



Ongoing challenges

Actor Aarushi Nishank highlights ongoing gender disparities, emphasising persistent pay gaps in the Indian film industry

LEISURE | P2



Gaza aid halted

Israel blocks the entry of aid trucks into Gaza as a standoff over the truce that has halted fighting for the past six weeks escalates

INTERNATIONAL | P10



FPIs quit equities

Foreign investors pull out ₹34,574cr from equity markets in February pushing total outflows to ₹1.12L-cr in 2025

BUSINESS | P11



India beat Kiwis

Shreyas Iyer's pressure-defying fifty and Varun Chakravarty's spin masterclass help India script a 44-run win over New Zealand

SPORTS | P12



REVEL AMID RUBBLE: As the sun sets, Palestinians sit at a large table surrounded by the rubble of destroyed homes and buildings as they gather for iftar, the fast-breaking meal, on the first day of Ramadan in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip, Saturday

CHAMOLI AVALANCHE

Rescue op ends; all bodies found

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, March 2: The bodies of the last four of the trapped labourers were pulled out from the site of the avalanche-hit Border Roads Organisation (BRO) camp in Chamoli Sunday, taking the death toll to eight as authorities ended the nearly 60-hour rescue operation.

Army doctors said 46 workers who were rescued Saturday have been brought to the military hospital in Jyotirmath. Two of them have been referred to AIIMS, Rishikesh. Three of the workers are in critical condition, Lt Col DS Malhdya said.

The body of the last missing worker has also been retrieved. The recovery marks the culmination of the Mana Village Rescue operation, Defence Public Relations Officer (PRO) Lt Col Manish Shrivastava said.

"Out of the 54 labourers who went missing after the avalanche, 46 were rescued alive and eight found dead," Chamoli District Magistrate Sandeep Tiwari said. Four bodies were retrieved Saturday and as many Sunday.

The avalanche hit the BRO camp between Mana and Badrinath Friday, burying the 54 workers inside eight containers and a shed. Earlier, it was believed that the total number of trapped labourers was 55 but one of them was on unauthorised leave and had reached home safely.

SHORT TAKES

Mega steel plant in Patana soon: Majhi

Keonjhar: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Sunday said a mega steel plant with an investment of around ₹40,000 crore will be jointly set up by JSW and POSCO in Keonjhar district's Patana area. Addressing a public gathering at Champua, Majhi said, "I had vowed to set up a mega steel plant in Keonjhar district. God was kind enough to make me the chief minister to realise this dream." In addition to Patana area, the CM said steel industries would be developed in various parts of the district, with a total investment exceeding ₹1 lakh crore. **P5**

2 road mishaps claim six lives

Rourkela/Baripada: Six persons were killed while another suffered serious injuries in two separate road accidents that occurred in Sundargarh and Mayurbhanj districts in a span of 24 hours. In the first incident, three persons, including a minor girl, were killed after the bike on which they were returning from the ongoing Vedyyas fair at Vedyyas shrine was knocked down by a speeding truck under Kuanrunda police limits in Sundargarh district, late Saturday night. In the second incident, three persons were killed and another was seriously injured after two motorcycles collided head-on in Mayurbhanj district Sunday. **P5**

BOOK BUCH: COURT

Even after retirement from a tumultuous innings as Sebi chief, controversies continued to trail Madhavi Puri Buch when a special court in Mumbai ordered filing of an FIR against the first woman to head the stock market regulator and five others for fraud. Buch, whose tenure ended Friday, was earlier in the eye of a political storm after US-based short-seller Hindenburg accused her of having conflict of interest that prevented a thorough examination of manipulation and fraud claims at the Adani Group. The Adani Group, however, has denied all the allegations. The court order comes at a time when India has become the worst-performing global stock market with Sensex and Nifty marking the longest losing streak since 1996. Meanwhile, the Sebi said it would be initiating appropriate legal steps to challenge this order.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 2: A special court here has directed the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) to register an FIR against former Sebi chairperson Madhavi Puri

Buch and five other officials in connection with alleged stock market fraud and regulatory violations.

There is prima facie evidence of regulatory lapses and collusion, requiring a fair and impartial probe, the Special ACB Court Judge, Shashikant Eknathrao Bangar, said in the order passed Saturday.

The court order also noted that the allegations disclose a cognisable offence, necessitating an investigation.

The inaction by law enforcement (agencies) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) necessitates judicial intervention under the provisions of the CrPC (Criminal Procedure Code), it added.

Apart from Buch, the other officials against whom the court has ordered registration of the FIR are BSE's Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Sundararaman Ramamurthy, its then chairman and public interest director Pramod Agarwal and Sebi's three whole time members Ashwani Bhatia, Ananth Narayan G and Kamlesh Chandra Varshney.

The court said it will monitor



the probe, and sought a status report (of the case) within 30 days. The Sebi said it would be initiating appropriate legal steps to challenge this order and remains committed to ensuring due regulatory compliance in all matters.

The complainant, Sapan Shrivastava (47), who is a media reporter, had sought an investigation into the alleged offences committed by the proposed accused, involving large-scale financial fraud, regulatory violations and corruption.

The allegations pertain to the fraudulent listing of a company on the stock exchange with the active connivance of regulatory authorities, particularly the Sebi, without compliance under the SEBI Act, 1992 and rules

and regulations thereunder.

The complainant claimed that the Sebi officials failed in their statutory duty, facilitated market manipulation, and enabled corporate fraud by allowing the listing of a company that did not meet the prescribed norms.

Despite approaching the police station and regulatory bodies concerned on multiple occasions, no action has been taken by them, the complainant said.

The court, after considering the material on record, directed the ACB Worli, Mumbai Region, to register an FIR under relevant provisions of the IPC, Prevention of Corruption Act, SEBI Act, and other applicable laws.

Reacting to the court order, the Sebi in a statement said, "A Miscellaneous Application was filed before the ACB Court, Mumbai against the former Chairperson of SEBI, three current Whole Time Members of SEBI and two officials of the BSE."

The Sebi said it would be initiating appropriate legal steps to challenge this order and remains committed to ensuring due regulatory compliance in all matters.

Rape convict killed with arrows; couple arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kuanrunda, March 2: A rape convict, who had been released from jail on bail, was shot dead with arrows by a couple Saturday night under Biramitrapur police limits in Sundargarh district, police said Sunday.

The deceased has been identified as Anuraj alias Raj Kumar Yadav (36) from Aurangabad in Bihar.

The accused couple has been arrested, police said adding that they have registered a case (71/25) in this connection and initiated an investigation.

According to the police, Raj Kumar worked as a plumber and was staying in a rented house near an under-construction water tank in Kuanrunda block. In 2023, he was jailed for allegedly raping the accused woman, his neighbour. Recently, he was released from prison on bail.

After his release, Raj Kumar reportedly entered the woman's house Saturday night, issued threats, and misbehaved with her. Enraged by his actions,



the woman and her husband attacked him with arrows. Police recovered Raj Kumar's body from a pond near the water tank, Sunday. His chest was pierced with three poison-tipped arrows, which were seized. Another arrow was recovered from the couple's house.

Biramitrapur police station officer in-charge Ramprasad Nag, Kuanrunda outpost officer Abhaya Mahapatra, and a forensic team from Sundargarh visited the crime scene for investigation.

During questioning, the couple confessed that Raj Kumar again attempted to assault the woman after returning from jail. Frustrated by his repeated harassment, the couple planned and executed the murder.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We can't invite more than one sensible panelist... or it might accidentally turn into a meaningful debate!

Is Sanskrit Indian? Experts differ on its origin

POST NEWS NETWORK

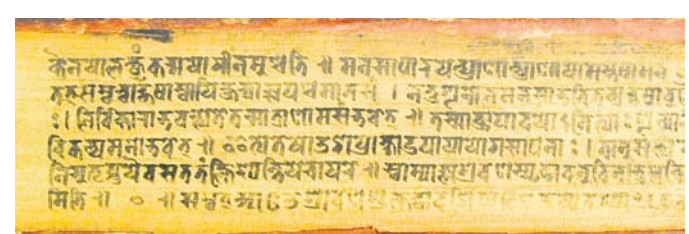
Bhubaneswar, March 2: Recent studies suggest that Sanskrit, often regarded as the 'mother of all Indian languages,' may not have originated in India. Instead, it is believed to have been introduced by nomadic groups from the Eurasian Steppe, a Business Today report said.

The report highlights genetic and linguistic evidence indicating that Sanskrit arrived in India through migrations from the Steppe region, where ancient pastoralists spread proto-Indo-European languages across continents. The Yamnaya people, who thrived around 5,000 years ago, played

a crucial role in this process—not only influencing Europe but also shaping the linguistic landscape of Asia.

Migrant farmers from the Caucasus and indigenous hunter-gatherer communities contributed to the development of hybrid cultures that eventually gave rise to Sanskrit and other Indo-European languages. DNA studies trace Sanskrit's lineage to nomadic groups near the Black Sea, challenging traditional beliefs about its origins.

Far from being purely Indian, Sanskrit's ancestry appears to be deeply intertwined with a broader history of migration, cultural exchange, and linguistic evolution. Researchers now suggest its roots lie in the in-



teractions between early European and Asian populations, reshaping long-held narratives about India's linguistic heritage.

