



## Kritika's preference

Actor Kritika Kamra says she wants to tell stories that show women in a stronger light

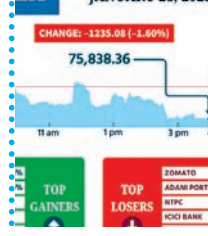
LEISURE | P2



## Israel's top general resigns

Israel's top general resigns, citing security and intelligence failures related to Hamas' surprise attack that triggered the war in the Gaza Strip

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## Sensex tanks 1,235 points

Benchmark Sensex tanks 1,235 points to settle at over seven-month low due to an across-the-board selloff triggered by global tariff war worries

BUSINESS | P11



## India crush England

India thrash England by 79 runs to lift the Physically Disabled Champions Trophy Tuesday

SPORTS | P12

## CM: NEP TO GROOM YOUTHS, STUDENTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 would help in preparing students and youths for building a modern and empowered India, Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Tuesday.

Majhi, while inaugurating a three-day national workshop on the NEP, said it will play an important role in realising the goal of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to build a 'viksit Bharat' (developed India).

The policy would help in creating a strong infrastructure and provide quality education at the primary level, he said.

The NEP will be implemented in Odisha from the next academic year, Majhi said. **P3**

## SHORT TAKES

### Assembly session from Feb 13; Budget Feb 17

**Bhubaneswar:** The Budget session of state Assembly will start February 13 with Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati's address, and will continue till April 5, a notification said Tuesday. The session will have 29 working days with a recession from February 22 to March 6, according to an Assembly Secretariat a notification. Discussion on the motion of thanks on the Governor's address will be held February 14 and 15 while CM Mohan Charan Majhi, who holds the Finance portfolio, will present the Budget February 17.

## Remuneration of MDM cooks, helpers hiked

**Bhubaneswar:** The government Tuesday announced a 50 per cent hike in the monthly remuneration of cooks and helpers engaged in the mid-day meal (MDM) scheme from ₹2,000 to ₹3,000. Keeping in view the work, skill and dedication of the cooks and helpers, CM Mohan Charan Majhi approved a proposal in this regard. The hike in remuneration will benefit more than 1 lakh cooks and cook-cum-helpers across the state.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Now that we've washed off all our sins, we need to sit, think and find a replacement for Electoral Bonds



**R-DAY PREP:** Artists perform during the rehearsal of 'Jayati Jai Mamah Bharatam', a dance ensemble that will be presented by the Ministry of Culture at the Republic Day Parade 2025, in New Delhi, Tuesday

# 14 MAOISTS GUNNED DOWN

*The theatre of the macabre killing of Left Wing Extremists (LWEs) was brought closer home when 14 alleged Maoists were gunned down by security forces at Kularighat reserve forest in Chhattisgarh, just 5 km from the borders of Nuapada district, in an encounter carried under cover of darkness. The slain 'Ultras' include Odisha native and CPI(M) central committee member Jairam alias Chalapati who carried ₹1 crore bounty on his head. With this, 40 Naxalites have been killed in separate gunfights in Chhattisgarh this year, while last year, 219 of them had been neutralised, according to government statistics. However, such 'encounters' have time and again come under a cloud regarding the veracity of police claims. In May last year, one such 'encounter' at Bijapur, where 12 'Maoists' were killed, generated unprecedented controversy after villagers staged protests terming it as cold-blooded mass murder of innocent tribals*



breathing its last today," Shah wrote on X.

PNN & AGENCIES

**Raipur/Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** Fourteen Naxals, including a top leader of the CPI (Maoists) who was carrying a reward of ₹1 crore, were killed in a joint operation by Central and state police forces along the Chhattisgarh-Odisha border.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah Tuesday termed the encounter as "another mighty blow to Naxalism" and asserted the Narendra Modi government's resolve for a Naxal-free India and the joint efforts of the security forces to eliminate the menace from the country.

Chhattisgarh's Gariaband district superintendent of police Nikhil Rakhecha said of the de-

ceased, one has been identified as Jairam Pahariya alias Chalapati, a central committee member of the CPI (Maoist), who was carrying a bounty of ₹1 crore. He was resident of Patadhara Reserve Forest area under Boden block in Nuapada district. The identity of the remaining cadres was yet to be ascertained.

"Another mighty blow to Naxalism. Our security forces achieved major success towards building a Naxal-free Bharat. The CRPF, SOG Odisha, and Chhattisgarh Police neutralised 14 Naxalites in a joint operation along the Odisha-Chhattisgarh border. With our resolve for a Naxal-free India and the joint efforts of our security forces, Naxalism is

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Intermittent exchange of firing in the area was underway Tuesday too and the number of Maoist casualties may increase, they said.

A joint team of security personnel from the District Reserve Guard (DRG) of the Chhattisgarh Police, CoBRA commandos of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and Special Operation Group (SOG) personnel from the Odisha Police were involved in the operation.

The operation was launched on the night of January 19 based on intelligence inputs about the presence of Maoists in the Kularighat reserve forest of Chhattisgarh, just 5 km from the border of Nuapada district.

Hailing the security forces, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said under the BJP-led double-engine government at the Centre and the state, Chhattisgarh will get rid of the menace by March 2026.

He said strengthening the resolve of Prime Minister Modi and the union home minister to end Naxalism in the country by March 2026, the security forces have been continuously achieving success and moving rapidly towards fulfilling the target.

# Trump withdraws America from WHO

*Among the dozen of executive orders he signed after assuming charge of White House, President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw the US from the World Health Organisation (WHO), accusing it of mishandling the Covid-19 crisis and failing to carry out reforms, is likely to affect millions across the world. Trump's move for the second time in the last five years has been dubbed as "regretful" by the global health body even as China expressed its firm support for the agency. Nevertheless, this will only help China expand its global clout at the cost of America*



The WHO came under intense criticism from Trump in 2020 for its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which grew into a worldwide health crisis during the final year of his first term.

"That's a big one," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office of the White House when an aide presented to him an executive order on this to be signed by him. "We paid USD 500 million to World Health when I was here, and I terminated it. China, with 1.4 billion people, has 350 dependents... Nobody knows what we have because so many people came in illegally. But let's say we have 325 (million people). They (China) had 1.4 billion people. They were paying USD39 million. We were paying USD500 million. It seemed a little unfair to me," he said. Reacting to Trump's move, WHO in a statement Tuesday said it "regrets the announcement". **P10**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Washington, Jan 21:** President Donald Trump has signed an executive order beginning the process of withdrawing America from the World Health Organisation (WHO), the second time in less than five years that the US has made a move to withdraw from the world body.

It was among dozens of executive actions he signed after being sworn in Monday for a second term, on issues ranging from immigration to foreign policy to climate change.

## Subhadra benefits for migrants

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** Ahead of releasing the fourth phase of the first installment of money under the Subhadra Yojana, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida Tuesday urged migrant women living outside the state to enroll in the scheme to avail benefits.

Parida, who also oversees the Women and Child Development department, said, "During review meetings in various districts, it was found that many eligible women beneficiaries, who have migrated outside Odisha, have not enrolled in the Subhadra Yojana. I request them to apply to avail benefits," she told reporters. She said migrant women can apply online through the Sub-

hadra portal or via Common Service Centers but they must be present in the state for the verification and biometric process. Parida added that if migrant women apply now, they could receive benefits in the 4th or final phase of the first installment. The state government has announced that registration will remain open until the last beneficiary is enrolled. Nearly 20 lakh women are expected to benefit from the scheme in the last phase, she added.

She emphasised the importance of KYC procedures during enrollment under the Yojana, the state's flagship women empowerment initiative launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi September 17, 2024.

# Great white shark's 9-mn-yr-old ancestor found

REUTERS

**Lima, Jan 21:** Paleontologists in Peru have unveiled the 9-million-year-old fossil of a relative of the great white shark that once inhabited the waters of the southern Pacific Ocean, where it liked to devour sardines.

The nearly-complete *Cosmopolitodus Hastalis* fossil was found some 235 km (146 miles) south of Lima in Peru's Pisco basin, a hot, desert area famed for frequent discoveries of ancient marine species.

The shark is believed to be an ancestor of the great white shark. It is now extinct, but its teeth once spanned up to 8.9 cm

(3.5 inches) in length, while adults could grow to near seven meters in length - the size of a small boat.

Cesar Augusto Chacaltana, an engineer at the Peruvian geological and mining institute (INGEMMET), said at a presentation the shark's remains showed "exceptional fossilization."

Researchers presented the ancient shark's remains in several glass urns, including one containing a giant, sharp-toothed jaw.

"There are not many complete shark (fossils) in the world," paleontologist Mario Urbina added at the presentation, adding the remains of



numerous sardines were found inside the stomach.

Urbina noted that as anchovies did not yet exist when the shark roamed the open seas and oceans, sardines formed a staple diet for marine predators.

Peruvian paleontologists in November presented the fossil of a young crocodile that lived more than 10 million years ago off central Peru, where Pisco and the agricultural region of Ica are found.

In April last year, researchers displayed the fossilized skull of the largest river dolphin known to date, which once inhabited the Amazon some 16 million years ago.



# leisure



## DUA LIPA TERRIFIED AS FANS SNEAK INTO HOTEL

Singer-songwriter Dua Lipa, who recently performed in India, had a harrowing encounter when fans snuck into her hotel and waited for her outside her bedroom door. The 29-year-old singer was staying in a hotel in Santiago, Chile, when fans managed to enter her private quarters.

## JOSH GAD REVEALS WHY HE WAS DENIED AVATAR

*Beauty And The Beast* star Josh Gad almost got a role in the 2009 sci-fi blockbuster *Avatar*, but was denied because he did not have the physical archetype filmmaker James Cameron was looking for. Gad auditioned for the role of Jake Sully's best friend.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You will share wonderful moments with your beloved today. Go ahead and learn some musical instrument, suggests Ganesha: it's a beautiful way to convey emotions. And it provides a perfect means to woo someone anew. Join a class before the mood wanes.

**TAURUS**  
It is highly unlikely that you will be emotional and sentimental today, predicts Ganesha. Adopt a laid-back attitude towards life to feel at ease. Public servants will have encouraging and affirmative results in their efforts. Your competency will be put to test at the work place.

**GEMINI**  
Today is an important day to completely immerse yourself in your favourite activities, says Ganesha. But don't forget that loved ones come first as lack of warmth may affect family life. Show your family members that you care. New relationships are also on the anvil. It is an eventful and positive day for you.

**CANCER**  
At work, your ability to forge great partnerships will see to the success of one of your ambitious projects. However, you need to be careful before signing the contract. It's always important to go through the finer details of a deal before closing it.

**LEO**  
Reinvention and rejuvenation – these are the two words that shall dictate your philosophy for the day. Refurbishing oneself does not always have to be in accordance with something new; taking a look back can be equally enlightening. In any case, it's a small world, and, hence, chances are that you shall revive most of your old contacts either in a social occasion or an official meeting.

**VIRGO**  
Achievement and accomplishment will be the highlights of the day, notes Ganesha. You will be recognised for your devotion to work and determination to succeed at your workplace. Much awaited promotions may come and financial arrears may also reach your hands.

**LIBRA**  
You will be very active today, especially when it comes to finishing tasks in office. Your thoughts will reach new heights and you will be able to motivate and stimulate others to perform. Your motto for the day is 'Arise, awake and sleep not till the goal is reached'.

**SCORPIO**  
Your close friends and loved ones seem to be on the menu today, predicts Ganesha. Romantic brilliance will usher in happiness and favourable business prospects will be the icing on the cake. Your charm will peak and you will enjoy the attention you get out of it.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Be ready with your bags packed as you may decide to undertake an impromptu trip today. It could be a business trip or simply travel in pursuit of pleasure. Nostalgia will grip you as you run into an old childhood friend today. Sharpen your public relation skills, which will come in handy when you deal with strangers today, says Ganesha.

**CAPRICORN**  
That you are affectionate towards your loved ones will be more noticeable today than ever before, says Ganesha. In fact, you will enjoy their company and will do everything in your capacity to make them feel wanted. Long-term relationships will also thrive.

**AQUARIUS**  
Fortune favours the brave, and who knows it better than you? Your performance may come under scrutiny, but your bosses will come away pleased as punch. Want to make some money? Ganesha points to real estate and the construction business.

**PISCES**  
Your expenses are likely to soar and you will need to draw a line between your needs and your desires if you are to keep them in check. There is a strong possibility that you will undergo a spiritual experience today. You may also pursue meditative techniques for your peace of mind, says Ganesha.

## Kritika yearns to play stronger women

**Mumbai:** From portraying a tough spy in *For Your Eyes Only* or a sharp-witted cop in *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, actress Kritika Kamra shared that she is drawn to roles that break stereotypes and that she consciously lets go of work that glorifies weak, dependent women.

Speaking about her journey, Kritika shares, "From playing a tough spy in *For Your Eyes Only* to a sharp-witted cop in *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, I'm drawn to roles that break stereotypes."

She wants to tell stories that show women in a stronger light.

"I want to tell stories that reflect strong, multi-dimensional women who stand their ground and challenge societal expectations. It's not just about playing different roles; it's about representing characters with purpose and depth that inspire audiences," said the actress.

Highlighting her approach, she stated, "I've consciously let go of work that glorifies weak, dependent women. My characters stand on their own terms. They have agency, resilience, and a voice that demands to be heard."

"As an actor, I feel a responsibility to portray women who embody strength and individuality," said Kritika.



**Mumbai:** Actress Tinaa Dattaa, who will be seen in the crime thriller series *Personal Trainer*, has revealed how her disciplined lifestyle helped her in playing the character of Neha.

She said: "There's a scene where I perform a headstand, and I was proud to pull it off on my own. My passion and wellness allowed me to bring authenticity to the character. It's not every day that you get to your interests meaty."

Talking about her experience on the show and about her character, she added: "Neha, and it was a complex role with both strengths and flaws. Besides bringing a promising character to life, it was fantastic to work with such a talented cast."

Set against the backdrop of Mumbai's elite gym culture, this gripping tale explores ambition, love, and the dangerous pursuit of physical perfection.

Tinaa rose to fame with her portrayal of Ichcha Singh Bundela in *Uttaran*. She went on to participate in stunt-based reality show *Fear Factor: Khairon Ke Khiladi 7* and reality series *Bigg Boss 16*.

**Mumbai:** R Madhavan, known for his and remarkable career in the Indian industry, recently shared his on the most nerve-wracking moments in his career. The whose career spans years, revealed that the of shooting and the first publicity or a film's release the most challenging ences for him.

In an interview with SCREEN, the Rock-etry actor shared how his nerves intensify as the release date approaches, admitting that the anxiety leading up to a film's release is overwhelming. "I get nervous by the hour as I get closer to a release. The first day of shooting is getting progressively difficult, and on the first day of publicity or release, I feel like everyone is saying, 'Nope, you've lost it; that's it, game over,'" he shared.

Despite these fears, the actor expressed immense gratitude for his enduring career, noting that surviving in an industry where stars often become irrelevant in just a couple of years is no easy feat. He credits the encouragement from his fans for keeping him grounded and motivated throughout his journey.

On the work front, Madhavan is set to star in *Hisaab Barabar*, a thriller with satirical elements that has already generated much anticipation among fans.

## Maddy's career fears

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## Tinaa on how she aced role in Personal Trainer



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### AJIT'S SILVER JUBILEE YEAR DRAMA FEST

# Shivratri exposes social biases involving inter-caste marriage



A scene from Hindi play *Shivratri* performed at Rabindra Mandap

**Bhubaneswar:** The artists of National School of Drama, Bangalore Centre, performed Hindi play *Shivratri* on the second evening of Ajit Natya Mahotsav here at Rabindra Mandap, Tuesday.

