ganesha advises you to stand up and conquer all today.

CAPRICORN
Lack of confidence may leave you glum in the first half of the day, and to add to it, you will be loaded with work that you may have taken up from company other than the one employing you full time, says Ganesha. The sullen mood will turn jovial by evening, and you can expect to have a good time socialising with friends and relatives.

AQUARIUS
Your plate will be full with plenty of work, and you will have no clue about how to handle all the chaos. Patience and organisational skills, your best qualities will help you sail through these difficult times, assures Ganesha. You will successfully wind up the day at work and geared up to party later in the evening.

PISCES
Financial bearings will be at the fore front of your attention today, feels Ganesha. Bank accounts, stocks, loans and other such things will dominate your thoughts and words. Earning money will be your primary goal and you will focus on those methods that will be most profitable to you, today.

Deepika enralls fans

Mumbai: It was the union of two of the biggest stars in Bangalore as Deepika Padukone, who was recently seen in *Singham Again*, performed on the stage with Punjabi superstar Diljit Dosanjh at his concert.

In a video clicked by a fan, the actress was seen dancing along as the singer performed his song with Sia, *Hass Hass*, on stage. The two also danced on Diljit's synth-pop track *Lover*.

This marked Deepika's first public appearance after the birth of her daughter Dua. What made the gig special for her was the fact that it was held in her hometown. The Copenhagen-born actress grew up in Bangalore before she made her way to modelling.

Last year, the actress delivered two blockbuster hits with SRK in the form of *Pathaan* and *Jawan*, she had a cameo appearance in the latter.

Both films were highly instrumental in resurrecting Bollywood at the box office after a lull induced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prior to *Singham Again*, the actress went pan-India, and was seen along with the titans of Indian cinema like Amitabh Bachchan, Prabhakar, Kamal Haasan, and Saswata Chatterjee in *Kalki 2898 AD*. IANS



Manoj on chasing dreams

New Delhi: How does a farmer's son from a Bihar village reach the pinnacle of his dreams in starry Mumbai where a million hopes are dashed and met every day. Manoj Bajpayee has the answer — just be "intelligently stubborn".

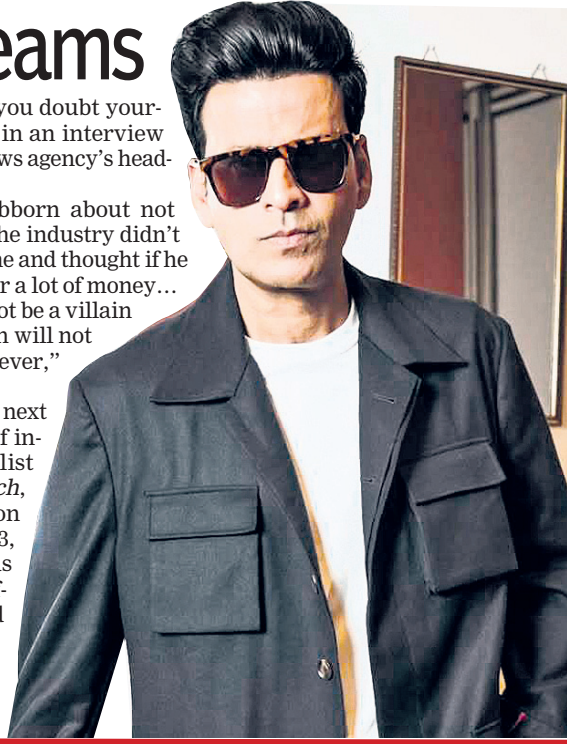
The actor, who has successfully owned both commercial and arthouse cinema as well as the big screen and the small with roles as diverse as Bhiku Mhatre in *Satya* and Srikant Tiwari in *The Family Man*, says he soon understood that circumstances can break those not committed to their dreams.

"You have to be intelligently stubborn and audacious. I say stubborn because otherwise circumstances and situations challenge you at every

moment and make you doubt yourself," Bajpayee told in an interview during a visit to a news agency's headquarters.

"I was very stubborn about not getting typecast... The industry didn't know what to offer me and thought if he is refusing, then offer a lot of money... but I knew I would not be a villain because if I do it then will not let me come out of it ever," the 55-year-old said.

Bajpayee, who will next be seen in the role of investigative journalist Joy Bag in *Despatch*, slated for release on ZEE5 December 13, said he understands that people have different destinies and destinations.



Kareena's SUCCESS FORMULA

Mumbai: Veteran actress Kareena Kapoor Khan, who was recently seen in *Singham Again*, attended the Red Sea Festival in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. The actress, who belongs to the first film dynasty of Hindi film industry, and has seen what works and what doesn't at the box-office.

Sharing her insights on what makes a movie truly successful in today's cinematic landscape, the actress said that the only successful formula for a film to work is that it has to create magic.

The actress said, "The formula for a movie to work is simple: create magic. Whether it's through powerful emotions, gripping action, or unforgettable music, if it leaves you inspired and moved in those 2-2.5 hours, it's a success".

She emphasised that the essence of a memorable film lies in its ability to create magic during the 2-2.5 hours it occupies the audience's attention.

Kareena's words capture the heart of Bollywood's storytelling tradition where films are not just entertainment but transformative experiences that resonate long after the credits roll.

The actress also took to her Instagram, and dropped several pictures from her visit to the film festival.

She wrote in the caption, "Red Sea International Film Festival opening night #RedSeaIFF24 #RedSeaIFF #TheNewHomeOfFilm @redseafilm". IANS



Pooja gives a peek into her camaraderie

Mumbai: Actress Pooja Hegde, who will be soon seen in the upcoming movie *Deva*, has teamed up with actor Varun Dhawan for his father David Dhawan's next film.

The film is tentatively titled *Hai Jawani Toh Ishq Hona Hai*. The actress took to the Stories section of her Instagram, and gave a glimpse into her camaraderie with Varun. The actress shared a picture along with Varun, and wrote, "This duo is dreaming of bread" with laughing emojis, sparking curiosity and excitement among fans.

She followed it up with, "Chalo post our next schedule maybe?" accompanied by a teary-eyed emoji, a thinking cloud, and a pizza emoji, playfully hinting at their shared off-screen vibes and the ongoing shoot for their film.

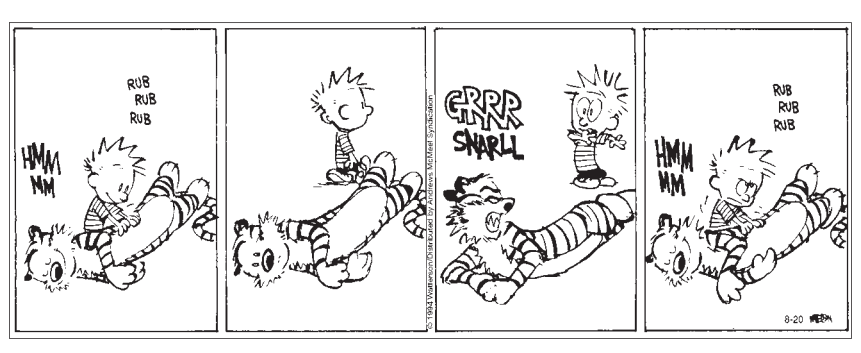
This lighthearted post not only underscores the fun bond between the two but also hints at the fresh chemistry they're set to bring to the big screen. Meanwhile, the actress is juggling a packed schedule. She will be next seen in the high-octane action thriller *Deva* opposite Shahid Kapoor and is part of major South Indian projects, including *Suriya 44* and *Thalapathy 69*. IANS



PEANUTS



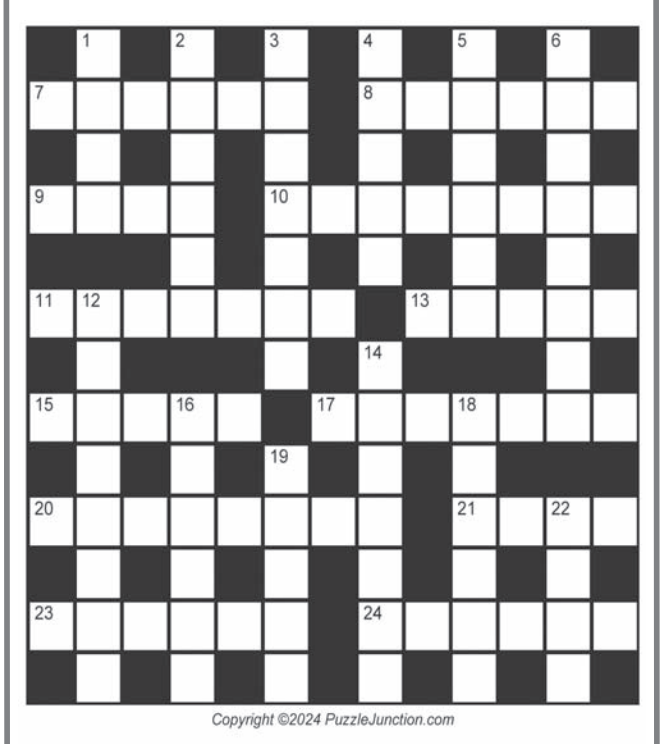
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



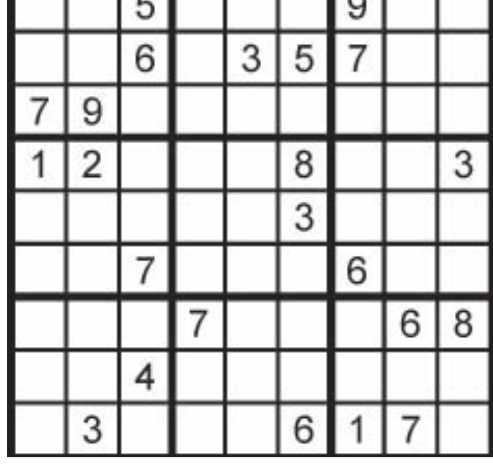
CROSSWORD



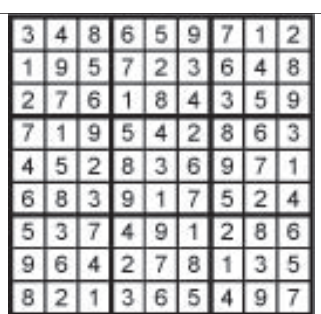
- Across
- 7 Lawn tool
 - 8 Block out
 - 9 Mountain goat's perch
 - 10 Equestrian sport
 - 11 Joint injuries
 - 13 Man-made fibre
 - 15 Talkative
 - 17 Not clear
 - 20 Gothic; chivalric
 - 21 Sugar source
 - 23 Imperial capacity
 - 24 Quake
 - 4 Aromatic compound
 - 5 Playful
 - 6 Negligee
 - 12 Nonviolent
 - 14 Aptitude
 - 16 Smart
 - 18 Seal of approval
 - 19 Seed structure
 - 22 Cozy corner
- Down
- 1 Melee
 - 2 Black mark
 - 3 Impasse (4,3)

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



DHARITRI CLIMATE GRANT

Environmentalist Trilochan Sahoo of Keonjhar receives ₹1 lakh climate grant for his innovative initiatives towards forest and wildlife conservation from leading Odia daily Dharitri's Deputy News Editor Lala Sunil Kumar Rath at the newspaper's office in Bhubaneswar Saturday, in presence of Editor Tathagata Satpathy, Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy and staffers



Environmentalist Sagar Kumar Patro of Anchalika Vikash Parishad, Ganjam, receives ₹1 lakh climate grant for his organisation's efforts towards environment protection from leading Odia daily Dharitri's Senior Sub-Editor Duryodhan Mishra at the newspaper's office in Bhubaneswar Saturday, as Editor Tathagata Satpathy, Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy and staffers look on

Phone snatchers' gang busted; three arrested

Bhubaneswar: Commissionerate Police Saturday claimed to have busted a three-member international phone snatching gang that used to smuggle the stolen phones to Bangladesh and arrested three persons. IIC of Lingaraj police station Purna Chandra Pradhan said three Jharkhand-based robbers have been arrested while a few other members of the gang are still at large. 17 cellphones and ₹430 have been seized from them, he added. The accused were identified as Bikash Sharma, 26, Rama Prasad Soni, 26, and Pradip Kumar, 26 – all natives of Jharkhand. They were frequenting to the City to rob mobile phones from gullible commuters, and smuggle them out to Dhaka at throwaway prices.

CAG picks holes in stormwater mgmt House din over 'job scam'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: Municipal corporations across the state have miserably failed in managing stormwater drainage and sewerage infrastructure, leading to frequent waterlogging and flooding, while release of untreated sewage to water bodies have resulted in public health and environment hazards, according to the CAG report tabled in the Assembly, Friday, which blamed deficiencies in design and lack of planning by the civic bodies for the exchequer losing crores of rupees. The 'Performance Audit on Storm Water Drainage and Sewerage Management Systems in Municipal Corporations', where the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India assessed the management of stormwater drains and sewerage system across five municipal corporations between 2017-18 and 2021-22, said, "Due to absence of regulatory framework for management of stormwater

Irregularities in Covid hospital payments

The CAG has found irregularities in funding to dedicated private Covid care hospitals (DCHs) set up in the state during Covid-19 pandemic. The auditor examined the related records of 18 DCHs in Khurda and Cuttack districts and found that 51,967 Covid patients had been treated in these DCHs in the first two waves of the pandemic, and ₹724.50 crore had been incurred for the purpose. "The audit observed irregularities in passing the bills for payment, without proper check/verification of documents. Thus, payment of ₹144.88 crore to the DCHs, without verification of basic documents/records, was irregular," the CAG said in its report.

drainage, the state government and urban local bodies (ULBs) failed to comply with the National Disaster Management guidelines, resulting in waterlogging and urban flooding." This apart, rapid urbanisation has more impact on land use pattern of the cities, mostly on drains/nallahs. Municipal corporations did not prepare the master plan for stormwater drainage management in cities, leading to waterlogging and urban flooding, it said. The municipal corporations have failed to take appropriate measures to recharge groundwater despite depletion in groundwater level. Municipal corporations did not provide adequate safety to commuters by covering the

corporations, only 52.97 Million Litre per Day (9.48 per cent) had been collected by the existing sewerage systems, leaving the remaining 505.67 Million Litre per Day (90.52 per cent) uncollected and had been discharged to water bodies, causing water pollution," it said. Around 42.24 lakh people across Odisha were affected by acute diarrhoea, 4.63 lakh by typhoid, 0.12 lakh by hepatitis and 0.12 lakh by renal diseases during the FY2017-22, which were primarily caused due to water contamination, it found. The auditor also found that due to non-achievement of service level benchmarks and non-preparation of annual accounts, ULBs did not get the Central assistance of ₹333.58 crore under 14th Finance Commission grant. Non completion of sewerage projects led to time and cost overrun of 12 years and ₹550.07 crore, respectively, for Bhubaneswar sewerage districts I, II and III, it said.

