VOLUME 14, ISSUE 308 I www. orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY | FEBRUARY 8, 2025

12 PAGE | ₹5.00

Voters outnumber Maha's adult population: Rahul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: The Congress, Shiv Sena-UBT and NCP-SP Friday alleged irregularities in the voter lists of Maharashtra, claiming that a total of 39 lakh voters were added between Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the state.

Addressing a joint press conference here, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi claimed that the total number of voters added in Maharashtra was equivalent to the population of a state like Himachal Pradesh, and urged the EC to provide them list of voters and come clean on the issue.

He claimed the majority of the voters added have gone in the BJP's favour as the Oppo-

sent shackles and handcuffs. Mavbe we

can use them for the Opposition

sition parties have maintained their vote share in the Assembly polls. Flanked by NCP-SP's Supriya Sule and Sena's Sanjay Raut, Gandhi said the adult population of Maharashtra is 9.54 crore as per government data while the voter population of the state is 9.7 crore.

There are more voters in Maharashtra than total adult population of state, alleged Gandhi.

He said while 39 lakh voters were added in Maharashtra in five months after LS polls, as much as 32 lakh votes were added in the state in the previous five vears, between 2019 and 2024.

Gandhi said if the EC does not provide the voter lists of Assembly and LS polls, it poses a serious question.



BARABATI BATTLE: All-rounder Hardik Pandya, part of the Indian cricket team, arrives at a City hotel, Friday. The Men in Blue will take on England in the second ODI at Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, Sunday

RBI cuts repo rate, loans get cheaper

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) reduction of its key interest rate for the first time in almost five years comes at a time when India's GDP growth is projected to slow to a four-year low of 6.7 per cent. Even as the rate drop may result in slightly lower interest rates for mortgages and credit cards, as well as reduced borrowing costs for businesses, investment growth and urban consumption have been declining, while corporate profits have also decreased in the first half of this fiscal. Besides, the RBI's twin objectives of controlling inflation and simultaneously boosting growth appear challenging due to global headwinds stemming from US President Donald Trump's tariff policies, significant outflows of foreign investment, and a depreciating rupee—which is likely to weaken further as rates are lowered. The rupee is currently trading near record lows, largely due to substantial foreign investor withdrawals from the domestic stock market in recent months

PNN & AGENCIES

Mumbai, Feb 7: Home, auto and other loans are likely to see a drop in interest rates after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under a new Governor cut the key benchmark rate Friday for the first time in almost five years to spur a sluggish economy.

mittee (MPC), headed by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, slashed the reporate by 25 ba sis points to 6.25 per cent. This was the first reduction since May 2020 and the first revision after two-and-a-half years.

The Monetary Policy Com

Malhotra, a career bureaucrat who replaced Shaktikanta Das barely days after the last bi-monthly MPC meeting in December, said the Indian economy will grow at 6.7 per cent in the fiscal starting April 2025 while inflation rate to be lower at 4.2 per cent.

The growth-inflation dynamics "opens up policy space for the MPC to support growth," he said, adding that the RBI will "remain unambiguously fo cused on a durable alignment of inflation with the target while supporting growth."

For the financial year ending March 31, the RBI quoted the government estimate to put the growth rate at 6.4 per cent, its worst in four years and lower than 6.6 per cent seen previously, while the inflation was pegged at 4.8 per cent.

While his predecessor held rates in waiting for inflation to drop to the 4 per cent level, the RBI under Malhotra tilted towards supporting growth in the inflation-growth trade-off.

While the policy rate was re duced, the MPC kept the stance unchanged at neutral

DSPL-380

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Corrupt officers won't be spared: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday said his government will award efficient and good officers and at the same time won't spare officers who indulge in corrupt practices.

Majhi was addressing a function where appointment letters were distributed among 6,390 newly-recruited officers and other staffers of nine government departments.

"Our government will promote honest and efficient officers. But, we will not tol-



erate corruption and officers involved in such practices,' Majhi said. "The Vigilance department is very active. So, don't fall for corruption," he warned the new recruits

He said that a government job is not just to earn a liveli-

dium for public service.

The government is looking for efficient and honest officers for crucial posts, he said.

hood, but it is also a major me-

"Everyone knows that getting a government job is very difficult in a populated country like ours. Jobs in the government sector are limited. The Central government has only 35 lakh employees while the state has three lakh employees," Ma-

"If we fill up all vacant posts,

appealed to the newly-recruited officers to diligently work for "All grassroots-level work is now on your shoulders and I believe that you will be able to discharge your duties respon-

sibly and delicately," he said.

we will be able to provide jobs

to only 4.5 lakh people, which

is less than one per cent of the

state's population. So, you all

are fortunate because you are

among this one per cent of the

Stating that the common

people have a lot of expecta-

tions from the government, he

population," the CM added.



ଶ୍ରୀ ନରେନ୍ଦ୍ର ମୋଦୀ ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ

କଥା ଦେଇ କଥା ରଖିଲେ ଆମ ସରକାର





ଶ୍ରୀ ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ମୋହନ ଚର୍ଣ ମାଝୀ ଙ୍କ କର୍କମଳରେ ପ୍ରଥମ କିସ୍ତିର ଚତୁର୍ଥ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟାୟ ୧୮ ଲକ୍ଷରୁ ଊର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ନୂତନ ହିତାଧିକାରୀଙ୍କୁ



୯୦୦ କୋଟିରୁ ଉର୍ଦ୍ଧ୍ୱ ଟଙ୍ଗାର ଆର୍ଥିକ ସହାୟତା ପ୍ରଦାନ

୦୮ଫେବୃଆରୀ ୨୦୨୫|ଯାଜପୁର

www.subhadra.odisha.gov.in | ମହିଳା ଓ ଶିଶୁ ବିକାଶ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର | ଦେୟମୁକ୍ତ ସହାୟତା ନମ୍ବର ୧୪୬୭୮

OIPR-33001/13/0069/2425

Isure



MEGAN FOX ENDS HER RELATIONSHIP WITH MACHINE GUN KELLY FOR GOOD

American actress Megan Fox has reportedly ended her relationship with Machine Gun Kelly for good. The pair broke up in December. The *Transformers* actress, 38, got separated from the Bad Things rapper, 34, after he was at the centre of cheating rumours

NEW BRITNEY BOOK TO BARE TRUTH OF HER TURBULENT LIFE

Written in the Gonzo journalism style, a new Britney Spears book promising to expose the full truth of her stormy life story is being released. Titled Waiting for Britney Spears: A True Story, Allegedly' will be out 10 June. It explores the pop star's historic rise and equally tragic fall.



accuracy • reliability • trust

Your progress will be abundant, enabling you to save quite a lot for a rainy day.

More agreements are on the cards, and these may prove milestones in your business. Ganesha says that you have worked hard and its fruits lie in the future.

TAURUS

You are likely to show a strong streak of selfishness today, says Ganesha. He urges you not to too possessive about people or acquisitive about things and objects. Be very particular about this as your self centred tendencies could cause you a lot of grief. Your judgments plans and decisions may not be too reliable.

You may or may not be too those around you. You can easily sacrifice your ego to ensure that the sentiments of the ones you love are not hurt. But this can take its toll. You are probably planning a trip today - business or pleasure, whatever the excuse may be, the idea is to take a break.

CANCER

In order to protect the feelings and sentiments of those dear to you, you may tend to hide your emotions under the garb of a calm demeanour, predicts Ganesha. In the afternoon, you may set out on a short trip out of town.

Lady Luck and the goddess

of wealth both seem to favour you on this very unique and dynamic day, says Ganesha. So, it should come as no surprise when you gain both — money and power — on the business front. The latter half of the day might find you splurging a bit on wellery for your sweetheart.

VIRGO There are chances that today,

you will turn to your family for happiness, predicts Ganesha. Of course, you may have to spend a small fortune to please them. Later in the day, you may pen the first chapter of a long-term platonic relationship

Today promises to be a

joy ride for your hidden corpulent side. Relish what you eat, as today you shall take a keen interest in the same. Career wise, you may find yourself standing at crossroads.

SCORPIO

It is highly likely that you will be on the move today, predicts Ganesha. You will be actively shuttling from one location to the other for work or social purposes. Business meetings and conversations will he the basis of all your thoughts. Business proposals may take shape later in the day, feels Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Mysteries that have perplexed and plagued you for the past few days will unravel as the curtain draws from the clandestine, laying bare the aspects you needed an insight into. Any associations you make today will be beneficial in the long run.

CAPRICORN

You may get bogged down with work, and experience enormous stress today, says Ganesha. But, an adept professional, you will not give up easily. Your opponents will take a beating and will start to acknowledge your potential and abilities.

AQUARIUS

Straighten your tie and pull in your tummy, it's time to make an impression! And that's not all; you need to be sharp as important decisions await you. Haste will not do, as these decisions may have a long-term impact, cautions Ganesha

PISCES

You will be full of energy and enthusiasm today, a fact which owes nothing to the revitalising pills you have added to vour diet. You will have a great time making new acquaintances and splurging on someone you think is special, and this too should probably not have anything to do with aforementioned pills. If it does, however, you ought to be wary of starting new 'projects', says Ganesha.

'I love being vulnerable'

Mumbai: In a world where one is questioning if the concept of love has changed, and if the new generation looks at love and relationships from a different lens, Radhikka Madan admits, "I am very romantic.' Talking about matters of the heart, the Angrezi Medium actress says, "When it comes to love, I'm either all in or all out. There's no midway. I feel a lot of happiness in giving and loving, and I love being

vulnerable. Ask Radhika, if she has ever been in an one-sided love, and she says, "Movies have really somehow conditioned us to romanticize one sided love. I don't believe in that. For me self respect is very important and whoever you are giving love

should He take your love for granted. Radhikka was

recently seen in a music video, Sahiba, alongside Vijay Deverakonda. The song was based on the theme of unrequited love, and was sung by Jasleen



worth

needs to not

Rajini shares secret behind positive vibes

Chennai: Superstar Rajinikanth has now disclosed the secret behind the positive vibes that emanate from

The superstar, who is credited with giving out positive vibes by those who have moved with him, said that the secret

to his positivity was the Kriya Yoga that he practised. The actor, who is now in Ranchi, visiting the YSS Ashram there, addressed his fans through a video clip that is fast going viral.

'If I have to speak about the Kriya... If people say I am very vibrant and that when they meet me, they get positive vibes, the secret to that is I practice Kriya (yoga). From the time I started practising Kriya, the change that has taken place within me -- I don't know how to describe it. It is a kind of silence," he explained. "I started practising Kriya in 2002. It (Kriya) gave

me a unique kind of peace always. Despite being in this world and doing worldly tasks, I feel separated (from worldly things)... Without having to make an effort, things happen all by themselves," he said, narrating its benefits. The Jailer actor went on to add, "Those who know it

are very fortunate. It is a bond that continues for generations. Only when you do the Kriya will you know its effect. I have that experience."





Premiere of Odia Film Misiri

Bhubaneswar: The promising director duo of Sisir Kumar Sahu and Peenakee Singh, who previously garnered critical acclaim for their film Phalguna Chaitra, are set to present their latest Odia film, *Misiri*.

The premiere of the film was held at Utkal Galleria Friday. Produced by Nirmal Jaiswal under the banners of Reels N Reels and AA Entertainment, the film is co-sponsored by Sthita Patnaik and Akkankshya The plot revolves around Su-

mit, who unexpectedly meets Misiri at a restaurant and falls in love at first sight. As their bond deepens, Sumit discovers Misiri's exceptional artistic talent. However, when he confesses his feelings, Misiri rejects him outright. The narrative takes a dramatic turn when Misiri's old friend Aditya appears and proposes to her. To find out what happens next, audiences are encouraged to visit their nearest theaters, say the filmmakers.

"Misiri is not just a love story; it's an emotional rollercoaster that explores passion, conflict, and artistry. We believe the audience will connect deeply with its narrative and performances" they added.

The ensemble cast of the movie includes Sthita, Vivash, Nirmal, Prasanjeet, Rupashree, and Abhishek, Eshan, and Kaushik, who have also composed the music.



Rashmika Mandanna is now gearing up for another highly-anticipated magnum. Donning the avatar of a Maharashtrian queen for the first time, the actress will be sharing screen space with Bollywood star Vicky Kaushal in the Laxman Utekar film Chhaava. A week ahead of its release, the actress discussed about fame and the need to remain grounded. Rashmika asserted that despite being on a continuous success spree, she believes in staying humble and grounded along with retaining her connect with her roots. While sharing about what keeps her grounded, popular actress Rashmika, said, "My brain is already wired in a way... (I know) that all the things that we adore, all the things we enjoy, all these luxuries, can stay or go in an in-

connected to my roots." It is to be noted that the actress who has given two backto-back blockbusters in Hindi and Telugu languages, has a lot on her platter in 2025. Starting the year with Vicky Kaushal starrer *Chhaava*, the actress has *Sikandar* with superstar Salman Khan and *Thama* with Ayushmann Khurrana in Hindi. Apart from that, she also has Dhanush, Nagariuna starrer Kubera, Rainbow, and The

POST

Girlfriend in Telugu.



CROSSWORD

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.

SUDOKU

3	5	8			7			2
		1			3	8		
1			7				8	
					17	4	1	3
4				5		6	2	17
				6				9
8			3		17			67
	6	7					5	

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

MACADAM DECOY SHERPA

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

PEANUTS

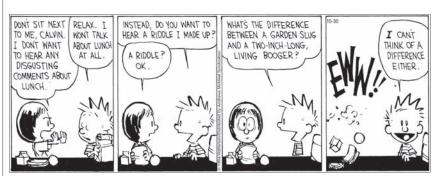








CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com 21

<u>Down</u>

Acre	OSS	
7	Catnap	
8	Beloved of	

- Aphrodite 9 Goblet feature
- 10 Cranky 11 Infatuated
- 13 Mooring 15 Take forcibly 17 Desert sights
- 20 Rainy day accessory

1 Buzzing pest 2 A clever remark (3,3)

23 Refugee's

request

24 Baby's toy

- 3 Confuse
- 4 "Yummy!"
- 5 Sheep dog

24

d'amore

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

- waterway
 - 22 Guisado cooker

6 Brief literary

description

assortment

14 Founder of

Lima

16 Seldom

18 Rabbitlike

rodent

19 Artificial

12 Motley

SUDOKU

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi will disburse the fourth phase of the first instalment under the Subhadra Yojana Saturday, benefitting over 18 lakh women. The money will be distributed at a grand programme scheduled at Jajpur. This will take the total number of beneficiaries to 98 lakh. Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi September 17, 2024, Subhadra Yojana is a flagship initiative aimed at enhancing women's financial independence across all the districts of the state. The scheme was a key electoral promise made by the BJP before the 2024 elections.

owntown

Odisha lacks CCI for kids with spl needs



New Delhi, Feb 7: Odisha is among the 12 states and Union Territories (UTs) that do not have a child care institution (CCI) for children with special needs, according to Minister of State for Women and Child Development (WCD) Savitri

In a written response to a question in the Lok Sabha Friday, Thakur said 2,450 CCIs have been established across the country under Mission Vatsalya. "And 199 of them cater to children with special needs," she said.

According to Mission Vatsalva guidelines, a CCI having a capacity of 50 children can have a special unit for 10 children with special needs. Similarly, a CCI with a capacity of 25 children can have a special unit for five children.

However, 12 states and UTs have no institutions for children with special needs, Thakur said. "Maharashtra, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Guiarat and Odisha are among 12 states and UTs that do not have any CCI for children with special needs," the MoS for WCD pointed out.

Meanwhile, W&CD Minister Annpurna Devi said, in a written response to a question, that 23 states and UTs have enacted

of beggary," she said. Responding to another question, Devi said according to WCD Ministry data from December 2024, only 7.50 crore children up to five years were enrolled in Anganwadis and registered on the Poshan Tracker.

of beggary. "Also, 15 states

have their own administrative

schemes to tackle the challenge

She said 7.18 crore of these children were measured on growth parameters of height and weight. "Of these, 39.68 per cent were found to be stunted. 17.22 per cent underweight and 5.5 per cent wasted," Devi said.

Kumar urges govt to levy addl tax on packaged food

Stating that the consumption of junk food has increased multifold over the last few years, BJP Rajya Sabha MP Sujeet Kumar Friday urged the government to make regulations related to packaged food more stringent, and levy additional tax to discourage people from consuming it.

Raising the issue in the House during Zero Hour, the MP from Odisha said the increase in consumption of junk food can be linked to the rise in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in India.

"There is an alarming rise in consumption of junk food, which are high in salt, sugar, unhealthy fat, but offer minimal nutrition," Kumar said. He quoted a WHO report of 2023, and said there has been a 40-time increase in consumption of packaged junk food between 2006 and 2019.

"Excessive consumption of junk food combined with poor lifestyle is one of the key reasons for increase in NCDs," he

Kumar cited an ICMR report to say that NCD-related deaths increased from 37.9 per cent in 1990 to 61.8 per cent in 2016.

"Most worrisome is that children are getting addicted because advertisements target them. Almost 41 per cent of our population is children. Demographic dividend can become

dangerous if our children grow as unhealthy citizens," he said.

The MP also said that the same brands sell better quality food products with better ingredients in western countries, but sell cheaper versions in India.

"They prioritise profit over the health of Indian citizens, taking advantage of our regulatory loopholes. The government should take measures to strengthen regulations," he

The MP called for stricter FS-SAI regulation, and urged the government to consider levying health tax on junk food. He also stressed on mentioning the ingredients in legible fonts on packaged food.

diac care units, 32 district day care centres and 414 community health centres. Union Health Minister JP Nadda said Friday. In a written response to a question in Lok Sabha, Nadda,

disha has 30 district

non-communicable dis-

ease (NCD) clinics, 12 car-

citing national NCD portal data, said over 14.6 crore women across the country have been screened for breast cancer. While 57,184 were diagnosed with the disease, 50,612 are receiving treatment. Similarly, over nine crore

women have been screened for cervical cancer. Out of them, 96,747 were diagnosed with the disease and 86,196 are under treatment, he said.