Written by Kannada playwright Chandrasekhar Kambar, the play was trans-

lated and directed by Veena Sharma. Talking about the play, its plot revolved around daring inter-caste marriage that challenges the rigid caste system and traditional norms of the time. It showed how the bold act throws society into turmoil, exposing biases and fears. Rooted in historical events, the play also captured the vi-

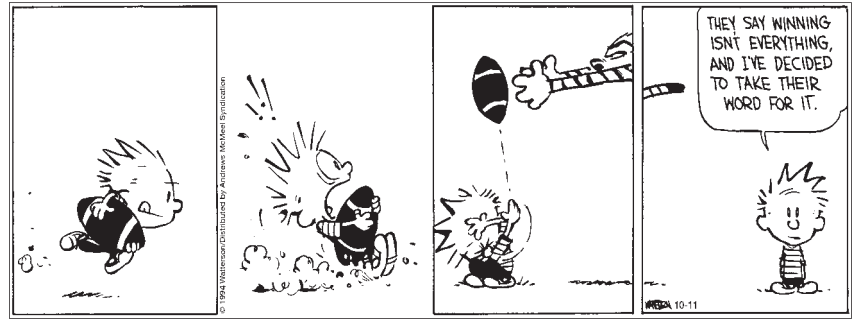


Orissa POST Features Editor Bijay Mandal being felicitated

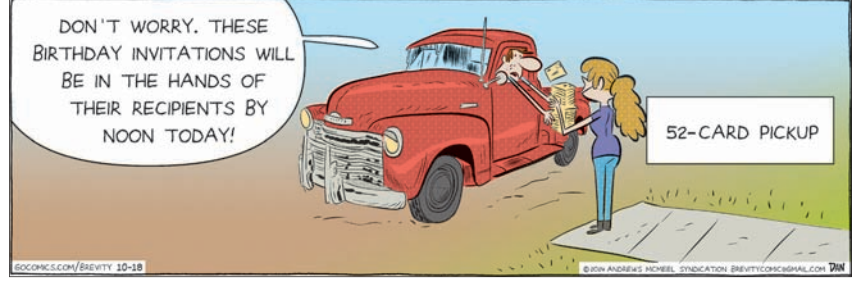
### PEANUTS



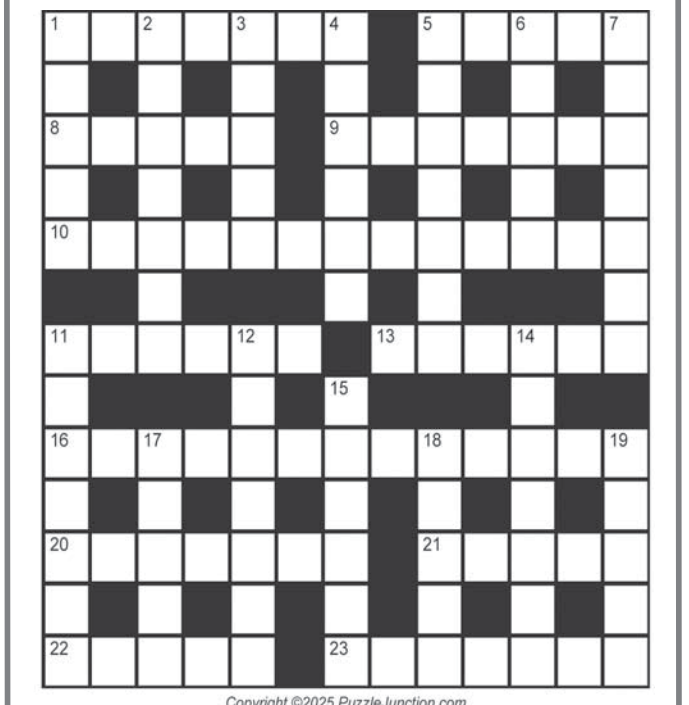
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



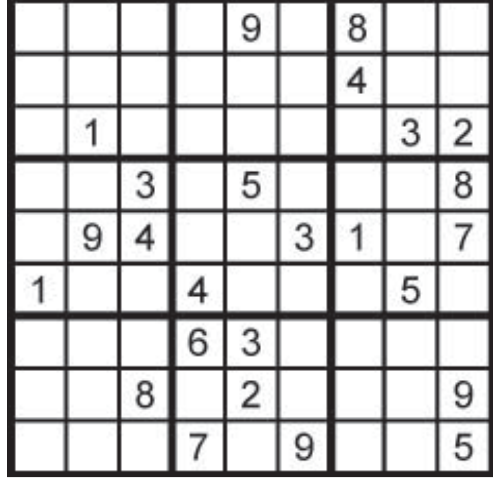
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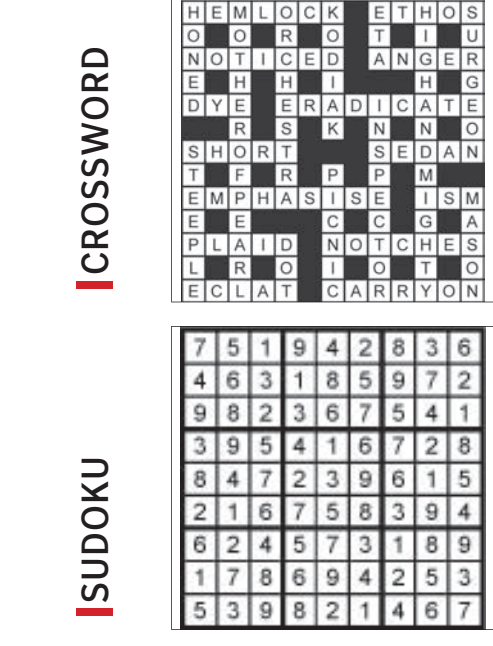
- Across**
- 1 Sunless spots
  - 5 Baked, in Bologna
  - 8 Audacity
  - 9 Kind of penguin
  - 10 Like a spy tries to be
  - 11 Assemble
  - 13 Degrees
  - 16 Yak or ox, e.g. (5,2,6)
  - 20 Passionate
  - 21 Belief system
  - 22 Small herring
  - 23 Vanity
  - Down**
  - 1 Red Sea peninsula
  - 2 Brandy flavour
  - 3 Indian, for one
  - 4 One of the Seven Dwarfs
  - 5 Parrot
  - 6 Trunk
  - 7 Collars
  - 11 Evil spirits
  - 12 Like the dodo
  - 14 Artemis or Diana, e.g.
  - 15 Disgust
  - 17 \_\_\_ of roses
  - 18 Family member
  - 19 Low-water mark

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# NEP will groom students for empowered India: CM

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 would help in preparing students and youths for building a modern and empowered India, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Tuesday.

Majhi, while inaugurating a three-day national workshop on the NEP, 2020, said it will play an important role in realising the goal of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to build a 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India).

The policy would help in creating a strong infrastructure and provide quality education at the primary level, he said.

The NEP, 2020 will be implemented in the state from the next academic year, Majhi said.

"The use of technology in imparting education will be enhanced. Providing education through technology will become an integral part of our academic system," the Chief Minister said.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, speaking on the occasion, said Odisha is going to be a model for the entire nation in bringing reforms to the education system. Both the Centre and the state government are working together in that direction, he said.

After the BJP formed government in the eastern state, concrete steps have been taken on the implementation of the NEP, 2020 in letter and spirit, Pradhan said.

Majhi said 'Sishu Vatikas' will be opened in the state to



**Odisha is going to be a model for the entire nation in bringing reforms to the education system. Both the Centre and the state government are working together in that direction**

**DHARMENDRA PRADHAN | UNION EDUCATION MINISTER**

provide preschool education to children. For this, robust infrastructure will be created in the coming years, he said.

The state government will also give emphasis on the appointment of more teachers, content preparation of textbooks and other teaching aids, he said.

Majhi said his government has already started taking steps to strengthen the infrastructure of primary education in the state.

One school in each panchayat is being developed as a model school under the 'Godabarish Mishra Adarsh Prathamika

Vidyalaya Yojana', the Chief Minister said.

In an effort to reduce the drop-out rate of tribal students, the state government has launched the 'Madho Singh Hath Kharch Yojana', he added.

School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond said with the implementation of the NEP, 2020, students can learn in their mother tongue along with other languages.

Besides, focus will also be on vocational education, digital education and the use of artificial intelligence at the school level, he said. The state has recently inked a pact with the Ministry of Education for the establishment of PM Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) in Odisha. In the first phase, 450 such schools will be set up, Gond said.

"We have requested the Education Ministry to sanction additional PM-SHRI schools for Odisha. This will strengthen the school infrastructure in the state," Gond said.

## 4 die of suspected diarrhoea in Kanas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** Four persons have died from suspected diarrhoea in Kanas block of Puri district, officials said Tuesday.

District officials visited the affected villages in Kanas block, provided medicines and advised locals not to use water from Daya River. The administration has also started providing drinking water through tankers.

Puri's chief district medical officer (CDMO) Rupabhanu Mishra said a joint inspection was carried out in the affected villages. During discussions, locals mentioned their ongoing drinking water problems and their reliance on water from Daya River.

"Laboratory tests on Daya River water revealed contamination, making it unsafe for consumption. We have advised people not to use it," Mishra explained.

A dedicated health team, along with an ambulance, has been deployed in the suspected diarrhoea-hit area, Puri Collector Siddharth Shankar Swain said.

In a statement, the Health and Family Welfare department confirmed an outbreak of acute diarrhoeal disease at Jaguleipadar village in Kanas block January 12, which spread to nearby villages along Daya River. A total of 83 people have been affected, it added.

The district team is actively conducting surveillance to detect cases early and prevent further spread of the disease. Twelve teams, each consisting of three members, are carrying out house-to-house surveys, treating minor ailments, and distributing ORS and Halozen tablets, the statement added. Prophylactic Doxycycline is being administered. Water and rectal swabs have been sent for laboratory analysis, and 88 tube wells have been chlorinated, with the remaining wells to be treated in the next 48 hours. The Naraj Barrage on the Mahanadi River was opened, followed by super chlorination of Daya River, it said.

On the other hand, BJD leader Umakanta Samantaray criticised the state government alleging that it had failed to provide safe drinking water to people of Kanas.

Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling said a special doctors' team has been sent to the affected area.

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DSPL - 342





UTKARSH  
ODISHA

MAKE IN ODISHA CONCLAVE'25

BHUBANESWAR | 28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> JAN | 2025



Shri Narendra Modi

Prime Minister

Shri Mohan Charan Majhi

Chief Minister, Odisha

## SECTORAL SESSION

Theme: Sustainable growth of Renewable Energy & Equipment Manufacturing

ଅକ୍ଷୟଶକ୍ତି ଏବଂ ବୈଦ୍ୟୁତିକ ଉପକରଣ ଉତ୍ପାଦନର ସାମଗ୍ରିକ ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି

28<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (15:30 - 16:30 Hrs)  
Hall-3, Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar - 13

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# Reddy calls for tech to combat illegal mining



Union Minister of Mines G Kishan Reddy visits the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) exhibition at the iconic Konark Sun Temple, Tuesday

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** Union Minister of Mines G Kishan Reddy Tuesday advised mineral-bearing states to adopt cutting-edge technologies to strengthen monitoring and enforcement mechanisms against illegal mining activities. Reddy was speaking on the second day of the 3rd National Mines Ministers' Conference at Konark in Puri district. The Centre has zero tolerance towards illegal mining, he asserted. "The stakeholders need to

the government's commitment to integrating green initiatives, including afforestation efforts, solar energy adoption and sustainable waste management. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change also shared with the audience information on forest conservation and environmental safeguards. "These inputs aim to guide states and stakeholders in implementing policies that balance economic growth with ecological preservation," an official said. The Directorate General of Mines Safety (DGMS) also highlighted critical updates on safety standards, technological advancements and training programmes across mining operations. On the second day of the conference, at least 11 states showcased their auction process, innovative practices and strategies to maximise resource utilisation while ensuring transparency and efficiency. The ministry remains steadfast in its mission to drive innovation, improve efficiency and ensure that the benefits of mining activities reach the last mile, an official statement said.

adopt cutting-edge technologies to strengthen monitoring and enforcement mechanisms while dealing with illegal mining," Reddy said. He also urged senior officials of the mineral-bearing states to take action against illegal mining, underlining the critical role of the sector in creating employment opportunities, particularly in the rural and semi-urban areas. Reddy also emphasised the importance of responsible mine closure practices to ensure environmental restoration and sustainability. He highlighted



**VITAL LINK:** The much-awaited Hanspal flyover, constructed at a cost of ₹24.5 crore, was thrown open to public by Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi Tuesday

# Dy CM promises recognition for electrohomeopathy in Odisha

RESHMI YADAV, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** Electrohomeopathy, a treatment method with no side effects, is gaining recognition across India, but Odisha has not given it the attention it deserves, said Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida at an event here Tuesday. Speaking on the concluding day of the two-day International Electrohomeopathic Conference 2025, organised by the State Electropathic Physicians' Association (SEPA) at the College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry, Ouat, Parida assured that under the current government, electro-



homeopathy will soon be recognised and further developed in the state. "I personally take electrohomeopathy treatment, and I can attest to its effectiveness," she added, highlighting the potential of this treatment. The event commemorated

the 216th birth anniversary of Count Cesare Mattei, the founder of Electrohomeopathy. Ekamra-Bhubaneswar MLA Babu Singh, Kantabanji MLA Laxman Bag, BJP spokesperson for Odisha Sajjan Sharma, and SEPA President Saroj Kumar Sahoo were among the digni-

taries in attendance. In his address, Sahoo emphasised the historical significance of electrohomeopathy, which gained popularity in India by 1920 and became widely recognised in Odisha in the 1980s. He noted that while the treatment is effective and affordable, it still lacks substantial government support in Odisha. With approximately 3,500 doctors practicing electrohomeopathy, Sahoo called for greater recognition and support for the field in the state. This marks a step toward expanding electrohomeopathy's role in Odisha's healthcare system.

# Mahasamund-Titlagarh section inspection by ECoR GM Funkwal

**Bhubaneswar:** The East Coast Railway (ECoR) General Manager Parmeshwar Funkwal conducted a comprehensive inspection of the Mahasamund-Titlagarh railway section recently, reviewing safety measures, passenger amenities, and infrastructure development across key stations.

# IICs urged to lead in policing efforts



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** An emergency meeting was held Tuesday at the Commissioner of Police's office, chaired by Commissioner S Dev Datta Singh, to review crime trends and the law-and-order situation in Bhubaneswar. The meeting, attended by Additional Commissioner Umashankar Dash and senior officers, focused on enhancing policing effectiveness. Commissioner Singh emphasised that all police station In-charges (IICs) must take a leading role in ensuring active patrolling, blocking, and thorough checking in their respective areas. He stressed the importance of visible policing at key locations and prompt local police responses to incidents. Singh also directed that motor vehicle checks be carried out stringently and traffic regulations strictly enforced. The Commissioner highlighted the need for quick reporting

of potential incidents to ensure better supervision and investigation. He stressed the importance of handling offences against women with urgency, regardless of their scale, and addressing ragging cases in educational institutions without delay. Singh also called for intensified drives against drug trafficking. In case of default in payment, they would undergo rigorous imprisonment for one more year, special public prosecutor Rasmi Ranjan Brahma said. According to the prosecution, Soumya Ranjan Kunda, who ran a betel shop in Saheed Nagar area, was sleeping inside the shop when the incident took place late August 30, 2022 night. "Manoj Das and Ashok Das attacked Soumya, leaving him critically injured. Family members rushed him to Capital Hospital and later to All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bhubaneswar where he succumbed to injuries during treatment," the special public prosecutor said. Soon, Soumya's brother Sagar approached the Saheed Nagar police who registered a case (418/2022) under Sections 302 and 34 of the IPC and arrested the two. The court convicted the two after taking into account the statements of 18 witnesses and 39 documents, Brahma said.

# 2 get life term for 2022 City murder

**BHUBANESWAR:** The District and Sessions Court, Khurda Tuesday awarded life imprisonment to two persons after holding them guilty of killing a shopkeeper in Saheed Nagar area here in 2022. The court also slapped a fine of ₹10,000 on each convicts - Manoj Das and Ashok Das. In case of default in payment, they would undergo rigorous imprisonment for one more year, special public prosecutor Rasmi Ranjan Brahma said. According to the prosecution, Soumya Ranjan Kunda, who ran a betel shop in Saheed Nagar area, was sleeping inside the shop when the incident took place late August 30, 2022 night. "Manoj Das and Ashok Das attacked Soumya, leaving him critically injured. Family members rushed him to Capital Hospital and later to All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bhubaneswar where he succumbed to injuries during treatment," the special public prosecutor said. Soon, Soumya's brother Sagar approached the Saheed Nagar police who registered a case (418/2022) under Sections 302 and 34 of the IPC and arrested the two. The court convicted the two after taking into account the statements of 18 witnesses and 39 documents, Brahma said.

# Cash looted from donation box

**PURI:** Unidentified miscreants reportedly looted lakhs in cash from the donation box of Sirlu Mahavir Temple under Chandanpur police limits here in the wee hours of Tuesday. According to sources, the miscreants entered the temple complex by cutting open the grill and took away cash from the donation box. "The miscreants snapped the electricity supply to the temple before committing the theft. They also reportedly disconnected the CCTV wires to evade identification," they said. On being informed by the priests, Chandanpur police officials visited the scene and launched an investigation.



FILE PHOTO

# Mines Secy highlights surge in critical mineral demand

**BHUBANESWAR:** The demand for critical minerals is expected to rise significantly in the next decade, driven by innovations in energy storage, solar and wind power, and electric vehicles, secretary of the Ministry of Mines VL Kantha Rao said during his recent visit to the CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT) in Bhubaneswar. Accompanied by Nalco CMD BP Singh, and NFTDC Hyderabad director K Balasubramanian, the team explored the institute's advanced R&D facilities focused on minerals and materials technology. The delegation toured several facilities, including material characterisation, advanced mineral processing, and pilot plants for PGE processing, iron ore beneficiation, seabed mineral processing, and metal recycling. They also reviewed activities under the Common Research and Technology Development Hub (CRTDH) and efforts related to environmental sustainability.

