

DADLS-79



Celebrating the Vibrant Spirit of Indian Diaspora Led by Youth, Inspired by Heritage



PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS CONVENTION and THEMATIC EXHIBITIONS

HIGHLIGHTS

Remote Flagging off of Pravasi Bharatiya Express and
Visit to Promotional Stalls by the Hon'ble Prime Minister

EXHIBITIONS

- **Vishwaroop Ram:** The Universal Legacy of Ramayana
- **Diaspora's Contribution to Technology**
- **Bharat Bharatiya:** Abhilekhiye Virasat par adharit Pradarshani—Launch of Oman Collection

Inauguration by

Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

✧ Chief Guest ✧

H.E. Ms. Christine Carla Kangaloo
President of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago

In the August presence of

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati Governor, Odisha | Shri Mohan Charan Majhi Chief Minister, Odisha | Dr. S. Jaishankar Union Minister | Shri Dharmendra Pradhan Union Minister |
| Shri Pralhad Joshi Union Minister | Shri Jual Oram Union Minister | Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw Union Minister | Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya Union Minister |
| Shri Kirtivardhan Singh Union Minister of State | Shri Pabitra Margherita Union Minister of State | Shri Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo Deputy Chief Minister, Odisha | Sushri Shobha Karandlaje Union Minister of State |
| | | | Smt. Pravati Parida Deputy Chief Minister, Odisha |



9th January, 2025 | Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar
Guests and Delegates requested to be seated by 8.30 AM.

बाँधो देवठे भवरा



OIPR-15001/13/0356/2425

leisure



JACOB IN NEGOTIATIONS TO STAR IN RIDLEY'S NEXT

Actor Jacob Elordi is in talks to star in Ridley Scott's upcoming movie *The Dog Stars* for 20th Century. The film is a post-apocalyptic thriller. The actor is said to replace Paul Mescal, who ran into scheduling issues.

JOHNNY DEPP WARNS FANS AGAINST AI SCAMMERS

Johnny Depp recently addressed the broad web of scams that have been targeting his fans and followers. The actor took to social media to express his words, warning his followers about the ill activity that had previously targeted a lot of his admirers.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Positive thinking can change the world, and you could do with some today. No matter how tough the going gets, take it in your stride, says Ganesh. If you think you can do it, you will. You have the magic touch today to initiate a new business strategy.

TAURUS
Definitely not a day when you plan to get your feet dirty (maybe a pedicure, though). You might delay the start of a new project. Perhaps, a romantic escape with your sweetheart or a day in the spa grooming yourself with a lavish makeover will validate your lethargy today. Either way, it will be heavy on your pocket.

GEMINI
Ganesh advises that while today will be a day filled with a lot of festivity, you still need to guard against getting carried away. You will spend the day socialising with friends and family. You might end up neglecting your household duties in organizing some function or picnic, says Ganesh.

CANCER
A hectic day, combined with domestic pressure will make you exhausted. You feel a heavy burden on mind and heart. Don't be too emotional, says Ganesh. Take care not to pass domestic burdens on to your career or business, and thereby mar your capacity and efficiency.

LEO
You will pay more attention to the younger members in the family. You will guide the children in improving their daily schedule. An occasion to celebrate will present itself. You will be desirous of participating in some competition or program, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Foreign contacts will in all likelihood be a source of monetary profits. Ganesh says you will perform wonderfully in anything you might choose to undertake today. Even your ambition of setting up an offshore business enterprise will take root today.

LIBRA
Lady Luck smiles on you today. With all the good fortune on your side, it's assured to be a day when financial gains come your way, especially if you are in the banking business. Agreed everything is going your way today, but be careful not to let your emotions cloud your reasoning and slow you down.

SCORPIO
Ganesh asks you to practice caution today. There are strong possibilities that an evil eye may attack you in some or other way. So, keep a watchful eye. And remember, every day brings along an experience and a lesson with it. Learn and move on.

SAGITTARIUS
Your stars are aligned in a way that you may have to travel long distance, either for business or for leisure. Socially, you are active as you are likely to attend a function and take the centre stage. You may also participate in religious activities and give importance of rites and rituals, if need be, informs Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
After all the drudgery you endured in a bid to reach a certain point in your career, it's time to sit back and enjoy the rewards, says Ganesh. Today, you can expect to get a transfer, a promotion, a pay hike or all the three. But these will be accompanied by added responsibilities and work, leaving you wondering if it really was an achievement or a bait used to trap you.

AQUARIUS
You will tackle complicated issues with infinite ease! But you will also find people passing the buck onto you. It irks you no end, having to take the blame for others' mistakes. But here's a chance, says Ganesh, to turn a weakness into a strength.

PISCES
The focus today will be on self-improvement. You may find yourself attending seminars or workshops. Self-employed people are likely to find lucrative deals landing in their laps in the afternoon. Quality time with your family in the evening will give you a sense of balance and of belonging, says Ganesh.

Sanya sparks dating rumours

Mumbai: Actress Sanya Malhotra has sparked dating rumours with renowned sitarist Rishab Rikhiram Sharma. Photos of the duo spending time together have surfaced online, leading fans to speculate about their relationship.

A Reddit user shared a series of pictures of Sanya and Rishab spending time together. In one image, the duo can be seen together as the sitarist poses with a fan. They were also spotted at the same event, posing with the same person in separate photos. These sightings have led to a wave of curiosity, with many fans wondering if the two are indeed dating.

While neither Sanya nor Rishab has confirmed or denied the rumours, fans are rooting for the duo, both of whom are known for their exceptional talent and dedication to their craft.

Rishab, the last disciple of sitar legend Pandit Ravi Shankar, is a celebrated musician and mental health advocate. He was invited to Washington, DC by the White House to perform solo at the first-ever Diwali party held at the US Presidential residence in 2022 and also entertained Indian athletes during the closing ceremony of the 2024 Olympics in Paris. Sanya is set to release her next film, *Sanskari Ki Mari*, alongside Dhawan, Jan Kapoor and Rohit to release April 18, 2025.



AGENCIES

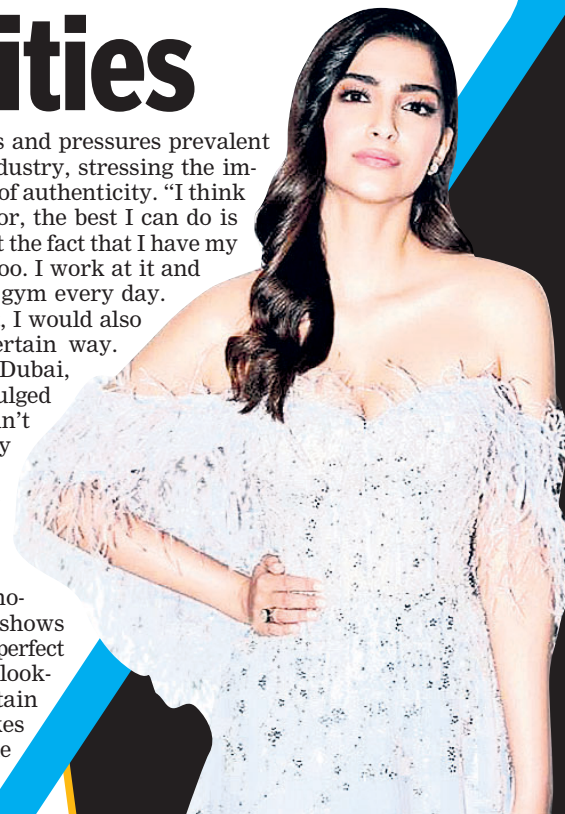
Ananya reflects on her insecurities

Mumbai: Ananya Panday, who garnered widespread acclaim for her roles in *CTRL* and *Call Me Bae*, recently talked about the challenges of navigating societal beauty standards and personal insecurities. Speaking to Forbes India, she opened up about being body-shamed as a child and the ongoing pressures of maintaining a specific image in the entertainment industry.

Despite her confident appearance, Ananya revealed that she has struggled with body image issues from a young age. She said, "It may seem like I am very happy with my body and that I fit ideal beauty standards. I've heard that so much, but I am also very insecure about my body, and I have been since I was a kid. When I was in school, people called me a hunchback, said I had toothpick legs, chicken legs, or was a flat-screen TV. They even mocked my hairy arms. Words like that really stick—I still remember exactly who said them 12 years." Ananya further addressed the unrealistic beauty

standards and pressures prevalent in her industry, stressing the importance of authenticity. "I think as an actor, the best I can do is talk about the fact that I have my off days too. I work at it and go to the gym every day. If I didn't, I would also look a certain way. Once in Dubai, I overindulged and couldn't fit into my skirt—and that's okay. Talking about these moments shows we're not perfect and that looking a certain way takes effort," she added.

AGENCIES



Fashion tips by Sonam

Mumbai: Actress and fashionista Sonam Kapoor has revealed the secret to look good "without even trying."

Sonam took to her Instagram, where she dropped a string of images looking dead gorgeous in neutral hues such as black and navy blue.

"Neutrals: for when you want to look good without even trying (or at least pretending not to)," revealing the secret, she wrote as the caption.

Earlier this week, Sonam treated her fans with a special New Year wish. She dropped a sneak-peek into her life in 2024. In the first picture, we can see that the actress is enjoying a good time with her husband, Anand Ahuja. Sonam

also shared a short video of her car ride with son Vayu. The last still of the post featured Anand Ahuja with little Vayu.

On the work front, she will next be a part of *Battle for Bittora*. The drama will be a cinematic adaptation of Anuja Chauhan's 2010 novel of the same name. Anil Kapoor Films Company banner is financing the film.

IAN5

Mumbai: Action hero Tiger Shroff lifted heavy weights in the gym and said that his quest for greater power continues.

Tiger took to his Instagram stories, where he shared a video of himself doing bench chest press with 60 kilos dumbbells on each hand.

"The quest for greater power continues... #60s," he wrote as the caption.

January 3, the son of Bollywood star Jackie Shroff, shared an insight into his intense training on social media and posted a video doing an extremely impressive kick.

He can be seen jumping in the air as he lands a powerful kick on his trainer. It would be interesting to see him try something like that on the big screens.

Along with the video, the *Baaghi* actor wrote a note that read "Not usually proud of any of my skills.. but this is one where I wonder how TF I did havent seen this one... yet .. bhajjaan g**e bach gaye sorry @nadeem-khiladi786."

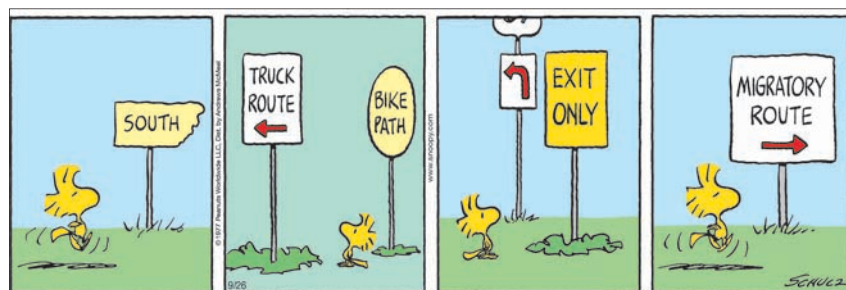
On the work front, Tiger Shroff is currently gearing up for his upcoming action entertainer, *Baaghi 4*.

IAN5



Tiger's 'quest for power'

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

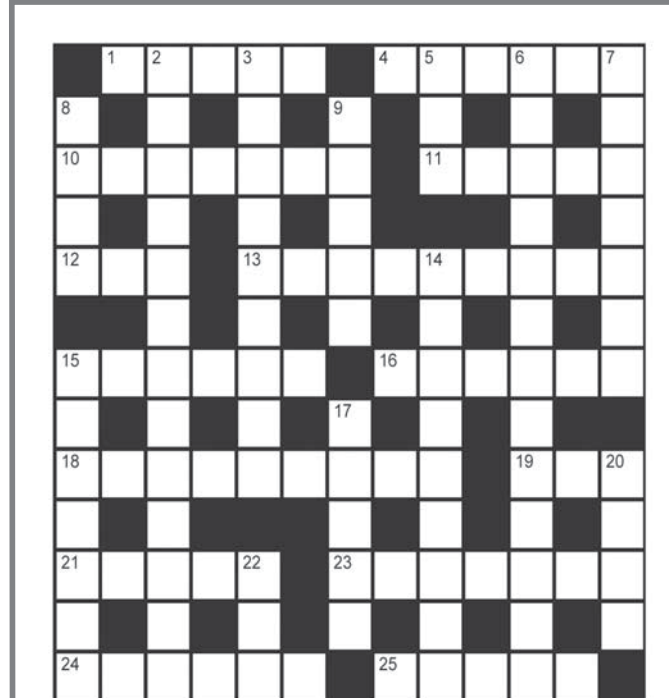


BREVITY



FUN POST

CROSSWORD

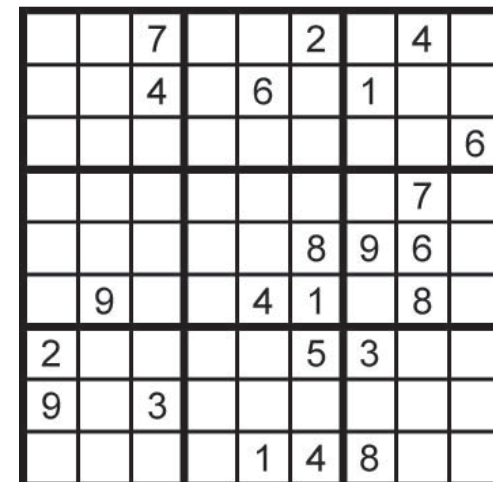


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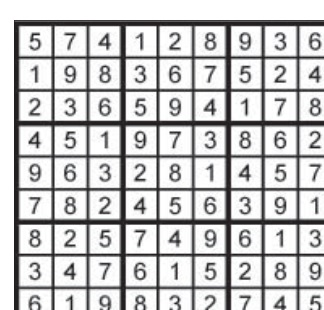
- Across**
- 1 Cravat
 - 4 Angora fabric
 - 10 Alleviate
 - 11 Implied
 - 12 Lion's home
 - 13 Break up
 - 15 Playground equipment
 - 16 Emissaries
 - 18 Spinach, e.g.
 - 19 Durable wood
 - 21 African republic, Sierra _____
 - 23 Young tree
 - 24 Cash in one's chips
 - 25 Ridgeline
- Down**
- 2 Breakaway faction (8,5)
 - 3 Cheque book problem
 - 5 Uneaten morsel
 - 6 Sir Leonard Woolley, for one
 - 7 Manchester terriers, e.g.
 - 8 Egg on
 - 9 Discontinue
 - 14 Pub owner
 - 15 Bullfighting capital of Spain
 - 17 Vast chasm
 - 20 Firkins
 - 22 Musical ability

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

HC on harassment

Kerala HC holds that a comment on a woman's "body structure" would constitute penal offence of sexual harassment

NATIONAL | P7

Wildfires rip LA

More than 30K people vacate their homes as a wildfire rips through an upscale coastal area of Los Angeles overnight

INTERNATIONAL | P8

Slowest growth

India's electricity generation has grown at its slowest pace in 2024 since the COVID-19 pandemic

BUSINESS | P9

Bumrah on top

Jasprit Bumrah continues to reign supreme at the top of the bowlers' chart with a career-best rating of 908 in the latest ICC Test Rankings

SPORTS | BACK PAGE



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi during the inauguration of Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas as 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention gets underway at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

When you excel abroad, we rejoice in Odisha: CM

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: The residents of the state are overjoyed when people of Indian origin excel abroad, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Wednesday while addressing the young diaspora at the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

The 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention began here with the inauguration of Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived here Wednesday night to take part in the formal inaugural session Thursday, while President Droupadi Murmu will preside over the valedictory session Friday.

"You are our cultural ambassadors embodying the essence of India in your host nations and you are our pride. When you excel abroad we rejoice here," Majhi told the youths.

This is an occasion to honour the invaluable contributions of Indians worldwide and to explore new opportunities for brotherhood and collaboration, he added.

"Hosting this prestigious event here in Odisha is a matter of immense honour and pride for us," the Chief Minister said adding that it showcases the strength of

Take part in quest for 'Viksit Bharat': EAM

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar Wednesday called upon NRIs and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) to actively participate in the quest for a 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India). Addressing the young diaspora, Jaishankar explained the reason behind holding a conclave for youths as part of the PBD celebration, being held in Odisha for the first time. "The thinking behind is one of recognising the special contribution that young minds make, at home and abroad. And indeed, in connecting them more effectively for mutual good," he said. Jaishankar noted that this is a time when so many key developments in the world are being shaped by this younger generation - AI, electronic vehicles, startups, drones and sports. Acknowledging young diaspora's role in enhancing perception of India globally, the country has started its journey towards 'Viksit Bharat', Jaishankar said adding that this is an effort for the future generation. "In this period, they (youths) will come to the front ranks and lead the nation. A large part of our efforts is to give the right motivation to the younger generation to accelerate their efforts. While development itself is a very complex task, it becomes much easier when we are confident that nothing is beyond us," he said.

global Indian identity.

He said the country celebrates the exceptional contributions of over 30 million Indians living in around 200 countries.

From being front-runners in science and technology to leading global corporations and shaping policies in governments across the world, the Indian Diaspora has demonstrated resilience and excellence, Majhi said. The CM named top business leaders like Gopichand Hinduja and LN Mittal, CEOs like Indira Nooyi, Sundar Pichai and Satya Nadella, scientists like Venkat Ramakrishnan, fashion designers like Bibhu Mohapatra, who have brought immense pride for the country.

