

Addressing negativity
 Actor Triptii Dimri shares a cryptic Instagram story to address unwanted criticism directed at her
 LEISURE | P2

Ceasefire in Gaza
 Israel's Cabinet approves a deal with Palestinian militant group Hamas for a ceasefire and release of hostages in the Gaza Strip
 INTERNATIONAL | P10

TikTok faces US ban
 The platform has until Sunday to cut ties with its China-based parent ByteDance or shut down its US operation
 BUSINESS | P11

Squad announced
 Selectors announce the Indian men's cricket team for the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 and the ODI series against England Saturday
 SPORTS | P12



SKILLS ON DISPLAY: Security personnel during rehearsals for the Republic Day parade, at Kartavya Path in New Delhi, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

3 missing workers' bodies recovered

The worst fear has eventually come true with the recovery of bodies of three labourers, who went missing for nearly 40 hours, from the debris of a mishap site at Dalmia Bharat's cement plant in Rajgangpur. The incident once again has brought under focus the callous approach of industrial authorities towards occupational safety. In Odisha, this is the third major industrial mishap in about six months that claimed several human lives. At least two labourers died while six others sustained critical injuries after a mechanical structure in a steel plant run by Rungta Mines in Dhenkanal district collapsed in June last year. In the other incident, two contractual workers lost their lives and six others were grievously hurt when a large metal plate fell on them at the blast furnace of Orissa Metaliks Pvt Ltd in Jharsuguda district in September. Meanwhile, the Sundargarh ADM has slapped a notice to the plant authorities for closure of its captive power plant following the deadly mishap that took place late Thursday night

(Rourkela). The coal hopper was operated by a third-party vendor engaged by DBCL authorities had earlier said in a statement.

Over 60 other workers were safely rescued on the day of the accident, officials said. Personnel of the fire service department, Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) and local police teams carried out the rescue operation.

The situation in front of the main gate of DBCL remained tense as family members of the deceased and union representatives staged a protest demanding permanent jobs for one member from each of the deceased family and ₹25 lakhs as compensation for each dead.

Later, plant officials along with the district administration held discussions with the protesters and agreed to their demands. The affected families will also receive an additional sum of ₹10 lakh each as insurance claims and a house with their children getting free education up to Class XII.

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: The bodies of three missing labourers were Saturday recovered from the debris of a collapsed iron structure on the premises Dalmia Cement (Bharat) Limited at Rajgangpur in Sundargarh district, after a 36-hour rescue operation, police said. The deceased have been identified as Susanta Rout (58), Ranjit Bhol (24) and Dashrath Patra (42), who

were engaged by a contractor at the captive power plant in Rajgangpur, they said.

Meanwhile, the plant authorities have been asked to close its captive power plant, informed Sundargarh ADM Abhimanyu Majhi.

The workers were trapped after a coal hopper – a big iron structure used for storing large quantities of coal – collapsed Thursday evening, said Brijesh Kumar Rai, DIG, Western Range

Recruitment drive for 933 SI, other vacancies

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: The Odisha Police Recruitment Board has released a detailed notification for the Combined Police Service Examination. This drive aims to fill various posts, including Sub-Inspector (SI), Station Officer, and Assistant Jailor. The official notification was issued Friday.

According to the notification, the recruitment will cover 609 posts of Sub-Inspector of Police, 253 posts of Sub-Inspector of Police (Armed), 47 posts of Station Officer in the Fire Service, and 24 posts of Assistant Jailor under the Home Department of the Odisha Government.

The online registration for the examination will begin January 20 at 10:00 am and will close February 10 at 10:00 pm. Women and transgender candidates can apply for the posts of Sub-Inspector of Police and Assistant Jailor.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We're here to toe the party line, not retweet it, you fool!

No insurance, pay fine at toll plazas

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: Toll gates in the state will identify and penalise the vehicles from February 1 if they don't possess valid insurance documents with them, the state transport authority (STA) informed Saturday.

The 22 toll gates on National Highways (NHs)

passing through Odisha will start detecting vehicles having no valid insurance from February 1 this year, it added. The toll gates will detect vehicles plying without valid insurance through the e-detection system. The authorities will issue e-challans to the owners of such vehicles at the toll plazas, said the STA in a statement.

The STA has urged the vehicle owners to ensure that their vehicles have the valid license before the stipulated date. As per the Motor Vehicle Act, driving vehicles without valid insurance document is illegal. Driving a vehicle without a valid insurance will invite a penalty of ₹2,000 for the first offence.

The fine for driving without insurance will be ₹4,000 for the second offence. The driver may also face imprisonment for up to three months.

However, many vehicles in the state do not have valid license. As a result, the road mishap victims are being deprived of the insurance coverage.

2 killed, 1 injured in series City mishaps

Mishap site at Raj Bhawan Square



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: Two people were killed, and another suffered grievous injuries after a speeding car collided with two motorcycles here near Raj Bhawan Square, Saturday evening. The injured was admitted to the Capital Hospital, said Capital police station IIC Dayanidhi Nayak.

The deceased have been identified as retired police inspector Goura Chandra Nayak, 62, and his brother Rabi Chandra Nayak. The two are natives of Gajapati district while injured Dinabandhu Samantaray was battling for his life.

Nayak said the mishap occurred around 5:30 pm, when a speeding car (OD 02

AR 1020), came from Circuit House Road, and entered the wrong route towards Gopabandhu Square. It collided head-on with a motorcycle carrying a driver and a pillion rider. After losing control, the car hit a second motorcycle, crushing the elderly police officer under its wheels. The retired cop, who bled profusely, died on the way to Capital Hospital. His brother Rabi was taken to hospital where he succumbed to the injuries.

Eyewitnesses said the car driver was in an inebriated condition during the mishap.

Following the mishap, the traffic was disrupted between Raj Bhawan to AG square, with scores of vehicles being stranded for a long time.

RG KAR VERDICT Sanjay Roy guilty of medic's rape-murder

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 18: A Kolkata court Saturday declared Sanjay Roy 'guilty' of raping and murdering an on-duty doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, a heinous crime that sparked nationwide outrage and prolonged protests.

The Sealdah court, where Roy's trial was held, will declare his sentence Monday, Anirban Das, the additional district and sessions judge, said. The judgement was pronounced nearly two months after the in-camera trial commenced in November last year and 162 days after the heinous crime was committed August 9, 2024. Roy was found guilty under Sections 64 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita that governs rape, and Sections 66 and 103 (1) of the Act, which deals with punishments for death and murder.

Section 103 (1) of BNS entails a possible punishment of death or life imprisonment. The judge stated that Roy was found guilty of sexually assaulting the doctor and strangling her to death, and that the CBI had proven all the charges against him.

Morocco to cull 3mn dogs ahead of FIFA WC

AGENCIES

Rabat, Jan 18: Morocco could be set to slaughter three MILLION stray dogs in a brutal clean up bid before hosting the 2030 World Cup. The pooches could be wiped out from the streets to make the country's cities look nicer to visiting football fans, it's been claimed.

Morocco will co-host the 2030 FIFA World Cup alongside Spain and Portugal, marking the tournament's centennial edition.

The event will feature matches across all three countries, highlighting Morocco's first opportunity to co-host a World Cup. The country has already begun preparing its infrastructure,



aiming to upgrade stadiums and transportation networks to meet FIFA standards.

But it has also reportedly killed thousands of stray dogs, and it's feared that the numbers could still ramp up as 2030 approaches. The International Animal Coalition

animals such as birds and rodents.

The pups are also reportedly shot in the streets, the coalition says, or trapped and transported to facilities where they're brutally slaughtered. Many are also said to die in agony after being wounded by gunmen patrolling around the clock, the Daily Mail reports.

Despite claims from Moroccan authorities that the brutal campaign stopped in August 2024, the coalition says the killings spiked after FIFA announced Morocco as a host nation in 2023.

With outrage mounting, activists are demanding immediate action to end the slaughter and protect Morocco's stray dogs.

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*T&Cs APPLY.

leisure



KYLIE DUBBED 'CLIMATE CRIMINAL' OVER LA WILDFIRES POST

Kylie Jenner faced massive flak over her post on relief efforts amid the terrible wildfires in Los Angeles. She was blasted as a "climate criminal" as her personal jet flew for the 11th time this month. Earlier, her sister was also criticised over the same issue.

ANDY COHEN SLAMMED FOR DAVID LYNCH'S DEATH NEWS

Andy Cohen has been criticised for breaking the news of David Lynch's death during an interview with the cast of Dan Erikson's sci-fi drama, *Severance*. Cohen's handling of the news drew immense backlash from netizens for its insensitivity.



FORTUNE FORECAST



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ARIES

You will be quite circumspect throughout the day, predicts Ganesha. Your spirits will soar high as you will be invited to join parties and socialise a bit. You will find the correct balance between work and having fun.

TAURUS

It is about time that you stopped running from your problems and stand up and face them, suggests Ganesha. Your loved ones will bask in your material generosity today. You will be magnanimous with the wallet to impress members of the opposite sex. Don't forget that time is also money, advises Ganesha.

GEMINI

You will long for some privacy today, says Ganesha. You may end up earning a large amount of money, mostly through some private venture. The day will be a greatly profitable one for cashiers, money lenders and those in retail business. Keep working hard to achieve success.

CANCER

Today, there is a strong possibility that you may face unexpected job changes. You are likely to spend lavishly to please family and friends. You may feel we make money to spend on loved ones. Still it would probably be a good idea to count every penny before using it, says Ganesha.

LEO

Seems today is just one of those days when things simply refuse to go your way. It happens to the best of us, says Ganesha, and there isn't much one can do about it except slog it out and find that hidden reserve of moral support. On a brighter note, Ganesha observes the possibility of you meeting the right person who shall help you rekindle your imagination.

VIRGO

A cocktail of business and pleasure is on the house today. Parties will run till dawn. You will also take the correct route to success by making important decisions. People will stand to gain if they involve you in their do, says Ganesha.

LIBRA

Well, today is just not your day. The prospects sure aren't looking too good. However, there's no point in getting anxious over this triviality. Remember, 'not good' does not necessarily mean bad. In any case, if it's a stressful day you have had, be sure to have an equally enjoyable evening.

SCORPIO

Add a pinch of innovation and inventiveness to your daily working style. There shall be order in the chaotic way you perform your tasks - though not apparent to others. Revitalise yourself and plunge into work with new-found zest and vigour, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Today shall be a rather decisive day, speculates Ganesha. Situations that have pushed you into a corner will force you to make rash decisions. But take stock of the situation and assess the long-term consequences of your actions beforehand, advises Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

The day will be of paramount significance as you are likely to meet someone who will be associated with you for life, says Ganesha. Also, relationships and relatives will keep you busy for major part of the day. You may not find it interesting, but you will not have any options either. A visit to holy places for some peace of mind is also likely.

AQUARIUS

You may rave and rant, but all you'll get from colleagues or juniors are wishy-washy excuses for a job not done. Ganesha advises that you take care to finish your own work before you help others. The stars say that your beloved will smoothen your creased brow.

PISCES

You will have difficulty in interpreting the behaviour of your life partner today. It is better to bring transparency in your relationship rather than to doubt it. Speak freely about your problems and communicate with your spouse. Business relationships will also face rough weather. Those who work will find a measure of success in their office.

Triptii's cryptic note on negativity

Mumbai: Triptii Dimri, known for her stellar performances in *Laila Majnu*, *Qala*, and *Animal*, has been making headlines lately, but not for the reasons fans might expect. Rumors recently swirled around her alleged departure from *Aashiqui 3*, a project starring Kartik Aaryan. Reports suggested the makers dropped the actress over her "lack of purity in demeanor" and bold scenes in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's movie. This sparked a wave of criticism, with netizens calling out the apparent smear campaign targeting her character.

While the *Bad Newz* actress remained silent amid the controversy, she has finally shared a cryptic Instagram story, seemingly addressing the negativity. The post featured a video with the words: "Sometimes, all you hear about is the hate, but there is more love in this world than you can possibly imagine." Fans interpreted it as her graceful response, focusing on the overwhelming support she continues to receive. Inter-

estingly, Triptii's involvement in *Aashiqui 3* was never officially confirmed, despite strong speculation. Anurag Basu, the film's director, recently dismissed the reports, calling them baseless and denying claims about her exclusion.

Triptii was last seen in *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*, which also stars Kartik Aaryan, Vidya Balan, and Madhuri Dixit. The actress' upcoming projects include *Dhadak 2* with Siddhant Chaturvedi and Arjun Usttar with Shahid Kapoor.



Sharvari seeks divine blessings

Mumbai: Actress Sharvari is currently in her hometown Morgaon in Maharashtra and visited a temple to seek blessings for 2025.

The actress took to her Instagram stories, where she shared a picture of the Mayureshwar temple in Morgaon. The actress then shared a picture of her offering prayers in the temple.

She captioned that: "Beginning 2025." Sharvari ended her 2024 by working on her upcoming movie *Alpha*. On the last working day of 2024,

Salman to unleash his 'inner superhero'

Mumbai: Superstar Salman Khan is set to bring out his "inner Avenger" for his label Being Human.

Salman took to Instagram, where he shared a picture of himself holding a Captain America shield. He wrote: "Gear up for something super, something heroic! @marvel_india for the first

Avenger himself... stay tuned with @beinghumancloning for an exciting journey ahead. #JustBeingHuman #CaptainAmericaXBeingHumancloning #Marvel #ComingSoon."

In other news, Salman, who is currently seen hosting the 18th edition of *Bigg Boss*, will be joined by the cast and crew of his upcoming movie *Sikandar*.



coming movie *Sikandar*. Sources close to the development suggest that Salman will be joined by the cast and crew of the show. The finale promises to be an unforgettable spectacle, with the possibility of fun-filled moments.

Sikandar marks the star's return to the big screen after more than a year. The superstar was last seen in *Tiger 3*. The film is directed by A.R. Murugadoss who is known for *Ghajini* and also stars Rashmika Mandanna. *Sikandar* marks the reunion of Salman Khan and Sajid Nadiadwala after their 2014 blockbuster, *Kick*, which also marked the directorial debut for the latter. IANS

Shreya shares her fitness journey

Mumbai: Shreya Chaudhry, known for her work in *Bandish Bandits*, opened up about her fitness journey in the past with her having a slip disc at an early age of 19 to her putting on over 30 kilos of weight.

Taking to social media, Shreya wrote: "When I opened up about my struggle with fitness and health on social media, I did not know that I would be flooded with so much love from everyone. I made the post because I felt empowered and safe to share my feelings, and it struck a chord with people."

At 19, Shreya found herself in a dark phase. "I was not in the best headspace. During this time, I put on a lot of weight, which took

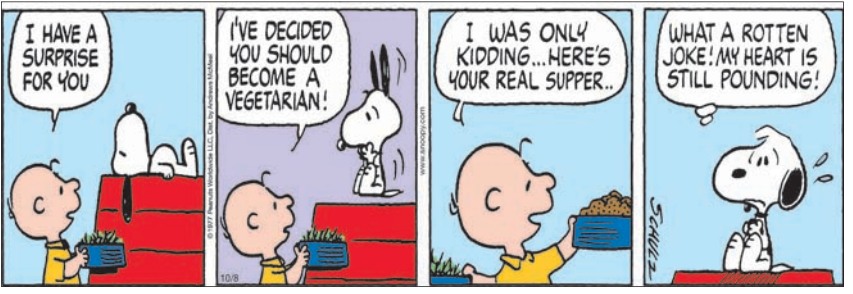
a toll on my fitness and health. I stopped doing any physical activity, and that made things worse. What struck the final nail was me getting a slip disc at that young age! I think this was a huge wake-up call for me. I couldn't believe I had taken myself for granted," she revealed.

"It took me many, many months, but I focused on my fitness and well-being, and by the time I was 21, my body and mind were in a brand-new mode. I slowly became fitter, lost 30 kilos, and there was no relapse of the slip disc," she said.

"Life will always throw a lot of things at us; we just need to move on and stay focused, I guess," she added. IANS



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

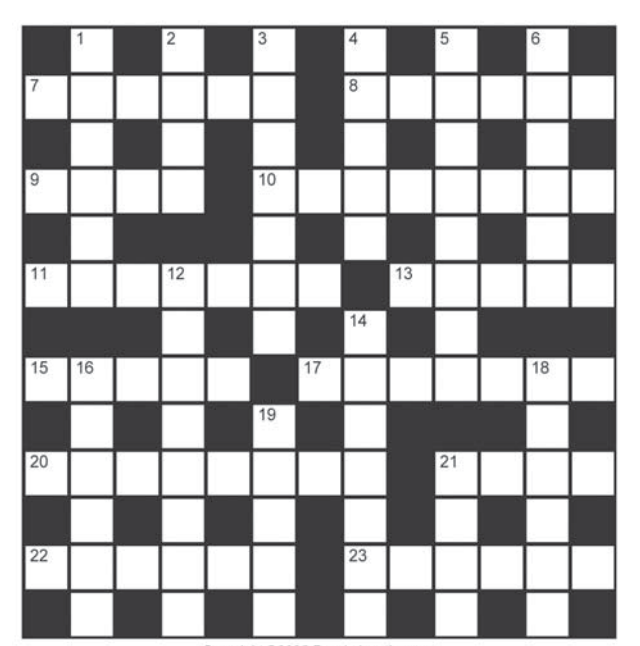


BREVITY



FUN POST

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Magical drink
 - 8 Sharp pointed implement
 - 9 Reduce, as expenses
 - 10 Like some contracts and wills
 - 11 What athletes do while exercising
 - 13 Pasternak or Godunov
 - 15 They go with fish
 - 17 Brutal
 - 20 Military court, usually
 - 21 Lowest female singing voice
 - 22 Shoot for
 - 23 Shocked
 - 3 Arp and Duchamp, e.g.
 - 4 Bullion unit
 - 5 Relief provider (3,5)
 - 6 Mixture of soluble salts
 - 12 Weimar was one
 - 14 Hotel attendant
 - 16 Torment
 - 18 Most recent
 - 19 A deadly sin
 - 21 Distress signal
- Down**
- 1 Squalid and disreputable
 - 2 Wagon part

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

S	A	B	H	P	E
P	O	S	T	O	N
M	A	R	M	O	S
S	N	I	C	K	E
A	R	M	I	N	L
O	Z	O	N	E	S
A	U	A	S	E	
G	R	I	T	S	P
E	M	P	A	T	U
S	T	E	E	P	I
H	G	C	E	E	T

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Bhubaneswar: A Vigilance court in Berhampur Saturday convicted former forest range officer Bijay Kumar Mohanty and sentenced him to undergo three-year rigorous imprisonment (RI) for possessing disproportionate assets (DA). The court also imposed a fine of ₹50,000 on Mohanty, who worked in Samantiapalli forest range under DFO, Berhampur in Ganjam district. The Vigilance Directorate will now approach the competent authority for stoppage of the pension of Mohanty following his conviction, official sources said. Prasant Kumar Dwivedy, ex-DSP, Vigilance, Berhampur Division investigated the case, and Surendra Panda, Special PP, Vigilance, Berhampur conducted the case on behalf of the prosecution.

downtown

'India-S'pore can show how to build trust'

Shanmugaratnam visits Raghurajpur, Sun Temple

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: Asserting that India was emerging as a major pole of the global economy, Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam Saturday said his country would like to collaborate with it and show the 'fractious and uncertain world' how it was possible to build trust.