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: The Assembly was adjourned twice Saturday due to a ruckus by Opposition BJD members who demanded a clarification from Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi over his allegation of irregularities in government recruitment during the previous BJD regime. Majhi, while introducing the Odisha Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2024 in the Assembly Friday, alleged that massive irregularities happened in government recruitment during the previous BJD regime and jobs were sold for lakhs of rupees. He alleged there were irregularities in the recruitment of assistant section officers (ASOs) and junior engineers. BJD had strongly condemned the statement and asked him to prove the charges. As soon as the House assembled for Question Hour Saturday, BJD members trooped into the Well and raised slogans demanding a clarification from the Chief Minister.



The House could function for only three minutes during the Question Hour, after which Speaker Surama Padhy adjourned it as the agitating BJD members refused to stop sloganeering. When the House reassembled at 11.30am, Opposition Chief Whip Pramila Mallik of the BJD strongly condemned Majhi's statement and said the remarks were unbecoming of a Chief Minister. She urged the Speaker to expunge the CM's statement from the Assembly records. Mallik said Majhi's statement was an insult to the meritorious students who

have been newly recruited in the post of ASO. "The CM's statement will also de-motivate aspiring candidates preparing for different government jobs. Therefore, it should be deleted from the Assembly records," she said, while demanding a clarification from the CM. BJP member Santosh Khatua also alleged that there have been irregularities in the recruitments during the previous government. "The new law is therefore now passed in order to end the legacy of corruption in the recruitment process. There is no point in disrupting the valuable time of the Assembly," Khatua said. The BJD members again created ruckus, demanding a ruling from the Speaker. Amid the din, Padhy again adjourned the proceedings till 4pm. Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Naveen Patnaik, was present in the House when his party members trooped into the Well. However, Majhi was not present as he was attending a programme of President Droupadi Murmu in Mayurbhanj district.



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📌 Aadharr card is mandatory for online registration
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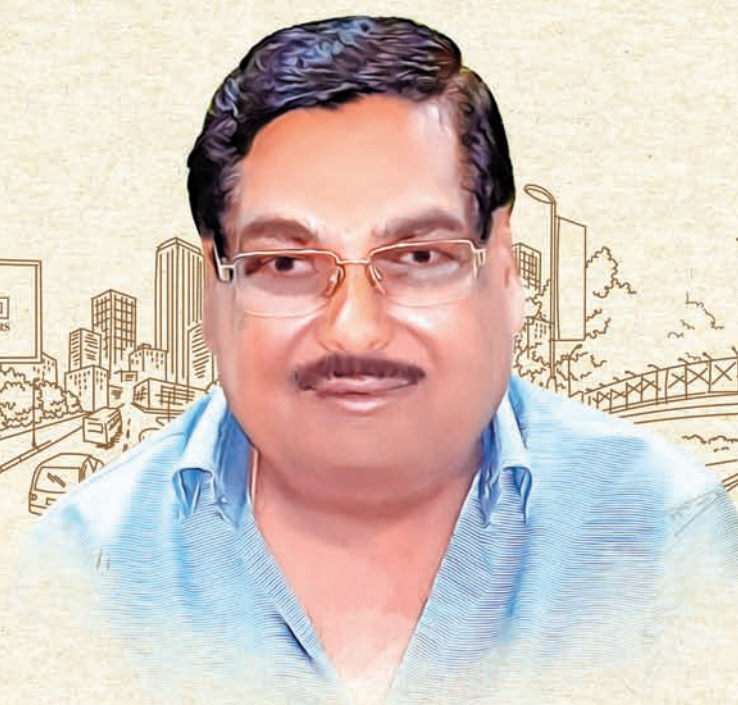
Registrations are open from 2 December 2024 till 31 December 2024

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A LEGEND WHO LIVES ON



SURESH CHANDRA AGARWAL
1948 : 2020



*"In Memory of a life so beautifully lived...
a heart so deeply loved"*

Throughout your life you have touched everyone with your warmth and benevolence. Your vision and expertise will inspire us forever. With deep reverence and unwavering love in our hearts, today on your

4th Death Anniversary

"We honor your memory with gratitude and carry your vision forward with respect."

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FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND EMPLOYEES**

Prez lays foundation for 3 new rail lines

MURMU ALSO VIRTUALLY LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR THE TRIBAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, DANDBOSE AIRPORT AND A 100-BED SUB-DIVISIONAL HOSPITAL IN RAIRANGPUR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangriposi, Dec 7: President Droupadi Murmu Saturday laid the foundation for six projects in the state, including three new railway lines, worth a total of ₹6,400 crore.

Bangriposi-Gorumahisani, Buramara-Chakulia and Badampahar-Keonjhar are the railway lines for which the foundation stones were laid by Murmu in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav and Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jial Oram, among others.

The President also virtually laid the foundation for three other projects in Rairangpur - Tribal Research and Development Centre, Dandbose Airport and a sub-divisional hospital.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion, the President expressed confidence that the rail projects and the airport would boost



President Droupadi Murmu (center) laying foundation stones for three new rail lines in the presence of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi (right) and other officials.

transportation, commerce, and business in the region.

The new 100-bed hospital would provide better health facilities to the locals, she said.

Noting that Odisha is getting benefitted from the 'Purvodaya' vision of the Central government, the President said development of the entire region is getting accelerated

through various welfare schemes on education, skill development, health, tourism and transportation.

Murmu said that Eklavya Model Residential Schools are being established for tribal children.

She said more than 100 new Eklavya Model Residential Schools are being established in Odisha, including 23 in Mayurbhanj district.

She expressed confidence that after getting education from these schools, tribal children would be able to contribute towards the progress of society and the country.

According to Railway sources, the 82-km Badampahar-Kendujhar line will pass through Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts. The project will

be developed at an estimated cost of ₹2,106 crore.

The 86-km-long Bangriposi-Gorumahisani line will be built at an expenditure of ₹2,549 crore. It will facilitate the movement of passengers and freight and contribute to the economic growth of Mayurbhanj district, they said.

Similarly, the 60-km Buramara-Chakulia line, connecting Mayurbhanj district with Jharkhand's East Singhbhum district, will be built at a cost of ₹1,639 crore. The new rail line will improve access between these mineral-rich areas and boost the local economy by enhancing the transportation of goods, particularly for the industrial sector.

Murmu Saturday ended her five-day tour of Odisha during which she attended a series of events including the Indian Navy Day celebration at Blue Flag Beach in Puri December 4 and OUAAT's 40th convocation in Bhubaneswar December 5.

Two unions hold protest near Taldih mines

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Dec 7: The Rourkela Shramik Sangh (RSS) and Gangpur Mazdoor Manch (GMM) Saturday held a joint demonstration against the entry of Adani Group in Steel Authority of India (SAIL)-owned Taladih mines near Barsuan. Residents from villages of five nearby Gram Panchayats (GPS) also joined in the protest.

The two unions, which recently won the Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) union elections, are up in arms against the handing over of the excavation of SAIL owned Taladih mines to Adani group, which they fear could be the beginning of the plans to handover RSP to the private

conglomerate.

GMM president and former MLA George Tirkey said, "We have decided that we will not allow Adani to excavate from Taldih mines because this will pave the way for the business group's takeover of RSP. The group has already spread its wings in Odisha, thanks to the double engine government. But we have pledged not to let this happen here."

Tirkey alleged that while earlier RSP was allowed to lift 2 MT ores per year, Adani will now raise it to 7 MT. "This will finish the area. Look what is happening at Gandhamardan range," he said.

General secretary of RSS Prasant Behera said the union had earlier an-

nounced about the demonstration over the likely plans to privatise the RSP during a press conference. Reiterating his demand, Behera said the unions will never allow the handover of the mines to Adani, or let the privatisation of RSP happen. "We will oppose any such moves vehemently," he warned.

Earlier December 1, the unions, in a press conference, had alleged that the government had plans to privatise RSP in the same way as it did to the Ferro Scrap Nigam Limited (FSNL) which was taken over by a Japanese company with over 1200 employees. The union officer bearers claimed that RSP could meet a similar fate despite making profits.

Environmentalists oppose proposed NH over Chilika

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: Environmentalists across the state have expressed serious concerns over the plans to construct a two-lane national highway (NH-516A) over Chilika Lake, as announced by the National Highways Authority of India recently. They said the project will potentially damage the rich bio-diversity of Asia's largest brackish water lake and leave a trail of destruction of the region's fragile eco-system.

The NHAI, in a recent letter, stated that it has approved the land acquisition plans for the National Highway, connecting Gopalpur and Satapada. The NHAI had further directed the concerned construction company for drone survey before December 11 for timely execution of the project.

However, the project's announcement has invited strong resistance from thousands of locals in the surrounding region who claim that the highway would pose critical threats to the endangered marine species in the lake, while seriously affecting live-



lihood of the fishermen communities.

Secretary of Orissa Environmental Society, Jaya Krushna Panigrahi said, "Coastal ecosystems are normally fragile, which is facing an enhanced stress from landward and seaward sides in the scenario of an impending climate change. On top of this, if the proposed construction will be allowed near

Chilika Lake it would jeopardise the entire ecosystem". Panigrahi added that the construction of the highway would pose imminent threats to the livelihood of fishing communities, and would also endanger existence of migratory birds, who consider Chilika a safe haven during winter. Echoing similar concerns, city-based lawyer Shankar

Pani said, "Even though the project was dropped off in 2018 following stiff opposition from the locals, it is absurd to conceive the thoughts about the project again. Despite Chilika being the first Ramsar site in India, the large-scale construction and frequent noise, arising from the movement of automobiles, would keep the birds away from the wetland".

Moreover, Pani added that it is futile to connect Satapada and Gopalpur since it does not serve any business interests.

Environmentalist Akash Ranjan Rath said, "Almost 90 per cent of the Irrawaddy Dolphin population in this region is resident due to factors such as isolation, abundant food supply, and good water quality. Like all cetacean species, they are highly sensitive to noise and artificial light. Habitat fragmentation and various forms of pollution are likely to have a significant impact on their migration patterns".

due to factors such as isolation, abundant food supply, and good water quality. Like all cetacean species, they are highly sensitive to noise and artificial light. Habitat fragmentation and various forms of pollution are likely to have a significant impact on their migration patterns".



AKASH RANJAN RATH

DD to broadcast news in Santali: Vaishnav

Bangriposi: Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnav on Saturday said the Doordarshan will start news bulletins in Santali within a week. Vaishnav, also the railway minister, made the announcement at a programme in Mayurbhanj district where President Droupadi Murmu laid the foundation stones for six projects, including three rail lines. Murmu, the first tribal president of the country, belongs to the Santali community. Santali is one of the 22 languages recognised in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, RAYAGADA. E-Procurement Notice Bid Identification No. EERWRGD-Online-04/2024-25. Details of procurement for maintenance of road works.

ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD. E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE INVITING TENDER NO. BHEP/31/2024-25 DATED 06.12.2024. Details of tender for construction of security shed.

Bank of India E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE. Details of auction for properties of SAHID NAGAR BRANCH and SASTRI NAGAR BRANCH.

Youth body demands 'Coastal Reserve Battalion'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Dec 7: The Utkalmani Yubak Sangha, a Pattamundai-based youth association, has urged the President of India and the Chief Minister to initiate steps for setting up of a 'Coastal Reserve Battalion' in the district to bolster surveillance and security along its 48 km coastline.

In letters e-mailed to the President and the CM, the

Sangha said such a dedicated force will not only safeguard the district's rich natural resources but it will also strengthen the nation's coastal security infrastructure.

The Sangha said the region remains vulnerable to a gamut of security threats despite the presence of three coastal police stations owing to lack of sufficient personnel and advanced military-grade

equipment. Kendrapara is home to Bhitarkanika National Park, a critical ecological zone spread over 672 sq km and a treasure trove of marine and wildlife resources, Sangha president Goutam Behera said.

The sensitive area faces persistent threats from infiltrators who exploit loopholes in coastal security in carrying out their illegal activities, such as

poaching, smuggling, and trafficking.

There have also been reports of foreign infiltrators exploiting sea routes to engage in illegal fishing activities, posing threats to marine biodiversity, he added. In 2001, a fake wireless centre was discovered in Banipal, where secret information regarding Hukitola Island's protection was compromised.

Teachers' training programme concludes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, Dec 7: A training programme in English language for teachers in elementary schools concluded at Sasanabad Government High School at Remuna in the district Saturday.

The programme organised by the State Institute of Languages and Teacher Training (SILT) in collaboration with the District Education office, Balasure for five days - from December 3 to 7. The programme was monitored and guided by Sumita Das, Director SILTT and Prachi Tanaya



Giri, District Education Officer, Balasure.

The objective of the programme was to enrich language proficiency and professional competence among teachers - in view of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 - which

comprised interactive sessions, group discussions, role play, lesson planning and improvement of communication skills.

Headmaster of the organising school, Laxmikanta Mohanty, graced the opening session while Gopabandhu Das, Jayachandra Behera from SILTT, and resource persons Tulsi Prasad Das and Swasti Shreeti Shaw mentored the programme.

The programme witnessed the participation of 56 teachers from different government primary schools across Remuna block.

Union Bank of India E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE. Details of auction for secured assets of Sonapur-1 Branch.

FOCUS SOUTH KOREA

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION



While some might argue that it is undemocratic to remove a democratically elected leader, the South Korean experience shows that impeachment can be an effective instrument for defending democracy

his term, but later committed suicide while facing corruption charges. Then, in December 2016, President Park Geun-hye was impeached, and this time the Constitutional Court confirmed the decision. In 2018, Park was convicted on criminal corruption and abuse-of-power charges and given a prison sentence (she was released in 2021). South Korea's experience with impeachment is rare. A recent study I co-authored shows that there were only ten successful impeachments globally between 1990 and 2017. Yet South Korea has generated valuable precedents for others to follow. While some might argue that it is undemocratic to remove a democratically elected leader, the South Korean experience shows that impeachment can be an effective instrument for defending democracy. South Korean legislators today know that they won't be breaking new ground if they impeach Yoon. Unlike impeachment in the US, the Korean process remains a credible, serious part of the country's democratic politics. Legislators can be reassured by the fact that past decisions to remove a president have not been seen as merely partisan. Since the vote in the Park case was bipartisan, members of Yoon's People Power Party cannot take refuge in simply

voting along party lines. Precedent demands that they take their constitutional responsibility seriously, as others before them have done. The Constitutional Court's certification of their decision – in effect, checking the legality of their work – also serves an important function, shielding legislators from accusations of partisan impropriety. In 2004, the court made clear that while the National Assembly had a political and fact-finding role to play, judges would ultimately decide whether the facts presented met the constitution's threshold for removal. Nor can legislators be accused of acting undemocratically. After all, a fresh election necessarily follows from a successful impeachment vote. Far from overruling the people, they are preventing the people's trust from being abused. The Constitutional Court's final review and the quick triggering of new elections are both missing in the US system, which is clearly worse for it. Thanks to wise choices made by the drafters of the South Korean constitution, impeachment functions as a "hard reset" of the democratic system. When malign incumbents show their true colors, they can be shown the door before public confidence in the system is lost.