# Timely completion of TP Scheme stressed

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) has pulled up its sleeves to implement Town Planning (TP) Scheme 8 to support the mega infrastructure project of a 64-km long ring road, while urging the land owners to contribute 40 per cent of their land for planned development in peri-urban areas. This was revealed during a meeting convened by BDA Tuesday to discuss the draft TP Scheme 8, covering Andharua and Daspur mouzas on the outskirts of the city. Landowners from these mouzas participated in the meeting and shared their suggestions for the planned development of the region in a transparent manner. BDA Vice Chairman N



Thirumala Naik, Deputy Commissioner (TP) Bhabataran Sahu, Land Officer Sipak Kumar Patra, Sub-Collector Manoranjan Sahu, BDO Devi Prasad Mohanty, additional tehsildar Siddhartha Gourab Parida, assistant town planner Mansi Mahanty, and Andharua sarpanch Swarnalata Baliarsingh were present at the meeting. Deputy Commissioner Sahu outlined the objectives of

the TP Scheme and provided an overview of infrastructure projects and land acquisition activities completed under earlier TP Schemes 1, 2, 3, and 4, which encompass nine mouzas, including Sahajpur, Naragoda, Paikarapur, Nuagaon, Tamando, Bijipur, and Sijuput. He also highlighted the ongoing progress of the ring road passing through the area. Sahu detailed the steps taken

# Koraput MP, Gunupur MLA in task force for SODC formation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday included Koraput MP Saptagiri Ulaka and Gunupur MLA Satyajit Gomungu in the task force constituted for the formation of the Southern Odisha Development Council (SODC). With the inclusion of Ulaka and Gomungu, both from the Congress, the task force - headed by School and Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond - now has 11 members and three ex-officio members. The three ex-officio members are RDC (Southern Division), RDC (Central Division) and Managing Director of Western Odisha Development Council (WODC). Earlier, Transport Minister

Bibhuti Bhusan Jena, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises Minister Gokulananda Mallik, Nabarangpur MP Balabhadra Majhi, Kandhamal MP Sukant Kumar Panigrahi, Digapahandi MLA Siddhant Mohapatra, Malkangiri MLA Narasingh Madkani, Paralakhemundi MLA Rupesh Kumar Panigrahi, Phulbani MLA Uma Charan Mallik, and Pottangi MLA Ramchandra Kadam were appointed as members of the task force. The proposed SODC is expected to play a significant role in the development of the region, aiming to involve all sections of society in the state's development process. Earlier, Majhi had emphasised the importance of the council in the Assembly.

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# 12-hour Bargarh bandh partially hits normal life



While shops and business establishments remained closed, emergency services were kept out of the purview of the bandh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Sambalpur, Jan 21:** A 12-hour bandh called by a local organisation to protest police "inaction" in the alleged abduction of a woman, partially affected normal life in Bargarh town, an official said.

traffic to a standstill. Hundreds of vehicles remain stranded on the Bargarh-Raipur national highway, officials said. While shops and business establishments remained closed, emergency services were kept out of the purview of the bandh. "We hit the streets because the police failed to nab the main accused even eight days after the incident," said Manch leader Jugnu Jagdala. Former minister and BJD leader Snehangini Chhuria, who joined the protest, alleged

## Elderly man dies of electrocution



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rayagada, Jan 21:** An elderly man died after coming in contact with a 25,000-volt electric wire at Rayagada railway station Tuesday afternoon. The deceased was identified as Narasingh Kand, 64, a resident of Badamula village under Rajakhariar police limits in Nuapada district. According to reports, Narasingh, reportedly suffering from some mental illness, suddenly climbed onto a stationary goods train at the railway station and touched the overhead live wire. Railway staff rushed him to Rayagada district headquarters hospital where he was declared dead upon arrival. Railway Protection Force (RPF) has launched an investigation into the incident. "Narasingh's son, Ram Kand, has been informed about the former's death, and the body will be handed over to the family after post-mortem," said the RPF officials. According to the RPF, Narasingh had arrived at Rayagada from Secunderabad earlier in the morning and behaved irrationally on the station premises before climbing the train.

## Two arrested for pushing minor girl into flesh trade

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, Jan 21:** Town police here Tuesday arrested two persons on charges of their involvement in trafficking of a 16-year old tribal orphan girl to Bhubaneswar and involving her in flesh trade. The girl was rescued by the police and her ordeal came to the fore during counseling by a voluntary outfit. The accused were identified as Ranjit Sahoo and Sushila Patra of Kiapada village under Turumunga police limits in Keonjhar district. Police arrested them after receiving a complaint from a caregiver of an open shelter at Keonjhar where the survivor is currently under shelter. The accused women were produced in the court Tuesday and further investigations are underway. Town police IIC Srikant Sahu said. According to the complaint, the minor girl was rescued along with other girls by Khandagiri police during a raid at a slum in Khandagiri area December 1, 2024 when she was engaged in flesh trade. Later, she was housed in an open shelter. Khandagiri police handed over the girl to Child Welfare Committee, Keonjhar after some days, as she was a native of the district. Later, she was housed in an open shelter in Keonjhar. The survivor, during counseling, narrated her ordeal and revealed how she was trafficked from Keonjhar to Bhubaneswar and

that the police failed to take action against the accused persons. Speaking to PTI over phone, Bargarh Superintendent of Police (SP) BS Meena said: "The woman was acquainted with the accused persons. Two of the four arrested persons were found on CCTV camera with the woman earlier at a shopping mall. This is not a case of sexual assault as the doctor has already made it clear. The case is under investigation and justice will be done to the victim." Police have so far arrested four persons in this connection. The incident took place January 12 evening when the 24-year-old Dalit woman was returning to her home after witnessing Dhanu Jatra in Bargarh town. Her family had filed a missing complaint at the Bargarh Town police station. The woman was rescued by local people from Kurla jungle. The woman was admitted at the Veer Surendra Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR). VIMSAR superintendent Prof Lalmohan Nayak said that the woman was not sexually assaulted.



DEMO FOR SUGAR MILL: Members of Nayagarh Sugar Mill Joint Action Committee take out a rally Tuesday, demanding establishment of a new sugar mill in Sanhamara mouza near Panipoila of Nayagarh district. They also submitted a memorandum to the District Collector, addressed to the Chief Minister

## Internal rift deepens in Anandapur BJD

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Hatadihi, Jan 21:** The ruling BJD's internal discord in Anandapur Assembly constituency in Keonjhar district has come to the fore despite the party's victory in the 2024 elections. An open confrontation between two party-backed representatives has indicated a growing rift. The clash occurred recently on Hatadihi block office premises during a panchayat samiti meeting. The dispute involved Kousalya Sethi, Zilla Parishad (ZP) member representing Zone 36, and Hemalata Behera, sarpanch of Akarua panchayat. Following the heated altercation, Sethi filed a complaint at Nandipada police station against the sarpanch and her husband Chaturbhuj Swain. According to Sethi's complaint, the incident took place January 15. She alleged that while raising concerns over mismanagement and inefficiency in Akarua panchayat, she faced casteist slurs and verbal



abuse from the sarpanch and her husband. The altercation was brought under control by government officials, public representatives, and locals who intervened. Nandipada IIC Ravindra Patra confirmed that a case (13/2025) has been registered, and an investigation is underway. Adding to the tensions, Anandapur SDPO Prashant Kumar Behera visited the block office Friday to assess the situation. The sarpanch, Hemalata Behera, has accused the ZP member of attempting to assert undue control over the panchayat. Behera alleged that Sethi, a former sarpanch of Akarua, is meddling in the panchayat's

operations and disrupting its functioning. She also claimed that Sethi was involved in financial irregularities during a drainage construction project, which had prompted a Vigilance inquiry. Denying the accusations, Sethi argued that the panchayat office is poorly managed, and her efforts to address these issues have led to targeted attacks by the sarpanch and her husband. She described the allegations against her as baseless. A senior BJD leader, speaking on the condition of anonymity, expressed dissatisfaction with the local MLA, Abhimanyu Sethi, accusing

him of neglecting party workers and failing to strengthen the party's organisation in the region. "The MLA's unilateral decisions have demotivated frontline workers and grassroots leaders," he said. In response, MLA Abhimanyu Sethi dismissed claims of internal rifts, saying that everything within the party is in order. However, the dispute between the ZP member and the sarpanch remains unresolved. The infighting has weakened the BJD's position in the constituency, with party workers reportedly losing enthusiasm, said the locals. Meanwhile, BJP leaders, workers, and MPs have intensified their public engagement, attending meetings, inauguration and religious functions, further consolidating their base in the region. The ongoing discord within the BJD has raised concerns about its future prospects in the Anandapur constituency, as internal rifts threaten the party's unity and public perception.

## JOURNALISTS' STIR OVER ENTRY BAN

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sanakhemundi, Jan 21:** Journalists in this block of Ganjam district staged a protest at Sanakhemundi block office Tuesday morning after posters banning their entry were put up there Monday morning. The scribes gathered at Loknatheshwar temple at Pattapur and held a meeting to decide on next course of action. Later in the evening, a formal protest letter was submitted to Sanakhemundi tehsildar Ramachandra Pattnaik, addressed to the Ganjam Collector. Journalists then proceeded to Pattapur police station and submitted a memorandum to Ganjam SP's office via SI Himanshu Patra, demanding action. Later in the evening, the protest was called off after getting assurance from Berhampur Sub-Collector Deenah Dastageer, said Block Journalists' Association secretary Satyanarayan Padhi.

भारत सरकार  
कारपोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय  
त्वैरित कॉर्पोरेट समापन प्रसंकरण केंद्र (सी-पेस),  
आई.आई.सी.ए. बिल्डिंग, 7वीं मंजिल,  
प्लॉट P-6, 7, 8, से.-5,  
आई.एम.टी. मानेसर,  
गुडगाँव, हरियाणा - 122050  
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Form No. STK - 6  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]  
Public Notice: ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2024-25/1592 Date: 31/12/2024  
Reference: (1) in the matter of striking off or removal of names of (1) companies in the state of Odisha under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S. No.	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AB2144619	U74999OR2020PTC032851	EASE TRIP SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED

(2) Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies had received applications from the above-mentioned companies under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name(s) from the register of companies either on the ground that they have failed to commence business within one year of their incorporation or on the ground that the company(ies) is/are not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two immediately preceding financial years and has/have not made any application(s) within such period for obtaining the status of a dormant company under section 455 of the Companies Act, 2013 or the company(ies) have obtained the status of dormant company/subscribers to the memorandum have not paid the subscription which they had undertaken to pay at the time of incorporation of a company and a declaration to this effect has not been filed within one hundred and eighty days of its incorporation under subsection (1) of section 10A/have not been carrying on any business or operations, as revealed after the physical verification carried out under sub-section (9) of section 12, but it/they do not wish to continue its/their registration as companies and have, therefore, requested for removal/strike off of its/their names from the register of companies.  
(3) Accordingly, the Registrar of Companies proposes to remove or strike off the names of the above-mentioned companies from the Register of Companies.  
(4) Any Person objecting to the proposed removal or striking off name of the companies from the register of companies may send his or her objection to the office address mentioned here above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

Irfan Tirkay  
Assistant Registrar  
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit  
CBC 07123/11/0672/2425

## Steel City CA wins Modi's gifts in e-auction



RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, Jan 21:** A city-based chartered accountant has successfully won 11 gifts presented to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by various organisations over the past two years in an e-auction conducted by the Ministry of Culture, a report said. Manoj Thebriya, in his 50s, had been eagerly awaiting the auction for the past two years. "I was keen to purchase these items when they were first auctioned in Delhi at a gallery. Later, I learned that future auctions would be held online, so I kept a close watch," Manoj said. The e-auction began in September 2024, and Manoj registered

himself for participation. "The auction lasted for a few days and concluded on Diwali in 2024," he said. Manoj expressed satisfaction with the items he won. "I purchased a statue of Maharana Pratap, Hanumanji, Ram Darbar, and Shiv Parivar, all made of metal. I also acquired a bamboo replica of the Ram Mandir and a statue of Goddess Durga carved from a single piece of wood. Additional-



ly, I got four 'angavastrams' and a 'potli' (pouch) for storing money," he explained. Manoj and his family are admirers of PM Modi. "I don't know if I will ever get the chance to meet Modiji, but now I have gifts that he personally touched and kept with him," he said. His family was thrilled when he won the items in the auction. The items were delivered at his doorstep January 16. "I was asked to deposit the payment within a week of the conclusion of the auction, and I promptly did so. The ministry delivered the item at my home," he said. The delivery was part of a larger logistics operation involving two trucks carrying the auctioned goods to various winners across the country. "One truck came to my house, and all the items were carefully packed to prevent any damage," he added. He was informed that the proceeds from the auction would go towards the Namami Gange project. When asked, about the cost of the items, Manoj, who has been in the profession for 30 years, declined to disclose the amount. "Please, I got the items, and I'm happy I did. Don't ask me about the price—they are priceless," he said.

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया  
Bank of India

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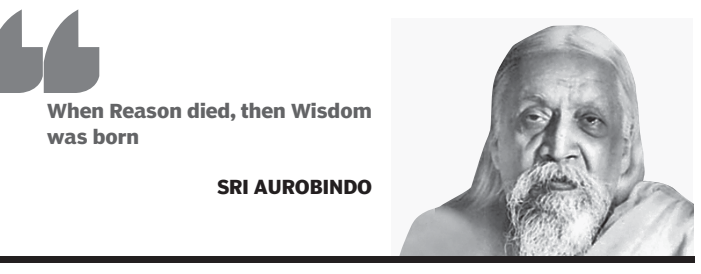
**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE**  
E-Auction Sale Notice Under SARFAESI ACT, 2002

Where as the Bank acting through its Authorised Officer in exercise of its powers under-Section 13(4) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (SARFAESI) has decided to put up for E-auction of the following properties "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for realization of the debts due to the Bank.

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Total Dues	Description of the Properties	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	<b>GOPALPUR BRANCH, PH.: 9007488999 /</b> Borrower : Mrs. Diptimayee Kar, W/o.: Mr. Suresh Kar, At: Purushottam Nagar, Kajidih, Madhupatna, Cuttack-753010, Permanent Address: Labour Colony, Khapuria, Madhupatna, Cuttack-753010 / Total Dues: ₹13,49,000/- + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.	Vacant Land on Khata No.: 118/131, Plot No.: 11/796, Plot Area: Ac.0.1840 Dec. i.e. 8015 Sqft., KISSAM: Gharabari, Mouza: Manibada, P.S.: Cuttack Town, P.S. No.: 78, SRO/Tahasil: Cuttack, Tahasil No.: 283, Dist.: Cuttack, Odisha, Standing in the name of Mrs. Diptimayee Kar, W/o.: Mr. Suresh Kar, Bounded by East: Sushil Kumar Hembram, West: Saraswati Sahoo, North: Road, South: Plot No.: 12 & 13	₹18,24,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹1,82,400/- / ₹ 50,000/-
2.	<b>JAGATSINGHPUR BRANCH, PH.: 9938772882 /</b> Borrower: Mrs. Namita Das, W/o.: Mr. Santosh Kumar Das / Co-Borrower: Mr. Santosh Kumar Das, S/o.: Mr. Sanatan Das, Both are At: Railbari, P.O.: Palli, P.S.: Balikuda, Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha-754103 / Total Dues: ₹6,21,000/- + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.	Residential Land and Building pertaining to Khata No.: 869/110, Plot No.: 1272, Area: Ac.0.110 Dec. i.e. 4791.6 Sqft, having KISSAM: Gharabari, Mouza: Raibarai, P.S.: Jagatsinghpur (Thana No. 331), DSRO/Tahasil: Jagatsinghpur (Tahasil No.: 331), Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, Standing in the name of Mrs. Namita Das, W/o.: Mr. Santosh Kumar Das, Bounded by East: Plot No.: 1271, West: Plot No.: 1273, North: Plot No.: 1262 & 1263, South: Plot No.: 1206 (15 ft Bitumen Road)	₹10,77,000/- (excluding GST & other statutory dues) / ₹1,07,700/- / ₹ 50,000/-

Date & Time of E-Auction: 27.02.2025 From 11.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M. with unlimited extension of 10 (Ten) minutes each.  
Last Date & Time for submission of EMD & Documents: 27.02.2025 upto 4.00 P.M.  
Inspection will be provided to the prospective bidders on any working day before 25.02.2025 with prior appointment of the authorised officer  
The sale shall be subject to the terms and conditions and provisions prescribed in the SARFAESI Act 2002 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.  
This is also a 15/30 days sale notice to the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) of the aforesaid loan account for settlement of their outstanding dues with the Bank and to participate in the public auction on the above mentioned date. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in https://banknet.com  
Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 22.01.2025  
Authorised Officer, Bank of India





Oligarchy In Making

The conspicuous presence of the three American tycoons – Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg and Jeff Bezos – in the forefront of the ceremony installing the new US President Donald Trump 20 January for the second time is no coincidence. It is a clear signal of the birth of a new American oligarchy under the stewardship of Trump against which the outgoing President Joe Biden had warned in his parting words from the Oval Office. Political power mostly gets an underpinning of economic power everywhere and the US is no exception. Yet, at times the relationship between the two powers becomes too glaring and threatening for the common man and democracy itself. To sound the alarm bells about the advent of oligarchs hanging on to the coattails of Trump, in his farewell speech Biden evoked the 19th-century Gilded Age and the robber barons, who destroyed competitors, exploited workers, bought judges and politicians and paraded wealth. Biden has hardly any listener now in his own country or elsewhere even though he had strengthened the economy with green investment, massive healthcare expansion and managed reasonably well the post COVID crisis that he had inherited from Trump. He seems to have wasted the goodwill for his pathetic handling of the war in Gaza and his reluctance to bring peace in the Middle East. What resonated, however, was his alarm call warning of the “dangerous concentration of power in the hands of a very few ultra-wealthy people.” In almost prophetic words he iterated: “An oligarchy is taking shape in America of extreme wealth, power and influence that literally threatens our entire democracy, our basic rights and freedoms.” This was unexpected and rather ominous given the fact that the top 0.1 per cent of the US population holds nearly six times as much total wealth as the bottom 50 per cent. Both the Democrats and the Republicans have profited from the super-rich. At least 83 billionaires backed Kamala Harris’ campaign. It would be straining credulity if one claims they all did so from disinterested concern for their nation. Rarely has the marriage of politics and riches been so unabashedly naked as in the case of Trump who rages against elites, but has formed a cabinet with 13 billionaires. Elon Musk, the first person whose net worth has exceeded \$400 billion, has even gone on spinning his economic theory that citizens will face “temporary hardship” as his department of government efficiency slashes public spending. Zuckerberg, the boss of Meta, and Bezos, the owner of Amazon and the Washington Post, seen in the company of Trump at the swearing-in ceremony, have their own plans to mix economic power with political power. Other “oligarchs” are already benefiting from backing fossil-fuel-friendly Trump. In this inner circle at the centre of which is Trump himself, new figures have emerged during the past months. Musk has been promoted to a position that will make him the de facto heart of power. The other two tech billionaires, Zuckerberg and Bezos, form a formidable group. Made up of media and social media platform owners, this oligarchy also represents a global threat to free access to reliable information. In the name of freedom of speech and expression these tycoons, it is feared, would seek to control the minds of the global population with narratives that blur the borders of fact and fiction, so as to strengthen their own private interests of remaining super-rich. Trump has already articulated his imperialist ambition to grab land and natural resources with his plan to “buy” Greenland and bring Canada and Mexico to heel. A new world order is being sought to be shaped not for the benefit of the poor and the downtrodden, but for the super-affluent. Undoubtedly now, in these changed circumstances, the super-rich not only from America but from across the world would like to align with this new and yet to emerge oligarchy for reasons known to all. The world is aware this is not some event that would complete a cycle in the next four years of the Trump administration but, instead, these four years will provide the impetus to kick start a new ‘global order of the affluent’.