Speaking to media at the end of his two-day Odisha tour, Shanmugaratnam said the priorities of India and Singapore are very similar.

"Finally, it is about building trust. It is not about specific industries but about working on projects that continue to build trust between the two countries. Trust is in short supply internationally. Singapore and India can show how it is possible to build trust in today's world, even in today's uncertain and fractious world," he said, adding, "India is emerging as a major pole of the global economy. India is a nation with which we would like to collaborate."

"According to the priorities established under the India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable, the two governments are working together to develop the semiconductor ecosystem in India. Singapore is looking into how it can contribute to the ecosystem and is also looking at new generation industrial parks, particularly Sembcorp is very actively exploring possible sites for the development of new industrial parks," he said.

He said both countries are also working on skills, which is a major factor in securing India's future. Noting that sustainability is a priority for both countries, he said India is fortunate in solar and wind energy, and it is going to be a significant green ammonia producer.

"So, Singapore is keen to engage with India in the development of these sectors and also the green corridor leading to Southeast Asia, which may take more time but is a very important aspiration," he said.

Shanmugaratnam said that in his meetings with the Indian government, he shared Singapore's keenness to expand the air service agreement, which



Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam visited heritage crafts village Raghurajpur and the famous 13th century Sun Temple at Konark in Puri Saturday.

The president and his wife were accorded a grand welcome at Raghurajpur with traditional Gotipua dance and other cultural programmes. The couple spent over an hour at the heritage crafts village which is well-known for its diverse range of artistic traditions, including Pattachitra art, Tala Patra Chitra (palm leaf engravings), stone sculpture and Gotipua semi-classical dance.

They also interacted with the artists there and a purchased two Pattachitra paintings on various themes of Ramayana and Lord Ganesh from the artists.

"Raghurajpur heritage community accorded a welcome

to the President of Singapore today. Later, we also demonstrated the process of making the Pattachitra paintings as he tried to know how we create such artwork. He was pleased and bought two Pattachitra paintings from us," said Pattachitra artist Prasant Kumar Subudhi.

President Shanmugaratnam also received a handmade painting presented by young artist Ayush Mohapatra of Raghurajpur village. The beautiful painting has President Shanmugaratnam and the First Lady of Singapore in the backdrop of Srimandir in Puri.

The couple later visited the 13th century majestic Sun Temple at Konark in Puri where they were welcomed by the officials of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

The Puri Police had put in place elaborate security arrangements in view of the visit



of President Shanmugaratnam to Raghurajpur and Konark Sun Temple.

Shanmugaratnam had earlier Friday spent engaging four hours at Kala Bhoomi, the handicrafts museum in Bhubaneswar. He praised the rich art, handloom, and

craftsmanship of Odisha. He was accompanied by Governor Haribabu Kambhampati, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, and Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

President Shanmugaratnam explored various galleries at Kala Bhoomi, spending significant time in the Jagannath Gallery.

He lauded Odisha's spiritual essence and cultural traditions, which were beautifully showcased in the exhibits.

A highlight of the visit was the purchase of a saree by the President's wife, who paid for it via UPI, reflecting India's global leadership in digital payment systems.

During the visit, the Singapore President and his wife were treated to a traditional Odia dinner, followed by a



cultural program. The performance included Odissi dance and a fusion of Odisha and Singaporean dance styles. President Shanmugaratnam expressed deep admiration for Odissi music and dance, calling it a unique and captivating art form.

Odisha, this two-day visit of the Singapore President is a matter of great honour. The impact of this visit will be far-reaching," he said, pointing to the eight MoUs signed in the last two days.

companies among global leaders in MRO business," he said.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi described Shanmugaratnam's visit as a major milestone for the development of the state. "For me, and for

Is City becoming a transit point for hydroponic weed?



DEBASISH PANIGRAHI, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: The back-to-back seizures of hydroponic weed from passengers at Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here in the last couple of weeks' time have raised fears of the non-metro international airport being used as a transit point for the high-valued party drug during the country's tourist season.

On Saturday, the Air Intelligence Unit (AIU) confiscated 7 kg of the weed valued at ₹7 crore from a passenger who arrived from Bangkok. Four days prior to that, January 14, the AIU had seized hydroponic weed worth ₹4 crore which was concealed in eight cornflakes' packets inside the check-in baggage of a woman passenger who landed from the Thai capital. On January 6, two women passengers who arrived from Kuala Lumpur were held at the BPIA for possessing the same variety of weed worth ₹9.56 crore.

Sources privy to the investigation of the cases told Orissa POST that the people arrested in connection with the seizures are mostly carriers of the drug - meant for consumption in places like Mumbai, Delhi and Goa - while the kingpins of the syndicate remain elusive. Due to the heightened surveillance at airports in these cities, the syndicates are targeting smaller airports, like Bhubaneswar, to smuggle the contraband, sources added.

"Hydroponic weed is of great demand among tourists and party goers during the tourist season. Bhubaneswar does not have a clientele-base for the expensive narcotics. In all probability, the BPIA is being used as a passage for the drug to its destinations

Hydroponic weed

Hydroponic weed is grown using a hydroponic system. Hydroponics is a method of plant cultivation without soil. Here, the plants are grown in nutrient-rich water that provides all the essential minerals and nourishment needed for growth. There is a growing body of research suggesting that hydroponic agriculture (or weed cultivation) is a more efficient and reliable method than traditional cultivation in soil as in case of bush weed.

in the country," sources added. There seems to be meat in the claims as Bhubaneswar, or Odisha, has long been considered a source for homegrown bush weed (ganja, or wild hemp) which costs not more than ₹5,000-10,000 per kg in the street, as against ₹1 crore for the same weight of hydroponic weed.

Sources said hydroponic weed is popular among users for its high potency as compared to bush weed, found outdoors. "The PSH value is altered in hydroponic weed which is grown in controlled environment to make it more potent than the commonly available bush weed," sources added.

Experts said that most of the hydroponic weed is cultivated in South East Asian (SEA) countries, with India as the main landing destination. "The supply we get in India of hydroponic weed mostly originates from Thailand. This is because after decriminalising cannabis in 2022 for medical purposes, that country failed to regulate the market which resulted in rampant abuse and smuggling of weed," sources added.

Dy CM opens power distribution tech centre



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo Saturday inaugurated a state-of-the-art power

distribution technology centre, marking a transformative leap in distribution network management and operational excellence.

The centre has been set up by

TPCODL, a joint venture of Tata Power and the Odisha government. "Inaugurated the power distribution technology centre at TPCODL - a pioneering step towards strengthening Odisha's

power infrastructure," Singh Deo said.

Singh Deo, who is also the Energy Minister, said the centre will be crucial in making Odisha a hub of distribution excellence.

"With advanced infrastructure and technology, it ensures resilient and reliable power for the state. It reflects our vision for a future-ready energy ecosystem that supports both consumers and industries. I commend Tata Power for its unwavering commitment to strengthening power distribution in Odisha," he added.

The hub integrates advanced operational technology and information technology systems, alongside a 24x7 power system control centre that ensures real-time network monitoring, seamless system operations, and uninterrupted power supply across Odisha, according to the company.

Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja and Praveer Sinha, CEO and MD, Tata Power also attended the event.

SCIENTISTS FIND SEPSIS MOLECULE

INDO ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 18: A team of US scientists has uncovered how a molecule found on certain bacteria may drive blood clotting in sepsis -- a life-threatening condition that causes about eight million deaths per year.

The team at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) focused on the role of specific blood clotting mechanisms in sepsis.

The findings may pave the way for enhancing treatments for critically ill patients. They found that lipopolysaccharide,

or LPS -- a molecule found on the surface of certain bacteria like E. coli -- can directly activate proteins in the blood that trigger clotting.

This process can both block blood flow and damage vital organs in a chain reaction where proteins in the blood work together to form clots. The researchers found a specific type of LPS, called O26:B6, that is particularly good at setting off this reaction, making it more likely to cause clotting problems. The research, published in the Journal of Biological Chemistry, is based on a study conducted in

nonhuman primates. The team found that when bacteria containing LPS entered the bloodstream, it quickly activated the trigger system.

This included coagulating proteins like factor XII, which seems to initiate the clotting process, causing a chain reaction. "People who are born without factor XII are healthy and don't bleed abnormally," said Joseph Shatzel, a physician-scientist at OHSU.

"That makes it a great target for therapies -- blocking it might help stop dangerous clots without causing bleeding."

Andre L. Lira, Postdoctoral scholar and lead author of the study, said his research focuses on how the physical properties of bacterial surfaces trigger the clotting system. Sepsis can arise from bacterial, viral, or fungal infections.

"Even when we know the bacteria causing the infection, different strains can behave differently," he said. "By understanding this, we hope to develop precision therapies." The team is working on experimental treatments targeting factor XII, including antibodies designed to block its activity.

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242 people get property cards under SVAMITVA



Prime Minister Narendra Modi distributes more than 65L property cards to beneficiaries across 10 states including Odisha

The scheme will enable institutional credit through bank loans, reducing property-related disputes, facilitating better assessment of properties and property tax in rural areas

ally from Raj Bhavan. The Governor in a post on X said, "This visionary initiative is revolutionising rural India by securing property rights, empowering landowners, and driving economic progress." Majhi said 3,045 villages in five districts -- Rayagada, Jharsuguda, Nabarangpur, Gajapati and Dhenkanal, have been covered under the Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improved Technology in Rural Areas (SVAMITVA) scheme. "Drone survey of the properties is in progress in these villages in the first phase. Property cards have been distributed to 242 persons of Rayagada district today," he added. The Prime Minister virtually addressed the event and also interacted with some beneficiaries. He said rural land digitisation is "furthering rural empowerment by leveraging the power of technology and good

governance". The property cards were distributed among beneficiaries across more than 50,000 villages in 10 states -- Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and two Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Modi said the scheme will help people get loans and benefits of other government schemes. Under the SVAMITVA scheme, which was launched in April 2020, a Record of Rights (RoR) was being provided to families owning houses in inhabited areas in villages. It will help in the monetisation of properties and enable institutional credit through bank loans, reducing property-related disputes, facilitating better assessment of properties and property tax in rural areas, and enabling comprehensive village-level planning.



EXPRESSIONS: Artists from Film Academy Manipur perform Manipuri dance on the fourth evening of Global Theatre Festival, organised by Theatre Movement at Kala Vikash Kendra auditorium in Cuttack, Saturday

AGENCIES New Delhi, Jan 18: A total of 242 people in Odisha Saturday got property cards under the SVAMITVA scheme, aimed at bolstering economic activities and help in poverty alleviation. These were among the 65 lakh property cards distributed across the country by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi joined the programme in Rayagada district, while Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati was present in the event virtu-

Rural Devtpt dept holds monthly review meet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: Rural Development department principal secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh chaired the monthly review meeting of the department here Saturday, assessing the progress of various projects and schemes across the state. Singh reviewed the work of all sixty-three rural development divisions of the state. Officers of all the divisions joined through video conferencing and informed the principal secretary about the status of the ongoing projects. A detailed review was carried out regarding Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Mukhya Mantri Sadak Yojana,



different schemes by the department and addressing grievance received through the CM's grievance cell. Projects implemented under PM-JANMAN and Setu Bandhan Yojana was also reviewed at the meeting. Singh directed the officers to focus on the preparation of proper design, survey and estimation for each project. En-

sure high standard and quality of work and ensure completion of the project within the stipulated time, Singh said. The issues related to forest clearance, land acquisition and construction works in Naxal affected areas were also discussed in detail. The review meeting was attended by senior officers in-

Department's principal secretary instructs officials to complete each project within the stipulated time frame with utmost importance on the quality

cluding department's special secretary Sarbeshwar Singh, additional secretary Babita Mohanty, financial advisor Smita Pani, EIC Prasanna Kumar Sahu and EIC Pradeep Kumar Jena.

Trio arrested for woman's abduction

Bhubaneswar: The police Saturday arrested three individuals in connection with the abduction of a woman following a road rage incident in December 2024. The accused—Chandan Mallick, Pranab Nayak, and Rahul Nayak—abducted the woman near Chandrasekharpur police station, releasing her near Khandagiri Square within an hour. DCP Pinak Mishra confirmed that one suspect is still at large. Early investigations revealed that Pranab Nayak has been involved in seven previous cases, Chandan in five, and Rahul in two. Police seized one car, two blood-stained knives, five mobile phones, and the victim's phone from the accused. The incident occurred after midnight December 22 when Akash Singh and his friend, Rojalin Nayak, ran out of petrol near Lumbini Vihar. While refueling at a nearby station, they got into a dispute with four men in a car over cutting in line. The situation escalated, leading to Rojalin's abduction. Akash suffered minor injuries and was treated at Capital Hospital. A complaint was filed later at Maitri Vihar police station. The trio was booked under Sections 140(3), 118(2), 109, and 3(5) of BNS and was produced before a local court Saturday.

'Sailabhasha' poetry collection launched



RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: The poetry collection "Sailabhasha" by poet and homemaker Sailabala Das was launched at a book release ceremony held at Bhubaneswar Club Saturday. The event celebrated the journey of an ordinary housewife who has become a symbol of creativity, using poetry to portray her views on life and society in simple yet impactful language. The ceremony was graced by eminent personalities, including renowned writer and educationist Adhyapak Biswaranjan, gynaecologist and philanthropist Seba Mohapatra, and former Superintendent of Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi, Abhaya Kumar Dash. Literature enthusiasts, dignitaries, and the poet's family members also attended the event, making it a memorable

celebration of literary achievement. Addressing the gathering, Adhyapak Biswaranjan lauded the poet's efforts. "Sailabala Das demonstrates that creativity knows no boundaries. Her work reflects deep thought, articulated in a language that resonates with the common person," he said. In her speech, Das shared her reflections on her creative journey. "Writing poetry has been my way of navigating life's complexities and expressing my innermost thoughts," she noted. The event began with a welcome speech by the poet's son, Navajyoti Das, who spoke about his mother's passion for poetry and her journey as a writer. Seba Mohapatra praised Sailabala's ability to weave emotions with reality, stating, "Her work brings a fresh perspective to literature, rooted in authenticity and truth."

SOA inks pact with UNL for research collaboration

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), USA, to foster academic and research collaboration between the two institutions. UNL, a public university recognized as a Carnegie Research Institution, offers a wide range of academic programs across disciplines such as agricultural sciences, engineering, business administration, arts, law, and journalism. The university is also part of the Big Ten Academic Alliance, a prestigious consortium of research institutions known for advancing academic missions, creating opportunities for faculty and students, and promoting collaboration in innovative programs. The MoU was signed by UNL Chancellor Rodney D Bennett and SOA vice-chancellor



Pradipta Kumar Nanda. Chittaranjan Ray, Director of the Nebraska Water Center at UNL, represented the US University during the signing. The agreement aims to establish a cooperative relationship between the institutions to support collaboration in academic activities such as teaching, research, student and faculty exchange, technology transfer, curriculum development, and joint projects. The MoU will also be subject to US export control laws regulating the transfer of technical information. Key SOA representatives present at the ceremony in-

cluded, Centre for Climate Smart Agriculture (CCSA) director Rabindra Kumar Panda and professor Uma Charan Mohanty, Institute of Agricultural Sciences dean Santosh Kumar Rout, Institute of Technical Education and Research additional dean Dharendra Nath Thatoi, department of Civil Engineering head Bidhyadhar Basa and SOA's chief administrative officer Pramod Kumar Panda. This collaboration is expected to strengthen academic ties and open new avenues for innovation and knowledge exchange between SOA and UNL.

KISS lifetime achievement award to Neville G Pinto

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: President of the University of Cincinnati, USA Neville G Pinto was conferred the prestigious KISS Lifetime Achievement Award during his visit to the KISS campus recently. Pinto expressed his admiration for the institution and its founder Achyuta Samanta, while announcing a significant partnership between the University of Cincinnati with KISS. In his address, Pinto lauded Samanta's contribution to education and tribal empowerment. "Samanta started from utter poverty and hunger, and now look at what he has accomplished. His philosophy of always doing good for others is truly inspiring. Each one of you has the same potential to achieve what Samanta has achieved. Knowledge provides you with the power to do good, and Samanta's dedication and passion should be a guiding light for all." Pinto expressed hope that the partnership would benefit students and faculty alike, opening new avenues for research, cultural exchange and academic excellence. On the occasion, Samanta expressed his delight at hosting Pinto and highlighted the historical significance of this collaboration. "It is a moment of pride for us that an Indian-born academician is leading a prestigious university like the University of Cincinnati, established in 1819. While KIIT and KISS are relatively young, being only 30 years old, we have achieved milestones on par with IITs and NITs. Our tremendous contributions in the fields of academics and sports are a testament to our commitment," Samanta said.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Gouranga Chandra Sahoo, S/o - Late Harihara Sahoo, R/o - Biranarasinghpur Road, near Bhargabi High School, Thentapur, P/O - Biranarasinghpur, P/S - Chandanpur, Dist. - Puri, Pin - 752012, Odisha, declare by this Affidavit No. - 6, dated 10.12.2024 that now onwards I shall be known as Gauranga Chandra Sahoo, S/o - Late Harihara Sahoo for all future purposes.

OAS probationers' induction training concludes at GAA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Jan 18: The Gopabandhu Academy of Administration (GAA) hosted the valedictory ceremony of the Induction Training Programme for Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) probationers Saturday. A total of 112 OAS officer trainees, who had undergone intensive training over the last few months, participated in the event. The ceremony was graced by Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, who delivered a motivating address, emphasising the



transformative role of civil servants in driving change and improving governance. Ahuja highlighted the unique position that OAS officers occupy in the state's governance structure

and urged them to embrace technological advancements for real-time governance, which can enhance the efficiency of public service delivery. He stressed the importance of innovative thinking, the need for job creation, skill development, and economic growth, all of which are critical for the state's future progress. Ahuja further underscored the significance of simplifying bureaucratic processes to ensure a smoother and more transparent service delivery system. He encouraged the probationers to always maintain a sense of

empathy in their governance practices, ensuring the dignity of citizens while delivering public services. Revenue and Disaster Management additional chief secretary Deo Ranjan Kumar Singh also addressed the probationers, encouraging them to continue their habit of reading and acquiring knowledge. The event also featured a presentation by additional chief secretary and director general of GAA, G Mathi Vathanan, who provided an overview of the key activities undertaken during the induction training programme.

empathy in their governance practices, ensuring the dignity of citizens while delivering public services. Revenue and Disaster Management additional chief secretary Deo Ranjan Kumar Singh also addressed the probationers, encouraging them to continue their habit of reading and acquiring knowledge. The event also featured a presentation by additional chief secretary and director general of GAA, G Mathi Vathanan, who provided an overview of the key activities undertaken during the induction training programme.