In order to prevent and control major NCDs like hypertension, diabetes, oral cancer, breast cancer and cervical cancer, the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease (NP-NCD) was launched by the Department of Health and Family Welfare in 2010. The national NCD portal was rolled out by the government in 2018 under NP-NCD for NCD screening and management and ensuring care for five common NCDs, including breast and cervical cancer.

Under the NP-NCD, 770 district NCD clinics, 233 cardiac care units, 372 district day care centres and 6.410 NCD clinics at community health centres have been set up across the country, Nadda said. "In Odisha, 30 district NCD clinics, 12 cardiac care units, 32 district day care centres and 414 community health centres have been set up," he pointed out.

The Department of Health and Family Welfare provides technical and financial support to the states and Union Territories under the NP-NCD as part of National Health Mission (NHM). The programme focuses on strengthening infrastructure, human resource development, early diagnosis, referral to an appropriate level of healthcare facility for treatment and management and health promotion and awareness generation for prevention of NCDs, Nadda said.

ASHAs administer community-based assessment checklist (CBAC) for all individuals of 30 years and above age group in the population. Risk assessment for NCDs is done through CBAC and all the high risk individuals are referred for screening of common NCDs as part of the comprehensive primary health care under NHM, Nadda stated.

Balasore man held in Delhi for emptying house; gang busted

Stolen jewellery, including 90 items of gold, diamonds, and stones worth around ₹90 lakh has been recovered from the gang members so far

New Delhi, Feb 7: The Delhi police Friday claimed to have busted a gang of burglars belonging to Odisha with the arrest of a 19-year-old man from Balasore for allegedly stealing jewellery and cash worth around ₹1.9 crore from a house in the Greater Kailash area here.

The arrested accused, identified as Sanjay Kumar Malik, is the member of the burglary gang whose members allegedly posed as domestic helps and carried out burglaries at their employers' houses.

The police investigation began October 14 last year when they received information about a theft at a house in Greater Kailash-II. A woman from the area informed them that jewellery and Rs 1.30 crore in cash had been stolen from her house after the almirah was broken into. Her servant, Shakti Pati, was also missing, a senior police officer said.

During the investigation, the police reviewed CCTV footage and found that the servant. along with three other accused including Malik, had committed the burglary.

The police traced Malik's location to Balasore, following which he was arrested, said Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Ankit Chauhan.

Malik disclosed that the stolen gold iewellerv was kept in Sanjay Van in Mehrauli under the bushes. Upon checking the location, the jewellery was recovered, he said.



The arrested accused, identified as Sanjay **Kumar Malik, is** the member of the burglary gang whose members allegedly posed as domestic helps and carried out burglaries at their employers' houses

Malik further revealed that the gang would come to Delhi in groups, rent accommodations in various parts of the city, and frequently change rooms. They would search for employment as domestic help. Once hired as cooks or other help, the member who entered the house would conduct surveillance for a few days and share the details with his gang members, Chau han said.

After finding the right time, he would call the other members of the gang, who would then burgle the house and flee with the stolen articles. They would later divide the stolen goods among themselves, police said.

Stolen jewellery, including 90 items of gold, diamonds, and stones worth around Rs 90 lakh, was recovered, they added.

Senior govt officer, 4 others held on corruption charges

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: The Odisha Vigilance Friday said it has arrested a senior government officer of the Watershed department and his four associates on corruption charges. During search operations,

the Vigilance department found over Rs 2 crore in cash, deposits worth Rs 91 lakh, gold jewellery weighing 422 gram, four flats and a building from the possession of Santanu Mohapatra, the Deputy Director and Project Director of the Watershed department in Malkangiri.

Acting on a tip-off, the anti-corruption wing conducted search operations at various locations Wednesday and Thursday and discovered the properties, the Vigilance department said in a statement. Mohapatra's four associates.

he officer and his colleagues are suspected of misappropriating government funds by falsely reporting completed work and making payments to labour accounts, which were then withdrawn and stolen, said a Vigilance official

including an assistant agriculture engineer and a data entry operator, were also arrested on the charge of embezzlement of government funds.

The officer and his colleagues are suspected of misappropriating government funds by falsely reporting completed work and making payments to labour accounts, which were then withdrawn and stolen," a Vigilance official said.

It appears that these people had been operating the labourers' bank accounts to facilitate the withdrawal and misappropriation of government funds,

Miscreants snatch ₹2.55L cash from man in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Unidentified bike-borne miscreants allegedly snatched a bag containing Rs 2.55 lakh cash from a man in Infocity area Friday. The local police are vet to establish the

tor-In-Charge (IIC) Mahendra Kumar Sahu said the victim - Sisir Mohapatra - is employed with a private security

a close watch on my movement after I withdrew cash from the bank," Sisir said. IIC Sahu said the cops were scanning CCTV feed from nearby areas to identify the miscreants.

identity of the miscreants. Infocity police station Inspec-

firm, "He withdrew the money (Rs 2.55 lakh) from a local SBI branch around midday to deposit his son's college fees. After parking his bike inside his office campus, Sisir was walking towards his office entrance when the miscreants, who appeared to have been trailing him, grabbed the cash-filled bag and sped off on a motorcycle," Sahu said. "I suspect the robbers were keeping

'Sanatani' released amid tight security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Despite opposition from the Christian community, an Odia film on religious conversion was released across the state Friday amid tight

The movie 'Sanatani-Karma Hi Dharma' was released in around 30 cinema halls across the state.

"There was no protest from any quarters and the film has received good response from people in different places of Odisha," Bijay Kandoi, the producer of the film, told PTI

He claimed that there was nothing objectionable in the film, directed by Basudev Barad, to hurt any community. The lead actor, Sambit Acharya,

said all people should watch the film and then give their opinion. Initially, the Central Board of

Film Certification (CBFC)'s regional office in Cuttack had denied certification to the film but it received UA certification from CB-FC's Mumbai office, Acharya said.

The censor board had suggested changing the title of the film from 'Hey Ram: Karma Hi Dharma' to 'Sanatani: Karma Hi Dharma' and edit some portions of the film. The producer has complied with the



suggestions of CBFC, Acharya

The film was screened in Balasore and Bhadrak town during the day amid tight security provided by Odisha Police, said Amresh, who is looking after the screening of the film.

Meanwhile, the National United Christian Forum (NUCF), a joint platform of Catholic Bishop's Conference of India (CBCI), National Council of Churches in India (NC-CI) and Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI) condemned the release of the film 'Sanatani'.

"The film derogatorily portrays Jesus Christ, Christians and Christian services, distorting **National United Christian Forum, a joint** platform of Catholic **Bishop's Conference of India, National Council** of Churches in India and **Evangelical Fellowship** of India condemn the release of the film based on religious conversion

the image of Jesus, key aspects of Christian doctrine, particularly the sacrament of Baptism, and misrepresenting conversion as a criminal activity," the NUCF said in a statement.

It said: "The right to freedom of religion, including the right of a citizen to convert to any religion of choice, is enshrined in the Constitution of India, and any attempt to undermine this fundamental right is unconstitutional."

The Orissa High Court Wednesday did not grant a stay order on the release of the film. Two petitions were filed in the court seeking an interim intervention to stop its release.



OrissaPOST



Barabati ODI: 7 held for black-marketing tickets

While Darghabazar

Police arrested three

persons for selling

eight gallery tickets

at higher prices,

Cantonment Police

nabbed four

persons on the

same charges

istered at Darghabazar police station and Cantonment police

station in this regard, he said.

selling eight gallery tickets for

Police said three men were



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, Feb 7: At least seven people were arrested Friday for their alleged involvement in black-marketing tickets for the upcoming One Day International (ODI) between India and England at Barabati stadium in Cuttack, police said.

Cuttack Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Jagmohan Meena said that the police have seized 25 gallery tickets, cash worth ₹30,000, some mobile phones and motorcycles from the possession of the seven arrested persons.

At least four FIRs were reg-

the match at higher prices in Darghabazar police station area. They had even posted photographs of the tickets online and sought a response from prospective buyers.

The police nabbed them while they were handing over the tickets to a person in Buxi Bazaar area of the city. The man purchasing the tickets also told the police that he was availing the tickets at higher prices due to the unavailability of tickets for the Sunday match.

Similarly, Cantonment Police also arrested four other persons for their alleged involvement in the sale of match tickets in the black market. They were selling tickets worth ₹1,100 for ₹7,000 each.

While Barabati stadium has a capacity of 45,000 seats, only 24,000 tickets have been released to the public and the remaining 21,000 tickets have been distributed among VIPs and VVIPs, sources said.

A stampede-like situation was witnessed outside the Barabati stadium gate with a large number of people queuing to buy offline tickets from the counters Wednesday.

The Odisha Cricket Association (OCA) functionaries were not immediately available to comment on the matter.







STELLAR SHOW: Artistes perform at the inaugural evening of 21st Dhauli-Kalinga Mahotsav-2025 at Shanti Vihar Foothills of Dhauli on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Friday

'Shrama Sachetanata Rath' flagged off

BHUBANESWAR: In a bid to spread awareness about the state government's welfare activities for the labourers, state Labour Commissioner Indramani Tripathi Friday flagged off Shrama Sachetanata Rath" from the premises of Joint Labour Commissioner's office at Unit-III here. This awareness campaign will be routed through all the blocks of Khurda district for a month. Through this drive, the workforce of the district will be made aware of various steps being taken by Odisha **Building and Other Construction** Workers' Welfare Board, Odisha Unorganised Workers' Social Welfare Board for the welfare of workers, labour reforms, increase in minimum wages of workers

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Мах Тетр	32.2°	30.5°
Min Temp	20.0°	18.8°
Humidity	72%	74%

FORECAST

INDEX

SENSEX

DOLLAR

GOLD

SILVER

MARKET WATCH





VARIATION

77860.19

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: Housing and Urban Development, Public Enterprises Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra, who is also the Chairman of Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) Friday laid the foundation stone for a stateof-the-art crematorium at Dumduma, a move that is expected to improve funeral services in the Capital city. The minister also inaugurated 22 traffic aid posts at Khandagiri.

This crematorium reflects the government's the commitment to providing dignified and accessible facilities for the deceased and their families, especially as Bhubaneswar evolves into a Smart City, said the minister.

The proposed crematorium in Dumduma will come up on 1.58-acre land, with a budgetary allocation of Rs 4.60 crore. The facility is designed to include a spacious waiting hall, separate changing rooms for men and women, an administrative



Min lays stone for crematorium at Dumduma

AT KHANDAGIRI, THE H&UD MINISTER INAUGURATES 22 TRAFFIC AID POSTS FOR THE CITY

block, a water body, and a modern electrical/gas crematorium.

To ensure inclusivity, the crematorium will be equipped with ramps and tactile signage, making it accessible to all community members. Additionally, the facility will feature parking area, security measures, and effective waste management system, with emphasis on en-

vironmental sustainability. The state government has recognised the increasing need for respectful funeral rites that cater to the emotional and spiritual needs of grieving families in a gradually expanding Bhubaneswar. This crematorium is expected to provide essential support during difficult times, contributing positively to the community's overall well-being.

In addition to the crematoriums, the minister inaugurated 22 traffic aid posts at Khandagiri that would support the well-being of traffic police officers who endure long hours under the sun. Designed to meet their needs, the initiative offers essential amenities such as toilet facilities, shaded rest areas, and an unobstructed view for effective traffic monitoring.

Strategically placed at major junctions, a total of 22 posts have been constructed and handed over to the Commissionerate Police for use. The 22 traffic aid posts have been built at a total cost of Rs 2.6 crore.

These posts will serve as a resting place for traffic personnel, allowing them to take breaks while managing traffic at busy junctions. The posts are equipped with rest rooms and drinking water facilities for traffic personnel.

This initiative marks a significant improvement in the working conditions for traffic cops, who often work in extreme weather conditions, ensuring they have the necessary facilities to perform their duties effectively.

Bhubaneswar-Ekamra MLA Babu Singh, Additional Commissioner of Police Umashankar Dash, BDA Vice Chairman N Thirumala Naik and other senior officials of BDA were also present.

11th Int'l Radio Fair from Feb 13

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: To commemorate World Radio Day, Outreach, an organisation dedicated towards promoting radio, is set to host the 11th International Radio Fair February 13 and 14 at Bhanja Kala Mandap here, the organisers announced Friday. Speaking at a presser, Out-

reach president Subrat Kumar Pati said, "Distinguished radio stations and broadcasters from across the country will participate in this mega event. Many organisations and individuals will be honoured for their excellence in broadcasting at the radio fair.

The fair will showcase over 3,000 vintage radios, broadcasting equipments, Ham radios, and gramophones.

Several competitions, including dance, singing, drawing, report writing, radio news reading, and debate will be held for school and college students. Top three position holders in each category will be receiving awards.

Notable international broadcasters including Association of Community Radio Broadcasters,

Nepal president Arjun Giri and representatives from Kalinchok FM (Jeevan Lama), Hazucko Radio (Deepak Kumar Ghimire),

Tamakoshi FM (Saroj Raj Sub

edi) and Radio Nepal (Pradeep

Kafle) will attend the event.

Singer Barnali Hota will be honoured with 'Upendra Kumar Pahadsingh Memorial Award', while retired Akashvani executive Abhay Das will receive the 'Nadiya Bihari Me morial Award'. Keonjhar's Radio Juhar will be recognised for using radio in disseminating public service messages.

tanaik from Bolgarh and Rajendra Sahu from Bhubaneswar will showcase their collections

Radio collectors Akshav Pat

WONDERLA BHUB UNVEILS **VALENTINE'S DAY OFFERS**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Feb 7: India's largest amusement park chain Wonderla Holidays Ltd has launched special Valentine's Day offers at its Bhubaneswar Park where an array of events for couples and special activities for singles, along with exclusive discounts and unique experiences have been planned from February 7 to 16. For couples, Wonderla Bhu-

> baneswar will feature wave pool dinner, a magical evening with live music, karaoke, and emcee-led entertainment, providing the perfect setting for couples to celebrate their love February 14. The park will also host a live

band performance, offering singles the chance to enjoy music. meet new people, and have an unforgettable time February 15 To make the occasion even

more special, Wonderla is of-

fering upto 40 per cent off on

The deal can be availed between February 7 and 14.

Wonderla encourages visitors to book their entry tickets in https://bookings. wonderla.com/ in advance through the online portal or can contact Bhubaneswar Park at 0674 - 6640300



Triumph Over Orthopaedic Challenges', organised by CARE Hospitals Bhubaneswar, over 200 patients who had undergone knee replacement and sports injury surgeries shared their recovery stories and highlighted the positive impact of modern orthopaedic treatments, which helped them return to an active lifestyle. The event held at the Kalin-

ga Stadium Tennis Centre was joined by Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy as chief guest, state BJP president Manmohan Samal as guest of honour, DMET additional director Braja Kishore Das, Orthopaedics department head at the hospital and chief consultant for Robotic Surgery and Sports Injury Sandeep Singh and Quality Care India Limited group managing director Varun Khanna.

Distinguished group of or-



RESURGENCE: TRIUMPH OVER ORTHOPAEDIC CHALLENGES

thopaedic surgeons, specialists, and key figures from various

medical and healthcare organ

isations also graced the event.

On the occasion, Singh launched 'The Billion Knees Project', an initiative dedicated to improving access to high-quality orthopaedic care, specifically focusing on knee health, across the state.

In her address, the Speaker emphasised the importance of healthcare accessibility and pa tient empowerment and stated, "Healthcare should be a right, not a privilege. The resilience of these patients is truly inspiring, and initiatives like 'The

Billion Knees Project' will go a long way in ensuring quality orthopaedic care reaches every corner of Odisha.'

"Government schemes and insurance policies have been instrumental in making advanced orthopaedic treatments accessible to more people. By working together, we can ensure that healthcare is not just a privilege for some, but a right for all," quoted Das.

Delivering the keynote address, Singh said, "The latest advancements in knee replacements and sports injury treatments are revolutionising the way we approach orthopaedic care. These innovations are not just improving recovery times but also giving patients the chance to return to active, fulfilling lives."

'This event was a celebration of the strength and courage of our patients. It shows that with the right care, anyone can over come orthopaedic challenges and regain their independence," Singh added.

Speaking on the occasion Khanna highlighted the hospi tal's commitment to innovation and excellence in healthcare and said, "At CARE Hospitals, we believe in combining cutting-edge technology with compassionate patient care. Our focus on robotic-assisted surgeries and advanced orthopaedic treatments is setting new benchmarks in medical excellence. With initiatives like 'The Billion Knees Project', we are committed to making high-quality orthopaedic care accessible to all, ensuring that no one has to live with mobility challenges.'

ACCOMMODATION

for Senior Citizens, Mentally ill person & **Drug addicted Person** with all facilities. Contact: 9337160036, 7325991853, 9439928693.

CLASSIFIED

₹95,489

Free Accommodation

couple passes for park tickets and exclusive food and ticket combos when booked online.

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488 Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816 Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

PARBATI GIRI MEGA LIFT IRRIGATION PROJECT

No end to wait for water

15 yrs after project's inauguration, irrigation remains a distant dream for many

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Feb 7: Nearly 15 years after the inauguration of Parbati Giri Mega Lift Irrigation (LI) Project, which was designed to irrigate 12,800 hectare farmland in Jajpur district, water is yet to reach about 40 per cent of the targeted area, raising concerns over irregularities and mismanagement leading to such inordinate delay. The farmers have alleged widespread corruption in the 12 mega LI projects in the district.

In this regard, the Bari Dwipanchala Unnayana Parishad, a local outfit, lodged a complaint with the state Water Resources department, a portfolio held by the Chief Minister.

In response, the Water Resources department has ordered an investigation. Additional Secretary Prashant Kumar Sahu has directed the Chief Engineer of the Parbati Giri Mega LI Project to take immediate corrective action. Despite repeated complaints, farmers said, no significant progress



has been made in this regard. According to Kulamani Shukla, chairman of the Bari Dwipanchala Unnayana Parishad, two key projects-Asalpur and Kampagada LI projects—have failed to provide water to the intended areas. These projects, scheduled for completion by December 15, 2021, still remain unfinished, leaving large swathes of farmland without irrigation.