FOCUS POVERTY

SUBSISTENCE ISN'T ENOUGH

In 1990, more than one-third of the global population lived below the World Bank’s extreme poverty line (\$2.15 per day). Since then, the share has fallen below 10% – a remarkable and inspiring achievement. But barely scraping by falls far short of what impoverished people aspire to.



One reason for this persistent empowerment gap is that rising GDP per capita does not always translate into widespread economic benefits



Even in the world’s most developed countries, 20% of the population remains economically disempowered

To this end, the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) has introduced the concept of an “empowerment line.” Building on the work of development economists, this threshold represents the income required to access essentials like food, shelter, healthcare, education, water, transportation, and energy while also saving enough to weather unexpected emergencies. Income is vital for economic empowerment, but affordability is equally important. While the income required to meet basic needs varies by country, the global benchmark is \$12 per person per day in purchasing-power-parity terms. Despite decades of progress, roughly 80% of people in low-income economies, and 50% in middle-income countries, still fall below this threshold. Even in the world’s most developed countries, 20% of the population remains economically disempowered. One reason for this persistent empowerment gap is that rising GDP per capita does not always translate into widespread economic benefits. The cost of essentials – such as housing in high-income countries and food in lower-income countries – often rises faster than wages, effectively “crowding out” income gains and eroding living standards. Lowering the cost of critical goods and services could play a crucial role in promoting inclusive development. MGI estimates that reducing prices in high-cost countries to match those of more affordable peers at similar income levels could lift around 230 million people – 2.8% of the global population – above the empowerment line. In countries with per capita incomes between \$2,500 and

\$5,000, for example, food costs often vary widely, with some households paying more than twice as much as others for basic necessities. Narrowing these gaps would not only alleviate financial pressures but also enable millions of families to achieve lasting economic security. Efficient markets help keep prices in check, while inefficiencies drive up costs and limit access to basic goods and services. A recent MGI report underscores the need for governments to improve affordability and emphasises the effectiveness of fostering competition, both domestically and globally, through regulations and trade policies. The private sector, which employs the vast majority of the global workforce, is also well positioned to support economic empowerment, and there are three compelling reasons why companies should. For starters, the private sector is already driving economic empowerment by creating quality jobs and delivering goods and services. According to MGI, US businesses channel \$4 trillion annually toward empowering employees, suppliers, and communities, while their European counterparts contribute \$2.1 trillion. At this scale, even minor improvements could generate substantial benefits. Moreover, businesses face increasing pressure to consider their social impact alongside financial performance. Research shows that address-

ing the broader effects of their activities can help companies enhance employee satisfaction, improve customer loyalty, and boost productivity. Lastly, an empowerment-oriented approach can reveal new market opportunities. While few mobile providers entered Sub-Saharan Africa or South Asia with the goal of empowering local communities, their success at linking small farmers to global markets and accelerating financial inclusion has accomplished that. A similar trend is playing out in the retail sector, where discount grocery stores’ low-cost business model has made food more affordable for millions of people around the world. To understand how businesses can promote empowerment, MGI analysed initiatives launched by 100 large companies from a range of industries worldwide. These efforts include subsidized healthcare, in-house training programmes to help employees advance to higher-paying roles, and philanthropic activities like donations to food banks and disaster relief. A growing number of companies have also pledged to pay their employees a living wage, with some requiring their suppliers to do the same. But determining the most effective approach remains a significant challenge. While marginal abatement cost curves are a widely accepted tool for assessing the cost efficiency of efforts to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions,

there is no comparable framework for evaluating the impact of social initiatives. To fill this gap, MGI has developed an “empowerment impact” metric, which measures the benefits of such programmes relative to their costs. A ratio of 1.0 means that each dollar spent delivers a dollar in benefits to households below the empowerment threshold, while a lower ratio reflects greater cost efficiency. Using this metric, companies can better design and implement social programmes. For example, MGI estimates that if US corporations and foundations improved the cost efficiency of their charitable giving – totaling \$140 billion annually – by just 10%, they could lift an additional five million people above the economic empowerment threshold. Companies could leverage their expertise to identify the groups most at risk of falling below the empowerment line, tailoring solutions to address specific challenges, such as housing shortages in Germany, high food prices in Vietnam and China, and rising health-care costs in the US. Recognising these local contexts could help companies develop initiatives that play to their core strengths. For example, a pharmaceutical company might focus on expanding access to life-saving drugs, while a bank could invest in affordable housing projects. To be sure, economic growth is the single most powerful driver of poverty reduction, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. But growth alone is not enough. Achieving meaningful progress requires widely shared benefits, supported by robust social provisions and improved affordability. Without these foundations, economic empowerment will remain elusive, preventing millions of people from reaching their full potential.

The writers are partners at McKinsey & Company.

WISDOM CORNER

- That which comes and goes, rises and sets, is born and dies is the ego. That which always abides, never changes, and is devoid of qualities is the Self. RAMANA MAHARSHI
Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens. KAHILJ GIBRAN
It is easy to hate and it is difficult to love. This is how the whole scheme of things works. All good things are difficult to achieve; and bad things are very easy to get. CONFUCIUS

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1905: On what was later known as Bloody Sunday, Russian workers marching on St. Petersburg were fired on by Russian troops.
1943: World record for fastest temperature change. The fastest temperature change recorded in history occurred on this day in Spearfish, South Dakota. The temperature increased from -4°F (-20°C) to +45°F (+7°C) in the span of two minutes.
1943: All Japanese resistance in Papua, on the island of New Guinea, site of an important Allied base at Port Moresby in World II, ceased.
1963: The Élysée Treaty formalizes the reconciliation between Germany and France. The treaty effectively ended centuries of enmity between the two European countries.
1973: The US Supreme Court legalizes abortion. On this day, the US Supreme Court issued one of its most momentous decisions, ruling in Roe v. Wade that a Texas statute criminalizing abortion in most instances violated a woman’s constitutional right of privacy.
1992: Serving as a payload specialist aboard the Discovery space shuttle, Roberta Bondar became the first Canadian woman and the first neurologist to travel into space.
2006: Evo Morales becomes Bolivia’s first indigenous president. The Left-wing politician has focused mainly on combating poverty and curbing the influence of transnational corporations.

CLARIFICATION

This is to clarify that the article titled “Techno colonialism & surveillance state” published in Orissa POST on January 16, 2025 has been attributed to Satya Narayan Misra. However, on inquiry it was found that the original author of the article is Bibhu Prasad Mohapatra. Regret the error.

Editor

IN JEST THIS

Pet affection: You’ve got to draw a line somewhere



You might think that it’s only Americans or Brits who would go so far, but ‘man’s best friend’ enjoys plenty of affection all over the world

If you own a dog or cat, I have a piece of advice for you: no matter how cute or lovable your pet is, please refrain from any kissing. This advice also applies to any other animals you may own, whether they’re cows, pigs or snakes. Try to keep a little space between your lips and theirs. Perhaps this advice does not apply to you at all. Perhaps you have zero animals or have zero inclination to kiss them. I fall into the latter category myself. I have a dog named Lulu who is very affectionate and enjoys being petted. I take her for walks and give her belly rubs. But I have not given her a single kiss, not even on National Dog Day. The only scenario in which I’d ever consider putting my lips on Lulu is if she needs mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and my wife is not around. I try to keep my mouth away from Lulu’s mouth, largely because I know where her mouth

has been: everywhere. She doesn’t hesitate to stick her nose and mouth into almost anything, whether it smells good or awful. (What smells awful to me often smells good to her). Instead of kissing Lulu, I might as well kiss the garbage can. It would be safer. You don’t have to be a scientist to realize that there are health risks associated with kissing your dog or not washing your hands after touching your dog. But in case you need some scientific evidence, a group of researchers at Penn State University in the US have just published a study in which they matched strains of Salmonella bacteria found in dogs with those affecting humans during the same period (2017 to 2023) and location. They found dozens of cases in which the bacteria – which can cause diarrhoea, fever and abdominal cramps – appeared to have moved from a pet dog to a human.

While a number of animals can carry Salmonella, you usually have to eat them to be infected. That’s not the case with dogs. As Sophia Kenney, a doctoral student who spearheaded the study noted, “we don’t let cows sleep in our beds or lick our faces, but we do dogs. We have this close bond with companion animals in general, and we have a really close interface with dogs.” While I consider it somewhat distasteful to kiss a dog, many pet owners feel quite differently. Some even kiss their dogs when they leave for work – and again when they return. In fact, an English broadcaster named Claudia Winkleman recently caused a stir when she said that she is so attached to her one-year-old King Spaniel dog, Skip, that she literally French kisses him. (Her husband is appalled, apparently – and a little jealous.) You might think that it’s only Americans or Brits who

would go so far, but “man’s best friend” enjoys plenty of affection all over the world. Women have been known to kick their husbands out of bed to make room for Rover. I make it a habit, however, to keep at least 15 centimeters between my face and Lulu’s. Why 15 cm? Because that’s the length of Lulu’s tongue. I don’t want her to think that I’m giving her an invitation to lick my face. Dogs love to lick humans – and they do it for a variety of reasons, according to Ellen Furlong, an associate professor of psychology and neuroscience at Pennsylvania State University in Kentucky, US. “They’re going to lick to taste things,” she told Popular Science. “They might lick to explore. They might lick because you’ve come home from a run and you’re very salty.” And if you happen to move away, your dog may give you a hurt look that says, “Why so salty?”

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



Unprecedented move

Sir, Education, being a subject in the Concurrent List of the Constitution implies shared responsibility between the Centre and states. But the latest UGC draft regulations appear to centralise authority by giving Governors, as Chancellors of most state universities, greater control over the selection of VCs. This seems to be an unprecedented move and such endeavours smack of a sinister political intervention by the ruling dispensation in the recruitment process and career advancement of teachers. Needless to say it also undermines the federal principles in education. Draft regulations are outside UGC’s jurisdiction, especially in so far as the appointment of VCs of public universities is concerned. In fact, UGC is only a regulatory body, which also should have been wound up by now going by the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 guidelines. That the same has not happened speaks volumes of the clout of the UGC’s bureaucracy aided and abetted by the ruling party. Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Path for peace

Sir, The recent ceasefire between Israel and Hamas provides much-needed relief for 2.3 million Gazans enduring months of siege and bombardment and offers closure for the families of Israeli hostages. However, this truce is only the first step in addressing the deeper, long-standing conflict that has caused immense suffering on both sides. Donald Trump’s intervention, securing the ceasefire before his inauguration, highlights the potential for effective US diplomacy. However, it raises questions about the delayed efforts by Joe Biden’s administration, which failed to compel Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to halt his offensive earlier. The ongoing violence has claimed over 46,000 lives in Gaza, with Biden’s inability to act decisively leaving a stain on his legacy. The next challenge is ensuring the ceasefire evolves into a permanent agreement, including the full withdrawal of Israeli troops and the release of all hostages. A postwar plan for Gaza is essential, as Hamas is unlikely to govern again. The US and its allies must support the emergence of a credible Palestinian authority, despite resistance from Netanyahu’s Far-Right coalition, which has consistently opposed such efforts. Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH



# Parliamentary panel on Waqf Bill holds meeting

The meeting was attended by officials of the Shia Waqf Board and representatives of various Muslim organisations and the Uttar Pradesh government



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, Jan 21:** The joint parliamentary committee (JPC) formed vis-a-vis the Waqf (Amendment) Bill held an important meeting here Tuesday.

The meeting was attended by officials of the Shia Waqf Board and representatives of various Muslim organisations and the Uttar Pradesh government.

State Minority Welfare Minister Om Prakash Rajbhar, who attended the meeting, told PTI, "Various stakeholders related to Waqf properties presented their views before the JPC members. The government's intention is very clear. It wants to give the benefits of Waqf properties to poor Muslims as well."

Without naming anyone, Rajbhar said, "Those who have illegally occupied Waqf land are the ones opposing the Waqf (Amendment) Bill."

Uttar Pradesh Shia Waqf Board Chairman Ali Zaidi told PTI that he put forth his point of view at the meeting.

Zaidi said he has especially highlighted the uncertainty about the future of "Waqf in-use" properties before the JPC. He said the draft of the Waqf

(Amendment) Bill talks about excluding "Waqf in-use" properties from the category of Waqf. In such a situation, what will happen to those properties and who will manage them? he asked.

Zaidi said he informed the JPC that all dargahs, karbalas, imambaras, khanqahs and graveyards are such properties that are in use but not recorded in writing as Waqf. However, they come under Waqf in terms of use and their management is done through the Waqf Act.

The Shia Waqf Board chairman said there are many other legal aspects that he has presented before the JPC.

He said the meeting was attended by JPC Chairman Jagdambika Pal as well as MPs A Raja, Imran Masood, Asaduddin Owaisi, Muhibullah Nadvi and various representatives of the Uttar Pradesh government.

The JPC was constituted after the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 could not be passed in Parliament. In recent months, the panel has held meetings in various states and sought to know about the objections to the Bill by holding discussions with various parties related to Waqf.

# Northeastern trio marks 53rd Statehood Day

The erstwhile princely states of Tripura and Manipur were merged into the Indian Union in October 1949 and became full-fledged states January 21, 1972

AGENCIES

**Agartala/Imphal/Shillong, Jan 21:** Meghalaya, Tripura and Manipur Tuesday separately celebrated their 53rd Statehood Day by holding a variety of colourful cultural programmes and other functions.

In view of the prevailing situation arising due to over 20-month long ethnic violence, the Statehood Day functions were low-key in Manipur. Governors and Chief Ministers of different northeastern states hoped that the spirit of peace, unity and progress would prevail in the trouble-torn Manipur.

The three states have taken a series of programmes to celebrate the day and announced a slew of welfare programmes and various plans to develop these states in future. President Droupadi Murmu, Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP President and Union Minister JP Nadda, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath greeted the people of the three states on the occasion.

Several Union ministers, Governors and Chief Ministers of the neighbouring northeastern states, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge greeted the people of the three states on the occasion.

The erstwhile princely states of Tripura and Manipur were merged into the Indian Union in October 1949 and became full-fledged states January 21, 1972.

Meghalaya was part of Assam before becoming a full-fledged state on the same day. All the three northeastern states became full-fledged states under the North Eastern Region (Re-Organisation) Act, 1971.