Sanskrit is closely tied to the Aryan migration and their language evolution, which is a key historical factor in its arrival in India. It wasn't originally native to the Indian

subcontinent, but it became the language of culture, religion, and intellectual thought in India, the report said.

Agreeing to the report findings, noted Mumbai-based linguist **Yatin Sawant** said Aryans are thought to have originated in the Steppes of Central Asia or the Caucasus region. "And as they moved

into India, they brought with them their language, which evolved into what we now know as Vedic Sanskrit," Sawant, currently posted as an Additional Excise Commissioner told **Orissa POST**.

Vedic Sanskrit is a much earlier and ancient form of the language compared to classical Sanskrit, which emerged later. Hence, the earliest and oldest Veda - Rigveda - has descriptions of Indus river and not the Ganges, proving that Sanskrit and the people who used it were not native to this sub continent and were restricted to only Indus river and thereabouts. It is believed to have been spo-

ken by the Indo-Aryan tribes who entered the Indian sub-continent, settled in the north-western region, and gradually spread across the Indo-Gangetic plains, he said.

Speaking in tandem, well-known archeologist **Dr Kurush F Dalal** said, "We all agree that Sanskrit language is born out of the Proto-Indo-Iranian (PII) language which is the mother of Avesta and Rig Vedic Sanskrit. PII in turn comes from Proto-Indo-European (PIE) language which is the mother of both Latin and Greek - the root of European languages and The Indo-Iranian languages, respectively." **Contd... P4**

leisure



HARRISON FORD TO SKIP OSCARS FOLLOWING SHINGLES DIAGNOSIS
 Hollywood icon Harrison Ford, 82, has stepped down from presenting at the 2025 Academy Awards due to a shingles diagnosis. Ford, who attended the SAG Awards days before falling ill, is reportedly doing well. He is active in 1923 Season 2 production.

AL PACINO TO STAR IN HOSTAGE THRILLER DEAD MAN'S WIRE
 Al Pacino has joined the cast of renowned filmmaker Gus Van Sant's upcoming movie *Dead Man's Wire*. The Oscar winner will feature alongside Bill Skarsgard, Dacre Montgomery, Myha'la, Cary Elwes and Colman Domingo in the movie, based on the true hostage situation which occurred in the US February 8, 1977.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
 Emotions always pose obstacles. When things go wrong, life seems dispirited. But Ganesha advises you to look at the positive side of things, like the food on the dining table or the clothes in your wardrobe, and you will thank God for granting you a blessed life.

TAURUS
 This day your energy levels are likely to be below par. You may tend to be restless, inactive, and averse to exerting yourself in any way. Routine tasks, even the important ones could remain unattended. But, says Ganesha, you will try to pull yourself together later in the day, make amends by trying to do something meaningful. Towards this end, success will smile upon you.

GEMINI
 You have great business plans and can't wait to launch a few of your ideas today. Your colleagues will lend you their complete support. You may spend the evening decorating your home or finding peace in the arms of your beloved.

CANCER
 You will finalise business dealings with your partners today. Your high spirits may be subdued later in the day. However, as evening approaches and you get ready for a party, you will be back in your elements, cracking jokes and generally putting a smile on people's faces.

LEO
 You will be in the mood to provide assistance to others, however you may not be able to succeed in your endeavour. The latter half of the day will see your doubts melt away and the picture will become much more clearer. You will need to work hard to attain desired results today, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
 Your focus levels will reach their highest point today, says Ganesha. Working will be fun and you shall finish your jobs quickly and efficiently. A twist of tale may crop up its head; worry not, as physical intimacy will take your love affair to the next level, says Ganesha.

LIBRA
 Ganesha says you shall have good news in the family regarding the progress of your children. You will present them valuable gifts and will appreciate their efficiency. Due to no reason, in the afternoon you will experience a feeling of sadness. Ganeshji advises you not to take small things on your mind.

SCORPIO
 Your spouse will shower you with love and warmth today. The afternoon sun may bring good news from distant relatives. On the home front, family members will get special attention, predicts Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
 You shall push yourself to the limit to make sure your authority goes unquestioned. Colleagues and seniors will laud you for your commitment. Expect that wallet to get heavier as you receive some cash gains, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
 Socialising is on the cards, and with increase in the number of acquaintances will be the increase of your social clout, says Ganesha. Later in the day, you will take to reading, and will pick up just about any book. You will set out in search for peace as dusk sets in, and will find solace in holy places, where you would strive to improve your concentration power.

AQUARIUS
 Today, you will realise the importance of time in the business world. Ganesha says you will understand how much risk is involved in going about things in a haphazard manner. As a natural corollary, you will revamp and reschedule a lot of your plans, whether it's business or travel or just a family vacation.

PISCES
 You will need to be as scheming as the proverbial fox if you hope to wriggle out of the tricky situations that you are likely to find yourself embroiled in today. Keep your temper in check if things don't go your way initially, for the answers to your troubles will come sooner rather than later, says Ganesha.

AARUSHI on gender disparity

MUMBAI: Actor-producer Aarushi Nishank has opened up about the ongoing challenges faced by women in Bollywood, particularly addressing the persistent pay gaps and gender disparities in the industry.

Reflecting on her experiences, she stressed that despite advancements in society, women in the film industry continue to encounter significant obstacles, even in the 21st century. Former Union minister and ex-Uttarakhand chief minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank's daughter Aarushi told this news agency, "Unfortunately, disparities still exist, even in the 21st century. Women in Bollywood have long faced pay gaps and other challenges. Tarini also faced several hurdles, but I prefer to talk about them once the film is released and successful." She added,

"This film is about six women who defied the odds, and we had to fight for its recognition. Women's stories deserve more prominence, and it's time we change the narrative."

Sharing her thoughts on the ongoing debate around nepotism, Nishank stated, "The path I have chosen is certainly tough. Interestingly, I have experienced a mix of nepotism. In one space, I am considered an outsider, while in another, I am seen as a political insider. While nepotism may give some people an initial platform, success is never guaranteed. Many star kids have not been able to sustain their careers. Ultimately, talent, hard work, and perseverance determine an actor's success."



OSCAR 2025 Emilia Pérez sweeps nominations with 13 nods

EMILIA PÉREZ, a French-Mexican musical directed by Jacques Audiard, has made history at the 2025 Oscars with 13 nominations, becoming the most-nominated non-English language film in Academy Awards history.

The film has been recognised in major categories, including Best Picture, Best Director, Best International Feature Film, Best Song, Best Score, Best Screenplay, and Best Production.

Karla Sofia Gascon's outstanding performance in the lead role has earned her a Best Actress nomination, while Zoe

Saldana has been nominated for Best Supporting Actress. *Emilia Pérez* tells the story of a Mexican cartel leader who undergoes a gender transition to escape his violent past, blending a musical and crime drama narrative.

Following closely with 10 nominations each are *The Brutalist*, a drama about an architect chasing the American dream after surviving the Holocaust, and *Wicked*, a film exploring the origin story of the *Wicked Witch of the West*.

From the Middle East, *No Other Land*, a Palestinian-Israeli documentary about journalist Basel Adra's efforts to



protect the West Bank village of Masafer Yatta from Israeli

settlers, has been nominated for Best Documentary Feature. The film has received critical acclaim, winning top prizes from the Gotham Awards, International Documentary Association, and Los Angeles Film Critics Association.

Meanwhile, in *The Shadow of the Cypress*, an Iranian animated short by Hossein Molyayemi and Shirin Sohani, is nominated in the Best Animated Short Film category.

The 97th Academy Awards, originally set for January 17, were delayed due to the Los Angeles wildfires, prompting the Academy to extend the voting window.



Pooja's hustle

MUMBAI: Pooja Hegde, who has made her mark in Tamil, Telugu and Hindi films, recently reflected on her journey in the industry, emphasising the challenges of not having a film-producing support system. She shared how each film is crucial for her, as she doesn't have the luxury of someone backing her for future projects if one doesn't succeed. "Every film can make or break you, and you have to push through the setbacks to secure your next opportunity," she said, acknowledging the constant hustle behind her career.

Expressing a deep emotional connection to Bollywood, Pooja revealed her desire to work more in Hindi cinema. She remarked, "Who doesn't want to make it big in Bollywood?" Having grown up watching these films, she is thrilled that her South films have reached Hindi audiences, and now she seeks to strike a balance between both industries.

Pooja's ultimate goal is to leave behind a legacy of quality work, regardless of the language. Inspired by the films she grew up with, she hopes her own performances will make a lasting impact. With an ever-expanding filmography, Pooja is excited about her upcoming Tamil film *Retro*, where fans can expect another memorable performance.

Vidya issues 'scam alert'

MUMBAI: Actress Vidya Balan, who was recently seen in *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*, is the latest actor from the film industry falling prey to the increasingly dangerous use of the Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The actress took to her Instagram, and shared the video in question notifying her followers about its lack of authenticity. She urged her followers to not take anything on face value in current times where it is so easy to generate video content using deep fakes.

She also penned a long note in the caption asking her followers to be mindful of misleading information, and stressed upon the practice of verifying anything that's available on the Internet.

She wrote, "There are multiple videos currently circulating on social media and WhatsApp, which appear to feature me. However, I want to clarify that the videos are AI-generated and inauthentic. I have no involvement in its creation or dissemination, nor do I endorse its content in any way. Any claims made in the videos should not be attributed to me, as it does not reflect my views or work".