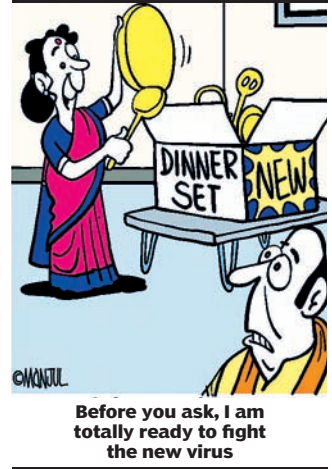
The Chief Minister informed the visitors that Odisha is a treasure trove of history culture and natural beauty. "From the majestic Sun Temple at Konark, to the sacred Jagan-

nath Temple in Puri, our state is home to some of the most iconic landmarks of Indian civilisation," he said.

Majhi said while Odisha's past is steeped in history, its present is defined by transformation and progress. "Now, Odisha stands as a leader in mining and industries such as steel and aluminium, while emerging as a hub for sports, IT and skill development. Skilled in Odisha is a preferred brand name," the CM said.

He called upon "brothers and sisters" in the diaspora to reconnect with their roots and rediscover the magic of Odisha. "We also value the role of the diaspora in promoting Brand Odisha globally. You are our ambassadors bridging cultures and creating opportunities for Odisha on the world stage... Together we are stronger. Together we can build a 'Viksit Odisha' and 'Viksit Bharat'," Majhi said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Before you ask, I am totally ready to fight the new virus

Tirupati stampede claims 6 devotees

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh), Jan 8: At least six devotees died and dozens were injured in a stampede here Wednesday night as hundreds of them jostled for tickets for Vaikunta Dwara Darshanam at Lord Venkateswara Swamy temple on Tirumala Hills, said an official. Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Chairman BR Naidu said one body has been identified.

A DSP opened the gates and immediately everybody pushing ahead led to this stampede. Reports are emerging that six persons died, Naidu told a vernacular news channel.

Hundreds of devotees turned up from across the country for the 10-day Vaikunta Dwara Darshanam commencing from January 10.

"A few devotees dying in a stampede near Vishnu Nivasam in Tirupati while trying for Vaikunta Dwara Darshanam has grieved me intensely," said Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu in a post on 'X'.

According to the TTD Chairman, Naidu conducted a teleconference and expressed dissatisfaction over the temple employees and said such an incident was unfortunate.

Daylight murder rocks Bhubaneswar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: At a time when the capital city is under a thick security blanket for the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention, three miscreants, including a woman, hacked a 35-year-old man to death with sharp weapons near Rasulgargh Road Over Bridge (ROB) in broad daylight, Wednesday morning.

The deceased was identified as Sahadev Nayak, a resident of Kedarpalli area under Capital police station limits here. Nayak was a trade union leader and was working as a supervisor of sanitation workers. Notably, the deceased had also worked for some time as Police Mitra (Friends of Police), volunteering to help the city police keep slums free from crimes and drug smuggling.

Nayak was intercepted by



the miscreants while riding a two-wheeler from Rasulgargh towards Vani Vihar on NH-16, police said. Nayak's family members claimed he was murdered as he was strongly opposed to the drug trade in the city.

An eye-witness refusing to be identified said, "As I was heading towards Rasulgargh square on the ROB, around 7:40am,

three individuals, including a woman, were involved in a heated dispute with a scooter rider. All of a sudden, their argument escalated and the trio severed the scooter rider's head with a sharp weapon. Though some people had gathered by then, but none mustered the courage to apprehend them." Soon the trio fled the spot, he added.

Tension ensued at the post-mortem facility of Capital Hospital later in the day, with scores of people, including Sahadev's relatives, coming down heavily on the Commissionerate Police for the laxity in maintaining law and order in the city.

Bhubaneswar DCP Pinak Mishra said that the police have so far arrested three people in this connection. The arrested accused, identified as Laxmidhar Naik, Rocky Naik and Lipika Naik, were nabbed by a special team of the Commissionerate Police from Saranakul area of Nayagarh district.

Asked regarding the family's allegation of the drugs trade angle, the DCP said, "We are investigating all the angles of the murder. The motive behind the crime appeared to be personal enmity."

MORE P3

Panigrahy acquitted in all five job fraud cases

PNN & AGENCIES

Berhampur, Jan 8: Berhampur's BJP MP Pradeep Kumar Panigrahy was acquitted in three more cases of cheating by a special court in Ganjam district Wednesday due to lack of evidence.

A total of five cases were registered at the Baidyanathpur and Golanthara police stations in the district between 2020 and 2022 when he was the local BJD MLA. The cases were lodged after complaints were filed, alleging that he took money to give jobs. He was acquitted in two of the cases Tuesday.

The special MPMLA court acquitted the former state minister in all five cases with this, said his counsel Deepak Patnaik. Truth always wins and the verdict is the victory of the truth, said Panigrahy. His



supporters celebrated after the court delivered the verdict.

Meanwhile, trials in two cases of corruption and cyber-crime were pending against him in Bhubaneswar, sources said. Panigrahy was arrested by the Crime Branch December 3, 2020, for his alleged involvement in a job scam. He was expelled from the Naveen Patnaik-led BJD for alleged anti-people activities. He joined the BJP ahead of the 2024 elections and got elected from the Berhampur Lok Sabha seat.

Greenland grabs spotlight in warming world

SINCE HIS FIRST TERM AS US PREZ, TRUMP HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN ACQUIRING GREENLAND, WHICH IS A SEMIAUTONOMOUS TERRITORY OF DENMARK, A LONGTIME US ALLY AND A FOUNDING MEMBER OF NATO

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nuuk (Greenland), Jan 8: Remote, icy and mostly pristine, Greenland plays an outsized role in the daily weather experienced by billions of people and in the climate changes taking shape all over the planet.

Greenland is where climate change, scarce resources, tense geopolitics and new trade patterns all intersect, said Ohio University Security and Environment professor Geoff Dabelko.

The world's largest island is now central to the geopolitical, socioeconomic competition in many ways, partly because of climate change, Dabelko said.

Since his first term in office, President-elect Donald Trump has expressed interest in acquiring Greenland, which is a semi-autonomous territory of

Denmark, a longtime US ally and a founding member of NATO. It is also home to a large US military base.

Why is Greenland coveted?

Think of Greenland as an open refrigerator door or thermostat for a warming world, and it's in a region that is warming four times faster than the rest of the globe, said New York University climate scientist David Holland.

Locked inside are valuable rare earth minerals needed for telecommunications, as well as uranium, billions of untapped barrels of oil and a vast supply of natural gas that used to be inaccessible but is becoming less so.

Many of the same minerals are currently being supplied mostly by China, so other countries such as the United States are interested, Dabelko said.



Three years ago, the Denmark government suspended oil development offshore from the territory of 57,000 people.

But more than the oil, gas or minerals, there's ice — "a ridiculous" amount, said climate scientist Eric Rignot of the University of California, Irvine.

If that ice melts, it would reshape coastlines across the globe and potentially shift weather patterns in such a dramatic manner that the threat

was the basis of a Hollywood disaster movie. Greenland holds enough ice that if it all melts, the world's seas would rise by 24 feet (7.4 metres). Nearly a foot of that is so-called zombie ice, already doomed to melt no matter what happens, a 2022 study found.

Since 1992, Greenland has lost about 169 billion metric tonnes of ice each year, with losses hitting 444 billion metric tonnes in 2019.

Greenland will be "a key focus point" through the 21st century because of the effect its melting ice sheet will have on sea levels, said Mark Serreze, director of the National Snow and Ice Data Centre in Boulder, Colorado. It will likely become a bigger contributor in the future. "That impact is 'perhaps unstoppable,'" NYU's Holland said.

Because it straddles the Arctic Circle between the United States, Russia and Europe, Greenland is a geopolitical prize that the US and others have eyed for more than 150 years. It's even more valuable as the Arctic opens up more to shipping and trade.

"I see it as insanely beautiful. It's eye-watering to be there," said Holland, who has conducted research on the ice more than 30 times since 2007.

V Narayanan new chairman of ISRO

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 8: V Narayanan has been appointed as the next chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Secretary of the Department of Space, according to an official announcement made Tuesday.

He is set to take over from the current ISRO chief, S Somnath, January 14. A distinguished scientist at ISRO, Narayanan currently serves as the Director of the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) in Valiamala, Kerala.

With nearly four decades of experience in the Indian space programme, Narayanan has held several important roles within ISRO. His expertise primarily focuses on rocket and spacecraft propulsion.



LACK OF COLD STORAGE & MARKETING FACILITIES

Subarnapur farmers forced into distress sale

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, Jan 8: Subarnapur, a predominantly agricultural district, boasts significant horticultural production, but the absence of cold storage and proper marketing facilities continues to plague farmers, a report said.

They are often forced into distress sales of their crops, leaving them vulnerable to financial exploitation.

Farmers in the region face immense challenges due to inadequate preservation and market support systems. Taking advantage of this gap, traders purchase vegetables at extremely low prices and later sell them elsewhere at much higher rates. Subarnapur, which lacks industrial development, primarily relies on agriculture. In addition to cultivating paddy, farmers grow pulses and various vegetables.

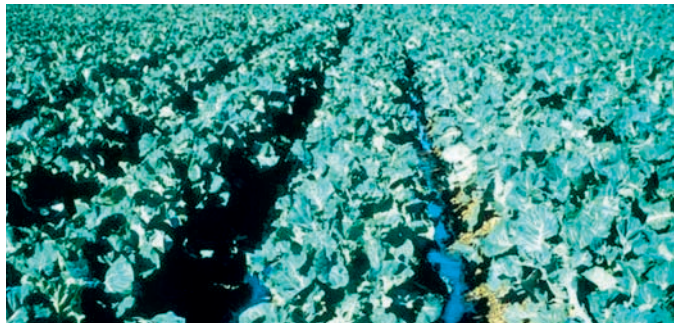
According to data from the horticulture department, 1,501 hectares in the district are dedicated to onion cultivation, with a production target of 17,457 metric tonnes for the

2024-2025 fiscal year.

Similarly, 308 hectares are used for potato farming, with an estimated output of 4,737 metric tonnes. The district also has 2,548 hectares under brinjal cultivation, aiming for 44,955 metric tonnes, and 3,207 hectares for tomatoes, with a target of 45,197 metric tonnes. Additionally, Subarnapur produces thousands of metric tonnes of mangoes. Despite this agricultural diversity, the lack of cold storage facilities prevents farmers from preserving their produce, forcing them to sell at unreasonably low prices. This results in significant financial losses.

For instance, during the onion harvest season, farmers are compelled to sell onions for as little as ₹7 to ₹9 per kilogram, even though market prices later surge to ₹40 per kilogram. Similar trends are observed with tomatoes, brinjals, cauliflowers, and cabbages, leaving farmers perpetually in financial distress.

The absence of cold storage and robust market infrastructure remains a critical issue requiring



immediate attention. Farmers argue that such infrastructure would enable them to preserve their produce and fetch fair prices, reducing their reliance on traders.

During peak harvest seasons, distress sales become commonplace, exacerbated by government inaction. Farmers recall that the previous state government had promised during the 2019 elections to construct cold storage facilities in every block. However, not a single facility has been established in the district to date. While various government schemes aim to promote agricultural development,

lack of infrastructure means they are unable to store or sell their produce at competitive prices, with much of it perishing during harvest seasons.

Currently, many farmers engage in cultivation solely to meet basic subsistence needs, citing a lack of government encouragement and support. Despite repeated financial setbacks, some farmers have expanded into vegetable and fruit cultivation, highlighting the urgent need for cold storage facilities to sustain their efforts.

The newly formed BJP-led state government has announced plans to establish cold storage facilities across all sub-divisions as part of its first-phase initiatives. Sources from the horticulture department indicate efforts are underway to set up such facilities in the Sonepur and Biramaharajpur sub-divisions to benefit local farmers. Farmers hope these initiatives will address the pressing issues and prevent further exploitation, enabling them to earn fair prices for their hard work.

IGH docs save 2 girls after accidental strangulation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Jan 8: The lives of two minor girls, who suffered accidental strangulation while playing on swings, were successfully saved by the doctors at Ispat General Hospital (IGH) in Steel City, a report said.

Both cases, strikingly similar in nature, were admitted recently to the intensive care unit (ICU) of the paediatric department at IGH, operated by Rourkela Steel Plant.

The first case involved an 11-year-old girl from Jharsuguda, who was admitted to IGH in critical condition. She had experienced partial hanging and traumatic asphyxia due to accidental entanglement with the ropes of a swing. Upon arrival, she was in a critical state with altered sensorium and significant respiratory distress.

The medical team acted swiftly, stabilizing her cervical vertebrae with a neck collar and initiating mechanical ventilation. Further investigations, including X-rays and a CT scan of her neck revealed aspiration pneumonia and an odontoid fracture.

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of the IGH paediatric team, the girl was successfully managed on ventilatory support and intensive care for two days. She made a remarkable recovery and was discharged after eight days of comprehensive treatment.

The second case involved another 11-year-old girl from Rourkela, who also suffered accidental strangulation while playing on a swing. She presented with similar symptoms, including altered sensorium, respiratory distress, and a gasping condition. She was placed on mechanical ventilation for three days.

Her chest X-ray revealed aspiration pneumonia, but there were no cervical injuries noted on her neck X-ray. The medical team treated her successfully, and she, too, was discharged after eight days of care.

These incidents highlight the expertise and dedication of the IGH paediatric team, who successfully managed these life-threatening situations and ensured the recovery of the young patients.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before Executive Magistrate, Bargarh, I Sikun Padhan, S/o. Dibakara Padhan resident of At - Kurla, P/O - Bonda, Ps./ Teh./Dist. - Bargarh (Odisha), Pin - 768038, declared that my actual Mother name is Late Sabita Padhan, But in my Official documents and my Educational documents SI.No. - 1701380585 and Roll No. - 129EC0085 my mother name has been wrongly mentioned as Kabita Padhan. That Sabita Padhan and Kabita Padhan is same and one person.

LOST

I, Rati Ranjan Paltasingh, S/o-Rohit Paltasingh, resident at Jethisahi, P.O.- Daruthenga, P.S.- Chandaka, Bhubaneswar, Dist.- Khurda. I am the owner of Vacant Land vide Plot No.- 235/1387 & 232/1388, Khata No.- 105/2360, Area- Ac. 0.094 dec. at Mouza- Tulasadeipur, Tahasil-Bhubaneswar Dist.-Khurda. I have lost original link Document. 1- Sale deed No.- 4945 dtd. 15.12.1998. 2- Sale deed No.- 1831 dtd. 15.04.1997. 3- Sale deed No.- 11131015861 dtd.23.12.2010. 4- ROR Khata No.- 105/848 & 105/847 (Patta) at my village. Therefore notice is hereby given to general public anybody has got any right, title, interest over the said property on the missing document they have to claim before within 10 days of publication. Contact details : Mr. Rati Ranjan Paltasingh, contact number- 8327778338.

Man gets 20-year RI for raping minor girl

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, Jan 8: A special POCOS court here Wednesday convicted a man for raping a minor girl in 2020 and sentenced him to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI).

The judge Rajesh Dash also slapped a penalty of ₹20,000 on the convict identified as Suratha Behera, a resident of Town police station area in Phulbani. In default the convict has to undergo an additional six months of imprisonment, the judge observed while delivering the order. The judge also directed the district legal services authority (DLSA) to provide ₹10 lakh compensation to the survivor. Another accused in this case identified as Agasti Behera is still absconding, Special Public Prosecutor Asim Praharaj, pleading the case for the state government said. The judge pronounced the order after examining the statements recorded by 11 witnesses and going through the medical examination report and police charge-sheet in the case, the SPP said.

According to the case diary, the incident took place Novem-

ber 28, 2020, when the survivor, a minor was going to her friend's house near ITI park under Town police limits to do her home works. The convict Suratha along with Agasti who were known to the victim gave her lift on a bike promising her to drop at her friend's house. However, instead of dropping her at her friend's house they forcibly took her to a nearby forest. Despite fervent request, Suratha raped the girl while Agasti helped him in committing the act.

After committing the heinous act, they threatened her not to disclose the matter before others and dropped her near the ITI Park. The minor girl later, mustered courage and disclosed the matter to her grandmother December 24, 2020.

On being informed, the father of the survivor lodged a written complaint at Town police station. Acting on the complaint police registered a case (No 166/20) and arrested both the accused before producing them in the court. However, Agasti has been absconding after his release from jail on a bail bond.



PREP FOR MEGA SHOW: Makeup men getting the artistes readied at 'Gopapura' in 'Mathuranagari' for Bargarh Dhanu Yatra ahead of their performance Wednesday

Kalahandi locals demand Vedanta bauxite mines for



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: Residents of Kalahandi district have urged Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi to take steps towards allocating permanent bauxite mines to the Lanjigarh-based Vedanta Company.

The demand finds mention in a memorandum submitted to the District Magistrate and Collector Wednesday. Copies of the memorandum were also handed over to the Block Development Officer (BDO).

The residents argue that allocating permanent bauxite

mines to Vedanta would significantly boost the socio-economic growth of the district and benefit its people.

Around 4,000 individuals representing various organizations—including the Lanjigarh Workers' Association, Lanjigarh Merchants' Association, Lanjigarh Drivers' Association, Motor Vehicle Owners' Association, and several social and political groups from Kalahandi and Rayagada districts participated in a rally. The procession began at the Horticulture office in Biswanathpur and concluded at the Lanjigarh block office.

