



Kritika's philosophy

Actor Kritika Kamra always believes that staying true to oneself is the key to long-term success

LEISURE | P2



Trump delays tariffs

President Donald Trump says he has postponed 25% tariffs on most goods from Mexico for a month after talks with that country's president

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Markets rebound

Sensex rallies nearly 610 points to reclaim 74,000-mark while Nifty closes above 22,500 following heavy buying

BUSINESS | P11



India on advantage

New Zealand batting mainstay Kane Williamson reckons India have 'real clarity' on how they want to operate in Dubai

SPORTS | P12

Subhadra crosses 1 crore milestone

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 6: The state government Thursday disbursed ₹5,000 each to 2.30 lakh beneficiaries under Subhadra Yojana in the fifth phase of the first instalment, crossing the one crore milestone.

Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida, who holds the Women and Child Development portfolio, disbursed the amount to beneficiaries through DBT.

"Since its launch by Prime Minister Narendra Modi September 17 last year, the state government has disbursed financial assistance under the scheme in five phases, benefiting over one crore women," Parida added.

She also highlighted the state government's aim of creating at least five 'lakhpati didis' in every village as part of its vision for a 'Viksit Odisha'.

To further help women to become empowered, the government will assist the beneficiaries to enhance their skills and provide them market linkage to sell their products, she assured. Parida appealed to all beneficiaries of the scheme to light a lamp (diya) March 7 evening for the welfare of their families and their societies.

Additionally, she announced that the state government has decided to release 10 months of pending salaries for women workers under the Mission Shakti department, including Bank Mitras, Krishi Mitras and Prani Mitras.

Furthermore, the government will provide a bonus of ₹1,500 to each Anganwadi worker and ₹500 to each Anganwadi assistant in recognition of their dedication to reaching one crore women under the scheme, she said. In its election manifesto, the BJP had promised to provide ₹50,000 to one crore women in the state. "Now, that promise has been fulfilled," Parida added.

Deputy CM Pravatī Parida announces bonus for Anganwadi workers and assistants



FOR A CAUSE: Police personnel use water cannon to disperse members of Kerala Students' Union (KSU) during their protest in Kochi, Thursday, demanding government action against alleged drug mafia in Kerala

Justice Harish Tandon new HC Chief Justice

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 6: The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended the appointment of Justice Harish Tandon as the Chief Justice of Orissa High Court, official sources said Thursday. Justice Tandon has been serving as a judge of Calcutta HC since April 13, 2010.

The recommendation was made following the retirement of Chief Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh January 19, 2025. Justice Arindam Sinha is currently serving as the acting Chief Justice of Orissa HC.

Justice Tandon ranks at seven in the All-India Seniority of High Court Judges, including Chief Justices, the Collegium said in its statement.

"He has acquired extensive experience in dispensing justice. He is considered to be a competent judge and possesses a high level of integrity and conduct required of a person holding high judicial office," it said.



Trump's last warning

Issuing his 'last warning' to Hamas, US President Donald Trump threatened the militant group to release all the hostages in Gaza immediately, or 'it is OVER for you.' Trump's warning came just a few hours after US confirmed that it was negotiating directly with Hamas about hostages and Gaza ceasefire, a move that goes against its tradition of not talking to groups it considers terrorist organisations. Taking to Truth Social, the US President said he would send Israel 'everything it needs to finish the job'. Trump's latest salvo at Hamas is interpreted as a culmination of the US' preparation for a full-scale attack against the terror outfit which started after it made Israel call a ceasefire with the warring militants

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, March 6: US President Donald Trump issued what he called a 'last warning' to Hamas to release all remaining hostages held in Gaza, directing a sharply worded message after the White House confirmed that he had recently dispatched an envoy for unprecedented direct talks with the militant group.

In a statement on his Truth Social platform soon after meeting at the White House with eight former hostages, Trump added that he was 'sending Israel everything

it needs to finish the job.'

"Release all of the Hostages now, not later, and immediately return all of the dead bodies of the people you murdered, or it is OVER for you," Trump said. "Only sick and twisted people keep bodies, and you are sick and twisted!" The pointed language from Trump came after the White House said Wednesday that US officials have engaged in 'ongoing talks and discussions' with Hamas officials, stepping away from a long-held US policy of not directly engaging with the militant group.

Confirmation of the talks in the Qatari capital of Doha came as the Israel-Hamas ceasefire remains in the balance. It's the first known direct engagement between US and Hamas since the State Department designated the group a foreign terrorist organisation in 1997. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt declined to provide detail on the substance of talks, but said President Donald Trump has authorised his envoys to 'talk to anyone.'

Egyptian and Qatari intermediaries have served as mediators with Hamas for US and Israel since the group launched its October 7, 2023 attack on Israel that sparked the war.