While the Irrigation department claims that 12,662 hectare farmlands were irrigated under the Parbati Giri LI Project during the kharif season, farmers dispute these figures. arguing that 40 per cent of the intended area has not received any water yet. The Asalpur project, meant to irrigate 2,000 hectares across 19 villages, has struggled to do so due to poor

Wildfire razes Mitrabhanu forest in Keonjhar

forest division, has been de-

stroyed with thousands of trees

of various species burnt down.

unidentified miscreant set the

fire around 11:30am Wednes-

day. The flames spread fast

and despite a three-hour effort

by Forest officials and Fire

department personnel, it took

a significant struggle to bring

In 2020-21, under a CSR grant,

32,000 saplings were planted on

50 acres to establish this forest.

Funds were allocated annual-

ly for its maintenance, and 14

workers engaged in its upkeep.

the fire under control.

According to sources, an

planning. Instead of utilising the abundant water resources in Asalpur, officials built an intake point at Kampagada, leading to the project's failure.

Farmers allege that only small portions of the targeted land have received water, while officials misrepresent project success. Frustrated by the delay, farmers have warned to stage a protest in front of the departmental office March 3 if the issue is not resolved before schedule.

Meanwhile, farmers in several villages including Bhagirathpur, Sarangapur, Tikarapada, Nathuabar, Adampur, Naguan, Balangi, Baunsaanta, and Kurukura are still waiting for irrigation from the Tulasipur pump house, which was supposed to lift water from the

Locals blamed the Forest

department's inefficiency for

the destruction, alleging that

thousands of young trees were

charred due to poor manage-

ment. The grass and under-

growth had not been cleared

since January, leaving nearly

four feet of dry vegetation at

the base of the trees, which

fueled the fire. Additionally,

plantation under afforestation

efforts made under the CAMPA

grant in 2023-24 was reportedly

Residents further claimed

that guards assigned to main-

tain the afforestation work

were often deployed elsewhere,

leading to negligence. The ab-

sence of a firebreak before

summer allowed dry leaves

and grass to accumulate, help-

ing the fire spread quickly and

destroying hundreds of trees.

Meanwhile, Sadar range offi-

cer Ajit Das stated that the fire

was deliberately set. However,

he confirmed that Forest per-

sonnel and firefighting teams

responded immediately and

damaged in the blaze.

Farmers Rabindra Behera, Ramesh Behera, and Deepak Behera said they have waited for over a decade for water to flow through the pipelines laid on their land, but to no avail. They had hoped for better crop yields and financial stability in the wake of the project's inauguration, but now doubt whether water will ever reach their fields.

The project was expected to provide irrigation to 2,000 hectare of farmland in Barchana constituency, 3,700 hectare of farmland in Bari constituency, 5,400 hectare of farmland in Dharmasala and Korei constituencies and 1,700 hectare of farmland in Jajpur constituencv. However, with 40 per cent of the total farmland still without water, farmers continue to suffer crop losses and financial hardship. Many have fallen into debt, with instances of farmers resorting to suicide due to financial distress.

Despite significant government investment, irrigation projects remain incomplete due to corruption and administrative failures. While authorities claim to prioritise agriculture and irrigation, inefficiency and mismanagement continue to hinder the benefits from reaching the needy.

247 kg ganja seized from Koraput kendu leaf godown



Jeypore, Feb 7: Acting on a tip-off received during routine patrol, Jeypore Sadar police here have seized over 247 kg ganja from a Kendu leaf warehouse managed by the Odisha Forest Development Corporation, sources said Friday.

The police raided the warehouse Wednesday at approximately 4:30pm and investigation ran well into the night. Upon reaching the site, officers found the warehouse's doors unsecured, but locked with a padlock. No arrest has been made yet in this connection and the investigation is ongoing. Authorities have registered a case and are working to identify the persons involved, Jevpore Sadar police station officer-in-charge Ishwar Tandi

Leopard hide seized; 6 detained

railway station, marking the commencement of its journey, Friday



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Feb 7: A special team of the Forest department Friday seized a leopard skin under Karaniia forest division in Mayurbhanj district. Six individuals involved in the illegal trade of animal parts have been detained for questioning.

According to sources, the wildlife criminals were trying to strike a deal in Nayak Sahi, Manduar, under the Karanjia forest range when officials received a tip-off. Acting on the directive of Karanjia Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Srikant Nayak, a special team was formed, and a raid was conducted, leading to the seizure of the hide.

Preliminary investigation suggests the seized leopard skin is 2-3 years old. However, the exact time and circumstances of the leopard's poaching remain under investigation. Officials have yet to determine the length ak speculated that the leopard was relatively young at the time of its death.

and width of the hide. DFO Nay-

JOURNEY BEGINS: Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida flags off a senior citizens' pilgrimage train at Sambalpur

A sample of the seized skin will be sent to the National Centre for Biological Sciences in Bangalore for further examination. The forensic report will confirm whether the tiger was male or female and provide insights into the cause of death.

Authorities suspect an interstate wildlife trafficking network is operating in the region. Traders from neighbouring Jharkhand and West Bengal are believed to be luring locals into illegal activities, including the trade of tiger skins and elephant tusks. As a result, many gullible tribal people involved in poaching are being arrested and facing legal consequences.

Conservation groups are calling for stricter patrolling in border areas to curb wildlife crime and protect endangered species.

The following persons, who have availed loans against pledge of gold ornaments, from CONCERNED

BRANCHES of UCO Bank, have not repaid the amount in spite of our demand notice. Therefore, please take notice that if the principal, interest and other charges are not paid on or before

Dt.21.02.2025, the pledge ornaments will be publicly auctioned on Dt.24.02.2025 at

Zonal Office, UCO Bank
Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok
Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751009

Couple killed, 3 others injured as brick-laden tractor-trolley overturns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Koraput, Feb 7: A couple was killed and three others were seriously injured when a brick-laden tractor-trolley overturned in Rayagada district Friday, police said.

The accident took place when the driver of the Gun upur-bound tractor-trolley which was coming from Gulamunda Paka, lost control over the vehicle, a police officer said.

The deceased have been identified as Chaitanya Sabar and his wife Mamita.

The injured were immediately rushed to Gunupur hospital for treatment. One critically injured person was later referred to the district headquarters hospital in Paralakhemundi after his condition worsened, he added.

Six people, including the driver, were on the tractor-trolley, Uttam Kumar Sahu, IIC of Gunupur police station, said.

They were daily wage labourers from Ompera village he said, adding an investiga tion has been launched into

the incident.

GOLD AUCTION

Sadar range in the Keonjhar 3 workers injured in blast furnace mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Feb 7: Due to a lack

of proper supervision by the

Forest department, wildfires

continue to consume forests in

Keonihar district. A few days ago, fire broke out in Patna

block reducing a forest to ashes.

Now, concern is growing over

another wildfire in Sadar block.

bhanu forest—a newly planted

forest named after forest guard

Mitrabhanu Naik for his suc-

cessful efforts in its creation—

has been destroyed in the blaze.

The forest, located in Kendua

village under the Belda bit of

Reports indicate that Mitra-

Rourkela, Feb 7: At least three workers were injured in an accident at a blast furnace here Friday evening, a police officer said.

The mishap took place due to a rupture in the protecting wall of the unit, he said.

contractors.

10 Mode of Payment of Bid cost

and Bid security

OIPR-32090/11/0009/2425

came across hot metals and suffered injuries, the officer said.

They have been admitted to a private hospital, where two were discharged after treatment, while the condition of one of the injured is stated to be stable. Rourkela SP Nitesh Wadhwani said.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

E-mail: eemidivision_khariar@rediffmail.com e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Bid Identification Notice No. : 06/SE MIDKHR/2024-25 Lt. No.: 155/MIDKHR Dt.: 03.02.2025 No.A-1014: The Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Khariar, Dist. Nuapada on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate Bids in Single Cover System through e-procurement to be received in online mode only for the works as detailed in the table below. The bid should be submitted online in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in by eligible

Improvements to different MIPs Name of work under M.I. Division, Khariar 02 (Two) Nos. Only Varies from 10.00 Lakhs to 12.1 2 Total No. of works Estimated cost Lakhs Approximately Class of Contractor As mentioned against work As mentioned against work From 10:00 A.M. on 07.02.2025 5 Period of completion Date and time of availability of Bid and up to 5:30 P.M. on 17.02.2025 Document in porta Up to 5:30 P.M. on 17.02.2025 Last date / time for receipt From 11:00 A.M. on 18.02.2025 Date / Time of opening of At O/o M.I. Division, Khariar, Technical Bid Nuapada Name and Address of Tender Superintending Engineer, M.I. Inviting Officer

Division, Khariar, Nuapada Office inviting the Bid

Sd./- Superintending Engineer M.I.Division, Khariar

However, the fire burnt more managed to extinguish the than 10,000 trees to the ground. flames. confirmed. GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER. BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO.I. BHUBANESW

> 1st CORRIGENDUM TO TENDER CALL NOTICE No. 64 (Estg.) of 2024-25 No. 936 due to unavoidable circumstances.

Last date of online submission of bid document in the portal/online: 5.30 P.M. of 20.02.2025 Date of Opening : 12.30 P.M. of 21.02.2025

3)	The following work is added in St. No. 3					
SI. No.	Name of the Work	Approximate Estimated Cost put to Tender (Rs. in Lakh)		Cost of Bid Document		Period of Completion
1	Repair and Restoration work to Road from Jharapada - Koradakanta for the year 2024-25 from RD 0/000 Km to 0/560 Km.		Rs.49,000/-	Rs.6,000/- Online	"B" Class Only	01 (One) Calendar Month
	other conditions of NIT remain unaltered.		./- Superinte			

भारत सरका कारपोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय त्वरित कॉपोरिट समापन प्रसंस्करण केंन्द्र (सी-पेस), आई.आई.सी.ए. बिल्डिंग, 7वीं मंजिल, प्लाट P−6,7,8, से.-5, आई.एम्.टी. मानेसर, गुडगाँव, हरियाणा – 122050 Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in



Ministry of Corporate Affairs Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit (C-PACE). IICA Building, 7th Floor, Plot P- 6, 7, 8, Sector-5 IMT Manesar, Gurgaon, Haryana - 122050 Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

Government of India

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 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016] Public Notice: ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2024-25/1658 Date: 13/01/2025

Reference: (1) In the matter of striking off or removal of names of (5) companies in the state of Odisha under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

١	S. No.	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
ı	1	AB2344797	U92410OR2022PTC040832	COMICDAY PRIVATE LIMITED
1	2	AB2244282	U01100OR2016PTC025817	SWARNADRI CONSTRUCTION PRIVATE LIMITED
	3	AB2233390	U85100OR2022PTC039183	BALYA NAVARITHI PRIVATE LIMITED
ı	4	AB2177734	U13139OD2024PTC045664	TOSHALI TEXTILES AND CHEMICALS PRIVATE LIMITED
ı	5	AB2228532	U62091OD2024PTC046734	TECHNIVO SOLUTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED

(2) Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies had received applications from the above-mentioned companies und section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name (s) from the register of companies either on the ground 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 above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice

Irkan Tirkay Assistant Registrar CBC 07123/11/0717/2425

Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit

	12	.00 Noon at the Respective Branch premises. The Bank reserviction to any other convenient date without assigning any reason	es the right to can	
	SI. No		Balance Outstanding	Weight in (Grams)
		BADAKHOLI BRANCH, At/P.O: Badakholi, Via Name of the Manager: Dilip Kumar Ghadei,		
o.in	1.	Alekha Jena, At: Sankholi, P.O: Badakholi, Dist.: Ganjam, PIN-761116 / 11600610038499	₹ 67,110/- + Interest and Charges	21.50
A	11 -	Alekha Jena, At: Sankholi, P.O: Badakholi, Dist.: Ganjam, PIN-761116 / 11600610043431	₹ 12,275/- + Interest and Charges	4.40
025	1 3.	Sudashna Swain , At/PO: Bhetanai, Ganjam, PIN- 761116 / 11600610040409	₹ 39,228/- + Interest and Charges	13.80
ade	4.	Sudashna Swain, At/PO: Bhetanai, Ganjam, PIN- 761116 / 11600610040263	₹ 93,569/- + Interest and Charges	34.70
		PHIRINGIA BRANCH, P.O.: Phiringia, Dis Name of the Manager: Priyabrata Karna, M		•
of tion	1.	Pramila Kanhar, At: Ladapadar, P.O: Kiamunda, P.S: Phiringia, Phulbani - 762011 / 10360610018446	₹ 63,000/- + Interest and Charges	29.30
e) lar	2.	Pramila Kanhar , At: Ladapadar, P.O: Kiamunda, P.S: Phiringia, Phulbani - 762011 / 10360610018194	₹ 26,620/- + Interest and Charges	10.20
1	3.	Krushna Chandra Digal, At: Shradimunda. P.O: Muselipanga, G.P: Polabrudi, Jajespanga, Dist.: Kandhamal, PIN - 762011 / 10360610018323	₹ 30,000/- + Interest and Charges	14.1
	4.	Indrajit Kanhar, At: Digriguda, P.O: Kiamunda, Dist.: Kandhamal, PIN - 762011 / 10360610018576	₹ 51,582/- + Interest and Charges	34
	5.	Mamata Banarjy, At/P.O: Bhrungijodi, Phiringia, Kandhamal, PIN - 762011 / 10360610018460	₹ 43,000/- + Interest and Charges	14.68
	6.	Trinath Sahani, At: Sarukoi, P.O: Telapali, Dist.: Kandhamal, PIN - 762011 / 10360610018422	₹ 20,847/- + Interest and Charges	11.20
	7.	Dutika Bagha , At/P.O: Jajespanga, Dist.: Kandhamal, PIN - 762011 / 10360610019702	₹ 20,000/- + Interest and Charges	9.9
	8.	Balakrishna Kanhar , At/P.O: Sadingia, Kandhamal - 762011 / 10360610019351	₹ 30,000/- + Interest and Charges	13.9
_		PHULBANI BRANCH, At/Po: Phulbani, Di Name of the Manager: Bhabani S Mishra, N		
e 7	1.	Chumuki Kanhar, At: Ganda Gaon, Kilisunga, Dist.: Kandhamal, PIN - 762019 / 08130610022313		11.3

SUKAL BRANCH, At: Alisha, P.O: Sukal, Via: Sakhigopal, Dist.: Puri,

Name of the Manager: Sushanta Kanungo, Mob.: 9131245571 Kailash Chandra Sahoo, At: Dokhandapur, P.O.: Sukal, PS: ₹ 60.724/- + Satyabadi, Dist.: Puri, PIN - 752014 / 30310610033692 Interest and Charge

The intending bidders may participate in the auction by fulfilling the following terms: 1. The Bank does not guarantee the weight or purity of the jewellery/coins, either of its gold contents

The jewel is available for inspection by the intending bidders during business hours on any working

The intending bidders have to contact the Respective Branch Head for the Reserve Price of

The intending purchaser shall make an earnest money deposit of 25% of Reserve Price (to be

computed as per the balance outstanding).

The jewel to be handed over to the highest bidder on payment of the balance amount within **24 hours** or on the next working day of the bank during its business hours.

6. If the successful bidder fails to pay the amount, the earnest money will be forfeited and the jewe

may be resold within 30 days from the date of auction.

7. The unsuccessful bidder shall be entitled for the refund of the earnest money immediately after the

8. It shall be lawful for the Bank to stop the auction at any stage without assigning any reason thereto in which case the earnest money shall be returned to whoever makes the deposit

N.B.: For further details please contact Zonal Office Co-ordinator, Mob: 7873016821

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 07.02.2025 Authorised Officer, UCO Bank



power post



A certain exaltation of the being comes naturally with stronger experiences and the sense of marvel or miracle may go with it, but there should be no egoistic feeling in the exaltation.

SRI AUROBINDO



BABUDOM

BYTES

Dilip Cherian

Sideline to Centrestage

rakash Mishra is back in the spotlight. The BJP-led Odisha government has appointed the retired IPS officer as an advisor to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi—with cabinet rank, no less. That's a big deal, not just for Mishra but also for Odisha's political

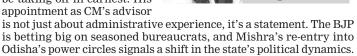
Mishra's career has been anything but ordinary. When the Modi government came to power in 2014, it wasted no time picking him as the Director General of the CRPF, India's largest paramilitary force. After retirement, he continued to be in the Centre's good books, serving as DG of Home Guards, Civil Defence & Fire Services. Eventually, he joined the BJP, making his political leanings clear.

But Mishra's story isn't just about his rise, it's also about the hurdles ne faced. His tenure as Odisha's DGP ended abruptly when then-Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik sidelined him. However, he found his way back into the system through key roles in Delhi. He even came close to bagging one of the country's most coveted jobs—CBI Director. Insiders believe he was the Modi government's top pick to replace Ranjit Sinha, but just as his name was gaining traction, an old foe resurfaced: Odisha's vigilance department.

In 2014, when Mishra's name was in contention for the CBI top post, the Odisha government slapped a vigilance case on him, alleging financial irregularities from his tenure as CMD of the State Police Housing and Welfare Corporation. Coincidence? Hardly. Many saw it as a strategic move by the Patnaik government to block his appointment. The

Orissa High Court later threw out the case in 2015, calling out the state government for targeting him.

Now, a decade later, Mishra's political innings seem to be taking off in earnest. His appointment as CM's advisor



This time, he's not just the cop who took on the system—he's part of it.

Who's really in charge? When babus hold the reins

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's recent admission raises an age-old question: Who really calls the shots in India's governance—the elected government or the bureaucratic machinery? When she revealed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was keen on tax relief but bureaucratic processes slowed things down, it sounded less like a simple statement and more like an unintentional reality check.

Her exact words? "The PM was very clear that he wants to do something... So, the more work that was needed, was needed for convincing the board..." Translation: The political leadership may have grand ideas, but the babus decide when—or if—those ideas see the light of day.