The rally was led by Sridhar Pesnia, former MLA Shibaji Majhi, Md Ayub, Rajendra Pratap Singh Deo, Himadri Pesnia, and Lingaraj Majhi. In their memorandum, the locals expressed their appreciation for the establishment of an alumina refinery in the tribal-dominated area of Lanjigarh, Kalahandi, which is one of Odisha's most underdeveloped regions. They emphasized that the region is home to some of the most primitive tribes, including the Dongria and Kutia Kondhs, and is often regarded as one of India's poorest districts.

UCO Bank's 83rd foundation day: Blood donation camp held

UCO Bank's 83rd foundation day: Blood donation camp held

Sambalpur: A blood donation camp and a health check-up camp was organised in GM University campus in Sambalpur on the occasion of UCO Bank's 83rd foundation day. Chairman of PG Council Gyana Ranjan Swain inaugurated the camp in which 36 units of blood were collected. Deputy Registrar Umacharan Pati, Finance Officer Jagannath Rout, Dean Prof Sushanta Das, YRC Officers Kalyani Ratha, Sanjukta Bhuiyan and Prasanta Kumar Sethi, Chief Manager of the bank's Sambalpur Zonal Office Sanjukta Patel and all staff members of Budharaja branch attended. In a separate event, the bank's Kantabanji branch in Sambalpur Zone and the new premises of RSETI branch in Dhenkanal were also inaugurated. M. Nagaraju, Secretary, Department of Financial Services, inaugurated the new branch in virtual mode in the presence of Ashwani Kumar, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, UCO Bank.



Zonal Manager Ashish Kumar Biswal, senior manager Brajeswar Adarkulia, Chirag Agrawal, Jahid Mahmud, Soumitra Das, manager Lalatendu Debta and Assistant Manager Chandan Pandit were present. Among others, branch manager of Kantabanji branch, Jhasketan Sahu and staffs of the branch office were present.

Boyanika launches Night Bazar for PBD



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: Odisha's leading handloom organisation Boyanika Wednesday launched an exclusive discount sale across its three Bhubaneswar outlets in celebration of Pravaasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) 2025. The initiative aims to showcase Odisha's rich handloom heritage to global delegates and visitors attending the event.

As part of the celebrations, a Night Bazar at Boyanika Exclusive, Kharvela Nagar, will run until January 13, allowing visitors to shop for Odisha's exquisite handloom creations during extended night hours. The bazar was inaugurated by Handlooms, Textiles, and Handicrafts Minister Pradeep

Bal Samanta, alongside senior officials from the department.

Customers can avail discounts of 20 per cent, 10 per cent, and 5 per cent across all Boyanika stores in Bhubaneswar until January 12. Additionally, an extra 5 per cent discount is available at the Kharvela Nagar store from 11pm to 7am during the Night Bazar.

The bazar offers more than just shopping. Instrumental classical music performances and food counters enhance the night time shopping experience, creating a lively atmosphere. Boyanika invites everyone to take advantage of this opportunity to own authentic Odisha handloom products at special prices.

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Police laxity claimed hubby's life: Sunita

Sensitisation camp for workers

Bhubaneswar: A sensitisation camp for unorganised workers was held at Red Cross Bhawan, organised by the District Labour Department, Khurda, CCWD, Anasangathita Sramik Mancha Odisha, and ActionAid Association India. The camp aimed to raise awareness about social security measures for workers. Khurda district labour officer Pravakar Biswal, ALOs Rashmita Kumari Patro and Kaliputra Kuldeep Prasad highlighted workers' rights, while Dharmendra Mishra from the National Board for Workers Education discussed government scheme.

CITY'S DRUG CRISIS CLAIMS YET ANOTHER LIFE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: With terror and shock gripping the denizens after three miscreants, including a woman, beheaded a 35-year-old man in broad daylight near Rasulgargh road over-bridge (RoB), the wife of the deceased- Sunita Nayak made few startling observations, noting that the Commissionerate police had given a free run to the drug peddlers in the City, which claimed her husband's life. This, yet again, has sparked discussions on the laxity of the Commissionerate police in curbing drug-related activities in the City.

Speaking to media persons, Sunita said Sahadev protested against the frequent instances of brown sugar trade in Kedar-

A total of 1,949 cases were registered under the NDPS Act in 2022-23, a staggering 161 per cent increase from 748 cases in the previous fiscal year

palli slum, and was entangled in a feud with four-five notorious miscreants. "Few days back, one among them threatened to sever Sahadev's head, and deliver at Capital police station, if latter would trouble them further. Despite this, the police maintained its slackness, and failed to act on them", she added.

A cop at Mancheswar police sta-

tion, requesting anonymity, said three suspects behind this murder have earlier been booked under multiple NDPS cases. The woman suspect, Lipika Naik, recently got released on bail January 5, in a NDPS case, too.

The heinous incident comes amidst a surge in drug-related crimes and accidents across Odisha. To provide context, 1,949 cases were registered under the NDPS Act in 2022-23, a staggering 161 per cent increase from 748 cases in the previous fiscal year. Excise Department data also reveals that 32 kg of heroin was seized in 2022-23, compared to the previous year's figures. Additionally, authorities confiscated 41 quintals of ganja during the same period, up from 31 quintals in 2021-22.



WARM WELCOME: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati greet Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who arrives at Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar Wednesday. The PM will formally inaugurate the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas being held for the first time in Odisha, Thursday

WEATHER

| | BBSR | CTC |
|----------|-------|-------|
| Max Temp | 28.4° | 26.5° |
| Min Temp | 15.3° | 15.0° |
| Humidity | 81% | 81% |
| Rainfall | Nil | Nil |

FORECAST

Fog/mist in the morning and mainly clear sky later



MARKET WATCH

| INDEX | INDEX | VARIATION |
|--------|-----------|-----------|
| SENSEX | 78,148.49 | ↓ 50.62 |
| NIFTY | 23,688.95 | ↓ 18.95 |
| DOLLAR | 86.07 | ↑ 0.16 |
| EURO | 88.86 | ↑ 0.61 |
| GOLD | ₹77,940 | ↑ ₹409 |
| SILVER | ₹91,381 | ↑ ₹508 |

Ekamra Walks celebrates Odisha's Heritage for PBD

The initiative offers a rare access to historical sites, crafts, and nature, running until January 10

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) launched the inaugural edition of "Culture, Crafts, and Conversations" under its Ekamra Walks initiative here Wednesday, bringing Odisha's living cultural heritage to life for Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) celebrations.

The specially curated walk, which runs until January 10, began at the Odisha State Archives, a premier institution that typically remains reserved for researchers.

During the event, visitors were granted rare access to the archives, where they explored British-era records, including audits of the Jagannath Temple, and witnessed live demonstrations of document conservation. The walk continued



to the Kala Bhoomi - Odisha Crafts Museum, where participants delved into the state's rich craft traditions, concluding with a flute recital.

Ekamra Walks offers several thematic trails this year, each catering to different interests. For nature lovers, the "Walk in the Wilderness" trail explores the serene Chandaka Wildlife Sanctuary and Deras Dam. Those interested in spiritual and architectural heritage can enjoy the "Spiritual Sojourn," which highlights the Kalingan School of Architecture and Odisha's iconic temples. The

"Mystical Odyssey" focuses on the Shakta Cult's influence on the state's spiritual traditions, while "Culture, Crafts, and Conversations" offers a deep dive into Odia literary and artistic heritage.

For adventure enthusiasts, the "Jungle Safari" and "Nocturnal Jungle Safari" provide thrilling experiences in Chandaka's vibrant ecosystem.

Ekamra Walks began December 25 and will continue every weekend until February, offering both locals and visitors an opportunity to explore the cultural richness of Odisha.

RIE Bhub to host RISM 2025

Bhubaneswar: The Regional Institute of Education (RIE), Bhubaneswar, will host the Regional Institutes Students' Meet (RISM) 2025 from January 9 to 13. The event will bring together students from all five RIEs across India to celebrate academic excellence, cultural diversity, and national unity. The inaugural ceremony will be addressed by Ashok Kumar Negi, PMG, Inspector General, ITBP, Central Frontier, Bhopal and presided over by institute principal, PC Agarwal. The meet will feature a variety of cultural performances, athletic and literary competitions, providing a platform to nurture future educators and leaders by encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. RISM 2025 aligns with the NEP 2020 vision, focusing on critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and cultural integration. It will promote national unity and cross-cultural understanding through academic, athletic, and literary competitions, including races, volleyball, football, debates, quizzes, and drawing. This is the second time RIE Bhubaneswar is hosting the event, following its first in 2017. A highlight of the meet is a field trip, allowing participants to explore Odisha's cultural heritage.

Minati Mohapatra Cycling Velodrome inaugurated

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: The Minati Mohapatra Cycling Velodrome was inaugurated at the KIIT-KISS campus by Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Mansukh Mandaviya, Wednesday. The velodrome is named after Minati Mohapatra, Odisha's first Arjuna Awardee in cycling.

In his speech, Mandaviya emphasised the importance of education and sports working together to build a stronger nation, aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision. He praised the efforts of KIIT, KISS and KIMS founder



Achyuta Samanta for nurturing students into responsible citizens and highlighted the role of education in shaping the future.

Samanta expressed gratitude for the minister's visit and outlined plans to expand sports infrastructure at KIIT and KISS, aiming to double the facilities in the coming years to support

aspiring athletes.

Secretary General of the Cycling Federation of India Maninder Pal Singh, commended Mandaviya's passion for sports and his contributions to promoting cycling across the country.

Minati, expressed moved by the honour, expressed deep gratitude, calling it the greatest recognition of her life. "Dr Samanta is like a god to us," she said.

KIIT vice-chancellor Saranjit Singh praised Mandaviya's achievements as Union Health Minister, while KISS vice-chancellor Deepak Kumar Behera delivered the vote of thanks at the ceremony.

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FOCUS PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS

ENGAGING THE DIASPORA



Indian diaspora is ubiquitous, having spread the world over. Better education and English language skills have given the Indian diaspora an edge, particularly in the English-speaking world

and technological institutions. A flagship scheme in this regard is the Ramalingaswami Re-entry Fellowship offered by the Department of Biotechnology, under the aegis of the Ministry of Science & Technology. The scheme aims to attract highly skilled researchers (Indian nationals) working overseas to various cutting-edge disciplines of biotechnology such as agriculture, health sciences, bioengineering, energy, environment, bioinformatics and other related areas. They are entitled to take up teaching and research assignments, and to supervise doctoral and MS students. A large number of such scientists are eventually absorbed by the institutes in which they conduct their research.

Indian diaspora is ubiquitous, having spread the world over. Better education and English language skills have given the Indian diaspora an edge, particularly in the English-speaking world. The Indian diaspora has been able to carve a niche for itself in their adopted countries as a result of their talent, perseverance and hardworking nature. Third, Indians, unlike the Chinese, have mainstreamed themselves in the political and electoral processes of many countries, which is evident from their representation in the legislatures of the UK, the US and Canada, in particular. Several members of the Indian diaspora, besides being elected to Parliament, have also been occupying responsible positions in governmental structures, corporate houses, academics, and research and media houses.

The writer is a former senior fellow at the Monohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and also Indian Council of Social Science Research. Views are personal.

the problems of South African Indians, but with the lot of Indians all over world.

The then Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee took a major initiative to address issues pertaining to the diaspora by constituting a High-Level Committee on Indian Diaspora in August 2000, under the Chairmanship of the late LM Singhvi, a member of the Rajya Sabha and a former Indian High Commissioner to the UK. The creation of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) in May 2004 was an assertion that the welfare of the overseas Indians needed mainstream attention. Eventually, in January 2015, the MOIA was merged with the Ministry of External Affairs.

The Singhvi Committee inter alia recommended that dual citizenship be permitted within the ambit of the Citizenship Act, 1955. It was in this context that the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2003, was introduced in Rajya Sabha, in December 2003. Subsequently, in 2004, by an amendment to the Act, the facility of Overseas Citizenship of India was made available to PIOs in 16 specified countries.

The issue of granting voting rights to NRIs, particularly from the Gulf region, had long engaged the attention of Parliament, the media and judi-

ciary. The government was of the view that conferring such rights would enable NRIs to participate in the democratic process and would also boost their involvement in nation building. Accordingly, after considering all aspects of their demand, the government proposed to make provision through legislation to enable those Indian citizens, absent from their residences in India on account of employment, education, or otherwise outside India, to get their names registered in the electoral rolls of the concerned constituency of their place of residence in India. This would enable them to vote in elections to the Lok Sabha and to the State Legislature in case they were present in their constituency at the time of the polls. The Bill sought to amend Section 20 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950. The Bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament, and assented to by the president. Today, NRIs have started voting in elections in India. There is, however, a demand for postal voting, a privilege enjoyed by defence personnel and diplomats.

Over the last few years, India has been taking a number of initiatives to attract Indian research scientists studying abroad to premier scientific

The 18th edition of India's biannual event Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is being held at Bhubaneswar from 8 to 10 January. The high profile event will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 9 January. The decision to hold the event in Bhubaneswar signifies the importance that the Modi government attaches to Odisha and the recognition of Odia diaspora spread the world over from the Silicon Valley to Silvasa in the remotest corner of India. The efforts of the government to engage the diaspora can be attributed to a number of factors, the most important being the irreversible and unstoppable process of globalisation that breaks the physical and emotional barriers of nation states. The trend of globalisation has, nevertheless, suffered a setback in the recent past on account of the protectionist policy followed by some countries, including the US under Donald Trump. Notwithstanding this setback, the world is witnessing not only the free movement of goods and services, but also that of peoples and ideas. The integration of world economy and the breakthrough in Information Technology have brought to the fore social, economic and political issues with a bearing on migration and reverse migration. It is important, therefore, to harness the prowess and potential of the expatriate population as a strategic asset in the economic, social and educational development of the home country.

It was Mahatma Gandhi who first espoused the cause of the Indian diaspora in an organised manner. Gandhi started his experiment of Satyagraha in South Africa to highlight the injustice and unfair treatment meted out to immigrant Indians. He fought for their rights, dignity and self-esteem. Gandhi was concerned not only with



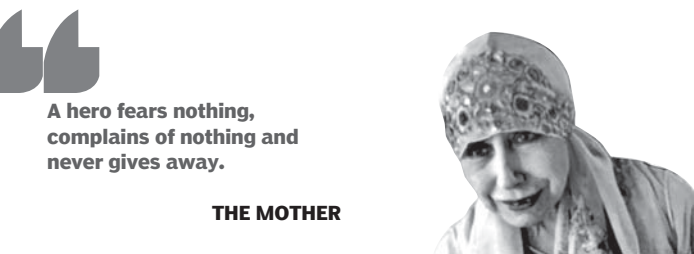
Rup Narayan Das

IT WAS MAHATMA GANDHI WHO FIRST ESPOUSED THE CAUSE OF THE INDIAN DIASPORA IN AN ORGANISED MANNER



Ian Buruma

ONE OF THE AIMS OF WARTIME PROPAGANDA IS TO DEMONISE THE ENEMY AND PORTRAY THEM AS LESS THAN HUMAN



A hero fears nothing, complains of nothing and never gives away.

THE MOTHER

The Culture War

In 2022, Lithuania's then-Minister of Culture Simonas Kairys decided that performing Russian composer Tchaikovsky's classic ballet The Nutcracker was no longer an appropriate way to celebrate the Christmas season. Lithuania is a staunch supporter of Ukraine, and Kairys, believing that Russian culture could not be separated from Russian imperialism, called for a "mental quarantine" - otherwise known as "cultural decolonization."

At the end of last year, Sar nas Birutis, the newly installed culture minister, announced that he liked Tchaikovsky's music and saw no reason to prohibit it. Some Lithuanians agree, including another former minister of culture, who said: "We fought Soviet power to get the freedom not to ban things."

The Nutcracker debate in Lithuania echoes similar, though usually more fraught, arguments in Ukraine. In 2023, the Kyiv City Council decided that Russian music, plays, books, and art should no longer be showcased in public. Statues of Pushkin, one of Russia's greatest poets, were removed from public places.

The patriotic urge to ban works of art associated with an enemy country is not new, of course. During World War I, some British people wanted to prohibit the performance of German music in concert halls, and there was even a proposal to replace German-made pianos with British-made models.

When World War II came around, music played a very different role in Britain. The celebrated British pianist Myra Hess performed her famous lunchtime concerts in London during the Blitz. Hess, who was Jewish, saw no problem with playing music by the great German composers. To her, and to the Londoners who flocked to hear her, Mozart, Beethoven, and Bach belonged to the world, not to Germany alone.

In Nazi Germany, the same music was performed on official occasions, such as Adolf Hitler's birthday, to demonstrate the superiority of German culture. Wilhelm Furtwängler, the most famous German conductor at the time, would not have disagreed about the exalted status of German music, but he was not a Nazi. In his view, great music lifted people above politics and wartime propaganda, hence his refusal to leave his home country, or to stop performing there.

The Nazis never banned all "enemy culture" either. Shakespeare's plays were performed in Germany throughout WWII, although The Merchant of Venice posed some problems: Shylock, the Jewish moneylender, might evoke a little too much sympathy.

One of the aims of wartime propaganda is to demonise the enemy and portray them as less than human. Hollywood movies had been very popular in Japan (and in Germany) until December 1941. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese propaganda portrayed Americans as "devils and beasts," and their devilish and beastly cultural products were swiftly taken out of circulation.

So, is banning the art of another country ever a good idea? In principle, no. Tchaikovsky cannot be held responsible for Russian President Vladimir Putin's war of aggression. Withholding great works of art from the public will have a narrowing, provincialising effect. Artists like Beethoven, Shakespeare, and Tolstoy transcend borders.