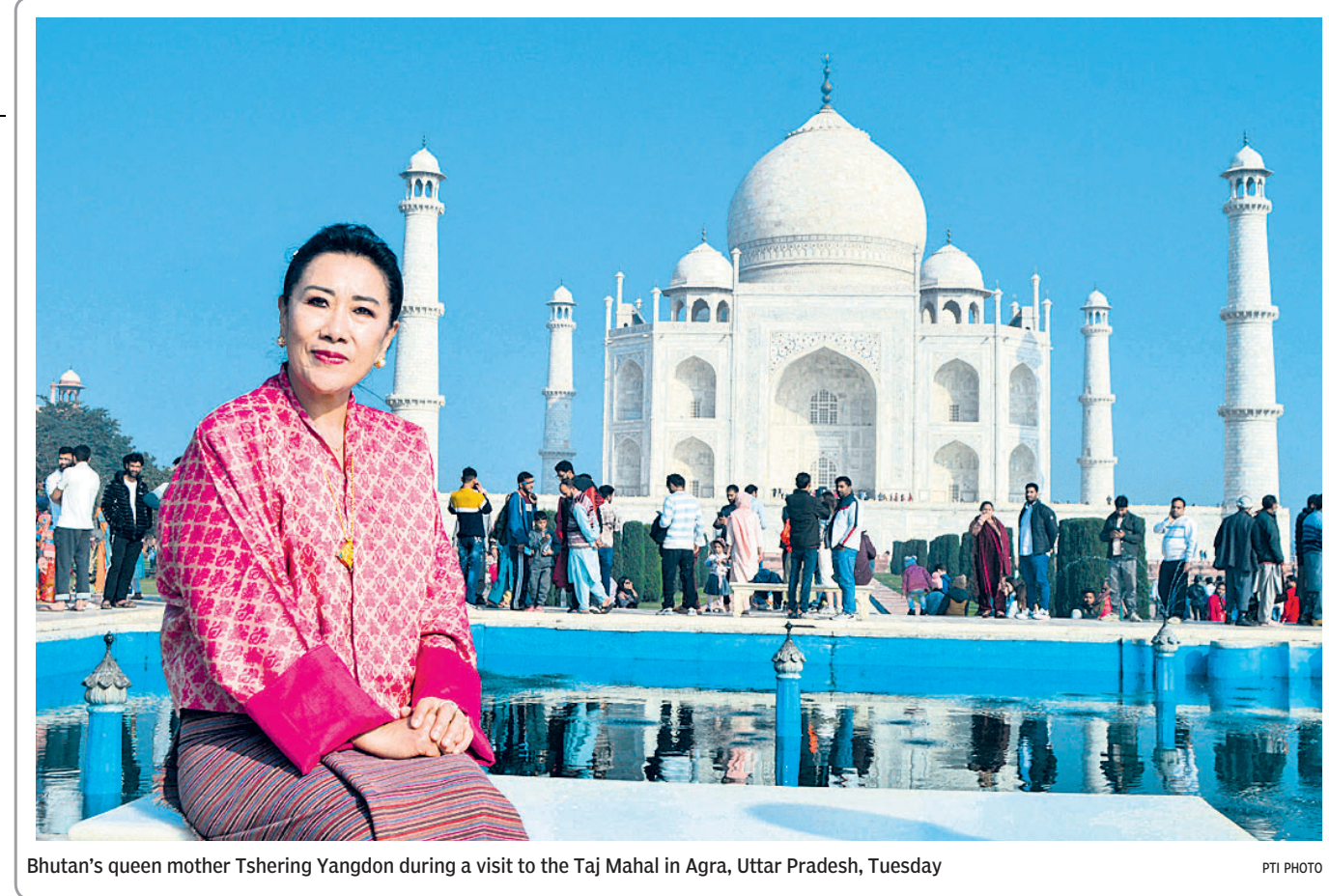


## Tripura records 2nd-highest GSDP in Northeast, says CM Saha

**AGARTALA:** Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha Tuesday said the state recorded the second-highest Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) among the northeastern states. Addressing the statehood day programme at Rabindra Bhavan here, the CM asserted that the state has been benefiting from the double-engine government over the years. "When devastating floods hit the state in September last year, the Centre helped us tide over the situation. When trouble broke out in Manipur in May 2023, the civil aviation minister arranged a special flight to evacuate Tripura's students from there," he said. "Be it GDP or Sustainable Development Growth (SDG), the state is developing rapidly. We have transformed Tripura into a front-runner, fast-moving state according to the NITI Aayog report for 2023-24," he claimed. The CM expressed gratitude towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for their contributions to the development of Tripura and the Northeast. "The Prime Minister encourages us to bring a big container to secure a larger allocation. If you bring a small kitty, you will receive less funding," he remarked.

## Meghalaya CM lays foundation stone for new Secretariat building

**UMSAWLI (MEGHALAYA):** Celebrating the 53rd statehood day of Meghalaya, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma Tuesday laid the foundation stone for the Rs 1,188 crore new secretariat building to house various government offices. The building will come up on a 53-acre plot in New Shillong Township. It will be constructed in two phases. In Phase I, the government will build 68 offices, facilities for 1,829 staff and a 700-people capacity auditorium while Phase II will see the establishment of 56 offices, facilities for 4,746 staff, and two auditoriums of 200 people capacity each, officials said. Laying the foundation stone, Sangma said, "It is not just a building and a construction that is going to happen. It is the expansion of the city of Shillong." Terming the new city as the administrative and knowledge city, the chief minister also said it would be a "growth centre" for the state. He said, "While we invest in this Secretariat, we invest in the multiple roads connecting the existing city to this new administrative city. From this administrative city to the new knowledge city, we are laying the foundation for the community, for the people, for the landowners in about 30 sq km area to develop this entire new Shillong into a major growth centre for our state."



Bhutan's queen mother Tshering Yangdon during a visit to the Taj Mahal in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

## Curfew in Meghalaya village after villagers clash with police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mawkyntew (Meghalaya), Jan 21:** Curfew was imposed in Mawkyntew village in Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills district following a clash between locals and the police, leaving at least 13 people injured, officials said Tuesday. The clash ensued after the villagers stormed the construction site of a school run by the Ramakrishna Mission Monday, claiming that a plot of land belonged to a local sports club.

East Khasi Hills district SP Vivek Syiem told PTI that five police personnel, including 2 women, were injured after the villagers stormed the construction site. The other people, who sustained minor injuries, were villagers.

The police had to fire tear gas shells to pacify the crowd, he said. East Khasi Hills district magistrate RM Kurbah promulgated curfew in the village Monday to prevent convergence of 5 or more people near the site.

## Arunachal to restore remnants of WWII at Nampong: Khandu



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Itanagar, Jan 21:** Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu Monday said that the state government will curate and restore all remnants of World War II at Nampong in Changlang district.

The historical site would be redeveloped for tourism purpose, Khandu said, while inaugurating the three-day Pangsau

Pass International Festival (PIPF) at Nampong, an official statement said.

"We will soon engage an expert for this and give a new facelift to Nampong town as a reminder of the bygone WWII," he said. The chief minister said the frontier town of Nampong in Changlang district holds immense historical, cultural, and economic significance as for centuries, the region has been a conduit for migration, trade, and cultural exchange.

"From the sacred migration routes of our ancestors to the historic Stilwell Road, this area has played a pivotal role in connecting Northeast India with Southeast Asia," he said.

Khandu stated that PIPF is a shining example of how culture and economy go hand in hand.

# Pilgrims throng Kinnar Akhara at MahaKumbh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mahakumbh Nagar, Jan 21:** Having faced stiff resistance when they tried to register an 'akhara' for transgender persons 10 years ago, the camp of their sect at the ongoing Maha Kumbh is now flooded with pilgrims queuing up for blessings.

More than 3,000 trans persons, most of them abandoned by their families, are residing in the akhara and taking part in the sacred bathing ritual at the Sangam.

The surge of devotees seeking their blessings has finally offered them hope that they would be accepted in society.

Mahamandleshwar of Kinnar Akhara, Pavitra Nandan Giri - who identified herself as a woman - told PTI that society had always despised eunuchs.

"We have always been considered inferior. When we wanted to register an akhara for ourselves, questions were

raised about our religion. We were asked why we needed it. Despite the resistance, we managed to register it 10 years ago and this is our first Maha Kumbh," she said.

Akhara are monastic institutions or sects that unite seers (ascetics) under specific spiritual traditions and practices.

Giri said, "Today, we are able to take a dip at the Sangam, conduct processions similar to other akharas, and perform rituals. The akhara is flooded with pilgrims and they are lining up to take our blessings. We are proud to have found our place and hopefully we will be accepted more in society as well."

A nursing graduate, Giri said her family abandoned her, as is the case with many trans persons, and she found herself in the community and her new family.

"Life is difficult for us. As a child, I would play with my brothers and sisters, unaware



that I was not one of them. Once known, everyone treated me like I was inferior or untouchable. I even completed my formal education but still continued to face discrimination," she said.

The Akhil Bharatiya Kinnar Akhara is the 14th akhara at the Maha Kumbh.

The 13 akharas are divided into three groups -- Sanyasi (Shaivite), Bairagi (Vaishnav) and Udaseen.

Each akhara is allocated specific time slots for certain rituals, creating a vibrant atmosphere filled with processions featuring decorated elephants,

horses and bands.

The Juna Akhara is one of the oldest and largest among the 13. Mahamandleshwar Laxminarayan Tripathi, who also identified as a woman, said they were treated at par with other seers at the Maha Kumbh.

"We are chanting prayers, singing 'bhajan (hymns)' and performing 'yagya (offering in fire)'. People are queuing up to take one-rupee coins from us. It is considered auspicious when a 'kinnar' gives blessings. Though this is well known, society still refuses to accept us. The akhara has now sealed our right to spirituality," she said.

Asked about the resistance faced by the akhara, Tripathi said, "The resistance was less from people and more on grounds of religion. I asked if we did not even have the right to pray or call ourselves Hindu? The Juna Akhara came with us and our akhara was established to promote inclusivity and

bring visibility to marginalised communities. We want to send out a message that spirituality transcends all boundaries of gender and identity."

Visakhapatnam native Trinatha Uika, who also identified as a woman, said she was four when her family learnt that she was "different".

**TENDER NOTICE FOR OFFICE STATIONARY & CONSUMABLE ITEMS OF FMMC&H, BALASORE (2024-25)**  
**Tender No.232/S/FMMC&H Date:20.01.2025**  
 No.E-698: FMMC&H, Balasore invites sealed Tender from registered Firm/ Agencies/ Company for **Office stationary & Consumable** items for FMMC&H, Balasore. The proposal in the prescribed format along with all supportive documents should reach to the Office of the Superintendent, Remuna, FMMC&H, Balasore by **Dt 05.02.2025 upto 5 PM** through Registered Post/ Speed Post/ Courier only and the same will be opened on **dt. 06.02.2025, 11 AM** at Office chamber of Superintendent, Remuna, FMMC&H, Balasore. Application from as well as other details will be available and downloaded from district website [www.baleswar.nic.in/](http://www.baleswar.nic.in/) or [www.blsmch.nic.in](http://www.blsmch.nic.in). Authority reserves every rights to reject all or any of the Tender without assign any reason thereof.  
**Sd./- Superintendent FMMC&H, Balasore**  
 OIPR-10134/11/0030/2425

**NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement**  
 Tel.No.06752222092, e-mail id- eerwपुरi@gmail.com  
 No.O-1309: **TCN No.TENDER ONLINE-09 OF 2024-25**  
**No.303/ Dt.13.01.2025**  
 The Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Puri on behalf of Government of Odisha invites percentage rate tenders through e-procurement for 31 Nos. of work for the year 2024-25 in the District of Puri.  
 1. Total no. of works:31 nos., 2. Tender cost of packages: Amount varies from Rs.1.68 lakh to 11.76 Lakhs.  
 3. Class of Contractor: As per DTCN. 4. Period of completion: 15 (Fifteen) days & 1 (One) Calendar Month.  
 5. Period of availability of tenders on-line / Date and time of bidding on-line/ last date of seeking clarification/ Date of Opening of tender papers.  

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender on-line for bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date, time & venue of opening of tender
		From	To		
1	2	3	4	5	6
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Puri	Online-09	27.01.2025 at 11.00 A.M.	06.02.2025 upto 5.00 P.M.	05.02.2025 upto 1.30 P.M.	07.02.2025 at 11.30 A.M. Office of the S.E., R.W. Division, Puri

 6. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which is available in website "https://tendersodisha.gov.in."  
**OIPR-25065/11/0012/2425** **Sd./- Superintending Engineer, R.W.Division, Puri**





The Tamil Nadu government provides the necessary infrastructure for state universities. Should the Chancellor's post be reserved only for someone appointed by the central government? That is our question

WOMAN PASSENGER GIVES BIRTH AT RAILWAY STATION

A woman travelling by train went into sudden labour and gave birth at the Guwahati railway station assisted by railway doctors and RPF women personnel, an official said Tuesday.



of the day quote

Mahatma Gandhi used to utter the name of Lord Rama, always. When Nathuram Godse assassinated him, he uttered 'Hey Ram'. There cannot be a better example of it. He was a diehard Hindu

Met the Executive Chairman of ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India, Lakshmi N Mittal, and CEO Aditya Mittal in Davos today. ArcelorMittal/Nippon Steel has recently made a landmark investment of ₹1.4 lakh crore for a 17.8-million-ton integrated steel project in Anakapalli

We are extremely eager to partner with enterprises who can help us meet this goal and also train a skilled workforce to service our growing RE industry

WB govt moves Cal HC seeking death sentence

RG KAR CASE



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee reiterates her dissatisfaction with trial court's order: 'If someone is a monster, then how can the society show humanity?'

AGENCIES

Kolkata, Jan 21: The West Bengal government Tuesday moved the Calcutta High Court to file an appeal seeking death penalty of the convict in the RG Kar hospital doctor's rape and murder case and secured the court's necessary permission.

The state government's move comes in less than 24 hours after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced her intent to challenge before a higher court the order of Sealdah court that sentenced Sanjay Roy to life imprisonment until death in the case.

Advocate General Kishor Datta moved a division bench of Justice Debangsu Basak and Justice Md Shabbar Rashidi Tuesday morning, seeking the court's permission to file the appeal challenging the order passed by Additional District and Sessions Judge in Sealdah,

Anirban Das, Monday. High court sources maintained that the judicial process pertaining to the case could start this week itself if the due process of filing the appeal was completed by the end of the day Tuesday.

The Sealdah court sentenced Roy to life imprisonment until death after he was convicted of raping and murdering the on-duty doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, rejecting demands for the death penalty saying it was not a "rarest of the rare" crime.

The court also ordered Roy to pay a ₹50,000 fine and directed the state government to pay compensation of ₹17 lakh to the family of the deceased doctor. Holding that "in the realm of modern justice, we must rise above the primitive instinct of an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth or nail for a nail or a life for a life", Das awarded rigor-

ous imprisonment to Roy, the sole convict in the case, for the remainder of his natural life.

The judge also stated in his order that "our duty is not to match brutality with brutality, but to elevate humanity through wisdom, compassion and a deeper understanding of justice. The measure of a civilised society lies not in its ability to exact revenge, but in its capacity to reform, rehabilitate and ultimately to heal."

Maintaining that the case doesn't meet the stringent criteria drawn from established guidelines of previous Apex Court judgments for imposing death penalty, the trial court stopped short of classifying the crime as "rarest of the rare". "The Supreme Court has consistently emphasised that the death penalty should be used only in exceptional circumstances where the collective conscience of the community is so shocked that it expects the holders of judicial power to inflict the death penalty," Das stated in his order while highlighting that "it is crucial to note that there is no evidence of prior criminal behaviour or misconduct by the convict".

Expressing dissatisfaction with the Sealdah court's verdict, the chief minister had on Monday asserted that had the case been handled by the Kolkata Police, the death penalty would have been ensured. "All of us have demanded the death sentence, but the court has given a life term until death...The case was forcibly taken from us. Had it been with the (Kolkata) police, we would have ensured that he was served a death sentence," she told reporters.

Govt issues rules to make e-commerce accountable



The draft guidelines, titled 'E-commerce Principles and Guidelines for Self Governance', have been prepared by the Bureau of Indian Standards under the Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry's supervision, seeking stakeholder comments by February 15

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 21: The government has rolled out draft guidelines for e-commerce platforms, mandating self-regulatory measures to protect consumers from fraudulent practices amid the fast-growing digital shopping landscape in India.

The draft guidelines, titled 'E-commerce-Principles and Guidelines for Self Governance', have been prepared by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) under the Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry's supervision, seeking stakeholder comments by February 15.

"...the rise of e-commerce has introduced new challenges, particularly in terms of consumer protection and trust. The importance of clear and effective rules and norms for self-governance in e-commerce

cannot be further emphasized in this context," the draft stated. The framework introduces three-phase principles covering pre-transaction, contract formation, and post-transaction stages for e-commerce operations.

Under pre-transaction requirements, platforms must conduct through KYC of business partners, especially third-party sellers. The guidelines mandate detailed product listings including title, seller contact details, identification number, and supporting media to help consumers assess product utility and features.

For imported goods, platforms must display importer, packer, and seller details prominently. During contract formation, platforms must record consumer consent, enable transaction review, and maintain transparent policies for cancellation, returns, and refunds.

Complete transaction records must be maintained and made accessible to consumers as per applicable laws. The guidelines mandate diverse payment options including credit/debit cards, mobile payments, e-wallets, and bank transfers, with full disclosure of processing charges.