"I urge everyone to verify information before sharing and be cautious of misleading AI-generated content. #FakeAlert #Stay-Aware", she added.

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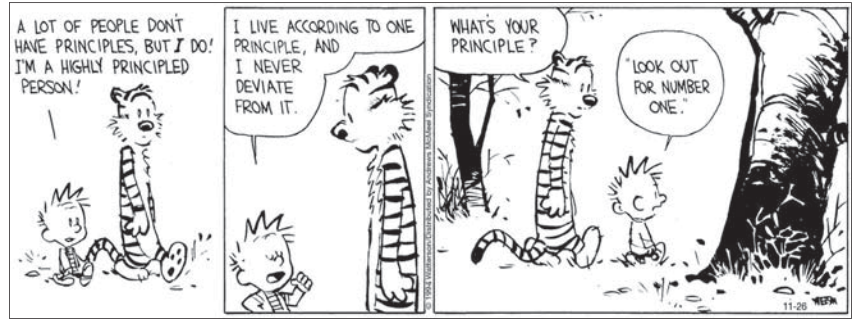
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PEANUTS



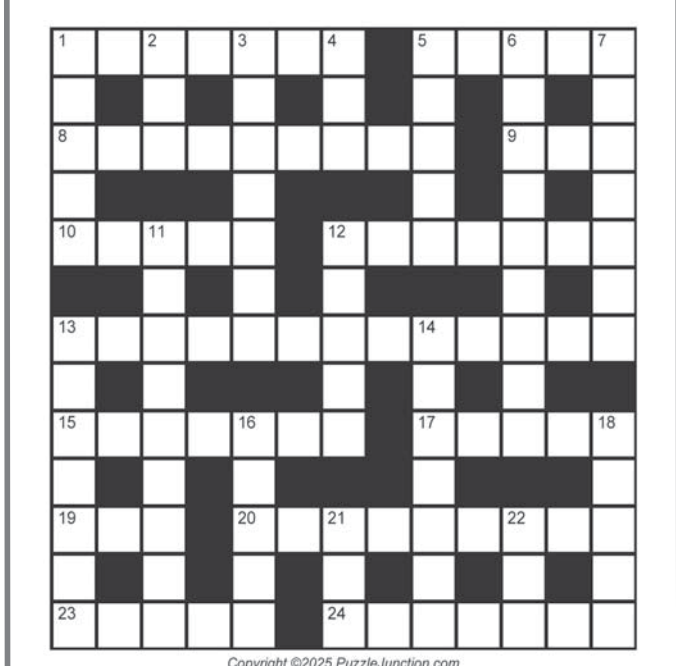
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



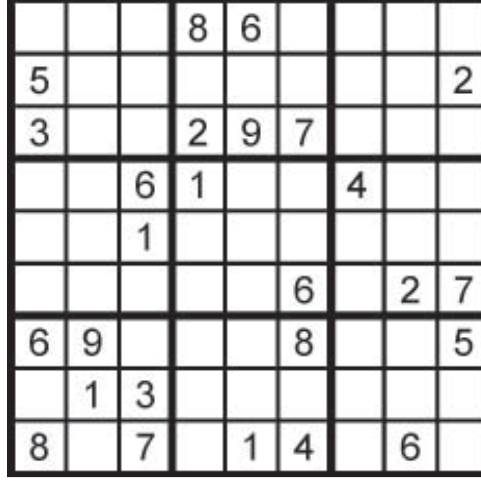
CROSSWORD



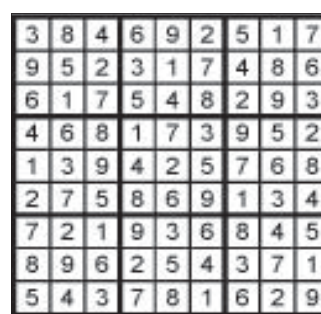
- Across**
- 1 Hospital VIP
 - 5 Escapade
 - 8 Bar billiards
 - 9 Behavioral quirk
 - 10 Museum
 - 12 Luggage carrier
 - 13 Holier-than-thou
 - 15 Horrible
 - 17 Band necessities
 - 19 Fuss
 - 20 Exercise device
 - 23 Forebodings
 - 24 Rain catchers
 - 6 Type of quilt
 - 7 Cooking school necessities
 - 11 Asian port
 - 12 Type of road
 - 13 Large treelike cactus
 - 14 Always on the move
 - 16 Roman Emperor
 - 18 Jockey's wear
 - 21 Flow's partner
 - 22 Ill temper

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Junior doctors welcome Dr Ratna Renu Baliarsingh, who took charge as the Dean and Principal of the SCB Dental College and Hospital in Cuttack, Sunday



downtown

Govt to groom 50 tribal students for pilot training



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 2: The state government will provide preparatory pilot training to 50 tribal students, mostly women, to make them ready for the professional course, an official said Sunday. The Commerce and Transport department has recently issued a tender to hire a professional agency to provide the training. As per the tender document, the government, through the selected private agency, will identify at least 300 tribal students, from whom 50 will be shortlisted through proper screening for the preparatory training. The selected 50 students, mostly women, will receive coaching, covering all selection parameters of airline cadet pilot assessment, in Bhu-

programme syllabus set by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and give an overview of the flying training course, he said. The programme aims to train the selected candidates in English proficiency, personal development, self-improvement and grooming, basic aviation knowledge, human performance and limitations, aptitude and psychometric tests, group discussion and interview, portable simulator training for hand-eye-foot co-ordination and spatial orientation, among others. The private agency will provide training for a period of eight weeks, with an average teaching schedule of six hours per day for five days a week. It will include self-supervised studies, computer-based training and mock examinations, he added. Regular assessments will be conducted upon completion of each module and special training will be provided during weekends for those lagging behind, the Transport department official said. After completion of the preparatory training, all the 50 students will sit for the final round of selection by private airlines such as Air India and IndiGo. They will again shortlist top 10 students through their own tests and provide them technical training to make them professional pilots, he added.

Govt will identify at least 300 tribal students of whom 50 will be shortlisted through proper screening to impart the preparatory training

The shortlisted students, mostly women, will receive coaching, covering all selection parameters of airline cadet pilot assessment in Bhubaneswar for eight weeks

The coaching is aimed at preparing the candidates to clear the cadet pilot assessment and make them ready for the basic foundation programme syllabus set by DGCA

baneswar for eight weeks, the official said.

The coaching is aimed at preparing the candidates to clear the cadet pilot assessment and also make them ready for the basic foundation



RUN-UP TO WOMEN'S DAY: Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida felicitates the winners of different competitions held during the state-level youth conclave as part of International Women's Day celebrations, organised by Women and Child Development department at Rama Devi Women's University in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

5th phase Subhadra assistance March 6

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 2: The state government will release ₹5,000 each to 1.7 lakh women beneficiaries under Subhadra Yojana March 6, an official said. This will be the fifth phase of disbursement of the scheme's first instalment. "Odisha's pathbreaking scheme, #SUBHADRA crosses 1 crore milestone. More than 1.7 lakh women will receive the 1st instalment of ₹ 5,000 in phase-5 on March 6, 2025. Keeping our

Deputy CM Pravati Parida said the first instalment of ₹5,000 has already been provided to more than 98 lakh women beneficiaries in four phases

promise, the 2nd instalment of ₹5,000 will be disbursed to about 1 crore women on #InternationalWomensDay (March 8, 2025); with its women on the move, Odisha marches ahead," the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said in a post on X. Deputy Chief Minister Pra-

vati Parida said the first instalment of ₹5,000 has already been provided to more than 98 lakh women beneficiaries in four phases. "For the first time in the history of Odisha, one crore people have been covered under one scheme and that too, in a short

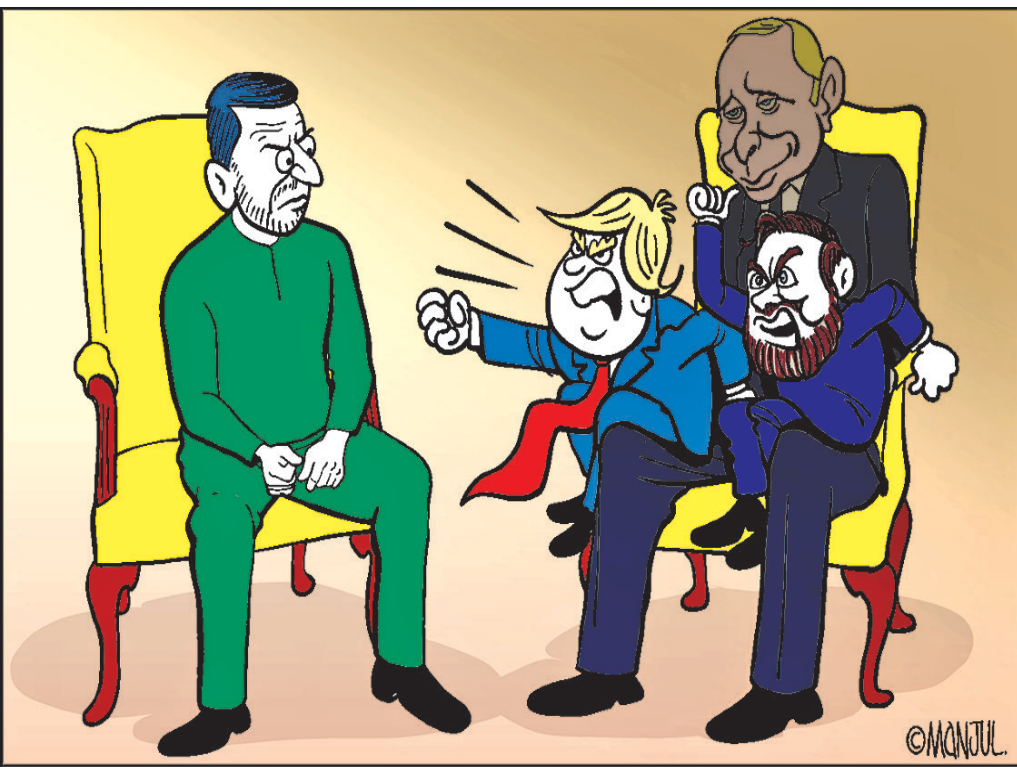
span of eight months," Parida, who is also in charge of the Women and Child Development Department, told reporters. She said March 31 will be the deadline for submission of applications to get benefit of the scheme. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the pro-women scheme on his birthday last year - September 17. The scheme is designed to provide eligible women aged 21 to 60 years with ₹ 50,000 over five years, from 2024-25 to 2028-29.