The 2004 court ruling in Roh's case made this very point. The justices held that impeachment should occur only if there is a grave violation of the law, and if a president's removal is "necessary to rehabilitate the damaged constitutional order." Given this standard, there is a powerful case for concluding that Yoon's actions – even more so than Park's – fit the bill. Under the 1987 constitution, the president may declare martial law solely "to cope with a military necessity or to maintain the public safety and order by mobilization of the military forces in time of war, armed conflict, or similar national emergency." Yoon's decision not only fell far short of this standard; it made a mockery of it. In his speech declaring martial law, Yoon did not even bother to cite any "military necessity" or credible threat to "public order." Instead, he offered an intemperate word salad of complaints about legislators' fiscal decisions (which had supposedly turned the country into a "drug paradise"), investigations into his scandals, and unsubstantiated claims about "threats of North Korean communist forces and ... shameless pro-North Korean anti-state forces." Far from meeting the constitutional standard for imposing martial law, Yoon's erratic behaviour and plain disregard for the facts revealed a reckless disregard for South Korea's democratic system. At a moment when leaders in other backsliding democracies seem to enjoy impunity, South Korea's latest impeachment saga is a reminder that democracy, once established, can easily be lost through inattention or venality. The authority of a president must not be confused with the naked flexing of power by someone who once won an election.

The writer is Professor of Law at the University of Chicago.



Aziz Huq

THE AUTHORITY OF A PRESIDENT MUST NOT BE CONFUSED WITH THE NAKED FLEXING OF POWER BY SOMEONE WHO ONCE WON AN ELECTION

Yoon Suk-yeol's latest political gambit undoubtedly did not unfold as he expected. After abruptly declaring martial law on 3 December, South Korea's scandal-plagued president was forced to lift the order within hours in the face of public protests and legislative opposition. He now faces an impeachment motion filed by the opposition Democratic Party, which has condemned his "insurrectionary behavior." As of this writing, the opposition is eight votes shy of what it needs to oust Yoon. But given the artful design of South Korea's 1987 constitution and the country's recent experience with impeachment, the opposition has an advantage, and it stands on firm legal ground. Yoon's removal would serve as a global example – in stark contrast to the United States – of how democracies can and should deal with those who abuse the privileges of incumbency. A South Korean president can be impeached for violating "the Constitution or other laws in the performance of official duties." While a simple majority in the National Assembly can propose an impeachment bill, it must then be approved by a two-thirds supermajority. As in the US, the constitution limits the effect of impeachment to removal from office, and expressly leaves open the possibility of a criminal prosecution. But unlike in the US, a Korean president who faces impeachment immediately passes his or her duties to the prime minister. And in another departure from the American model, the impeachment motion then goes to the Constitutional Court for final approval. This design has resulted in two successful impeachments in the last two decades. In 2004, President Roh Moo-hyun was impeached, but the Court held that the charges against him were inadequate to justify his removal. Roh went on to finish



In concentration and silence we must gather strength for the right action.

THE MOTHER

The Way Forward

The BJP's Ram Madhav has written an article titled "For South Asia to grow, communalism must end." It makes two points in the main. The first is that South Asia is "on track to be the fastest growing region in the world." Despite turmoil in Bangladesh and Pakistan, the parts that once made up all of Hindustan will grow at over 6 per cent. The second point Madhav makes is for prosperity, South Asia must give up communalism. This is an accurate prescription. The question is how does one achieve that? Since this is the subject of the book I am writing, it is something that I have grappled with as well. The conclusion I have arrived at is that it is not possible for South Asia to normalise internally, meaning becoming less communal, without normalising externally with the other parts of what used to be united India. But again, how does one normalise externally? The present situation is our region is such that cricket is not played across borders, visas are not given, we have shrunk our diplomatic presence in Bangladesh and so on. To find an answer to that we have to look at other parts of the world that have had hostilities, in many instances worse and more painful than the ones historically suffered here, to see what they have done. Germany and France fought against each other in two world wars, with millions killed. Almost the entire western front of World War I was fought on French soil. Under Hitler, Germany occupied France after a military humiliation. Today, the countries have normalised. They have not merged themselves and France remains France and so does Germany as an independent nation but in terms of trade and movement they are normal. The European Union project began, just after the Second World War with the integration of the steel and coal industries (because those were directly linked to war preparation). ASEAN, the Association of South East Asian Nations, is also one that has a history of hostilities. Singapore hanged two Indonesian Marines after they were convicted of a terror bombing inside Singapore. Today, this is one of the world's largest trading zones. It has Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Communists and all sorts of people integrated and offering each other visa-free travel. China occupied Vietnam for centuries and even today this is remembered, and the Vietnamese are wary. But that has not stopped them from trading with China. Or stopped China from opening up to Japan, which had occupied it in the same decade as Partition happened. In fact Netaji's Indian National Army was allied to that same Japanese force till the fall of Singapore to the allies. Both Europe and ASEAN offer us a way forward to do what Madhav is saying is needed. His argument focusses mostly on the others and his belief is that India is fine and does not need to do much because communalism is only the exception for us whereas it is the rule for the others. We can argue over this but today I am not going to. We can accept the broad argument. The question is how to proceed towards a solution. Madhav does not go there but my book does. The World Bank says that "South Asia is one of the least integrated regions in the world in terms of trade and people-to-people contact." Intraregional trade between Bangladesh, India and Pakistan accounts for 5 per cent of our total trade, compared to South East Asia where the number is five times higher. Trade annually in South Asia is \$23 billion though it should really be over \$100 billion. Why? The problem is purely man-made. The World Bank says that "border challenges mean it is about 20 per cent cheaper for a company in India to trade with Brazil instead of a neighbouring South Asian country." Transport and logistics costs for trade between South Asian nations are 50 per cent higher than the cost in OECD nations. The main problem is a broad trust deficit throughout the region. "Putting aside traditional concerns and taking joint action can develop cross-border solutions to shared issues, strengthen regional institutions, improve infrastructure and connectivity, and advance trade policy," the World Bank says. What are these 'traditional concerns'? They are of course the unwillingness to integrate, the hostility that has ended movement across the borders of people and capital, the invocation of bogeymen to discourage citizens from thinking of a more united future, and above all the absence of political imagination. The benefits are clear: "Regional cooperation has the potential to produce significant gains across all countries of South Asia." This is the solution. We have to trade more with each other, we have to be more open to each other in terms of visitors, and we have to think of ways in which the region can work together on larger challenges such as climate change. This will need leadership from the largest state. We are also the one that is likely to benefit most, at least in the short term given our manufacturing base. As I wrote last week, half of all medical tourists coming into India are from Bangladesh. Few if any Pakistanis can come because relations are frozen. It appears that the solution is simple, but in fact it is being held back by internal nationalisms. Many do not want a solution because the problem is either not properly understood or, as in the case of some political parties, the problem of communalism is the reason for their existence.



Aakar Patel

MANY DO NOT WANT A SOLUTION BECAUSE THE PROBLEM IS EITHER NOT PROPERLY UNDERSTOOD OR, AS IN THE CASE OF SOME POLITICAL PARTIES, THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNALISM IS THE REASON FOR THEIR EXISTENCE

SPECTRUM JURISPRUDENCE

Presidential pardon & judicial review



Satya Narayan Misra

IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT, PROPORTIONALITY IS OFTEN INVOKED BY THE SUPREME COURT

US President Joe Biden has issued a full and unconditional pardon to his son Hunter Biden who was convicted for illegally buying a gun and for tax evasion. It was uncharacteristic of Biden; who said the "charges were politically motivated and designed to hurt him politically." President-elect Trump called the pardon "such an abuse and miscarriage of justice." Interestingly, he has already suggested that some of the rioters of 6 January 2021 could be pardoned when he takes office. Trump had pardoned his son-in-law's father Charles Kushner for tax evasion and other crimes in his first term as President. Likewise, Bill Clinton had pardoned his half-brother Roger Clinton for old cocaine charges. Aharon Barak, the celebrated judge and Chief Justice of the Israeli Supreme Court from 1995-2006 writes in his fascinating book "The Judge in a Democracy" that if the "President of a state grants a pardon, his action is subject to judicial review." The court must examine

the criteria used by the President and evaluate whether he acted lawfully. In response to a petition in which the legality of the President's pardon of the head of the General Security Services and several members of the service was considered, while the majority upheld the power of the President to give pardon before the trial, Aharon dissented and opined: "The branches of the state are lofty, but the law is higher than all of us. We would not fulfill our judicial role if, in the context of lawfully submitted petitions, we did not review the actions of other branches as they appear from the petitions before us." In recent years a new concept has developed for determining the scope of protection of the Constitution and its values; the concept of proportionality. It was born in the European law countries and from there it crossed over to most of the common law countries. Proportionality is a standard that examines the relationship between the objective the executive branch wishes to achieve,

which has the potential of infringing upon a human right, and the means it has chosen to achieve that infringing objective. An objective is worthy if it serves an important social goal that is sensitive to human rights if it is intended to fulfill social goals important to the existence of a social framework that recognises the constitutional importance of human rights. In the Indian context, proportionality is often invoked by the Supreme Court. While in the Puttaswamy case (2017), the Court was of the view that the purported benefits of Aadhaar outweigh the potential threat it carries to the fundamental right to privacy, in the *Sreyas Singal Case* (2015), it struck down S66A of IT Act 2000 as a 'vice of vagueness' and disproportionate to the protection of public order under Article 19(2) of the Constitution. The power of the President to grant a pardon is vested in Article 72 of the Constitution. However, unlike the US President, the President of India acts on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers.

On the question of judicial review of the President's power to pardon, in the seminal case *Maru Ram Vs UOI* (1980), Justice Krishna Iyer observed "wide as the powers of pardon, it cannot run, for no legal power can run like John Gilpin on the horse but must keep sensibly to a steady course." There is a consensus that the court cannot look into the merits of decision except in cases of arbitrariness, mala fide, or ignorance of relevant facts. Justice Pathak had rightly observed that "In any civilized society, there is no attribute more important than the life and personal liberty. It is hoped that those exercising the power of pardon exercise them in a just and impartial manner. And the judiciary continues to act as a watchdog in such cases." The US Supreme Court can take a leaf out of the *Maru Ram* case, to look into the manifest mala fide that stains Biden's pardon of his son, should there be a challenge to it. *The writer teaches constitutional law.*

WISDOM CORNER

In oneself lies the whole world and if you know how to look and learn, the door is there and the key is in your hand. Nobody on earth can give you either the key or the door to open, except yourself.
JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

There are two kinds of people one can call reasonable: those who serve God with all their heart because they know him, and those who seek him with all their heart because they do not know him.
BLAISE PASCAL

Look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious.
STEPHEN HAWKING

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

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Mental stagnation

Sir, The designation of "Brain Rot" as Oxford's Word of the Year for 2024 has underscored the severe impact of low-quality online content on mental and intellectual health. In India, where a significant portion of the population is under 30, social media platforms dominate the daily lives of millions. However, much of the content consumed on these platforms lacks substance, with algorithms prioritising engagement metrics over quality. This phenomenon fosters mental stagnation, weakens critical thinking, and accelerates societal polarisation. Social media's algorithm-driven feeds amplify divisive and sensationalist content, creating echo chambers that entrench biases and discourage meaningful dialogue. This environment feeds the spread of fake news, propaganda, and misinformation, contributing to a societal erosion of trust in credible institutions. The intellectual toll is particularly heavy on the youth, whose cognitive and analytical abilities are undermined by a steady diet of trivial, toxic, or fake content. As a result, both individual potential and collective societal progress are being compromised. The concept of "Brain Rot" is not new. First used by Henry David Thoreau in *Walden* (1854), it described the intellectual decay that arises when society prioritises distractions over depth and understanding. In the digital age, Thoreau's warning rings truer than ever, as endless feeds of memes, clickbait, and inflammatory headlines dominate our attention. *Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH*

Address glitches

Sir, Though Vande Bharat Express train engine and racks are manufactured with cutting edge technology, of late there were some issues regarding technical glitches in some of these trains in some routes where the trains halted abruptly and had to be hauled by conventional locos to reach their destinations. The root cause of such technical glitches will have to be thoroughly analysed and addressed to the manufacturing workshops so that such issues do not happen. Vande Bharat trains are known for their perfect timing, good running and comfortable journey. Issues such as these can tarnish their image among rail passengers and that should not happen for these indigenously built semi-high-speed trains. *M Pradyu, KANNUR*

100-day TB campaign launched in Assam

Guwahati, Dec 7: A 100-day intensified TB elimination campaign was launched in Assam Saturday by Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya with a focus on 17 districts from where a high number of cases are reported.

Launching the campaign, Acharya spoke about the socio-economic burden of TB, which predominantly affects the poorer sections. He stressed the importance of community-driven efforts in implementing the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP).

He noted the state's innovative measures, including the integration of TB services at Health and Wellness Centres under the Ayushman Bharat programme, free TB treatment in tea garden areas, and TB

detection through boat clinics in 'char' areas. The governor hailed the Ni-kshay Mitra campaign under the PM TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan, which has seen widespread participation of corporates and public sector entities. Contributions from organisations such as OIL India, ONGC, GAIL India, and Power Grid Corporation of India have provided critical nutritional and treatment support to TB patients, he said.

The special 100-day campaign has been started with a focus on the high-burden TB districts. Along with better drugs and diagnosis, patient support amount has also been doubled under the programme.

The campaign includes activities such as high-burden area mapping, identification of vulnerable populations in tea gardens, slums, and mining areas.



Preparations underway ahead of the Winter Session of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly at Suvarna Vidhan Soudha, in Belagavi, Saturday

Protest call against AFSPA in Manipur on Rights Day



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Dec 7: Five Imphal valley-based civil society organisations led by the All Manipur United Clubs Organisation (AMUCO) will hold a mass rally December 10 against the continued imposition of AFSPA as well as to demand the restoration of peace in Manipur.

December 10 is observed as International Human Rights Day. The Convenor of the bodies, Pratap Leishangthem, said, "On the occasion of International Human Rights Day, a rally

will be held Tuesday against the reimposition of AFSPA and for restoration of normalcy in the state."