And yet, perhaps the Ukrainians should be given some slack. Britain was not in danger of being dominated by German culture during WWII, let alone forcibly assimilated into it. Putin's vision of building a broader Russkiy mir (Russian world) in which peripheral countries are subservient to the Kremlin, and their cultures are reduced to folkloric dances on official occasions, poses a fundamental threat to Ukraine's survival as an independent nation-state.

Until recently, elites in Ukraine's cities spoke Russian, not Ukrainian. Russian was even the first language of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Far from being the only Russian who thinks of Ukrainians as a minority within the greater Russian world, Putin has promoted his "special military operation" in Ukraine as an effort to "unite the Russian people." Estonians, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Poles have reason to fear the possibility of Mother Russia's forced embrace, too. After all, it has happened before.

To speak of cultural decolonisation suggests a parallel between Ukraine and the former European colonies in Asia and Africa, where some local elites were indeed Anglicised or Frenchified. But a better comparison would be to Korea under the Japanese Empire between 1910 and 1945. During this period, Koreans were not so much colonial subjects as widely despised second-class citizens. In the later stages of Japan's imperial rule, Koreans were forced to adopt Japanese names and be educated in Japanese.

After Japan's defeat in WWII, Koreans, nearly robbed of their identity, also narrowed their cultural horizon by rejecting all things Japanese. It was only in the 1990s that Japanese movies, comic books, pop music, and literature began to re-enter South Korea, and they were not always well received.

To those of us who espouse the principle of universal humanism, this kind of cultural chauvinism might seem provincial, if not bigoted. But Koreans were once fighting for their survival as a people. Culture was an existential matter.

The same is true for Ukrainians today. Shunning Russian music, art, and literature, despite having deep historic links with such works, will not do much for universal humanism in Ukraine. But Ukrainians have more pressing concerns: they must fight to maintain their own distinct language and culture, as well as their own government. Once they secure their sovereignty, neither they, nor indeed the Lithuanians, will have any reason to fear Pushkin's poetry or Tchaikovsky's music.

The writer is the author, most recently, of Spinoza: Freedom's Messiah (Yale University Press, 2024).

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

There are two ways to live: you can live as if nothing is a miracle; you can live as if everything is a miracle.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

What lies behind you and what lies in front of you, pales in comparison to what lies inside of you.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

SPECTRUM LAW

Easing commercial dispute redressal

The Government of India is continuously evaluating and amending the legislation regulating dispute resolution related to commercial activities to enhance the ease of doing business in the country. The Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1996, revised in 2016 and 2019, institutionalised arbitration by reducing judicial participation. The Commercial Courts Act 2015, implemented in 2015 and revised in 2018, mandates pre-institutional mediation for commercial disputes, whilst the Mediation Act, 2023, enacted in 2023, formalises mediation procedures in India.

Subsequent to these amendments, along with suggested modifications to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1996 and new legislations, the government proposed on 8 November, 2024 to amend the Commercial Courts Act of 2015, aiming to facilitate access to, initiation of, and resolution of disputes via alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and conventional dispute resolution systems.

An unambiguous interpretation of the proposed amendments presents an optimistic view of the conflict resolution processes of the commercial courts if modified and ratified.

The government solicited public feedback and recommendations regarding the planned revisions. Upon closer examination, the proposed revisions are less favourable than they seem and do not bolster the government's initiatives to institutionalise arbitration and engage commercial entities in the arbitration sector. Two issues to consider are the government's enthusiasm for institutionalising, licensing, and regulating arbitration in India. The Arbitration and Conciliation Act of 1996 was revised to establish the Arbitration Council of India with that specific objective. The Arbitration Council of India (ASI) has not yet been constituted or made functioning. The Mediation Act of 2023 has recommended establishment of the Mediation Council of India (MCI) to institutionalise, license, and regulate mediation organisations in India. The location of the MCI's establishment and operationalisation remains unknown.

The proposed revisions include Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) in commercial courts. Referring matters for mediation even in cases where urgent interim relief is sought, the provision made in the amendment to section 12 A of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015 is

to "provided that in case where an urgent interim relief was sought and granted or denied by the court, it shall thereafter, refer the parties to mediation and the procedure for pre-institution mediation shall apply mutatis mutandis." This provision clearly promotes mediation for resolving commercial issues. However, the foundation of MCI will encourage, advocate for, license, and regulate mediation organisations.

The amendments also suggest increasing arbitration processes for resolving commercial issues. The reforms aim to promote arbitration for the quick resolution of commercial disputes. In addition to recommending commercial cases for resolution in regular commercial courts, the amendments seek to establish designated arbitration courts within the commercial courts system while also empowering state governments to establish commercial courts at the district level with the permission of the high courts.

Looking at these, as well as a number of recent decisions taken by the government in bureaucratic circles, we wonder if the government is serious about fostering institutional arbitration by establishing arbitration institutions in the private sector.

On the 3 June, 2024, the department of expenditure, informed all the government departments stating clearly that "Arbitration as a method of dispute resolution should not be routinely or automatically included in procurement contracts/tenders, especially in large contracts, and the recent developments, namely the enactment of the Mediation Act, 2023 and Court decisions, combined with the experience gained over many years."

On 2 December, 2024, the Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Law, issued a public notice stating unequivocally that there is currently no procedure in place in the Department for recognising or grading institutions providing ODR services. The proposed amendments to the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, while emphasising the discouragement of judicial intervention in arbitration, necessitate high court approval for a minimum of eight actions under the Act, including the designation of dedicated arbitration commercial courts and the creation of new commercial courts at the district level. Will the amendments genuinely facilitate company operations with ease?

The writer is a former international senior advisor to UNDP.



P Madhava Rao

THE REFORMS AIM TO PROMOTE ARBITRATION FOR THE QUICK RESOLUTION OF COMMERCIAL DISPUTES

Act with urgency

Sir, Nimisha Priya, an Indian nurse who was convicted of murder of a Yemeni citizen and sentenced to death has been desperately waiting to be saved by the Indian government. Her case raises serious questions about the protection of Indian citizens abroad, the Indian government's handling of such cases and the complex foreign legal system. True, people working in foreign countries need to comply with the law of the land. However, when they are caught in legal trouble, escaping punishment is difficult. Although the deceased Talal Abdo Mahdi had subjected the woman to extreme atrocities, the act of murdering him made her a criminal. Though most countries have abolished death penalty, it still prevails in some countries. The Indian government has offered diplomatic support and has agreed to facilitate the payment of blood money compensation. However, these options highlight the limitations of the government in protecting the citizens working abroad. It has been a long time since the verdict was delivered and the execution is scheduled to take place within a month. Yet, the uncertainty over saving the life of Nimisha Priya has not been brought to an end. The government must act with urgency to ensure that the hapless woman's life is saved.

Venu GS, KOLLAM

Room for negotiations

Sir, The surprise resignation of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau could pave the way for a diplomatic reset with India, which hopefully will ease tensions over the contentious allegations about New Delhi's involvement in the killing of Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil. It is not yet clear who the Liberal Party will choose as Trudeau's successor, but analysts say, irrespective of the appointee, there will now be room for renewed negotiations between the two countries. It remains to be seen whether the next leader chosen by the Liberal Party takes a more propitiatory tone towards Delhi. However, analysts say that Trudeau's successor may not like to be seen as being hostile towards India. Keeping aside India's relations with Canada, the political upheaval comes at a difficult moment for the north American country.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

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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State eyes to be among top 5 economies: Majhi



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday said that Odisha aspires to be among the top five state economies in the country by 2047, when India will celebrate 100 years to Independence.

Addressing the joint business session between MEA and Odisha organised as part of the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention, Majhi said India has become the fifth-largest economy in the world and at present the fastest-growing big economy under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Odisha also aspires to be a part of this growth journey, while from the 13th biggest economy in the country with about 100 billion USD economy we want to propel ourselves to be among the top five economies in the country," he said.

"I hope as the country celebrates its 100th year of Independence in 2047. We will achieve this goal and Odisha will be in the proud club with a 1.5 trillion dollar economy," Majhi said. He said India is the favourite destination of global FDI in the world and Odisha wants to be the favourite destination of FDI in India.

To realise this goal, he said, the foundation has to be strong and should be laid early, which the state is doing with 'Utkarsh Odisha' (a business summit to be held later this month).

Majhi said the state has a

defined and clear roadmap and its vision for transformation is centered on future-ready sectors such as renewable energy advanced manufacturing, petrochemicals, textiles, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology.

Odisha has natural bounty of virgin forests, beautiful and green mountains, 480-km long coastline and sea beaches, Asia's largest saltwater natural lake, hundreds of historical and religious places, he said while asking investors "What more do you need to invest in the field of tourism?"

The CM urged the diaspora to explore the possibilities in this important sector which promises so many possibilities.

Addressing the meeting, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said India is using 3Ts (Trade, Technology and Tourism) to evaluate foreign policies. He urged the investors among the India diaspora to look into the 3Ts when they are here in Odisha.

The 'Look East' policy of the government of India actually has a historic origin from Odisha, the Bali Yatra. The connection to South East Asia was actually started in Odisha, he said.

Mission Purvodaya speaks about the rejuvenation of the eastern part of the country. One of the earliest commitments made by the government during the third term of PM Modi was to take practical decisions to enable Purvodaya to actually happen and Odisha plays a crucial part in this direction, he said.



Jaishankar thrust on motivating youth

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: The 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention kicked off at Janaata Maidan here Wednesday, with External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar calling upon NRIs and Persons of Indian Origin to actively participate in the quest for a 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India). He underscored the importance of motivating the young generation and encashing their talent for mutual benefit.

The convention began with the inauguration of Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas by Jaishankar, Union Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

Addressing the young diaspora, Jaishankar explained the reason behind holding a conclave for youths as part of the PBD celebration, being held in Odisha for the first time.

"The thinking behind is recognising the special contribution that young minds make, at home and abroad. And indeed, in connecting them more effectively for mutual good," he said.

Jaishankar noted that this is a time when so many key developments in the world are being shaped by this younger generation - AI, electronic vehicles, startups, drones and sports.

Acknowledging young diaspora's role in enhancing perception of India globally, Jaishankar said the country has started its journey towards 'Viksit Bharat' and this is an effort for the future generation.

"In this period, they (youths) will come to the front ranks and lead the nation. A large part of our efforts is to give the right motivation to the younger generation to accelerate their efforts. While development itself is a very complex task, it becomes much easier when we are confident that nothing is



beyond us," he said.

The External Affairs Minister quoted badminton player PV Sindhu on why Prime Minister Modi is a youth icon.

"She summed it up as his attitude which moved our nation from 'chalta hai' (it's ok) to 'badal sakta hai' (it can change) to 'hoga kaise nahin' (why can't it happen)?" he said.

Jaishankar highlighted

various campaigns and programmes to develop India undertaken since 2014 under the Modi government.

"Let me take the opportunity to urge you (young diaspora) on behalf of the PM to promote India as a tourism destination. If young PIOs bring their equally young friends from abroad to explore our uniquely rich and diverse heritage and culture, this will surely become a life-long habit," he said.

India's potential was proved during the Covid-19 pandemic, the minister said.

"The very country that was predicted to go under ended up supplying vaccines and medicines to the entire world," he said.

On Odisha, Jaishankar said, "It is equally a living testament to the developmental progress in all its dimensions. And when it comes to the youth, their optimism and energy is very much on display in Odisha, whether

it is in institutions of learning or those we encounter in daily life."

MoS for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita lauded Central schemes like Pravasi Kaushal Vikash Yojna that has been paving the way for youths to find jobs abroad, armed with skills imparted through the scheme.

Dev Pragad, CEO of the Newsweek magazine from the USA, was the guest of honour at the event.

He highlighted his roots in India and discussed how the Indian diaspora has become a top choice to lead US business houses recently, thanking the culture and traditions of India and its ethos.

Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports Raksha Nikhil Khadse said such events will inspire and guide the youth for a bright future through exchange of ideas and cultural communications.



BHUBANESWAR



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BHUBANESWAR



BHUBANESWAR

Pravati for Odisha as a tourist hub

Bhubaneswar: The state government is committed to positioning Odisha as a leader in the global tourism map, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida said, Wednesday. Speaking during a session on 'Unravelling India's Best Kept Secret' on the first day of the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas conference here, Parida said Odisha is blessed with an abundance of natural resources as well as timeless art, culture and tradition. "Odisha's unique folk art, classical dance, and culinary traditions have been recognised at the international level. We are committed to positioning the state as a leader in the global tourism map," she said. The event saw a discussion on Odisha's famous temples, sanctuaries, forest resources, wildlife, and culinary culture along with exchange of views on state's global recognition for traditional cuisine.

Singh Deo bats for investment in Odisha

Bhubaneswar: With a treasure trove of natural resources and business-friendly environment, Odisha is among the states which are favourable for tourism and investment, Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo said Wednesday. Speaking during a session on 'Odisha: A land of opportunities', he said developing sports infrastructure along with improving air connectivity, both domestically and internationally, could significantly boost Odisha's economy. "With a vast coastline, abundant rivers and rich mineral resources, Odisha is a land of opportunities. Considering these aspects, Odisha is extremely favourable for tourism and investment as compared with other states," Singh Deo said.

'PBD a powerful platform for changemakers'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 8: The entire Janaata Maidan, the venue for 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) convention, was abuzz with a flurry of activities as several events were lined up for celebrating the achievements of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs). Amidst this, **Orissa POST** interacted with a cross-section of overseas citizens ranging from scientists, to entrepreneurs and from community leaders to healthcare workers who hailed the initiative.

Dr Sita Kantha Dash, a globally recognised scientist and chairman of Kalinga Hospital Limited, Odisha and Dr Dash Foundation, Minnesota in the US, appreciated the efforts of the government.

"It is an honour to be a part of the PBD event in Odisha - a land of rich culture, innovation, and inspiration. As a healthcare professional and also a probiotic scientist, I firmly believe in the power of science and technology to transform



Dr. Sita Kantha Dash



Nirmala Raghuraman



Jayesh Trivedi



Bhagyashree Singh



Shashank Mohapatra

lives," Dash said.

Stating that his work on probiotics focuses on enhancing gut health and overall well-being using natural and scientifically-backed interventions, Dash said their mission is to bridge the gap between cutting-edge medical research and accessible patient care.

"PBD is a powerful platform to connect with global changemakers and contribute to India's growth story. Together, we can harness innovation,

collaboration, and dedication to uplift healthcare standards not just in India but globally," he added.

Highlighting the role of PBD in expanding his client base globally, Jayesh Trivedi, a native of Gujarat and an entrepreneur based in Mauritius, said this grand convention acts as a catalyst to expanding businesses.

Trivedi said, "I have attended the last two PBD conventions held in Nagpur and Indore and they were really appreciable.

This is my third PBD convention. The Union government is facilitating growth of several businesses through this congregation, where a cross-section of people converges and exchanges ideas." "PBD helps us getting more clients. I got more clients from the US, Australia and some other countries through the grand event," he added. "This event helps us understand each other's requirement and we get an opportunity to explore other dimensions of our business."

"I had a dream to attend the 18th PBD event in Odisha and it came true with the High Commissioner's approval," Trivedi said.

Regarding the PBD's role in fostering women empowerment, Nirmala Raghuraman, a housewife-cum-community leader, staying in Qatar, said she has attended the previous three PBDs and all the conclaves were very encouraging. Born in Chennai, Raghuraman is associated with Indian Women Association in Qatar, Qatar

Tamil Sangha and Karnataka Sangha in Qatar.

"In my first PBD, I had heard Sushma Swaraj ji. Her speech was really inspiring. Women are not born to cook and clean. They should rather explore other possibilities beyond the four walls. They should work for the betterment of the society as well. Not only PBD, but several other events also help us gain more knowledge about various people across the country and the world. Exposure is very important and PBD serves this purpose," said Raghuraman.

Highlighting Odisha's beautiful tourist destinations, she put emphasis on the role of youth in rebuilding the state.

"Odisha is a nice state with full of tourism sites. I visited Nandankanan this morning and will visit Puri to have a glimpse of Lord Jagannath Thursday. Odisha has a great youth potential. I can see the energy and enthusiasm in them. The government should empower the youth and tap their potential for the better-

ment of the next generation," she Raghuraman.

Bhagyashree Singh from UK, who works for National Health Service (NHS), a publicly-funded healthcare system in England, said, "Odisha is hosting PBD for the first time which is a proud moment for us. My friends from UK came to the Temple City for the first time with me and we all are in awe with the beauty and culture of the state. They also loved the food and hospitality. Barring a few issues, it was a great experience. Hope this enhances the business and trading opportunities."

Shashank Mohapatra, vice president of a tech firm in Singapore, stated that PBD gives the NRIs a chance to relive their bygone days in Odisha. "The Odisha government has put its heart and soul into crafting an amazing experience for all the Odias across the world. This is one of the best ways for every NRI Odia to connect to his routes, and the event gives them a chance to rediscover Odisha once again," Mohapatra said.

national



Now if some-one threatens to undermine that spirit, that glorious heritage of the state, counter that, combat that

MAMATA BANERJEE | CHIEF MINISTER, WEST BENGAL

CONGRESS PROMISES ₹25L HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME

The Congress Wednesday promised free health insurance of up to ₹25 lakh under "Jeevan Raksha Yojana" if voted to power in Delhi. Senior Congress leader and former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot said the proposed scheme would be a game-changer as it will provide comprehensive health coverage to families, covering medical expenses for critical illnesses, hospitalisations, and treatments



दिल्ली में कांग्रेस है जरूर

of the day quote

I have heard many cadets express a desire to join the armed forces -- the Army, Navy, and Air Force. It's wonderful that you want to, as serving the nation in uniform has a distinct charm. But to serve the nation, one may not necessarily need to wear a uniform. This is something we must remember



AP SINGH | IAF CHIEF

Our concerted efforts have yielded remarkable outcomes. The Adjusted Net Enrolment Rate in elementary education has reached an impressive 100 pc



PEMA KHANDU | CHIEF MINISTER, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Countries like Canada have lost their battle against drugs and resorted to legalisation. But Bharat is in a position to win this war. With robust coordination among states and districts, we will ensure that Maharashtra and the country become drug-free



DEVENDRA FADNIS | CHIEF MINISTER, MAHARASHTRA

Defence talks add new vigour to India-Maldives ties: Rajnath

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: India Wednesday conveyed to the Maldives its readiness to support the island nation in enhancing its defence preparedness as Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held "fruitful" talks with his Maldivian counterpart Mohammed Ghassan Maumoon focusing on maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean.