Miscreants set parked SUV ablaze in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 2: In blatant disregard for law and order in the City, two unidentified miscreants set a parked sports utility vehicle (SUV) afire after pouring diesel on it in Dumduma area under Khandagiri police station here late Saturday night. The vehicle owner, who wished not to be named for safety reasons, said the incident took place at midnight when she was at her sister's residence in Nayapalli area of the City. "Minutes after I reached my sister's place, my neighbours called me over phone that our vehicle is on fire. Initially, I suspected an electric short-circuit as the cause of the blaze. However, upon reviewing CCTV footage, I saw two unidentified men reaching our residence on a motorcycle and setting my vehicle on fire after pouring diesel on it," she said. Firefighters from Baramunda Fire Station were called in who managed to douse the blaze. While the front portion, including the engine, was gutted, the middle and rear sections of the black Scorpio (OD 33 AK 7070) could be salvaged due to swift response of the fire services personnel. IIC of Khandagiri police station Abhimanyu Das stated that efforts are on to identify the perpetrators. "We are scanning CCTV footage of the area to trace the suspects. Preliminary investigations have not revealed any known enmity involving the complainant that could have led to this act," he said. A case has been registered under Sections 3(5) and 25 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the IIC said, adding that further investigations are ongoing to apprehend the culprits at the earliest.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



8 rooms gutted

TANGI: At least eight rooms belonging to four families were reduced to cinders in a major fire mishap at Bindhania village under this gram panchayat of Khurda district Sunday. According to reports, the fire erupted from Shikhar Behera's house, later engulfed the adjacent houses of Pankaj Behera, Prashant Sahu and Rabi Behera. Soon, locals informed the firefighters at Tangi who reached the spot and doused the inferno. However, they failed to save the eight houses from raging fire.

Advertisement for Lijjat Papad featuring a woman holding a packet of papad and a rabbit. Text includes: 'Shaadi, Utsav ya Tyohar... Lijjat Papad Ho Harbar...', 'Karram Kurram... Kurram Karram...', 'Lijjat PAPAD', 'Website: www.lijjat.com', 'Email: enquiry@lijjat.com'.

Bolangir records 38.1 degrees Celsius

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 2: Several places across Odisha experienced hot weather conditions Sunday with mercury crossing 38 degrees Celsius in Bolangir. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Bolangir recorded a maximum

temperature of 38.1 degrees Celsius Sunday. Five other places recorded temperatures above 37 degrees Celsius. They are: Angul (37.9), Titalagarh (37.6), Jharsuguda and Bhadrak (37.5), and Jajpur (37.2). Bhawanipatna, Sonapur and Baripada recorded a maximum temperature of 37 degrees

Celsius. Likewise, Bhubaneswar recorded a day temperature of 36.1 degrees Celsius. There will be no large change in the temperatures over the next four-five days, the IMD said. As per seasonal forecast, the maximum temperature will remain above normal in March, April and May.

Policies need to factor in global uncertainties: Mishra

THE PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO PM EXPRESSES OPTIMISM ON INDIA'S ABILITY TO WITHSTAND GEOPOLITICAL CHALLENGES WITH ITS VAST CONSUMPTION BASE AND DEMOGRAPHIC ADVANTAGE, AUGMENTED BY A ROBUST DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND TECHNOLOGICAL CAPABILITIES

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 2: Any policy making in Government of India set-up has to factor in uncertainty with a focus on a comprehensive framework and an outcome-oriented constructive mindset, said Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr PK Mishra, while interacting with a senior journalist at a recent 'Business Standard Manthan Summit' here. Addressing a wide array of issues, Mishra said that the government had been successful in tackling turmoil like Covid-19 pandemic, Ukraine-Russia conflict and West Asia crisis with a focus on being 'Atmanirbhar'. He attributed this to the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi focussed on readiness to address the challenges posed by being resilient and by introducing reforms to tackle the emergent issues. In his interaction, Mishra elaborated how the Indian economy faced several challenges:

geopolitical tensions, disruptions in global supply chains, and energy transition. In the event of Covid-19 pandemic when the whole world, including India, appeared to be in turmoil, India could navigate the challenges effectively and successfully. It took several measures on economic reforms in addition to providing some stimulus packages. The growth momentum was restored, he said. Mishra also highlighted the government's initiative of production linked initiative (PLI) schemes and leveraging of consumption base and demographic advantages of India among others. On India's PLI scheme, Mishra pointed out its positive impact but stressed the importance of long-term evaluation. In the context of the ongoing protectionism and breakdown of the Washington Consensus, Mishra explained how India's policy stance in its economic engagement with the world has been consistent. India con-



tinues with its belief in engagement with other countries on the basis of mutual benefit, he said. Citing examples of recent free trade agreements (FTAs) with Australia, UAE and EFTA, he referred to the ongoing negotiations with the UK and the EU. "This approach will help us mitigating the emerging challenges," Mishra said. The Principal Secretary to the PM impressed upon the

need to tackle uncertainty with a new approach where not only risk assessment but also building an 'anti-fragile system' should be our objective. He emphasised that our systems should not just be resilient but also 'anti-fragile'. Mishra made a reference to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's recent visit to US describing it as "very positive" from the perspective of enhanc-

ing trade relations and building on 'opportunities' rather than simply reacting to crisis, being the focus. He said that not only bilateral, regional, but also multilateral relationships in the evolving global trade environment are changing the economic landscape. He expressed optimism on India's vast consumption base and a demographic advantage; augmented by a robust digital public infrastructure and technological capabilities. He remarked that India should be able to sustain external pressures and negotiate from a position of strength. Quoting works of economic analyst Nassim Nicholas Taleb, Mishra stressed on creating anti-fragile systems rather than merely focussing on resilient ones. He said that policies are framed with analytical perspective with sustainability focus. On India's agriculture front, Mishra said the sector continues to account for about 46 per cent of the country's workforce, even

though its share in the gross domestic product (GDP) has declined from almost 50 per cent in 1970s to 18 per cent in present times. Diversifying agriculture holds the key, he opined. On Civil Services reforms, Mishra said that India showcases continuous and evolving efforts to modernise and strengthen the civil services to keep pace with the changing needs of governance. The approach is also to have continuous innovation, lifelong learning and steadfast integrity. During the last decade, personnel management system has undergone unprecedented transformation. New initiatives such as 'Mission Karmayogi' and 'Integrated Government Online Training' (iGoT) platform have introduced competency based and holistic approach to personnel management. Reforms will continue in areas such as adopting new technologies e.g. Artificial Intelligence for making governance more accessible, efficient and citizen-friendly.



national



I believe that the Left and the liberals are the biggest danger to the Hindus
HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

OVER 50K REUNITED WITH FAMILIES AT MAHA KUMBH

More than 50,000 people who were separated from their families amid the massive crowd of devotees at the 45-day Maha Kumbh were successfully reunited with their loved ones, the UP government said Sunday



of the day quote

Every expressway should have hospitals on both sides, just like food plazas. Trauma centres, ambulances, and trained staff should be stationed at divisional headquarters hospitals
YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

Let me refer to some changes that are worryingly alarming, concerning... Our civilisational ethos tells us inclusivity. Should there be a confrontational stance on language in the land of Bharat
JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT

Farmers who don't have a permanent power connection will be given the facility for ₹ 5. We want to do good for cultivators and better their lives
MOHAN YADAV | MP CM

Congress worker found dead, party seeks probe

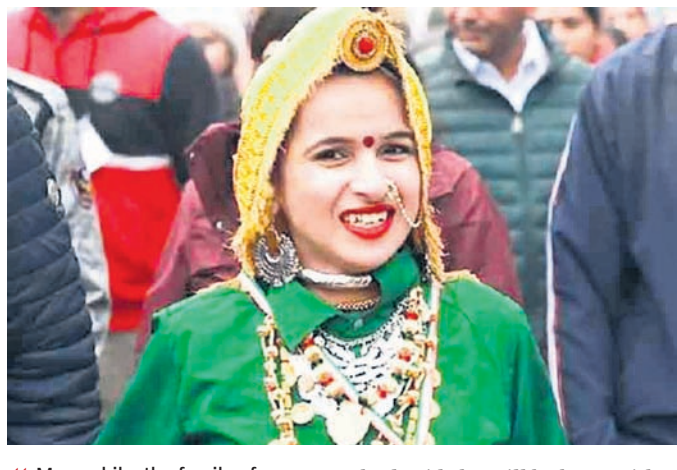
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, March 2: A day after the body of Congress worker Himani Narwal was found stuffed in a suitcase in Rohtak, the Haryana Police Sunday set up a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the murder. Meanwhile, the family of Narwal refused to cremate her body until her killers are arrested. They also alleged that some leaders in the Congress party envied her political rise in a short span.