Leishangthem appealed to all to cease work on that day and attend the mass rally, which will cover some 5 km.

"The rally is jointly organised with Poirei Leimarol Meira Paibi Apunba Manipur, All Manipur Women Voluntary Association, Committee on Human Rights COHR and Manipur Student Federation," Leishangthem said.

Meanwhile, the Centre for

Organisation Research and Education (CORE) said that it has submitted formal communication to the United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (UNWGEID) in connection with the disappearance of Laishram Kamalbabu who went missing from an army camp at Leimakhong November 25.

The UNWGEID functions under the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva.

A statement issued by CORE said that it urged the UN body to intervene promptly and ensure an impartial investigation into the disappearance of Kamalbabu. Kamalbabu, a native of Assam's Cachar district who lived in Khukrul in Imphal West, was a works supervisor for a contractor working with the Military Engineering Services (MES) in Leimakhong Military Station of the 57th Mountain Division, according to the Army.

He had gone missing while en route to Leimakhong army camp November 25.

Parnaik press for future-oriented urban planning

Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt Gen KT Parnaik highlighted the unique challenges of the North East Region, including its vast forest cover, limited habitable land and location within Seismic Zone-V

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, Dec 7: Arunachal Pradesh (AP) Governor Lt Gen KT Parnaik (ret) Saturday underscored the urgent need for comprehensive and future-oriented urban planning.

Speaking at the inaugural of the East Zone Conference of the Institute of Town Planners India (ITPI) here, Parnaik highlighted the challenges facing urban settlements in AP, including inadequate infrastructure, insufficient parking facilities, and a shortage of public spaces like parks and open areas.

These shortcomings, the governor noted, significantly affect the quality of life.

Emphasising the importance of regional planning, he cited the vastness and geographical diversity of the state.



Parnaik said that development efforts must go beyond individual towns to adopt a holistic, region-wide approach. Such a perspective would promote balanced growth, enable efficient resource allocation, and enhance connectivity across districts, ultimately fostering greater economic and social integration, he said.

Parnaik highlighted the unique challenges of the North East Region, including its vast forest cover, limited habitable land, location within Seismic Zone-V, prolonged monsoon season and susceptibility to landslides and floods and stressed the need for sustainable development that strikes a balance between urban growth

and environmental conservation. He called for the creation of inclusive and efficient urban spaces that preserve the region's natural beauty and uphold its rich cultural heritage.

The governor asked the ITPI to support AP through knowledge sharing, capacity building, and training initiatives.

The potential of modern technologies such as GIS, AI-based planning tools, and remote sensing to significantly enhance the state's planning capabilities, he

said. Touching on the issues related to hydropower projects and rehabilitation, Parnaik suggested the development of smart model villages using compensation funds.

These villages, he suggested, should retain a traditional aesthetic while incorporating modern amenities such as schools, markets, recreation-cum-community halls, playgrounds, and dispensaries. Large numbers of town planners and urban development professionals from nine states, particularly from the North Eastern region and educational institutes participated in the conference.

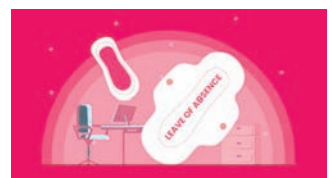
The conference was organised by ITPI, in collaboration with the Directorate of Town Planning, department of Urban Affairs and

was themed, 'Need for Planned Urbanisation in the North Eastern States'.

State Urban Affairs and Land Management Minister Balo Raja, Urban Affairs commissioner Yashpal Garg, ITPI president NK Patel, secretary-general VP Kulkshrestha and ITPI coordinator Pradeep Kapoor attended the conference.

Development efforts must go beyond individual towns to adopt a holistic, region-wide approach
LT GEN KT PARNAIK I GOVERNOR, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Sikkim University allows menstrual leave



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gangtok, Dec 7: Sikkim University has allowed one day menstrual leave per month for female students, according to a notification.

The Sikkim University registrar Laxuman Sharma issued the notification to this effect December 4 following a representation by the Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA) last month.

"The Vice-Chancellor has been pleased to allow one-day menstrual leave in a month for girl and women student of Sikkim University except during university examinations," said the registrar.

The leave so availed shall be adjusted with the mandatory 75 per cent attendance criteria of the classes held in a semester for examination purposes, he said.

HAL, SAI & NSDF pact to boost sports infra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Dec 7: Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Sports Development Fund (NSDF) and Sports Authority of India (SAI) to establish a state-of-the-art 'HAL-SAI High Performance Centre' in Bangalore.

This collaborative effort is taken up under HAL's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Initiative.

In a statement issued Saturday, the HAL said, it has been supporting sports in partnership with SAI to provide world-class facilities and build a platform to support the talented sports persons.

"Under its CSR initiative HAL has now committed to establish a 'HAL-SAI High Performance Centre' at SAI, Netaji Subhas Southern Centre, Bangalore. This centre will leverage science and technology to enhance the performance of athletes," it said.

According to HAL, the cen-



As part of CSR, HAL has already partnered with SAI for running the HAL-SAI Sports Training Centre at Koraput, Odisha for training tribal youths

tre will have facilities in the areas of anthropometry, bio-

mechanics, exercise biochemistry, nutrition, sports and exercise, physiology, psychology, strength and conditioning, sports medicine and physiotherapy.

This 'HAL-SAI High Performance Centre' represents a significant milestone in HAL's journey to unlock India's sporting potential, it stated.

"With this state-of-the-art facility, athletes will have the best chances to succeed at the international levels including

the Olympics and enhance the national pride," it added.

As part of CSR, HAL has already partnered with SAI for running the HAL-SAI Sports Training Centre at Koraput, Odisha for training tribal youth in archery, football and athletics. Another significant step taken by the company is setting up of football academy at Bangalore with FIFA standard football grounds to spot, identify and train young talent, the statement added.

In a first, Meghalaya varsity gets UGC recognition

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, Dec 7: Captain Williamson Sangma Technical University has received recognition from the University Grants Commission, making it the first state-owned varsity in Meghalaya to be empowered to award degrees to students, an official said.

It also empowers the university to award degrees as specified by UGC requiring it to follow the UGC notifications issued from time to time



and was permitted to operate its campus within Meghalaya,

the official said. "The name of the university

has been included in the list of universities established as per Section 2(f) of UGC Act, 1956. The University may note and adhere to the following - the university is empowered to award degrees as specified by the UGC under section 22 of the UGC Act 1956 by conducting courses through its own departments, its constituent colleges and through its affiliated colleges in regular mode only," the UGC said in a letter to the registrar of the university.

Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma posted on X, "With the Captain Williamson Sangma State University getting recognition from UGC, our colleges have the option to affiliate to the state university so that students applying to those colleges affiliated to state university won't have to appear for CUET in the future."

The Captain Williamson Sangma Technical University was established through an Act in 2011.

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER
ATHMALLIK FOREST DIVISION
At/P.O.: Athmallik, Dist.: Angul - 759125
E-mail: dfoathmallikt@gmail.com, Mob.: 9437004236
Tender Notice No. 6311/1F/2024 Date: 06.12.2024
Short Tender Notice for Construction of Staff Barrack at Kiakata under Madhapur Range & Charkhaman under Handapa Range of Athmallik Forest Division
No. MM-310: Sealed tender is hereby invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Odisha, invites tender for following works from the eligible contractor as detail below.
1. Name of the Work: Construction of Staff Barrack at Kiakata under Madhapur Range & Charkhaman under Handapa Range of Athmallik Forest Division.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Tender Notice No.	Estimated Cost
1	Construction of Staff Barrack at Kiakata under Madhapur Range of Athmallik Forest Division		13.75 Lakh
2	Construction of Staff Barrack at Charkhaman under Handapa Range of Athmallik Forest Division		13.75 Lakh

2. Place of Work: Athmallik Forest Division
3. Period of Completion: 90 Days
4. Commencement of download RFP document on website: www.odishaforest.in Dt. 08.12.2024, Time: 11.00 A.M.
5. Last date of bid submission (by Messenger/Courier/Post): Dt. 23.12.2024 Time: 01.00 P.M. Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik Division, P.O./P.S.: Athmallik, PIN - 759125, Dist.: Angul.
6. Date of General & Technical and Financial Bid Opening: Dt. 23.12.2024 Time: 04.00 P.M. Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik Division, P.O./P.S.: Athmallik, PIN - 759125, Dist.: Angul
7. RFP document cost (Non-refundable): Rs.6,000/- by DD issued by Nationalized Bank in favour of the Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik Division, Payable at Athmallik for each work.
8. Address for Bid submission: Office of the Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik Division, At: Athmallik, Angul, PIN - 759125
9. EMD (Refundable): Rs.20,000/- by DD issued by Nationalized Bank in favour of the Divisional Forest Officer, Athmallik Division, Payable at Athmallik for each work.
10. Bid validity period: 3 Months from the last date of submission of Bid.
11. Latest tender document and addendum/corrigendum, if any, will be published at the websites: www.odishaforest.in.
12. The site of construction may change (within the Athmallik Forest Division) depending on administrative needs.
13. Disclaimer: Notwithstanding anything else contained to the contrary in this tender document, DFO Athmallik reserves the right to cancel/withdraw/modify fully or partially the "Invitation of Bids" or to reject one or more of the bids without assigning any reason and shall bear no liability whatsoever consequent upon such a decision.
Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer
Athmallik Division
OIPR-08125/11/0010/2425



It is said in our culture that 'seva param dharma' (seva is top duty). We not only speak about it, we also practice it

POPE NOT TO VISIT INDIA IN '25: MOS GEORGE KURIAN

Union Minister of State for Fisheries George Kurian Saturday informed that the much-awaited Papal visit to India will happen only after 2025.



of the day quote

The health sector remains a top priority for the state government and several reforms are being implemented to improve the system



The world looks at us with surprise as we keep marching towards getting our due place on the global stage.



The Congress party is already working on it. We are taking guidance and seeking opinions of experts



Rahul claims govt to bring in 'new GST slab'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Saturday said while the Narendra Modi government is hiking the rates of the income tax and other taxes for the common man, it is giving concessions to billionaires, and claimed that it is set to introduce another slab of the GST to burden people.

GANDHI SAID THE CONGRESS WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE THIS "INJUSTICE" OF IMPOSING HIGHER TAX RATES ON THINGS OF DAILY USE AND GIVING CONCESSIONS TO BIG BILLIONAIRES



Gandhi said the Congress will continue to oppose this "injustice" of imposing higher tax rates on things of daily use and giving concessions to big billionaires. "See another example of concessions to capitalists and looting common people. On one hand, the income tax is increasing constantly in comparison to the corporate tax. On the other hand, the Modi government is preparing to collect more money through Gabbar Singh Tax," he said in a post in Hindi on X.

In the Lok Sabha said. "This is a grave injustice -- taxing the hard-earned money of poor and middle-class families in order to give tax breaks to billionaires and waive their massive debts," he claimed. "Our fight is against this injustice. We will raise our voice strongly against the burden of taxes on the common people and put pressure on the government to stop this 'loot', the Congress leader added.

5.56 lakh crore to Rs 10.2 lakh crore in the last five years. Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh also hit out at the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre over the state of the country's economy and cited the comments of a senior Reserve Bank of India (RBI) official.

He said RBI's Deputy Governor Michael Patra has summarised the current economic situation very well in an interview. "Dr Patra says the economy is not moving ahead as fast as it should because -- private investment is not picking up; manufacturing growth is sluggish."

"Both are being caused by lack of demand from consumers who are being hit by inflation," the Congress leader said in a post on X.

Assam CM Sarma expands cabinet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Dec 7: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Saturday expanded his cabinet with four BJP MLAs sworn in as ministers. Governor Laxman Prasad Acharya administered the oath of office to the four new ministers - Prasanta Phookan, Kaushik Rai, Krishnendu Paul, and Rupesh Goala at the Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra here.

The Chief Minister and members of his cabinet were present on the occasion.

"Congratulations to all my colleagues who have taken oath today. Looking forward to working with them to fulfil Adarniya Shri @narendramodi's vision of a Viksit Assam," Sarma posted on X.

He now heads a 19-member council of ministers. The induction of the four new ministers emphasises the government's commitment to strengthening the administration and ensuring effective governance, Sarma later told reporters.

"There was a requirement of more hands in the ministry and with their induction, the Council of Ministers will be strengthened and we will be able to dedicate ourselves more for the development of Assam," he said.

The chief minister said that due to the number of ministers being less earlier, 'we were not able to give guardian ministers to all the districts but now with the induction of the new ministers, we can do justice to all the departments and serve all sections of people'.

Farmers to resume march to Delhi today



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Dec 7: Punjab farmer leader Sarwan Singh Pandher said Saturday that they have not received any message from the Centre for talks to address their issues and said a group of 101 farmers will again begin their march to Delhi December 8.

Protesting farmers Friday suspended their foot march to the national capital for the day after some of them suffered injuries due to tear gas shells fired by security personnel, who stopped them at the Punjab-Haryana border.

The farmers have been pressing for various demands, including a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP). Addressing the media at Shambhu on the Punjab-Haryana border Saturday, Pandher said 16 farmers suffered injuries and one of them lost hearing ability because of the tear gas shelling by Haryana security personnel.

Except four injured farmers, the rest of them have been discharged from hospital, he said, adding, "We have not received any message from the Centre for holding talks. The (Naren-

Protesting farmers Friday suspended their foot march to the national capital for the day after some of them suffered injuries due to tear gas shells fired by security personnel

dra) Modi government is in no mood to hold talks."

As part of a call given by the farmer unions SKM (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, a 'jatha' of 101 farmers began its march to Delhi Friday from their protest site at the Shambhu border to press for their demands.

The 'jatha' was stopped by multilayered barricading erected by Haryana security personnel. Undeterred by prohibitory orders, the farmers attempted to force their way through the barricades but were stopped by security personnel who lobbed multiple tear gas shells to force them to go back to their protest site at Shambhu, which falls in Punjab.

SHORT TAKES

Triple suicide: Constable among four arrested

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP): After a man and his two sons took their lives within a 24-hour period following alleged harassment by relatives over a property dispute, police Saturday arrested four persons, including a woman constable, on charges of abetting suicide, a senior official said. The district police chief has also shunted out the police outpost in Babupur Grant number 11 village. Ram Thursday Naresh, the 63-year-old father, ended his life due to alleged harassment over a property dispute with his relatives.

Man fires at teen student, kills self

Sambhal: A 25-year-old man shot at a woman undergraduate student before turning the gun on himself in the Asmoli area of this Uttar Pradesh district, police said Saturday. The injured student (18) is undergoing treatment at a hospital. Superintendent of Police Krishna Kumar Bishnoi said, "One Gaurav from Amroha called the woman -- a BSc student -- and shot at her. He then fatally shot himself with the same gun at the spot."