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Act on 'zero' villages: NHRC 4 Odisha women held captive in Bihar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Jan 18: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has instructed the Principal Secretary of the Revenue and Disaster Management department, Government of Odisha, to present an up-to-date status report on the conversion of 589 'zero' villages and 20 'Forest' villages. The apex rights body has also requested district-wise details of converted revenue villages and the status of provided facilities and claims to be submitted within eight weeks, without fail.

The order was passed while monitoring a petition filed by rights activist and Supreme Court advocate Radhakanta Tripathy. The petition highlighted the lack of basic necessities and amenities for villagers (primarily from Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes) living in forest villages, also known as zero villages, which are located within reserved forest areas. These villages are not listed in revenue records and, as a result, lack elected representatives or Gram Sabhas.

According to the 2011 Census, there are 4,526 forest villages across India, of which 458 are in Odisha. The petition also not-



ed that in May 2016, the Union government acknowledged the need to convert forest villages into revenue villages due to the difficulties faced by residents.

Tripathy further pointed out various issues faced by the residents of these villages, including human trafficking, man-animal conflict, distress migration, malnutrition, and the absence of healthcare and educational facilities. These issues, he argued, should be addressed as a matter of priority. Villages in Dhenkanal, Angul, Ganjam, and Nayagarh districts in Odisha are particularly affected.

Residents of zero villages should have access to essential services such as safe drinking water, playgrounds, all-weather

roads, primary health centres (PHCs), education under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, toilets, and other basic facilities.

Tripathy also highlighted the broader issue of denial of social justice and deprivation of basic amenities in more than 4,000 forest villages across India. Odisha, with more than 420 forest villages, is a key example of this deprivation, as people in these villages lead miserable lives. Villages in other states such as Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, and the Northeastern states are similarly struggling with a lack of basic amenities, wel-

fare schemes, and are further affected by left-wing extremism (LWE) and ineffective constitutional safeguards.

In response to the gravity of the issue, the NHRC 13 August last year directed the Secretary of the Ministry of Rural Development, the Secretary of the Ministry of Forests, and the state Chief Secretary to address these serious concerns and ensure necessary action. They were instructed to submit their action taken reports (ATRs) to the NHRC within eight weeks.

Despite these directions, the state government has submitted a series of communications admitting that proposals for conversion are pending at various levels. It is concerning that, despite specific laws and directives from the State Ministry, the Secretary of the Board of Revenue, Odisha, the Director of Land Records, Surveys and Consolidation, Odisha, and all District Collectors have failed to take prompt action to complete the conversion process within the stipulated time. Nearly nine years after guidelines were issued for the conversion of villages, the actual status of conversion remains unclear, as observed by the NHRC.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, Jan 18: Four young women from Rajnagar block in Kendrapara district have been held captive in Bihar, where they are being physically assaulted and tortured. Sources said they were promised jobs at a biscuit company in Bhubaneswar, but were taken to Bihar, where they have been forced into dancing in an orchestra troupe and are living in confinement.

According to the complaint by Sharat Chandra Das from

Sanabadgopalpur panchayat in this block, his 19-year-old daughter and niece were taken to Bhubaneswar by a person identified as Sankar Bhanja, a resident of Kanpur village under Nischintakoli police limits in Jajpur district under the pretext of providing employment at a biscuit company.

They were initially employed at the biscuit factory for three days but were later taken to Bihar with the false promise of working at a new factory. After reaching Bihar, the girls were forced to work for an orchestra

troupe by another person identified as Sanjay Bhawan. Despite repeated refusal, the victims were coerced into continuing in the orchestra.

One of the victims, Binapani, managed to escape January 12 night, and reached Bhubaneswar. Upon arrival, her family took her home and then reported the incident to Rajnagar police. After the intervention of Rajnagar PS IIC Ajay Kumar Jena, a case was registered Friday. A probe is on to bring back the remaining three women from Salepur area, who are still held captive.

10-yr-old dies after falling off swing in school

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, Jan 18: A Class IV student died after falling off a swing on the school premises in Jajpur district Saturday, police said.

The deceased boy was identified as Soumyaranjan Sahu of Bagapatia Upper Primary School under Danagadi block.

The 10-year-old was playing on a swing with some of his friends during school hours when he suddenly fell and sustained critical injuries. He was rushed to a nearby hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival, police said.

Soumyaranjan's family and locals blamed carelessness of the teachers for his death. They allegedly detained the teachers after the incident and demanded strict action against them, police added.

Bagapatia Upper Primary School has 72 students and five teachers including the headmaster, official sources said.

"This is an unfortunate incident. We cannot compensate for the irreparable loss. However, we will certainly advise all the schools in the block to take necessary precautions to avoid such accidents during school hours," said Subhanshu Puhana, Block Education Officer of Danagadi.

2 killed in accident

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Jan 18: Two persons died while 20 others sustained injuries after the bus they were travelling in hit a stationary truck near Madhupada under Gajapathinagar police limits in Vizianagar district of Andhra Pradesh, Friday night. The deceased have been identified as Subrata Ray, a resident of MV-58 village under Padia police station, and his daughter. Subrata Ray was a local BJP booth president and a youth leader in the Padia region.

The bus was en route to Anil Neerukonda Hospital in Visakhapatnam when it collided with the parked truck. The truck had broken down on the road and had been parked improperly. Eyewitnesses said that heavy fog affected visibility, leading to the collision. The bus was carrying approximately 30 patients from various parts of Malkangiri to the Visakhapatnam hospital for treatment.



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Redressal of complaints against entities regulated by RBI

Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS)

- The Reserve Bank has mandated all its regulated entities to have a mechanism at their end to resolve the complaints received by them from their customers, which is considered as the Internal Grievance Redress Mechanism of regulated entities.
- The Reserve Bank has also put in place an expeditious and cost-free Alternate Grievance Redress Mechanism for resolution of customer complaints relating to deficiencies in services rendered by its regulated entities through the Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2021 (RB-IOS).
- Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies, Payment System Participants and Credit Information Companies are considered as regulated entities under the Grievance Redress Mechanism.
- The RB-IOS adopts a "One Nation One Ombudsman" approach for all complaints against any regulated entities. It is therefore no longer necessary for a complainant to identify under which Ombudsman scheme/office, he/she should file a complaint with the Ombudsman.
- The complaints against regulated entities not covered under the RB-IOS are handled at Consumer Education and Protection Cells (CEPCs) for resolution.
- The list of regulated entities covered under the ambit of RB-IOS and CEPC can be accessed by visiting <https://cms.rbi.org.in>

What to do if you have a complaint?

You can lodge complaint against the regulated entity at its branch or through online in the grievance redressal portal or any other mode as mentioned in its website. Get acknowledgement or save the reference number of the complaint.

When to approach the RBI Ombudsman?

You can approach the RBI Ombudsman, in case:

- No reply is received from the regulated entity within 30 days** - Anytime within one year and 30 days from the date of your complaint to regulated entity.
- Reply received from the regulated entity is unsatisfactory** - Anytime within one year of receipt of reply from the concerned regulated entity.

Note:

- The complaint should contain all requisite details / information as per the complaint form prescribed in the RB-IOS.
- The complaint should not have been dealt with / pending with any other forum (like Courts) or dealt earlier by the RBI Ombudsman.
- Filing complaint directly with RBI Ombudsman, without approaching the RE, may lead to its rejection.**

How to lodge a complaint with RBI?

Complaint against the regulated entity can be filed through any of the following modes:

- Online through the Complaint Management System (CMS) portal of RBI at <https://cms.rbi.org.in>
- Physical complaint (letter / post) in the form as specified in Annexure in the RB-IOS to "Centralized Receipt and Processing Centre, 4th floor, Reserve bank of India Sector-17, Central Vista, Chandigarh – 160017"

How to know more about lodging a complaint with RBI?

For more information, you can approach RBI Contact Centre facility with Toll-free Number: 14448. The contact center with Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) is available 24x7, while the facility to connect to Contact Centre personnel is available from Monday to Saturday except National Holidays, between 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM for English, Hindi and ten regional languages (Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Telugu and Tamil).

For more information

Please Visit:

FAQs on RB- IOS, 2021 - https://www.rbi.org.in/scripts/FS_FAQs.aspx?fn=2745

Or

CMS Portal - <https://cms.rbi.org.in/>

(For complaints against DICGC, members of public can lodge the complaint at following address/ e-mail Id)

Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation
The General Manager
DICGC, Complaint Redressal Cell,
Reserve Bank of India, 2nd Floor,
Opp. Mumbai Central Railway Station,
Byculla, Mumbai – 400008
E-mail: dicgc.complaints@rbi.org.in
Contact No. 022-23019645



NTPC Limited

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NOTICE

Registered Office Address: NTPC Bhawan, Core-7, SCOPE Complex, 7-Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003
Corporate Identification Number- L40101DL1975GOI007966

The petitioner above named has made an application before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, New Delhi for determination of tariff of Farakka Super Thermal Power Station Stage-II (500 MW) from 01.04.2024 to 31.03.2029.

- The beneficiaries of the generating station are:
 - West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited Vidyut Bhawan, Block-DJ, Sector-II, Salt Lake City, Kolkata - 700091
 - Bihar State Power Holding Company Limited (erstwhile Bihar State Electricity Board) Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna - 800 001
 - Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Limited, Engineering Building, HEC Township, Dhanuwa, Ranchi-834004
 - Grid Corporation of Orissa Limited 24, Janpath, Bhubaneswar - 751007
 - Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited, Sardar Patel Vidyut Bhawan, Racecourse, Vadodara, Gujarat - 39007
- Capacity of the generating station : 500 MW
- Approved capital cost of the project : Rs 2761.87 Crore
- Authority which has approved the Capital Cost : CERC
- Scheduled date of commercial operation : Not Applicable
- Actual date of commercial operation of Station : 04.04.2012
- Capital cost on date of commercial operation of Station : Not Applicable
- Details of tariff :

Particulars	Tariff for the previous year*	Year-wise tariff sought to be determined				
		2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
1.Capacity Charges (Rs.Lakh/year)	67576.10	65325.71	57867.27	58624.96	57481.37	58535.61
2. Energy Charges (Rs./kWh)	3.987	3.234				

*As per Petition for truing-up of tariff for 2019-24 period for Farakka Super Thermal Power Station Stage-II (1*500 MW) filed before Hon'ble CERC.

- A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of NTPC, namely www.ntpc.co.in under the Tab "Notices".
- The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the petition may be filed by any person, including the beneficiaries through e-filing portal of the Commission, with a copy to the Petitioner within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place : Noida (U.P.) (Prashant Chaturvedi)
Date : 03.12.2024 Addl. General Manager (Comml.)

Leading the Power Sector



NTPC Limited

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NOTICE

Registered Office Address: NTPC Bhawan, Core-7, SCOPE Complex, 7-Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003
Corporate Identification Number- L40101DL1975GOI007966

The Petitioner above named has made an application before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), New Delhi for determination of tariff of Muzaffarpur Thermal Power Station, Stage-II (2 X 195 MW) from 01.04.2024 to 31.03.2029.

- The beneficiaries of the generating station are:
 - Bihar State Power Holding Company Ltd (BSPHCL), Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road Patna - 800021
 - North Bihar Power Distribution Company Limited, 1st Floor, Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna - 800 021.
 - South Bihar Power Distribution Company Limited, 1st Floor, Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna - 800 021.
 - Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Ltd., Engineering Building, HEC Township, Dhanuwa, Ranchi - 834 004
 - GRIDCO Ltd., Janpath, Bhubaneswar - 751 022
 - West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd., Vidyut Bhawan, Bidhanagar, Salt Lake City, Kolkata - 700 091
 - Power Department, Govt. of Sikkim, Kazi Road, Gangtok, Sikkim - 737101
 - Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC), DVC Towers, Kolkata, West Bengal - 700 054
- Capacity of the generating station : 390 MW
- Approved capital cost of the Project : Rs. 3803.22 Crore
- Authority which has approved the Capital Cost : CERC
- Scheduled date of commercial operation : Not Applicable
- Actual date of commercial operation of Station : 01.07.2017
- Capital cost on date of commercial operation of Station : Not Applicable
- Details of tariff :

Particulars	Tariff for the previous year*	Year-wise tariff sought to be determined				
		2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
1.Capacity Charges (Rs.Lakh/year)	72758.24	72435.16	73748.57	75948.20	78159.62	80910.38
2. Energy Charges (Rs./kWh)	2.948	3.001				

* As per the Petition for truing-up of tariff for 2019-24 period for Muzaffarpur Thermal Power Station Stage-II (2 X 195 MW) filed before Hon'ble CERC.

- A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of NTPC, namely www.ntpc.co.in under the Tab "Notices".
- The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the petition may be filed by any person, including the beneficiaries through e-filing portal of the Commission, with a copy to the Petitioner within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place : Noida (U.P.) (Prashant Chaturvedi)
Date : 03.12.2024 Addl. General Manager (Comml.)

Leading the Power Sector

FOCUS CLIMATE CHANGE

THE AGE OF FIRE



To be sure, fighting to eliminate GHG emissions amounts to provoking Goliath – a giant who profits enormously when we burn the fuels that are causing our homes to be gutted

of oil and natural gas, and historically the highest emitter of GHGs. The US Department of Defense is the world's largest institutional oil consumer, owing to America's involvement in wars around the globe.

To be sure, fighting to eliminate GHG emissions amounts to provoking Goliath – a giant who profits enormously when we burn the fuels that are causing our homes to be gutted. Fortunately, there are many Davids, like the 6,000 U'wa, an indigenous people who have tirelessly resisted oil development in Colombia's cloud forests since 1991, when the government granted exploration rights to MNCs. It took three decades and an international network of supporters, but last month, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ruled that Colombia had violated the rights of the U'wa by authorizing oil, gas, and mining projects on their land. Oil development in the area has been halted (at least for now), and an important precedent has been set.

The U'wa believe that oil is the "blood of the mother Earth." As U'wa spokesperson Berito Kuwaru'wa warned, "If you take away her blood, our mother will experience vacillating heat and cold, ferocious winds and terrible fires, destruction like you have never seen." Eliminating fossil fuels will not be easy, but it is far preferable to watching a prophecy come true.

The writer is Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Stanford University.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

Los Angeles has been burning for almost two weeks now, and the blame game is in full swing. From diversity, equity, and inclusion policies and AI data centers to the mismanagement of public resources by political leaders, fingers seem to be pointed in every direction. But the charges being thrown around miss the point: the underlying cause of the conflagration is GHG emissions generated by the burning of fossil fuels.

Even as President-elect Donald Trump's nominee for energy secretary, Chris Wright, disputes the scientifically established relationship between climate change and more severe wildfires, the fires rage on, destroying ecosystems and reducing neighborhoods to ashes across Los Angeles County – where about one-third of residents live within a mile of one of the area's 8,335 active oil wells. This current disaster is exceptional only in that it affects a major US city. Similar fires are happening all over the world, and have been for a while – especially since 2016.

Consider the wildfires that engulfed Fort McMurray in Alberta – where pipelines carried more than 300,000 barrels of oil per day – in May of that year. The combination of wind, high temperatures, and plentiful dry brush quickly transformed a few burning embers into a raging inferno. With flying embers igniting numerous new fires, it did not take long for local firefighting capacity to become severely strained, leaving emergency services waiting for outside help to arrive.

Though there was no shortage of water – Fort McMurray is located at the convergence of four rivers – extinguishing the fires proved impossible, given the incredible speed of their spread in the parched air. Two days after the embers were first spotted in the brush, the entire city had to be abandoned, in what would become Alberta's largest-ever wildfire evacuation. Ultimately, the fire destroyed Fort McMurray and its surrounding towns, becoming the most expensive disaster in Canada's history.

Sound familiar? The oil wells of Los Angeles may be tucked behind Macy's or Bloomingdale's, or obscured by walls – out of sight, out of mind – but like any other oil well, they emit carbon dioxide and methane. The rapid and exponential increase in emissions of these GHGs, whether originating in Los Angeles or Lagos, is one of the main causes of observed climate change since

the mid-twentieth century. California has experienced many of these supercharged infernos in recent years: the Thomas Fire and the Santa Rosa Tubbs Fire in 2017, the Redding Carr Fire and the Camp Fire in 2018, the Bay Area Fire (which spread to Oregon and Washington) in 2020, and the Dixie Fire in 2021. Now used to be a fire season is what a fire age.

Is it insensitive to discuss climate change during this moment of crisis? Shouldn't we be focusing on people's immediate needs, on the traumatic experiences so many are enduring, and on the exhaustion of brave first responders? Some say yes. But it is not too soon to apply the lessons of these supercharged fires. Unless we do, such catastrophes – and the needs, trauma, and exhaustion they bring – will proliferate and intensify. The Los Angeles fires, and other recent blazes, should serve as a wake-up call to everyone, but especially to the United States – the world's largest producer and consumer



Terry Lynn Karl

ELIMINATING FOSSIL FUELS WILL NOT BE EASY, BUT IT IS FAR PREFERABLE TO WATCHING A PROPHECY COME TRUE



Aakar Patel

IN THE LONG-TERM WE ARE NOT REPLICATING WHAT THE OTHER ASIAN ECONOMIES HAVE DONE AT THE SAME PACE AND WE ARE IN FACT MORE OR LESS IN THE SAME PLACE AS OUR NEIGHBOURS

SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

EU & Russia: Is reconciliation possible?

Relations between the European Union and Russia reached a stalemate post the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. This is not to say that they ever had good relations but the hope for reconciliation was nevertheless always on table. I seek to chart out the trajectory of Russia-EU relations over the decades while arguing that there are primarily two reasons for the decline i.e. ideological and economic.

The collapse of Soviet Union, followed shortly by the establishment of EU, laid the stage for a reordering of the pan-European space. Russia, being the most visible region of what then seemed like the new world order post the Cold War, was the natural candidate on which the EU sought to implement the new liberal and political values. The historical circumstances under which this relationship was forged gave some advantage to Russia. Thus, Russia could demand economic assistance as well as expect to be placated politically for ending the Cold War. Given the volatility of the relationship, EU was justifiably worried that Russia would revert back to authoritarianism and state-led economy if its demands were to remain unaccommodated. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed in 1994 under these circumstances. While the PCA was primarily economic, it did make reference to "democratic principles and human rights" in Article 2. This served as a topic of contention during negotiations as it granted EU

the right to terminate the agreement should it determine that there has been a breach of "European values."