An SIT has been set up and four teams of Rohtak police are already looking for the culprits behind the incident, a police official said. Narwal, who was in her late 20s, lived at Vijay Nagar in Rohtak. Her body, which was found in a suitcase in Rohtak district Saturday, bore some injury marks, police said.

Postmortem of the body was conducted by a board of doctors in Rohtak, the official said. Haryana Congress leaders described Narwal as an active and dedicated party worker, who also took part in Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Yatra earlier. They said she was pursuing law degree and had been associated with the party for the last nearly a decade.

Narwal's family said they will not cremate her till killers are arrested. Her mother Savita, who spoke to reporters in Rohtak, alleged that some leaders in her party envied her political rise in a short span. "It could be anyone in the party who was jealous about her rise or it could be anyone else," the mother, who was accompanied by her son Jatin, said. Latching



Meanwhile, the family of Narwal refused to cremate her body until her killers are arrested. They also alleged that some leaders in the Congress party envied her political rise in a short span

The 22-year-old woman lived at Vijay Nagar in Rohtak, police said

An SIT has been set up and four teams of Rohtak police are already looking for the culprits behind the incident

on to her comment, Haryana minister and BJP leader Anil Vij said the allegations levelled by Narwal's mother are "serious".

"To move ahead, push others behind, this is Congress' old culture," Vij told reporters in Ambala when asked about the murder. He also said police are conducting a thorough probe in the murder case.

Savita said her daughter used to work for the party till late hours and had dedicated her life for it. "Last time, I talked to her February 27. She

had said she will be busy with a party programme the next day, but later her phone was found switched off," her mother, who reached Rohtak from Delhi, said. "Till the time my daughter does not get justice, we won't cremate her," she said. She also said her elder son was murdered many years ago and lamented "even then I did not get justice".

Narwal's brother Jatin said the family was informed about the murder Saturday afternoon. Former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda Sunday said he spoke to Rohtak's superintendent of police regarding the murder case, adding that police and the government should ensure speedy justice for the victim's family. According to a statement, Hooda spoke to the victim's family and offered his condolences.

Congress leader and party MLA from Rohtak B B Batra said Narwal was a "very good and active" worker of the party. She used to participate in various programmes of the party, Batra added.

DMK also responsible for 'wrong' of 1974: TN Gov

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 2: Rather than politicising the fishermen's issue and faulting the Centre for it, a constructive approach by the state government would go a long way in wiping the tears of fishers, Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi said Sunday.

After meeting the protesting fishermen at Rameswaram, who sought quick release of arrested fishermen and their boats from Sri Lanka, Ravi said the fishing community was a victim of an "iniquitous agreement" of 1974 (between India and Sri Lanka), which was extremely insensitive to the livelihood concerns of the state's poor fishermen.

The governor alleged the ruling DMK was equally responsible "for the wrong of 1974" as it held power at that time in the state. Law Minister S Regupathy hit back at Ravi, asking him to not "compete" with BJP Tamil Nadu President K Annamalai as the Saffron party's state unit chief is available for politics.

Regupathy asked Ravi to stop his "fictitious tales" about Katchatheevu and urged the governor to take up with PM Narendra Modi the matter of release of Tamil Nadu fishermen from Sri Lanka. The minister said the governor's allegation of the "wrong of 1974" was a rusted tool and seeking to refute Ravi, he underscored several points. It includes then Chief Minister, M Karunanidhi submitting proof that Katchatheevu is part of India, opposing ceding of Katchatheevu in Parliament and seeking cancelling of the pact between India and Sri Lanka over Katchatheevu.



Regupathy said though the BJP leadership took up the Katchatheevu issue in a big way ahead of the 2024 LS polls, the party was defeated in all the 39 constituencies in the state and also in the lone segment in neighbouring Pondicherry.

In a post on 'X', Governor Ravi said: "In my visit to Rameswaram today, I met our distressed brothers and sisters from fishing community. I deeply sympathise with them. They are victims of an iniquitous agreement of 1974 which was extremely insensitive to the livelihood concerns of our poor fishermen. The then governments in Delhi and Chennai committed a grave sin by depriving our fishermen of their traditional fishing rights in the sea around Katchatheevu island. Since then our fishing community have been suffering enduring hardship. They are arrested and their boats confiscated by Sri Lankan authorities. This enduring problem has to have an enduring solution. The state and central govts together have to work towards it.

Instead of politicising this issue and faulting the Central Government a constructive approach by the State Government will go a long way in wiping the tears of our affected people.

Omar chairs meeting of alliance partners

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, March 2: As Jammu and Kashmir is preparing for the first budget session in seven years, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Sunday chaired a joint meeting of the alliance partners here and discussed various issues for the smooth functioning of the house.

The 40-day budget session, having a total of 22 sittings, is scheduled to start March 3 with the address of Lt Governor.

This will be the first budget of the government after it assumed power in October last year.

Abdullah, who is set to present the budget March 7, had held the charge of home and General Administrative Department among others during his previous stint as the chief minister in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir from 2009 to 2014.

The previous five budgets were presented and passed by the parliament in the absence of the legislative Assembly in J&K, while the then governor Satya Pal Malik led the state administrative council to pass the budget for 2019-2020 following the fall of the PDP-BJP government in June 2018.

The joint meeting, attended by Congress legislative party leader G A Mir and CPI(M) MLA M Y Tarigami among others, took place shortly after Abdullah presided over a separate legislature party meeting of the National Conference at his official residence here.

The Congress legislature party also met separately at Residency Road party headquarters before Mir joined the meeting convened by Abdullah. National Conference president Farooq Abdullah also attended the joint meeting.

SHORT TAKES

Truck-ambulance collision claims 3

Kolkata: Three persons were killed and five injured when an ambulance collided with a truck in West Bengal's Nadia district Sunday morning, police said. The truck, heading towards Krishnanagar, collided head-on with the ambulance at Bara Jaguli on NH 12, police added. The ambulance, coming from Pakur in Jharkhand, had eight people on board, including the driver. The injured were taken to JNM Hospital in Kalyani, where the on-duty physician declared three of them dead on arrival. The deceased included two women, police said.

IPS officer suspended

Amaravati: The Andhra Pradesh government Sunday suspended senior IPS officer P V Sunil Kumar for allegedly making repeated foreign visits without prior permission during the previous YSRCP regime. In a government order, Chief Secretary K Vijayanand stated that Kumar, a DGP-rank officer awaiting posting, had deviated from the travel plan approved by the government during those overseas trips.

PM Modi visits Somnath temple

Junagadh: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday offered obeisance at the revered Somnath temple in Gujarat's Gir Somnath district and prayed for the health and prosperity of countrymen. The PM, who arrived at Jamnagar in Gujarat Saturday evening on a three-day state visit, started his day by visiting Vantara, an animal rescue, conservation and rehabilitation centre there. Later, he reached Somnath temple, the first of the 12 jyotirlingas, located in Prabhas Patan and offered prayers to Lord Shiva.

Gangster held

Chandigarh: Punjab Police Sunday said it has arrested a gangster and seized from him three sophisticated weapons sourced from Pakistan. The accused was identified as Hardeep Singh alias Deepa, a resident of Ferozepur. Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said police seized a 9 mm Glock pistol, a .30 mm Beretta pistol and a pump action gun, along with three magazines and 141 cartridges, from Hardeep Singh. Besides, 45 grams of heroin was also recovered from his possession, he said.

46 pc turnout in Haryana civic polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, March 2: Forty-six per cent of the more than 51 lakh eligible voters for civic body polls in Haryana exercised their franchise Sunday, officials said.

The polling was peaceful, they added. Voting was held to elect the mayors and ward members of seven municipal corporations - Gurugram, Manesar, Faridabad, Hisar, Rohtak, Karnal and Yamunanagar. Bypolls for the mayors' posts in Ambala and Sonapat were also held. The voting was held from 8 am to 6 pm. The turnout in the civic polls was recorded at 46 per cent, the officials said, adding that the overall percentage may slightly increase once the entire data is collected. Elections were also held for the posts of presidents and ward members in four municipal councils - Ambala Sadar, Pataudi Jatoli Mandi, Thanesar and Sirsa. A bypoll was also held for the president's post in the Sohna Municipal Council.



Visitors at the Karnataka State Legislature Book Fair, at Vidhana Soudha in Bangalore, Karnataka

Zoo breeding programmes face funding challenges: Panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 2: While India's zoos have made "notable" progress in breeding endangered species under conservation programmes that started around a decade ago, a government panel says that persistent gaps in execution, funding and species management hinder their overall success.