Platforms must implement secure payment systems with encryption and two-factor authentication.

1984 ANTI-SIKH RIOTS Court defers verdict against Sajjan Kumar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 21: A Delhi court Tuesday deferred its verdict to January 31 in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots murder case against former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar.

Special judge Kaveri Baweja, who was scheduled to pass the order Tuesday, deferred the pronouncement to January 31 after the prosecution sought time to further argue on certain points. An application was moved by the public prosecutor seeking to argue on certain points, which he said were essential for just adjudication of the case.

He said the arguments were in response to defence counsel's submissions made January 8, 2025 on certain issues. "Submissions heard in view of the aforesaid submissions, the case is directed to be listed for arguments on behalf of PP for the State January 31, 2025," the judge said. The case is over the alleged killings of two persons in Saraswati Vihar area during the anti-Sikh riots. Kumar, who is currently lodged in Tihar central jail, appeared before the court through video-conferencing.

The court reserved the judgment after hearing the final arguments over the killings of Jaswant Singh and his son Tarundeep Singh November 1, 1984. Though Punjabi Bagh police station registered the case initially, a special investigation team later took over the investigation.

Maha Cong to hold state-wide protests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 21: The Maharashtra unit of the Congress Tuesday announced to organise state-wide protests January 25 alleging irregularities in the last year's state Assembly elections.

January 25 is celebrated as the National Voters' Day (NVD) to mark the foundation day of the Election Commission of India (ECI). Addressing a press conference here, Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) president Nana Patole said, "The party will hold protests at the district and taluka levels across Maharashtra January 25. Key leaders of the party will take part in the protests."

He accused the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the ECI of undermining democracy through manipulation of votes during the state Assembly elections held in November 2024.

The Mahayuti retained power in Maharashtra, pocketing a whopping 230 of the 288 Assembly seats. The BJP won 132 seats, the Shiv Sena 57 and the NCP got 41 seats.

The Congress leader was apparently referring to the government's tweaking of an election rule last month to prevent public inspection of certain electronic documents such as CCTV camera and webcasting footage as well as video recordings of candidates to prevent their misuse.

Second meeting of JPC on simultaneous polls Jan 31

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 21: The second meeting of the joint parliamentary committee examining the two Bills for simultaneous elections will be held January 31, according to schedule posted on the Lok Sabha website.

The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill were introduced in Lok Sabha during the recent Winter Session and referred to the committee. According to the Lok Sabha website, procedure and modalities for examination of the amendment Bills will be discussed at the upcoming meeting.

The panel had held its first meeting January 8, where representatives of the Ministry of Law and Justice (Legislative Department) briefed the members. A robust exchange of contesting views had marked the first meeting of the Parliamentary panel with Opposition

members criticising the concept as an attack on the basic fabric of the Constitution and federalism, and BJP MPs hailing it as reflective of popular opinion. All MPs were given a trolley carrying over 18,000 pages, including one volume of the Ram Nath Kovind committee report each in Hindi and English, and 21 volumes of annexure, besides a soft copy as well. Headed by BJP MP PP Chaudhary, the 39-member joint committee comprises members from all major parties, including Priyanka Gandhi Vadra from Congress, Sanjay Jha from JD(U), Shiv Sena's Shrikant Shinde, AAP's Sanjay Singh, and Kalyan Banerjee and Saket Gokhale from Trinamool Congress.

The government decided to increase the committee's strength from 31 to 39, as more political parties expressed their desire to be part of the exercise to examine the two draft legislations on simultaneous elections.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Scientists link climate change to dengue outbreaks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 21: Dengue infections and deaths increase when temperatures go above 27 degrees Celsius and rainfall is moderate and spread out over a period, according to a new study.

The study also reveals very heavy rainfall (more than 150 mm in a week) can wash away mosquito eggs and larvae, lowering the risk of dengue. Researchers Sophia Jacob and Roxy Mathew Koll from the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune, examined how temperature, rainfall, and humidity affect dengue in Pune, a major hotspot of the disease.

They found that dengue infections and deaths increase when temperatures go above 27 degrees Celsius, rainfall is moderate and spread out over time and humidity is between 60 and 78 per cent during mon-

soon (June-September). The scientists created a model using artificial intelligence and machine learning that can predict dengue outbreaks more than two months in advance. This allows local authorities and health departments to prepare in time and reduce the impact of the disease.

In Pune, the average temperature ranges from 27-35 degrees Celsius during monsoon. This range is conducive for dengue transmission because it affects how long mosquitoes live, how many eggs they produce, and how quickly the virus develops inside them. It also influences how long it takes for people to show symptoms after being infected. The researchers noted this temperature range is specific to Pune and will differ in other places because various factors - like rainfall and humidity - vary. Therefore, it's important to study the cli-



mate-dengue link for each region separately.

The study shows moderate rains (up to 150 mm in a week) increase dengue deaths because they cause stagnant water that mosquitoes use to breed. Heavy rains (more than 150 mm in a week), however, reduce dengue by washing away eggs and larvae. Monsoon rainfall in India has active (wet) and break (dry)

phases. Years with fewer active and break phases (meaning rainfall is more evenly spread out) see higher dengue cases and deaths. Years with more of these phases (meaning more rain in short bursts) see fewer dengue cases and deaths, the scientists found. So, it is not just the total amount of rain that matters, but also how the rain is spread out over time. Currently, the In-

« The scientists found that dengue infections and deaths increase when temperatures go above 27 degrees Celsius, rainfall is moderate and spread out over time and humidity is between 60 and 78 per cent during monsoon (June-September)

« The scientists created a model using artificial intelligence and machine learning that can predict dengue outbreaks more than two months in advance

« This allows local authorities and health departments to prepare in time and reduce the impact of the disease

India Meteorological Department (IMD) issues forecasts for these active-break cycles 10-30 days in advance for the whole country. Using these forecasts can give extra time to predict dengue outbreaks.

In the future, scientists say temperatures and humidity in India will continue to go up, and monsoon rains will become more erratic, with more heavy rainfall. While these heavy rains might wash away some mosquito eggs and larvae, overall warmer days will likely boost dengue transmission. Under scenarios with both low and high fossil fuel emissions, Pune could see its average temperature rise by 1.2-3.5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century.

Several states with a high dengue burden - such as Kerala, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Punjab, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh - could benefit from an advanced early warning system. This would improve their readiness and reduce the disease's effects, the scientists said.



# national



Many governments have come and gone, including non-Congress governments, but no government had a minister who stood in Parliament and insulted Ambedkar

## MATHURA SHAHI MASJID COMMITTEE MOVES SC

The Mathura Shahi Masjid Eidgah Committee has moved the Supreme Court seeking to close the Centre's right of filing a reply on a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the Places of Worship Act



### of the day uote

Under the BJP government, the series of deaths in custody is not stopping in Uttar Pradesh. In a recent case, the death of a person, who was taken from his home in the name of interrogation in Sambhal, sparked public outrage

A tourism development project worth ₹150 crore, approved by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), has been launched in the key tourist destination of Manali to strengthen the tourism infrastructure and create additional facilities

In Gujarat, a 400-unit bill amounts to ₹4,500. But if you press the wrong button here, soon you'll be paying ₹10,000 for electricity

## Mamata asks people not to go near B'desh border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Jan 21: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday urged the people of Malda district, which shares boundary with Bangladesh, to avoid visiting the border areas if there is unrest.

The Chief Minister's comment came days after an altercation between farmers from both countries escalated into a brief clash. A portion of the international boundary is unfenced and the BSF is erecting barbed wire fences in those sections. "I will urge the people not to get involved in any form of riots. There are some problems in Bangladesh. It's the job of the BSF to look into affairs around the border. If there are law and order issues, we will oversee them. Remember, if they (Border Guard Bangladesh) are having an argument with the BSF, the villagers must not get involved in that," Banerjee said.

The CM, who is on a visit to the district, directed the district

administration to keep an eye on attempts to sneak into India from the other side of the border.

At a meeting here, she also made the same appeal to the local people, saying that if anti-social elements and terrorists manage to enter India, this would affect the state as well as the country. "It is the duty of the BSF to protect the border. I urge the people not to visit the border areas if they see any problem," Banerjee said.

The chief minister said, "I believe that one day our relationship (with Bangladesh) will improve again." During a recent administrative review meeting at the state secretariat, the CM accused the Border Security Force of allowing infiltration from Bangladesh and alleged that it was doing so as part of the central government's "blueprint" to destabilise the state.

The central paramilitary force had denied the charge asserting it diligently guards the country's boundary.



A visitor poses for pictures at a snow-covered terrain, at Gulmarg in Baramulla district of J&K

PTI PHOTO

## DELHI POLLS

# BJP's 2nd manifesto for free KG-to-PG education

In the run-up to the Assembly polls, major contenders AAP, BJP and Congress have rained Delhi with freebies and schemes for various sections of the society, including women, students, elderly, auto-taxi drivers, domestic workers, washermen, street vendors, temple priests and gurudwara granthis among others

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 21: The BJP Tuesday released the second part of its election manifesto which promised free education from "KG-to-PG" for needy students in government education institutes and assured a ₹10 lakh insurance and ₹5 lakh accident cover for domestic helps and auto-taxi drivers. It also pledged a one-time assistance of ₹15,000 for UPSC aspirants.

In the run-up to the Assembly polls, major contenders AAP, BJP and Congress have rained Delhi with freebies and schemes for various sections of the society, including women, students, elderly, auto-taxi drivers, domestic workers, washermen, street vendors, temple priests and gurudwara granthis among others.

Presenting the second part of the BJP's Sankalp Patra, former Union minister Anurag Thakur said a special investigation team (SIT) will be formed to probe all "irregularities and scams" of the AAP government if the party comes to power in Delhi. The broad contours of the schemes announced in the manifesto had already been described, a senior BJP leader said, adding that the final modalities and eligibility criteria will be worked out once the party's government is formed. Addressing a press conference,



Thakur said the party will provide a one-time financial assistance of ₹15,000 and reimburse fees and travel expenses twice for Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and state civil services examinations.

The BJP also assured that its government in Delhi would launch 'Dr BR Ambedkar Stipend Yojna' to provide ₹1,000 monthly aid to Scheduled Caste (SC) students at polytechnic and skill centres in the national capital. The saffron party, which last ruled Delhi 26 years ago, has struggled in previous assembly elections, securing only three and eight seats in 2015 and 2020 respectively.

The election to the 70-member Delhi Assembly will take place on February 5. The counting of votes will be undertaken February 8. Talking to reporters, Thakur said once

the BJP government is formed in the National Capital Territory (NCT), it will form welfare boards for domestic workers and auto-taxi drivers.

Besides, he said, the boards will provide ₹10 lakh of insurance and ₹5 lakh of accident cover and offer scholarships to the children of domestic workers and auto-taxi drivers. He also promised six months' paid maternity leave for the female domestic workers.

Under the PM SVANidhi scheme for street vendors, the number of beneficiaries will be doubled, he said, citing the Sankalp Patra-2. Thakur alleged that the AAP government had failed to implement the Jal Jeevan Mission in the national capital, reiterating the BJP's commitment to improve infrastructure and welfare if voted to power.

## DEMAND FOR NRI REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 21: A suggestion to give non-resident Indians representation in Parliament was made Tuesday at the meeting of the parliamentary committee on external affairs due to their growing numbers and unique issues concerning the diaspora interest.

Sources said Congress MP Deepender Singh Hooda cited examples of countries such as Italy, which has reservation in legislature for its citizens residing abroad, to pitch for NRI representation in Parliament to cater to their issues in a better way.

The standing committee headed by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor discussed a number of issues concerning the Indian diaspora.

As millions of NRIs reside in foreign countries, they deserve to have representation in Parliament, Hooda is learnt to have said. Some NRI groups in the past have demanded seats in Parliament.

As of now, NRIs cannot even vote from abroad and are required to come to India to exercise their franchise.

A bill to allow them to vote through a proxy in the Lok Sabha and assembly elections was introduced in Parliament in 2018 but lapsed later.

NRIs are officially described as "overseas electors". It was a lively and full discussion with a lot of questions and answers, he added.

The sources said the organisations participating in the meeting made some good proposals, including one from Kerala that said Indian organisations could skill people depending on the needs of any foreign country.

## Saif Ali Khan back home from hospital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Jan 21: Bollywood actor Saif Ali Khan returned home Tuesday, a little wan but smiling broadly as he left a Mumbai hospital five days after an intruder stabbed him inside his apartment with a knife in the neck and spine.

The 54-year-old actor underwent a neurosurgery to treat a spinal injury and a plastic surgery to repair wounds on his neck and hands at Lilavati Hospital after he was stabbed by an intruder in the early hours of Thursday last week in his 12th floor flat in 'Satguru Sharan' building in upscale in Bandra.

As he exited the hospital, Khan, wearing a white shirt and a pair of blue jeans, waved to waiting cameras, his hand bandaged, and expressed heartfelt gratitude for the support he received throughout his recovery process.

Saif got into a waiting black vehicle, accompanied by security personnel. His wife, actor Kareena Kapoor Khan, was also seen at the hospital shortly before he was discharged. The Mumbai police have arrested the intruder who allegedly

stabbed the Bollywood actor. The accused, identified as Shariful Islam Shehzad Mohammad Rohilla Amin Fakir (30), a Bangladeshi national, is at present in police custody.

The 30-year-old accused, arrested from adjoining Thane city Sunday, has told the police he stabbed the actor in his back multiple times to free himself from his tight grip, an official said.

After the attack, the intruder escaped from Khan's flat, and hid in the garden of the building for around two hours, the official said.

"The accused entered the actor's flat from the bathroom window with the intention of theft. After he entered the house, the actor's staff spotted him and started arguing with him. Soon, Saif Ali Khan came there and sensing a threat, he held the accused tightly from the front," the official said. "As the accused did not get time to move, he started stabbing the actor in his back to free himself from the latter's grip. As Khan was injured in the attack, the accused managed to break free from his grip," he said.



## POST OF THE DAY

Indians on H1B visas already face uncertainty about US citizenship, but they relied on birthright citizenship for their children. With Trump revoking that, even this assurance is gone — and bhakts who do puja, hawan for Trump never understand gravity of this decision

## SHORT TAKES

### Woman kills 2 toddler sons

Daman: A woman was arrested for allegedly killing her two toddler sons by flinging them off the fourth floor of a building and trying to commit suicide in Daman district, police said Tuesday. The incident was triggered by a domestic dispute between the woman and her husband, residents of Dalwada in the Nani Daman locality, police said. The Daman Police stated that a call was received from the Moti Daman community health centre late Monday night about two children falling off the fourth floor of a building.

### Man gets ten years in prison

Faridabad: A local court Tuesday sentenced a hotel manager to 10 years in prison for murdering his wife in a dowry case. The Court of Additional Sessions Judge Sanjay Kumar Sharma also imposed a fine of ₹20,000 on the convict, identified as Sumit. Police said Sumit murdered his wife in June 2021 after his demand for a gold chain in dowry was not met.

### J'khand: Over 20 IEDs, gelatin sticks recovered

Chaibasa (Jharkhand): Over 20 IEDs and more than 50 gelatine sticks were recovered by security personnel from a forest in West Singhbhum district Tuesday during an anti-Naxal operation, a senior police officer said. A total of 21 IEDs were recovered from the forest near Serengda village and defused by a bomb disposal squad on the spot, Superintendent of Police Ashutosh Shekhar said. Besides, 55 pieces of gelatine sticks were seized from the area and destroyed, he said. The IEDs were planted by suspected CPI (Maoist) members to target security personnel engaged in the anti-Naxal operation, he said.

# Indus Water Treaty: Neutral expert backs India's stand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Jan 21: A World Bank-appointed neutral expert has backed New Delhi's position on the framework to resolve certain disputes between India and Pakistan on Kishenganga and Rattle hydroelectric projects.

While India has been pressing for resolution of the issues by the neutral expert as mandated under the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) between the two countries, Pakistan has been backing the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague to resolve them. India and Pakistan signed IWT on September 19, 1960 after nine years of negotiations with a sole aim to manage issues relating to cross-border rivers.

India welcomed the ruling by the neutral expert, International

Commission of Large Dams president Michel Lino. On Monday, Lino ruled that he is competent to render a decision on the "merits of the Points of Difference" between India and Pakistan on the two hydropower projects.

"India welcomes the decision given by the Neutral Expert under Paragraph 7 of Annexure F to the Indus Waters Treaty, 1960," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. "The decision upholds and vindicates India's stand that all seven questions that were referred to the neutral expert, in relation to the Kishenganga and Rattle hydroelectric projects, are differences falling within his competence under the treaty," it said Tuesday.

In 2015, Pakistan sought the appointment of the neutral expert to deal with its objections



to the two projects. However, a year later, Islamabad demanded that the objections be handled by the court of arbitration. India has been cooperating with the neutral expert but stayed away from proceedings of the Permanent Court of Ar-

bitration in The Hague.