The relationship stalled in early 2000s as Russia grew increasingly suspicious of EU. The Orange Revolution in Ukraine and EU's support for the same made Russia view EU as a regional competitor. It is only in 2010s that EU attempted to re-negotiate its relationship through the Partnership for Modernization (P4M). One of the central obstacles in forging a stable relationship is EU's tendency to implement its values on Russia. Unlike many other European nation-states, Russia has never conceded the importance of a value-based partnership or cultural similarities. This approach is primarily ideological. The P4M sought to address some of the ideological differences glimpsed in the PCA by attempting to make a strategic instead of a value-based partnership. For instance, it laid down the importance of trade by importing Russia's gas and oil while providing Russia access to European automobile companies. Nevertheless, contention still remained through the different understanding of "modernization" that both the parties adhered to. Putin seeks to restore Russia as a "great power" through modernization to reverse the humiliations of the breakdown of Soviet Union. While the former President Medvedev showed signs of being more accommodating of political and economic reforms, Putin

is known for his staunch statist and anti-Western approach. Modernization has historically been linked with economic and technical reforms as well as democratization. Discourse in Russia is almost exclusively focused on the economic. There is precedence for this model. Pyotr Stolypin, the Prime Minister of the Emperor Nicholas II, attempted modernization through reforming agriculture and encouraging foreign investment while also manipulating the parliament and ordering executions of political dissidents. The modernization acceptable to contemporary Russia is one that prioritizes economic and technological growth while also maintaining strong centralized state. This is often referred to as the "Russian idea" which posits Russia as entirely distinct from the West with its own superior norms and traditions. The historical experience of fascism and the holocaust in Europe makes EU prioritize democratization and human rights while Russia prioritizes the construction of a strong state and the instilling of national pride. The EU is 'post-modern' in its embrace of transnationalism and international administrative structures while Russia is a "modern" state in its embrace of realism, national pride and territorial integrity.

P4M was still moderately successful in re-opening a stalled relationship due to an emphasis on mutual dependence. This didn't last long as sanctions followed from the West and EU following the Russian invasion

of Ukraine. It was natural to expect the Russian economy to collapse under the effects of such sanctions. Russia's economy has often been characterized as suffering from the "Dutch disease" i.e. rapid growth in the oil and gas sector at the expense of others. Nevertheless, Russia's economy proved surprisingly resilient. This was due to multiple factors. Many Western politicians and analysts often overestimate the extent to which Russia is a state-led economy. This undermines the flexibility that Russian economy has exhibited often. To tackle with sanctions, Russian private companies created new supply chains via non-Western countries. Similarly, Putin ramped up spending and directed a third of its budget towards the war sector. The ruble was similarly devalued and markets were directed towards friendly countries like India and China.

This is not sustainable as the disastrous effects of war on economy will reflect soon enough followed by stagnancy in other sectors. Reconciliation with EU is unlikely but possible in the event that Russia fails to manage its economic crisis. However, it will no longer be possible solely on economic terms as Russia will have no choice but to promise democratization and respect for human rights in the aftermath of the Ukraine invasion in return for economic assistance.

The writer is a student of Global Affairs at Kings College London.



Anwesh Satpathy

RECONCILIATION WITH EU IS UNLIKELY BUT POSSIBLE IN THE EVENT THAT RUSSIA FAILS TO MANAGE ITS ECONOMIC CRISIS



Whatever has courage can give courage to others just as the flame of the candle can light up another.

THE MOTHER

Divided Region

What are the problems affecting those countries that made up pre-1947 India? There appear to be three important ones which are common to all three large South Asian nations. The first is poverty and insufficient economic growth. The second is an inward facing nationalism that is aimed at each nation's own minorities. The third is the tension between over-centralised States with vast regional disparities.

The first problem is clear to anyone who is familiar with the region. The per person national income or GDP of India in 2020 was \$1933, of Bangladesh \$2270 and of Pakistan \$1501. We should ignore the seasonal headlines that have marched us into superpower status. Each South Asian nation is only marginally ahead of or behind the other and nowhere close to Asian nations such as Korea (\$34000 in 2020), Japan (\$39000) or even China (\$10408). Any signalling about "fastest-growing economy" when it comes to India must be placed in this reality. In the long-term we are not replicating what the other Asian economies have done at the same pace and we are in fact more or less in the same place as our neighbours.

The second problem is again obvious to anyone who either lives in our parts or studies the area from the outside. It is remarkable how many scholars of India in the West have written recent books on the decline of secularism and pluralism here and how it has damaged us as a nation and will continue to do so in future. The same can be said of Pakistan and also about Bangladesh. Far too much national energy is expended on the persecution of minorities. Energy in terms of legislation, the media, the justice system and popular politics. And this is negative energy at that – meaning it is not productive and does not contribute to the nation except to take the focus away from important things. There is no point in repeating here what has been written and read and seen and heard a million times before. If one is unwilling to accept that this is today happening in India as much as it is in our neighbours there is little point in trying to convince such a person.

The third issue is less discussed and less understood, even by experts both inside India and outside. Perhaps one reason is that issue is for the moment in suspension till the census and the delimitation process are concluded. Apart from the reallocation of seats based on population, the other thing that the process will throw up is the sense of disempowerment felt by states.

In July 2023, the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation put out state-wise data on per person annual GDP at current prices. The southern states did better here with Andhra Pradesh (₹2.19 lakh), Kerala (₹2.28 lakh), Tamil Nadu (₹2.73 lakh), Karnataka (₹3.01 lakh) and Telangana (₹3.08 lakh) all above the national average. This can be compared with Bihar (₹1.49 lakh), Uttar Pradesh (₹1.70 lakh) and Madhya Pradesh (₹1.4 lakh).

A January 2024 paper by Bank of Baroda titled "State wise GST collections has variation" showed that the April-December 2023 collections for Uttar Pradesh (₹85,000 crore), Madhya Pradesh (₹34,993 crore) and Bihar (₹16,298 crore) were together just about the same as Karnataka (₹1.17 lakh crore).

Other than this wide and widening gap in income and contribution, there are other differences that are being emphasised in time. Resource allocation is one, and it is natural one to come up because distribution cannot follow the same pattern if India is to eliminate poverty and inequality.

States that contribute more per person to the national exchequer will get less per person so long as the disparity exists. Another difference is in terms of response to the second problem, of inward facing nationalisms or, to put it in another way, of majoritarian politics.

The south is less interested in this than the north. Though it is true that anti-minority politics has become more popular everywhere in India, including the south, some essential differences remain because on many issues southern focus is elsewhere.

In February 2022, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare published the status of the infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate in India. For every 1000 births, Kerala lost 6 infants and Karnataka 21. In Madhya Pradesh it was 46 and in Uttar Pradesh 41. The maternal mortality rate was 2 in Kerala and 17 in Uttar Pradesh. These are of course government figures and nobody disputes them. The differences are real.

The same problems affect Pakistan, which has enormous regional disparities of the sort that India has. Balochistan's per person GDP is less than half of its neighbour Sindh's. Punjab, a single province, has more than half the total national population. To address the imbalances, Pakistan will have to figure out something just as India and Bangladesh will have to.

Despite this, it is strange that our region remains divided and one of the least integrated parts of the world. Each country here seems to think its problems are unique and it will produce some special solution that will ignore what is happening around it.

The lessons of the Association of South East Asian Nations, which all have had nasty histories with each other but are economically integrated today, or of the European Union, hold little value for us. So what are the possible ways in which our region can address all of its three problems? I have something more to say about this in this column over the next few weeks.

WISDOM CORNER

The snow goose need not bathe to make itself white. Neither need you do anything but be yourself. LAO TZU

Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go. TS ELIOT

As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being. CARL JUNG

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



Coerced into combat

Sir, This refers to "16 Indians serving with Russian military missing," Orissa POST, Jan 18. By September last year, nine Indians had already lost their lives in Russian-Ukraine conflict. What makes this tragedy more painful is that none of these individuals were Russian citizens or enlisted soldiers. Around 100 Indians, currently in Russia, were recruited for civilian jobs like those of electricians, plumbers, and drivers, lured by promises of attractive salaries and perks. However, upon arrival, they were sent to the warfront after a few days of compulsory military training. Stripped of their passports and documents by unscrupulous recruiters, they were left with no choice but to comply with Russian Army orders. It is no surprise that these untrained and unwilling participants are cannon fodder in a war they neither support nor are equipped to fight. This is a humanitarian crisis for countries like India, whose citizens are being exploited. Despite India's historically strong ties with Russia and PM Narendra Modi's high-profile meetings with President Vladimir Putin, New Delhi has failed to ensure the safety of its citizens trapped in this situation. The larger question remains: Why should Indians, who went seeking better livelihoods, be sacrificed for Putin's war? N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

No safety concern

Sir, Jallikattu, the annual bull taming event in Tamil Nadu that takes place to mark the festival of "Pongal", has again claimed precious lives: 7 people, 6 of them being spectators, were killed and more than 400 injured, in different parts of the state. The event has always raised heckles among right-thinking people although the "sport" has found unflinching support among the traditionalists. While the correct way to participate in the event is to hold a bull's hump to take it to the finishing line, the unwritten rule is often violated, and the players, swayed by the frenzied crowd thronging the venues, often hold the animals by their neck or horns, violently pulling them around putting their as well as the lives of the bulls at stake. Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA



Women voters top agenda of all 3 parties

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 18: The race to woo women voters in Delhi Assembly elections has got hotter with the BJP manifesto unveiling many attractive welfare schemes for the 71.74 lakh women electors, who also figure in key poll promises made by the ruling AAP and the Congress.

The clout of women voters in Delhi elections can be gauged from the fact that in 31 seats of the 70 Assembly segments, women voter turnout was higher than men in 2020. In 28 of these 31 seats, the AAP emerged victorious – largely because of free travel on public buses announced by the Arvind Kejriwal government just one year before the Assembly election.

The trend of attracting Delhi's women voters through poll promises was started in 2008 by the then Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit who launched the 'Ladli' scheme under which ₹10,000 was deposited in the bank for the education of every girl child born in a family with an annual income less than ₹1 lakh.

For the current Assembly election February 5, the AAP took the lead in attracting wom-

en voters by promising ₹2,100 to women under the Mukhya Mantri Mahila Samman Yojana to women whose family income is less than ₹3 lakh per annum. The scheme's enrolment was also launched, however, the process ran into legal trouble with the Delhi government disowning it through public notices.

The BJP's 'Sankalp Patra', released by National President JP Nadda Friday, promised ₹2,500 monthly monetary assistance to women, matching the amount that the Delhi Congress has guaranteed to poor women.

The BJP has called the monthly assistance for women "Mahila Samridhhi Yojana" and the Congress has named it "Pyari Didi Yojana".

In the run-up to the voting day February 5, BJP leaders are making efforts to convince voters that it is their party which will honour the promise given to women. As proof, they are citing the monthly financial assistance being given in BJP-ruled states like – Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra.

Kejriwal claims that the free travel for women in pub-

DELHI POLLS



lic transport buses is a scheme which he has pioneered in the country. This scheme had a huge impact on the outcome of the 2020 election in which the AAP came to power for the third time.

Kejriwal Friday sought to expand the scheme to attract young voters by offering free bus travel to students and proposing a 50 per cent discount on Metro rail fare.

The BJP also wants to remain in the good books of poor women voters, and it has announced that all public welfare schemes in Delhi, including free bus

travel, will continue if its party forms the next government after the February 5 election.

"We will make the schemes free of corruption and strengthen them," said Nadda Friday, without specifically mentioning the free water and power schemes that both the AAP and Congress have highlighted repeatedly.

The BJP's manifesto has also promised one-time financial assistance of ₹21,000 and six nutritional kits to pregnant women, besides ₹5,000 for the first child and ₹6,000 for the second child. These promises appear to be on

the lines of the benefits offered in the rest of the country under the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana – which was not available in the city.

The Delhi Congress has promised to ease women's monthly household spending by offering a free monthly ration kit.

A monthly ration kit containing 5 kg rice, 2 kg sugar, 1-litre cooking oil, 6 kg pulses and 250 gm tea will be given free to all the poor, said Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav.

Yadav said that nearly 17 lakh families in Delhi will benefit from the promised ₹500 LPG cylinder every month.

The party has also guaranteed ₹8,500 monthly financial internship-cum-assistance to educated, jobless youth for a period of one month.

On the subsidised food front, the BJP has announced the Atal Canteens will be set up in every slum where a full meal will be offered at just ₹5.

The BJP has promised that its government will provide a ₹500 subsidy on LPG cylinders, along with two free cylinders on Diwali and Holi.

7th Delhi Assembly met for 74 days over 5 years: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: The 7th Delhi Assembly convened for just 74 days over its five-year term, the lowest number compared to all previous assemblies, according to a report by the think tank PRS Legislative Research.

The report states that the Assembly sessions were called every year and divided into several parts. Within each year, sessions were adjourned without prorogation and were divided into parts. This resulted in the House meeting for only one or two days on several occasions, the report said.

While the Lieutenant Governor summons and prorogues sessions, it is the Speaker who calls for sittings during a session, the report added.

The first session of the 7th Delhi Assembly began February 20, 2020, and was prorogued March 3, 2021, after being held in five parts.

The second session commenced March 3, 2021, and was prorogued March 8, 2022, after four parts.

The third session began March 8, 2022, and was prorogued March 9, 2023, also after four parts.

The fourth session was called March 9, 2023, and prorogued February 7, 2024, again held in four parts. The fifth session was called February 7, 2024, and has not been prorogued yet.



OVER THE FIVE YEARS, ONLY 14 BILLS WERE PASSED, THE LOWEST NUMBER SINCE ALL ITS PREVIOUS TERMS

OF THE 14 BILLS, FIVE WERE RELATED TO THE SALARIES OF LEGISLATORS

THE QUESTION HOUR WAS HELD ON JUST NINE DAYS DURING THE TOTAL OF 74 SITTING DAYS

Over the five years, only 14 Bills were passed, the lowest number since all its previous terms. Of the 14 Bills, five were related to the salaries of legislators. All the bills were either passed on the same day or the next day, the report noted.

The Question Hour was held on just nine days during the total of 74 sitting days.

Between 2020 and 2025, MLAs asked an average of 219 questions per year. In contrast, between 2019 and 2024, MPs in the Lok Sabha asked an average of 8,200 questions annually. Delhi will go to polls February 5, with votes to be counted February 8.

After 14 yrs, lioness gives birth in Mumbai's SGNP



Mumbai: In a first in 14 years, a lion cub was born at Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP), marking the success of its captive breeding programme, an official said Saturday. The cub was born to lioness Manasi at the national park Thursday night, the official said. The SGNP procured a pair of lions, Manas and Manas, last year in exchange for two tigers as a part of the zoo exchange programme as per the guidelines of the Central Zoo Authority. The big cats were integral part of the captive lion safari and the breeding programme. Dr Vinaya Jangle and a team of caretakers are monitoring the mother and cub 24x7. The lioness is doing good and nursing the cub well, he said.

Attack on Saif highly mysterious: Saamana

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Jan 18: The Shiv Sena UBT mouthpiece Saamana in its editorial Saturday said that the brutal attack on Bollywood superstar Saif Ali Khan has not just exposed the deteriorating law and order situation but also shown how Mumbai is becoming unsafe by the day.

"The attack on the Padma Shri awardee, who is not just an actor but a son of cricket doyen Mansoor Ali Pataudi and also leading actress Sharmila Tagore, is not just shocking but highly mysterious. What is more, the manner in which the attacker breached the security system and ran away after attacking Saif Ali Khan is further increasing the suspense in the entire case," the editorial said. It also raised serious doubts

over the efficiency of the Mumbai Police, considered as one of the best and often compared to Scotland Yard.

After the Opposition raised serious questions on Mumbai's safety, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis lectured them not to defame Mumbai assuring that no one will be spared as the police are investigating the case.

"What is happening in Mumbai is not good. An accused of bank fraud and other crimes comes to Fadnavis' 'Sagar' bungalow and lifts him on his shoulders in celebration of the victory of the MahaYuti. Fadnavis feeds him sweets. The same criminal talks about picking up a Marathi man named Gajbhau, who is active on social media, and Fadnavis pretends as if nothing has happened."



"In Beed, people come out on the streets in support of the accused and the mastermind of the murder of that sarpanch, Deshmukh sits in the Cabinet, like there is no fear of law," says the editorial.

"Baba Siddique was murdered on the streets of Mumbai. Rape and Koita (sickle) gang terrorised the people of Pune. Cases of sexual harassment have increased in Nagpur. Seeing all this, doesn't the home minister inside Fadnavis

wake up?" it asks.

"What happened in Saif's case is happening every day in Mumbai, but since Saif is an actor and Taimur's father, the knife of this incident pierced everyone's heart."

"About a fortnight ago, the Kapoor family and their son-in-law Saif met and talked to Prime Minister Modi. PM Modi made special enquiries about Taimur. Saif was happy to meet Modi, but within 15 days, Saif was attacked." "The appointments in the Mumbai Police are not made on efficiency criteria but purely based on proximity to the BJP. Due to this the situation in the metropolis is alarming."

"Is Mumbai safe? Let the people understand for once whether the security of Mumbai is at the mercy of God," the Saamana editorial concluded.

AAP screens trailer of 'banned' docu

Party vows to take it to every Delhi voter

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Jan 18: The AAP Saturday screened a trailer of its controversial documentary film 'Unbreakable' at its office and vowed to take the 'banned' film to every Delhiite to expose the alleged conspiracy of the BJP and the Delhi Police to stop its private screening.

Within hours of Delhi Police preventing the screening of the film in the afternoon in Central Delhi, Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj screened the trailer during a media briefing and said, "Now, we will ensure that the film reaches the masses." "Surely, there is something explosive in the film that attempts are



being made to stop its screening," said Bharadwaj, claiming that it was a private screening to which media and some AAP leaders, including him, were invited.

The 90-second trailer screened by Bharadwaj captures comments of former chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann and AAP MP Sandeep Kumar Pathak, apart from footage of election rallies addressed by the former Delhi chief minister.

The trailer highlights Kejriwal's interview in which he talks about fighting loneliness in prison where he was sent after being arrested in connection with a money laundering case linked to the now-withdrawn Delhi excise policy.

At one point in the trailer, Kejriwal says that he was not provided insulin in jail for 15 days, threatening his life. In one of the scenes, Pathak is shown questioning if there was a plan to kill Kejriwal while keeping him behind bars.

Earlier, Kejriwal hit out at the Delhi Police and the BJP for foiling the film-maker's plans to screen the documentary for media persons.

Chris, Dakota visit Babulnath temple ahead of Coldplay's Mumbai concert



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 18: Ahead of Coldplay's first concert in Navi Mumbai, the band's lead singer, Chris Martin, and his girlfriend, Hollywood star Dakota Johnson, offered

Dakota is seen whispering in the ears of Nandi, the sacred bull statue associated with Lord Shiva.