Now, is this a helpless acknowledgement that babus continue to wield power across political dispensations? Or was this a veiled compliment to the bureaucracy for its due diligence—ensuring that nothing moves without being thoroughly scrutinized? Either way, the message is clear: No matter who's in power, the system works at its own pace.

For taxpayers hoping for quicker relief, this is a classic case of "the spirit is willing, but the file is stuck in processing." This also highlights an uncomfortable reality—politicians can set the vision, but it's the bureaucrats who decide how fast (or slow) things move.

So, the next time a policy change feels like it's taking forever, don't just look at the political leadership—follow the paper trail. You'll likely find it gathering dust on some babu's desk.

Himachal's bold move

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has stirred the pot with his decision to halt the induction of new IAS and IPS officers into the state cadre. His logic? With a population of 70 lakh, the existing 153 IAS officers should be more than enough. He's also eyeing a reduction in Indian Forest Service (IFS) officers. Sounds like a masterstroke. Well, not everyone is convinced.

Opposition leader Jai Ram Thakur has already taken a swing, calling it a governance failure in the making. The argument against Sukhu's move is straightforward, fewer officers means an increased workload, slower decision-making, and potential administrative chaos. The bureaucracy, after all, is the backbone of governance, and trimming it down could create more bottlenecks than efficiencies.

But Sukhu isn't just playing the numbers game. His move is part of a larger effort to cut costs and streamline administration. Reducing unnecessary government spending is a politically smart (and economically prudent) decision in an era where state finances are stretched thin. Instead of endlessly expanding the bureaucratic machinery, the government is signaling a shift towards efficiency over size.

The real question is: Will this actually lead to better governance, or will it backfire by overloading the existing cadre? India's babus aren't exactly known for their lightning-fast efficiency—so placing more responsibilities on fewer officers could just create another layer of delays. On the flip side, if done right, a leaner, more accountable bureaucracy could be a game-changer.

For now, Sukhu's move has set the stage for a high-stakes experiment. Will it deliver smarter governance or leave the state gasping for administrative support? Himachal Pradesh is about to find out.

> Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect

WISDOM CORNER

Great things are done by a series of small things brought

As a well-spent day brings happy sleep, so a life well spent

brings happy death. Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an

artist once we grow up.

PABLO PICASSO

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1587: Mary, Queen of Scots, rival of Queen Elizabeth I of England, was beheaded at Fotheringhay Castle, her execution a chilling scene redeemed by the great personal dignity with which she met her fate.
- 1796: Qianlong, the fourth emperor of the Qing dynasty, abdicated and was succeeded by Jiaqing.
- 1943: The Battle of Guadalcanal ended with an Allied victory over Japan.
- 1984: Soviet Premier Yury Andropov died, 15 months after succeeding Leonid Brezhnev, and was replaced by Konstantin Chernenko.
- 1996: German physicist Peter Armbruster and his team of scientists synthesized chemical element 112, a heavy transuranium element that was later named copernicium.

FOCUS ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

INDIA & TRUMPERICA!

immigrants deported to India. They were brought by a military aircraft, perhaps as a symbolic show of power. Part of the Indian media has sharply reacted. The government is mute as it has agreed to take back the illegals. Add to this, Donald Trump's threat to impose tariff. And the phone call last week between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Trump when the latter asked the Indian Prime Minister to buy weapons from America. Again, the media called it bullying. Do these incidents indicate a downslide in India-America relations? A spokesperson for the US

embassy declined to share details of the flight and said: "The United States is vigorously enforcing its border, tightening immigration laws, and removing illegal migrants. These actions send a clear message: Illegal migration is not worth the risk." It is said that the Pentagon has provided flights to deport over 5,000 immigrants held by the US authorities at El Paso in Texas and San Diego in California and military aircraft have flown migrants to Guatemala, Peru, and Honduras so far.

Recall, the US deported over 1,100 illegal migrants from India between October 2023 and September 2024. The last publicly acknowledged US flight that brought back Indians was on October 22, when about 100 illegal migrants were repatriated to India on a charter flight. And there has been a "steady increase" in deportations of illegal Indian migrants from the US in recent years, the official said during a virtual briefing last year.

Last month, External Affairs Ministry spokesperson



The US deported over 1,100 illegal migrants from India between October 2023 and September 2024. The last publicly acknowledged US flight that brought back **Indians was October 22, when about 100 people** were repatriated to India on a charter flight

Randhir Jaiswal told a media that New Delhi is opposed to illegal immigration because of its links to several forms of organised crime, and it shall take back all Indians who have either overstayed in the US or are there without documentation. He, however, said India will accept such migrants only after verifying their nationality.

Arguably, the above developments are part of Donald Trump's election promises to defend American interests first in order 'Make America Great Again' (MAGA). From the Indian point of view, I have argued against illegal immigrants. Why should New Delhi defend those who migrate illegally by crossing the porous American-Mexican borders riding on donkeys etc?

Second, imposing tariffs is Trump's trump card in his foreign policy. It is a matter of negotiation and possible retribution by the trading countries. Third, Trump would try to trade in armament which is the main source of foreign exchange for America and other Western countries. Sadly, New Delhi is following suit by deepening the arms production and expanding its defence sales. The question to investigate

is if India and American relations are going down the hill? Not really. Let us point to some key parameters that will demonstrate how the relations are experiencing a ratchet growth. If they are slowing down or reversing, it is due to India's equivocation and its obsession with strategic autonomy, non-alignment and multi-alignment instead of concrete and solid security partnerships lack of which risk India's security and imposes heavy burden on its resources in building deterrence etc.

In fact, India-American relations have witnessed significant developments since Donald Trump became the President of the United States on January 21, 2025. Despite initial concerns about potential friction, the relationship between the two nations has remained strong, with both countries continuing to engage in dialogue and cooperation on various fronts.

One of the key areas of focus for India-American relations

ties. Trump's administration has been pushing for greater trade liberalization and reduction of trade deficits. India. on the other hand, has been seeking greater market access for its goods and services. Despite these differences, both countries have been engaged in negotiations to strengthen their trade relationship. The tariff threat will gradually disappear as Trump reviews the global security scenario and its implications for American trade and economy.

Defence pacts have been another significant area of collaboration between India and the US. The two countries have been engaged in discussions to enhance their defence partnership, including the sale of advanced military equipment to India. Trump administration has also been supportive of India's membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

Notwithstanding the positive developments in India-American relations, there are challenges that need to be addressed. One of the key challenges has been the issue of trade deficits, with the US seeking greater market access for its goods and services. Another challenge has been the issue of immigration, with the US seeking to restrict the flow of immigrants from India.

Despite these challenges, the India-US relationship remains strong, with both countries committed to strengthening their partnership. As the relationship moves forward, it will be important for both countries to address their differences and find common ground on key issue, and in mutual interest.

> The writer is a professor in NIIS Group of Institutions, Odisha INFA

ODISHA

Building climate-resilient agri-food systems



DESPITE THE

DEVELOPMENTS

POSITIVE

IN INDIA-

AMERICAN

THERE ARE

RELATIONS,

CHALLENGES

THAT NEED TO

BE ADDRESSED

Ranjitha Puskur

WOMEN'S TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND CAREGIVING **ROLES, COMBINED WITH YOUTH** CREATIVITY, **FORM A POWERFUL FORCE FOR RESILIENCE**

TO THE EDITOR

are most welcome to contribute letters

requested to send their contact

address/email ID. They may also send in

their valuable comments, opinion and

suggestions, preferably by email, to:

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Readers of Orissa Post

(100 words), articles and

words). Contributors are

numbers and full postal

columns (between 600-1000

crossroads of climate adversity, where rising seas, erratic monsoons, and frequent cyclones test its resilience. Yet, in these challenges lies an opportunity to build a future of adaptation, innovation, and sustainable growth for the people of Odisha.

The state has experienced 15 major cyclones in the past 30 years, and sea levels are projected to rise by 0.3-0.5 meters by 2050. Over 50% of Odisha's coastline is prone to erosion. Rainfall patterns are erratic, with concentrated monsoon activity increasing flood risks. The average temperature has risen by 0.8°C in the past 50 years, resulting in 30 heat-wave days annually between 2011 and 2020, with summer peaks exceeding 45°C.

Agriculture, Odisha's economic backbone, suffers from these climate challenges. Erratic rainfall and delayed monsoons in 2019 caused a 50% loss in paddy crops. Floods regularly damage kharif crops, while droughts affected 26 out of 30 districts in 2017, reducing agricultural production by 15%. Heat stress degrades soil health, reduces productivity, and affects food safety, while also increasing pest infestations and post-harvest losses.

The impacts of climate change are unevenly distributed. Women, a significant part of Odisha's agricultural workforce, face heightened vulnerability due to systemic inequities in access to resources, decision-making, and adaptive capacity. Their limited access to land, irrigation, credit, and training exacerbates their risks. Time poverty further restricts their ability to adopt sustainable practices, often forcing them into maladaptive techniques that harm natural resources.

Addressing these disparities is essential to building resilient agri-food systems. Solutions must consider the complex interplay of ethnicity, religion, class, and age that shapes women's challenges. Targeted approaches are needed to improve their adaptive capacity and ensure equitable resilience.

Here's are a few policy priorities for resilient food systems in the state

Prioritizing Vulnerable Groups: Focus on smallholder farmers, women, tribal communities, migrant households, tenant farmers, and those in disaster-prone regions. Direct financial aid and tailored support mechanisms are essential to fostering resilience.

Inclusive, Data-Driven **Policy Design:** One size does not fit all! Policies must be intentional, addressing the unique needs of women and marginalized groups. Align climate action with development goals like gender equality and poverty alleviation. Employ

data-driven approaches and blended finance models to bridge gaps. Ensure women's voices are represented in policy design and improve capacity for disaggregated data collection and analysis at all levels.

Comprehensive, customised solutions: Combine technological advances with traditional knowledge in culturally sensitive ways. Integrate social, technical, and institutional innovations to create dynamic, adaptable solutions. Build institutional capacities for continuous feedback, learning, and solution reconfiguration.

Gender-responsive extension services: Odisha has a unique opportunity to develop a gender-responsive state agricultural extension policy. Address digital literacy gaps, make climate advisories accessible to low-tech users, and promote sustainable practices. Include measures to reduce women's care burdens and time poverty in extension programs.

Strengthening infrastructure for value addition and storage: Invest in cold chains, processing facilities, and storage infrastructure to reduce post-harvest losses, stabilize incomes, and enhance food security.

Inclusive farmer producer organizations (FPOs): Strengthen facilitating organizations to make FPOs inclusive and effective. Promote leadership roles for women and marginalized groups to enable transformative efforts in food systems.

Private sector engagement: Encourage the private sector to develop climate-resilient products and services tailored to marginalized communities. Advocate for inclusive employment practices and capacity-building initiatives.

Youth engagement: Integrate climate action into education and create opportunities for youth innovation in agriculture. Harness the creativity and energy of young people to develop resilient agricultural systems.

The path forward: Focusing on women and youth is both a moral imperative and a practical necessity for building climate-resilient agri-food systems. Women's traditional knowledge and caregiving roles, combined with youth creativity, form a powerful force for resilience. Empowering these groups ensures a sustainable, equitable, and productive agricultural future for Odisha.

By aligning policies and programs with these priorities, Odisha can transition from a state grappling with climate adversity to a model of inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformation.

The writer is Principal Scientist - Gender and Livelihoods, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)

Vegetarian diet

Sir, A vegetarian diet outweighs a non-vegetarian diet in many ways. Firstly, a vegetarian diet is produced in a non-violent manner. It is non-polluted, uncontaminated, wholesome, nutritious, balanced, and complete. It is a myth that a non-vegetarian diet provides more strength and nourishment than a vegetarian diet. By consuming meat, one is ingesting dead food. Killing other animals to satiate our appetite is certainly not a good practice. Milk, whole grains, wheat, rajma, soya products, almonds, nuts, and fruits are more protein-rich and life-giving than meat, fish, eggs, and other non-veg products. Our sages and saints do not consume non-veg products. They are in a better state than non-vegans, both physically and spiritually. Our scriptures do not permit the killing of other creatures for our nourishment. What one eats is a personal choice. No one should force or influence others to change their diet. However, the merits of a vegetarian diet cannot be overemphasized. The outstanding merits of vegetarianism have stood the test of time

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Blueprint for ethnic cleansing

Sir, US President Donald Trump's proposal to forcibly relocate 2.3 million Palestinians from Gaza is not a peace plan—it is a call for ethnic cleansing. By suggesting the mass expulsion of Palestinians to neighboring Arab countries and redeveloping Gaza into a luxury destination, Trump is disregarding history, human rights, and regional stability. Palestinians are not stateless wanderers but a people with deep historical and national ties to their land. Forcibly removing them again would be an unprecedented violation of their rights. Trump's plan has been rejected outright by Arab nations, even those allied with the US. The broader Arab public also overwhelmingly supports Palestinian self-determination, making this plan politically and diplomatically untenable. This proposal aligns with the Israeli far-right's goal of permanently reshaping Gaza by resettling it with Jewish settlers. It would inflame tensions, deepen Palestinian resentment, and ensure endless conflict rather than peace. Instead of pushing a colonial-style displacement, the US should focus on securing an immediate ceasefire and a two-state solution that respects Palestinian sovereignty. Anything less is an endorsement of war crimes and long-term instability in the region. *Gopalaswamy J*, CHENNAI



MP's strategic

push for startups

The state government introduced the 'MP Startup

Policy and Implementation Scheme 2022' that offers

startups a financial support of up to 18 per cent of their

total funding or investment, subject to a cap of

Rs 18 lakh, according to the policy document

TWO STATES





MYSTERIOUS ILLNESS IN RAJOURI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Feb 7: Thirty-eight patients, who were admitted to different hospitals after falling ill due to a mysterious illness at Badhaal village in J&K's Rajouri district, have been discharged after complete recovery, officials said.

Currently, 363 individuals from 60 families remain quarantined in various facilities across Rajouri, they informed a meeting of health sonnel chaired by Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo Thursday. The mysterious illness has claimed 17 lives from three families in Badhaal between

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Feb 7: Madhya

Pradesh is offering finan-

cial assistance as well as a

comprehensive framework to

foster a robust startup ecosys-

tem that could incubate innova-

tions and create employment.

introduced the 'MP Startup Pol-

icy and Implementation Scheme

2022' that offers startups a fi-

nancial support of up to 18 per

cent of their total funding or

investment, subject to a cap of

Rs 18 lakh, according to the pol-

This assistance is provided

separately for each investment

stage, with a maximum of four

stages during the startup's life-

comprehensive framework for

the establishment and growth

of startups, including finan-

cial incentives, infrastructure

support, and capacity-building

Madhya Pradesh, often re-

ferred to as the heart of India.

is brimming with natural re-

sources and boasts over 300

industrial parks. With a pop-

ulation exceeding 8 crore, the

state is home to a thriving tal-

ent pool, with fresh graduates

emerging annually from more

than 1,287 industrial training

institutes, 1,373 government

and private colleges, and sev-

eral top-tier universities, in-

cluding IIT and IIM in Indore.

fostering entrepreneurship is

rag Jain, expressing concern

over the survey of Waqf Board

properties in Madhya Pradesh.

MLA said that the rules being

followed for the Waqf Board

properties could lead to a fu-

ture dispute, claiming that

documents of most of the prop-

erties are incomplete. He also

accused the state government

of presenting "incorrect" data

In his letter, the Congress

The state's commitment to

icy document.

state

Abid Rashid Shah briefed the meeting, stating that every measure has been taken to isolate the affected families and provide them with food and water after testing. "Out of the 55 symptomatic persons, 38 have been discharged after recovery, while 17 deaths have been registered so far," Shah said.

There are currently no new admissions in hospitals, and the existing patients have been examined by teams of doctors from PGIMER, Chandigarh, and AIIMS, New Delhi, he said. Health teams remain stationed in the village to monitor any new symptoms among the residents, who have all been screened by the healthcare

evident in its strategic policies,

which have led to the establish-

ment of over 4,900 recognised

startups. With industrial parks

dedicated to various sectors

such as IT, semiconductors,

textiles, automotive, and solar,

Madhya Pradesh offers an ideal

environment for new business-

es to thrive. During a recent

visit to Japan, Chief Minister

Mohan Yadav reiterated the

state's dedication to supporting

investors, emphasising stable

policy frameworks to back their

investments. Currently, the

state has a land bank of over

1 lakh acres available for indus-

entrepreneurship, and job cre-

ation, the Madhya Pradesh government has introduced a

new policy that supports start-

ups with capital assistance. The state is also actively promoting

the spirit of entrepreneurship

among school and college students. Madhya Pradesh aims to

achieve 100 per cent growth in

startup registrations under the

Startup India initiative, as well

as a 200 per cent growth in start-

ups within the agriculture and

food sectors. The state currently

houses 72 incubators and has set

a target to increase the number

The state government is mak-

ing special efforts to inculcate

the spirit of innovation and

startup among the students en-

rolled in schools and colleges.

Madhya Pradesh at present has

72 state-wide incubators.

of product-based startups

In its pursuit of innovation,

trial development.



providers, Shah added. Divisional Commissioner (Jammu) Ramesh Kumar said that no food or eatables were being exchanged among the families,

who have been placed under continuous surveillance.

"At present, 363 individuals from $\bar{60}$ different families have been quarantined, with 592 ani-

38 patients discharged after complete recovery

mals being tended to by the offi cials from the animal and sheep husbandry department to safe guard their health," he said. Assessing the efforts to safeguard lives and identify the cause of deaths, Dulloo emphasised the need for continued vigilance and instructed the sampling of locally used fertilisers, pesticides, and insecticides to determine the root cause.

He also called for enhancing local hospital facilities to handle similar situations in the future, including additional ICU beds, oxygen plants, isolation wards, and availability of specific drugs and specialists. The chief secretary urged AIIMS Delhi to support the local medical staff in capacity building and suggested sending doctors for specialised training and roping in experts to assist in building hospital capacity in the Union Territory.

Simultaneously, Dulloo directed the law enforcement agencies to expedite investigations based on the test reports received, and those awaited from different institutions. Officials said that to ensure the safety of the remaining households in Badhaal, the village has been divided into 14 clusters which are being monitored by multi-department teams.