"Look, dialogue and talking to people around the world to do what's in the best interest of the American people is some-

thing that the president ... believes is a good-faith effort to do what's right for the American people," she said.

Leavitt added that Israel has been consulted about the direct engagement with Hamas officials, and noted that there are 'American lives at stake.'

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's office offered a terse acknowledgement of the US-Hamas talks. "Israel has expressed to US its position regarding direct talks with Hamas," the PM's office said.

Israeli officials say about 24 living hostages — including Edan Alexander, an American citizen — as well as the bodies of at least 35 others are believed to still be held in Gaza.

Adam Boehler, Trump's nominee to be special envoy for hostage affairs, led the direct talks with Hamas. Boehler, founder and CEO of Rubicon Founders, a healthcare investment firm, was a lead negotiator on the Abraham Accords team during Trump's first term that strove to win broader recognition of Israel in the Arab world.

The talks, which took place last month, focused mainly on the release of American hostages, and a potential end of the war without Hamas in power in Gaza, according to a Hamas official who was not authorized to comment publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

CM residence welcomes occupant after 25 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 6: After remaining vacant for nearly 25 years, the official residence of Odisha Chief Minister in the state capital welcomed a new occupant as Mohan Charan Majhi formally moved in Thursday.

Majhi, along with his family, performed the 'Gruha Pravesh' ceremony at 10:47am, following a puja conducted by 11 priests from Puri.

"The Chief Minister entered the official residence along with two cows, according to Hindu rituals of Gruha Pravesh," said Pandit Bishnu Charan Panda, one of the officiating priests. The two cows — Nandi and Nandini — were worshiped during the ceremony and will continue to reside on the premises.

Majhi had previously been staying at a government quarters on Mahatma Gandhi Marg.



However, due to its proximity to an agitation site, security personnel faced frequent challenges, an official said.

The new CM's residence, located between AG Square and Raj Bhavan, had remained unoccupied for over two decades as former CM Naveen Patnaik chose to reside at his private home, Naveen Niwas, near the Biju Patnaik International Airport.

The two-storey official residence, situated near the CM's Grievance Cell, underwent extensive renovations over the past eight months.

The upgraded residence now features multiple conference rooms, a watchtower, and a spacious garden. The official residence was previously occupied by former CMs JB Patnaik and Giridhar Gamang until 2000.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Murder, corruption, harassment—his name is everywhere. But no arrests... he praises Godse, not Aurangzeb!

At 108, world's oldest female barber has no plans to retire anytime soon

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, March 6: Meet the world's oldest female barber: She is 108 but the slender, white-haired Japanese woman has no plans to retire anytime soon.

Shitsui Hakoishi says the formal recognition by the Guinness World Records this week brought her much joy — other than her satisfied customers, that is.

She was presented with an official certificate from the international franchise Wednesday. Guinness World Records has a separate category for male barbers but the man who was certified at age 107 in 2018, Anthony

Mancinelli of the United States, has died in the meantime, leaving Hakoishi as the only holder of the record.

Her career has spanned nine decades and she says she owes it all to her customers.

"I could come this far only because of my customers," Hakoishi told a televised news conference Wednesday at a gymnasium in her hometown of Nakagawa in the Tochigi prefecture, northeast of Tokyo. "I'm overwhelmed and filled with joy." Born November 10, 1916 to a family of farmers in Nakagawa, Hakoishi decided to become a barber at age 14 and moved to Tokyo, where she honed her craft first as an apprentice.



She got her barber's license at 20 and opened a salon together with her husband. They had

two children before he was killed in the Japan-China war that broke out in 1937.

Hakoishi lost her salon in the deadly March 10, 1945 US firebombing of Tokyo. Before that, she and her children were evacuated elsewhere in the Tochigi prefecture, according to the Guinness website.

It took her eight more years before she opened a salon again, calling it Rihatsu Hakoishi, in her hometown of Nakagawa. Rihatsu is Japanese for barber. She says she isn't ready to put away her scissors.

"I am turning 109 this year, so I will keep going until I reach 110," she said and smiled confidently.

London: Bid to breach Jaishankar's security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London/New Delhi, March 6: A pro-Khalistani protester attempted to breach the security perimeter outside Chatham House in London as External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar left the think-tank, drawing condemnation from India over the provocative activities of this 'small group of separatists and extremists'.

The small group chanting pro-Khalistan slogans and waving separatist flags was barricaded and monitored by a significant police presence outside the venue Wednesday night, with officers rushing to restrain the man as he ran past the barricade in an attempt to block the path of the minister's car pulling at an Indian flag. He was swiftly taken aside by Metropolitan Police officers and no arrests have been reported so far. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi condemned the incident of the 'security breach' and called on the UK government to 'live up to their diplomatic obligations'.

of a breach of security during the visit of the EAM to the UK," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in New Delhi.