Martin, 47, was dressed in a traditional blue kurta, while Johnson wore a printed suit and covered her head with a dupatta. Their joint appearance comes months after rumours of the couple's breakup. Martin and Johnson have been dating since 2017.

The Hollywood star, known for movies such as The Social Network, Suspiria, and The Lost Daughter, is accompanying Martin for Coldplay's 'Music of the Spheres World Tour' in India, which will begin Saturday with their first show at DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai.

prayers at the famous Babulnath Temple. Several videos going viral on social media showed Martin and Johnson visiting the renowned temple dedicated to Lord Shiva Friday. In one of the videos, 35-year-old

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, CUTTACK
 E-mail I.D. : rw_cuttack@yahoo.co.in, Ph. No. 0671-2440662 / Fax No. 0671-2440653

1st Corrigendum
 No.O-1295 : In respect of the Tender Call Notice No. Tender Online-RWD/13/2024-25 dt.06.01.2025 through eProcurement, the date & time rescheduled due to unavoidable circumstances.

Sl. No.	Period of completion	As per Notice	Reschedule
1.	Date & time of sale & receipt of bid document online	From : Dt.15.01.2025 at 11.00 A.M. To : Dt.22.01.2025 at 5.00 P.M.	From : Dt.15.01.2025 at 11.00 A.M. To : Dt.28.01.2025 at 5.00 P.M.
2.	Date & time of seeking of tender clarification	Dt.21.01.2025 at 5.00 P.M.	Dt.27.01.2025 at 5.00 P.M.
3.	Date & time of opening of bids	Dt.24.01.2025 at 11.00 A.M.	Dt.29.01.2025 at 11.00 A.M.

All other things in the Tender Call Notice remain unaltered.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
 Rural Works Division, Cuttack

OIPR-25053/11/0024/2425

यूनियन बैंक Union Bank of India
Regional Office: Bhubaneswar
 3/1 A, Civic Centre, IRC Village, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar - 751015, Ph.: 0674-2541936/2538502

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

This is to inform the public that in spite of repeated reminders the following gold loan borrowers have not repaid their loan. If they do not repay their outstanding debts including interest before the auction, their gold ornaments will be auctioned at the premises of our Concerned Branches on 07.02.2025 at 11.00 A.M. The Bank will not be liable for any inconvenience or loss to the borrowers and the Bank will take legal action against them if the Bank losses where necessary. Borrowers can take their Jewellery by repaying the outstanding debts including interest before the auction take place.

Sl. No.	Name of the Borrower(s) / Gold Loan A/c No.	Outstanding as on specified Date	Net Weight (in Gram)	Gross Weight (in Gram)
RUPALI SQUARE BRANCH				
1.	Bijay Kumar Jena / 105816540000133	₹32,242/- + interest thereon	7.10	7.55
2.	Dibya Darshan Sahoo / 105816540000141	₹85,232/- + interest thereon	18.20	22.80
3.	P. Prakash / 105816540000339	₹72,685.14 + interest thereon	15.50	18.15
OMFED SQUARE BRANCH				
1.	Krupasindhu Muduli / 588906540000274	₹20,788/- + interest thereon	5.90	6.95
2.	Sanjay Pradhan / 588906540000426	₹97,650/- + interest thereon	23.05	28.35
MAHURA BRANCH				
1.	Shatrujeet Swain / 732806540000052	₹98,025/- + interest thereon	22.5	30.1

Person willing to participate in the auction should obey the following rules:

- Person willing to participate in the auction must deposit Rs.5,000/- in the form of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) alongwith valid KYC before two hours of the scheduled auction time.
- After depositing the EMD, person who willing to participate in the auction can inspect the ornaments.
- The person who make the highest offer shall have to deposit full amount of the said offer immediately in the Bank. After making the highest offer, if the person unable to deposit full amount of the said offer, then his EMD will be forfeited and that person will not be allowed to participate in the auction process further.
- Auction for another account will begin only after the auction and amount deposit of one account have been completed.
- The Bank is not Bound to accept any auction calls. The Bank may cancel the auction without assigning any reason therefor.
- The person whose highest bid will be accepted by the Branch Office of the Union Bank of India will be compelled to deposit full auction amount immediately after receiving the notice of confirmation of the auction. Otherwise EMD deposit will be forfeited.
- If Union Bank of India, Branch Office cancel/postpone any higher Bid, then EMD amount will refunded to the depositor without any interest.
- Union Bank of India will not held responsible in any manner for the quality, weight and purity of the ornaments pledged for auction.
- Bank will forfeit the EMD Deposit Amount if any person does not obey the above rules.
- The highest bidder shall pay the GST amount at the rate of 3% over and above the bidding amount.

Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 18.01.2025

Authorised Officer
 Union Bank of India

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KUCHINDA
 No.O-1285 E-mail : eerw_kuchinda@yahoo.com

"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works
 Identification No. Online Tender / 10 / RWD, Kuchinda / 2024-25

1. Name of the work	: Road Works
2. Total Number of Works	: 03 Nos.
3. Class of Contractor	: B, C & D Class of Contractor
4. Period of Completion	: 02 calendar months
5. Availability of Tender online For bidding	: Dt.18.01.2025 to Dt.27.01.2025
6. Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	: Dt.26.01.2025 at 5.00 A.M.
7. Date & time of opening of tender	: Dt.28.01.2025 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 (IC)
 Rural Works Division, Kuchinda

OIPR-25151/11/0019/2425

एनटीपीसी NTPC Limited
 (A Govt. of India Enterprise)

NOTICE
 Registered Office Address: NTPC Bhawan, Core-7, SCOPE Complex, 7-Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003
 Corporate Identification Number: L40101DL19750G007966

The petitioner above named has made an application before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, New Delhi for determination of tariff of Farakka Super Thermal Power Station Stage-I&II (1600 MW) from 01.04.2024 to 31.03.2029.

- The beneficiaries of the generating station are:
 - West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited, Viduyt Bhawan, Block-DJ, Sector-II, Salt Lake City, Kolkata - 700091
 - Bihar State Power Holding Company Limited (erstwhile Bihar State Electricity Board), Viduyt Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna - 800 001.
 - Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Limited, Engineering Building, HEC Township, Durgam, Ranchi-834004.
 - Grid Corporation of Orissa Limited, 24, Janpath, Bhubaneswar - 751007
 - Haryana Power Purchase Centre, Shakti Bhawan, Sector - 6, Panchkula Haryana - 134109
 - Power Department, Govt. of Sikkim, Kazi Road, Gangtok, Sikkim - 737 101.
 - Tamil Nadu Generation & Distribution Corporation Ltd. (TANGEDCO) 144, Anna Salai, Chennai - 600002
 - Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL), THE MALL, Patiala - 147001
 - Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited, Shakti Bhawan 14, Ashok Marg, Lucknow-226001
 - Power Development Department, Govt of J&K Govt. of J&K Secretariat, Srinagar
 - Assam Power Distribution Company Limited, Bijulee Bhawan, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati - 782001
 - BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019
 - BSES Yamuna Power Limited, Shakti Kiran Bldg., Karkardooma, Delhi
 - Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited, 33 KV Sub Station Bldg., Hudson Lane, Kingsway Camp, New Delhi
 - Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Limited, Viduyt Bhawan, Janpath, Jaipur - 302005 (Rajasthan)
- Capacity of the generating station: 1600 MW (3*200 MW + 2*500 MW)
- Approved capital cost of the project: Rs 3406.48 Crore
- Authority which has approved the Capital Cost: CERC
- Scheduled date of commercial operation: Not Applicable
- Actual date of commercial operation of Station: 01.07.1996
- Capital cost on date of commercial operation of Station: Not Applicable
- Details of tariff:

Particulars	Tariff for the previous year*	Year-wise tariff sought to be determined				
		2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
1.Capacity Charges (Rs.Lakh/ year)	163167.37	155677.77	156733.60	158288.58	159061.80	158720.74
2. Energy Charges (Rs./kWh)	3.939		3.432			

*As per Petition for triung-up of tariff for 2019-24 period for Farakka Super Thermal Power Station Stage-I&II (1600 MW) filed before Hon'ble CERC

- A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of NTPC, namely www.ntpc.co.in under the Tab "Notices".
- The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the application may be filed by any person, including the beneficiaries through e-filing portal of the Commission, with a copy to the Petitioner within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place : Noida (U.P.)
Date : 03.12.2024

(Prashant Chaturvedi)
 Addl. General Manager (Comml.)

Leading the Power Sector



“The SVAMITVA scheme is an important step towards making villages self-reliant because only when villages are strong and self-reliant, the country will become self-reliant and developed”
BHAJANLAL SHARMA | RAJASTHAN CM

SCIENTIFIC BALLOON FRENZY

A balloon with a scientific payload fell in a village in this district in Karnataka Saturday creating panic among the people there, sources said. Later it was found that the equipment was launched by Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), from Hyderabad



of the day note

Andhra Pradesh, Chief Minister We also worked with the NDA earlier, between 2014 and 2019. I do not doubt that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, India will become the number one or two economy by 2047, and my ambition is to see Telugu people in the number one position globally
N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | AP CM

Ownership of land often becomes difficult to prove, leading to an increase in legal cases and hindering the development process
DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA CM

Under Modi 3.0, we have added 6 crore people above 70 under Ayushman Bharat. Now, more than 62 crore people, or over 45 per cent of India's population, are covered, not in health insurance but under a 'health assurance' scheme with an annual coverage of ₹5 lakh
JP NADDA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

ATTACK ON SAIF ALI KHAN

Suspect detained in Ch'garh



The person, whose photo had been shared by Mumbai Police with the Railway Protection Force (RPF), was traveling by the Jnaneshwari Express which runs between Mumbai Lokmanya Tilak Terminus to Kolkata Shalimar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 18: Two days after Bollywood star Saif Ali Khan was stabbed at his Mumbai home during a robbery bid, a 31-year-old suspect was Saturday detained at the Durg railway station in Chhattisgarh, officials said.

The person, whose photo had been shared by Mumbai Police with the Railway Protection Force (RPF), was traveling by the Jnaneshwari Express which runs between Mumbai Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT) to Kolkata Shalimar.

Aakash Kailash Kannoja, the detained man, was "still a suspect", Mumbai police said in a statement later, adding that further action will be taken after due verification.

Earlier Friday, a carpenter had been held as he resembled the screengrab of the suspected assailant from the CCTV footage at the actor's building, but he was released later as he was found to have no link to the crime. Saif Ali Khan, 54, grievously injured

in the attack in the wee hours of Thursday, was recovering well at Mumbai's Lilavati Hospital and could be discharged in two-three days, according to the doctors.

Mumbai Police, who had formed 30 teams to nab the assailant and recovered CCTV footage showing a suspect's face, informed RPF at Durg around 12.30 pm Saturday that a suspect was travelling by the Jnaneshwari Express.

RPF Durg alerted its counterpart at Rajnandgaon station (which comes before Durg on Mumbai-Howrah route) but the suspect could not be located when the train halted there, an RPF official said. He was found in the front general compartment at Durg station. He was made to talk to police officials in Mumbai through video call. He was presently kept at RPF Post Durg, and a Mumbai police team would be reaching Chhattisgarh soon, officials said.

Mumbai Police Friday had collected CCTV footage from

a mobile shop in Dadar visited by the alleged suspect following the incident.

"He purchased a pair of ear-phones for ₹50," said Hasan, who works at the shop 'Iqra', speaking to PTI Videos.

Saif Ali Khan, who has acted in films such as "Omkaara", "Kal Ho Naa Ho", "Dil Chahta Hai" as well as Netflix series "Sacred Games", was stabbed by the intruder multiple times during Thursday's incident inside his 12th floor apartment at 'Satguru Sharan' building in the upscale Bandra West area of Mumbai. Doctors said the Bollywood actor, who has been shifted out of the ICU, is able to walk and having normal diet.

"We are observing his progress, and he is doing excellently well according to our expectations. As per his progress, we have advised him bed rest, and if he is comfortable, then in two to three days we will discharge him," neurosurgeon Dr Nitin Dange who operated on him had said Friday.

Saif's wife and actor Kareena Kapoor Khan told police in her statement that the intruder got aggressive when confronted, but did not touch jewellery kept in the open, said an official. A senior police official said the attack seemed to be a "stray incident." "The intruder was not working for any gang, as per the prima facie investigation. He probably was not even aware whose house he had entered," the official added.

CCTV footage showed the suspected assailant, wearing a red scarf and carrying a backpack, scurrying down the stairs from the sixth floor of 'Satguru Sharan' around 2.30 am Thursday.

Maharashtra Minister of State for Home Yogesh Kadam has said that robbery was the motive and no underworld gang was involved.

CYBERCRIME INVESTIGATIONS

India, US seal pact to enhance cooperation



The agreement on cybercrime investigations, signed in Washington Friday, allows the agencies concerned of the two countries to step up the level of cooperation with respect to cyber threat intelligence and digital forensics, according to an Indian readout

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: Days before it hands over power to President-elect Donald Trump, the Biden administration signed a pact with New Delhi that provides for boosting cooperation in combating cybercrime and related challenges such as terror financing and violent extremism.

The agreement on cybercrime investigations, signed in Washington Friday, allows the agencies concerned of the two countries to step up the level of cooperation with respect to cyber threat intelligence and digital forensics, according to an Indian readout.

It is the second such move in the last few days by the outgo-

ing Biden administration that reflected the overall upward trajectory of relations between the two nations.

The US Wednesday removed restrictions on three Indian nuclear entities - Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), Indira Gandhi Atomic Research Centre (IGCAR) and the Indian Rare Earths (IRE). The lifting of the restrictions is aimed at implementation of the historic India-US civil nuclear deal sealed around 16 years ago.

The Memorandum of Understanding or MoU on cybercrime investigations was signed by Indian Ambassador Vinay Kwatra and Acting US Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security Kristie Canegallo.

"Cybercrime has intricate linkages with the common security challenges faced by India and the US such as terrorism and violent extremism, terror financing, drug trafficking, organised crime, human trafficking, illegal migration, money laundering and transportation security," the MEA said in the readout.

"The MoU on cybercrime investigations will enable further strengthening of India-US security cooperation, as part of our comprehensive and global strategic partnership," it said.

Rahul visits BPSC protest site in Patna

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Jan 18: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Saturday threw his weight behind the protest against alleged irregularities in BPSC exams, by visiting the site of the nearly a month-old agitation here and spending several minutes with aggrieved students.

After Gandhi wined up his pre-decided engagements, during which he also made a veiled reference to the protests with the remark "Bihar has been converted into a centre of paper leaks", a delegation of students called on him at a hotel. The delegation urged him to visit Gardani Bagh where several aspirants have been on a round-the-clock protest seeking cancellation of Combined Competitive Exam held last month.

Suman Saurabh, a student from Sitamarhi, who was part of the delegation, told PTI video, "We urged Rahul Gandhi to visit Gardani Bagh which is our 'dharmabhoomi' and 'karmabhoomi'. He said he will take some time off. As the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, he is known to the entire nation and his support means a lot to us." Gandhi squatted in the midst of young men and women who have been carrying on their 'dharna' under a makeshift tent. He was seen patiently listening to the candidates who raised slogans "We want a re-exam" and also highlighted their anguish over the Nitish Kumar government in Bihar failing to give them a hearing."

MUDA SCAM

BJP DEMANDS SIDDARAMAIAH TO STEP DOWN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Jan 18: The BJP Saturday demanded that Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah step down immediately in the backdrop of the ED attaching 142 MUDA units of immovable assets.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Friday provisionally attached 142 immovable properties, with a market value of about ₹300 crore, under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, in connection with a case involving Siddaramaiah and others. "If CM @siddaramaiah values the integrity of his office, he must step down immediately and allow an impartial probe to proceed. The people of Karnataka deserve transparency, accountability, and justice," BJP state president B Y Vijayendra said in a post on 'X'.

The Shikaripura MLA described the development as a significant victory in the fight against the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment scam. Explaining the MUDA scam, the ED alleged, "Siddaramaiah used his political influence to secure compensation of 14 sites (plots) in his wife B M Parvathi's name in exchange for 3 acres and 16 guntas of land acquired by MUDA.

SHORT TAKES

Man dies after consuming acid

Mangaluru (Karnataka): A man from Nellur Kemraje village shot his wife dead and ended his life by consuming acid used for rubber processing, police said Saturday. Ramachandra Gowda killed his wife, Vinoda Kumari, Friday night. He later ingested rubber acid and died shortly after, according to the police. Gowda, reportedly an alcoholic, frequently quarrelled with his family members, including his parents, wife, and son, during his nightly bouts of intoxication.

Curbs on flight ops at Delhi airport

New Delhi: Delhi airport operator DIAL Saturday said there will be no flight arrivals and departures between 10.20 am and 12.45 pm for the next eight days till January 26 in view of the Republic Day week. Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) is the country's busiest airport and handles around 1,300 flight movements daily. Details about the impact of the curbs on the earlier scheduled flights of various airlines could not be immediately ascertained.

Woman hacked to death by son

Kozhikode (Kerala): A 53-year-old woman was allegedly hacked to death by her son in Thamarassery, police said Saturday. The tragic incident took place at the home of Subaida's sister in Puthuppady, where she had been resting after undergoing major surgery, they said. The deceased woman's son, Aashiq (24) had recently returned from Bengaluru. Authorities have stated that he was a drug addict and had been receiving treatment for his addiction in Bangalore.

6 Rohingya women arrested in Tripura

Agartala: Six Rohingya women were arrested in Tripura's Unakoti district Saturday morning, police said. They were arrested from Saprikandi village in Kailashahar subdivision when they were on the way back to Bangladesh after spending a considerable amount of time in Bangalore.

BSF: Farmers clash on India-Bangladesh border



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Malda (WB), Jan 18: Tension erupted on the India-Bangladesh border near a BSF border outpost Saturday morning after an altercation between farmers from both countries escalated into a brief clash, the paramilitary force said.

However, prompt intervention by the Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) ensured that the situation was swiftly brought under control, a BSF statement said. The incident took place at the same Sukdevpur border outpost area, where fencing work was briefly paused January 6 after the BGB

claimed it was being conducted on Bangladeshi territory. However, the issue was then resolved through discussions, and construction resumed without further disruptions the next day.

According to a BSF statement on Saturday, the brief clash occurred around 11:45 am near Sukdevpur Border outpost area, when Indian farmers working near the international border accused Bangladeshi farmers of stealing crops. The verbal argument quickly spiraled, with farmers from both sides gathering in large numbers, hurling abuses, and pelting stones at each other.

In a statement, the paramilitary force said, "The situation was immediately brought under control following timely intervention by BSF and BGB personnel. Farmers from both sides were dispersed and sent back to their respective territories. There have been no reports of injuries in the incident."



A 'Naga sadhu' clicks selfies at the Sangam area during the Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

Import of refurbished medical devices not allowed: CDSCO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: In a move aimed at curtailing the influx of unregulated second-hand medical devices in the country, the apex drug regulator Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has informed the Customs Department that import of refurbished devices is not allowed.