All shops and establishments in the village continue to remain sealed, while ration distribution is being strictly supervised, they said.

MP to get new tiger reserve soon: CM



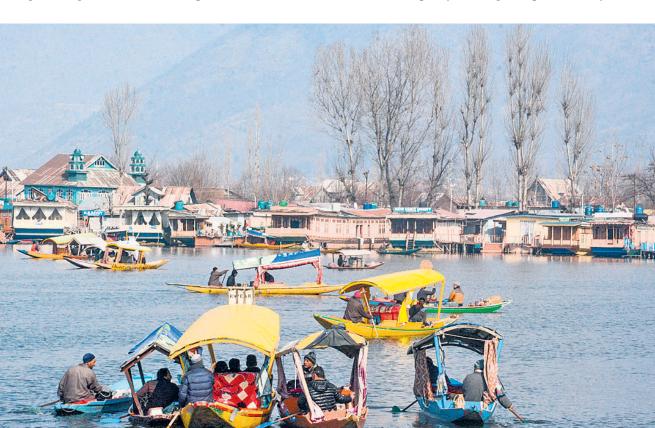
Bhopal, Feb 7: Madhav Na tional Park (MNP) in Shivpur district will soon become the ninth tiger reserve of Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Mohan Yaday said Thursday.

He made the announcement in a video message released to the media. The National Ti ger Conservation Authority's (NTCA) December 1 technical committee approved the pro posal to designate Madhav Na tional Park as a tiger reserve an official said, adding the state government's nod is awaited.

"At present, MNP, spread over an area of 375 square ki lometres, has three tigers. Two cubs have also been spotted Moreover, two tigers will be brought to MNP in March," its director Uttam Sharma said.

More than 1200 square kilo metres of forest area will be added to the park in order to turn into a reserve, he added 'MP has eight tiger reserves which is the highest for any state in the country," wildlife expert Ajay Dube told PTI.

The eight are Kanha, Satpu ra, Bandhavgarh, Pench, San jay Dubri, Panna, Veerangana Durgayati and Ratapani. In the first week of December, the Mad hya Pradesh government noti fied Ratapani forest in Raiser district as the eighth tiger eight reserve. As per the 'Status of Tigers: Co-predators & Prey in India-2022' report released by NTCA and Wildlife Institute of India, the tiger population in Madhya Pradesh is estimated to be 785, the highest in the country, followed by Karnataka at 563 and Uttarakhand at 560



Tourists take 'shikara' rides at the Dal Lake on a sunny winter afternoon in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir

'Ensure priority, protocol to MLAs' Sena (UBT) holds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Feb 7: The Jammu and Kashmir government Friday issued a directive to its employees, directing them to ensure that all elected representatives are attended to on priority in public offices and that proper protocol as per established government norms and guidelines is maintained.

The directive also emphasised that MLAs should be invited to all official functions and meetings organised within their jurisdiction.

"The elected Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir are expected to play a crucial role in the governance process at the grassroots level. It is, therefore, imperative that all government departments, officers and officials extend due cooperation and accord priority to issues highlighted and flagged by these public representatives," stated a circular issued by General Administra-



The directive also emphasised that MLAs should be invited to all official functions and meetings organised within their jurisdiction

ments of the Union Territory must attend to the elected representatives on priority in public offices and adhere to proper protocol as per established government norms and guidelines.

"Communications, requests and grievances raised by elected representatives shall be acknowledged and processed on priority and government officers and officials shall engage with them in a professional and respectful manner," the circular said. It also specified that elected representatives should

be invited to all official functions and meetings organized in their jurisdiction, including events involving official visits by dignitaries

'These instructions are issued for immediate and strict compliance," the circular added. This directive is particularly significant given the dual power structure in Jammu and Kashmir.

The circular has been issued ahead of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly's Budget Session, which is set to begin March 3.

protest in Jammu

Carrying placards bearing slogans like "Send Back Sheikh Hasina, Seema Haider" and "Deport illegal Rohingyas, Bangladeshis", activists raised slogans seeking the removal of all illegal Bangladeshis & Rohingya immigrants from India, including Sheikh Hasina

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, Feb 7: The Shiv Sena held a protest demonstration here Friday, asking the Centre to draw inspiration from the US and deport illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingva immigrants from the country with a particular focus on Jammu and Kashmir.

Scores of activists in the city participated in the demonstration led by Shiv Sena (UBT) J&K unit chief Manish Sahni.

Carrying placards bearing slogans like "Send Back Sheikh Hasina, Seema Haider" and "Deport illegal Rohingyas, Bangladeshis", they raised slogans seeking the removal of all illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingya immigrants from India, including Sheikh Hasina.

'The government of India should take a cue from the Donald Trump administration and promptly deport all illegal Bangladeshis and Rohingyas immigrants, including Pakistani woman Seema Haider

and former Bangladeshi president Sheikh Hasina," Sahni told Sahni highlighted ongo-

ing attacks on Hindus in Bangladesh, citing a recent incident during a live speech by former president Sheikh Hasina in Fudki village, Ra jshahi district. "The idol of Saraswati Devi in the temple was desecrated. Attacks on Hindus have persisted un abated since the change in leadership. We must expel all Bangladeshis from the country," he asserted.

Sahni criticised the BJP's stance on Rohingya immigrants and illegal Bangladesh is as mere election rhetoric. "Despite tensions with Bangladesh, approximately 856 kilometres of the Indo-Bangla desh border remain unfenced Nothing has been done to de port them," he said. Referring to the 2007 data indicating 1.2 crore illegal Bangladeshis in India. Sahni said todav's esti mates exceed two crore.

"While India shelters Sheikh Hasina, the Hindu community bears the brunt. Meanwhile, Pa kistani woman Seema Haider who illegally entered India with her four children two years ago, is expecting her fifth child today. In contrast, America is deporting Indians in chains, Sahni added.

He also highlighted the pres ence of Rohingya immigrants in sensitive areas of J&K, sug gesting their numbers exceed official figures.

CRPF chief reviews J&K security situation

RAJOURI/JAMMU: CRPF Director General GP Singh reviewed the security situation and the force's operational preparedness during a recent two-day visit to the forward areas in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said Friday. Singh also met Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Thursday and briefed him about the force's preparedness for counter-terrorism operations and managing law-and-order situations. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) chief visited the Kalakote, Kopratop, and the Thanamandi camps in the border district during his two-day visit, the officials said. He reviewed the overall security situation, apart from the troops' operational preparedness, they added. Singh interacted with personnel at the new Kopra Counter Insurgency camp, established under the CRPF's 237 Battalion, in Kopratop -- a site that witnessed significant terror activity during the past four years. He also engaged with officers and jawans, listening to their operational experiences.

tion Department (GAD) secretary M Raju Friday. He further directed that all officers and officials working in various government depart-Row over Waqf Board properties survey in MP

INDO-ASIAN NEW SERVICE in the name of the survey.

"Documents of various prop-Bhopal, Feb 7: A controversy erties of Waqf Board are incomhas erupted over the survey of plete, therefore, conducting a Wagf Board properties here in survey of such properties won't Madhya Pradesh after Congress be easy. This could lead to a ma-MLA Arif Masood demanded jor dispute on such properties. that the ongoing physical sur-I have written a letter to the Chief Secretary of the Madhya vey be stopped. Masood, who is an MLA from Pradesh government and has demanded that the ongoing sur-Bhopal Madhya Assembly seat, has written letters to Madhya vey should be stopped," Masood Pradesh Chief Secretary Anutold IANS

Meanwhile, the Congress MLA has also appealed to the representatives of Muslim organisations to come forward to oppose the survey of Waqf Board properties and register their complaints with district administrations.

Responding to Masood's allegation, senior BJP leader and Madhya Pradesh Public Works Department (PWD)

Minister, Rakesh Singh, said the survey is being conducted on the recommendation of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) and there should be no objection to it.

"Some people are in politics to create controversies only. They don't want to get things settled. This step (survey) has been taken to make properties encroached-free and stop corruption in Waqf Boards. Some

selective people are opposing it for their vested interest, otherwise majority of people of the minority community have welcomed the survey," he added.

M. P. WAQF BOARD

Notably, the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), has recently demanded details of Waqf Board properties in Madhya Pradesh.

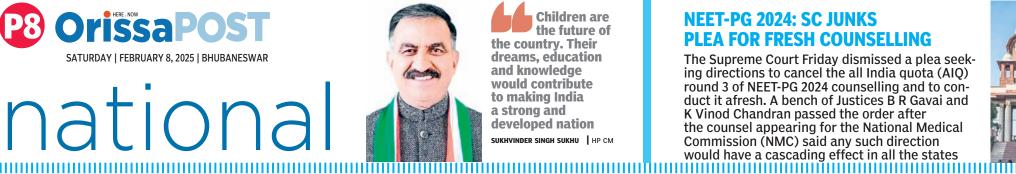
There are 14,986 properties of the Waqf Board and the JPC has demanded details, including current status, khashra numbers, and other records. State governments have also

been asked to share details of cases where their authorities are engaged in a legal dispute with Waqf boards over ownership or possession of any property.

Madhya Pradesh Waqf Board Chairman Sanwar Patel has earlier said that JPC has demanded information on 15 heads and 12 out of them are related directly to the Waqf Board and the rest of the heads are related to the Collector and the Revenue Department.

According to sources, the Madhya Pradesh government had informed the JPC that the State Waqf Board oversees 14,921 registered properties spanning 52,752 acres, as documented in official records.

national



Children are the future of the country. Their dreams, education and knowledge would contribute to making India a strong and developed nation

UKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU HP CM

NEET-PG 2024: SC JUNKS PLEA FOR FRESH COUNSELLING

The Supreme Court Friday dismissed a plea seeking directions to cancel the all India quota (AIQ) round 3 of NEET-PG 2024 counselling and to conduct it afresh. A bench of Justices B R Gavai and K Vinod Chandran passed the order after the counsel appearing for the National Medical Commission (NMC) said any such direction would have a cascading effect in all the states





The BJP is ing PDA (Pichre, Dalit and Alpashankhak) people from holding positions like

CO (Circle Officer) and SO (Station Officer). In the 2027 assembly elections, the PDA will unite to oust the BJP from power

AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF

Rahul Gandh is doing cover firing after sensing huge defeat for the



DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA CM

A major hreakthrough in Mumbai with the seizure of very high-grade cocaine, ganja, and cannabis gummies and the arrest of four people



AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

SHORT **TAKES**

6 killed in road accident in MP

Mhow (MP): Six persons, among them two women, were killed and 16 sustained injuries in an accident involving a two-wheeler a private minibus and a trailer truck in Madhya Pradesh's Indore district Friday morning, police said. The accident occurred in the Manpur area of Mhow tehsil when a motorcycle and a minibus rammed into a traile truck negotiating a slope, an official said. Two men on the motorcycle and as many women on the minibus died on the spot, while two others succumbed to their injuries at the government-run Maharaja Yeshwantrao Hospital, Additional Superintendent of Police (Indore Rural) Rupesh Dwivedi told PTI.

BSF arrests 7 infiltrators

Kolkata: The BSF has annrehended seven Bangladeshi infiltrators and three Indian touts in a major operation along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal's Nadia and Murshidahad districts. officials said Friday. The operation, carried out by the BSF, began at around 5 am February 6 when a patrol team spotted seven infiltrators attempting to cross the border from India to Bangladesh, they said. While two infiltrators were arrested immediately, five others managed to retreat into Indian territory. Following this, a comprehensive search operation was launched based on critical intelligence, leading to the arrest of three Indian touts allegedly facilitating the illegal border crossings.

NEET-UG to be conducted May 4

New Delhi: The medical entrance exam NEET-UG will be conducted May 4, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced Friday. The application process for the the National Eligibilitycum-Entrance Test (NEET)-UG began Friday and will conclude March 7. It is the largest entrance exam in the country in terms of the number of candidates appearing for the test. In 2024, a record more than 24 lakh candidates took the exam.

3 killed after

car hits bike Jaipur: Three people were killed when a car hit their bike in Raiasthan's Bikaner district, police said Friday. The accident took place late Thursday night when two men had gone to buy goods in Deli Talai, said Assistant Sub-Inspector, Pugal Police Station, Babu Lal.

DELHI POLL RESULTS TODAY

AAP, BJP in intense battle for glory



On the eve of the poll results, high political drama unfolded outside *Kejriwal's residence*

as a team of Anti-Corruption Branch reached there, seeking details and evidence regarding his allegations that BIP attempted to poach AAP candidates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: Counting of votes for the Delhi Assembly polls will take place Saturday to decide whether the AAP comes to power for a fourth term or the BJP forms a government in the national capital after more than 26 years.

The Congress is also looking for some gains after drawing a blank in the last two elections. On the eve of the poll results, high political drama unfolded outside AAP chief Arvind Keiriwal's residence as a team of Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB)

reached there, seeking details and evidence regarding his allegations that the BJP attempted to poach the Aam Aadmi Party candidates.

As Kejriwal did not meet ACB officials at his 5, Ferozeshah Road bungalow, they served him a legal notice seeking proof. The move comes soon after Lt Governor VK Saxena ordered an ACB probe into the matter. The counting process for the high-stakes Delhi Assembly polls will begin at 8 am in 19 counting stations, spreading across 11 districts of the city.

Several exit polls have given the BJP an edge over the AAP, which has been ruling in Delhi since 2015. Shahdara, Central Delhi, East, South, and Southwest districts will each have one counting station. The North, West, Northeast, and Southeast districts will each have two counting stations, while the New Delhi and Northwest districts will have three counting stations each.

According to the Election Commission, 60.54 per cent votes were polled Wednesday. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva has claimed his party will win nearly 50 seats. The AAP has rejected the exit poll predictions, asserting it will form the government again with its convener Kejriwal becoming Chief Minister for the

Delhi's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Alice Vaz said a total of 5,000 personnel, including counting supervisors, counting assistants, micro-observers and supporting staff trained for the process, will be deployed Saturday for the counting of votes. In view of the fairness of the counting process, a random selection of five VVPATs (voter verifiable paper audit trails) will be done in each Assembly constituency.

A three-tier security arrangement with 10,000 police personnel, including two paramilitary companies at each centre, has been put in place for the 19 counting centres. "We have made robust security arrangements (for counting day). Only authorised personnel will be allowed inside the counting centres, where the use of mobile phones will be strictly prohibited," Special Commissioner of Police Devesh Chandra Srivastava told a press conference on securing arrangements for the counting day.

In a snowballing controversy, Lt Governor VK Saxena Friday ordered an anti corruption branch (ACB) probe into allegations by AAP leaders that the BJP had attempted to poach its candidates by offering them ₹15 crore and ministerial berth.

The AAP leaders have accused the BJP of trying to create an illusion in their favour based on exit poll predictions, but trying to poach AAP's candidates with chanc-



A 'sadhu' during the ongoing MahaKumbh Mela 2025, in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

1984 ANTI-SIKH RIOTS

Court defers verdict against Sajjan Kumar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: A Delhi court Friday deferred to February 12 its verdict 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 Friday, deferred the pronouncement. The court in January adjourned the pronouncement after the prosecution sought time to advance further arguments on certain points. The case relates to the killing of two persons in Delhi's Saraswati Vihar during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots

The court reserved the judgment after hearing the final arguments in the case related to the killings of Jaswant Singh and his son Tarundeep Singh November 1, 1984.

Patanjali expands in YEIDA region

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Feb 7: Patanjali Group is rapidly expanding its industrial operations in the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) region.

As part of this initiative, Acharya Balkrishna, Man aging Director of Patanjali Ayurved Limited, visited Plot No. 1A, Sector 24A, YEIDA. He discussed the upcoming Patanjali Food and Herbal Park, which aims to bring large-scale investments and create new job opportunities. Acharya Balkrishna shared that the industrial park will be developed with an investment of ₹1,600 crore.

This will give a new push to the local economy. He emphasised that the project supports Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' initiative and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's 'Invest



UP' mission. Once fully operational, the park is expected to create over 3,000 jobs, benefiting the local community.

Patanjali Group is already developing an industrial park that provides space for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through sub-leasing. The new Food and Herbal Park will further strengthen this ef-

finance, technology and capaci-

ty-building support to develop-

ing and low-income economies

to help them cope with a warm-

ing world.

fort. It will support the FMCG, Ayurveda, dairy, and herbal industries, promoting local industrial growth. After visiting the industrial park, Acharya Balkrishna met with YEIDA CEO Arunveer Singh and senior officials. They discussed plans for industrial development in the region.

CEO Arunveer Singh ex-

pressed his commitment to supporting industrial projects, improving infrastructure, and attracting investments. He assured that all projects would be closely monitored to ensure balanced and inclusive growth. The goal is to maximize benefits for local busi-

nesses and industries. This project will strengthen YEIDA's position as a major industrial hub in North India. It will attract new investments, support local entrepreneurs, and contribute to Uttar

Pradesh's industrial progress. The visit highlighted a shared vision for YEIDA's future. The goal is to develop a high-growth industrial corridor, build world-class facilities, and create new business opportunities. The region is on its way to becoming a preferred destination for manufacturing and industrial companies, paying the way for a self-reliant and prosperous future.

Cabinet approves ₹8,800cr to Skill **India Programme**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: The Union Cabinet Friday approved the continuation and restructuring of central sector scheme 'Skill India Programme' till 2026 with an overlay outlay of ₹8,800 crore.

Giving details, Informa tion and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vi kas Yojana 4.0 (PMKVY 4.0) the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS), and the Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) Scheme -- the three key com ponents -- are now combined under the composite Central Sector Scheme of "Skill India

Programme". The allocation towards PMKVY 4.0 is ₹6,000 crore, PM-NAPS ₹1,942 crore and JSS ₹858

India's new climate targets to reflect limited resources

Countries are required to submit their next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), or climate plans, for the 2031-2035 period this year. With many countries, including India, expected to miss the February 10 deadline, UN climate chief Simon Stiell Thursday urged them to submit their plans by

September at the latest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: India is likely to submit its next round of climate targets closer to the UN climate conference in Brazil and these will be based on the limited resources available to the country, sources have said.