Sinha pays homage to bravehearts

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha Saturday paid homage to the "bravehearts" on the Armed Forces Flag Day and lauded the Army in particular for playing a crucial role in combating terrorism and providing a secure environment to people in the Union Territory. To mark the Armed Forces Flag Day which was observed across Jammu and Kashmir, the armed forces flag was pinned on the Lt Governor Manoj Sinha in Raj Bhavan here.

Gun shop sealed

Jammu: A shop selling guns was sealed for not renewing its trade license here Saturday while authorities set a deadline for all firearms license holders to surrender their excess weapons within a week, officials said.

Leopard attacks 3

Jaipur: Panic grips Vidhyadhar Nagar area here Saturday when a leopard strayed into a residential colony and attacked three people, officials said. Deputy Conservator of Forest Jagdish Gupta said that information was received about the movement of a leopard in Vidhyadhar Nagar.

SNIPPETS

Rajnath to begin 3-day visit to Russia today

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will embark on a three-day trip to Russia Sunday to witness the commissioning of a stealth warship into the Indian Navy and hold talks with his Russian counterpart Andrey Belousov on the expansion of bilateral cooperation in co-production of military hardware. The Russian-manufactured multi-role stealth guided missile frigate INS Tushil will be commissioned Monday in the coastal city of Kaliningrad. The warship, billed as one of the most technologically advanced frigates globally, is expected to significantly bolster the Indian Navy's operational capability in the Indian Ocean, a region that has witnessed increasing Chinese forays.

Maha Assembly Speaker poll tomorrow

Mumbai: The election to the post of the Speaker of the newly constituted 15th Maharashtra Legislative Assembly will be held Monday. According to the poll schedule released by the state legislature secretariat, the candidates will have to submit their nominations by 12 pm Sunday. BJP will continue to hold the Speaker's post and the party legislator Rahul Narwekar is the front runner. Narwekar was the Speaker of the 14th State Assembly from July 2022. BJP sources said that Narwekar will file his nominations before 12 pm Sunday.

Sam Pitroda's phone laptop hacked

New Delhi: Congress leader Sam Pitroda's smartphone, laptop and server have been repeatedly hacked over the past few weeks with hackers issuing threats and demanding tens of thousands of dollars in cryptocurrency, according to a mail sent to those on his mailing list. "They have warned that, if unpaid, they will launch a smear and misinformation campaign to tarnish my reputation by contacting people in my network," Pitroda said in the email. "I want to bring to your attention a critical matter: my laptop, smartphone, and server have been repeatedly hacked and severely compromised over the past few weeks," it read.



An Uttarakhand Home Guard personnel performs a drill during the celebrations of the Home Guard and Civil Protection Foundation Day in Dehradun

Rock bolt tech successfully treating active landslide zones in U'khand

Active landslide zones on Gangotri and Yamunotri highways have been a major issue for the Chardham pilgrims as well as the local people for years, the official said



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Uttarkashi, Dec 7: The rock bolt technology is successfully treating active landslide zones in the hilly areas of Uttarakhand, an official of the Border Roads Organisation said here Saturday.

Landslides occur almost regularly in the hill areas of the state, especially during the monsoon season, blocking roads and causing inconvenience to Chardham pilgrims,

and often claiming lives, he said. Active landslide zones on Gangotri and Yamunotri highways have been a major issue for the Chardham pilgrims as well as the local people for years, the official said.

The Australian rock bolt technology involves removing loose landslide debris by soil nailing in soil and rock bolting in bedrock. BRO Commander Vivek Srivastava said. It is being used at present in the treatment of active landslide zones

Cong ends Delhi Nyay Yatra, vows to defeat AAP, BJP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Dec 7: Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee president Devender Yadav Saturday concluded his month-long Delhi Nyay Yatra, which covered all the 70 Assembly constituencies, and said Delhiites now want good governance which can be delivered only by the Congress.

He said that the "unprecedented" public support for the Yatra was a clear message that people want Congress back in power to run a democratic government and not one-man shows like that of Arvind Kejriwal and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Thousands of Congress workers and local residents joined the Yatra Saturday when it started for Krishan Vihar, Rathi Complex, Burari with Yadav getting a rousing reception.

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Stand with Muslims on Waqf issue: Oppn Christian MPs



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: Christians should take an in-principle stand on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill as it affects the rights of minorities as enshrined in the Constitution, MPs from the community are learnt to have told the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI).

The CBCI, the apex body of Catholics in India, had called a meeting of all Christian MPs in Delhi December 3. It was attended by around 20 MPs, most of them from Opposition parties. Trinamool Congress's (TMC) parliamentary party leader Derek O'Brien, Congress MPs Hibi Eden, Dean Kuria-kose and Anto Antony, and CPI(M) MP John Brittas were among those who attended the meeting, while Union minister George Kurian joined the deliberations later, a source

who was present at the meeting told PTI. CBCI president Archbishop Andrews chaired the meeting, which was held after decades.

"The CBCI emphasises that this meeting was not a formal conference or a politically-motivated event, but rather an opportunity for Christian MPs to come together and celebrate the true spirit of Christmas," it added.

An MP who was present at the deliberations, however, questioned why an agenda was circulated if it was not a formal meeting.

The meeting's agenda included the role of Christian MPs in supporting and protecting the community and its rights, increasing attacks and threats against minorities, especially Christians, and the misuse of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) to target Christian institutions. The source said a senior opposition MP suggested that the community leadership should also highlight "positive points, the important role being played by the community today" and "not just be only reactive to negative news".

national



If the country is safe then religion is also safe. If religion is safe then we are also safe
YOGI ADITYANATH
UTTAR PRADESH CM

DELHI'S AIR QUALITY SLIPS BACK TO 'POOR'

After a brief respite of three days, Delhi's air quality dropped again to the 'poor' category Saturday. The 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) of the city was recorded at 233 at 4 pm Saturday, marking a deterioration from Friday's reading of 197, which fell in the 'moderate' category



JP Nadda inaugurates campaign to reduce TB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh/New Delhi, Dec 7: The rate of decline of tuberculosis incidence in India has doubled since 2015 and is ahead of the global average, Union Health Minister J P Nadda said Saturday while inaugurating a nationwide campaign in Haryana's Panchkula to reduce such cases and mortality due to it.

The 100-day TB elimination campaign will be implemented in 347 districts of 33 states where the prevalence of the disease is higher. The campaign is focused on enhancing detection, reducing diagnostic delays and improving treatment outcomes.

"Under this programme, we have taken detection, tests, treatment and supportive strategies forward in an accelerated way. I feel this 100-day programme will prove to be a milestone in making a 'TB-mukt Bharat' and it will have a far-reaching impact," Nadda said.



The Union health minister highlighted the country's long struggle in its fight against tuberculosis, saying that at one time TB meant a 'slow death'. "Even family members suffering from TB were isolated to prevent its spread. Since 1962, there have been many campaigns against tuberculosis, but in 2018 the prime minister put forth a vision to end TB much before the 2030 deadline of the Sustainable Development Goals." "We changed strategies to achieve the aim. Services have been decentralised and now, 1,73,000 AAMs (Ayushman Arogya Mandirs) will have the facilities to detect and treat tuberculosis," the Union health minister said.

India advises citizens to avoid travelling to Syria



In an advisory, the MEA asked the Indians living in the violence-hit country to leave by the earliest available commercial flights if they can

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: As Islamist-led rebels continue to make further advances in Syria, India has advised its citizens to avoid travelling to the Arab republic and urged those staying in that country to exercise "utmost precaution" and restrict their movements.

In an advisory, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) asked the Indians living in the violence-hit country to leave by the earliest available commercial flights if they can.

The Islamist rebels had almost taken control of the central Syrian city of Homs Thursday after capturing much of Aleppo, the country's largest city.

Tens of thousands of people have been fleeing Homs.

The MEA also urged the Indians residing in Syria to remain in touch with the Indian

embassy in Damascus. "In view of the situation prevailing in Syria, Indian nationals are advised to avoid all travel to Syria, until further notification," the MEA said.

"Indians currently in Syria are requested to remain in touch with the Indian embassy in Damascus at their emergency helpline number +963 993385973 (also on WhatsApp) and email ID hoc.damascus@mea.gov.in for updates," it said.

"Those who can, are advised to leave by the earliest available commercial flights and others are requested to observe utmost precaution about their safety and restrict their movements to the minimum," it added.

India Friday said it is closely following the unfolding situation in Syria.

"We have taken note of the recent escalation in fighting in the north of Syria. We are closely following the situation," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said.

"There are about 90 Indian nationals in Syria, including 14 who are working in various UN organisations. Our mission remains in close contact with our nationals for their safety and security," he said in a statement.

ISKCON temple set afire, idol damaged near Dhaka



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka/Kolkata, Dec 7: A group of people set fire to an ISKCON temple in Dhaka district in Bangladesh in the early hours of Saturday. While ISKCON Bangladesh said it was a "family temple" belonging to an ISKCON devotee, the organisation's Kolkata office said "ISKCON Namhatta Centre" was targeted.

The attack in Dhaka village, under Turag police station in Dhaka district, took place in the early hours of Saturday. A Turag police station official said a manhunt was launched to track down the culprits. According to Charu Chandra Das Brahmachary, general secretary of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), Bangladesh, the temple was set on fire after lifting the tin roof. "The fire was, however, doused quickly but an idol was damaged and curtains burnt," he added.

In India, however, ISKCON Kolkata vice president Radharan Das told PTI that the "vandals set ablaze idols inside the temple at the Namhatta property." "ISKCON Namhatta Centre burned down in Bangladesh. The deities of Sri Sri Lakshmi Narayan and all items inside the temple

were burned down completely. "Early morning between 2-3 am, miscreants set fire to the Shri Shri Radha Krishna Temple and the Shri Shri Mahabhagya Lakshmi Narayan Temple, which fall under the Hare Krishna Namhatta Sangha, located in Dhaur village, under the jurisdiction of Turag Police Station, Dhaka district," Das said in a post on X.

"The fire was initiated by lifting the tin roof at the back of the temple and using petrol or octane," he added in the post and also gave the address.

The relations between India and Bangladesh came under strain after the interim government headed by Muhammad Yunus came to power after deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country August 5 following a student-led protest.

The relations deteriorated further in recent weeks over continued attacks on Hindus and especially after the recent arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former member of ISKCON Bangladesh and now, a spokesperson for the Bangladesh Sammilita Sanatani Jagran Jote organisation. The Iskcon Kolkata vice president also expressed concern over Chinmoy Krishna Das's

The relations deteriorated further in recent weeks over continued attacks on Hindus and especially after the recent arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das, a former member of ISKCON Bangladesh and now, a spokesperson for the Bangladesh Sammilita Sanatani Jagran Jote organisation

The Iskcon Kolkata vice president also expressed concern over Chinmoy Krishna Das's safety following his denial of bail and the violent attacks

safety following his denial of bail and the violent attacks.

Das' arrest in a sedition case November 25 from Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport had triggered demonstrations by supporters of the monk.

An assistant government prosecutor, Saiful Islam Alif, was killed during a protest in Chattogram after the monk was denied bail November 26.

The attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh have triggered protests in India. The Bangladesh foreign ministry summoned the Indian envoy recently and lodged a protest over the storming of the Bangladeshi mission in Agartala by a group of protesters.

Meanwhile, in the Indian state of Assam, the Barak Valley Hotel and Restaurant Association has announced they would not host any Bangladesh national till attacks on Hindus and other minorities in the neighbouring country stopped. Barak Valley, which comprises three districts of Cachar, Sribhumi (formerly Karimganj) and Hailakandi, shares a 129-km-long border with Bangladesh's Sylhet region.

of the day note

Today, we held a second cabinet sub-committee meeting...we have only reviewed. We have asked the officials to take action, as per law, based on the recommendations and findings of the Justice Michael D' Cunha Commission report



D K SHIVAKUMAR | K TAKA DEY CM

Swarna Andhra Pradesh Vision 2047 is aimed at increasing annual income to USD 42,000 to USD 43,000 (per annum) which is 15 times more than the present levels. If you want to increase income, wealth has to be created. If you want to create wealth, students should acquire knowledge



N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | AP CM

It was more than two decades ago that I was a student here, at that time, the idea of effecting change was limited to charity work or social causes. Politics seemed inaccessible



ATISHI | DELHI CM

POST OF THE DAY

Customer loses temper and attacks bank employee after TDS deduction on Fixed Deposit.
Nirmala
Sitharaman's Tax Terr0r!sm becoming Fat@l for Bank employees

@DrJain21

SHORT TAKES

5 killed as speeding car falls into lake

Hyderabad: Five people were killed when the car they were travelling in plunged into a lake in Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri district of Telangana Saturday. According to police, the incident occurred when six youth from Hyderabad, in age group of 20-25, were proceeding to that district. The 'speeding' car fell into a village lake after the driver lost control of the vehicle ahead of a curve. One of them managed to come out of the car by breaking the window glass.

Mother tigress kills her cubs in WB Zoo

Kolkata: In a most unfortunate incident, three tiger cubs housed at Bengal Safari Park at Siliguri in the Darjeeling district of West Bengal were killed Saturday after being bitten by their mother tigress, Rika. Rika had given birth to the three cubs last week only. The officials of the Safari Park had claimed that the accident happened while the mother tigress was sifting her cubs from one place to another. During this process, the three cubs were bitten by Rika following which they punctured. Two of the three cubs died instantly while the third one died after some time.

Drugs worth ₹8.57cr seized

Aizawl: The Assam Rifles along with other law enforcing agencies have seized drugs worth ₹8.57 crore and apprehended three smugglers in Mizoram, officials said Friday. Assam Rifles sources said that the paramilitary troops along with Excise and Narcotics Department personnel recovered 244.500 gms of heroin and 2.288 kgs of 'WY' tablets worth ₹8.57 crore and apprehended three smugglers from Mualkawli areas in the Champhai district Thursday.

Fadnavis, deputies take oath as MLAs



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Dec 7: Two days after being sworn in as Maharashtra Chief Minister, Devendra Fadnavis Saturday took oath as MLA along with deputy CMs Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar, while the Opposition MVA boycotted the ceremony alleging EVM misuse.

The Opposition members refused to take oath on the first day of the three-day special session of the Maharashtra assembly after questioning the Mahayuti's massive mandate and the trustworthiness of electronic voting machines (EVMs).