New Delhi considers the start of the two concurrent processes to resolve the dispute a violation of the provision of the graded mechanism prescribed in the IWT. "It has been India's consistent and principled po-

WHILE INDIA HAS BEEN PRESSING FOR RESOLUTION OF THE ISSUES BY THE NEUTRAL EXPERT AS MANDATED UNDER THE INDUS WATER TREATY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, PAKISTAN HAS BEEN BACKING THE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION IN THE HAGUE TO RESOLVE THEM

sition that the neutral expert alone has the competence under the treaty to decide these differences," the MEA said in a statement. "Having upheld his own competence, which comports with India's view, the neutral expert

will now proceed to the next (merits) phase of his proceeding," it said. The MEA said this phase will culminate in a final decision on the merits of each of the seven differences.

"Being committed to preserving the sanctity and integrity of the treaty, India will continue to participate in the neutral expert process so that the differences are resolved in a manner consistent with the provisions of the treaty, which does not provide for parallel proceedings on the same set of issues," it said. "For this reason, India does not recognize or participate in the illegally constituted Court of Arbitration proceedings," it added.

The MEA said India and Pakistan also remain in touch on the matter of modification and review of the Indus Water Treaty.





The new administration has not yet informed anyone about the details of this operation, therefore we have not received information on whether this operation may be harmful to Polish citizens

RARE SNOWSTORM BLANKETS TEXAS

Texans woke up to a rare white sheet of snow Tuesday as a powerful winter storm swept through the state, triggering the first-ever blizzard warning for southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana



of the day quote

I insisted, demanded, and received an unequivocal commitment from the prime minister, the minister of defence and the rest of my Cabinet colleagues -- we will not stop this war a moment before realising its full goals



The ELN has chosen the path of war, and that's what they will get. I will declare a state of internal commotion



The government welcomes any assistance to train and equip the Palestinian police and security forces



Trump pardons Jan 6 defendants

Washington, Jan 21: Supporters of Donald Trump who attacked the US Capitol four years ago will start leaving prison Tuesday, pardoned by the new president in a flurry of Inauguration Day executive orders showing intent to stamp radical change on the country.



- Trump issues rapid spate of executive orders
About 1,500 pardoned over 2021 assault on U.S. Capitol
Orders aim at immediate efforts to curb immigration
Withdraws US from Paris climate deal for second time
Live coverage of Trump presidency

Trump, 78, is the first president in more than a century to win a second term after losing the White House and the first felon to occupy the White House.

IMMIGRATION CRACKDOWN
Trump has made illegal immigration a signature issue since he first entered politics in 2015 and he began a sweeping crackdown on Monday.

Top Israeli general quits

Lt Gen Herzl Halevi is the most senior Israeli figure to resign over the security breakdown October 7, 2023, when thousands of Hamas-led militants carried out a land, sea and air assault into southern Israel



Jerusalem, Jan 21: Israel's top general resigned Tuesday, citing the security and intelligence failures related to Hamas' surprise attack that triggered the war in the Gaza Strip.

Israel meanwhile launched a large operation in the occupied West Bank, killing at least six people, according to Palestinian officials.

with Hamas that could lead to an end to the war and the return of the remaining captives. Maj Gen Yaron Finkelman, head of Israel's Southern Command, which oversees operations in Gaza, also tendered his resignation.

SHORT TAKES

2 Americans held in Afghanistan freed

Islamabad: A prisoner swap between the United States and Afghanistan's Taliban freed two Americans in exchange for a Taliban figure imprisoned for life in California on drug trafficking charges.

Major influx of aid into Gaza

United Nations: Gaza has received a major influx of aid and goods, with 915 trucks crossing into the territory on the second day of the ceasefire.

TURKEY SKI HOTEL FIRE

Smoke made evacuation difficult

66 dead, 51 injured in hotel fire at ski resort in northwestern Turkey

Ankara, Jan 21: A fire raged through a 12-story hotel at a popular ski resort in northwestern Turkey early Tuesday during a school holiday, killing at least 66 people.



celerated the spread of the fire. Part of the 161-room hotel is on the side of a cliff, hampering efforts to combat the flames.

At least 51 people also were injured in the fire at the Grand Kartal hotel in Kartalkaya, in Bolu province's Koroglu mountains, some 300 km east of Istanbul.

Witnesses and reports suggested that the hotel's fire detection system failed to operate. "My wife smelled the burning. The alarm did not go off," said Yelkovan.

In an address in Ankara, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said, "Unfortunately, we received very sad news this morning from Bolu, Kartalkaya. Our brothers and sisters were killed and injured in a fire that broke out in a hotel."

Winds picking up in Southern California

The weather service issued a warning of a 'particularly dangerous situation' for parts of Los Angeles, Ventura and San Diego counties from Monday afternoon through Tuesday morning due to low humidity and damaging Santa Ana winds



Los Angeles, Jan 21: Winds picked up Tuesday in Southern California and at least a couple of new wildfires broke out as firefighters remained on alert in extreme fire weather two weeks after two major blazes started that are still burning in the Los Angeles area.

Wind speeds ranged from 35 mph (56 kph) along the coast to 63 mph (101 kph) in the mountains overnight, according to National Weather Service reports.

At least two small fires started in San Diego County. Evacuation orders were issued for the Lilac Fire, which had burned about 50 acres (20 hectares).

SNIPPETS

Bangladesh vows to pursue Hasina's return from India

Dhaka: Bangladesh's interim government Tuesday said it will continue its efforts to bring deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina back from India and will seek international intervention if necessary.

Putin discusses 'multipolar global order' with Xi

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin had a call Tuesday with Chinese President Xi Jinping, emphasising the two countries' close ties, a day after Donald Trump was sworn in as the 47th US president.





**The first trip of my new commission will be to India. Together with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we want to upgrade the strategic partnership with the largest country and democracy in the world**

URSULA VON DER LEYEN | EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT

## SEBI PLANS PRE-LISTING TRADING IN IPO SHARES

Sebi is looking at introducing a system where an investor can sell shares as soon as they are allotted in an Initial Public Offering (IPO) to curb grey market activity, chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch said Tuesday. The chief of the capital markets regulator also announced that the top two proxy advisory firms are on the verge of launching a portal which will be a repository of related party transactions and will be useful in judging the governance standards in a company for any stakeholder.



### of the day quote

**Steel and cement industries are in the hands of a few people. They always decide the rates. Their cartelism is a big problem for the country**

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER FOR ROAD TRANSPORT

**For BRICS to have a common currency, we need to sort a lot many geo-political issues. There are concerns between India and China, while other members have separate issues. I don't see that happening anytime soon**

RAGHURAM RAJAN | FORMER RBI GOVERNOR

**We are focusing on providing premium products and services to Indian consumers as part of our mid-to-long term strategy with focus on sustainability at the core of our business**

HIROSHI YOSHIZANE | MD AT BRIDGESTONE INDIA

# Sensex tanks 1,235 pts to 7-month low

Investors lose over ₹7 lakh crore in single day as bears grip stock markets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

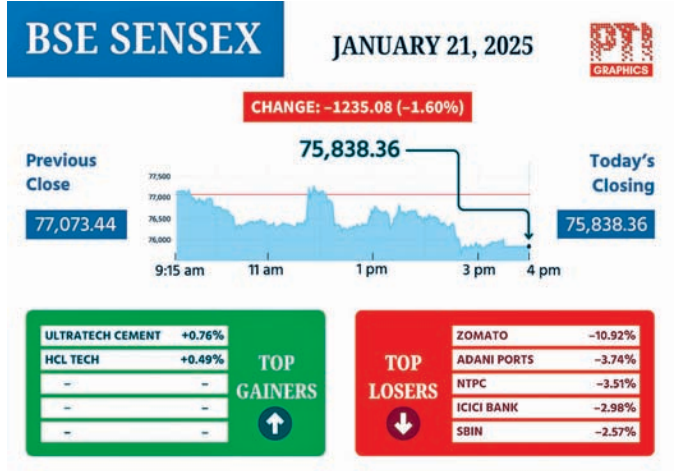
**Mumbai, Jan 21:** Benchmark Sensex tanked 1,235 points to settle at more than seven-month low due to an across-the-board selloff triggered by global tariff war worries and persistent foreign fund outflows, making investors poorer by over ₹7 lakh crore.

The 30-share BSE Sensex plummeted 1,235.08 points or 1.60 per cent to settle at 75,838.36 dragged by losses in ICICI Bank and Reliance Industries. During the day, the BSE benchmark plummeted 1,431.57 points or 1.85 per cent to hit an intraday low of 75,641.87.

The broader NSE Nifty plunged 320.10 points or 1.37 per cent to close at 23,024.65, a level not seen since June 6, 2024. In the intraday trade, the NSE Nifty plunged 367.9 points or 1.57 per cent to 22,976.85.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies eroded by ₹7,52,520.34 crore to ₹4,24,07,205.81 crore or USD 4.90 trillion.

"Domestic markets experienced a significant decline today, with heightened volatility, followed by Trump's announcement of trade tariffs on neighbouring countries on his inauguration day, adding uncertainty into global markets. The weak recovery in the ongo-



ing Q3 earnings, coupled with a depreciating INR, are likely to prompt further outflows from FIIs," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services said.

Among Sensex shares, Zomato fell the most by 10.92 per cent due to weak Q3 earnings. NTPC, Adani Ports, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Reliance Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Tech Mahindra and Axis Bank were among the major laggards.

UltraTech Cement and HCL Technologies were the only gainers.

The BSE midcap gauge declined 2 per cent and smallcap index slumped 1.94 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, Realty nosedived the most by 4.22 per cent, followed by Consumer Durables (3.99 per cent), Consumer Discretionary (2.90 per cent), Services (2.86 per cent), Power (2.63 per cent), Telecommunication (2.52 per cent) and Utilities (2.35 per cent) were among the laggards.

As many as 2,788 stocks declined while 1,187 advanced and 113 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd said, "Markets were on a cautious mode in the past few sessions, but witnessed frenzied selling Tuesday as inves-

## Rupee falls 14 paise against US dollar

**Mumbai:** The rupee pared initial gains and settled for the day lower by 14 paise to 86.59 (provisional) against US dollar Tuesday, tracking heavy sell-off in the domestic equity market and a recovery in the US dollar index. Forex traders said the dollar weakened from its 109 levels but clawed back to 108.66 as Donald Trump declared tariffs against Canada and Mexico in the near future but stopped short of declaring any tariffs against China. Rupee is expected to see high volatility ahead of key events in the global and domestic economic landscape, they added.

tors now fear that Trump's inaugural speech to safeguard America's interest could hurt economic prospects of many countries, including India, going ahead. While foreign investors continue to offload domestic shares at will, any further rise in US bond yields could trigger massive selling."

In Asian markets, Tokyo and Hong Kong ended higher, while Shanghai and Seoul settled on a flat note Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude slipped 0.76 per cent to USD 79.54 a barrel.

# Govt disburses ₹1,596cr in 6 PLI schemes in Apr-Sep



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 21:** The government has disbursed ₹1,596 crore under Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes for six sectors, including electronics and pharma, during the April-September this fiscal, an official said.

The government in 2021 announced PLI schemes for 14 sectors such as telecommunication, white goods, textiles, manufacturing of medical devices, automobiles, speciality steel, food products, high-efficiency solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell battery, drones, and pharma with an outlay of ₹1.97 lakh crore.

Out of the total 1,596 crore, the maximum amount of 964 crore was disbursed under the PLI scheme for large-scale electronics manufacturing. It was followed by pharma

(Rs 604 crore), food products (Rs 11 crore), telecom (Rs 9 crore), bulk drugs (Rs 6 crore) and drones (Rs 2 crore).

Incentives disbursed till 2023-24 stood at 9,721 crore, the official said adding the scheme is having a cascading effect on the country's MSME ecosystem.

The anchor units that will be built in every sector will require a new supplier base in the entire value chain. Most of these ancillary units will be built in the MSME sector.

Further as of August 2024, across 14 sectors, investment of 1.46 lakh crore have been realised, which has resulted in incremental production/sales of over 12.50 lakh crore, employment generation of over 9.5 lakhs, and exports surpassing 4 lakh crore. Over 760 applications have been approved under PLI schemes.

## SHORT TAKES

### UCO Bank Q3 profit rises 27%

**New Delhi:** State-owned UCO Bank Tuesday reported a 27 per cent increase in net profit at ₹639 crore for the third quarter ended December 2024. The Kolkata-based lender had logged a net profit of ₹503 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Operating profit also rose to ₹1,586 crore as against ₹1,119 crore in the December 2023 quarter. Total income increased to ₹7,406 crore from ₹6,413 crore in the same period last year, UCO Bank said in a regulatory filing. Interest income also rose to ₹6,220 crore over ₹5,552 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Net Interest Income (NII) during the quarter rose by 20 per cent ₹2,378 crore as against ₹1,988 crore for the same period of the preceding year.

### PNB Housing Fin profit up 43%

**New Delhi:** PNB Housing Finance Tuesday reported a 43 per cent jump in net profit to ₹483 crore for the December quarter. The non-banking finance company, promoted by Punjab National Bank, had earned ₹338 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Total income during the third quarter of the current fiscal year grew to ₹1,943 crore from ₹1,756 crore in the year-ago period, PNB Housing Finance said in a regulatory filing. During the quarter, interest income improved to ₹1,848 crore as compared to ₹1,680 crore in the same period a year ago.

### ICICI Pru Life Q3 profit jumps 43%

**New Delhi:** ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Tuesday reported a 43 per cent surge in net profit of ₹326 crore for the third quarter ended December 2024. The life insurance company promoted by ICICI Bank had posted a profit of ₹227 crore in the same quarter a year ago. During the third quarter of the ongoing fiscal year, the net premium income increased to ₹12,261 crore, as against ₹9,929 crore a year ago, ICICI Prudential Life said in a regulatory filing. The assets under management of the company increased to ₹3.10 lakh crore as against ₹2.86 lakh crore, it said.

# Optimistic about Indo-US ties under Trump: India Inc

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 21:** Industry leaders expressed optimism about India-US trade and economic ties under President Donald Trump, outlining opportunities for advancing bilateral cooperation, in areas such as healthcare, pharma, and electronics. Notably, Trump has again warned that he will impose 100 per cent tariff against countries of the BRICS bloc, of which India is a part, if they take any step to replace the US dollar.

Trump, who took oath as the 47th President of the US Monday, said, "If the BRICS nations want to do that, that's okay, but we're going to put at least a 100 per cent tariff on the business they do with the United States."

Hours before Trump's inauguration ceremony in the US on Monday, RPG Enterprises Chairman Harsh Goenka, in a post on X, said, "What India can do for Trump: 1.Ease market access for U.S. products 2.Welcome Starlink & Tesla 3.Be flexible with Amazon 4.Strengthen defense ties What Trump can do for India: 1.Support in aerospace & defense manufacturing 2.Back India's UN Security Council bid

3.Ease visa rules for Indian talent 4.Collaborate on bringing good relations with Bangladesh," Goenka said in the post.

Sharing his views on the prospects of India-US ties under the Trump-led US administration, S P Sharma, Deputy Secretary General of PHDCCI, told PTI, "Donald Trump's previous tenure proved highly beneficial for India, with a robust bilateral trade trajectory and dynamic economic relations. Moving forward, we anticipate further strengthening of India-US bilateral economic and trade relations. As a leading driver of global growth, India's perspectives hold significant importance for shaping a better and more balanced world".

Sudarshan Jain, Secretary General, Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance, said healthcare security and affordability are key priorities for the new Trump Administration. India and the US have an opportunity to collaborate in these areas to advance the healthcare agenda, he said.

"Healthcare can serve as a cornerstone of this partnership and will help to explore opportunities for cooperation in pharmaceutical research, development, and manufacturing, and to address common challenges in healthcare, including supply chain resilience and security," Jain said.

# Govt launches scheme for diamond sector

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 21:** The government Tuesday introduced the Diamond Imprest Authorization scheme, which allows duty-free import of cut and polished diamonds up to a specified limit, to boost exports and enhance value addition.

The diamond industry is witnessing a steep decline in exports and job losses for the workers, the commerce ministry said.

This scheme is expected to combat this trend and will rejuvenate the industry. It mandates export obligation with a value addition of 10 per cent.

"Department of Commerce has introduced the Diamond Imprest Authorization scheme on January 21, aiming to enhance the global competitiveness of India's diamond sector," the statement said.

The commerce ministry also said that diamond exporters holding two-star export house status and above and having USD 15 million exports per year, are eligible for availing the benefit under this scheme.

"This scheme allows the duty-free import of natural cut and polished diamonds, of less than 25 carats (25 Cents)," it said, adding that it will be implemented from April 1.

# AUM of wealth mgmt industry to double in next 5 yrs: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jan 21:** Demand for wealth management services in terms of assets under management (AUM) will more than double from USD 1.1 trillion in FY24 to USD 2.3 trillion by FY29, helped by shifting macroeconomic trends and rising income levels, a report said.

There is a significant unmet demand for wealth management services, according to the Deloitte India report.

Of the USD 1.1 trillion financial wealth held by affluent households in FY24, it is estimated that USD 0.4 trillion will remain self-managed/informally managed, it said.

By FY29, the wealth of these affluent households is expected to surge to USD 2.3 trillion, creating substantial opportunities for both established players and new entrants in the sector, it said.