In a post on X, Singh said the discussions will add "new vigour" to India-Maldives relations. The two defence ministers "reasserted" their firm commitment to work closely in realising the joint vision for India-Maldives comprehensive economic and maritime security partnership, according to an Indian readout.

Maumoon is on a three-day visit to India, nearly eight months after New Delhi completed pulling out its military personnel from the Maldives following a demand by its pro-China President Mohamed Muizzu.

The overall episode had significantly frayed the ties between the two nations. However, there was a thaw in the relations following Muizzu's visit to Delhi in October.

Maumoon appreciated India's historical role as the 'First Responder' for the Maldives, and thanked New Delhi for assisting Male in augmenting the modern infrastructural capacities and training of defence and security personnel, the defence ministry said in the readout.



"On the government of Maldives' request, India handed over defence equipment and stores to the Maldives," it said.

In his post, Singh described his talks with Maumoon as "fruitful".

"Several issues pertaining to deepening defence cooperation were discussed which would

Maumoon appreciated India's historical role as the 'First Responder' for the Maldives, and thanked New Delhi for assisting Male in augmenting the modern infrastructural capacities and training of defence and security personnel

also help in enhancing the capability of Maldives National Defence Forces. Today's discussions will add new vigour to India-Maldives relations," he said.

The defence ministry said Singh and Maumoon comprehensively reviewed various aspects of bilateral defence and security cooperation.

"During the talks, both sides reasserted the firm commitment to work closely in realising the joint vision for

India-Maldives Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership," it said.

Singh "reaffirmed" India's readiness to support the Maldives in capability enhancement for defence preparedness, including provisioning of defence platforms and assets to augment its capacities, as per its national priorities and in line with New Delhi's 'Neighbourhood First' policy and the vision of SAGAR, the ministry said.

EC's total voter enrolment in Maha higher than total adult population: Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: The Congress Wednesday alleged that the Election Commission seems to have enrolled 16 lakh more electors than the entire adult population in Maharashtra as estimated by the Narendra Modi government.

Chairman of the Congress' Data Analytics department, Pravin Chakravarty, claimed there was a sudden increase of 50 lakh voters in just four months of the Maharashtra assembly elections, which is 16 lakh more than the entire adult population in the state.

"It is in the interest of the nation's democracy and strengthening voters trust that the CEC (chief election commissioner), rather than grandstanding and hiding behind flowery poetry, should acknowledge the uncomfortable truth and take remedial actions and steps as a dutiful public servant," Chakravarty said in a statement.

He cited the November 2019 report of the National Commission on Population of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, where Maharashtra's estimated adult (18+) population in 2024 can be calculated as 9.54 crores, based on the five-year projections of the report.

"As per the Election Commission, the total enrolled electors in Maharashtra for Vidhan Sabha election were 9.70 crores. That is, the Election Commission seems to have enrolled 16 lakh more electors than the entire adult population in Maharashtra, as estimated by the Narendra Modi government," he said.

The Congress has been raising objections with the EC on the sudden rise in voters in Maharashtra ahead of polls.

The fresh salvo from the opposition party came a day after Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar rejected allegations of spurt in voter turnout figures near the end of polling hours, saying the system is "fool-proof" and dubbed claims of sudden increase as "misconceived narratives". Chakravarty said the CEC in a press conference January 7 to announce the dates for Vidhan Sabha election for Delhi and few other byelections, sought to address the lingering doubts over the mysterious increase in total electors enrolled for the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha election.

CEC, EC SELECTION

Court's opinion vs legislative power: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: It will be court's opinion versus the legislative power to enact law, the Supreme Court Wednesday said as it posted the pleas challenging the appointment of the chief election commissioner and election commissioners under the 2023 law February 4.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan was informed by advocate Prashant Bhushan, representing an NGO, the incumbent Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar was set to superannuate February 18, and a new CEC would be appointed under the new law, if the court didn't intervene.

Bhushan said the top court in its March 2, 2023 verdict set up a panel comprising the Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition and the CJI to appoint the CEC and election commissioners (EC).

"However, under the new law the selection committee will comprise the Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet minis-



ter, the Leader of Opposition or the leader of the largest Opposition party in Lok Sabha. They have removed CJI from the selection committee," submitted Bhushan.

While posting the hearing February 4, the bench said it would see whose views had

supremacy.

"It will be the opinion of the court under Article 141 versus legislative power to enact law," it underscored.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for one of the petitioners, said the government did not remove the basis of the March 2, 2023 judgement, and enacted a new law.

Bhushan said the government couldn't control the appointment of election commissioners as it would be a threat to democracy.

Sankaranarayanan said the only way the Centre could have got around the judgement was by amending the Constitution and not enacting a law.

The bench asked Bhushan and Sankaranarayanan to remind the judges February 3 for the matter to be taken up the following day.

The top court refused to stay the appointments of new ECs under a 2023 law March 15, 2024 which excluded the CJI from the selection panel and deferred the hearing on a batch of pleas challenging the appointments.

SHORT TAKES

2 Delhi HC judges take oath of office

New Delhi: Two new Delhi High Court judges Wednesday took oath of office, taking the total strength of the court to 37. Acting Chief Justice Vibhu Bakru administered oath to Justices Ajay Dignaul and Harish Vaidyanathan Shankar at a ceremony held on the high court premises. The Central government Monday notified the new appointments after the Supreme Court Collegium made a recommendation in favour of the two practising advocates in August last year. With their swearing-in, the high court now has 37 judges. The sanctioned strength of the court is 60.

Two women Maoists surrender

Gadchiroli: Two hardcore women Maoists, carrying a collective reward of Rs 10 lakh on their heads and facing more than 50 criminal cases, surrendered before security forces in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra Wednesday, police said. Shamala Pudo alias Leela (36) and Kajal Vadde alias Limmi (24) surrendered before Gadchiroli police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel, said a release issued by the office of the district superintendent of police (SP). According to the release, Pudo served as a "section commander" in the Maoist outfit, while Vadde was a member of the Bhamaragad LOS (Local Organisation Squad). Both are residents of Gadchiroli, a Naxal-hit district in eastern Maharashtra.

Elephant goes berserk; 23 hurt

Malappuram (Kerala): Twenty-three people were injured when a captive elephant ran amok during a religious ceremony at a mosque near Tirur Wednesday. Of the injured, one person is in critical condition after being picked up and tossed by the elephant, police said. The remaining 22 individuals suffered minor injuries in the stampede caused by panic-stricken people following the elephant's attack at around 12.30 am, an official at the Tirur police station said. According to visuals of the incident, of the five elephants lined up for the ceremony, one became violent and charged toward the crowd of people gathered in front of it. The elephant picked up one man with its tusk, twirled him around, and then tossed him away.

DELHI ASSEMBLY POLLS

Kejriwal thanks Mamata for TMC's support to AAP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal Wednesday thanked the Trinamool Congress for its support to the party for the upcoming Assembly polls in Delhi.

Kejriwal took to X (formerly Twitter) to thank the Mamata Banerjee-led party for extending support to them for the upcoming polls, which will see AAP in a triangular contest against the Bharatiya Janata

Party (BJP), as well as INDIA bloc partner Congress.

"TMC has announced support to AAP in Delhi elections. I am personally grateful to Mamta Didi. Thank you Didi. You have always supported and blessed us in our good and bad times," Kejriwal said in a post on X.

Replying to Kejriwal, TMC's Rajya Sabha Parliamentary party leader Derek O'Brien said, "We have your back, Aam Aadmi Party".

Indian Rlys successfully completes high-speed trial from Katra to Banihal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Banihal/Jammu, Jan 8: A new chapter was written in Indian Railway history with a successful "rising grade" speed trial in the challenging terrain from Jammu and Kashmir's Katra to Banihal along the USBRL project, a top official said Wednesday.

The remarks by the Northern Circle's Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) Dinesh Chand Deshwal offer a positive indication for an early start to direct rail services between Kashmir and the rest of the country.

However, he said they would analyse the data collected after completion of the two-day statutory inspection later in the

day before the Centre might take a decision to start the much-awaited service.

Talking to reporters on reaching Banihal after the successful high-speed trial run from Katra station, Deshwal said his team would return to Katra and all the collected data would be analysed before a decision was taken on the start of direct train services to Kashmir.

"The trial run at 110 kilometres per hour on the 180-degree rising grade in such a challenging geography from Katra to Banihal has written a new chapter in the history of the Railways. The trial run was smooth and filled us with a sense of fulfilment and the credit for it goes to our engineers who have done



such great work," the CRS said. The trial train left Katra station at 10:30 am and reached Banihal station within one-and-a-half hours. The train left for Katra on its return journey at 2 pm and reached its destination at 3:30 pm.

This was the final speed trial run on the trek.

Deshwal, who reached Katra on a two-day statutory inspection of the newly completed railway line, said the Centre would take the final decision on the start of services between Kash-

The trial run at 110 kilometres per hour on the 180-degree rising grade in such a challenging geography from Katra to Banihal has written a new chapter in the history of the Railways. The trial run was smooth and filled us with a sense of fulfilment and the credit for it goes to our engineers who have done such great work

DINESH CHAND DESHWAL | COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAY SAFETY

mir and the rest of the country.

"I am not in a position to talk about it (start of services). The statutory inspection will be completed by this evening and all the gathered data analysed in accordance with guidelines of

the Northern Railway," he said. The CRS said the inspection and the trial run on the trek had been satisfactory so far.

"Our infrastructure is outstanding and very soon a fair decision will be taken based on our report," he added.

On reaching Katra, Deshwal said the speed trial run on the falling gradient from Banihal to Katra was also satisfactory.

"It was fully successful on both sides...the train also passed through T-30 (tunnel-30) at a speed of 110 kmph. This tunnel posed some challenges during the construction process but the engineers overcame the technical solutions and made the track alignment precisely fit for this speed," he said.

COURT CORNER

Frame policy on cashless treatment for motor accident victims: SC to Centre

New Delhi: In a landmark verdict, the Supreme Court Wednesday directed the Centre to formulate a scheme for cashless medical treatment to motor accident victims in the "golden hour" period mandated under law. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih referred to Section 162(2) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, and ordered the government to provide by March 14 the scheme which could save numerous lives with prompt medical care to accident victims. The golden hour, defined under Section 2(12-A) of the Act, refers to a one-hour window following a traumatic injury under which a timely medical intervention will most likely prevent death. "We, therefore, direct the Central government to make a scheme in terms of sub-section (2) of Section 162 of the MV Act as expeditiously as possible and, in any event, by March 14, 2025. No further time shall be granted," it ordered. A copy of the scheme was directed to be placed on record on or before March 21, along with an affidavit of the officer concerned of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways explaining the manner of its implementation.

Sambhal court to hear Jama Masjid-Harihar temple case March 5

Sambhal (UP): A local court has fixed March 5 as the next date of hearing in a case connected to the Mughal-era Shahi Jama Masjid and its survey at Chandausi. "The Supreme Court has directed all the lower courts not to entertain new suits seeking surveys of any place of worship until further orders. We have filed a copy of the said order in the court, which fixed March 5 as the next date of hearing," Shakil Ahmad Wari, advocate representing the Muslim side, told reporters. When told about the Hindu side's claims that the mosque was built over an ancient Harihar temple, Wari said it is for the court to decide on the matter.

Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case: HC grants bail to 2 accused noting long incarceration

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court Wednesday granted bail to researcher Rona Wilson and activist Sudhir Dhawale, arrested in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case, noting that they were in jail since 2018 and the trial was yet to start. A division bench of Justices AS Gadhkari and Kamal Khata said the two had spent more than six years in jail as under-trial prisoners. "They are in jail since 2018. Even the charges in the case are yet to be framed. The prosecution has cited over 300 witnesses, and thus there is no possibility of the trial to conclude in the near future," the court said. A trial starts after the charges are framed.



Priests perform 'Ganga Aarti' at a 'ghat' ahead of Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, in Prayagraj, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

national



Both Haryana and Karnataka must strive to become regional leaders in achieving the Swachh Bharat Mission goals. Sustaining these achievements and driving targeted interventions will ensure a cleaner and healthier environment for rural communities
CR PATIL | UNION JAL SHAKTI MINISTER

FOREIGN SECRETARY MISRI MEETS ACTING AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTER

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri held talks with Afghanistan's acting foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai Wednesday. In the meeting, the Afghan side underlined its sensitivities to India's security concerns, according to an Indian readout



of the day quote

When you talk of communication, I think the technology that we are focusing on is integrated satellite communication grid. We don't want any service to be over dependent on a particular satellite
AVM PAWAN KUMAR | DIRECTOR GENERAL, DEFENCE SPACE AGENCY

The GDP growth rate is expected to fall to 6.4 per cent. The ones who are truly saddened by this are the country's poor and hardworking population, who, despite their tough lives, are not ready to hear any harm coming to their nation
MAYAWATI | BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY CHIEF

The chances of the Congress forming the government in Delhi are increasing. I believe this is also necessary for the country
ASHOK GEHLOT | EX-CM, RAJASTHAN



Modi's tricks never end! After cutting citizens' rights to seek information on Govt's inactions + wasting of public funds — his guys have now rigged the RTI process with cunning OTPs — making it technically impossible to obtain info. What are you hiding?
@jawharsircar

INTERIM BAIL FOR ASARAM BAPU

Security tightened for rape victim's family

Shahjahanpur (UP), Jan 8: The family members of Asaram Bapu's rape victim have been provided with additional security, a day after he was granted interim bail on medical grounds by the Supreme Court, police said Wednesday.

Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Sanjay Kumar Sagar said after the Supreme Court's order, he personally visited the victim's residence and interacted with the family.

"A police guard is already deployed at the victim's home and her father has a gunner for security. Additional police personnel are now being assigned, and necessary instructions have been issued to the relevant police station and circle officer to ensure the family's safety," Sagar said.

"Orders have been given to repair the dysfunctional CCTV cameras around the victim's house, and the victim's father has been advised to inform authorities before stepping out. We are continuously monitoring the family's safety as this is a high-profile case," Sagar added.

The victim's father expressed that he was shocked to learn that Asaram had been granted interim bail. He said, "I haven't been able to sleep since, as I am deeply concerned about my family's safety. Even while in jail, Asaram was responsible for the murder of four witnesses — Rajkot's Amrut Prapapati, Akhil Gupta (a cook), Lucknow's Rahul Sachan, and Shahjahanpur's Kripal Singh."

Asaram, who is serving a life sentence in a sexual assault case, was granted interim bail by the Supreme Court until March 31, 2025, on medical grounds. The court imposed specific conditions before granting him bail.

ONE NATION ONE ELECTION MEET

Oppn questions bills, BJP extends support

Several Opposition MPs, including those from the Congress, DMK and the Trinamool Congress, echoed their parties' stated views that the proposed laws run contrary to the Constitution and are attack on its basic fabric as well as federalism



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: A robust exchange of contesting views Wednesday marked the first meeting of a parliamentary panel scrutinising two bills on conducting simultaneous polls, with Opposition members criticising the concept as an attack on the basic fabric of the Constitution and federalism, and BJP MPs hailing it as reflective of popular opinion.

The MPs attending the meeting of the 39-member Joint Parliamentary Committee expressed their views and asked questions following a presentation by the Ministry of Law and Justice on the provisions of the bills and the rationale guiding

them. All MPs were given a trolley carrying over 18,000 pages, including one volume of the Kovind committee report each in Hindi and English, and 21 volumes of annexure, besides a soft copy as well.

It is not often that parliamentary committees hand over such voluminous load of documents to members that require trolleys to carry them.

A number of Opposition MPs, including Congress' Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, questioned the claim that simultaneous polls will reduce expenditure. They asked if any estimate was made following the 2004 Lok Sabha elections when EVMs were used the first time in all 543 seats and are believed to have brought

down the cost incurred. Vadra reportedly stressed that the reports on expenditure being cited by the government are for elections held before 2002. BJP MPs, the sources added, countered the charge that the 'one nation one election' proposal flouted constitutional values by requiring an early dissolution of several state Assemblies and locking their term with the Lok Sabha's.

Several Opposition MPs, including those from the Congress, DMK and the Trinamool Congress, echoed their parties' stated views that the proposed laws run contrary to the Constitution and are an attack on its basic fabric as well as federalism.

AAP vs BJP Showdown over 'Sheesh Mahal'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: A high drama unfolded Wednesday outside the bungalow once occupied by former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and dubbed a 'Sheesh Mahal' by the BJP, as AAP leaders attempted to enter it but were stopped by the police.

The AAP party workers later tried to reach the Prime Minister's official residence on Lok Kalyan Marg calling it a "Raj Mahal", but were stopped by the police again, following which they staged a "dharna".