They are likely to take oath Sunday. Fadnavis, Shinde and Pawar were administered the oath of office as MLAs by pro-tem speaker Kalidas Kolambkar soon after the proceedings

began at 11 am. Before them, Chainsukh Sancheti, Jaykumar Rawal (both BJP), Manikrao Kokate (NCP) and Ashish Jaiswal (Shiv Sena) took oath as they have been appointed as members of the pro-tem speaker's panel by Governor C P Radhakrishnan.

CM Fadnavis, who represents Nagpur South-West assembly constituency, took oath as a member of the state legislature's Lower House for the sixth time, having been first elected as an MLA in 1999.

As Fadnavis' name was called out by the pro-tem speaker, he was greeted by members of the treasury benches with thumping of desks. Some members raised slogans of 'Jai Shri Ram' and 'Jai Bhavani, Jai Shivaji'. Deputy CM Eknath Shinde was also greeted with similar slogans with BJP's Ashish Shelar, Girish Mahajan and Ravindra Chavan thumping their desks before he took oath.

Deputy CM Ajit Pawar sported a traditional red 'pheta' (head gear) with golden border. His party members raised 'Ekach (only one) Vada (promise), Ajit Dada'.



Uttarakhand Home Guard personnel participate in a march past during the celebrations of the Home Guard and Civil Protection Foundation Day in Dehradun PTI PHOTO

BIZMAN SHOT DEAD DURING MORNING WALK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: A businessman was shot dead by two unidentified assailants during his morning walk near his house in east Delhi's Shahdara Saturday, police said.

Sunil Jain (52), a resident of Krishna Nagar, was shot

multiple times and rushed to a hospital where he succumbed to his injuries, they said.

A police officer said Jain, who ran a business of utensils, was returning home on a scooter after his morning walk at Yamuna Sports Complex when two motorcycle-borne unidentified attackers opened

fire at him in the Farsh Bazar area.

The accused fled after the attack. An investigation has been launched into the matter, the officer said. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) Prashant Gautam, who visited the spot, said police received a call regarding the firing at 8.36

am. According to Jain's family members, he did not have any enmity with anyone nor had he received any threats, he said.

"We are probing the case from all angles," he added. Gautam said CCTV footage from the area is being scanned to identify the culprits.

73 complaints against vulgar ads on TV channels: Govt

In a written reply in the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L Murugan said the complaints were "suitably" addressed by a three-level grievance redress system

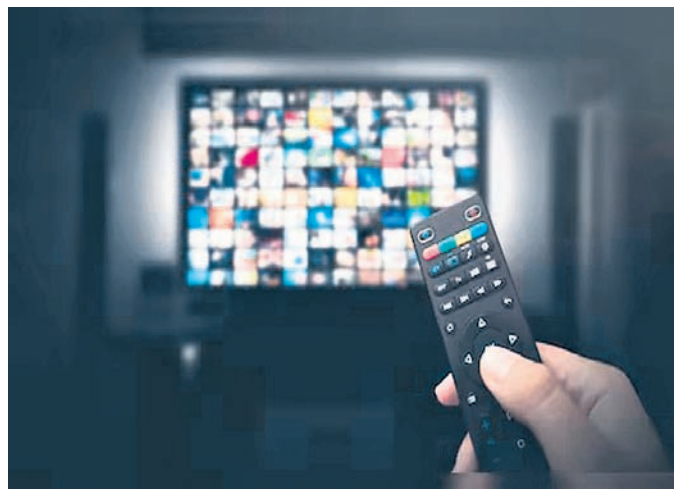
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: Seventy-three complaints have been received against obscene and vulgar advertisements on pri-

vate television channels by the regulatory bodies over the past three years, the government has told parliament.

In a written reply in the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting L Murugan said the complaints were "suitably" addressed by a three-level grievance redress system.

Murugan said the mechanism, established under the Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, includes self-regulation by broadcasters, self-regulation by self-regulating bodies of the broadcasters, and an oversight mechanism of



the central government.

The minister said appropriate action is taken wherever violation of the Advertising Code is found by issuance of "Advisories, Warnings, 'Apology Scroll' Orders and Off-air orders." In reply to a separate question, Murugan said OTT platforms are required to adhere to the Code of Ethics under Part-III of the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

"These codes are self-regulatory in nature," the minister said. Murugan said these Code of Ethics require the publishers not to transmit any content

which is prohibited by law and to undertake age-based self-classification of content into five categories, based on general guidelines provided in the Rules.

The guidelines provide that while undertaking such self-classification, the context of the period depicted in such content and the contemporary standards of the country and people to which such content relate, are to be kept in mind, he said. Murugan said the Code also provides that the OTT platforms will put in place adequate safeguard for restricting age inappropriate content for children.



I am not exactly sure what was the trigger for it (Trump's remarks) but we've always said that India has never been for de-dollarisation. Right now, there is no proposal to have a BRICS currency
S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, INDIA

WORLD MEDITATION DAY
India co-sponsored a UN General Assembly draft resolution that was unanimously adopted to proclaim December 21 as World Meditation Day. India, including Liechtenstein, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Mexico and Andorra, was a member of the core group of countries that guided the unanimous adoption of the resolution titled 'World Meditation Day' in the 193-member UN General Assembly Friday



of the day **quote**

We are very sorry for the Syrian people who became a subject of another geopolitical experiment. We are doing everything we can not to make terrorists prevail, even if they say they are not terrorists
SERGEY LAVROV | FOREIGN MINISTER, RUSSIA

From the vantage point that I've been sitting on the IMF board, I have no hesitation in saying the world is bullish on India
KRISHNAMURTHY V SUBRAMANIAN | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IMF

We have seen a lot of encouragement from the incoming (US) administration in order to achieve a (Gaza ceasefire) deal, even before the president comes to the office
SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN ABDULLAHMAN AL THANI | PM, QATAR

Yoon's impeachment fails

The South Korean President apologised to the nation Saturday morning but resisted calls to resign ahead of the vote in first public appearance since he rescinded the martial law order



REUTERS

Seoul, Dec 7: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol survived an impeachment vote in the Opposition-led parliament Saturday that was prompted by his short-lived attempt to impose martial law this week, after members of his party boycotted the session.

Only 195 votes were cast, below the 200 needed for the vote to count, and the motion was scrapped.

"The entire nation is watching the decision being made here at the National Assembly today. The world is watching," said Speaker Woo Won-shik, adding that it was unfortunate that not enough lawmakers participated for the votes to be tallied. The main Opposition Democratic Party vowed to try again, while Yoon's party said it would find a "more orderly, responsible" way to resolve the crisis.

Yoon shocked the nation late Tuesday when he gave the military sweeping emergency powers to root out what he

called "anti-state forces" and overcome obstructionist political opponents.

He rescinded the order six hours later after parliament defied military and police cordons to vote unanimously against his decree. But the move plunged Asia's fourth-largest economy and key US military ally into its greatest political crisis in decades, threatening to shatter South Korea's reputation as a democratic success story.

The Opposition needed at least eight votes from Yoon's conservative People Power Party to reach the two-thirds majority needed to impeach. As PPP lawmakers departed after casting votes on a separate motion, some people shouted and cursed them. Only three from Yoon's party voted.

The President apologised to the nation Saturday morning

- Vote scrapped after too few lawmakers participate
- Yoon imposed first martial law in S Korea since 1980
- His own party leader called Yoon a danger to the country
- Prosecutors investigate Yoon for insurrection and abuse of power

but resisted calls to resign ahead of the vote.

His party said it could not allow a repeat of the 2016 impeachment of then-President Park Geun-hye, who left office after months of candle-lit protests over an influence-peddling scandal. Her downfall triggered the implosion of the party and a victory by liberals in presidential and general elections.

"We cannot repeat the trag-

'FINAL STAGE' OF OFFENSIVE Syrian insurgents reach suburbs of Damascus

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beirut, Dec 7: Syrian insurgents have reached the suburbs of Damascus as part of a rapidly moving offensive that has seen them take over some of Syria's largest cities across the country, opposition activists and a rebel commander said Saturday.

It was the first time that opposition forces reach the outskirts of the Syrian capital since 2018, when Syrian troops recaptured the region adjacent to the capital following a years-long siege.

It came after the Syrian army withdrew from much of southern Syria Saturday, leaving more areas of the country, including two provincial capitals, under the control of opposition fighters.

The rapid advances by insurgents is a stunning reversal of fortunes for Syria's President Bashar Assad, who appears to be largely on his own, with erstwhile allies preoccupied with other conflicts.

His chief international backer, Russia, is busy with its war in Ukraine, and Lebanon's powerful Hezbollah, which at one point sent thousands of fighters to shore up his forces, has been weakened by a year-long conflict with Israel. Iran, meanwhile, has seen its proxies across the region degraded by Israeli regular airstrikes.



Amid the dramatic developments, Syria's state media denied rumours flooding social media that Assad has left the country, saying he is performing his duties in the capital, Damascus. Rami Abdurrahman, who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition war monitor, said insurgents are now active in the Damascus suburbs of Maadamiyah, Jaramana and Daraya. He added that opposition fighters Saturday were also marching from eastern Syria toward the Damascus suburb of Harasta.

A commander with the insurgents, Hassan Abdul-Ghani, posted on the Telegram messaging app that opposition forces have started carrying out the "final stage" of their offensive by encircling Damascus. He added that insurgents were headed from southern Syria toward Damascus.

Syria's military, meanwhile, sent large numbers of reinforcements to defend the key central city of Homs, Syria's third largest, as insurgents approached its outskirts.

SHORT TAKES

Pope creates 11 new cardinals

Rome: Pope Francis is installing 11 new cardinals, many of whom are key figures in his reform agenda. A Dominican preacher who acted as the spiritual father for Francis' recent gathering of bishops, a Neapolitan "street priest" like himself, and a Peruvian bishop who has strongly backed his crackdown on abuse. With Saturday's additions, Francis will have created 110 of the 140 cardinals under 80, thus eligible to vote in a conclave.

Dominican Republic seizes 9.5tn cocaine

Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic): Authorities in the Dominican Republic announced Friday that they confiscated nearly 9.5 tons of cocaine, the largest drug seizure in the country's history. The USD 250 million worth of drugs were found nestled inside a banana shipment that arrived at the Caucedo port in the capital of Santo Domingo, the country's most important seaport. The shipment had been sent

Burkina Faso junta sacks prime minister

Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso): Burkina Faso's ruling military junta issued a decree Friday dismissing Prime Minister Apollinaire Joachim Kyelem de Tambela and announcing the dissolution of the national government. The military's leader, Ibrahim Traore, said officials in the dissolved government will continue to perform their duties until a new government is formed. No reason was given for the move. The junta in Burkina Faso seized power in September 2022 by ousting the military rule of Lt. Col. Paul Henri Sandaogo Damiba about eight months after it staged a coup to remove democratically elected President Roch Marc Kaboré.

Checkpoint attack: 6 Pak army men killed

Peshawar: Armed men killed six Pakistani security personnel and wounded seven in a checkpoint attack in the country's northwest, a police official said Saturday. The assault happened in Kurram district, where fierce sectarian fighting has killed at least 130 people during the past few weeks. A ceasefire between the area's Sunni and Shiite communities is holding and Saturday's incident is not connected to the recent clashes. Local official Saleem Khan said armed men attacked a Frontier Corps checkpoint in Bagam, 200 kms south of Peshawar city.

Litmus test for democracy as Ghanaians head to polls



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Accra (Ghana), Dec 7: Ghanaians headed to the polls Saturday in presidential and legislative elections poised to be a litmus test for democracy in a region shaken by extremist violence and coups.

Some 18.7 million people are registered to vote in the West African country hit by one of the worst economic crises in a generation. However, the two main candidates offer little hope for change for the nation.

Polls opened at 7am and will close at 5pm, with early results expected late Saturday. The first official results will be released by Tuesday.

Ghana used to be a poster

child for democracy in the region. At a time when coups threatened democracy in West Africa, Ghana has emerged as a beacon of democratic stability with a history of peaceful elections. It had also been an economic powerhouse, priding itself on its economic development.

But in recent years, it has struggled with a profound economic crisis, including surging inflation and a lack of jobs.

According to an opinion poll released earlier this year by Afrobarometer, a research group, 82 per cent of Ghanaians feel their country is headed in the wrong direction.

Although 12 candidates are running to become Ghana's next president, Saturday's election — like previous ones since the return of multiparty politics in 1992 — has emerged as a two-horse race.

Vice President Mahamudu Bawumia is the candidate of the ruling New Patriotic Party, or NPP, which has struggled to resolve the economic crisis. He faces off against former President John Dramani Mahama, the leader of the main opposition party National Democratic Congress, or NDC. He was voted out in 2016 after failing to deliver on promises for the economy.



Waves crash during storm Darragh over the seafont in Porthcawl in Wales, Saturday

Gandhi's bust unveiled in Nebraska State Capitol

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York/Seattle, Dec 7: A bust of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled in the State Capitol building in Nebraska, the first time a statue of the iconic Indian leader has been installed inside any such premise in the US Pacific Northwest states that come under the jurisdiction of the Indian Consulate in Seattle.

Governor Jim Pillen unveiled



the bust of Gandhi Friday at his office in the iconic Nebraska State Capitol premises in Lincoln. This marks the first

installation of Gandhi's bust in any State Capitol premise in the nine states that come under the consular jurisdiction of the Indian Consulate in Seattle.

A press statement issued by the Consulate said that in another special gesture, Pillen issued an official proclamation declaring December 6, 2024 as "A Day of Remembrance for Mahatma Gandhi" throughout the State of Nebraska.

Restored Notre-Dame Cathedral reopens 5 yrs after fire

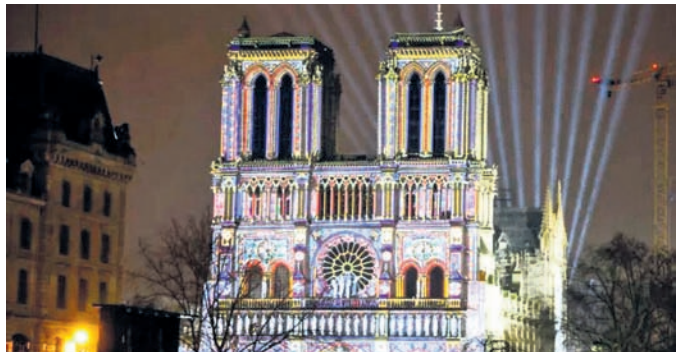
Macron, Trump and other world leaders join ceremony in rare symbol of unity

REUTERS

Paris, Dec 7: Howling winds couldn't stop Notre Dame's heart from beating again. With three resounding knocks on its doors by Paris Archbishop Laurent Ulrich, firing a staff carved from fire-scorched beams, the cathedral roared back to life Saturday evening.

For the first time since a devastating 2019 blaze, the towering Gothic masterpiece reopened for worship, its rebirth marked by song, prayer, and awe beneath its soaring arches.