"We condemn the provocative activities of this small group of separatists and extremists. We deplore the misuse of democratic freedoms by such elements. We expect the host government in such cases to fully live up to their diplomatic obligations," he said.

The UK strongly condemned the 'security breach', saying such attempts to 'intimidate, threaten, or disrupt' public events are 'completely unacceptable'. "We strongly condemn the incident that took place outside Chatham House yesterday (Wednesday) during the EAM's visit to the UK," a Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office spokesperson said.

A Met Police spokesperson added, "As the Minister left the event, a protester ran in front of his stationary car waving a flag. He was quickly intercepted by officers and moved out of the way. He did not get close to the Minister who was able to leave the area without further incident. There were no arrests."

Police recruitment exam put on hold

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 6: The state government Thursday put on hold the written examination for recruitment to Group-B posts in the police department due to 'unavoidable circumstances', an official statement said.

The exam, conducted by the Odisha Police Recruitment Board (OPRB), was scheduled to be held March 8-9 at different centres across Odisha, it said.

In January, the OPRB had issued advertisements for recruitment for 933 vacancies in the police department — 609 sub-inspector posts, 253 sub-inspector (armed) posts, 47 station officer (fire service) posts and 24 assistant jailor positions.

Several aspirants, however, had raised objections over the conduct of two written examinations for Assistant Agriculture Officer (AAO) and Group-B posts in the police department March 9.

The aspirants had demanded postponement of at least one test.

leisure



JANE FONDA RECALLS PROTECTING HER GRANDSON FROM A WILD BEAR

Jane Fonda, at 87, recounted a moment when she pushed a wild bear out of her bedroom. The bear had entered the room where her grandson's crib was. Fonda scared the bear away by making herself appear larger.

PATTINSON CAN NO LONGER WATCH HORROR MOVIES

Robert Pattinson shared that he has become too sensitive to watch horror movies. He once had to watch a horror film for a project meeting and ended up sleeping with knives because he was so scared. Pattinson is teaming up with Parker Finn for a *Possession* remake, but it's unclear if he will star in it.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Business affairs and love will flourish today. You can expect some monetary benefits and even some loans to be sanctioned. In love, you anticipate a romantic evening, where you will confide your deepest feelings to your beloved. Ganesh says you couldn't possibly ask for more.

TAURUS

This is a productive day to deal in money matters, foresees Ganesh. You will probably enjoy both money and muscle power in the afternoon. A necklace or pendant is awaiting your sweetheart, so surprise her. Caution: There is a risk of your money being swindled.

GEMINI

It is possible that the start of the day may not see you in the best of moods and some mental distress is the likely reason behind it. You need to consult an expert to find out the best way out of your current predicament. You will feel the need to do things that appeal to you in the evening, in a bid to elevate your mood, says Ganesh.

CANCER

A perfect day in store for you, says Ganesh! You may begin the day on a positive note, and may decide to express your gratitude towards the God by visiting a temple. Religious feelings may also keep you preoccupied. Stars will take a good care of your health today, and you may also get a plenty of free time.

LEO

You will face some problems today and will be tense on account of them. You may experience instability and conflict in your personal relationships. You should not spend time chasing useless schemes and concentrate on fruitful and progressive activities, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

All big businessmen may expect a very beneficial and progressive day. The loans for which you have applied may be sanctioned by the financial institutions today. However, Ganesh advises you not to neglect your beloved and near and dear ones, for without them there is little cause for interest in life.

LIBRA

Ganesh says you will be busy in work related to your business field. People in the field of research will gain success today. In legal matters that are pending, the judgment will be in your favor today. Solutions regarding the success of your business will come out too.

SCORPIO

Fully charged up, your enthusiasm and sense of humour is quite contagious today. People who belong to creative fields should let their creative juices flow freely. In short, you are performance driven today. All's well that ends well, and this day is sure to end on a positive note, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Caught in a whirlpool of thoughts, you are likely to give a new look to your lovely abode. You plan to decorate it with rare artefacts and object de art. Evening will be high on romance as you treat your sweetheart and taste-buds with sumptuous dinner.

CAPRICORN

Mounting work load may give you wrinkles on the forehead, but you see light at the end of the tunnel. With undying spirit you keep on going irrespective of the magnitude of the problems. Don't get demotivated though, says Ganesh, as you are blessed with loving and supportive family members. After a long day at work, coming home will be like a breather as your family will cheer you up.

AQUARIUS

Your intelligence and positive attitude will get you through every situation today. You will spend afternoon with friends and have a gala time with them. Why should family be left alone? Plan the evening with family members, and enjoy their presence in your life, suggests Ganesh.

PISCES

Your hidden hopes will be shown today or you will share them with someone. You will suddenly come across people who had gone away from your life some time back. Today is the day to dream and to foster new hopes and dreams. With Ganesh's blessings your planetary positions are favourable.