On its part, the BJP also took media to the AB 17 Mathura Road bungalow allotted to Chief Minister Atishi to show that she already had a government residence and sought to know why she was asking for a separate



bungalow. AAP leaders Sanjay Singh and Saurabh Bhardwaj staged a sit-in outside the 6, Flagstaff Road bungalow in North Delhi's Civil Lines after they were not allowed to enter inside, where they had invited the media to tour with them in a bid to counter the BJP's "Sheesh Mahal" jibes. The AAP leaders have de-

molished "political etiquette and ethics" through their "shameless" act, Trivedi said.

The police set up barricades and deployed personnel in front of the 6, Flagstaff Road bungalow, preventing the AAP leaders from entering the premises. When Singh and Bhardwaj were stopped by police personnel at the former CM's residence, they moved to the PM's residence, and when stopped again, they staged a sit-in near the Tughlak Road Police Station for second time.

The AAP leaders accused the BJP-led central government of running away from the challenged inspection of the PM residence, which they dubbed as "Raj Mahal", alleging that it had been renovated at an inordinate cost.

'Commenting on body structure amounts to sexual harassment'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, Jan 8: The Kerala High Court has held that a comment on a woman's "body structure" is a sexually coloured remark which would constitute penal offence of sexual harassment.

The ruling by Justice A Badharudeen came while dismissing a former Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) employee's plea to quash the sexual harassment case against him filed by a woman staffer of the same organisation.

The woman had alleged that the accused used vulgar language against her from 2013 onwards and then in 2016-17 began sending objectionable messages and voice calls.

Despite complaints against him to the KSEB and the police, he continued sending her objectionable messages, she had claimed.

Following her complaints, the accused was booked for the offences under sections 354A (sexual harassment) and 509 (insulting modesty of a woman) of the IPC and section 120(o) (causing nuisance through any means of communication by undesirable call, letter, writing, message) of the Kerala Police Act.

The ruling by Justice A Badharudeen came while dismissing a former Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) employee's plea to quash the sexual harassment case against him filed by a woman staffer of the same organisation

Seeking to quash the case, the accused claimed that mere reference that a person has a nice body structure could not be attributed to sexually coloured remarks within the ambit of section 354A and 509 of the IPC and section 120(o) of the Kerala Police Act. The prosecution and the woman, on the other hand, contended that the calls and messages of the accused carried sexually coloured remarks intended to harass her and outrage her modesty.

Agreeing with the prosecution's contentions, the Kerala High Court said that prima facie, the ingredients to attract the offences under section 354A and 509 of IPC and section 120 (o) of the Kerala Police Act "are made out". "Having noticed the facts of the case, it is discernible that the prosecution case is specifically made out, prima facie, to attract the offences alleged to be committed. In the result, this Criminal Miscellaneous Case stands dismissed. Interim order, already granted, shall stand vacated," the court said in its January 6 order.

Govt set to mandate domestic airlines to share weather data

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: The government is planning to make it mandatory for domestic airlines to share weather data captured by aircraft during takeoffs and landings with the weather office, which could lead to significantly better forecasts.

Currently, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) launches weather balloons from 50-60 stations to collect critical data on temperature, humidity and wind speed at various altitudes, which form crucial inputs for weather forecasting models.

These inputs could increase exponentially as the country records more than 6,000 take-offs and landings by domestic airlines at various airports every day.

M Ravichandran, secretary in the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences, told PTI that his ministry had been in discussions with the civil aviation ministry on the matter, and providing weather data would be "made mandatory for domestic airlines within a year".

"It has to be mandatory. It will not only be very useful for airline operations but also for weather forecasts everywhere," he said.

Ravichandran said weather forecasts depended largely on the number of observations collected.

Multi-agency rescue effort for miners

SAYAN CHATTERJEE

Assam, Jan 8: The body of one of the nine workers trapped inside a coal mine in Assam's Dima Hasao district was recovered by army divers Wednesday, the third day of the rescue operations, officials said.

The chances of the survival of the eight others appear grim, though a team of navy, army, NDRF and SDRF personnel intensified their efforts to rescue the trapped miners, the officials said. In a race against time, the Indian Navy has deployed a specialised team to help rescue trapped miners. The move underscores the exigency of the situation, as rescue teams face the dual challenges of flooding and hazardous terrain.

The Navy's intervention corresponds to an urgent request for assistance. It is part of a co-ordinated multi-agency operation involving the Indian Army, Assam Rifles, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), and local civil authorities.

Navy's Expertise at Work

The Navy's team, comprising one officer and eleven sailors, includes highly trained Clearance Divers equipped with deep-diving gear and underwater Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs). Known for their expertise in complex underwater recovery and rescue operations, the divers aim to bolster ongoing efforts by the Army's Rescue Task Force.

The Navy's arrival follows an airlift by the Indian Air Force from Visakhapatnam



earlier today. Their sophisticated equipment and skillset are expected to enhance the efficiency of operations, particularly in challenging underwater environments where visibility and access remain critical barriers.

Around-the-Clock Efforts

Army Engineers have already attempted two diving operations and are working tirelessly alongside local authorities to drain water from the mine and set up additional lighting for nighttime operations. These efforts are vital to maintaining momentum as search operations are underway.

The Indian Navy's deployment reinforces the government's resolve to ensure every possible measure is taken to rescue the miners. "This mission reflects our commitment to supporting the nation in emergencies and saving lives," a Navy official said.

A Collaborative Response

This high-stakes operation highlights the collective capabilities of India's armed forces and emergency response agencies. With meticulous coordination, the teams are pooling expertise and resources to confront the challenges of this critical mission.

| EAST COAST RAILWAY | |
|--|--|
| Tender Notice No. MSM-WAGON-KBJ-1-25 | Description of Work: COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR RMPUs FITTED IN LHB/SGAC TYPE AC COACHES, POWER CARS, PANTRY CARS, HYBRID TYPE LHB AC COACHES AND OTHER SPECIAL COACHES LIKE RA/OBSERVATION CAR/WGD/LOMS COACHES AT BHUBANESWAR (BBS) COACHING DEPOT OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS. |
| Approx. cost of the Work : ₹ 2,12,85,757.40, EMD: ₹ 2,56,400.00, Cost of tender document: 11,800.00, Completion period: 24 months. | Approx. cost of work : ₹ 11,29,27,274.82, EMD: ₹ 7,14,600.00, Completion period: 36 Months. |
| Tender closing Date & Time: At 1500 hrs. on 23.01.2025. | Tender closing date & time: At 1500 hrs. of 27.01.2025. |
| No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. | No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.reps.gov.in |
| Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : www.reps.gov.in | Note: The prospective tenders are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender. |
| Divisional Mechanical Engineer (Frt.), PR-862/P/24-25 Sambalpur | Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G), PR-863/P/24-25 Khurda Road |

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.O-1181
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KUCHINDA
E-mail: erw_kuchinda@yahoo.com
"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works
Identification No. Online Tender/09/RWD,Kuchinda/2024-25

- Name of the Work : Road Works
- Total Number of Works : 03 Nos.
- Class of Contractor : B, C & D Class of Contractor
- Period of Completion : 02 Calendar Months
- Availability of Tender Online : Dt.10.01.2025 to Dt.20.01.2025 For Bidding
- Last date & time of seeking tender clarification : Dt.19.01.2025 at 5.00 P.M.
- Date & Time of Opening of tender : Dt.21.01.2025 at 11.00 A.M.

Other details can be seen from Detailed notice inviting Tenders, available in website www.tenderodisha.gov.in.
• Corrigendum if any shall only be published in the above website.
Sd./- Addl. Chief Engineer (I/C) Rural Works Division, Kuchinda
OIPR-25151/11/0016/2425

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, ANANDAPUR INVITATION FOR BID
No.84/ Dt.07.01.2025
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
No.C-1422:Anandapur Municipality proposes to undertake "Preparation of Comprehensive Drainage Master Plan and Detailed Project Report for Drainage System of Anandapur Municipality Area".
Proposals are invited to conduct the assignment and submit the deliverables from Public Sector Undertaking/Autonomous Bodies/Consulting firms that have requisite experience in preparation of drainage and infrastructure.
The intending bidders can participate through "Offline" bidding only. The details may be accessed and the RFP/Application forms can be downloaded from the websites <http://www.anandapurmunicipality.in> & <https://www.kendujhar.odisha.gov.in>. The bid document can also be purchased from Anandapur Municipality by paying requisite RFP document fees.
The completed application as per the instructions in the RFP document, should reach the following address by hand/Speed Post/ Registered Post latest by 5.00 PM on dtd.24.01.2025. Anandapur Municipality reserves the sole right to accept or reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason whatsoever.
Sd./- Executive Officer Anandapur Municipality
OIPR-13049/11/0011/2425

| Regional Office (Sambalpur Region) G.M. College Chowk, Christian Para, Sambalpur-768001 | | POSSESSION NOTICE (Immovable Property) | |
|--|---|--|---|
| (As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002) | | | |
| Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the BANK OF BARODA under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice calling upon the Borrowers/Guarantors to repay the amount mentioned in the notice together with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken POSSESSION of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the date mentioned below. The Borrowers/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the BANK OF BARODA for an amount stated herein below plus further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment. The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. | | | |
| DEOGARH BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantor | Description of the Immovable Properties | Demand/Possession Notice Date | Total Dues as on |
| Borrower: Mr. Shashi Bhusan Pradhan, S/o. Mr. Khireswar Pradhan, Flat No.: A 415, 4th Floor, Kalpana River View Complex, Bankual, Near Bankual Shiv Mandir, At: Plot No.: 174, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Dist.: Khordha, Odisha, PIN-751002 / Co-Borrower: Mrs. Namita Pradhan, W/o. Mr. Khireswar Pradhan, At: Panda Sahl, P.O./P.S.: Deogarh, Dist.: Deogarh, Odisha, PIN-768108 / Guarantor: Mr. Khireswar Pradhan, At: Ward No.: 1, P.O./P.S.: Deogarh, Dist.: Deogarh, Odisha, PIN-768108 | Equitable Mortgage of Land & Building bearing Khata No.: 248/680, Plot No.: 320/1292, Area: Ac. 0.060.58 Dec. i.e 2639 sqft, KISSAM: Gharabari, Duplex No.: 7 & 8, Block-04 in name & style of Duplex "PENGUIN CAVES" in Mouza: Gotalagram, P.S./Tahasil: Baliaanta, Dist.: Khordha, Odisha, PIN-752101, along with G+1 storied building of GF/FF, Built Up Area: 1421 Sqft, each floor, Carpet Area: 1136.8 sqft, each floor as per physical. Owner of the property Mrs. Namita Pradhan , Bounded by East: Govt. Road, West: Geetanjali Nayak, North: Part of Revenue Plot No.: 320 and South: Vendor | 31.07.2024 / 06.01.2025 | ₹24,47,184.38 as on 31.12.2024 + further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment |
| Place: Sambalpur, Date : 08.01.2025 | | | |
| Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda | | | |

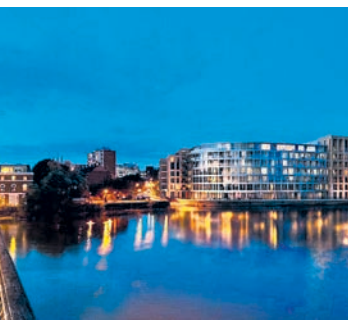
international



The Department of Justice's selective actions risk damaging critical alliances with key partners like India, one of America's strongest allies in the Asia-Pacific region

ANIL AGARWAL ACQUIRES LONDON'S RIVERSIDE STUDIO

The founder and chairman of Vedanta Group Anil Agarwal is the new owner of the iconic Riverside Studio in London, announced a press release Wednesday. The 100-year-old studio is a renowned global centre for arts and located on the north bank of the river Thames in the centre of London



of the day quote

Children occupy a privileged place in God's heart, and whoever harms them will be accountable to him

Either the European Commission applies with the greatest firmness the laws that exist to protect our unique space or it does not and in that case it should think about giving the capacity to do so back to the member states of the European Union, to France

Germany will spend more on defence but will not commit to a NATO defence spending target

Trump's territorial threat

US prez-elect doesn't rule out using military to get Panama Canal, Greenland



Washington, Jan 8: US President-elect Donald Trump did not rule out the use of the military to bring Panama Canal and Greenland under American control, which he argued is of great economic and strategic significance to the United States.

Look, the Panama Canal is vital to our country, it's being operated by China. And we gave the Panama Canal to Panama, we didn't give it to China

Donald Trump | President-elect, US

structure, if we call it a structure, which I guess you can ever build. Giving that away was a horrible thing," he said. Trump said the US needs Greenland for national security purposes. "I've been told that for a long time, long before I even ran. I mean people have been talking about it for a long time. You have approximately 45,000 people there. People really don't even know if Denmark has any legal right to it, but if they do, they should give it up because we need it for national security," Trump asserted.

That's for the free world. I'm talking about protecting the free world. You don't even need binoculars, you look outside, you have China ships all over the place. You have Russian ships all over the place. We're not letting that happen. If Denmark wants to get to a conclusion — but nobody knows if they even have any right title or interest," he said.

"The people are going to probably vote for independence or to come into the United States. But if they do that, then I would tariff Denmark at a very high level," he said. Trump said he has not drawn up a plan for acquisition of Greenland yet. Greenland's leader was expected to hold talks with the Danish king in

From Gulf of Mexico to Gulf of America

US President-elect Donald Trump Tuesday said that he would rename the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America asserting that this is the appropriate thing to do. "We're going to be changing the name of the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America, which has a beautiful ring that covers a lot of territory. The Gulf of America. What a beautiful name," Trump told reporters at a news conference in Mar-a-Lago, Florida. "And it's appropriate. It's appropriate," Trump asserted. He did not give a timeline for this. However, a Republican lawmaker from Georgia welcomed the move and said that she would introduce a legislation in this regard in the Congress soon. "President Trump's second term is off to a GREAT start. I'll be introducing legislation ASAP to officially change the name of the Gulf of Mexico to its rightful name, the Gulf of America!" Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Green said on X.



'Economic force' against Canada

US President-elect Donald Trump Tuesday said that he will use "economic force" to make Canada a part of the United States, a comment that attracted sharp reaction from Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. "No," Trump told reporters at Mar-a-Lago in Florida when asked if he is considering military force to annex and acquire Canada. Over the past few weeks, Trump has asserted that he wants to make Canada part of the United States and its 51st state. Many times, he has been mocking Trudeau as the Governor of Canada. "I will be using) economic force because Canada and the United States, that would really be something. You get rid of that artificially drawn line and you take a look at what that looks like, and it would also be much better for national security. Don't forget, we basically protect Canada," Trump said.

Copenhagen, after US President-elect Donald Trump said he wanted to take control of the vast Arctic island, an autonomous territory of Denmark. Hawaii was the last territo-

rial acquisition of the United States. It was admitted as the 50th State August 21, 1959. Alaska, the largest US State, was admitted as the 49th State January 3, 1959.

POLITICAL CRISIS

SK's Yoon faces new arrest attempt in fortified compound

Seoul, Jan 8: South Korea's impeached President Yoon Suk Yeol faces a new and potentially more robust attempt to arrest him for insurrection after a top investigator vowed to do whatever it takes to break a security blockade and take in the embattled leader. Acting president Choi Sang-mok urged Wednesday authorities to "do their best to prevent any injuries to citizens or physical conflict between government agencies" while executing Yoon's arrest warrant.

Protesters supporting and opposing Yoon braved freezing temperatures to stage rallies on the streets around the presidential compound Wednesday after a court re-issued a warrant Tuesday to arrest him. The Presidential Security Service (PSS) has been fortifying the compound this week with barbed wire and barricades using buses to block access to the residence, a hillside villa in an upscale district known as Korea's Beverly Hills.

Yoon is under criminal investigation for insurrection over his failed attempt to impose martial law December 3, a decision that stunned South Korea and prompted the first arrest warrant for a sitting president.

SHORT TAKES

France's Jean-Marie Le Pen dies at 96

Paris: Jean-Marie Le Pen, the founder of France's far-right National Front who was known for fiery rhetoric against immigration and multiculturalism that earned him both staunch supporters and widespread condemnation, died Tuesday. He was 96. One of the most polarising figures in French politics, Le Pen made Islam and Muslim immigrants his primary target, blaming them for economic and social woes. He also repeatedly denied the Holocaust and was convicted multiple times of antisemitism, discrimination and inciting racial violence. Despite those convictions and eventually being politically ostracised, the nativist ideas that propelled his decades of popularity — encapsulated in slogans like "French People First" — are ascendant in today's France, across Europe and beyond. Le Pen — who reached the second round of the 2002 presidential election that Jacques Chirac went on to win in a landslide — was eventually estranged from his daughter Marine Le Pen.

Ousted PM Hasina's passport revoked

Dhaka: Bangladesh's interim government Tuesday said it has revoked the passport of ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and 96 others over their alleged involvement in enforced disappearances and the July killings. Hasina, 77, has been living in India since August 5 last year when she fled Bangladesh following a massive student-led protest that toppled her Awami League's (AL) 16-year regime. Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) has issued arrest warrants for Hasina and several former Cabinet ministers, advisers, and military and civil officials for "crimes against humanity and genocide".

Hollywood stars among thousands flee LA blaze

Wildfires rip through upscale Pacific Palisades, Pasadena

Los Angeles, Jan 8: More than 30,000 people evacuated their homes as a wildfire ripped through an upscale coastal area of Los Angeles overnight, with Hollywood celebrities among those fleeing by car and on foot as flames engulfed homes and set hillsides ablaze.

Weather conditions were expected to deteriorate further throughout Wednesday as a wind storm and arid conditions fanned a blaze in the Pacific Palisades neighborhood and at least two others in the Los Angeles area, forecasters said. California Governor Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency Tuesday. Numerous buildings were destroyed and nearly 3,000 acres (1,200 hectares) burned in Pacific Palisades, which lies between the beach towns of Santa Monica and Malibu, officials said. The area is home to many film and music stars.