The evening's celebration, being attended by 1,500 dig-



nitaries, including US President-elect Donald Trump, US First Lady Jill Biden, Britain's Prince William, and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, underscores Notre Dame's enduring role as both a spiritual and cultural beacon.

For President Emmanuel Macron, who championed the ambitious five-year restoration

timeline, it was a rare moment of unity amid profound political crises and threats to his presidential legacy.

While the ceremony was initially planned to begin on the forecourt, unusually fierce December winds whipping across the central Paris island, flanked by the River Seine, forced all events inside. Yet the occasion

- Major fire hit the cathedral in 2019
- Ceremony marks reopening of Gothic masterpiece
- Cathedral is one of France's most beloved and visited monuments

lost none of its splendour. Inside the luminous nave, choirs are singing psalms, and the cathedral's mighty organ, silent for nearly five years, is thundering to life in a triumphant interplay of melodies.

THOUSANDS WORKED ON RESTORATION

Thousands of expert craftspeople - from wood carpenters and stonemasons to stained glass window artists - worked around the clock for the last five years, using age-old methods to restore, repair or replace everything that was destroyed or damaged.

"Notre-Dame is more than a Parisian or French monument. It's also a universal monument," said historian Damien Berne. "It's a landmark, an emblem, a point of reference that reassures in a globalised world where everything evolves permanently," said Berne, a member of the scientific council for the restoration.

The cathedral's first stone was laid in 1163, and construction continued for much of the next century, with major restoration and additions made in the 17th and 18th centuries.

So much money poured in for the renovation from all over the world - more than 840 million euros (\$882 million), according to Macron's office - that there are still funds left over for further investment in the building. The Catholic Church now expects the cathedral to welcome some 15 million visitors annually.

TIKTOK BAN LIKELY IN US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Dec 7: A federal appeals court panel Friday unanimously upheld a law that could lead to a ban on TikTok in a few short months, handing a resounding defeat to the popular social media platform as it fights for its survival in the US.

The US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit denied TikTok's petition to overturn the law — which requires TikTok to break ties with its China-based parent company ByteDance or be banned by mid-January — and rebuffed the company's challenge of the statute, which it argued had run afoul of the First Amendment.

"The First Amendment exists to protect free speech in the United States," said the court's opinion, which was written by Judge Douglas Ginsburg. "Here the Government acted solely to protect that freedom from a foreign adversary nation and to limit that adversary's ability to gather data on people in the United States."

TikTok and ByteDance — another plaintiff in the lawsuit — are expected to appeal to the Supreme Court, though it's unclear whether the court will take up the case.

"The Supreme Court has an established historical record of protecting Americans' right to free speech, and we expect they will do just that on this important constitutional issue," TikTok spokesperson Michael Hughes said in a statement.

Though the case is squarely in the court system, it's also possible the two companies might be thrown some sort of a lifeline by President-elect Donald Trump, who tried to ban TikTok during his first term but said during the presidential campaign that he is now against such action.

The law, signed by President Joe Biden in April, was the culmination of a years-long saga in Washington over the short-form video-sharing app.





There have been instances where the Committee of Creditors' performance has been found lacking in several aspects

M RAJESHWAR RAO | DEPUTY GOVERNOR, RBI

TVS ROLLS OUT 2025 RONIN

Two and three-wheeler major TVS Motor Company has unveiled the 2025 edition of its popular 225 cc motorcycle TVS Ronin, during the ongoing TVS MotoSoul 4.0 event in Goa, the company said. The company, in a statement Saturday, said the TVS Ronin mid-variant would be equipped with a Dual-Channel ABS towards enhancing the safety and stability of its riders



ADB okays \$350mn loan to boost logistics sector, create jobs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Manila, Dec 7: In a bid to help India strengthen and modernise its logistics sector, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$350 million policy-based loan to support wide-ranging reforms in the sector.

The logistics sector reforms are also expected to create substantial employment opportunities, both in urban and rural areas. The increased demand for skilled logistics workers, driven by private sector investments and process efficiency, will contribute to job creation.

The loan will finance the second subprogramme of the 'Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem Programme', which supports the government's efforts to create a comprehensive policy, planning, and institutional framework at the federal, state, and city levels.

The government has launched several strategic policies to address logistics sector constraints, including the Prime Minister Gati Shakti-National Master Plan (PMGS-NMP) and the National Logistics Policy (NLP).

The development of the logistics sector has a profound impact on the manufacturing sector's competitiveness. Improved logistics efficiency enhances supply chain resilience, reduces transaction costs, and boosts export competitiveness," said Sameer Khatiwada, ADB Senior Public Management Economist.

"The integration of digital technologies and standardised processes facilitates smoother movement of goods, which is crucial for manufacturing growth," Khatiwada added.

ADB's programme supported India's reform efforts, which have improved India's ranking in the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index and reduced logistics costs significantly.

Key actions include the establishment of institutional arrangements for logistics planning at the state and city levels, implementation of a grain storage plan, and adoption of green transition guidelines for inland waterways.

From 2000 to 2022, India's goods export increased from \$48.5 billion to \$467.5 billion while industrial exports grew from \$39.6 billion to \$317.4 billion.

INDIA RANKS THIRD IN 2024 BILLIONAIRES LIST

THE COMBINED WEALTH OF INDIAN BILLIONAIRES SURGED BY 42.1% OVER THE YEAR TO \$905.6BN

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Dec 7: India ranked third globally in billionaire count in 2024, with 185 billionaires, trailing only the US (835) and China (427), according to UBS' latest Billionaire Ambitions Report.

The country saw the addition of 32 billionaires in the year, reflecting a 21 per cent increase, and a remarkable 123 per cent growth since 2015. The combined wealth of Indian billionaires surged by 42.1 per cent over the year to \$905.6 billion.

India is expected to experience a "significant" rise in

billionaire entrepreneurs over the next decade, mirroring China's trajectory from four years ago. The report also acknowledged the prevalence of family-owned businesses, with 108 publicly listed entities, placing India third globally in this category.

It said, "Family businesses have played a pivotal role in India's economic transformation. India boasts one of the highest numbers of publicly listed family-owned businesses globally, many of which have thrived across generations." Trends in US, China



Globally, the billionaire population expanded from 1,757 in 2015 to 2,682 in 2024, with their cumulative wealth rising from \$6.3tn to \$14tn – an increase of 121%

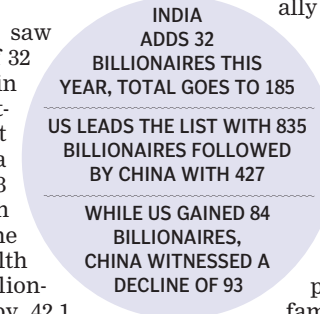
While the US gained 84 billionaires, China witnessed a decline of 93. American billionaires' collective wealth grew from \$4.6 trillion to \$5.8 trillion, whereas China's total wealth dropped from \$1.8 trillion to \$1.4 trillion.

The report said, "From 2015 to 2020, billionaire wealth grew globally at an annual rate of 10 per cent. Since 2020, the glob-

al average has stalled at 1 per cent. But that number masks continued expansion in the US, EMEA and parts of Asia, most notably India."

Of the 2,682 billionaires in 2024, 1,877 were self-made, while 805 came from multigenerational wealth.

Tech leads over 10 years Over the last decade, tech billionaires have seen the fast-



of the day note

Fills have started December on a positive note, providing a significant boost to market sentiment

SIDDHARTHA KHEMKA | ANALYST, MOTILAL OSWAL FINANCIAL SERVICES

The 1 lakh mark will be reached shortly whether this year or early next year. It would be too steep a climb but India is certainly in the midst of a bull run in the stock market

MANORANJAN SHARMA | CHIEF ECONOMIST, INFOMERICS RATINGS

Easing food inflation, coupled with benign non-food inflation, is expected to bring down headline CPI inflation

ASHISH VORA | HEAD, CRISIS MARKET INTELLIGENCE AND ANALYTICS

SHORT TAKES

GCPL expects flattish volume growth in Q3

New Delhi: Impacted by an increase in soap prices and unseasonal rainfall slowing down sales of the home insecticides (HI) segment, Godrej Consumer Products expects a "flattish" underlying volume growth and a mid-single-digit sales growth in the domestic market in the December quarter. Both segments jointly contribute to two-thirds of GCPL's standalone revenue -- mainly income from operations from the domestic market. However, the rest of the portfolio is demonstrating good performance and is expected to deliver double-digit underlying volume growth. Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL) said in an update on business conditions and quarterly performance to the exchanges.

Paytm arm to sell stake in PayPay

New Delhi: Fintech firm and owner of Paytm brand One97 Communications' Singapore-based arm has approved the sale of its Stock Acquisition Rights in Japan's PayPay to Softbank Vision Fund 2 for Rs 2,364 crore, the company said in a regulatory filing Saturday. Paytm and Paytm Singapore had signed an agreement with the Japanese digital wallet firm, Softbank Corp, Softbank Group Corp and Yahoo Japan Corporation to provide technology services to PayPay. In lieu of the services, Paytm Singapore had acquired Stock Acquisition Rights, convertible into 1,59,012 shares or a 7.2 per cent stake in PayPay on a fully diluted basis.

Dollar Protect unveils 'Windguard' collection

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: Dollar Industries Limited, a leading name in India's hosiery and garment industry, is expanding its product range with the launch of the Windguard range under its Dollar Protect brand.

The Windguard collection features a versatile range of winter-ready windcheaters designed for both men and women, offering superior protection against chilly winds and light winter rains.

The Windguard collection are designed for those on the go. The new collection is made using materials such as Crush Tpu, Butter Ns, Micro Pa, Micro Tpu, Sandwich, etc that ensure durability, flexibility and optimal thermal regulation while maintaining a sleek and modern look.

"We have always been committed to providing our customers with products that combine both functionality and fashion. As winter approaches, there is a growing demand for outerwear that is not only comfortable and warm but also stylish. Our Windguard collection answers that need by offering high-quality, all-weather protection against the cold and wind, while ensuring an on-trend look for both men and women. At Dollar, we focus on delivering premium and affordable products and this collection is a perfect example of that commitment," Vinod Kumar Gupta, Managing Director, Dollar Industries Limited.

The Windguard collection is designed to meet the needs of active individuals during the winter months. Whether it is for outdoor workouts, winter travel, or everyday commuting, these windcheaters provide lightweight warmth, water resistance, and protection against biting winds.

'BE 6E' TRADEMARK FIGHT

M&M to challenge IndiGo

Mahindra & Mahindra to rename its latest electric car, a significant move after aviation market leader IndiGo sued the automaker for use of its call sign and widely used brand name '6E'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: Mahindra & Mahindra Saturday said it has decided to rename its new electric vehicle brand as 'BE 6' but noted that it will continue to contest strongly in court with InterGlobe Aviation for the trademark 'BE 6E'.

InterGlobe Aviation, which owns IndiGo airlines, has taken the automaker to court over the usage of 6E in its new EV brand. "Our priority and focus is on ensuring an excellent experience for our customers as we take our product to the market. We would not like to get distracted from our vision of popularising electric transport in India," M&M said in a statement.

It further said, "We also find it unseemly that two large, Indian multinationals should engage in a distracting and unnecessary conflict when in fact we should be championing each other's growth and expansion." Hence, the company is tak-



ing the decision to brand its product as "BE 6", it added.

"We, however, do believe the claim by IndiGo is baseless and if not challenged, will set an unhealthy precedent of monopolising alpha-numeric 2-character marks, despite our mark being distinctive and different. This will be enormously constraining for all companies across industries and sectors," it said.

WHILE TRADEMARK INFRINGEMENT CASES ARE COMMON IN INDIA, LEGAL DISPUTES BETWEEN BIG PUBLICLY TRADED COMPANIES HAVE BEEN RARE

"We will thus continue to strongly contest this in court and reserve our right to the brand name BE 6e," it added.

M&M said in the past, Tata Motors had objected to InterGlobe using the IndiGo mark, given their Tata Indigo car brand.

"InterGlobe continues to use the mark IndiGo in a different industry and business. We, therefore, find their objection

Canara Bank Executive Director attends MSME Cluster Meet & Outreach programme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BHUBANESWAR: Canara Bank, one of the leading public sector banks, is committed towards empowering Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the country. As a major step towards this, the bank has organised MSME Cluster Meet & Outreach programme at various locations. In the state, the bank has organised this outreach programme at Bargarh, Balasore, Berhampur and Cuttack December 6. The programme was organised at Bhubaneswar and Puri which was graced by Ashok Chandra, Executive Director and Jagdish Chander, General Manager & Circle Head Bhubaneswar Circle office December 7. While addressing the gathering, Ashok informed that the bank is doing this MSME outreach programmes at 238 cluster locations pan-India. He has interacted with MSME entrepreneurs and taken feedback from all customers. During the event, Canara Bank State Head & General Manager Jagdish Chander highlighted important MSME schemes of the bank like Canara GST, Canara MSME Star, Canara MSME Textile, Canara MSME Inn and government sponsored MSME schemes like PM Svanidhi, PM Vishwakarma etc. The event was attended by large number of MSME entrepreneurs and customers and this initiative of the bank was highly appreciated by all participants.



GST leaves colossal impact on beedi industry

Classified under the highest tax slab of 28% since GST's implementation in 2017, beedis now face significant cost pressures, disrupting a sector that sustains over four million workers, most of whom are women in economically vulnerable regions

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Dec 7: The Goods and Services Tax (GST) has deeply impacted the traditional beedi industry, a cornerstone of rural livelihoods in India.

Classified under the highest tax slab of 28% since GST's implementation in 2017, beedis now face significant cost pressures, disrupting a sector that sustains over four million workers, most of whom are women in economically vulnerable regions.

This high tax rate has strained small-scale manufacturers, increased production costs, and led to reduced



The beedi industry's challenges highlight the need for a balanced approach to taxation. Reducing GST rates and offering targeted incentives could help safeguard the livelihoods of millions while preserving a traditional industry that remains vital to India's rural economy

is crucial for sustaining the industry and protecting the livelihoods it supports.

For the predominantly female workforce, the consequences have been severe. Most women in the beedi industry work on a piece-rate basis, earning wages directly linked to their production. As man-

ufacturers grapple with rising costs, many have reduced payouts to workers, leaving families in economically disadvantaged areas struggling to sustain themselves.

"Higher production costs have made it harder for us to make ends meet," shared a worker from West Bengal. The lack of al-

ternative employment opportunities in rural areas exacerbates this situation, making the beedi industry an irreplaceable source of income for many families.

To alleviate these challenges, industry stakeholders propose reducing the GST rate on beedis. A lower tax rate would reduce production costs, ensuring affordability for consumers and fair compensation for workers. Additionally, a tiered GST system could provide relief to small-scale producers, enabling them to compete effectively in a challenging market.