In a letter to the principal commissioner of Customs, the CDSCO said that all medical devices are regulated under the Medical Devices Rules, 2017. "However, there is no specific provision for regulation of refurbished medical devices under the said rules. Hence, no licence is issued for import of such devices and it cannot be imported under Medical Devices Rules for sale and distribution," the CDSCO said.



Manufacturers of medical devices have welcomed the move, stating this decisive clarification reinforces the regulatory framework designed to ensure the highest standards of patient safety. Dr Sudhir Srivastava, former Chair of the Medical Device Committee at PHDCCI, said that the decision by CDSCO marks a pivotal step towards reinforcing India's self-reliance in medical technology.

By curbing refurbished imports, we not only protect the integrity of our medical ecosystem but also send a strong message to global investors that India is committed to building a robust, indigenous medical device industry. This move safeguards both the future of healthcare innovation in India and the well-being of our patients

DR SUKHIR SRIVASTAVA

"cutting-edge solutions tailored to our healthcare needs", he said. "By curbing refurbished imports, we not only protect the integrity of our medical ecosystem but also send a strong message to global investors that India is committed to building a robust, indigenous medical device industry. This move safeguards both the future of healthcare innovation in India and the well-being of our patients," he added. Gaurav Agarwal, Managing Director, Innvolution Healthcare, said that CDSCO's decisive clarification reinforces the regulatory framework designed to ensure the highest standards of patient safety while creating a robust environment for the growth of indigenous manufacturing. "By eliminating ambiguity, CDSCO has further strengthened the push towards self-reliance, innovation, and quality in India's medical technology sector, perfectly aligning with the 'Make in India' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiatives. "Innvolution Healthcare remains committed to supporting these national objectives by delivering cutting-edge, locally manufactured solutions that enhance healthcare de-

livery and patient outcomes. We look forward to continued collaboration with regulators and stakeholders to advance India's position as a global leader in medical technology," Agarwal said. Vishwaprasad Alva, Founder and Managing Director, Skanray Technologies, said that import of used medical equipment was an error that the government corrected. "It's the right move. India being a large nation and a growing market, apart from becoming a dumping ground for old unsafe medical equipment, we would have also become an e-waste destination for the world. The government seems to be sensitive and serious about world class healthcare and also helping homegrown manufacturing and research and development infrastructure", Alva said.

national



The basic goal of our party is to revive Mahatma Gandhi's ideology in the era of Godse... Bedari Karwaan is a campaign based on Gandhi's ideology
PRASHANT KISHOR | JSP FOUNDER

ESCAPED UNDERTRIAL KILLED IN ENCOUNTER

An undertrial, who shot at policemen while escaping from custody three days ago, was killed in an encounter in West Bengal's Uttar Dinajpur district early Saturday, a senior officer said



of the day quote

The aim of the caste census is not just to know about the count of various castes but their participation in the country's wealth as well... We don't want a caste survey like the Bihar government did. The exercise which the Bihar government had done was just to befoul people

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

I consider it my good fortune to have taken a bath in the Prayagraj Sangam today. This is a spiritual and cultural mega festival of Indianness. It should not be seen in association with any sect, community, or religion. If anyone wants to understand India and Indianness, they should come and see the Maha Kumbh

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

The appeal of the Shiv Sena is growing beyond Maharashtra. Activists from states like Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and districts such as Nipahad, Peth, Dindori-Nashik, Kalyan, Mumbai, and Nagpur are joining the party. This reflects the resonance of Balasaheb Thackeray's ideology

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHA DY CM

Docs vow to continue protests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 18: Doctors from various hospitals in Kolkata staged a protest rally here Saturday expressing dissatisfaction with the conviction of prime accused Sanjay Roy in the RG Kar rape-murder case and demanded that the CBI bring to justice all those allegedly involved in the crime. Junior and senior doctors from city-based state-run hospitals, including RG Kar hospital, who took out a rally from outside the Sealdah court, said their protest would continue until the truth behind the crime was fully revealed. "While Sanjay has been convicted, what about the other culprits? How could he have committed this crime alone? The CBI's probe was based on circumstantial evidence, but where is the place of occurrence? We still have unanswered questions," junior doctor Aniket Mahato said. The agitating doctors also questioned why the central probe agency did not file any supplementary chargesheet. "Where is the supplementary

RG KAR CASE



that they would file one quickly," another agitating doctor Asfakullah Naiya asked. The doctors raised 20 key questions about the case, which they claimed remain 'unanswered,' and pointed out that the crime scene had been tampered with. "There is clear evidence of this. Also, what explains the presence of multiple semen

TMC seeks 'death penalty' for convict

Kolkata: The ruling TMC in West Bengal Saturday welcomed the conviction of Sanjay Roy in the rape and murder of the doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, calling for the "death penalty" to set a strong precedent. A trial court in Sealdah found Roy, a civic volunteer, guilty of raping and murdering the on-duty doctor at the state-run hospital August 9. The court is set to pronounce the sentence Monday. Senior TMC MP Sougata Roy told PTI, "The ruling must be followed by the harshest punishment possible for Roy." "This will not only serve as a warning to others who think they can get away with lawlessness but also restore people's faith in the system. We need to ensure that such actions are met with the strongest deterrent," he said.

with this conviction. This is actually to help others who were equally involved in the crime. We will continue to hit the streets till justice is delivered and the bigger conspiracy is exposed," Goswami said.

RAJOURI DEATHS

Inter-ministerial team to probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: Union Home Minister Amit Shah has ordered the constitution of an inter-ministerial team to visit a village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district to ascertain the causes of deaths in three incidents in the past six weeks. The team will be headed by a senior Union Home Ministry officer and consist of experts from the ministries of health and family welfare, agriculture, chemicals and fertilisers, and water resources, according to an official statement. The team will also be assisted by experts from the animal husbandry, food safety and forensic science labs. The central team will proceed Sunday and, in collaboration with the local administration, also work on providing immediate relief as well as taking precautionary measures to prevent such inci-

At least 16 people have died of a mysterious illness in the Budhal village of Rajouri district in the past 45 days

dents in the future, according to the statement. Experts from some of the most reputable institutions in the country have been arranged to manage the situation and understand the causes of the deaths. At least 16 people have died of a mysterious illness in the Budhal village of Rajouri district in the past 45 days. Earlier, a Jammu and Kashmir government spokesperson said investigations and samples empirically indicated that the incidents were not due to a communicable disease of bacterial or viral origin and that there is no public health angle.

AAP claims Kejriwal's car attacked by BJP workers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: The AAP Saturday alleged that party chief Arvind Kejriwal's car was attacked by BJP supporters during campaigning in the New Delhi constituency. "Supporters of BJP's New Delhi candidate Parvesh Verma attacked Kejriwal during campaigning in the constituency," an AAP leader said. Denying the AAP's charges, the BJP claimed that some party workers were attacked by AAP volunteers. Verma was heading to Lady Hardinge hospital to meet injured party workers, BJP leaders said. Later, in a post on X, BJP's Verma alleged that Kejriwal's vehicle hit two youths. "Arvind Kejriwal hit two youths with his vehicle. Both were taken to Lady



Hardinge hospital. Seeing imminent defeat, (he) forgot the price of human lives," Verma said in the post. Police said that no one pelted stones at the Kejriwal's car but some people were trying to show black flags to the former chief minister, who were immediately removed from the spot. In a purported video of the incident, Kejriwal can be seen sitting in a vehicle with police personnel clearing the route for it. A man waving a black piece of cloth and a stone hurled towards the vehicle were also seen in the video clip.

CENTRE OFFERS MEETING AGITATING FARMERS FEB 14

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

CHANDIGARH: The Centre has proposed a meeting with the protesting farmers February 14 in Chandigarh to discuss their demands, a senior official of the Union government said Saturday. Following the announcement, farmer leaders appealed to fasting farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal, whose fast-unto-death entered 54th day Saturday, to take medical aid so that he can participate in the proposed meeting. A delegation of Central government officials led by joint secretary rank officer Priya Ranjan met Dallewal at Khanauri and held a meeting with the representatives of Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha. Earlier, farmers protesting at the Khanauri and Shambhu border points between Punjab and Haryana Saturday said they have received a proposal from the central government which they will discuss.

India joins mega naval wargame La Perouse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: The Indian Navy is participating in a mega wargame along with naval forces from eight nations including the US and France against the backdrop of increasingly fractious geopolitical environment and China's military muscle-flexing in the Indo-Pacific. The naval exercise 'La Perouse' is underway in the straits between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean

as well as Malacca, Sunda and Lombok. These straits are largely considered as very crucial for global maritime trade. The nine-day exercise that began January 16 aims to enhance cooperation among the participating nations in areas of maritime surveillance, interdiction operations, air operations and information sharing. French Carrier Strike Group (CSG), led by nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Charles De Gaulle, is the mainstay of the mega exercise.

POST OF THE DAY

Movie on Modi - Allowed. Movie on Savarkar - Allowed. Movie on Manmohan Singh - showing him weak - Allowed. Movie on Modi by BBC exposing truth - Banned. Now, Documentary on AAP & it's leaders - Banned. Why not let We - the People of India decide what to watch & what Not to?

@iArpitSpeaks

Man 'kills' wife, son, survives suicide bid

Pune: A 45-year-old man Saturday allegedly killed his wife and minor son by administering them a heavy dose of sleeping pills before attempting suicide due to "harassment" by moneylenders, police said here. The man, Vaibhav Hande from Chikhali near Pune city, is being treated in a hospital and police have booked four persons, identified as Santosh Kadam, Surekha Kadam, Santosh Pawar and Javed Khan, in connection with the deaths, the official said. In his complaint, Vaibhav said he gave several sleeping pills to his wife Shubhangi Hande, 36, and their 9-year-old son Dhanraj in the morning, resulting in their death. Vaibhav then tried to hang himself from a ceiling fan in their flat. Vaibhav Friday night had sent a note on the mobile phone of his 14-year-old son, whom he had sent to his relative's place in Mumbai, detailing his plan.



A farmer prepares an agricultural land for paddy cultivation, in Nadia district, West Bengal

OFFICE OF THE SR. GENERAL MANAGER (ELECTRICAL)
UPPER INDRAVATI HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT, MUKHIGUDA
DIST.: KALAHANDI - 766026, E-mail: sgml_uiehp@ohpcitd.com

ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(A GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA UNDERTAKING)
Regd. Office: OSPH & W.C. Building, Vanivihar Chhak, Janpath, Bhoinagar, Bhubaneswar - 751022, Tel.: 91-0674-2542983, 2542802, 2545526, 2542826, Fax: 2542102, E-Mail: ohpc.co@gmail.com / md@ohpcitd.com
WEB: www.ohpcitd.com, CIN: U40101OR1995SGC003963

'e' Procurement Notice
NOTICE INVITING TENDER No. UIHEP/47/2024-25 Dated: 16.01.2025
No. CAD-2205: The Unit Head, UIHEP, Mukhiguda, Dist.: Kalahandi invites percentage rate bids in Double Cover System i.e. Cover-I (Technical Bid) & Cover-II (Price Bid) in Online mode from eligible contractors for the work as detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Approx. Estimated Cost (in Rs.)	EMD (in Rs.) (Online)	Class of Contractor	Cost of Bid Document (in Rs.) (Online)	Period of Contract
1	Operation of Water Supply System on job contract basis at Sector-I, II and III of Power House Colony, UIHEP, Mukhiguda for the year 2024-25.	10,70,362/- (Excluding GST)	10,750/-	'D' & 'C' Class, Contractor registered with State Govt./ Central Govt./ MES/Railways	6,000/- + GST @ 18% = 7,080/-	One (01) Calendar Year

Availability of tender document in the portal: From 19.01.2025 (10.00 Hrs.) to 28.01.2025 (upto 13.00 Hrs.)
Last date & time of submission of tenders in the portal: 28.01.2025 upto 13.00 Hrs. The date & time of opening of the bid: 28.01.2025 at 16.30 Hrs. (Only Technical Bid)
The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen and tender document can be downloaded from the e-Procurement Portal "https://tendersodisha.gov.in".
OI/PR-32136/11/0029/2425 Sd./- Unit Head, UIHEP, Mukhiguda

U'khand's madrasa to offer Sanskrit as optional subject

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, Jan 18: The Uttarakhand Waqf Board has set up the state's first modern madrasa offering general education under the NCERT curriculum with Sanskrit as an optional subject besides Arabic. Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Modern Madrasa has been developed by the board at a cost of around Rs 50 lakh and will commence classes from the next academic session in March, Uttarakhand Waqf Board Chairman Shadab Shams said. The madrasa located at the Muslim Colony near the railway station in Dehradun, he said. Shams said of about 10 madrasas located in the areas around the colony, this madrasa, has been improved with infrastructure, including well-equipped classrooms, furniture, computers and smart boards. Students from the nearby madrasas will be brought here for consolidated education, the chairman said.

Bank of India
Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

POSSESSION NOTICE
[Rule-8(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002]

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Bank of India 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 in the loan Account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of the said Notice.

The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The Borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Bhubaneswar SME Branch for an amount mentioned below with interest & other expenses thereon, less the amount repaid after the date of the said Notice.

The Borrowers attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the Secured Assets.

BHUBANESWAR SME BRANCH Name & Address of Borrowers	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice/Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Property
Borrowers: (1) Mr Jayasen Sahu, S/o: Mr Gopinath Sahu, (2) Mrs Sunita Sahu, W/o: Mr Jayasen Sahu, both are address at Main Road Athagada Patna, Patharapalli, Ganjam, Odisha- 761105.	Rs.41,82,404.75P + interest, & expenses thereon	01.11.2024 / 16.01.2025	Equitable Mortgage of all the part and parcel of land bearing Khata No.134/21, Plot No.205, Area: Ac.0.160 dcmI and Plot No.207, Area: Ac.0.415 dcmI, Total Ac.0.575 dcmI, Mouza: Patharapalli, SRO/Thana: Kabisuryanagar, Ganjam, Odisha- 761105, Kissam: Gharabari, in the name of Mr Jayasen Sahu, S/o: Mr Gopinath Sahu

Place : Bhubaneswar, Date : 18.01.2025 Authorised Officer, Bank of India

एनटीपीसी NTPC Limited
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)

NOTICE
Registered Office Address: NTPC Bhawan, Core-7, SCOPE Complex, 7-Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003
Corporate Identification Number- L40101DL1975GOI007966

The Petitioner above named has made an application before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), New Delhi for determination of tariff of Kahalgaon Super Thermal Power Station, Stage-II (1500 MW) from 01.04.2024 to 31.03.2029.

- The beneficiaries of the generating station are:
 - GRIDCO Ltd., 24, Janpath, Bhubaneswar - 751007
 - Gujarat Urja Vikas Nigam Limited, Sardar Patel Vidyalaya, Race Course, Baroda - 390007
 - Madhya Pradesh Power Management Company Ltd., Shakti Bhawan, Vidyalaya, Jabalpur - 482008
 - Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited, 'Prakashgand', Bandra (East), Mumbai-400051
 - Chhatisgarh State Power Trading Co. Ltd., Po. Sundernagar, Dhagania, Raipur, 492013.
 - Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Power Distribution Corporation Limited, 1st and 2nd Floor, Vidyalaya Bhawan, Silvassa-396230, DNH, India
 - Uttar Pradesh Power Corp. Limited, Shakti Bhawan, 14, Ashok Marg Lucknow - 226001
 - Uttaranchal Power Corporation Ltd., Urja Bhawan, Kanwali Road, Dehradun-248001
 - Jaipur Vidyalaya Nigam Ltd., Vidyalaya Bhawan, Janpath, Jaipur-302005
 - Ajmer Vidyalaya Nigam Ltd, Old Power House, Hathi Bhatta, Jaipur Road, Ajmer
 - Jodhpur Vidyalaya Nigam Ltd, New Power House Road, Industrial Area, Jodhpur
 - Power Development Department (J&K), Govt. of J&K Secretariat, Srinagar
 - BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd., BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019
 - BSES Yamuna Power Ltd., Shakti Kiran Bldg., Karkardooma, Delhi
 - Tata Power Delhi Distribution Ltd., NDPL House, Hudson Lane, Kingsway Camp, New Delhi-110009
 - Haryana Power Purchase Centre Ltd., Shakti Bhawan, Sector-VI, Panchkula, Haryana-134109
 - Punjab State Electricity Board, The 17Mall, Patiala-147001
 - Himachal Pradesh State Electricity Board, Vidyalaya Bhawan, Shimla-171004
 - Power Department, Union Territory of Chandigarh, Addl. Office Building, Sector-9D, Chandigarh
- Capacity of the generating station : 1500 MW
- Approved capital cost of the project : Rs. 5690.56 Crore
- Authority which has approved the Capital Cost : CERC
- Scheduled date of commercial operation : Not Applicable
- Actual date of commercial operation of station : 20.03.2010
- Capital cost on date of Commercial operation of Station : Not Applicable
- Details of tariff :

Particulars	Tariff for the previous year*	Year-wise tariff sought to be determined				
		2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
1.Capacity Charges (Rs.Lakh/year)	121044.67	118927.30	121832.60	126102.67	134243.94	142463.25
2. Energy Charges (Rs./kWh)	3.705		3.026			

* As per Petition for trialing-up of tariff for 2019-24 period for Kahalgaon Super Thermal Power Station, Stage-II (1500 MW) filed with Hon'ble CERC.

9. A copy of the petition made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of NTPC, namely www.ntpc.co.in under the Tab 'Notices'.

10. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the petition may be filed by any person, including the beneficiaries through e-filing portal of the Commission, with a copy to the Petitioner within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Place : Noida (U.P.) Date : 27.11.2024 (Prashant Chaturvedi) Addl. General Manager (Comm.)

Leading the Power Sector

international



Unfortunately, our efforts, like those of national governments, have not been sufficient to curb the drivers of anti-Semitism
MIGUEL MORATINOS | HEAD, UN ALLIANCE OF CIVILIZATIONS

COMMEMORATING 'GENOCIDE' OF KASHMIRI HINDUS

A British member of Parliament (MP) has tabled a parliamentary motion to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the 'genocide of Kashmiri Pandit Hindus from Jammu and Kashmir in India'



of the day quote

We are ready to work with Hanoi to build a community with a shared future of strategic significance
XI JINPING | PRESIDENT, CHINA

I believe that when the partnership between Taiwan and the United States becomes stronger, the power to maintain peace and stability in the world will also become stronger
LAI CHING-TE | PRESIDENT, TAIWAN

The international community will back Lebanon for what we believe will be a speedy recovery of this country, making it again the centre of the Middle East
ANTONIO GUTERRES | SECRETARY-GENERAL, UN

SHORT TAKES

2 'hard-line' judges shot dead in Tehran

Dubai: In a rare attack targeting the judiciary, a man fatally shot two prominent hard-line judges in Iran's capital Tehran Saturday, state media reported. Both the deceased judges allegedly took part in the mass execution of dissidents in 1988. No group immediately claimed responsibility for the fatal shootings of the judges -- clerics Mohammad Mogheiseh and Ali Razini. However, Razini's involvement in the 1988 executions had likely made him a target in the past, including a failed assassination attempt in 1999. Their killings also come as Iran faces economic turmoil, the mauling of its Mideast allies by Israel, and the return of Donald Trump to the White House Monday.