Countries are required to submit their next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), or climate plans, for the 2031-2035 period this year. With many countries, including India, expected to miss the February 10 deadline. UN climate chief Simon Stiell Thursday urged them to submit

their plans by September at

An official source told PTI that India has not yet finalised

its new NDCs "India's new NDCs will have targets achievable with the means available.

"Mitigating climate change requires financial and technological support, along with other enablers. Developed countries are unwilling to provide this support. Why should countries that did not cause climate change continue to suffer," the source asked.

The collective aim of these climate plans is to limit global



temperature rise since the start of the industrial revolution to 1.5 degrees Celsius, the key goal of the 2015 Paris Agreement. According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), adopted in 1992, high-income annually by 2020. industrialised nations, which However, this target was onhave historically been responsible for most of the greenhouse gas emissions driving climate change, are required to provide

These countries include the US, the UK, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and European Union member states such as Germany and France In 2009, developed nations pledged to provide \$100 billion

ly met in 2020, with about 70 per cent of the funds given as loans. In 2009, they pledged to provide \$100 billion per year by 2020.

However, this pledge was only met in 2020, with around 70 per cent of the funds coming in the form of loans. Developed countries were required

to deliver a new and ambitious financial package to support climate action in the developing world at the UN climate conference in Azerbaijan last year.

However, they offered a paltry \$300 billion by 2035, a mere fraction of at least \$1.3 trillion needed annually from 2025. India had called the sum "too little, too distant", "paltry" and 'an optical illusion"

The government's Economic Survey 2024-25 tabled in Parliament in January said the lack of funding from developed countries to mitigate climate change in the Global South may prompt developing countries to "rework" their climate targets

India's Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said that domestic resources will be the key to climate action amid the lack of support from developed countries.

The government informed Parliament Thursday that India has so far received \$1.16

billion for climate projects through the financial mechanism of the United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change (UNFCCC). This amount includes \$803.9 million from the Green Cli mate Fund, \$ 346.52 million from the Global Environment Facility (for climate change focal area), and \$16.86 million from the Adaptation Fund according to a written reply in the Rajya Sabha by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yaday.

However, the majority of India's climate actions have been financed through domestic resources, he said.

According to an analysis, conducted by the UK-based think tank ODI and the Zurich Climate Resilience Alliance last year, India contributed \$ 1.28 billion in climate finance through multilateral develop ment banks in 2022 alone, surpassing the contributions of many developed countries.

national



I held pre-budget consultations with various stakeholders from industry, tourism, and education, ensuring their concerns shape our **budget and policies** omar abdullah | J&K cm

ADANI'S SON MARRIES IN INTIMATE CEREMONY

Billionaire Gautam Adani's younger son Jeet Friday married fiance Diva Shah at a small and intimate, traditional ceremony with a close group of friends and family in attendance





Just as the Opposition could not believe that its de feat was genuine, the BJP did not find its own victory



SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF



39 lakh voters are equivalent to the entire voter population of Himachal Pradesh, added in a remarkably short period

RAHUL GANDHI CONGRESS LEADER









Maharashtra total voters as per EC 2019 loksabha: 8.86.76.946 2019 Assembly: 8.98.38.267

2024 loksabha: 9.30.61.760 2024 Assembly: 9,70,25,119 44 lakh voters added in 5 years 40 lakh voters added in 5 months Agree or Die, Maharashtra Election was rigged.

@mohitlaws

SHORT **TAKES**

Cabinet clears new I-T Bill

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet Friday approved the new income tax Bill, which will replace the six decades old I-T Act, sources said. The new Bill seeks to make direct tax law simple to understand and not to impose any new tax burden. It will not have provisos and The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the New Income Tax Bill, sources said. Sources said the new income tax Bill will now be introduced in the Parliament next week and would be sent to Parliament's Standing Committee on Finance.

Mumbai reports first case of GBS

Mumbai: Mumbai reported its first case of Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS) Friday after a 64-year-old woman was diagnosed with the rare nerve disorder, civic officials said. GBS is a rare condition in which a person's immune system attacks the peripheral nerves, resulting in muscle weakness, loss of sensation in the legs and or arms, as well as problems swallowing or breathing. Talking to PTI, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) commissioner and its stateappointed administrator Bhushan Gagrani said the patient was

IAF personnel dies in parachute mishap

currently undergoing treatment.

Agra (UP): An Air Force warrant officer lost his life during a parachute training exercise in Agra Friday, police said. Wing Commander Rohit Dahiya and 12 trainee jumpers, including Warrant Officer Manjunath, jumped from an Air Force aircraft at 8:30 am. While 11 jumpers landed safely, Warrant Officer Manjunath's parachute failed to open and he subsequently fell into a wheat field. The fellow air force personnel immediately responded to the incident and rushed him to the Air Force Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.



Oppn seeks govt's intervention Trump next week

New Delhi, Feb 7: Led by the DMK, the Opposition MPs Friday raised the issue of Tamil fisherfolk being arrested and their boats seized by the Sri Lankan Navy, and urged the Union government to find a lasting solution to the vexed

The MPs held a protest in the Parliament complex before the House met Friday and also raised the issue in Lok Sabha later. The protest was joined by parliamentarians from several other Opposition parties, including the Congress and Left MPs from Tamil Nadu. Other leaders who were a part of the protest included Derek O'Brien of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and Sudama Prasad of the CPI(ML) Liberation. The protesting MPs held up

placards with slogans that read 'Justice For Tamil Fisherman" "Bring Back Our Fishermen". "No More Arrests" and "Tamil Nadu Fishermen Are Indians". DMK MP Tiruchi Siva said the matter of Tamil fisherfolk's arrest was a national issue as they were Indians being mistreated by Sri Lanka.

"Many other parties also took part in the protest. It is an issue which should not be restricted to the state. They are Tamil fishermen, they are Indians," Siva told PTI. "Fishermen are being tortured, harassed and killed for years and the government does not take any concrete steps to resolve the issue. Earlier, they (Sri Lankan authorities) used to assault them and take away their catch. Recently, they have started using weapons to shoot



were a part of the

protest included Derek

protest in the Parliament complex before the House met Friday and also raised the issue in Lok Sabha

The protest was joined by parliamentarians from several other Opposition parties, including the Congress and Left MPs from Tamil Nadu

O'Brien of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and Sudama Prasad of the CPI(ML) Liberation

the poor fishermen," the Rajya Sabha member said. He claimed that the fisher-

folk are scared of venturing out to sea, disrupting their livelihood. Siva also said there was a proposal to include these fisherfolk in the Scheduled Tribe category. Congress MP Manickam Tagore also demanded the Centre's intervention in the matter and engagement with the Sri Lankan government.

"We are protesting against the continuing arrests of Tamil fishermen by Sri Lanka..." the Lok Sabha member said. "The government of India

must intervene. It should talk to the Sri Lankan authorities and stop the seizure of boats and other material from the fishermen," he said. DMK MP Kanimozhi said

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar several times on the matter, urging them to find a permanent solution. 'The Sri Lankan Navv has been arresting and harassing Tamil Nadu's fishermen... The Union government has not done anything. We demand that the fishermen be released, the boats returned and a permanent solution found," the Lok Sabha member said.

When Lok Sabha met at 11 am, the DMK members raised slogans demanding a permanent solution. On the Chair's

permission, party MP Kanimozhi said fishermen from the state are being harassed and arrested by the Sri Lankan authorities and more than 97 of them are lodged in jails of the neighbouring country

She claimed that the fishermen are shot at and tortured, and over 210 fishing boats have been seized by Sri Lanka, impacting their livelihood. The Tamil fisherfolk issue has been a bone of contention between India and Sri Lanka for several years.

The island nation's navy has repeatedly been accused of firing at the Indian fisherfolk. who allegedly entered its territorial waters in the Palk Strait, and seizing their boats. Earlier this month, the Sri Lankan authorities arrested 10 Indian fisherfolk and seized their boat for allegedly venturing into its territorial waters. In 2024, the Sri Lankan Navy arrested more than 550 Indian fisherfolk for alleged illegal fishing.

PM Modi to meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pay a two-day working visit to the US from February 12 during which he will meet President Donald Trump, the external affairs ministry Friday announced. Addressing a press con-

ference, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said Modi's visit will give further impetus and direction to India-US bilateral relationship. Prior to his US visit, Modi will be in France from February 10-12 to co-chair the AI Action Summit with French President Emmanuel He will also visit Cada-

rache, the site of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor of which India is a partner, Misri said. "This will be the first visit of Prime Minister Modi to the United States since the inauguration of the second presidential term of US President Donald Trump," he said.

"The fact that the Prime Minister has been invited to visit the US within barely three weeks of the new administration taking office shows the importance of the India-US partnership and is also reflective of the bipartisan support this partnership enjoys in the US," the foreign secretary said. During his visit to France from February 10-12, Modi and Macron will also address the India-France CEOs forum.

The prime minister and Macron will travel to Marseille where they will inaugurate the Consulate General of India. The leaders will also visit the war cemetery and pay



rior to his US visit, Modi will Summit with French President

tribute to the sacrifices made by Indian soldiers in World War 1. Modi and Macron will visit Cadarache, the site of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) Misri said there has been a very close rapport between Trump and Modi, dating back to the US leader's first term.

"There is a clear convergence of interests between the two countries in several areas, including trade, investment, technology, defense co operation, counterterrorism Indo-Pacific security, and people-to-people relations,' he said.

"The 5.4 million-strong Indian community in the US and the more than 350,000 Indian students pursuing higher education in American universities further strengthen this bond," he said.

Bank unions give two-day strike call beginning March 24

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: Bank unions have given a two-day nationwide strike call beginning March 24 to press for their various demands, including a 5-day work week and adequate recruitment in all cadres.

The strike call given by United Forum of Bank Unions (UF BU), an umbrella organisation of 9 bank employees association, is also pitched for filling up the post of workmen/officer directors in public sector banks. After due discussions and deliberations, it has been decided to launch an agitation al programme culminating in two days of continuous strike March 24 and 25, 2025, UFBU said in a statement Friday.

Besides, the UFBU has de manded immediate withdraw al of the recent directives of the Department of Financial Services (DFS) on performance review and performance-linked incentives, which threaten job security and create division amongst employees.

The UFBU alleged that micro-management of PSBs on policy matters by the DFS undermined the autonomy of respective boards. It also demanded resolution

of residual issues pending with Indian Banks' Association (IBA) and for amending Gratuity Act to increase the ceiling to ₹25 lakh on the lines of scheme for government employees along with exemption from income tax.

Members of UFBU include All India Bank Employees As sociation (AIBEA), All India Bank Officers' Confederation (AIBOC), National Confederation of Bank Employees (NCBE), All India Bank Of ficers' Association (AIBOA) and Bank Employees Confed eration of India (BEFI).

AIBOC has decided to change the strike dates aligning with the dates as decided by UFBU being one of the major con stituents of UFBU, its general secretary Rupam Roy said.

Earlier, AIBOC threatened to go on a two-day nationwide strike February 24-25, 2025.

Fire at camp in Maha Kumbh Mela, none hurt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mahakumbh Nagar, Feb 7: A fire broke out at the ISKCON camp in Mahakumbh Nagar Friday and quickly spread to over a dozen nearby camps, officials said. No casualties have been reported.

Chief Fire Officer Pramod Sharma told PTI, "Upon receiving information about the fire at the ISKCON camp in Sector 18, fire tenders were immediately dispatched. The fire has been fully contained." The fire spread to over a dozen nearby camps, causing significant

Officials said the cause of the fire and the damage incurred due to it were being ascertained, officials said.

DIG (Maha Kumbh) Vaibhav Krishna said the fire incident has "completely been controlled" by the fire brigades. This is the third time that a fire incident has been reported in the Kumbh Mela area.

On January 19, a massive fire broke out in the Maha Kumbh Mela area's Sector 19 due to a cylinder blast.



Artistes perform during the 38th Surajkund International Crafts Fair, at Surajkund in Faridabad

India criticises US deportation, calls for fair treatment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: India Friday said it has registered concerns with the US over the deportation of illegal immigrants in shackles and conveyed that this kind of treatment could have been avoided.

The remarks of Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri came amid uproar over the deportation of illegal Indian immigrants by the US in handcuffs during their 40-hour flight onboard a military aircraft. 'We do make our concerns known to the United States that this kind of treatment can perhaps be avoided," the foreign secretary said in response to

questions on the deportation. Misri said there are as many as 487 presumed Indian citizens with final removal orders from

the US authorities and details of 298 people have been shared with India. He said the information shared by the US authorities was being verified. He said the US policy of deporting illegal immigrants in restraints has been in place since 2012. "I don't think there was any

protest. We don't have any record of any protest having been made about it," the foreign secretary said to a question on whether India had registered its protest on deportation of illegal immigrants in shackles in 2012.

He referred to the statement by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in Parliament Thursday. "The description by the EAM of the standard operating procedure relating to the use of restraints which has been communicated to us

by US authorities including the immigration and customs enforcement," Misri said. He said

the minister attracted attention

to the fact that these have been

in practice for a long period of time since 2012. The foreign secretary said

India continued to emphasise to US authorities that there should be no mistreatment of deportees. "We will continue to take up any instances of mistreatment that come to our attention," he said. He also stressed on the need to take action against the "real cancer" that is the ecosystem of illegal

immigration.

The remarks of

Foreign Secretary

Vikram Misri came

amid uproar over the

deportation of illegal

Indian immigrants by

the US in handcuffs

during their 40-hour

flight onboard a

military aircraft

international



with America gent, wise or honourable AYATOLLAH ALI KHAMENEI I

NO PHONES IN SCHOOLS

Brazilian students returned to class this week with a new task: staying away from their smartphones as a new law restricting their use in schools takes effect. President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva signed a bill in January limiting smartphone access at schools, in line with a trend seen in the US and Europe



lines from the United States that they (Hezbolto terrorize the

by being a part of the government MORGAN ORTAGUS |

US DEPUTY MIDDLE EAST ENVOY

With these violations of human rights we



war by a just and lasting peace, but be together... Not

to give Russia an opportunity to ANDRIY YERMAK

UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT'S CHIEF OF STAFF

SHORT **TAKES**

3rd plane mishap in US

Anchorage: An aircraft carrying 10 people across Alaska's Norton Sound south of the Arctic Circle went missing Thursday afternoon and rescuers searched into the night for any sign of the aircraft. The Bering from Unalakleet to Nome with nine passengers and a pilot, according to Alaska's Department of Public Safety. Authorities were working to determine its last known coordinates. Unalakleet is a community of about 690 people in western Alaska, about 150 miles (about 240 kilometers) southeast of Nome and 395 miles (about 640 kilometers) northwest of Anchorage, The disappearance marks the third major incident in US aviation in eight days.

22 states sue New York

Albany (US): Twentytwo states sued New York Thursday, contending that a new law forcing a small group pay \$75 billion into a fund to cover climate change damage is unconstitutional. The lawsuit, filed in Albany, lists state Attorney General Letitia James and other officials as defendants. According to a statement, West Virginia Attorney General JB McCuskey led the coalition of states against New York's Climate Change Superfund Act, which requires payments for damage allegedly done from 2000 to 2018. The law requires major fossil fuel companies to pay into the fund over the next quartercentury based on their past gas emissions.

Santorini on alert

Athens: Greece's government declared a state of emergency on Santorini Thursday after hundreds of undersea earthquakes shook the resort island for nearly a week. The ministry of civil protection's announcement will provide authorities faster access to state resources. It follows a magnitude 5.2 tremor -- the most powerful recorded since activity started on January 31 -- that struck late Wednesday. Government spokesman Pavlos Marinakis confirmed that multiple emergency services were already mobilized to support the island. Despite causing minimal damage, the earthquake activity has prompted an exodus of thousands of residents and seasonal workers, mostly evacuating to the Greek mainland by ferry. Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis visited earthquakestruck Santorini on Friday, as the Aegean island imposed more precautionary measures amid intense seismic activity.

TRUMP SANCTIONS ICC

The US prez's move coincided with a visit to Washington by Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is wanted by the ICC over the war in Gaza

Washington, Feb 7: US President Donald Trump has authorized economic and travel sanctions targeting people who work on International Criminal Court investigations of US citizens or US allies such as Israel drawing condemnation - but also some praise - abroad.

The ICC is a permanent court that can prosecute individuals for war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and the crime of aggression against the territory of member states or by their nationals.

The ICC condemned the sanc-

"The court stands firmly by its personnel and pledges to continue providing justice and hope to millions of innocent victims of atrocities across the world, in all situations before it," it said Friday

The ICC also called on its 125 member states to support its staff. Many in Europe did so.

"Sanctioning the ICC threatens the Court's independence and undermines the international criminal justice system as a whole," Antonio Costa, the president of the European Council of EU leaders, wrote on social media platform Bluesky.

The Netherlands, the host nation of the court based in The Hague, also said it regretted the sanctions, as did European Commission chief Ursula von der Leven.

"The court's work is essential



UNCLEAR HOW QUICKLY US WILL ANNOUNCE DESIGNATIONS ICC HAS ISSUED ARREST WARRANTS FOR NETANYAHU, PUTIN

It's time for Hungary to review what we're doing in an international organization that is under US sanctions! New winds are blowing in international politics. We call it the Trump-tor-

VIKTOR ORBAN | PM, HUNGARY

in the fight against impunity.' **Dutch Foreign Minister Caspar** Veldkamp said in a post on X.

But Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, a staunch ally of Trump, said the sanctions showed it might be time to leave the ICC.