The number of affluent households, defined as the top 4-5 per cent with annual incomes above USD 25,000, is expected to grow substantially, it said.

There is a noticeable shift from physical assets like real estate and gold to financial as-



sets like mutual funds, equities, and portfolio management services. Mutual fund AUM grew at an annualised rate of 16.2 per cent from FY17 to FY24, reaching USD 651 billion, it said.

Wealth management firms are integrating data modernisation, cloud infrastructure, and cybersecurity measures to enhance offerings, it said.

"Rising affluence and shifting preferences of relevant customer segments are likely to drive unprecedented growth in India's wealth management industry. At the same time, it is a

competitive landscape marked by a diverse set of providers," Deloitte India Partner - Banking and Capital Market Vijay Mani said.

Success in terms of growth and profitability will require a different approach from the past, i.e., there is a need for a sharper understanding of the customer, better tailoring of products for varying segments hybrid operating models that blend technology powerfully with Relationship Manager (RM) talent and a keen eye on regulatory compliance, it said.

# Bitcoin rally cools as Trump makes no new mention of crypto

REUTERS

**Singapore/Paris, Jan 21:** Bitcoin, other cryptocurrencies and even the newly minted token bearing Donald Trump's name cooled Tuesday, after the U.S. president's first set of policies following his inauguration made no reference to the asset class.

Bitcoin, the world's largest cryptocurrency, hit a record high \$109,071 Monday when Trump was sworn in as the 47th U.S. president, but later started falling. By 1001 GMT on Tuesday, it was trading at \$102,546.13 - still up around 9.5% so far this month.

Trump's own cryptocurrency, launched Friday night, was trading at \$37.98, according to cryptocurrency price tracker CoinMarketCap, having roughly halved since its peak around \$75 on Monday, when its market value exceeded \$14 billion. The coin had been priced around \$6.50 at its launch.

Trump's inaugural speech Monday was accompanied by a host of executive orders and plans relating to trade tariffs,

immigration, energy deregulation and even a reprieve for popular Chinese short-video app TikTok. But he did not mention cryptocurrencies.

"The digital asset market is disappointed to not have been mentioned in the inauguration speech or day 1 executive orders," said Geoffrey Kendrick, global head of digital assets research at Standard Chartered.

"I suspect bitcoin will end up going lower so long as we get no news from Trump on digital assets. A break back below \$100,000 seems inevitable," he said.

Hopes had been building among crypto investors for months that the crypto-friendly president would kick-start a sea-change in US policies towards the volatile asset class. The excitement helped bitcoin rise above \$100,000 for the first time ever in December last year.

"I think in the short term there's a chance this could be a sell-the-news event," said Matthew Dibb, chief investment officer at crypto asset manager Astronaut Capital, adding



that crypto investors had been anticipating some executive actions to be rolled out during Trump's first day in office.

"The market has some great expectations about a bitcoin strategic reserve and a loosening of regulations around digital assets, but it's more likely these developments will be drip-fed over a series of months rather than days. Bitcoin has already retreated... We are expecting further volatility here and likely a selloff," Dibb said.

However, Trump has already set in motion personnel changes that the industry sees as encouraging.

He has tapped Mark Uyeda, a Republican member of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, to be acting chair of the SEC and plans to nominate former SEC Commissioner Paul Atkins to run the regulator on a permanent basis.

Atkins is widely expected to end a crypto crackdown led by former President Joe Biden's

Democratic SEC chair Gary Gensler and Uyeda has criticised the SEC for failing to offer guidance on how crypto companies can register with the SEC.

Top Republican officials at the SEC are poised to begin overhauling its cryptocurrency policies potentially as early as next week, said three people briefed on the matter.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST** Meanwhile, Trump's launch of the \$TRUMP token and the

\$MELANIA token, for first lady Melania Trump, shortly before his inauguration creates new conflict-of-interest concerns, ethics experts and industry insiders said.

Eighty percent of Trump coin's tokens are owned by CIC Digital, an affiliate of Trump's business, and another entity called Fight, Fight, Fight, according to its website.

The companies said they are not investments or securities but are an "expression of support for, and engagement with, the ideals and beliefs embodied by the symbol '\$TRUMP'".

World Liberty Financial, a separate Trump-linked crypto project, also announced Monday it had completed an initial token sale, raising \$300 million, and would look to issue additional tokens.

Trump has pledged to hand management of his assets to his children, but crypto is raising particular concerns due to its ability to quickly attract billions of speculative dollars with little transparency.



# Men in Blue eye fresh start

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Jan 21:** Fit-again pacer Mohammed Shami's comeback would be keenly watched when the Suryakumar Yadav-led Indian T20 team takes on an evenly-matched England in a five-match series starting here Wednesday, aiming to make up for the recent Test disasters that have caused considerable turmoil and heartbreak.

The white-ball rubber, comprising five T20Is and three ODIs after that, presents an ideal platform for both the teams to experiment with combinations and assess form before next month's Champions Trophy.

Shami, despite missing four matches, emerged as India's leading wicket-taker in the ODI World Cup 2023 with 24 scalps, including a sensational 7/57 in the semifinal against New Zealand at the Wankhede.

Interestingly, the pacer has claimed the same number of wickets -- 24 at an average of 29.62 -- in his limited T20I career and will aim to improve on that while proving his fitness.

Shami was sidelined after the lost final against Australia November 19, 2023 due to an ankle injury that required surgery. The recovery from that was followed by swelling on his left knee during the domestic comeback some weeks back.

Following his inclusion in India's Champions Trophy squad, Shami's return will garner national attention.

With pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah nursing a back injury and his Champions Trophy participation doubtful, Shami's comeback assumes greater significance.

The 34-year-old made his competitive return in the Ranji Trophy for Bengal, guiding them to their first win of the season with a seven-wicket haul.

He followed it up with impressive performances in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (11 wickets) and the Vijay Hazare Trophy (five wickets).

Shami's T20I career has been sporadic, with just 23 appearances since his debut in 2014.



His last outing in the format was against England in the 2022 T20 World Cup semifinal.

With the Rohit Sharma-led Indian Test set-up still reeling from a horror tour of Australia, a good performance from the T20 side has become imperative especially after the Board had to step in to reinforce diktats on team discipline.

#### Axar's new beginning

All-rounder Axar Patel will debut as India's vice-captain in the T20I format.

India will operate with a flexible middle order during the five-match T20 series against England, all-rounder Axar Patel said Monday.

India, who won last year's T20 World Cup, have tended to pack their batting lineup with "floaters" such as Axar.

Talking to reporters ahead of the series opener against England Wednesday, the spin bowling all-rounder said only openers Sanju Samson and Abhishek Sharma could expect to have a fixed batting slot.

He has been rewarded for his stellar all-round contributions in India's triumphant T20

World Cup campaign in the Caribbean last year.

Axar played a crucial knock of 47 off 31 balls in the final against South Africa and took nine wickets at an average of 19.22 across eight matches.

The Gujarat player has already outlined his vision for India's middle order, emphasising a flexible approach with players floating between No 3 to 7 depending on match situations.

#### Curious case of Sanju Samson

All eyes will also be on Kerala's Sanju Samson, who faces another critical juncture in his career after being omitted from India's Champions Trophy squad.

He was subsequently ignored by Kerala selectors for their Ranji Trophy match against Madhya Pradesh.

The wicketkeeper-batter has proven his mettle several times, becoming the first Indian to score successive T20I centuries in the recent series against South Africa being a case in point.

Promising all-rounder Nitish

Reddy, who scored his maiden Test century against Australia in December at Melbourne, has also earned a spot in the squad, giving the team another option pace-bowling all-rounder along with the redoubtable Hardik Pandya.

#### England's fresh start

For the Jos Buttler-led England, the series marks a new chapter under head coach Brendon McCullum, who signed a three-year contract following Matthew Mott's resignation following their T20 World Cup exit.

Known for revolutionising Test cricket with his aggressive 'Bazball' approach, McCullum will now seek to replicate that success in the limited-overs format.

It would not be a new territory for the New Zealand great, who was also at the helm of Kolkata Knight Riders after playing for the franchise in the inaugural IPL.

England will miss key players Reece Topley, Sam Curran, and Will Jacks, but promising 21-year-old Jacob Bethell, who

impressed in the ODI series against the West Indies last year, will look to shine.

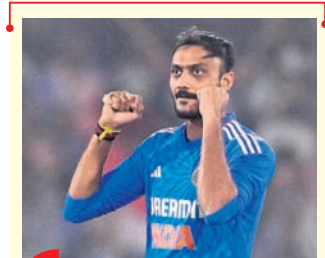
Bethell has averaged 57.66 and struck at 167.96 in his seven T20I appearances. Test opener Ben Duckett has been given the position in the shortest format for the first time in six years.

Like Shami, England's fiery pacer Jofra Archer will be under the spotlight as he returns from injury to lead their pace attack ahead of the Champions Trophy.

The playing XI finalised for Wednesday also includes pace bowler Mark Wood, who has recently recovered from a right elbow injury.

But conditions in India, with the possibility of heavy evening dew, could pose a challenge for bowlers. After Wednesday's game, the series would move to Chennai for the second T20I (January 25), followed by matches Rajkot (Jan 28), Pune (Jan 31) and Mumbai (February 2).

The ODI leg will start in Nagpur on February 6, followed by Cuttack (February 9) and Ahmedabad (February 12).



**the openers are fixed but everyone from numbers three to seven have been told that they can come into bat anytime, in any situation, our middle order will come to bat depending on the match situation, what kind of bowlers are bowling at the time, which match-up works well. We've spoken about that, how we can all be floaters, be it coming in early or obviously finishing.**

AXAR PATEL | VICE CAPTAIN

## HOME DEFEAT

# Sethu FC outshine Odisha FC eves



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Jan 21:** The Kalinga Warriors suffered a 2-0 loss to Sethu FC at the Kalinga Stadium Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

The match started with both teams creating early opportunities. In the 2nd minute, Odisha's goalkeeper Shreya made a solid save from a goal-bound shot. Then, in the 7th minute, Nishka's low cross for Jennifer was blocked by a Sethu defender, and in the 13th minute, Jennifer's shot from the left was deflected off a defender and safely gathered by the keeper.

The game took a dramatic turn in the 20th minute when Jennifer Yeboah advanced with the ball and was brought down by Anu Sabu. The referee promptly handed out a red card to Sabu, leaving Sethu with 10 players.

If the first half had demanded bravery of Sethu, then the second needed ingenuity and tactical nous, not just to play out the game but also take something from it. As it happened, they also got their bit of luck, when Shreya Hooda spilled a routine long range effort, straight into the path of Amnah Nababi. The midfielder had spotted the long range shot and on pure poacher's instinct followed it in. She tapped in the rebound to give

Sethu a lead against the run of play.

Odisha's game got increasingly desperate as time wore on, and where they could've done with patience they instead got frantic. Chances came and went begging. For Sethu, Khambi Chanu and Nirmala Devi were superb with their saves and interventions in goal and defence.

With the numerical advantage, Odisha pressed forward. A notable opportunity came when Maryam's free-kick was comfortably saved by Sethu's goalkeeper. Six minutes later, Odisha came close to scoring as Jennifer latched onto a brilliant through ball from Grace. She aimed for the far corner, but her shot struck the post.

Sethu took the lead in the 69th minute when Shreya Hooda spilled a long-range shot, allowing Amnah Nababi to tap in the rebound.

Despite creating several chances, the Kalinga Warriors struggled with finishing. Sethu's goalkeeper Chanu and one defender were solid in denying Odisha clear-cut opportunities. Sethu took advantage of Odisha's missed chances in the 82nd minute. A quick counter-attack saw Nababi round Odisha's goalkeeper Hooda and finish into an empty net, securing the win for Sethu.

## SHORT TAKES

### Satwik-Chirag advance; Ayush, Tanya Draw

**Jakarta:** India's Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty stormed into the second round of the USD 475,000 Indonesia Masters super 500 badminton with a clinical straight-game win against Chinese Taipei's Chen Zhi Ray and Lin Yu Chieh here Tuesday. The Asian Games champions, who reached back-to-back semifinals at Malaysia Super 1000 and India Super 750 in the last two weeks, outwitted Chen and Lin, ranked 38th in the world, 21-16 21-15 in their opening match.

### No 'Pakistan' On India Jersey

**New Delhi:** The BCCI has reportedly refused to have host nation's name 'Pakistan' printed on Team India's jerseys for the ICC Champions Trophy. A fresh controversy has emerged from the forthcoming ICC Champions Trophy in Pakistan and Dubai, with India reportedly objecting to 'Pakistan' (the name of the host nation) being printed on the team's jersey. India are set to play their Champions Trophy games in Dubai, though Pakistan remain the official hosts for the tournament. While a hybrid-model was accepted by the Pakistan Cricket Board and the International Cricket Council after the Board of Control for Cricket in India's refusal to send its team to Pakistan, the host name of the jersey has triggered a fresh row.

### Gukesh, Arjun Lead Norway Chess line-up

**Stavanger:** World champion D Gukesh and India No.1 Arjun Erigaisi will take on the might of heavyweights such as Magnus Carlsen and Fabiano Caruana in this year's star-studded Norway Chess tournament, to be held here from May 26 to June 6. Norway Chess on Tuesday announced that renowned Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura, currently ranked world No 3, and China's No 1 Wei Yi will compete in the prestigious tournament. The event will feature world No 1 Carlsen, world No 2 Caruana, Nakamura, world No 4 Erigaisi, world No 5 and youngest world champion Gukesh, and world No 9 Wei Yi.

# Bhadoria, Prasad star as India crush England to claim PD Champions Trophy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Colombo, Jan 21:** Aided by Yogendra Bhadoria's quick-fire half-century and a four-wicket haul by Radhika Prasad, India thrashed England by 79 runs to lift the Physically Disabled Champions Trophy here Tuesday.

India posted a fighting 1974 in 20 overs and then bowled England out for 118.

The title clash saw some fine batting from Bhadoria, who dominated the England attack to score 73 runs off just 40 balls, including four boundaries and five sixes at a strike rate of 182.50.

Prasad then led the charge with the ball, returning figures of 4/19 in 3.2 overs to demolish the opponents, while Vikrant Keni took 2/15 in his miserly three-over spell. Ravindra Sante kept up the pressure to grab two wickets for 24 runs in his four overs.

Leading this incredible team to victory in the PD Champions Trophy is the proudest moment of my career. Our journey through the playoffs shows the depth of talent and fighting



spirit in this team, said Keni.

Each player has contributed significantly to this achievement. This trophy belongs not just to us, but to every differently-abled person who has ever dreamed of playing cricket for India.

Head coach Rohit Jalani attributed the win to the players quickly getting used to the environment and the challenges

the opponents threw at them.

The boys showed tremendous character throughout the tournament, adapting to different conditions and rising to every challenge. What makes this win special is not just the trophy, but the way our team played -- with heart, determination, and a spirit that truly represents the best of Indian cricket, said Jalani.

# Djoko defeats Alcaraz, Eyes 25th Grand Slam triumph

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Melbourne, Jan 21:** Novak Djokovic refused to let anything stop his pursuit of a record 25th Grand Slam trophy in the Australian Open quarterfinals. Not a problem with his left leg. Not an early deficit. And not the kid across the net, Carlos Alcaraz, who was making things difficult and eyeing his own bit of history.

Djokovic overcame it all, just as he has so often along the way to so many triumphs, moving into the semifinals at Melbourne Park for the 12th time with a 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 victory over Alcaraz in a scintillating showdown Tuesday night between

a pair of stars born 16 years apart and at opposite ends of their careers.

The action was non-stop, the shot-making brilliant, even as the



match stretched on for more than 3 1/2 hours

and nearly to 1 am -- never more so, perhaps, than when Alcaraz saved a break point that would have put Djokovic ahead 5-2 in the fourth set,

## Bopanna-Zhang Bow Out in QF

Rohan Bopanna and Shuai Zhang had a match point in the Super Tie-break but could not close out the mixed doubles quarterfinals in their favour as local wild cards John Peers and Olivia Gadecki emerged winners in an exciting contest at the Australian Open here Tuesday. Bopanna and Zhang lost 6-2 4-6 9-11 in one hour and eight minutes at Kia Arena, bringing curtains on India's campaign at the first Grand Slam of the season. Bopanna had earlier made exit from the men's doubles. India's other contenders, including singles exponent Sumit Nagal, and doubles specialists Yuki Bhambhani and N Sriram Balaji, had also lost at various stages of the hard-court Major. Bopanna and Zhang ran away with the opening set but the Australian wild-card pair bounced back strongly. The Chinese player lost her serve in the third game of the second set and that gave Peers and Gadecki an opening to force a Super Tie-break. There was no surprise, and that break remained with the wild cards, who wrapped up the second set. The windy conditions also occasionally made the returns a bit tough.

allowing him to serve for the win. The 33-stroke exchange was the longest of the evening, and when it ended with Djokovic sailing a forehand long, the capacity crowd at

Rod Laver Arena went wild. Djokovic reached for his both-ersome leg and yelled toward his entourage; Alcaraz, his chest heaving, leaned on a towel box and grinned.