Designating rural areas as GST-free zones for traditional industries could further bolster the sector, preserving jobs and supporting local economies. Export subsidies for beedis could enhance their competitiveness in global markets, creating new opportunities for growth.

UltraTech in soup over India Cements purchase

The southern market for grey cement, where India Cements primarily operates, is highly competitive and fragmented, with the presence of over 35 grey cement manufacturers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Dec 7: Leading cement maker UltraTech Cement has received a notice from the fair trade regulator CCI over its proposed acquisition of the South-based India Cements Ltd.

UltraTech Cement, in a regulatory filing, said it has received notice from the Competition Commission of India (CCI), and the Aditya Birla group flagship firm is confident in the merits of its case.

"The Company has received a communication from the Competition Commission of India under Section 29 (1) of the Competition Act, 2002, regarding the proposed acquisition of The India Cements Ltd. The Company will be responding to the same," said UltraTech.

"We are confident of the merits of our case," said the Aditya Birla Group firm said.

Under the CCI Act, where the fair trade regulator is of the opinion that a combination is "likely to cause, or has caused an appreciable adverse effect

on competition within the relevant market in India", it shall issue a notice to show cause to the parties to combination calling upon them to respond within 15 days. After the receipt of the response of the parties to the combination, CCI may also call for a report from its probe unit -- Director General of Investigations.

Earlier in July this year, UltraTech Cement had announced the acquisition of a 32.72 per cent stake in India Cements from promoters and their associates in a Rs 3,954 crore deal in a move to expand its footprint in the highly competitive and fast-growing southern cement market, particularly in Tamil Nadu.

Besides, it had also announced a Rs 3,142.35 crore open offer to acquire 26 per cent share of ICL from its shareholders. UltraTech leads the Indian cement market with a consolidated capacity of 156.66 million tonne per annum (MTPA) of grey cement.

It is followed by billionaire Gautam Adani-led Adani Group, which is rapidly pacing up its capacity through acquisitions and capacity expansions. Adani Cement recently announced to acquisition of CK Birla group firm Orient Cement, through which it will achieve a capacity of 100 MT (million tonnes) per annum by the end of FY25 and a gain of 2 per cent in the overall market share in the country.



Head(ache) puts India on backfoot



India's nemesis Travis Head powers Australia with blazing ton as top-order crumbles

boundary, and he maintained that audacious approach until the umpires called stumps. Earlier, Head continued to be a thorn in India's flesh with yet another magnificent knock that powered Australia's response after bowling out India for 180.

Head, who got off the mark with a cracking boundary off Jasprit Bumrah (4/61), got a reprieve on 76 as Mohammed Siraj failed to complete the catch despite getting both hands to it after the batter

tried to slog-sweep R Ashwin, having just smashed his third six against the off-spinner.

Amid the rejoicing around Head's century, Siraj (4/98) was rewarded for his discipline as he had Alex Carey caught (15) behind following a faint outside edge with Australia's lead crossing 100.

Desperate to prevent Australia from adding to that advantage, India took the second new ball the moment it was made available to them, and their lead pacer Bumrah too was brought back into the attack.

Bumrah, however, pulled his adductor muscle as the physio attended to him. Fortunately for India, Bumrah was up on his feet quickly and ready to bowl again, even as Head flicked him for two boundaries in between.

During his knock, Head played some incredible shots, including a pick-up six over Siraj over deep square leg, but the pacer had the last laugh as he brought his innings to an end when he cleaned him up with a yorker.

In all, Head struck 17 fours and six fours.

Earlier, Rohit Sharma giving his strike bowler Bumrah only four overs in the first session seemed odd, and so were some of his field placements.

Then, in another surprising move, he started the proceedings after tea with Ashwin instead of the fast bowlers.

Luck, though, was with Ashwin as Mitchell Marsh decided to walk off despite a half-baked appeal by the Indian team.

Seeing Marsh heading in the direction of the dressing room, Richard Illingworth raised his finger too, but replays clearly showed there was a gap between bat and pad.

Head, though, went about his task in the manner he does best - dictating the terms to the bowlers with his free-flowing strokes. None of the Indian bowlers, including Bumrah, looked like they could cause problems for Head.



Senior India speedster Mohammed Shami is set to compete in the last two Tests of the ongoing series against Australia with his playing kit already headed Down Under

ting on 15 off 14. Thanks to Head's eighth Test century, which he reached in 111 balls after toying with the Indian bowling attack, Australia ended with 337 all out, and more importantly, a 157-run first-innings lead.

The hosts are looking to restore parity in the five-match series after the 295-run hammering in the opener at Perth.

Head's hundred, the fastest in a pink ball Test, reduced Marcus Labuschagne's (64) composed half-century, coming after a lean run of form, to a mere footnote.

India lost KL Rahul (7) early in their second innings and Yashasvi Jaiswal (24) was done in by a peach of a delivery from Boland, who again struck with his first delivery that had a hint

of late movement. Boland then had Virat Kohli (11) caught behind after he got one to land right in the channel which has been troubling the Indian batting mainstay for a while now.

To make matters worse for the visitors, Starc knocked down Shubman Gill's (28) middle stump with his late in-swinging doing the damage to leave India at 86 for four in front of a record crowd of over 50,000.

However, unperturbed by Australian inroads, Pant looked to be batting in a universe of his own and played some outrageous shots against the fast bowlers, leaving everyone stunned.

Least bothered by the fact that India were three down with not enough on the board, Pant danced down the track first ball and smashed Boland over mid-off for a

WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP Gukesh plays out easy draw, scores remain tied



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, Dec 7: Indian challenger D Gukesh yet again proved equal to the task with defending champion Ding Liren of China as the 10th game of the World Chess Championship match between them ended in a draw without much excitement here Saturday.

It was by far the easiest of the game with black pieces for Gukesh as the position played itself out of a London system game wherein Ding Liren took no risks and was also apparently happy with the drawn result. The seventh consecutive draw - and eighth of the match - left both players on an identical tally of 5 points each, still shy of 2.5 points in order to win the championship.

The two players signed peace after 36 moves.

Just four more classical games are left to be played in the \$2.5 million prize money championship and if a tied result happens after 14 rounds, there will be games under faster time control to determine the winner.

The 32-year-old Liren had won the opening game while the 18-year-old Gukesh had emerged victorious in the third game.

Liren continued with his London system in the opening and came with a slight change early that left the pawn structure symmetrical. The tactic

The seventh consecutive draw -- and eighth of the match -- left both players on an identical tally of 5 points each, still shy of 2.5 points in order to win the championship

might have worked on another day but Gukesh for once decided not to press hard as black out of an equal position.

Gukesh, the younger ever challenger, had his task cut out and he passed all the tests with flying colours.

Before the start of the 10th game, Liren had three white games against Gukesh's three but now it's a level playing field with just four more games to go.

For Gukesh, the hardest decision was to go for a completely equal position on move 11 and even though the position had occurred a few times before in Grandmaster games, it did not look like either the Indian or Liren was aware of what had happened in those games.

It did not take long for the world to decide when Liren went for a series of exchanges, including the queen, that the game was heading towards a draw.

SHORT TAKES

India to face B'desh in U19 Asia Cup final

Dubai: It will be a battle of India's formidable batting against Bangladesh's incisive bowling when the two teams clash for the ACC U19 Men's Asia Cup title at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium here Sunday. India, the most successful team in the tournament's history with eight titles, will be keen to reclaim their crown after a three-year gap. Defending champions Bangladesh, who eliminated India in the last edition, are determined to retain their title in what will be a rematch of the 2023 semi-final. India's batting has been spearheaded by opener Ayush Mhatre, who has amassed 175 runs, and 13-year-old sensation Vaibhav Suryavanshi, who has scored 167 runs in the tournament. Bangladesh, on the other hand, have relied on their bowlers, with Md. Al Fahad and Md. Iqbal Hasan Emon leading the charts, bagging 10 wickets each. With Bangladesh having the upper hand in last year's edition, Indian skipper Mohamed Amaan and his team will be eager to set the record straight and reassert their dominance.

Messi named MVP

Washington: Lionel Messi was named Major League Soccer's Most Valuable Player Friday after leading Inter Miami to a record-breaking regular season campaign. The Argentine superstar was handed the accolade after his performances helped Miami to a record regular season points tally, earning the club its first ever Supporters Shield. The 37-year-old maestro finished the regular season with a league-leading 36 goal contributions after netting 20 goals and 16 assists. Messi's MVP award comes despite an injury-hit campaign that saw him make only 19 appearances this year. Miami and Messi's season ultimately fizzled out, when the team suffered a shock first-round defeat in the MLS Cup playoffs. Messi is the 10th South American to win the MVP, and the fifth from Argentina after Luciano Acosta, Diego Valeri, Guillermo Barros Schelotto, and Christian Gomez.

Kamboj improves decade-old U-18 meet record in women's discus throw

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Dec 7: Punjab's Asian U-20 silver-medalist Amanat Kamboj hogged the limelight by erasing more than a decade old meet record in the women's U-18 discus throw event on the opening day of the 39th National Junior Athletics Championships here Saturday.

On her way to winning gold in the women's U-18 discus throw event, the 17-year-old recorded 52.89m to improve the previous meet record of 49.54m set by Navjeet Dhillon in 2012.

Amanat has made good strides in the last one year. Holder of U-16 national record (43.36m) in 2023, she went on to throw 50.45m to win silver earlier this year in Dubai during Asian U-20 Athletics Championships.

Amanat's opening throw of 52.89m fetched her gold medal with a new meet record. Her second attempt was no throw and the third recorded 49.25m. Her last three throws were no



marks. Away from the field event, there was ample excitement in the middle distance races in

On her way to winning gold in the women's U-18 discus throw event, the 17-year-old recorded 52.89m to improve the previous meet record of 49.54m set by Navjeet Dhillon in 2012

the evening session. Winners of both men and women's 1500m races had to sprint home to clinch gold medals.

Earlier in the morning session, the men's U-20 10,000m race saw top six athletes crossing the finish line below 30 minutes. It was Madhya Pradesh's Vinod Singh who won the gold medal with a timing of 29:43.39 seconds. More than 2000 athletes in various age groups are taking part in the four-day competition.

Demoralised eyes look to avoid series defeat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Brisbane, Dec 7: A desperate India will need their under-fire batters to step up in the second Women's ODI against Australia here Sunday, as the visitors aim to avoid yet another series loss Down Under.

India's batting woes continued as the tourists were bundled out for 100 in the series opener, leading to a demoralising five-wicket defeat, their heaviest in terms of balls remaining since ODIs were reduced to 50 overs a side.

India have never won a series Down Under and they will have their task cut out against a quality Australian side, which showed no signs of rust despite playing in the format after a gap of nine months.

On the other hand, it was the Indians who appeared under-prepared as the squad was unable to train together as some of the players were competing in domestic T20 tournaments while others played in

MILESTONE MOMENT Eng first team in Test history to score 5L runs

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Wellington, Dec 7: The Ben Stokes-led England took a massive 533 run-lead against New Zealand on Day 2 of the 2nd Test in Wellington Saturday.

Four players scored over 50 as England batters controlled the proceedings. In the first innings, England had scored 280 before dismissing New Zealand for just 125. At stumps on Day 2, England were 378/5. During the match, England became the first side in the 147-year history of Test cricket to score 500,000 runs in Test cricket. This is England's 1082th Test.

Australia is second to England, scoring 4,28,868 runs. Indian cricket team sits at the third position with 2,78,751 runs.

Talking about the match, Gus Atkinson claimed a hat-trick before England's batsmen let loose to power the visitors 533 runs ahead of New Zealand Saturday and in full control of the second Test.

GUWAHATI MASTERS SUPER 100

Anmol, Sathish, Ashwini-Tanisha in final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Dec 7: Anmol Kharb, Sathish Kumar Karunakaran and women's doubles pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto delivered stellar performances, keeping India in contention for three titles at the Guwahati Masters Super 100 badminton tournament here Sunday.

In an all-Indian women's singles semifinal, Anmol, a member of the Indian women's team that won the gold medal at the Asia Team Championships 2024, defeated Mansi Singh 21-19 21-17 in just 40 minutes.

The 17-year-old Anmol, who has already claimed two international titles this year, will now face Chinese qualifier Cai Yan Yan as she aims for her first Super 100 title of her bur-



geoning career. Sathish Kumar, the 2023 Odisha Open Super 100 champion, showed resilience as he staged a comeback to beat sixth-seed Wang Zheng Xing of China 13-21 21-14 21-16. Sathish will meet another Chinese qualifier, Zhu Xuan Chen in the final. In the women's doubles semifinals, top seeds and defending champions Ashwini and Tanisha breezed into the final with a 21-14 21-14 victory over China's Keng Shu Liang and Wang Ting Ge.

'Godfather of Motor Sports in India' no more

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Dec 7: Indu Chandhok, the founder-member of the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI) who transformed motorsports scene in the country with his foresight and dedication, died here Saturday.

He was 93 and is survived by two sons and one daughter.

Born in Kolkata, Chandhok moved to the erstwhile Madras and co-founded the Madras Motor Sports Club (MMSC) in 1953. Later, he co-founded FMSCI in 1971, of which he was the president from 1978 to 1979.

He was also an integral part of the trust that purchased and developed the Madras International Circuit (erstwhile Madras Motor Race Track), near Sriperumbudur, on the outskirts of Chennai, which became a motorsports hub in

the years to come. Chandhok's involvement with motorsports spanned six decades, first as a competitor and later as an organiser, which earned him the sobriquet of "Godfather of Motor Sports in India".

"The patriarch of the Chandhok family passed away in his sleep this morning. Total legend he was. He was a fantastic fa-

In Indu Chandhok's demise, the MMSC and Indian motorsports have lost a giant and an institutional figure. He was instrumental in providing definitive direction to motorsports in India and we are now enjoying the fruits of his untiring efforts. He also shaped MMSC to what it is today

AJIT THOMAS | PRESIDENT, MMSC



ther and protector," Chandhok's son and MMSC vice-president Vicky said.

"In a way, he was also the patriarch of Indian motorsports who saw the big picture with a clear vision for the growth of the sport. The family and the motorsports fraternity will miss him," added Vicky, a former racing driver.

Former FMSCI president Shramik Masturlal said Chandhok took Indian motorsports to great heights.

"Indu was an institution in himself. His co-founding of the FMSCI, his huge efforts in making Sholvaram races what it became, the creation of the new track from scratch, the birth of the MMST etc, all bore the stamp of Indu's efforts in furthering motorsports to unimaginable levels. Indu leaves gigantic footprints. An era has passed!" said Masturlal.