"It's time for Hungary to review what we're doing in an international organization that is under US sanctions! New winds are blowing in international politics. We call it the

Trump-tornado," he said on X. **ASSET FREEZES, TRAVEL BANS**

Court officials convened meetings in The Hague Friday to discuss the implications of the sanctions, a source told Reuters on condition of anonymity

The US sanctions include freezing any US assets of those designated and barring them and their families from visiting the United States

It was unclear how quickly the US would **RUSSIA AND** announce names of peo-**ISRAEL ARE NOT** ple sanctioned. During MEMBERS OF the first Trump administration in 2020, Wash

ington imposed sanctions on then-prosecutor Fatou Bensouda and one of her top aides over the ICC's investigation into alleged war crimes by American troops in Afghanistan

As Trump pushes limits of presidential power, courts push back citizenship, which was intend-

WASHINGTON: A familiar pattern has emerged since President Donald Trump returned to the White House less than three weeks ago: He makes a brash proposal, his opponents file a lawsuit and a federal judge puts the plan on hold. It's happened with Trump's attempts to freeze certain federal funding, undermine birthright citizenship and push out government workers. Lawsuits that originated in more liberal jurisdictions like Boston, Seattle and Washington, DC, could find their way to the US Supreme Court, where a conservative majority has demonstrated its willingness to overturn precedent. Roughly three dozens lawsuits have already been filed, including by FBI agents who fear they're being purged for political reasons and families who are concerned about new limitations on healthcare for transgender youth. The latest setbacks for Trump came Thursday. In Seattle, US District Judge John Coughenour blocked Trump's executive order on birthright

The court has taken measures to shield staff from possible US sanctions, paying salaries three months in ad-

matically considered Americans. Coughenour described birthright citizenship, which was established by the 14th Amendment as "a fundamental constitutional right" and he assailed Trump in scathing terms. "The rule of law is, according to him, something to navigate around or simply ignore, whether that be for political or personal gain," said the judge, who was nominated by President Ronald Reagan in 1981. "There are moments in the world's history where people look back and ask. Where were the lawyers? Where were the judges?" Coughenour added. "In these moments, the rule of law becomes especially vulnerable. I refuse to let that beacon go dark today." Also on Thursday in Boston, US District Judge George O'Toole Jr paused Trump's plan to encourage federal workers to resign by offering them paid leave.

ed to prevent the children of

parents who are in the coun-

try illegally from being auto-

vance, as it braced for financial restrictions that could cripple the war crimes tribunal, sources told Reuters last month

'SMEARING, SABOTAGE'

Panama quits BRI: **China blames US**

REUTERS

Beijing, Feb 7: China is opposed to US "smearing and sabotage" of the Belt and Road Initiative in Panama through "pressure and coercion", its for eign ministry said Friday, after the South American nation de cided to exit the programme.

At a regular press briefing, a ministry spokesperson, Lin Ji an, said China deeply regretted Panama's decision.

"We hope that Panama will make the right decision based on the overall situation of bilateral relations and the long-term interests of the two peoples and eliminate external inter-

ference," he added. Panama has formally present ed a document to exit the Belt and Road Initiative, President Jose Raul Mulino said Thursday, after meeting US Secre tary of State Marco Rubio this month, but denied that the Unit

ed States had sought the move More than 20 Latin American nations are among the more than 150 countries that have participated in the Belt and Road Initiative, with results benefited their people, Lin said.

China introduced the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013. In November 2017, Panama

became the first Latin Amer ican country to officially join, five months after switching diplomatic ties to China from Taiwan, the democratically governed island Beijing claims as its territory. US President Donald Trump

has repeatedly said Panama has ceded control of the canal to China, an accusation both

Vandalism spreads across B'desh

Protesters attack houses of Awami League leaders



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, Feb 7: Protesters in Bangladesh have attacked, torched houses of leaders of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League across the country and murals of the country's founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were demolished and defaced in nearly two dozen districts, according to media reports.

The unrest sparked over a live online address by Hasina Wednesday night, when protestors targeted the house of Sheikh Mujib.

A house of Awami League Presidium Member Sheikh Selim in Dhaka's Banani was set on fire around 1:30 am Friday. Security concerns prevented the Fire Service vehicles from accessing the site until 2.45 am, the Fire Service control room duty officer was quoted as saying by the United News of Bangladesh (UNB).

A day after the Dhanmondi-32 residence of Sheikh Muiib was torched and torn down, protesters ransacked and set the house of Obaidul Quader, general secretary of Awami League (AL), in Noakhali's Companiganj on fire, the Daily Star reported Friday

Protesters also attacked and torched the house of AL leader Abu Sayeed in the Shalgaria village of Pabna yesterday. They broke the gate, ransacked the house, and then set it on fire

Thursday evening, said witnesses. Hasina, 77, has been living in India since August 5 last year when she fled Bangladesh following a massive student-led protest that toppled her Awami League's 16-year regime.

Hasina's father is widely viewed as an independence hero, but anger at his daughter has tarnished his legacy.



An aerial view of the "Sarandi" stream, dyed red due to unknown contaminants as alleged by residents, in an industrial neighborhood on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, Argentina

Halt in US aid cripples global efforts to relieve hunger

IN 2023, ALMOST 282 MILLION PEOPLE IN 59 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES EXPERIENCED EXTREME FOOD SHORTAGES THAT THREATENED THEIR LIVES OR LIVELIHOODS. ACCORDING TO THE 2024 GLOBAL REPORT ON FOOD CRISES

REUTERS

Washington, Feb 7: The Trump administration's effort to slash and reshape American foreign aid is crippling the intricate global sys-

tem that aims to prevent and respond to FOOD AID IN LIMBO IN famine. Struggling to

manage hunger crises sweeping the developing world even before US President Donald Trump returned to the White House, the international famine monitoring and relief system has suffered multiple blows from a sudden cessation

of US foreign aid. The spending freeze, which Trump ordered upon taking office January 20, is supposed to last 90 days while his admin-

istration reviews all foreign-aid

programs. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said an exception allows emergency food assistance to continue. But much of that emergen-

cy aid is at least temporarily halted as humanitarian organizations seek TONS OF US clarity about what

relief

programs TRANSIT OR STORAGE allowed continue. US OFFERS LITTLE GUIDANCE Compounding ON WHAT AID IS STILL the problem is ALLOWED Trump's move this week to shut

US IS BY FAR WORLD'S ARGEST PROVIDER OF the US govern-**FAMINE RELIEF** ment's top relief provider, the US Agen-

> opment (USAID). About 500,000 metric tons of food worth \$340 million is in limbo, in transit or storage, as humanitarian organizations wait for US State Department approval to distribute it, said Marcia Wong, a former senior

cy for International Devel-

USAID official who has been briefed on the situation.

US-provided cash assistance intended to help people buy food and other necessities in

Sudan and Gaza also has been halted, aid workers told Reuters. So has funding for volunteer-run community kitchens, an American-supported effort

We are the one thing that nearly everyone agrees on - that little children who are starving and need emergency aid

MARK MOORE CEO, MANA NUTRITION OF GEORGIA

in Sudan to help feed people in areas inaccessible to traditional aid, these people said.

Humanitarian organizations have hit roadblocks in getting paid for emergency food operations. Questions about what programs have permission to continue have gone unanswered, because the people who normally field such inquiries - officials at USAID - have been placed on leave, at least

six sources said. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network, the US entity that produced regular food security alerts meant to prevent famine, also has been shut down. Its loss leaves aid organizations without a key source of guidance on where and how to deploy humanitarian relief.

And the US government is sued stop-work orders to two major manufacturers of nutritional supplements, diminishing the supply of life-saving food for severely malnourished children around the world.

Conflict is driving large numbers of people into desperate hunger, and the US is the largest single donor of aid. It provided \$64.6 billion in human itarian aid over the last five years. That was at least 38% of the total such contributions recorded by the United Nations.

The halt in aid creates a two pronged crisis for humanitar ian organizations working to relieve severe hunger. It im pairs the programs that aim to prevent mass starvation. More immediately, it hobbles programs meant to respond to crises and save lives.

susiness



crossed **₹15,000** crore in total AUM in January 2024. We are on target to achieve ₹30,000 crore in AUM by March 2026

MANISH SHAH MD AND CEO, GODREJ CAPITAL

PHONEPE EXITS ACCOUNT **AGGREGATION BUSINESS**

Country's largest fintech firm PhonePe Friday said it has exited from account aggregation business as it could not add enough partners to provide services as per its expectation





DPIIT scrutinised 867 tenders, on a random basis. of these 259 tenders were

found to be non-compliant with the provisions of Public **Procurement (Preference to** Make in India) Order, 2017 JITIN PRASAD | MINISTER OF

India continues to present growth opportunities as an agri-economy, and we remain

committed to supporting the 'One Bharat One Fertiliser' scheme and our farmers with research-driven agri-nutrient solutions

ASHWIN MUTHIAH | CHAIRMAN, SPIC

The Indian government's vision to set up energy by 2047 is exciting and

100GWe nuclear visionary. At Jindal Nuclear, we are very bullish on

nuclear energy and believe the private sector must play its role to realise this vision of 100GWe by 2047 SK SHARMA | SENIOR

03 RESULTS

LIC profit rises 17%

New Delhi: State-owned insurer LIC Friday reported a 17 per cent jump in net profit at ₹11,056 crore in the third quarter ended December 2024 due to reduction in expense ratio. The country's biggest insurer, Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), had earned a net profit of ₹9,444 crore in the year-ago period. However, the net premium income of the insurer moderated to ₹1,06,891 crore in the third quarter of the current fiscal from ₹1,17,017 crore in the same period a year ago, LIC said. The total income also came down to ₹2,01,994 crore in the latest December guarter compared to ₹2.12.447 crore in the year-ago period. During the quarter, expenses of management came down to ₹14,416 crore as compared to ₹18.194 crore in the same period a year ago.

M&M profit surges

Mumbai: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd Friday reported a 20 per cent rise in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) to ₹3.181 crore in the December quarter. The company had posted a consolidated PAT of ₹2.658 crore in the year-ago period. Revenue for the quarter under review grew 17 per cent yearon-year to ₹41,470 crore from ₹35,299 crore a year earlier, the company said. In the auto segment, the company said, quarterly volumes stood at 2.45.000, up 16 per cent year-on-year while utility (UV) volumes for the quarter stood at 1,42,000. Auto segment revenue for the third quarter of the current fiscal was at ₹23,391 crore, registering a 21 per cent growth, while consolidated PAT stood at ₹1,438 crore, up 20 per cent year-on-year, it said.

Ola net loss widens

New Delhi: Ola Electric Mobility Ltd Friday reported a widening of consolidated net loss at ₹564 crore in the third quarter ended December 31, 2024 impacted by lower revenue due to enhanced competition and one-off cost to address service issues. The company had posted a net loss of ₹376 crore in the third quarter last fiscal, Ola Electric Mobility Ltd said in a regulatory filing. Revenue from operations in the third quarter stood at ₹1,045 crore as compared to ₹1,296 crore in the year-ago period, it added. Total expenses in the quarter under review stood at ₹1,505 crore as compared to ₹1,597 crore in the corresponding period last fisal, the company said.

RBI MPC MEETING 2025

Rate cut to boost growth: Experts

Home, auto and other loans are likely to see a drop in interest rates after the RBI under a new governor cut the key benchmark rate Friday for the first time in almost five years to spur a sluggish economy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 7: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has delivered the required monetary policy support and this, combined with the consumption boost from the tax relief announced in the Budget, should give momentum to demand and pushing growth, experts said Friday.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, slashed the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent. This was the first reduction since May 2020 and the first revision after two-and-a-half years.

Industry body Assocham described the reversal of the rate cycle as a catalyst for boosting demand across different sectors of the economy.

"The 25 basis points cut in repo rate, as recommended by the RBI Monetary Policy Committee, would help push demand in several key sectors of the economy, including housing, automobile and consumer durables among others," Assocham President Sanjay Nayar said.

Ranen Banerjee, Partner and



Leader, Economic Advisory PwC India, said the new RBI Governor and the MPC delivered the widely accepted 25 basis points rate cut with policy stance as neutral, leaving room for it to take further actions in its next meeting.

The MPC would have got comfort from the expectation of a moderating food inflation and under-check core inflation. giving an inflation estimate for FY26 at 4.2 per cent," he said.

Crisil Chief Economist Dharmakirti Joshi said the recent easing in consumer price index (CPI) inflation, and the need to remain supportive of economic growth moved the RBI.

However, it maintained the policy stance at "neutral", which gives it flexibility to remain data dependent and respond to exigencies.

"With the Trump Administration in the US shaking up global markets, expect the RBI to be proactive in using liquidity and forex management tools.

"The tariff war will have a bearing on policy rate cuts

If the inflation Global expects

could expect further rate cuts by the RBI in the next few quarters SANJAY NAYAR | PRESIDENT, 2025 after slicing 100

and December 2024," Joshi said. Rishi Shah, Partner and Economic Advisory Services Leader, Grant Thornton Bharat, said the RBI's first monetary policy decision under the new governor signals a promising start. with the unanimous repo rate cut underscoring the central bank's commitment to support-

the US Federal

Reserve to move

more gradually,

cutting just 25

basis points (bps)

in the first half of

bps between September

ing growth. Pankaj Kalra, CEO, Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production said under the guidance of new Governor Sanjay Malhotra, the RBI's decision to cut the repo rate by 25 basis points, is a move that signals a supportive approach toward sustaining economic growth.

On the RBI's announcement regarding access of Sebi-regis-

tered non-bank brokers to NDS OM, Deep Inder Singh, Vice President -- Sector Head -- Financial Sector Ratings, ICRA, said the proposed measure will enhance the ease of exit for retail investors in government securities, thereby boosting their overall liquidity.

Rohit Arora, CEO & Co-Founder, Biz2X & Biz2Credit said, "Pursuing with flexible inflation targeting models given the recent inflation cooling is also a pragmatic

move. The revision should help ease rate retains its liquidity downward trend, we cerns but more than anything the statement delivers the bigger picture -- the

bigger worry on the global trade aspects.' DAEWOO INDIA Managing Director HS Bhatia said

by lowering the interest rate. the RBI is making borrowing cheaper, which can encourage individuals and businesses to take out loans and invest in the economy. "This move is expected to have a positive impact on various sectors, including real estate, automotive, and consumer durables,' Bhatia said.

According to RupeeQ.com Chairperson Neeru Puri, credit market, which saw a 15 per cent growth in retail loans, is poised for further expansion following the rate cut by the RBI. "We anticipate increased demand for unsecured loans, given that digital lending grew 40 per cent last year," she said.

Banks to have 'bank.in' internet domain name, non-banks 'fin.in'



Mumbai: In order to check cyber security threats, the Reserve Bank Friday decided that Indian banks will have exclusive internet domain name 'bank.in' and non-bank financial entities 'fin.in'.

Unveiling the last bi-monthly monetary policy of this fiscal year, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said registrations for 'bank.in' will commence from April 2025, and going forward 'fin.in' will be introduced.

The decision is aimed at enhancing trust in the financial sector, he said adding the increased instances of fraud in digital payments are a significant concern.

"To combat the same, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is introducing the 'bank.in' exclusive Internet Domain for Indian banks," he said. The initiative aims to reduce

cyber security threats and malicious activities like phishing, and streamline secure financial services, thereby enhancing trust in digital banking and payment services.

The Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) will act as the exclusive registrar.

Going forward, Malhotra said it is planned to have an exclusive domain -- 'fin.in' -- for non-bank entities in the financial sector.

The RBI also decided to in troduce an additional layer of security by enabling Additional Factor of Authentication (AFA) in cross-border 'Card Not Pres ent' transactions.

The central bank said that introduction of AFA for digital payments has enhanced the safe ty of transactions which, in turn provided confidence to custom ers to adopt digital payments.

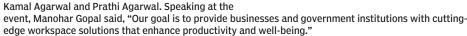
This requirement, however, is mandatory for domestic transactions only.

"In order to provide a similar level of safety for online international transactions using cards issued in India, it is proposed to enable AFA for international card not present (online) trans actions as well," the RBI said.

This will provide an additional layer of security in cases where the overseas merchant is enabled for AFA. Draft circular will be issued shortly for feed back from stakeholders.

Featherlite opens experience centre

Bhubaneswar: Featherlite, a Bangalore-based leading workspace furniture manufacturer, has launched its exclusive experience centre in Bhubaneswar, showcasing innovative solutions for modern offices, educational institutions, and healthcare facilities. The 10,000-squarefoot showroom was inaugurated by Managing Director of Featherlite Group, Manohar Gopal; alongside Chairperson of PGL Group, Pushpa Devi Agarwal. Other key attendees included Director of Featherlite Furniture. Kiran Chellaram: National Head of Dealer Development. Gyanendra Singh Parihar: and Director of PGI Furniture. Kamal Agarwal and Prathi Agarwal. Speaking at the





Symphony hosts Dealer's Meet 2025

Bhubaneswar: Symphony Limited organised its Dealers' Meet 2025 in Puri, bringing together key trade partners from the consumer durables industry. The event was led by AGM Ratheesh Srivastav, along with Branch Head Radhakanta Rout, BSM Prasant Tripathy, and Executive Deepak Das, who welcomed the attendees and set the tone for an engaging session. The meet highlighted Symphony's latest range of cutting-edge cooling solutions, including the Silenzo, MaxWind, Arctic Circle, and Air Force series—designed to meet the diverse cooling needs of Indian households with advanced technology and sleek

designs. In addition to air coolers, Symphony unveiled its new range of geysers and tower fans, further expanding its portfolio of innovative home solutions.

Benchmarks end lower Non-stop outflow of foreign fund dents investors' sentiment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Feb 7: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended lower Friday as the RBI's rate cut did not spring any major surprise for the markets and investors turned to profit-taking amid foreign fund outflows

Registering its third day of decline, the 30-share BSE benchmark Sensex dropped 197.97 points or 0.25 per cent to settle at 77,860.19, in a volatile trade. During the day, it lost 582.42 points or 0.74 per cent to 77,475.74.

The NSE Nifty declined 43.40 points or 0.18 per cent to 23.559.95

From the 30-share blue-chip pack, the stock of ITC dipped over 2 per cent after the diver-

BSE SENSEX

FEBRUARY 07, 2025

CHANGE: -197.97 (-0.25%)

77,860.19

BHARTI AIRTEL	+3.60%	TOP
ZOMATO	+2.10%	GAINER
M&M	+1.86%	
ULTRATECH CEMENT	+1.45%	T

sified entity reported a 7.27 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to ₹5,013.16 crore for the December quarter on account of subdued demand and sharp escalation in input costs.