Roads were jammed with people fleeing the inferno, some abandoning their cars as flames licked the edges and plumes of smoke and flames rose in the night sky over Los Angeles and its suburbs. Actor Steve Guttenberg told KTLA television that friends of his were impeded from evacuating because others had abandoned their cars in the road.



As nearly 3,000 acres burned in Pacific Palisades, over 210,000 homes in Los Angeles county were without power

"It's really important for everybody to band together and don't worry about your personal property. Just get out," Guttenberg said. "Get your loved ones and get out."

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass Wednesday morning urged residents to follow evacuation and parking orders, using shelters set up by authorities if needed. "Stay vigilant and stay safe," she wrote in a post on X, saying

the windstorm was expected to worsen through the morning. The National Weather Service said in an advisory: "This is a particularly dangerous situation for portions of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties!" Pacific Palisades resident Cindy Festa said that as she evacuated, fires were "this close to the cars," demonstrating with her thumb and forefinger. "People left their cars on Palisades Drive. Burning up the hillside. The palm trees - everything is going," Festa said from her car.

Hollywood actor James Woods said on X he was able to evacuate his Pacific Palisades house but he added: "I do not know at this moment if our home is still standing."

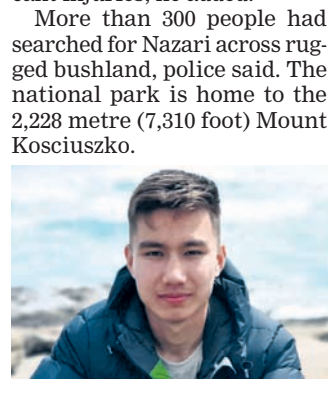
Australian hiker found alive after surviving for two weeks on berries

Sydney, Jan 8: An Australian student missing for two weeks near the country's tallest mountain was found Wednesday, after surviving by foraging for berries, drinking water from a creek and finding two muesli bars left behind by other hikers, police said.

Hadi Nazari, a 23-year-old university student from Melbourne, went missing from his group of friends December 26 in the Kosciuszko National Park. Nazari was found Wednesday afternoon by a group of hikers who alerted the authorities, police in the state of New South Wales said.

"This is the fourteenth day we've been looking for him and for him to come out and be in such good spirits and in such great condition, it's incredible," NSW Police Inspector Josh Broadfoot said.

The student was in "really good spirits" with no significant injuries, he added. More than 300 people had searched for Nazari across rugged bushland, police said. The national park is home to the 2,228 metre (7,310 foot) Mount Kosciuszko.



SNIPPETS

Italian journalist freed by Iran

Rome: An Italian journalist detained in Iran for three weeks, whose fate became intertwined with that of an Iranian engineer wanted by the United States, was freed Wednesday and is heading home, Italian officials said. A plane carrying Cecilia Sala, 29, left Tehran after "intensive work on diplomatic and intelligence channels," Premier Giorgia Meloni's office said, adding that the Italian premier had personally informed Sala's parents of the news. Iranian officials offered no immediate comment. Sala, a reporter for the Il Foglio daily, was detained in Tehran December 19, three days after she arrived on a journalist visa. She was accused of violating the laws of the Islamic Republic, the official IRNA news agency said.



In a first, EU Court penalises EU

Brussels: In a first, the EU General Court ruled Wednesday that the European Commission must pay damages to a German citizen for failing to comply with its own data protection regulations. The court determined that the Commission transferred the citizen's personal data to the United States without proper safeguards and ordered it to pay him 400 euros (\$412) in damages. The individual had used the "Sign in with Facebook" option on the EU login webpage to register for a conference. The court, which hears actions taken against EU institutions, found that this transfer of the user's IP address to Meta Platforms in the US violated EU data protection rules. Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive and stringent data privacy laws in the world.

1st woman to head major Vatican office

Rome: Pope Francis Monday named the first woman to head a major Vatican office, appointing an Italian nun, Sister Simona Brambilla, to become prefect of the department responsible for all the Catholic Church's religious orders. The appointment marks a major step in Francis' aim to give women more leadership roles in governing the church. While women have been named to No 2 spots in some Vatican offices, never before has a woman been named prefect of a dicastery or congregation of the Holy See Curia, the central governing organ of the Catholic Church. The historic nature of Brambilla's appointment was confirmed by Vatican Media, which headlined its report "Sister Simona Brambilla is the first woman prefect in the Vatican." The appointment means that a woman is now responsible for the women who do much of the church's work — the world's 600,000 Catholic nuns — as well as the 129,000 Catholic priests who belong to religious orders.



Rescuers battle cold, aftershocks to find survivors

Beijing, Jan 8: Rescuers raced against time to search for survivors under the rubble of collapsed buildings in frigid weather amid hundreds of aftershocks, a day after a massive quake hit a Tibetan county while another county in the neighbouring Qinghai province was jolted by a 5.5 magnitude tremor Wednesday.

Local officials said no casualties have been reported due to the Wednesday's quake that hit the Madoi County in Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Qinghai province of north-west China at 3:44 pm (Beijing time), tremors for which were also felt in north-eastern Nepal. The epicentre was at a depth of 14 km, according to the China Earthquake Networks Cen-



More than 400 people trapped by quake have been rescued. Survivors trapped under rubble at risk of hypothermia. At least 126 dead, 188 injured on Tibetan side. Quake destroyed more than 3,000 homes in Tibet's Shigatse

This region forms part of the sprawling Tibetan plateau with average altitude of 13,000 to 15,000 feet. At least 126 people were

itude 6.8 quake. The Dingri county, part of the holy town of Shigatse, which is close to the India-Tibet-Nepal trijunction, was hit by 646 aftershocks as of Wednesday.

The largest aftershock had a magnitude of 4.4, and was about 18 km from the epicentre, Hong Li, head of the regional emergency management department told the official media. Nepal's Earthquake Monitoring Centre also confirmed hundreds of aftershocks on Wednesday. "But we didn't record (all) officially, as the epicentre lies outside of the country," Lok Bijaya Adhikari, Centre's chief said. Meanwhile, the Chinese government has launched a level-II emergency service response in Dingri, which is home to the northern base camp of Mt Everest.

Over 12,300 civilians killed since start of Ukraine war

Geneva, Jan 8: More than 12,300 civilians have been killed in the Ukraine war since Russia invaded nearly three years ago, a UN official said Wednesday, noting higher casualties in recent months amid the use of drones, long-range missiles and glide bombs.

"Russian armed forces intensified their operations to capture further territory in eastern Ukraine, with a severe impact on civilians in frontline areas, particularly in the Donetsk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia regions," Nada Al-Nashif, United Nations



Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights said in a

We are deeply concerned by the impacts on civilians of the increased use of drones and the use of new weapons

NADA AL-NASHIF | DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, UNITED NATIONS

statement, referring to developments since September 2024. "We are deeply concerned by the impacts on civilians of the increased use of drones and the use of new weapons," she added, referring in part to Russia's use of highly destructive guided bombs or glide bombs in residential areas.

Business



I always say we are one mathematical breakthrough away from that entire edifice being thrown out and being going after something else

SATYA NADELLA | MICROSOFT CHAIRMAN AND CEO

RBI LIFTS RESTRICTIONS ON 2 NBFCs

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Wednesday lifted the business restrictions placed on Chennai-based Asirvad Micro Finance and New Delhi-based DMI Finance with immediate effect. In October last year, the central bank ordered four NBFCs to cease and desist from sanction and disbursal of loans, on material supervisory concerns, including usurious pricing.



of the day quote

We had announced training for 20 lakh people last year. We have already trained 24 lakh.



We have announced to train 1 crore people over the next five years. We have also signed an MoU with IndiaAI mission and as part of that, 5 lakh people will be trained

PUNEET CHANDOK | MICROSOFT INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA PRESIDENT

I am sure that the processed food segment of the industry will be a major contributor to the Prime Minister's vision and resolve to make India 'Viksit Bharat' (developed nation)



CHIRAG PASWAN | UNION MINISTER

This industry-first part-payment feature exemplifies our commitment, empowering more Indians to book international flights with greater convenience and flexibility



SAUJANYA SHRIVASTAVA | COO, MAKEMYTRIP

Power output growth at slowest since pandemic

The slackening electricity generation was in line with a softening economy, which grew at the slowest pace in nearly two years during the quarter that ended Sept 30

REUTERS



Singapore, Jan 8: India's electricity generation grew at its slowest pace in 2024 since the COVID-19 pandemic, an analysis of federal grid regulator data showed, hit by a slowdown in the world's fastest growing major economy.

Power output rose 5.8% annually to 1,824.13 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh), an analysis of daily load despatch data from federal grid regulator Grid-India showed.

Growth in power generation averaged 2.3% in the year's second half, nearly a quarter of the first half's rise of 9.6%, the data showed.

The slackening electricity generation was in line with a softening economy, which grew at the slowest pace in nearly two years during the quarter that ended Sept. 30.

However, analysts expect a pickup in industrial activity

and residential power use stemming from adverse weather to drive growth of 6% to 7% in electricity use in 2025.

"Demand has already picked up in December, with mercury levels dropping and increased usage of heating systems," said Sooraj Narayan, head of Asia-Pacific power modelling at consultancy Wood Mackenzie.

"Combined with increased industrial production activities, we expect the demand growth rate to be higher in 2025."

Slowing electricity demand growth and a rise in the share of renewables to a record 12.1% of power generation helped the world's third-largest emitter of greenhouse gas snap a three-year streak of gains in the share of coal.

The polluting fuel's share in India's power mix fell to 74.4% in 2024, from 75% in 2023.

But the year also saw tepid growth in the renewables sector, with growth of 18.4% in total solar output its slowest since India made international commitments to fight climate change in 2015. Annual wind power output fell for the first time since 2020, the data showed.

Output from hydropower, India's second-largest electricity source after coal, rose 4% in 2024, recovering from a plunge of 13.7% in 2023, but its share in total output fell further to 8.6%.

In 2025, analysts expect both the share of coal and renewables to rise at the expense of natural gas-fired power, which rose 17.3% last year.

"We see a declining share of gas in the generation mix this year due to our forecast of higher year-over-year gas prices," said Keshav Sumeet, senior LNG analyst at Energy Aspects.

Sebi modifies credit rating agency rules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: Capital markets regulator Sebi has revised timelines for credit rating agencies (CRAs) to enhance the ease of doing business by introducing the term 'working days' instead of 'days' for compliance deadlines.

In a circular issued Tuesday, the markets watchdog announced changes in rules for CRAs aimed at standardising rating processes and publication protocols.

These changes follow recommendations from a working group on CRAs that highlighted the challenges posed by existing timelines, especially during non-working days.

"One of the recommendations of the Working Group of CRAs for ease of doing business pertains to modification of approach on specifying timelines from 'days' to 'working days' in respect of certain requirements," Sebi said.

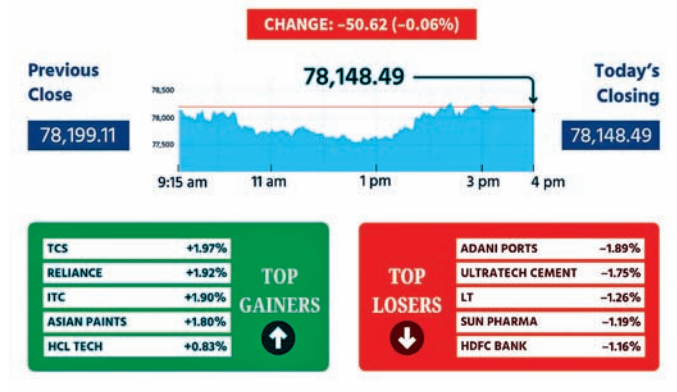
Under the revised rules, the regulator said credit rating agencies are required to publish press releases on rating actions within seven working days of the relevant event, replacing the previous mandate of seven calendar days.

Similarly, for reviewing ratings in cases of delays in debt servicing, the timeline has been adjusted to two working days from two calendar days, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said.

In addition, Sebi has revised the timeframe for tagging ratings as "Issuer Not Cooperating" due to three consecutive months of non-submission of a no-default statement (NDS). Credit rating agencies must now take this action within five working days against seven calendar days earlier.

Markets settle marginally lower

BSE SENSEX JANUARY 08, 2025



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 8: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended marginally lower in a volatile session Wednesday, as investors stayed on the sidelines ahead of the earnings season amid lower economic growth projections.

Besides, a depreciating rupee and persistent foreign fund outflows also dented sentiments.

However, buying in bellwether stocks TCS and Reliance Industries managed to restrict a steep decline in markets, traders said. The 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex fell 50.62 points or 0.06 per cent to settle at 78,148.49. During the day, it dropped 712.32 points or 0.91 per cent to 77,486.79. The NSE Nifty skidded 18.95 points or 0.08 per cent to 23,688.95.

"Slowing economic growth projections and caution ahead of Q3 numbers added volatility in the market. However, the market witnessed a recovery from the day's low owing to the accumulation of beaten-down blue-chip stocks and in expectation of government reforms

in the upcoming budget to lift the tepid economy. The near-term sentiment is likely to be subdued due to the rise in US bond yield and fear of fewer rate cuts by the Fed," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

From the 30-share blue-chip pack, Adani Ports, UltraTech Cement, Larsen & Toubro, Sun Pharma, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, NTPC and State Bank of India were the major laggards.

Tata Consultancy Services, Reliance Industries, ITC, Asian Paints, HCL Tech and Maruti were among the gainers.

"IT stocks to be in focus as Tata Consultancy Services is set to kick-start the Q3 earning season with its results tomorrow. While revenue for the IT giant is expected to remain impacted by furloughs, client-specific challenges are likely to normalize in 3Q. Its EBIT margin may improve, driven by talent development, training, and operational efficiency," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

SHORT TAKES

Sebi warns Ola Electric

New Delhi: Market regulator Sebi has warned Ola Electric Mobility for violating listing norms by sharing store expansion plans on social media before informing stock exchanges, according to a regulatory filing by the company. In a letter to the company by Sebi, shared on BSE by Ola Electric Mobility, the market regulator took exception to the dissemination of information regarding plans for a four-fold expansion of the company-owned store network by December 20, 2024. "It is observed that whereas the aforesaid information was disseminated on the stock exchanges by you at 1:36 PM (BSE) and 1:41 PM (NSE) on December 2, 2024, it was announced beforehand on X (formerly Twitter) at 9:58 AM on December 2, 2024, by Bhavish Aggarwal, your promoter and Chairman-cum-Managing Director," the letter said.

M&M to scale up auto biz globally

Pune: Having consolidated its position in the domestic market, Mahindra & Mahindra is now looking at ways to expand its presence across international markets, as per a top company executive. The Mumbai-based auto major is looking to scale up its automotive business globally in a phased manner with plans to leverage its existing distribution channels in various overseas markets in the first phase. In an interaction with PTI, Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) Executive Director and CEO for auto and farm sectors Rajesh Jejurikar said new products like the under-development lifestyle pickup truck and the new range of electric models would allow it to enter new international markets.

Bisleri profit rises 82.8%

New Delhi: Leading packaged drinking water company Bisleri International's profit rose 82.8 per cent to ₹316.95 crore in FY24 and its revenue from operations was up 14.8 per cent to ₹2,689.69 crore, according to an RoC filing by the company. Total consolidated revenue of Bisleri International was up 18.32 per cent to ₹2,814.04 crore for the financial year ended on March 31, 2024, helped by other income, according to financial data accessed through business intelligence platform Tofler. This is the highest revenue in the last five years for Bisleri International, a company owned by Ramesh J Chauhan, popularly known as RJC, and his family.

Rupee plunges 17 paise to settle at new record low

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 8: The rupee extended its slide for the second straight session and declined 17 paise to hit a fresh record low of 85.91 against the US dollar Wednesday amid higher crude oil prices and stronger American currency.

Lacklustre sentiment in domestic equity markets and sustained outflow of foreign funds also played spoilsport even as investors stayed cautious over lower economic growth projection by the government, forex analysts said. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.82 and lost further ground to finally settle at 85.91 against the dollar, 17 paise lower than its previous close.

Tuesday, the rupee settled

with a loss of 6 paise at 85.74 against the dollar.

"This decline is attributed to the strengthening of the US dollar, bolstered by positive economic indicators from the United States, including robust labour market data and increased activity in the services sector. These factors have led to a rise in US Treasury yields, making the dollar more attractive to investors," Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said.

"In response, the RBI has intervened through state-run banks to mitigate the rupee's losses. Despite these efforts, the rupee's depreciation reflects broader concerns about India's economic growth and capital flows," he said.

GOVT REVISES GOLD IMPORT DATA



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: The government has revised gold import data, bringing down numbers for November by USD 5 billion to USD 9.84 billion, possibly to rectify double accounting of inbound shipments.

According to revised data of the commerce ministry arm Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIIS), gold import numbers have been slashed since April 2024, revealing excess imports of about USD 11.7 billion during the first eight months of 2024-25.

The revision was prompted by an unusual surge in imports of the precious metal in November 2024, leading to record import of USD 69.95 billion and the highest ever trade deficit of USD 37.84 billion. Noticing the jump, the commerce ministry started examining if there were any calculation or accounting mistakes in the compilation of the gold imports data.

Kolkata-based DGCIS is an organisation for the collection, compilation and dissemination of India's trade statistics and commercial information. The revised data published on the DGCIS website showed a difference of about USD 11.7 billion for April-November 2024-25.

The cumulative gold import during April-November 2024-25 worked out to be USD 37.38 billion as against the earlier estimates of USD 49.08 billion.