China, Lanka extend currency swap facility

Colombo: China has extended its 10 billion yuan or \$1.4 billion currency swap facility to Sri Lanka by three years. "The Central Bank of Sri Lanka and the People's Bank of China, in December 2024, successfully renewed the Bilateral Currency Swap Agreement signed in 2021, for a period of another three (3) years, under the terms and conditions stipulated in the original agreement," the Central Bank of Sri Lanka said. The announcement came in the joint statement issued at the end of a four-day official visit to China by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake Thursday. China had extended the swap facility during the ousted president Gotabaya Rajapaksa's tenure. Dissanayake went to China on his second overseas trip since being elected president in September. His first visit was to Delhi in December when he called on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Nigeria ninth BRICS 'partner country'

Abuja: Nigeria has been admitted as a "partner country" of the BRICS bloc of developing economies, according to Brazil, the group's chair. BRICS was formed by Brazil, Russia, India and China in 2009, with South Africa added in 2010, as a counterweight to the Group of Seven (G-7) leading industrialised nations. Last year, the bloc added Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia and the UAE, while Saudi Arabia has been invited to join. Turkey, Azerbaijan and Malaysia have formally applied to become BRICS members, while a few others have also expressed interest. Nigeria becomes the ninth BRICS partner country, joining Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand, Uganda, and Uzbekistan.

Gaza war comes to an end

Ending the 15-month-old war, Israeli cabinet approves Gaza ceasefire accord due to take effect Sunday

REUTERS

Jerusalem, Jan 18: Israel's cabinet approved a deal with Palestinian militant group Hamas for a ceasefire and release of hostages in the Gaza Strip, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Saturday, a day before the agreement's scheduled start. In the early hours of Saturday, after meeting for more than six hours, the government ratified the agreement that could pave the way for an end to the 15-month-old war in the Palestinian enclave, which Hamas controls.

"The Government has approved the framework for the return of the hostages. The framework for the hostages' release will come into effect on Sunday," Netanyahu's office said in a brief statement.

In Gaza, Israeli warplanes have kept up heavy attacks since the ceasefire deal was agreed.

Israeli tanks shelled eastern areas of the Zeitoun neighbourhood of Gaza City and Israeli planes fired on areas in central and southern Gaza Saturday, residents said. Medics in Gaza said five people were killed in a tent in the Mawasi area west of Khan Younis during an airstrike on the enclave's south.

Some 123 Palestinians have now been killed by Israeli bombardments since the accord was announced Wednesday, the Palestinian Civil Emergency Service said.



Sirens sounded in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv Saturday. The military later said it has shot down a missile fired from Yemen and there was no mention of any casualties.

After the Israeli cabinet approval, lead US negotiator Brett McGurk said the plan was moving forward on track.

The ceasefire will come into effect at 0630 GMT Sunday, the Qatari foreign ministry spokesman posted on X. The White House expects three female hostages to be released to Israel in the afternoon through the Red Cross.

"We have locked down every single detail in this agreement. We are quite confident... it is ready to be implemented on Sunday," McGurk told CNN from the White House.

Under the deal, the three-stage ceasefire starts with an initial six-week phase when hostages held by Hamas will

be exchanged for prisoners and detainees jailed in Israel.

Thirty-three of the 98 remaining Israeli hostages, including women, children, men over 50 and ill and wounded captives, are to be freed in this phase. In return, Israel will release almost 2,000 Palestinians from its jails.

They include 737 male, female and teen-aged prisoners, some of whom are members of Palestinian militant groups convicted of attacks that killed dozens of Israelis, as well as hundreds of Palestinians from Gaza in detention since the start of the war.

The Israeli Justice Ministry published their details early Saturday, along with the ceasefire agreement, which said 30 Palestinian prisoners would be released for each female hostage Sunday.

The Israeli military said it was preparing to receive the

Israel began its assault on Hamas in Gaza after the group's fighters burst into Israel October 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people and taking 250 as hostage, according to Israeli tallies. The war between Israeli forces and Hamas has razed much of heavily urbanised Gaza, killed more than 46,000 people and displaced most of the enclave's prewar population of 2.3 million

hostages "in accordance with the set agreements" and that the military "is operating to provide suitable physical and psychological support, with careful attention to every detail."

After Sunday's hostage release, McGurk said, the accord calls for four more female hostages to be released after seven days, followed by the release of three further hostages every seven days thereafter.

HARD-LINERS OPPOSE TRUCE

With the accord opposed by some Israeli cabinet hard-liners, media reports said 24 ministers in Netanyahu's coalition government voted in favour of the deal while eight opposed it.

The opponents said the ceasefire agreement represented a capitulation to Hamas. National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir threatened to resign if it was approved and urged other ministers to vote against it. However, he said

he would not bring down the government.

Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, also threatened to quit the government if it does not go back to war to defeat Hamas after the first six-week phase of the ceasefire.

After a last-minute delay Thursday that Israel blamed on Hamas, the Israeli security cabinet voted Friday in favour of the ceasefire accord, a requirement before the full cabinet vote.

If successful, the ceasefire could ease hostilities elsewhere in the Middle East, where fighting has spread to include Iran and its proxies -- Lebanon's Hezbollah, Yemen's Houthis and armed groups in Iraq - and the occupied West Bank.

Gaza civilians have faced a humanitarian crisis due to hunger, cold and sickness. The ceasefire agreement calls for a surge in assistance, and international organisations have aid trucks lined up on Gaza's borders.

Death was minutes away: Ousted B'desh PM Hasina



I am suffering, I am without my country, my home, everything has been burned
SHEIKH HASINA | FORMER PM, BANGLADESH

Hasina 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 16-year regime

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: Deposed Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina has said she and her younger sister Sheikh Rehana escaped death by just 20-25 minutes August 5 last year when her Awami League government was toppled in a student-led mass uprising.

In a brief audio note released by her party on its Facebook page, Hasina expressed her gratitude to God for saving her life.

She also recalled two pre-

vious attempts on her life she narrowly escaped and said she believed that God had saved her life as part of a divine design to get something greater done by her.

"We escaped death by just 20-25 minutes. I feel surviving the killings on August 21, surviving the large bomb in Kotalipara, or surviving on August 5, 2024, there must be a will of Allah, the hand of Allah. Otherwise, I wouldn't have survived this time," she is heard saying in Bangla in the audio clip.

In a trembling voice, the 77-year-old leader accused her political opponents of conspiring to get her killed.

Hasina survived several attempts on her life including that of the August 21, 2004 grenade attack on a party rally where she was addressing as the opposition leader. Twenty-four people were killed in the attack.

Hasina was initially flown to a nearby military air base and later an air force plane carried her along with Rehana to India.



Protesters are seen on a two-day hike from Kueblis to Davos as part of a demonstration of the collective 'Strike WEF' in Switzerland, Saturday ahead of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum, WEF, in Davos

Dozens hurt, trapped in ski lift mishap in Spain

REUTERS

Madrid, Jan 18: A ski lift collapsed at a resort in the Spanish region of Aragon Saturday, injuring dozens of people, nine of them very seriously and eight seriously, the regional government said. Around 80 people remain

trapped, hanging in the chairlift at the ski resort of Astun, in the province of Huesca, according to state TV channel TVE.

"It's like a cable has come off, the chairs have bounced and people have been thrown off," a witness told TVE. The cause of the cable fail-



ure remains unknown. The ski resort's manage-

Seema's first husband seeks Indian govt's help to reunite with children

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, Jan 18: The first husband of Seema Haider, a Pakistani woman who illegally crossed over to India with her four children in 2023 to be with her lover whom she had met online, has appealed to the Indian government to help him meet his kids and gain custody.

Seema, 32, who is from Jacobabad in Sindh province, in May 2023 took her children and left her home in Karachi to travel to India via Nepal. She captured the headlines in July when Indian authorities found her living with Indian national Sachin Meena, 27, whom she now claims to have married, in the Greater Noida area in Uttar Pradesh. The duo got in touch in 2019 while playing online game PUBG.

Seema and Sachin were arrested in July 2023 but later released on bail. While Seema was charged with illegally entering India, Sachin was booked for sheltering the illegal immigrant.

Seema's first husband Ghulam Haider in a recent video message appealed to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar for "justice".

Haider claimed he has been trying to gain custody of his children since late 2023, with the help of prominent Pakistani lawyer and human rights activist Ansar Burney. In February last year, Burney confirmed Haider had approached him for help and hired an Indian lawyer to initiate legal proceedings in Indian courts.

"After due process, we have hired an Indian lawyer, Ali Momin, and have sent the power of attorney to start legal proceedings in Indian courts," he had said.

However, it's unclear if the case has been initiated.

Haider in the video message claimed, "It has been a year since the case is pending in court and I have not seen my children since 2023."

"I appeal to the Indian minister, S Jaishankar, to give me justice," he said. Haider alleged that his children are stuck in India because of their mother. "She is trying to change their names and religion forcibly," he claimed.

Haider was working in Saudi Arabia when Seema ran away to India via the UAE and Nepal. All her four children were below the age of 7 years in May 2023.

In an earlier interview with BBC, Seema had said that she had adopted Hinduism and refused to return to Pakistan. Seema claims her children have also converted to Hinduism.

ment declined to comment and was not immediately able to say if foreigners were among the injured.

The Astun ski resort, mainly popular among Spanish skiers, is located close to the Spanish border with France, in the Pyrenees mountain range.

FIRST TIME IN 40 YEARS

'Arctic Blast' forces Trump inauguration indoors

REUTERS

Washington, Jan 18: President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration will take place inside the US Capitol Monday rather than outdoors because of severe cold, the first time in 40 years that US presidential inaugural ceremonies will be moved indoors.

"There is an Arctic blast sweeping the Country. I don't want to see people hurt, or injured, in any way," Trump said on his Truth Social platform Friday. "Therefore, I have ordered the Inauguration Address, in addition to prayers and other speeches, to be delivered in the United States Capitol Rotunda," he added.

The last time an inauguration was moved indoors be-

cause of the bitter cold was in 1985 for former Republican President Ronald Reagan's second swearing-in when the afternoon wind chill fell into the range of minus 10 to minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 23 to minus 29 degrees Celsius).

The forecast for Washington Monday is for a temperature at the time of Trump's swearing-in around 19 F (minus 7 C) but it is expected to feel even colder with wind chill.

Trump said supporters can view the ceremony on screens inside the Capital One Arena, a professional basketball and hockey venue in downtown



Swearing-in will take place Monday inside the US Capitol

Washington that holds 20,000 people.

He said his presidential parade, which was set to involve marching bands and other groups proceeding down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House, will be switched to Cap-

ital One Arena. It was not immediately clear how a parade would be organized inside the sports venue.

Trump said he would join the crowd at the arena after being sworn in.

The switch means there will

be no comparisons of Trump's crowd size to previous inauguration ceremonies. After his first swearing-in, in 2017, the Republican Trump was infuriated by media reports suggesting the crowd on the National Mall was far smaller than the one that saw former Democratic President Barack Obama first take the oath of office in 2009.

WINTER CHILL AN INAUGURAL TRADITION

Frigid weather has featured at many a past inauguration. Temperatures for Obama's first inauguration in 2009 were also cold, rising to around 29 F (minus 1.5 degrees C).

William Henry Harrison, the ninth US president, delivered the longest inaugural address March 4, 1841, in wet and cold

conditions without a hat or overcoat.

That event and speech were thought to have contributed to his later succumbing to pneumonia. He died one month after taking office, making his presidency the shortest in American history.

During the second swearing-in ceremony for President Ulysses S Grant March 4, 1873, several cadets and midshipmen standing outside without overcoats collapsed and gusting winds made Grant's address inaudible to even those close to him on the platform, according to a history published by the National Weather Service. The morning low temperature of 4 F (-15 C) on that day remains Washington's coldest March day on record.

Business



The size of Indian automobile industry is now ₹22 lakh crore. I am confident that within five years, the Indian automobile industry will be number one in the world

NITIN GADHARI | UNION MINISTER

SALES OF BUDGET HOMES DECLINE

Sales of apartments, costing less than ₹50 lakh each, fell 14 per cent to 38,626 units in 2024 across seven major cities on lesser launches of affordable housing projects and rising prices, according to JLL India.



of the day quote

Ashok Leyland has always been a pioneer in the introduction of new technologies in commercial vehicles. Introduction of Saathi reinforces our readiness to lead the transformation in road transport

DHEERAJ HINDUJA | ASHOK LEYLAND EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN



India is one of the most promising markets in the world. Indian government plans for 30 per cent EV penetration in total sales by 2030 will provide us strong support for growth in EV buses

JUNYA YAMANISHI | SML ISUZU, MD AND CEO



We are excited to lead the charge in transforming the industry with products that not only inspire but also contribute meaningfully to a greener future. In line with this, we are set to expand our dealership network to 40 within January and grow our network even further through 2025

RAJEEV CHAUHAN | BYD INDIA HEAD OF EPV BUSINESS



Importers' option strategy hit by rupee's record plunge

The rupee has plunged 3% in the two-and-a-half months since Donald Trump won the US elections. The last time it fell this quickly was in December 2022

REUTERS



Mumbai, Jan 18: For nearly two years, Indian importers flocked to a commonly used option strategy to hedge their forex risks amid the rupee's tranquillity, but a precipitous slide in the currency's value recently and a surge in its volatility have left them exposed. This strategy, called the 'seagull', allows an importer to hedge their future dollar payments for a lower cost than a regular forward contract but does not lock in a predefined rate, leaving them exposed to any sharp currency declines. A forward contract, on the other hand, might cost more but is rate-locked, making it immune to the rupee's value when the liability is due. "Seagulls, essentially, are designed to reduce the cost

of a hedge, assuming that the underlying does not move too far away from the current market price," said Akshay Chinchalkar, head of research at Axis Securities. "They do not work when volatility is high." The rupee hit an all-time low of 86.6475 per dollar Tuesday. "With market uncertainty about Donald Trump's actions on tariffs and their impact, it makes sense, from a risk management perspective, to maintain a healthy hedge ratio," said Sameer Karyatt, Executive Director - Treasury and Markets, DBS Bank. "Importers with structures that do not have protection beyond a certain point (like a seagull) need to revisit the levels where their protection runs out."

spiked. The 1-month realized volatility has jumped to 2.5% from under 1% before Trump's victory, while the 1-year implied volatility has nearly doubled. The rupee hit an all-time low of 86.6475 per dollar Tuesday. "With market uncertainty about Donald Trump's actions on tariffs and their impact, it makes sense, from a risk management perspective, to maintain a healthy hedge ratio," said Sameer Karyatt, Executive Director - Treasury and Markets, DBS Bank. "Importers with structures that do not have protection beyond a certain point (like a seagull) need to revisit the levels where their protection runs out."

Govt may introduce new income tax bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: The government, in the ensuing Budget session of Parliament, is likely to introduce a new income tax bill which seeks to simplify the current I-T law, make it comprehensible and reduce the number of pages by about 60 per cent. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her July Budget had announced a comprehensive review of the six-decade old Income Tax Act, 1961, within six months. "The new Income Tax law will be introduced in the Budget session of Parliament. It will be a new law and not an amendment to the existing Act. Currently, the draft law is being vetted by the law ministry and it is likely to be brought in Parliament in the second half of the Budget session," a source said. The Budget session is scheduled from January 31 to April 4. The first half (January 31-February 13) will start with President Droupadi Murmu's address to the joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha followed by the tabling of the Economic Survey for 2024-25. The Union Budget for 2025-26 will be presented on February 1. Parliament will reconvene March 10 and will sit through April 4. Pursuant to the Budget announcement by Sitharaman



for a comprehensive review of the I-T Act, 1961, the CBDT had set up an internal committee to oversee the review and make the Act concise, clear, and easy to understand, which will reduce disputes, litigation, and provide greater tax certainty to taxpayers. Also, 22 specialised sub-committees were established to review various aspects of the Act. Public inputs and suggestions were invited in four categories - simplification of language, litigation reduction, compliance reduction, and redundant/obsolete provisions. The Income Tax Department has received 6,500 suggestions from stakeholders on review of the Act. Sources said the provisions and chapters will be significant-

ly reduced and the obsolete provisions will be deleted. The Income Tax Act, 1961, which deals with imposition of direct taxes - personal I-T, corporate tax, securities transaction tax, besides gift and wealth tax - currently has about 298 sections and 23 chapters. "The effort is to cut down the volume by about 60 per cent," the source added. Sitharaman had said in her July, 2024, Budget speech that the purpose of the review is to make the Act concise, lucid, easy to read and understand. This will reduce disputes and litigation, thereby providing tax certainty to taxpayers. It will also bring down the demand embroiled in litigation. It is proposed to be completed in six months, she had said.

BIZ BUZZ

JOYALUKKAS' DIAMOND JEWELLERY SHOW



Bhubaneswar: Joyalukkas unveiled its grand Brilliance Diamond Jewellery Show at Bhubaneswar, January 18. The exhibition will continue till Feb 9. It promises to be the biggest jewellery showcase of the year, featuring never-before-seen designs in diamonds, uncut diamonds and precious jewellery. The exclusive collection, meticulously crafted as show-stoppers for this exhibition, will only be available at this showcase, redefining grandeur, elegance and luxury. "This Brilliance Diamond Jewellery Show is a tribute to the timeless beauty of diamonds and the artistry of our craftsmen," said Joy Alukkas, Chairman and Managing Director of Joyalukkas Group. "We are proud to bring this unparalleled experience to Bhubaneswar, showcasing jewellery that combines heritage with innovation, while offering designs that are destined to become cherished heirlooms."

Activation of new undersea cables in 2025

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: India's data transmission capacity is expected to grow four times with the activation of new submarine cables due in 2025 that connect the country to several key markets of the world, Trai Chairman Anil Kumar Lahoti said. While speaking at a telecom industry event Digicom Summit, he said India plays a key role in the global submarine cable network as it hosts around 17 international sub-sea cables across 17 district landing stations. "As of the end of 2023, the total lit capacity and activity and activated capacity of these cables stood at 180 TBPS (terabit per second) and 132 TBPS, respectively. Multiple next-generation systems are due to become operational in 2025, replacing ageing cables. Once the new systems are fully operational, India's data transmission capacity is projected to quadruple with additional crucial routes," Lahoti said. He said that telecom services are the backbone of the digital economy and industry is playing a critical role in supporting its growth. Trai Chairman said the contribution of the digital economy to the nation's GDP has grown to about 12 per cent of the GDP which is estimated to reach 20 per cent by 2026-27. "Since the current growth



The government aims for a USD 1 trillion digital economy by 2027-28

rate of the digital economy is 2.8 times the GDP growth rate. Accordingly, the government aims for a USD 1 trillion digital economy by 2027-28. The Indian telecom sector, which is the backbone of a digital economy, has witnessed significant development in recent years, setting the stage for a transformative era given unprecedented data consumption, a vast user base, and a policy-type friendly environment. India continues to foster industry growth and digital connectivity," Lahoti said.