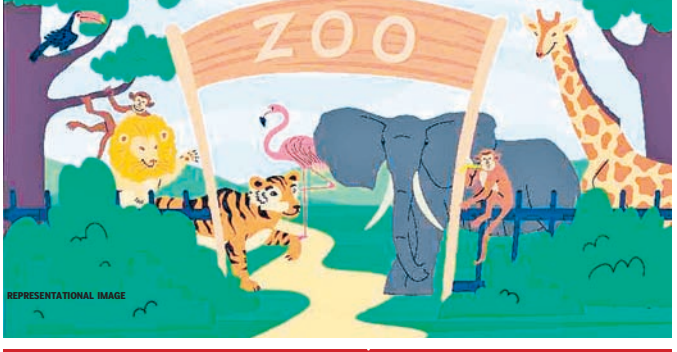
The Central Zoo Authority (CZA), which is responsible for overseeing and guiding national-level ex situ conservation efforts, constituted a committee in 2023 to review and evaluate the state of conservation breeding programmes in zoos across the country.

In 2007, the CZA selected 74 species for breeding in 43 zoos. By 2014, 26 high-priority species were shortlisted and breeding programmes began for 23. According to the report

of the committee submitted to the CZA recently, while India's zoos have made "notable progress in housing and breeding several endangered species, the overall effectiveness of conservation breeding programmes is hindered by persistent foundational and operational challenges".

The committee said that Rs 10.81 crore was allocated for conservation breeding between 2006 and 2011 and ₹18.13 crore between 2011 and 2021. Over time, with the decrease in the CZA's funding, zoos now receive limited financial support, mainly for maintenance.

According to the report, Artiodactyla (even-toed ungulates), Carnivora (meat-eating mammals) and Galliformes (game birds) are among the most targeted groups. However, many of their breeding programmes have either not



The committee said that Rs 10.81 crore was allocated for conservation breeding between 2006 and 2011 and Rs 18.13 crore between 2011 and 2021

started or are poorly managed. The report said errors in species identification, such as with the Alpine Musk Deer and Himalayan Serow, make managing populations difficult. The committee also highlighted that lack of genetic diversity, improper tracking and poor record-keeping reduce the success of conservation breeding programmes. While some successes, such as the Gaur (Bos gaurus)

and Indian Chevrotain (Moschiola indica), demonstrate the potential for growth and recovery, they also "expose broader challenges including inconsistent record-keeping, uncoordinated transfers and inadequate husbandry practices", the committee said.

Primates, Squamata (reptiles), and Perissodactyla (odd-toed ungulates) struggle with low birth rates and poor genetic diversity. Animals like the King Cobra and Western Hoolock Gibbon have specific environmental needs that are not being met, which reduces their chances of successful breeding.

It said that some birds and reptiles, like vultures (White-rumped and Indian Vultures), have seen population growth. However, problems such as unsexed individuals and poor use of founder stock

limit genetic diversity. Certain species, like the Nicobar Pigeon and Red-crowned Roofed Turtle, have small, stable populations but need better management. They said that many species, such as the Indian Giant Squirrel and Indian Pangolin, are declining due to low breeding success and poor tracking.

The Himalayan Salamander has shown recent growth but only at one facility without structured management. The committee said that small populations, poor demographic and genetic monitoring, improper husbandry practices, inadequate technical supervision, poor documentation, lack of animal identification, poor adherence to breeding protocols and lack of coordination between zoos are common challenges across all groups of animals.



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

ARUNACHAL CONDUCTS 1ST ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

Arunachal Pradesh has successfully carried out its first artificial insemination using imported sex-sorted Holstein Friesian semen, officials said.



of the day uote

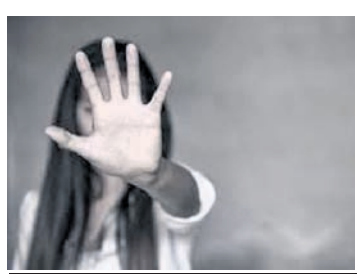
The BJP is preventing PDA (Pichre, Dalit and Alphashankh) people from holding positions like CO (Circle Officer) and SO (Station Officer).

I have not put any condition on any one and there is no need to put any condition. I'm a Karyakarta, I work according to what the party tells me.

We got a clear indication from our high command that the Congress is very much connected with the people of Kerala emotionally and politically.

Union Minister Khadse's daughter, friends harassed

Jalgaon, March 2: Union Minister Raksha Khadse Sunday lodged a police complaint regarding the harassment of her daughter and some of her friends by a group of men at an event in Maharashtra's Jalgaon district.



The FIR was registered on the complaint of Khadse at Muktainagar police station in connection with an incident that occurred at Sant Muktai Yatra in Kothali village Friday night.

The FIR was registered on the complaint of Khadse at Muktainagar police station in connection with an incident that occurred at Sant Muktai Yatra in Kothali village Friday night.

February 24 at a public event. "It is unfortunate. If such things happen to an MP or Union minister's daughter, imagine what common people have to go through," she said.

made to sit for two hours. The police told us to rethink the issue as it relates to girls. The youths have beaten up the police also.

The seven have been charged with stalking and other offences under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

"I have spoken to the chief minister and the deputy superintendent of police," she said, demanding that the culprits be arrested.

Reacting to the development, Maharashtra Congress chief Harshvardhan Sapkal claimed the law and order situation in the state has collapsed under the Mahayuti government.

The bodyguards accompanying the girls named the seven persons, the police official added. Talking to reporters earlier in the day, the Union minister and BJP leader said, "I was in Gujarat, so my daughter called me to ask for permission to go."

Raksha Khadse's father-in-law, former minister and NCP (SP) leader Eknath Khadse said, "The police have already received several complaints in the past, but no effective steps were taken. These boys are hardened criminals."

"The fact that a minister's daughter was molested even in the presence of security guards is a sign that the law and order has gone haywire. Fadnavis should resign from the post of home minister and give the state a full-time competent home minister for the safety of mothers and sisters in the state," the Congress leader said.

Kerala man shot dead at Jordan-Israel border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, March 2: A man from Kerala was reportedly shot dead at the Jordan-Israel border, according to his relatives here.

The deceased has been identified as Ani Thomas Gabriel, 47, a native of Thumba. Gabriel's family said Sunday that they received an email from the Indian Embassy March 1 confirming his death.

The incident occurred February 10, when Jordanian soldiers opened fire at the border. Gabriel's relative, Edison, was also shot but survived and has since returned home with injuries, according to family sources.

Gabriel had left home February 5, saying he was going to Velankanni, a Christian pilgrimage centre in Tamil Nadu, a relative told a TV channel. According to TV reports, Gabriel and Edison were part of a four-member group attempting to cross the border from Jordan into Israel with the help of an agent.

The Jordanian army intercepted them at the border, but as they attempted to escape, the soldiers opened fire. Gabriel was reportedly shot in the head, while Edison sustained a leg injury and was taken to a Jordanian army hospital.

Duplication of voter card numbers: EC to update system



The poll authority also asserted that duplicate numbers do not necessarily imply fake voters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 2: Amid reports flagging issuance of identical voter card numbers to electors in two different states, the Election Commission Sunday said it will rectify the issue and also update its technology-driven platform.

The poll authority also asserted that duplicate numbers do not necessarily imply fake voters. It said while the elector photo identity card (EPIC) numbers of some of the voters "may be identical", the other details, including demographic details, assembly constituency and polling booth, are different.

"Irrespective of the EPIC number, any elector can cast a vote only at their designated polling station in their respective constituency in their state or Union territory where they are enrolled in the electoral roll and nowhere else," the poll panel said.

It explained that identical EPIC numbers or series were allotted to some electors from different states and Union territories due to a "decentralised and manual mechanism" being followed prior to shifting of the electoral roll database of all states to the ERONET (Electoral Roll Management) platform.

This resulted in certain state chief electoral officers using the same EPIC alpha-numeric series and leaving a scope for the possibility of duplicate EPIC numbers being allotted to electors in different assembly constituencies in different states, the poll body said.

According to the EC website, ERONET helps election officials maintain the electoral system "by removing duplicate entries and inclusion of migrated electors".

POST OF THE DAY

Kerala's GST collection is HEALTHY Per capita Post Settlement SGST collected from 1 April 2024 to 28 February 2025, Kerala = 8,363

SHORT TAKES

SC acquits woman awarded life term

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has acquitted a woman from Haryana who was awarded life-term in a 23-year-old murder case of a minor. A bench of Justices MM Sundresh and Rajesh Bindal acquitted the woman after finding fault with the version of the prosecution and the finding of conviction recorded by the trial court on the basis of recovery of weapon 'gandasi' (axe), which was upheld by the high court.

Delhi court acquits 5 men

New Delhi: A court here has acquitted five men in a 2015 kidnapping case, saying the prosecution's story was improbable, unbelievable and riddled with doubts. "The evidence adduced by the prosecution is not worthy of acceptance and there is a serious shadow of doubt cast upon it and not worthy of inspiring any confidence. Hence, they strike at the very root of the prosecution story rendering it to be improbable and unbelievable," Additional Sessions Judge said.

Infant dies during police raid

Jaipur: A one-month-old infant died allegedly during a police raid in Alwar district of Rajasthan, an official said Sunday, adding that the family has registered a case against two policemen in connection with the incident.