Brijendra Pratap Singh takes over as CMD of Nalco



New Delhi: State-owned National Aluminium Company Ltd (Nalco) Wednesday said Brijendra Pratap Singh has taken over as its Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD). The joining of Singh is likely to provide a significant fillip to Nalco's various expansion programmes and new projects. He took over as CMD at the company's corporate office in Bhubaneswar Wednesday, Nalco said in a statement. Prior to joining Nalco, Singh was director-in-charge for Burnpur and Durgapur Steel Plant and member on the board of SAIL. Singh is a graduate in mining machinery engineering from IIT Dhanbad (formerly ISM Dhanbad) in 1989 and also holds an MBA degree in Marketing.

Farm workers, drivers largest growing jobs: WEF study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: Farm workers and drivers will figure among the fastest growing jobs over the next five years, while roles of cashiers and ticket clerks will see the largest decline, a new study showed Wednesday.

In its Future of Jobs Report 2025, the World Economic Forum (WEF) also said that 170 million new jobs will be created by 2030, while 92 million are projected to be displaced, resulting in 78 million net new jobs.

The report, released days before the WEF Annual Meeting in Davos from January 20-25, said that job disruption will equate to 22 per cent of jobs by 2030.

Technological advancements, demographic shifts, geoeconomic tensions, and economic pressures are the key drivers of these changes, reshaping industries and professions worldwide.

Drawing on data from over 1,000 companies, the study found that the skills gap contin-

ues to be the most significant barrier to business transformation today. Nearly 40 per cent of skills required on the job are set to change, and 63 per cent of employers already cite it as the key barrier they face.

Technology skills in AI, big data, and cybersecurity are expected to see rapid growth in demand, but human skills, such as creative thinking, resilience, flexibility, and agility, will remain critical.

Combining both technology and human skill types will be increasingly crucial in a fast-shifting job market.

Frontline roles and essential sectors like care and education are set for the highest job growth by 2030, while advances in AI and renewable energy are reshaping the market - driving an increase in demand for many technology or specialist roles while driving a decline for others, such as graphic designers.

Trends such as generative AI and rapid technological shifts are upending industries and labour markets, creating both unprecedented opportunities



and profound risks, said Till Leopold, Head of Work, Wages and Job Creation at the World Economic Forum.

Frontline roles, including farm workers, delivery drivers, and construction workers, are poised to see the largest job growth in absolute terms by 2030.

Significant increases are also projected for care jobs, such as nursing professionals, and education roles, such as secondary school teachers, with

demographic trends driving growth in demand across essential sectors.

Meanwhile, advances in AI, robotics, and energy systems - notably in renewable energy and environmental engineering - are expected to increase demand for specialist roles in these fields.

Roles such as cashiers and administrative assistants remain among the fastest declining but are now joined by roles, including graphic designers as

generative AI rapidly reshapes the labour market.

AI adoption is transforming industries worldwide, with half of the employers planning to leverage it to target new opportunities, 41 per cent planning to reduce their workforce due to automation, and 77 per cent to upskill their workers.

The list of five fastest-growing jobs would be topped by farm workers, labourers, and other agricultural workers, followed by light truck or delivery services drivers, software and application developers, building farmers, finishers and related trades workers, and shop salespersons.

These would be followed by food processing and related trades workers; car, van, and motorcycle drivers; nursing professionals; food and beverage service workers; general and operations managers; social work and counselling professionals; project managers, university and higher education teachers; secondary education teachers; and personal care aides.

On the other hand, the list

of five fastest declining jobs is topped by cashiers and ticket clerks, followed by administrative assistants and executive secretaries; building caretakers, cleaners, and housekeepers; material-recording and stock-keeping clerks; and printing and related trades workers.

These would be followed by accounting, bookkeeping, and payroll clerks; accountants and auditors; transportation attendants and conductors; security guards; bank tellers and related clerks; data entry clerks; client information and customer service workers; graphic designers; business services and administrative managers; and claims adjusters, examiners, and investigators.

The fastest-growing skills by 2030 will include AI and big data, networks and cybersecurity, technological literacy, and creative thinking.

These would be followed by resilience, flexibility, agility, curiosity and lifelong learning, leadership and social influence, talent management, analytical thinking, and environmental stewardship.

Dilemma over India's CT squad

INDIA WILL PLAY ALL THEIR CHAMPIONS TROPHY GAMES IN DUBAI, STARTING WITH THE CLASH AGAINST BANGLADESH FEB 20

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, Jan 8: Out-of-form veterans Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli will continue to form the batting core of India's ODI squad but there are at least three senior players whose future in the 50-over format could be debated when the selectors gather this weekend to pick the squad for the Champions Trophy.

KL Rahul, Mohammed Shami and Ravindra Jadeja's presence in the side is not a surety for the event starting February 19 even though they were a part of last year's World Cup.

Since the final, India have played six ODIs and while Shami and Jadeja were rested, Rahul was included for both the away bilateral engagements against South Africa and Sri Lanka.

Against Sri Lanka, however, he was dropped in the middle of the series after failing to get going in the middle overs. The world is also yet to forget how his sedate half century after using up 100-plus deliveries became a prime reason for India's loss November 19, 2023 against Australia.

It is understood that Yashasvi Jaiswal has a very bright chance of making it to the ODI squad. His inclusion would ensure a left-handed batter in the top four.

But if Rishabh Pant is the first-choice wicketkeeper, then would there be any point in having Rahul as the back-up? And if Rahul is not keeping, his place as a batter is not guaranteed.

Among his closest competitors, Ishan Kishan hasn't scored enough runs in the Vijay Hazare Trophy while Sanju



Samson hasn't been picked by Kerala after he missed the initial games.

If coach Gautam Gambhir still has his say in selection matters like he did till the disastrous Australia tour, then Samson, one of his personal favourites, will surely make the cut.

Jadeja's white-ball woes

Jadeja's white ball batting hasn't been as good as it used to be and those who are tracking the selection committee feel that Axar Patel is being seen as

way more effective in the ODIs at the moment.

Washington Sundar is expected to make it as an off-spinner but Kuldeep Yadav's fitness is something that selectors would be fretting on. Kuldeep is near full fitness but hasn't played a Vijay Hazare Trophy game.

In case Kuldeep fails to make it, one among Ravi Bishnoi or Varun Chakravarthy is expected to be picked.

Shami's fitness

Coming to Mohammed Sha-

mi, the veteran pacer's communication with the team management and the selection committee on his fitness status didn't seem to have the required clarity.

However, he has bowled eight overs each in the last two Vijay Hazare Trophy games and in case Jasprit Bumrah fails to make it due to back spasms, Shami's experience will become crucial for the side.

Hardik Pandya is the seam bowling all-rounder and it will be interesting to see if Nitish Reddy will be considered.

Among the reserve specialist batters, the choice could be between Rinku Singh and Tilak Varma.

Champions Trophy (In Contention):

Rohit Sharma (capt), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Rishabh Pant, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Varun Chakravarthy/Ravi Bishnoi, Washington Sundar, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, Arshdeep Singh, Avesh Khan/Mohammed Shami, Rinku Singh/Tilak Varma.

IOA president accuses ministry of interference

Applying norms selectively undermines credibility of sports governance, says Usha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 8: In a strongly-worded letter, Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president PT Usha has accused the sports ministry of interfering in the affairs of national federations and thus "undermining the credibility of sports governance", citing multiple examples, including the contentious Indian Golf Union elections, to support her claims.

Close on heels of the ministry pulling up the IOA for recognising the Indian Golf Union (IGU) elections won by the Harish Kumar Shetty-led faction, Usha said sports minister Mansukh Mandaviya is not being "properly apprised" of various important issues concerning national federations, including the contentious IGU polls.

In a letter dated January 2 and signed by the under secretary, the ministry said the IOA's act of according recognition to Shetty's faction can "create avoidable duplication and confusion" which may not withstand legal scrutiny.

In her reply addressed to Mandaviya, Usha said, "The manner in which this letter has been issued appears procedurally incorrect and reflects a lack of verification of the facts on record and a complete non application of mind by the Under Secretary. Sir, since I have assumed office in the IOA, it has become more and more apparent that the staff of the Ministry deliberately never appraises the true and correct

facts to the Hon'ble Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports."

Copies of the letter were also marked to the International Olympic Committee (IOA) and International Golf Federation.

Two Annual General Meetings (AGMs) were held December 15 to elect the new IGU office-bearers -- one at the India Habitat Centre (IHC) where Brijinder Singh was re-elected president with retired Punjab and Haryana High Court judge,



Rameshwar Malik, as the Returning Officer, and the other at the Olympic Bhawan, where Shetty was elected with Justice OP Garg (Retd) as the RO.

The IOA said it gave recognition to the faction led by Shetty after having "reviewed the facts" and "examined the procedural adherence" of the contentious polls but the ministry took a stern view of the move made by country's apex sports body.

However, Usha said the body recognised by the ministry "did not meet the quorum requirements as stipulated under Article 22 of the IGU Constitution".

"This specific provision mandates the presence of a minimum 10 number of State Golf Associations (SGAs) for a valid Annual General Meeting (AGM). The recognition of this faction, despite the participation of only 09 (Nine) out of the 31 (Thirty One) recognised SGAs as on the date of commencement of the election process, renders the conduct of the AGM and subsequent elections void," Usha wrote.

SHORT TAKES

ATP tour: Bhambri makes quarters

New Delhi: In a mixed bag for India on the ATP Tour Wednesday, Yuki Bhambri and his French partner Albano Olivetti advanced to quarterfinals of the ASB Classic in Auckland but N Sriram Balaji exited the Adelaide International with pre-quarterfinal defeat alongside Miguel Reyes-Varela. Bhambri and Olivetti edged past the pair of Sander Arends and Luke Johnson 6-4 6-4 in the round of 16, winning in 71 minutes. They will next take on the winners of the match between Julian Cash/Liyod Glasspool and Ajeet Rai/Kiranpal Pannu.

Guptill confirms retirement

New Delhi: New Zealand opener Martin Guptill has confirmed his retirement from international cricket, bringing an end to a decorated 14-year career. Guptill, 38, has scored 23 international centuries across all three formats while playing 198 ODIs, 122 T20Is and 47 Tests for New Zealand. He last played for New Zealand in 2022 and now ends his international career as the side's leading T20I run-scorer with 3,531 from 122 matches, the second-most appearances in the format for a player from the country. He also amassed 7,346 ODI runs, which places him third on the ODI run-scorers list.

MALAYSIA OPEN

PRANNOY, MALVIKA ENTER PRE-QUARTERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kuala Lumpur, Jan 8: India's number two shuttler HS Prannoy and rising shuttler Malvika Bansod advanced to the pre-quarterfinals of the Malaysia Open after winning their respective men's and women's singles opening round matches here Wednesday.

There was more delight for the Indian camp with the pairs of Tanisha Crasto/Dhruv Kapila and Sathish Kumar Karunakaran/Aadya Variyath sailing into the mixed doubles pre-quarterfinals of the Super 1000 meet. Overcoming a delay caused by water leaking from the roof, Prannoy eliminated his Canadian rival Brian Yang 21-12, 17-21, 21-15.

Persistent leakage had caused suspension of the match Tuesday with Yang leading 11-9 in the second game.

Despite conceding the second game, Prannoy maintained composure to seal the decider in a match lasting one-hour 29



minutes. Prannoy will next face seventh seeded Shi Feng Li of China who ousted Priyanshu Rajawat 21-11, 21-16.

Malvika breezed past local favourite Goh Jin Wei 21-15, 21-16 in just 45 minutes. She will face the winner of Chinese third seed Yue Han and Yu Po Pai of South Korea.

In other Indian results, Kapila and Crasto defeated South Korea's Sung Hyun Ko and Hye Won Eom 21-13, 21-14. They will face seventh seeded Chinese pair Xing Cheng and Chi Zhang in the last-16.

Sathish and Aadya defeated Ashith Surya and Amrutha Pramuthesh 21-13 21-15 to set up a pre-quarters clash against fourth seed Soon Huat Goh and Shevon Jemie Lai of the host country.

OFC look to bounce back

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Jan 8: Enjoying an impressive streak on the road, Odisha FC will look to capitalise on Chennaiyin FC's worrying form at home when they face off in the Indian Super League here Thursday.

A win for Chennaiyin FC in this game will mark the first time they achieve a league double over Odisha FC in ISL history after winning the reverse fixture 3-2 in September. It will also further their longest winning streak against the Juggernauts in the competition.

Odisha FC, on the other hand, are looking to bounce back from their recent defeat against FC Goa.

Chennaiyin FC are 10th in the table with 15 points from 14 matches, while Odisha FC are in seventh place with 20 points from as many games.

The Marina Machans have struggled in recent outings, securing just one win in their last six home games, whereas Odisha FC have been top notch on the road with two wins and a draw in their last three games.

The Sergio Lobera-coached team has also been more threat-



ening upfront, netting 27 goals as compared to the 19 of the Marina Machans. Diego Mauricio (7) and Wilmar Jordan Gill (6) top the scoring charts for both teams respectively.

The two sides also have their Indian attackers rising up to the challenge, with Jerry Mawihmingthanga and Irfan Yadwad finding the back of the net thrice each.

6 women in AFI Athletes Commission; Neeraj among 3 male members

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Jan 8: Long-jump great Anju Bobby George was Wednesday named chairperson of the Athletics Federation of India's nine-strong athletes commission that features six women with javelin throw star Neeraj Chopra being its most prominent male member.

The other women in the new panel are runner Jyotirmoyee Sikdar, discus thrower Krishna Poonia, hurdler MD Valsamma, steeplechaser Sudha Singh and runner Sunita Rani. George, a 2003 world championships bronze-winner, is also a senior vice president in the AFI.

All of them are retired and their induction is a noteworthy milestone in the AFI's quest for gender parity in its set-up. The previous commission featured four women. The commission was unveiled Wednesday after the elections held in October last year. Two-time Olympic medal-winning Neeraj Chopra is one of the four nominated members after consultations by the AFI's executive council.

FINAL CHAPTER FOR FRANCE'S GREATEST COACH

Deschamps to quit after 2026 World Cup

AGENCIES

Paris, Jan 8: Didier Deschamps announced Wednesday that he won't continue as France coach after the next World Cup, bringing an end to an era in which he became the nation's most successful manager over more than a decade.

The 56-year-old Deschamps said in an interview with broadcaster TF1 that he will leave when his contract expires in the summer of 2026.

"I've been here since 2012, I'm scheduled to be here until 2026, the next World Cup, but that's where it's going to end because it has to end at some point," Deschamps said in excerpts of the interview to be aired later Wednesday.

"I did my time, with the same desire and the same passion to keep the French team at the highest level, but 2026 is all very well."

Deschamps started in his role as a successor to Laurent Blanc. After a period marred by the 2010 World Cup debacle — where the players went on strike in protest against then-coach Raymond Domenech — and off-the-pitch controversies, Deschamps led France to victory



at the 2018 World Cup, also reaching the final in 2022 and at the 2016 European Championship. At the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, France lost an epic title match to Argentina.

"I'm not here for the records," said Deschamps, who also won the 2021 Nations League with France. "The most important thing is that the France team remains at the top as it has been for many years."

Deschamps is one of only three people in soccer history to have won the World Cup as both a player and a coach, along with Mario Zagallo (Brazil) and Franz Beckenbauer (West Germany). He has the highest number of wins (105) of any France coach, ahead of Michel Hidalgo and Domenech (tied on 41).

As a player, Deschamps captained France to victory at the 1998 World Cup and 2000 European Championship. He also won the Champions League with Marseille in 1993 and Juventus in 1996. Before taking charge of France's national team, he coached Monaco to the 2003-04 Champions League final and guided Juventus back to Serie A. Deschamps also achieved success at Marseille, winning the Ligue 1 title in 2010.

Europe will send 16 teams to the first 48-team World Cup, being co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico in the summer of 2026. Deschamps did not elaborate on his future beyond the tournament. "There is a life afterwards," he said. "I don't know what it will be."

His planned departure will leave plenty of time to find the right successor to Deschamps, with former France great Zinedine Zidane the overwhelming favorite if he is still interested in the job.

Bumrah continues to rule Test rankings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Jan 8: India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah continued to reign supreme at the top of the bowlers' chart with a career-best rating of 908 in the latest ICC Test Rankings, released Wednesday.

Bumrah, who made history ahead of the fifth and final Test against Australia by recording the highest-ever ICC Rankings rating for an Indian bowler at 907 points, improved that tally by one point after taking two wickets in the first innings at the SCG. However, a back spasm ruled him out of bowling in the second innings, restricting his role to just batting.

Left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja, who climbed a spot to be joint-ninth, is the other Indian giving Bumrah company in the top-10. He shares the ninth spot with Australian pacer Scott Boland, who has made a remarkable leap of 29 places to break into the top 10.

Boland's stellar performance in the Sydney Test, where he claimed a 10-wicket haul (4/31 and 6/45), proved too much for



the Indian batters on a lively pitch. His efforts were instrumental in Australia's triumph, ending a decade-long wait to reclaim the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Australia skipper Pat Cummins also made gains in the rankings, climbing to number two after picking up five wickets in the final match. South Africa's Kagiso Rabada rose a spot to occupy the third place while injured Josh Hazlewood moved down two places to be fourth.

Rishabh Pant's blistering

33-ball 61 in the second innings earned him a three-spot rise in the batting rankings, moving him to number nine while India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal retained his fourth spot.

South Africa captain Temba Bavuma extended his rich vein of form, scoring a vital century in the first innings to climb three spots to number six, also achieving a career-best rating of 769.

Meanwhile, Kyle Verreynne's impressive century saw him rise four places to secure the 25th spot.