He said that the telecom user community has grown to about 1.2 billion, out of which 944 million are broadband users. "One of the hallmarks is achieving over 100 times growth in rural broadband subscriptions in the last decade. In licence service areas such as Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh East, the aggregate count of rural broadband connections is significantly higher than the aggregate count of urban broadband connections," Lahoti said. He acknowledged the effort of telecom operators in providing 4G coverage across 97 per cent of the villages and 5G connectivity in over 99 per cent of districts in the country.

VinFast to enter India with premium electric SUVs

REUTERS

New Delhi, Jan 18: Vietnamese electric vehicle maker VinFast will enter the Indian market with two premium electric SUVs, taking on homegrown rival Mahindra & Mahindra and China's BYD, which already has a presence in the world's third largest car market. VinFast unveiled its VF6 and VF7 SUVs at the India Auto Show in New Delhi, as it hopes to draw buyers to its EVs and contribute to India's goals of eliminating carbon emissions on a net basis, said Pham Sanh Chau, VinFast's Asia CEO. "We are turning our focus to India - our next growth frontier," Chau told reporters. Nasdaq-listed VinFast counts North America and Vietnam as its primary markets but is trying to expand aggressively elsewhere. But the automaker has been reporting deepening losses as EV demand softens. Electric models accounted for about 2.5% of the more than 4 million vehicles sold in India last year. The government, targeting 30% by 2030, is working on a programme to attract EV makers. VinFast said last year it would invest \$500 million in India over five years to build a car and battery factory, now under construction in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, and launch new car models.

SHORT TAKES

Kotak Mahindra Bank net profit up

Mumbai: Kotak Mahindra Bank Saturday reported a 10.22 per cent rise in its December quarter consolidated net profit to ₹4,701 crore. The city headquartered lender had reported a net profit of ₹4,265 crore in the year-ago period and ₹5,044 crore in the preceding September quarter. On a standalone basis, the private sector lender's net profit increased to ₹3,304 crore from ₹3,005 crore in the year-ago period but was marginally down when compared with the September quarter's ₹3,343 crore. The total income increased to ₹16,050 crore from ₹14,096 crore in the year-ago period, while the expenses came at ₹10,869 crore against ₹9,530 crore.

RBL Bank net profit plummets

Mumbai: RBL Bank's net profit plummeted to ₹47 crore in the December quarter of 2024-25 from ₹245 crore in the year-ago period as the microloan portfolio came to bite. The city-based private sector lender, which has had difficult few quarters due to higher credit costs, reported a net profit of ₹231 crore in the preceding September quarter. Its core net interest income grew by 3 per cent to ₹1,585 crore, while the other income grew 38 per cent to ₹1,073 crore aided by a stake sale in the NBFC DAM Capital.

WazirX freezes stolen funds

New Delhi: Cryptocurrency exchange WazirX Friday said it has frozen the first tranche of assets which were stolen during last year's cyberattack worth USD 3 million. In a statement announcing the freezing of about USD 3 million in stolen assets (USDT), Founder Nischal Shetty said WazirX is fully committed to recovering the stolen funds "leaving no stone unturned to maximise recoveries under a scheme". "As part of the ongoing recovery efforts following last year's cyberattack, WazirX has been successful in freezing the first tranche of assets that were stolen during the cyberattack worth USD 3 million USDT," according to WazirX statement.

TikTok faces US ban deadline as users brace for fallout

The platform has until Sunday to cut ties with its China-based parent ByteDance or shut down its US operation to resolve concerns it posed a threat to national security

REUTERS

San Francisco, Jan 18: TikTok buzzed with nervous anticipation across the US Saturday as a looming federal ban threatened to sever access to the Chinese-owned app that has captivated nearly half of all Americans, powered small businesses and shaped online culture. The company said late Friday that it will go dark in the United States Sunday unless President Joe Biden's administration provides assurances to companies like Apple and Google that they will not face enforcement actions when a ban takes effect. The ban would be enacted under a law signed by President Joe Biden in April and mark the

first US shutdown of a major social media app - with TikTok boasting about 170 million domestic users and an estimated \$20 billion in 2025 revenue. The platform has until Sunday to cut ties with its China-based parent ByteDance or shut down its US operation to resolve concerns it posed a threat to national security. Supreme Court justices upheld the ban Friday in a unanimous decision and a White House statement suggested Biden would not take any action to save TikTok before the deadline. Without a decision by Biden to formally invoke a 90-day delay in the deadline, companies providing services to TikTok



or hosting the app could face legal liability. It is not clear if TikTok's business partners, including Apple, Alphabet's Google and Oracle, will contin-

ue doing business with it before Trump is inaugurated Monday. Uncertainty over the app's future had sent users - mostly made up of younger people -

scrambling to alternatives including China-based RedNote. Rivals Meta and Snap had also seen their shares rise this month ahead of the ban, as investors bet on an influx of users and ad dollars. Marketing firms reliant on TikTok have rushed to prepare contingency plans this week in what one executive described as a "hair on fire" moment after months of conventional wisdom saying that a solution would materialize to keep the app running. There have been signs that TikTok could make a comeback under incoming US President Donald Trump, who wants to pursue a "political resolution" of the issue and had last month urged the Supreme Court to pause implementation of the ban. Trump said Friday the decision on the future of the TikTok app will be up to him, but he did not provide any detail about what steps he would take. Media

reports have said that he was considering an executive order that would suspend the enforcement of the TikTok sale-or-ban law for 60 to 90 days. TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew plans to attend the US presidential inauguration January 20 and sit among high-profile guests invited by Trump, a source told Reuters. Suitors including former Los Angeles Dodgers owner Frank McCourt have expressed interest in the fast-growing business that analysts estimate could be worth as much as \$50 billion. Media reports say Beijing has also held talks about selling TikTok's U.S. operations to billionaire and Trump ally Elon Musk, though the company has denied that. Privately held ByteDance is about 60% owned by institutional investors such as BlackRock and General Atlantic, while its founders and employees own 20% each. It has more than 7,000 employees in the U.S.

CT squad announced

Bumrah picked but fitness will decide his availability; Shami returns, Jaiswal gets maiden ODI call-up



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 18: Premier pacer Jasprit Bumrah was Saturday named in India's squad for the Champions Trophy with his availability depending on fitness, and talented opener Yashasvi Jaiswal expectedly received the nod from the selectors, who also brought back Mohammed Shami in the national fold.

Bumrah had suffered back spasms during the recent Sydney Test against Australia and did not bowl on the final day at SCG.

But the Ajit Agarkar-led selection panel went ahead and included the 31-year-old in the squads that will do duty in the home ODIs against England and in the marquee ICC event, starting February 19.

Top-order batter Shubman Gill has been appointed as the vice-captain of the squad that had did not have place for pacer Mohammed Siraj.

Rohit Sharma, who will lead the side against England in the CT, explained the rationale behind selecting Bumrah with an asterisk against his name.

"Experience, it's only Siraj who's not there. But that's purely because we thought of it. We're not sure about Bumrah, whether he's going to play or not. We wanted to pick a squad where we have options of both, somebody to bowl with the new ball and somebody to bowl at the back end," said Rohit in the press meet to announce the squads.

Rohit hoped that seasoned

pacer Shami and left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh will support Bumrah, or step in the eventuality of him missing the tournament. "Obviously, with Bumrah missing, we're not sure. We wanted Arshdeep to come and play that role of bowling at the back end and Shami, obviously we saw what he did with the new ball (in the World Cup 2023 and during the recent domestic matches)."

Shami is returning to the ODI set up for the first time since the 2023 World Cup, and the pacer has done well in the domestic matches (Ranji Trophy, SMAT and VHT), even though he is yet to hit the peak rhythm.

Rohit termed Siraj unfortunate to miss out on the selection and said his reduced effect with the old ball played a part in it.

JAISWAL IN ODIs
The selection of Jaiswal was a no-brainer after his fine run Down Under albeit in Tests, and the variety he offers at the top as a left-hander.

Rohit underlined that point.

India Squad for Champions Trophy and England ODIs

Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill (vc), Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Arshdeep Singh, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rishabh Pant, Ravindra Jadeja, Harshit Rana (only for England series)

"Sometimes, I know it's very hard to ignore numbers but look at Jaiswal. We picked Jaiswal based on clearly what he's shown in the last 6-8 months. He's not played a single ODI but we still picked him because of the potential that he's got," he said.

All-rounder Harshit Rana, who made his Test debut in Australia, has been picked to play only the three-match ODI series against England.

Wrist-spinner Kuldeep, who was recuperating from a long-standing groin injury, has also been selected after sitting out of the Test series against Australia.

ALL-ROUNDERS GALORE
India have relied on a clutch of all-rounders to make an impact in the blue-riband event

that they had won in 2013 under MS Dhoni.

Hardik Pandya will lead that list and the pace-bowling all-rounder will be back to ODIs for the first time after the 2023 World Cup when he limped out during the match against Bangladesh with an ankle injury.

Others are experienced Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, the two left-arm spinners, and off-spinner Washington Sundar.

PANT FIRST-CHOICE WK
Rishabh Pant has played a lone one-day match in the last two years, against Sri Lanka last year, after coming back from the accident, but the selectors have decided to give him the mantle of the first-choice wicketkeeper batter.

The left-handed variety

10-POINT DIKTAT

Rohit hints players to discuss issue with BCCI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 18: Rohit Sharma seems to have reservations about certain clauses in the 10-point disciplinary guidelines prepared by the BCCI at the behest of head coach Gautam Gambhir and India skipper is set to discuss the issue with the Board secretary Devajit Saikia.

The BCCI has not officially announced the guidelines but media has already reported on the 10-point diktat.

One of the major contentions in policy document is going back to the old days where families are allowed only for 14 days on long tours. Any deviation would need coach Gambhir's approval.

It is understood that this point has not gone down well in the team's rank and file.

As Rohit sat beside chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar before the start of the press conference, he was heard telling his former Mumbai teammate: "Ab mere ko baithna padega secretary ke saath. Family, wamily ka discuss karne ke liye, sab mere ko bol rahe hai yaar (I have to sit down with the secretary to discuss about family (travel guidelines). Everyone (players) is asking me.)"

Rohit's comment wasn't meant for the media but it was caught on the microphone and it was not difficult to read between the lines.

When Rohit asked about the guidelines, he retorted, "Who told you about these rules? Has it come from the official handle of the BCCI? Let it come officially." However when Agarkar spoke, he indeed admitted that an SOP has been drafted.

Agarkar was asked what exactly went wrong that within six months of winning the T20 World Cup with same set of players, BCCI needed a travel policy document?
Agarkar, who was also a part of that review committee meeting that discussed the Australia debacle, said, "We'll probably talk about it endlessly if we keep going on."
"I suppose every team has some rules in place. We've spoken about various things you see over the last few months where you can improve as a team, where you can get a bit closer as a team. It's not a school. It's not a punishment," he said, trying to rationalise.

It's just (that) you have some rules in place and when you're playing for the national team you just follow those rules. Again, these are mature individuals. They are superstars in their own rights in international sport

AJIT AGARKAR | CHAIRMAN OF SELECTORS

SHORT TAKES

Injured Kohli, Rahul to miss Ranji matches

Mumbai: Virat Kohli and KL Rahul will not be playing the next round of Ranji Trophy matches due to injuries. According to reports, both cricketers have informed the BCCI medical staff that they are carrying niggles and will not be able to take part in the matches starting January 23. While Kohli had neck pain and had to take an injection, Rahul has an elbow issue that is likely to keep him out of Karnataka's match against Punjab. However, there will be a number of India stars which will feature in the Ranji Trophy matches - Rishabh Pant (Delhi), Shubman Gill (Punjab) and Ravindra Jadeja (Saurashtra).

Khvicha moves to PSG

Paris: Khvicha Kvaratskhelia completed his expected move from Napoli to Paris Saint-Germain when he signed a deal until 2029 with the record 12-time French champion. French media earlier reported the 23-year-old Georgia forward was in Paris to have his medical check, and PSG confirmed the transfer in a statement late Friday. "It's a dream to be here. I've heard a lot of very positive things about Paris Saint-Germain," Kvaratskhelia said. "I feel immense pride in joining." No further information was given but L'Equipe estimated the transfer fee to be 70 million euros (\$72 million) without bonuses.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Balaji crashes out; only Bopanna in fray for India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Jan 18: India's N Sriram Balaji and his Mexican partner Miguel Angel Reyes-Varela bowed out of the Australian Open men's doubles after a second-round loss to the Portuguese pair of Nuno Borges and Francisco Cabral here Saturday.

The closely-contested match ended with a scoreline of 6-7 (7), 6-4, 3-6 after two hours and nine minutes of intense play at Melbourne Park.

The first set was a gripping affair that lasted 56 minutes with neither pair able to break serve as it went into a tiebreaker, where Borges and Cabral held their composure under pressure to go one set up.

The Indo-Mexican pair started strong, taking an early 2-1 lead and maintaining their momentum to go up 5-4.

However, the Portuguese duo responded well, holding their serve to make it 5-5, and then 6-6, pushing the set into a tiebreak. Borges and Cabral did well to grab the set.

With powerful serves, precise movement, and crucial break-points, the Indo-Mexican duo maintained control through-



out the second set and sealed it with an ace and a forehand winner to bring the match on level terms.

In the decider, Borges and Cabral broke their rivals in the fourth game to go 3-1 up before both holding their serves.

Borges and Cabral then displayed urgency with powerful serve and the former's forehand winners to earn a break in the ninth game and eliminate their rivals.

India will now have Rohan Bopanna in the fray in the mixed doubles.

Bopanna and his Chinese partner Zhang Shuai advanced to the round of 16, defeating French-Croatian duo Kristina Mladenovic and Ivan Dodig 6-4, 6-4.

KHO KHO WC

UNBEATEN INDIA TEAMS IN FINALS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Jan 18: In a captivating display of skill and resilience, India's men's and women's teams entered the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup 2025 finals unbeaten, set to face Nepal in a historic bid for double glory.

The men's team overcame a strong South African challenge to secure their spot in the World Cup 2025 final with a 62-42 victory at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

The match showcased exceptional defensive prowess and strategic gameplay from both sides before India pulled away in the decisive final turn.

The team's clinical performance in the final turn propelled them through, marking a thrilling victory.

Meanwhile, the women's once again showcased their tactical prowess, outplaying South Africa 66-16 in the semifinals.

The 'Women in Blue' delivered a masterclass in both attack and defense.

Both Indian teams have remained undefeated throughout the tournament, progressing to the final with flawless records.

The Indian teams will face Nepal in the final at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium Sunday, January 19.

UNHEALTHY, UNACCEPTABLE

Denmark's Mia lambasts conditions at India Open



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 18: Denmark's Mia Blichfeldt has slammed the playing conditions at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, which is hosting the India Open Super 750 badminton tournament, and also criticised the pollution levels in the national capital, calling such conditions "unhealthy and unacceptable."

The world No 23 had picked up a stomach infection but managed to fight through the second round before losing 21-13 16-21 8-21 to China's Wang Zhi Yi.

"Finally home after a long and stressful week in India. It's 2 years in a row now that I get sick during India Open," Blichfeldt wrote on Instagram.

"It's really hard to accept that many weeks of work and preparing, gets wasted because of bad conditions. It's not fair to anyone that we have to train and play in smog, birds shitting on the courts, and dirt everywhere. These conditions are too unhealthy and unacceptable. @bwf.official. I'm happy that I managed the second round, but I'm far from satisfied."

The Badminton Association of India (BAI), on its part,

Finally home after a long and stressful week in India. It's 2 years in a row now that I get sick during India Open. It's really hard to accept that many weeks of work and preparing, gets wasted because of bad conditions. It's not fair to anyone that we have to train and play in smog, birds shitting on the courts, and dirt everywhere

MIA BLICHFELDT

Satwik-Chirag lose as India's campaign ends

In utter disappointment for India, shuttler's Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy's fantastic campaign ended at the India Open 2025 ended as they bowed out of the event after a semifinal loss. The Indian pair did not look in a good touch in the crucial semis clash, going down 18-21, 14-21 against Malaysia's Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin in men's doubles contest in New Delhi. Both Chirag and Shetty looked sensational in the entire tournament but in a clash which mattered the most, they failed the stern test. With this, India's doubles campaign at the premier event also ended after the single's campaign came to an end with PV Sindhu and Kiran George's exit Friday.

tions Thursday.
"The playing hall is pretty nice. But the weather is pretty cold here in Delhi and the pollution is really high right now, so it's not easy to play, not the best conditions to play in," Gicquel had said.

This is not an isolated incident, as during the 2023 Syed Modi International Super 300 tournament, foreign players had also raised concerns about the poor conditions at the Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium, citing issues such as bird droppings and dust-laden courts.

A few days later, Malaysian Soong Joo Ven took to social media to complain about muddy brown water leaking from a basin faucet at his hotel upon his arrival in Guwahati for the Guwahati Masters Super 100.

Additionally, former world number 1 Nozomi Okuhara of Japan claimed to have had a nightmare experience during the Odisha Open, where she was overcharged by a private cabbie and then made to wait for more than four hours to check into a hotel in Cuttack.

HISTORICAL MOMENT Takale first Indian to finish Dakar Rally

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Jan 18: Top racer Sanjay Takale created history by becoming the first Indian to finish the prestigious Dakar Rally in the classic cars category.

Along with French co-driver Maxime Raud of the Compagnie Saharienne team, Takale showed exceptional consistency and skill throughout the gruelling competition of nearly 8000km, culminating in a remarkable debut at the world's toughest rally, where he finished 10th in his class.

Takale partnered with Compagnie Saharienne and raced in a Toyota Land Cruiser HZJ78 at



the Classic cars class, a regulatory run.

He, thus, became the first Indian to race the Dakar Classic.

The 47th edition of the Dakar and the sixth in Saudi Arabia was completed in Shubaytah and reached the final finishing line after covering 7,453 km of the route.

Pune's Takale finished a stunning fifth in the final stage with zero penalty points. His strong performances included an impressive P7 twice, in Stage 3 after the demanding 48-hour Chrono segment, and another seventh in Stage 7.

He also chalked out three top-11 finishes in Stages 8, 9 and 11. After 14 challenging stages, Takale completed the rally 10th in his class for an overall 18th position.