SNIPPETS

SFI calls for strike in WB universities today

Kolkata: CPI(M)'s student wing SFI Sunday called for a strike in West Bengal universities March 3, demanding Education Minister Bratya Basu's resignation over the injuries to two protesters at Jadavpur University. The windscreens of the minister's car was smashed by protesters and two of the agitators were injured, one of them seriously, when the tyre of one of the vehicles in his convoy grazed past them Saturday. Students Federation of India (SFI) state committee member Shuvajit Sarkar told PTI Sunday the strike call has been given mainly focusing on university campuses in protest against the "entry of outsiders sheltered by TMC who instigated the violence and vandalism in the Jadavpur university campus March 1."

Inspired by film, boy kills child he was jealous of

Palghar: A teen boy was detained Sunday for allegedly murdering a 6-year-old girl in Maharashtra's Palghar district out of jealousy, with a senior police official claiming he took inspiration for the act from a Hindi film about a serial killer, a police official said. The girl's body was found on Sriram Nagar hillock at around 4.30 am, the Pelhar police station official said. "We have detained a 13-year-old boy from Nalaspore. The deceased is his cousin. He allegedly killed her out of jealousy since he thought everyone pampered her," senior inspector Jitendra Vankute of Pelhar police station told PTI. "The girl had gone missing Saturday evening after which her kin approached police. CCTV footage from the vicinity of a nearby company showed the boy taking the girl somewhere. The boy first tried to mislead police but later confessed," he said.

Devendra Fadnavis denies 'cold war' with Shinde

Mumbai: Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis Sunday scoffed at speculations of a "cold war" between him and his deputy Eknath Shinde, and mocked Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut, quipping he wants to compete with Salim-Javed, the legendary screenwriting duo. He was addressing a press conference with deputy CMS Shinde and Ajit Pawar after a cabinet meeting and customary tea party ahead of the four-week budget session of the Assembly, which begins Monday. "There is no war. Those who know both of us will remember what we do when we are together," said Fadnavis, pointing to their meetings before Shinde's rebellion split the undivided Shiv Sena and sunk the Maha Vikas Aghadi government in 2022.

'40% global population lacks education in their language'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 2: Forty per cent of the global population does not have access to education in a language they speak or understand, according to UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) team. Despite countries' growing understanding of the role of home language, policy uptake remains limited. Implementation challenges include limited teacher capacity to use home languages, unavailability of materials in home languages and community opposition, it said. In some low- and middle-income countries, this figure rises to 90 per cent. More than a quarter of a billion learners are affected, GEM

officials said, recommending nations to implement multilingual education policies and practices with the goal of creating educational systems that benefit all learners. The team, which has come up with a report titled "Languages matter: Global guidance on multilingual education", noted that as migration increases, linguistic diversity is becoming a global reality and classrooms with learners from diverse language backgrounds are more common. Over 31 million displaced youth are facing language barriers in education. The report was compiled on the 25th anniversary of International Mother Language Day, celebrating a quarter-century of dedicated



efforts to preserve and promote the use of mother tongues. The report comes at a time when India is in the process of implementing the new National Education Policy (NEP) that advocates multilingual education. The three-language policy in school education has drawn opposition from some states. According to the analysis by the team, the gap between

UP court acquits 45 in rioting case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur (UP), March 2: A court here has acquitted 45 individuals in a 27-year-old case of rioting, which claimed the life of a police gunner, due to lack of evidence. The violence took place January 9, 1998, when hundreds of people protested demanding the arrest of those responsible for allegedly assaulting the Imam of a mosque in Laxmipurwa area of Kanpur and disrupting the district's power supply.

The fast track court's recent decision to acquit all 45 accused came after the prosecution failed to present a strong case against the undertrials, according to defense counsel Shakeel Ahmad Bundel who represented 24 of the 77 accused in the case. Bundel said all the 45 accused were out on bail prior to the court's verdict. While the court acquitted the accused in the rioting case, it sentenced four individuals to three years in prison under the Arms Act. Government counsel Rajendra Uttam said that all four convicts were granted bail, as their sentence was less than three years.

Defense counsel Bundel provided details about the events leading to the riot. He said that the violent incident occurred January 9, 1998, when hundreds of people took to the streets, demanding the arrest of those responsible for assaulting the Imam of a mosque in Laxmipurwa, and disrupting the district's power supply.

bigger risk of leaning loss. In the second category, immigration brings new languages to classrooms in richer countries, enriching linguistic diversity but also posing challenges in instruction and assessment.

The GEM team has recommended that educational language policies should prioritise context-specific approaches and language transition must be backed by curriculum adjustments and supported by teaching and learning materials adapted for that grade. Planning for strong support systems outside of schools to ensure the success of new multilingual education policies and supporting school leaders to foster inclusion in schools are also among the recommendations.

international



Ramazan this year comes with a new flavour. This is the Ramazan of victory and liberation. HUSSAM HAJ-HUSSEIN | INTERIM MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, SYRIA

POPE'S HEALTH STABLE Pope Francis was in stable condition and resting on Sunday as he continued his recovery from double pneumonia, but again skipped his weekly noon blessing to avoid even a brief public appearance. For the third weekend in a row, Francis cancelled the appointment delivering the Angelus prayer



of the day quote

We have gone from being a global laughing stock ... to being an unexpected protagonist. The eyes of the world are now on Argentina after a long time

There's a real problem for European leaders to pick up the pieces and try and move forward. It's going to be a damage limitation exercise. It's going to have to be an exercise in where do we go from here?

The trade dispute will have far-reaching spillover effects, from price increases and paperwork backlogs to longer wait times at the US-Canada border for both people and products

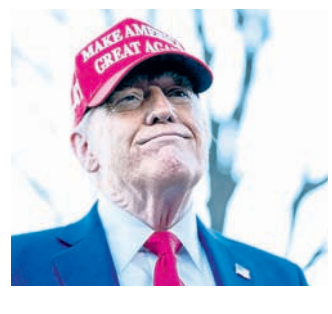
Trump makes English official language of US

For decades, lawmakers in Congress have introduced legislation to designate English as the official language of the US, but those efforts have not succeeded

Washington, March 2: President Donald Trump has signed an executive order designating English as the official language of the United States. The order allows government agencies and organizations that receive federal funding to choose whether to continue to offer documents and services in

language other than English. It rescinds a mandate from former President Bill Clinton that required the government and organizations that received federal funding to provide language assistance to non-English speakers. "Establishing English as the official language will not only streamline communication but also reinforce shared national

values, and create a more cohesive and efficient society," according to the order signed by Trump on Saturday. "In welcoming new Americans, a policy of encouraging the learning and adoption of our national language will make the United States a shared home and empower new citizens to achieve the American dream," the order also states. "Speaking English not only opens doors economically, but it helps newcomers engage in their communities, participate in national traditions, and give



back to our society." More than 30 states have already passed laws designating English as their official language, according to US En-

glish, a group that advocates for making English the official language in the United States. Within hours of Trump's inauguration last month, the new administration took down the Spanish language version of the official White House website. Hispanic advocacy groups and others expressed confusion and frustration at the change. The White House said at the time it was committed to bringing the Spanish language version of the website back online. As of Saturday, it was still not restored.

OUTBREAK SPREADS US sees first measles death in over decade

Houston, March 2: The United States has recorded its first measles-related death in over a decade, as a growing number of cases sweeps across the country, with Texas emerging as the epicentre of the outbreak, officials said. The highly contagious virus has infected individuals in at least nine states, sending several to hospitals. The Texas Department of State Health Services Saturday confirmed 146 measles cases as of February 28. A school-aged child in west Texas, who was unvaccinated, succumbed to the highly contagious but preventable respiratory disease on Wednesday, marking the first measles-related death in the US in over a decade. The outbreak in Texas has spread to neighbouring New Mexico, the officials said. Dr Peter Hotez, a pediatrician and virologist at Baylor College of Medicine, warned that the outbreak is a direct consequence of declining vaccination rates. "When vaccination coverage drops below 90%, measles can spread like wildfire. One infected person can transmit the virus to up to 18 others," he said.

Starmer hugs Zelenskyy after White House clash

UK's PM tries to revive hope for Ukraine peace at summit

London, March 2: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer will try to revive hope for peace in Ukraine at a meeting with Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other Western leaders Sunday, two days after the Ukrainian president clashed with US President Donald Trump. After the heated row with Trump, who threatened to stop support for Ukraine after accusing Zelenskyy of being ungrateful for US aid, the Ukrainian leader flew from Washington to London Saturday to be greeted with a warm hug from Starmer.



done anything wrong Friday. He described watching the spat between Zelenskyy and Trump in the Oval Office as uncomfortable viewing, but was keen to push the conversation forward by offering himself as a go-between for Europe and the United States. Starmer will ask leaders how they can step up to provide Kyiv with aid before any peace talks begin, given that many are struggling with limited public finances. Lacking the weaponry and depth of ammunition stocks of the United States, European leaders have so far offered expressions of support after the Zelenskyy row, with Germany calling for the release of 3 billion euros (\$3.1 billion) for Ukraine. Starmer is trying to revive a possible peace deal with Russia by convincing Trump that Europe can step up to defend itself. Some leaders might also encourage Zelenskyy to go back into talks with the US leader. He said the war was at a turning point three years into the invasion, and he offered "unwavering support for Ukraine" by doubling down on providing capacity, training and aid to Kyiv.