State Bank of India, Adani Ports, Tata Consultancy Services, ICICI Bank, Reliance Industries and PowerGrid were also among the laggards.

Among the gainers, Tata Steel jumped over 4 per cent. On weekly front, BSE bench-

mark climbed 354.23 points or 0.45%, and Nifty went up by 77.8 points or 0.33%

India hits 100 GW solar power capacity milestone

Solar power capacity increased 35 times over the past decade, rising from 2.82 GW in 2014 to 100 GW in 2025

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

BIZ

New Delhi, Feb 7: India has achieved the milestone of 100GW solar energy capacity, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi said Friday, underscoring the country's target of having 500 GW renewable energy capacity by 2030.

"Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble PM Shri @ narendramodi ji, India has achieved the historic milestone of 100 GW solar capacity. This achievement is powered by our relentless commitment to a cleaner, greener future," the New & Renewables Energy Minister said in a post on X.

Earlier, India had planned to have 175 GW of renewable energy capacity, including 100 GW solar by 2022. But it could not be achieved due to staggering impact of the pandemic which forced imposition of lockdown restrictions.

According to a statement issued by Ministry of New & Renewable Energy, the milestone reinforces India's position as a global leader in renewable "Initiatives like solar panels,

solar parks and rooftop solar projects have brought about revolutionary changes. As a result, today India has successfully achieved the target of 100 GW of solar energy production. In the field of green energy, India is not only becoming self-reliant but is also showing the world a new path," the statement quoted Joshi as saying.

The minister said PM SuryaGhar Muft Bijli Yojana is making rooftop solar a household reality and is a game changer in sustainable energy, empowering every home with clean power. As of January 31, 2025, In-

dia's total solar capacity installed capacity stands at 100.33 GW, with 84.10 GW under implementation and an additional 47.49 GW under tendering.

The country's hybrid and round-the-clock (RTC) renewable energy projects are also advancing rapidly, with 64.67 GW under implementation and tendered, bringing the grand total of solar and hybrid projects



to 296.59 GW

In 2024, record-breaking 24.5 GW of solar capacity was added reflecting more than twofold increase in solar installations compared to 2023.

Last year also saw the installation of 18.5 GW of utility-scale solar capacity, a nearly 2.8 times increase compared to 2023. Rajasthan, Gujarat, Tamil

Nadu, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh are among the top-performing states, contributing significantly to India's total utility-scale solar installations.

Under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble PM Shri@ narendramodi ji, India has achieved the historic milestone of 100 GW solar capacity. This achievement is powered by our relentless commitment to a cleaner, areener future

PRALHAD JOSHI | NEW & RENEWABLES

The rooftop solar sector in India witnessed remarkable growth in 2024, with 4.59 GW of new capacity installed, reflecting a 53 per cent increase compared to 2023.

A key driver of this growth has been the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana, launched in 2024, which is now nearing 9 lakh rooftop solar installations. enabling households across the country to embrace clean ener-

India has also made significant strides in solar manufacturing. In 2014, the country had a limited solar module produc**Solar energy** remains the dominant contributor to **India's renewable** energy growth, accounting for 47% of the total installed renewable energy capacity

tion capacity of just 2 GW. Over the past decade, this has surged to 60 GW in 2024, establishing India as a global leader

in solar manufacturing. continued policy With support, India is on track to achieve a solar module production capacity of 100 GW by 2030, the ministry said.

This 100 GW milestone in solar energy underscores India's role as a renewable energy powerhouse, ensuring clean, sustainable, and affordable energy access for millions while shaping a self-reliant energy future, the ministry said.

India remains net importer of steel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Feb 7: India staved net importer of steel with the inbound shipments rising over 20 per cent to 8.29 million tonnes during the April-January period of this fiscal, official data showed Friday. The country had imported

6.89 million tonnes (MT) of steel in the 10-month period of 2023-24 financial year. "India was a net importer

of finished steel. Import of finished steel was at 8.292 MnT with a year-on-year (y-o-y) growth of 20.3 per cent," according to the data.

Against imports, exports have shrunk to 28.9 per cent to 3.994 MT during the said period compared to 5.619 MT in April-January period of preceding fiscal year.

Steel and stainless steel industry players have been consistently raising the issue of import with the government, claiming the surge in inbound shipments from select group of countries including China has affected their competitiveness.

Kohli to play in Barabati Barcelona reach Copa semifinals

GILL'S STATEMENT COMES AS A RELIEF FOR ODISHA FANS AS KOHLI MISSED OUT IN THE FIRST ODI DUE TO KNEE INJURY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, Feb 7: India vice-captain Shubman Gill has allayed fears around Virat Kohli's fitness, saying the batting stalwart is fine and should be fit for the second One-Day International against England at Barabati Stadium here Sunday.

Kohli, 36, was forced to miss the ODI series opener in Nagpur due to swelling in his right knee, leaving the team in a spot of bother as it went into the final dress rehearsal for the ICC Champions Trophy, beginning in Pakistan and Dubai Febru-

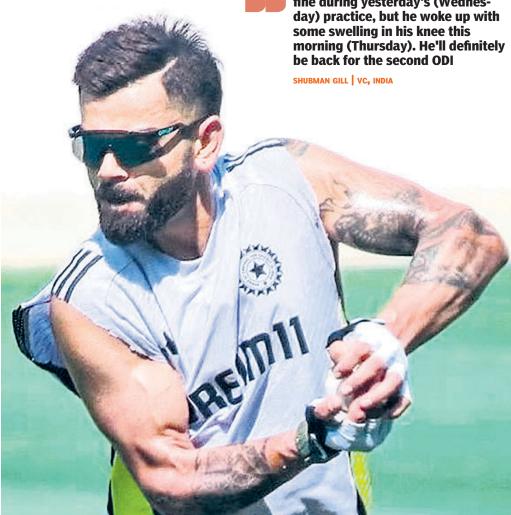
Gill, who scored a clinical 87 in India's four-wicket victory against England in Nagpur, told Disney-Hotstar: "It's nothing serious. He (Kohli) was fine during yesterday's (Wednesday) practice, but he woke up with some swelling in his knee this morning (Thursday). He'll definitely be back for the second ODI."

The top-order batter said he did not get carried away while approaching his century, adding that he would have played the shot, which ultimately got him, even if he was in his 60s.

Jos Buttler took a diving catch at mid-on off Saqib Mahmood's bowling as Gill, trying to pace the innings, mis-timed a shot to leave India at 235/6.

"No, I wasn't thinking about my century. I was focused on the field placements and played

It's nothing serious. He (Kohli) was fine during yesterday's (Wednes-



my shots accordingly. I wanted to dominate the bowler, and I would have played the same shot even if I was in my 60s, Gill said.

Gill, who usually opens the innings in ODIs, said he had no problem coming in at No.3 in the series against England.

according to the situation."

team strategy.

"It's an individual choice, not a team strategy. Every batsman has a plan to target specific areas. Many players are practicing sweeps and reverse sweeps in the nets to have more options while batting.

On his 94-run partnership with Shreyas Iyer (59) for the third wicket, Gill said once they had sized up the field, scoring runs became easy.

"I play at No. 3 in Tests, so it wasn't a big adjustment. It's always a challenge at that position because you have to adapt to the game situation. If the team loses quick wickets, you need to play sensibly. If the team starts well, you need to carry the momentum. My approach was simple — play

On young Indian players frequently choosing the sweep and reverse sweep shots against spinners, Gill said it was not a

We lost two early wickets, but the plan was to play according to the field and not hold back. After a few overs. the line and lengths became predictable, which helped us The Catalan club hadn't made it to Copa del Rey semifinals since being eliminated by Real Madrid in 2022-23



Madrid, Feb 7: Ferran Torres scored a hat trick in the first half hour to lead Barcelona to another rout of Valencia and a spot in the semifinals of the Copa del Rey Thursday.

Torres scored in the third, 17th and 30th minutes in Barcelona's 5-0 win at Valencia. Fermin López scored in the 23rd and Lamine Yamal in the 59th for the Catalan club, which less than two weeks ago had handed Valencia a 7-1 rout at home in the Spanish

"We thought it was going to be a very difficult game but we were lucky enough to score early," said Torres, a former Valencia and Manchester City

down. I wish them all the luck, I hope they escape relegation because I'm just another fan. It's hard to see the club of your life suffer like this. They're having a really bad time."

Valencia, sitting second-tolast in the Spanish league and enduring an off-the-field crisis related to fan protests against Singaporean owner Peter Lim, was runner-up to Real Betis in the Copa in 2021-22.

Barcelona hadn't made it to the Copa semifinals since being eliminated by Real Madrid in 2022-23. It last won the competition in 2020-21.

The Catalan club has out scored its opponents 26-11 in its last seven matches across all competitions.

SHORT **TAKES**

Solid start for golfers

Rabat (Morocco): Indian golfer Diksha Dagar began the new season with a bogey but then turned things around with four birdies for a threeunder 70 in the opening round of the Lalla Meryem Cup here. Diksha was tied seventh at the Royal Golf Dar Es Salam course. Avani Prashanth, making her professional debut, also had a rough start from the 10th as she bogeyed twice in the first three holes. She had six birdies from the 14th hole onwardxs but also dropped a double on Par-four fourth. At two-under 71, she was

Ranji quarters start

Kolkata: Title contenders and defending champions Mumbai will have both form and pedigree on their side when they take on a spirited Harvana outfit that is seeking to prove a point in their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal starting here from Saturday. The shifting of the match to the iconic Eden home venue, has affected the travel plans of both the teams, especially the hosts since the BCCI has not officially provided them any reason for the switch.

Pak's Avub to miss CT

Karachi: Young Pakistan opener Saim Ayub has been ruled out of the ICC Champions Trophy after being prescribed a rehabilitation period of at least 10 weeks to recover from an ankle injury. The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said Friday that Saim, who sustained the injury in South Africa in January, is "progressing well in his recovery from the ankle fracture and will continue his rehabilitation in

NEWS IN BRIEF

ODISHA, MIZORAM REGISTER EASY WINS IN WOMEN HOCKEY



Haridwar: Odisha and Mizoram registered convincing 4-1 and 4-0 wins over Karnataka and Uttarakhand respectively in the women's hockey competition at the 38th National Games Friday. Odisha got the better of Karnataka in a Pool A match through goals from captain Jiwan Kishori Toppo (7th, 19th minutes), Rashmita Minz (39th), and Ekka Prathiba (42nd) in Haridwar. Anjali H R (55th) was the lone goalscorer for Karnataka. Mizoram blanked hosts Uttarakhand 4-0 in a Pool B contest, courtesy goals from Marina Lalramnghaki (27th), Lalneipuii (43rd, 45th) and Lalthantluangi (58th). In another Pool B match, Jharkhand and Maharashtra played out a goalless draw. With this draw,

Jharkhand have retained the top position in the pool standings. In the men's competition, Uttar Pradesh defeated Haryana 2-1 in a Pool B contest. Arun Sahani found the back of the net in the 19th minute, which was equalised by Haryana's Mandeep Mor in the 29th minute. Sharda Nand Tiwari converted a penalty corner in the 43rd minute to guide Uttar Pradesh to a victory. Later in the day, Uttarakhand and Tamil Nadu played out a 1-1 draw.

LOVLINA BOXES HER WAY TO GOLD MEDAL

Lovlina Borgohain clinched the women's 75kg gold, while six-time Asian champion Shiva Thapa signed off with a silver medal in the men's 63.5kg category at the National Games here Friday. Playing her first tournament since the Paris Olympics, Assam's Loylina dominated her vounger opponent Pranshu Rathore from Chandigarh across all three rounds to register a convincing 5-0 win. In the men's light welterweight (63.5kg) division. Thapa lost in a close bout to Services Sports Control Board boxer Vanshai, with a 3-4 scoreline. In other bouts of the day, Services' Mandengbam Singh defeated Chandigarh's Anshul Punia in the men's flyweight (51kg) division by a 4-1 split



decision. Commonwealth Games bronze medalist Jaismine Lamboria of Services displayed her dominance with a convincing 5-0 win over World Championship bronze-winner Manisha Moun of Harvana in the women's 60kg event. Another gold medal for Services came from Sakshi, who outpunched Himachal Pradesh's Vinakshi 5-0. In the women's bantamweight category, Madhya Pradesh's Divya Panwar triumphed over Uttar Pradesh's Sonia Lather with a 4-1 victory. Local boxer Nivedita Karki showed precision and agility as she overpowered Harvana's Kalpana to claim the top spot in the women's flyweight (50kg) event. Former youth world champion Assam's Ankushita Boro reigned supreme in the women's welterweight (66kg) event, outclassing Uttarakhand's Kajal by a unanimous decision.

Feel confident I can give my best for India: Sonam



New Delhi, Feb 7: Young hockey forward Sonam's elevation to the senior national camp for the Women's Pro League has given her the added motivation to put her best foot forward after the disappointment of losing the Women's HIL final, despite scoring prolifically for Soorma Club.

Sonam, 19, scored four times in three games to emerge the highest goal-scorer among Indian players and third highest overall. She was adjudged the 'Upcoming Player of the Tournament' even though Soorma Hockey Club lost in the final to

Odisha Warroirs. Sonam's breakout performance in the inaugural Women's HIL season has earned her a spot among reserves in the national camp for the Bhubaneswar leg of the Women's Pro League beginning on Feb-

India will take on Germany, the Netherlands, England, and Spain during the 10-day long Bhubaneswar leg.

"My family was very happy when they heard the news (of national camp call-up). I feel good and confident that I can give my best for India. I am learning a lot from the senior players here in the camp and I will make the most of the opportunity if I get to play," said Sonam, who hails from Hary-

ana, in a Hockey India release. The 'Upcoming Player of The Tournament' award was a just reward for her efforts and Sonam, who idolises former India captain Rani Rampal, said it will motivate her to give it her best shot for the country.

FIFA suspends Pak **Football Federation**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, Feb 7: The International Football Federation (FI-FA) has suspended the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) after it failed to make amendments to its constitution which the world body deemed necessary for smooth and just governance of the sport in the country.

The world body said Pakistan would remain suspended until the PFF congress made those amendments.

Pakistan football has been run by a FIFA appointed Normalisation Committee since June 2019 which was tasked with holding elections and cleaning up parallel groupings in the football set up but it has failed to execute these plans properly.

The Normalisation Committee heads and members have changed in the last five but the core issues in the sport in Paki stan still remain.

The Normalisation Committee has been at loggerheads with the state-run Pakistan Sports Board which has caused a hold up in the amendments

Earlier this week, the PFF Normalisation Committee chair man Haroon Malik had warned a parliamentary panel that February 15 will be the last day of his tenure and Pakistan risked suspension if it didn't implement the constitutional amendments

Malik also made it clear that making the amendments didn't mean that he will become a potential candidate in the elec tions of the country's football governing body.

Record Jan transfers in men's football

Clubs spent \$2.35bn for almost 6,000 deals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Zurich, Feb 7: Fueled by England and Saudi Arabia, clubs spent a record \$2.35 billion on international transfer deals in a booming January trading period for men's soccer, FIFA said Friday.

The 5,863 international transfers — those between clubs in different countries that are processed by FIFA — also was 900 more than the previous highest, which was recorded last year.

In January 2024, only one transfer — Gonçalo Ramos confirming a permanent move to Paris Saint-Germain from Benfica — was reportedly valued at more than 30 million euros (\$31 million)

There were 10 such transfer fees agreed last month, including four to Manchester City,



and topped by Colombia forward Jhon Durán's \$80 million move from Aston Villa to join Cristiano Ronaldo at Saudi club Al Nassr.

Big spendersEnglish clubs collectively spent the most with a \$621.6 million outlay on transfer fees and recouped just \$186 million selling players to clubs in other countries.

The next biggest deficit was Saudi Arabia, where clubs spent more than \$160 million above what they earned. The spending of \$202 million was mostly fueled by Al Nassr, Al Hilal and other clubs all owned with sovereign wealth by the

Public Investment Fund. German clubs spent \$295.7 million, which was mostly offset by earning \$226.2 million in transfer sales. French clubs took in the highest total of transfer fees, \$371 million, and spent just \$209.7 million to make a collective profit of more than \$160 million.

Age is just a number for LeBron **OLDEST PLAYER TO SCORE 40 POINTS IN**

NBA HISTORY

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Los Angeles, Feb 7: The 40-year-old LeBron James became the oldest player to score 40 points in an NBA game Thursday night, putting up a season-high 42 in the Los Angeles Lakers' 120-112 victory over the Golden State Warriors

James passed the record held by Michael Jordan, his idol and the only other NBA player to score 40 after his 40th birthday.

"I'm old, that's my take, James said when asked about his latest achievement. "I need a glass of wine and some sleep, that's what I think. Jordan did it for the Wash-

2003. James is 38 days removed from his 40th birthday last December 30 - and it seems highly unlikely this will be the last time he hits the mark, since the top scorer in NBA history is still playing phenomenal bas-



ketball deep in his record-tying 22nd NBA season.

James also grabbed a season-high 17 rebounds and added eight assists while carrying the Lakers down the stretch against the Warriors and 36-year-old

Throughout my journey, anytime I've been named or put in a category of whatever the case, to cross paths with the greats is always humbling. Just to know where I come from and I love the game so much, so it's pretty cool

LeBron James

Stephen Curry, who put up 37 points in defeat. James didn't quite manage a

triple-double against the Warriors, falling just short for the second straight game. He is the second-oldest player in NBA history to record a triple-dou ble, and he's still about 90 days too young to break the record set by Karl Malone in 2003. He has 10 triple-doubles this sea son, each one making him the second-oldest player to accomplish the feat.

3 Printed and published by Adyasha Satpathy on behalf of Navajat Printers and Media Pvt. Ltd. and printed at Navajat Printers, B-15 Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar -751010, Odisha; Phone: 7894447142 (Marketing). Editor: Tathagata Satpathy, RNI No. ODIENG/2011/37159

ington Wizards just three days

after turning 40 in February