STANDOFF OVER TRUCE

Israel halts Gaza aid

The first phase of the ceasefire, which included a surge in humanitarian aid, expired Saturday. The two sides have yet to negotiate the second phase, in which Hamas was to release dozens of remaining hostages in return for an Israeli pullout and a lasting ceasefire



Israel says hostages must be released for ceasefire to continue. Hamas wants Israel to move to second phase of ceasefire. Negotiations ongoing, threat of renewed violence remains.

Jerusalem, March 2: Israel blocked the entry of aid trucks into Gaza Sunday as a standoff over the truce that has halted fighting for the past six weeks escalated, with Hamas calling on Egyptian and Qatari mediators to intervene. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said earlier that it had adopted a proposal by US President Donald Trump's envoy, Steve Witkoff, for a temporary ceasefire in Gaza for the Ramadan and Passover periods, hours after the first phase of the previously agreed ceasefire expired. If agreed, the truce would halt fighting until the end of the Ramadan fasting period around March 31 and the Jewish Passover holiday around April 20. The truce would be conditional on Hamas releasing half of the living and dead hostages on the first day, with the remainder released at the conclusion, if an agreement is reached on a permanent ceasefire. Hamas says it is committed to the originally agreed ceasefire that had been scheduled to move into a second phase, with negotiations aimed at a permanent end to the war, and it has rejected the idea of a temporary extension to the 42-day truce. Reflecting the fragility of the ceasefire deal, local health of-

officials said Israeli gunfire had killed four Palestinians in separate attacks in the northern and southern Gaza Strip. The Israeli military said that "suspects" were identified close to its troops in northern Gaza and that they had planted a bomb. It added that an airstrike was carried out to "eliminate the threat." Egyptian sources said Friday that the Israeli delegation in Cairo had sought to extend the first phase by 42 days, while Hamas wanted to move to the second phase of the ceasefire deal. Spokesman Hazem Qassem said on Saturday that the group rejected Israel's "formulation" of extending the first phase. In the first phase of the ceasefire, Hamas handed over 33 Israeli hostages as well as five Thais returned in an unscheduled release, in exchange for around 2,000 Palestinian prisoners and detainees from Israeli jails and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from some of their positions in Gaza. Under the original agreement, the second phase was intended to see the start of negotiations over the release of the remaining 59 hostages, the full withdrawal of Israeli

troops from Gaza, and a final end to the war. However the talks never began and Israel said all its hostages must be returned for fighting to stop. "Israel will not allow a ceasefire without the release of our hostages," Netanyahu's office said, announcing that the entry of all goods and supplies into the Gaza Strip would be halted. "If Hamas persists in its refusal, there will be additional consequences." Hamas has denounced Israel's move as "blackmail" and a "blatant coup against the agreement". "We call on mediators to pressure the occupation to fulfill its obligations under the agreement, in all its phases," it said, adding that the only way to get the hostages back would be to adhere to the agreement and start talks for the second phase. Over the past six weeks, both sides have accused the other of breaching the agreement. But despite repeated hiccups, it has remained in place while the hostage-for-prisoner exchange envisaged in the first phase was completed.

Wealth gap widens Chinese inequalities

Beijing, March 2: China's wealthiest individuals continue to grow richer, widening economic inequalities in the country despite the ruling Communist Party's efforts to control private businesses and implement policies aimed at boosting people's incomes, a report here said. The combined wealth of the 5.12 million families in China with over six million yuan (\$824,000) in assets was stated to be about 150 trillion yuan (over \$seven trillion) in 2024, according to a report published by the Hurun Research Institute. Of this, the wealthiest 130,000 families accounted for 58 per cent in 2024, which is up from 56 per cent a year earlier, the report said. China's per capita disposable income was stated to be 41,314 yuan (over \$41,314) last year, up 5.3 per cent from 2023, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported, citing the report. Analysts have warned that Beijing needs to work harder to narrow the wealth gap in its society more broadly as it tries to ignite a private sector-led economic recovery, the Post reported Sunday.

SHORT TAKES

Iran's Parl fires economy minister

Tehran: Iran's parliament Sunday impeached the country's economy minister and voted to remove him from office, amid growing concerns over the crashing rial and accusations of mismanagement. Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf announced that 182 out of 273 lawmakers voted to dismiss Abdolnasser Hemmati, just six months after President Masoud Pezeshkian's government took office. Pezeshkian, who defended Hemmati, emphasised that the government is locked in a tough battle with the West. He called for greater unity and cooperation from Parliament to face these challenges. The decision comes amid rising tensions over Iran's nuclear program and worsening relations with the West. Iran's economy has been severely affected by international sanctions, especially after the US withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal. In 2015, the rial was worth 32,000 to the dollar, but by the time Pezeshkian took office in July, it had plummeted to 584,000 to the dollar. Recently, it dropped even further, with exchange shops in Tehran trading 930,000 rials for each dollar.

Nepal arrests Indians for trafficking drugs

Kathmandu: Three people, including two Indians, were Sunday arrested from Nepalgunj sub-metropolitan city for trafficking narcotic drugs, Nepal Police said. Jiyaul Haque Shesh, 38, and Kishore, 18, both from Kolkata in India, and Nafis Mohamad Kabadiya, 24, a resident of Nepalgunj, were arrested along with 5,000 tablets of Tramadol, a type of narcotic drug, a Nepal Police News Bulletin said. A team of police dispatched from Jayapur police station arrested the trio with the drug during a security check on an Indian number plate motorbike headed towards Nepal from India, it said.

More troops sent to US-Mexico border

Washington: The Pentagon is sending about 3,000 more active-duty troops to the US-Mexico border as President Donald Trump seeks to clamp down on illegal immigration and fulfil a central promise of his campaign, US officials said Saturday. The forces will arrive along the nearly 2,000-mile border in the coming weeks. Already, about 9,200 US troops in total are at the southern border, including 4,200 deployed under federal orders and about 5,000 National Guard troops under the control of governors.

Energy transition: Challenges & opportunities

In 2024, global production of wind and solar energy reached unprecedented levels—figures that would have seemed unimaginable just a short time ago. Over the last 15 years, the contributions of wind and solar energy to the world's electricity generation have surged from nearly zero to 15 percent, while the cost of solar panels has plummeted by as much as 90 percent. These advancements signify a significant step forward in the energy transition—the movement away from a hydrocarbon-centric energy mix towards a low-carbon future dominated by renewable sources. However, 2024 also marked a record year for another reason: energy production from oil and coal reached all-time highs. Over a longer timeframe, the proportion of hydrocarbons in the global primary energy mix has barely changed, decreasing from 85 percent in 1990 to around 80 percent today. This suggests that what we are witnessing is less of an "energy transition" and more of an "energy addition." Rather than replacing conventional energy sources, the growth of renewables is coming on top of that of conventional sources. And with Donald Trump's return to the U.S. presidency, priorities will focus again on conventional energy production and what his administration calls "energy dominance." Concern about climate change had raised expectations for a rapid shift away from carbon-based fuels. But the realities of the global energy system have confounded those expectations, making clear that the transition—from an energy system based largely on oil, gas, and coal to one based mostly on wind, solar, batteries, hydrogen, and biofuels—will be much more difficult, costly, and complicated than was initially expected. What's more, the history of past energy transitions suggests that this should not come as a surprise: those were also "energy



additions," with each adding to rather than eliminating prior sources. As a result, the world is far from on track to achieve the often stated target of reaching, by 2050, "net-zero emissions"—a balance in which any residual emissions are offset by removals of emissions from the atmosphere. And there is no clear plan for get-

ting on track or for delivering the magnitude of investment that would be required to do so. The International Energy Agency projected in 2021 that, for the world to meet 2050 targets, greenhouse gas emissions would need to decline from 33.9 gigatons in 2020 to 21.2 gigatons in 2030; thus far, emissions have gone in the other direction, reaching 37.4 gigatons in

2023 (and there's no reason to think that a 40 percent decline in just seven years will be remotely feasible). Other facts similarly reflect the challenges of transition. The Biden administration set a goal of electric vehicles accounting for 50 percent of new cars sold in the United States by 2030; yet that number remains just ten percent, with automakers slashing investment in electric vehicles as they face multibillion-dollar losses. Past transitions, such as the shift from wood to coal, were motivated by improved functionality and lower costs, incentives that are not yet present across much of the entire energy system. The scale of the transition means that it will also be very costly. Technological, policy, and geopolitical uncertainty makes it challenging to estimate the costs associated with achieving net zero by 2050. But one thing is certain: the costs will be substantial. Any path to emissions reductions will have to go through the global South, because that is where substantial growth in energy demand will be. Yet its nations face particularly daunting challenges in attracting the capital necessary to move away from cheap, coal-based sources of energy (or from wood and waste) in large part because renewable energy projects often entail high upfront capital costs, long-term investment horizons, and policy and regulatory uncertainties while natural gas projects are rejected on ESG grounds. A combination of multilateral grant funding and more private investment is necessary to increase the flow of money to the global South. Ever since Abraham Darby switched to coal from wood more than three centuries ago, technological innovation has been central to every evolution in energy production. Investments in and research, development, and deployment of clean energy technologies have driven significant declines in cost for solar and wind. AGENCIES