Kritika on her career choice

MUMBAI: Actress Kritika Kamra has opened up about the philosophy that has followed through her journey in the world of acting and said that she has never sold her soul or compromised her ethics to make it big.

"I have always believed that staying true to myself is the key to long-term success," said Kritika.

"I never sold my soul or compromised my ethics to make it big. For me, my journey has always been about being proud of the choices I make."

"It's not just about the fame or the spotlight; it's about being able to sleep peacefully at night knowing I haven't betrayed my values. That's what keeps me grounded, no matter how challenging or glamorous the industry might be," she added.

From her portrayal in the web series

Bambai Meri Jaan to her performances in projects like *Gyaarah Gyaarah*, Kritika has made it clear that she prioritises substance over surface-level appeal.

She added: "I don't want to chase trends or conform to the pressures of the industry. I want my body of work to reflect my beliefs, my taste, and my growth. The roles I pick are an extension of who I am. For me, it's about telling stories that resonate with people and leave a lasting impression."

IANS



AYUSHMANN'S startling revelation

MUMBAI: Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana has revealed that for the past 20 years, he has been holding an Aadhaar card registered in Haryana.

In his latest post, the *Bala* actor shared this interesting detail while talking about his upcoming Haryanvi songs. Taking to his Instagram handle, he shared a photo of him with *The Heartbreak Chhora* written on it. The poster shows Ayushmann dressed in black, standing holding a stick, exuding Haryanvi vibes.

The text on the next photo read, "The Heartbreak Chhora This is the name of my new EP. 'I follow Haryanvi songs quite a bit. For twenty years, my Aadhaar card was from Haryana. I thought, let's sing something in Haryanvi. I would like to call this genre 'Urban Haryanvi.' So, friends, tomorrow Ayushmann is bringing you these three songs. *The Heartbreak Chhora*, *Ho Gaya Pyaar Re* and *Drive to Murthal*."

Sharing this post, the *Vicky Donor* actor captioned it, "#TheHeartbreak-Chhora Coming Soon Presave the link in bio."

Reacting to his post, Ayushmann's wife and author Tahira Kashyap commented, "Yes," followed by several red heart emojis.

Alia opens up about ADHD

MUMBAI: Alia Bhatt recently opened up about her struggles with mental health, revealing that she was diagnosed with ADHD and anxiety. In an interview, the *Jigra* actress shared how she began experiencing physical reactions at social gatherings, such as feeling her body heat up and struggling to focus.

This led her to seek professional help and get tested, where she was diagnosed with both conditions. Alia explained that she had always considered herself an "amazing multi-tasker," but over

time realised that constant multitasking was taking a toll on her, causing her to forget even basic things.

The diagnosis brought her relief, as it gave her clarity about her struggles. "It gave me information so whenever there's a lack of information, I get most thrown off," she said, adding that understanding her conditions made it easier to cope. The actress also revealed that she is not on medication but is actively working on managing her mental health.

Her need for answers intensified after becoming a mother to her daughter, Raha. "I didn't want to forget anything related to my daughter," she shared. The diagnosis helped her understand why her brain felt chaotic at times, offering comfort and reassurance that her feelings were not just in her head.



PEANUTS



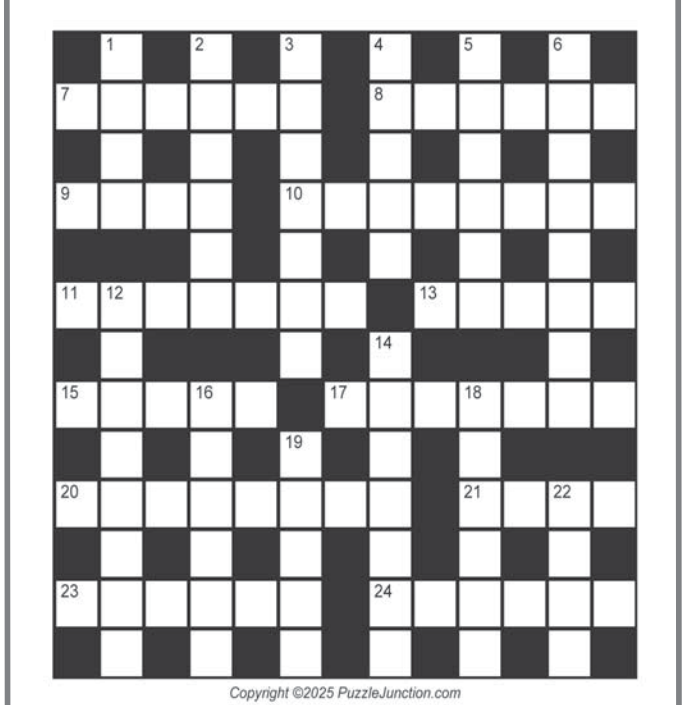
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



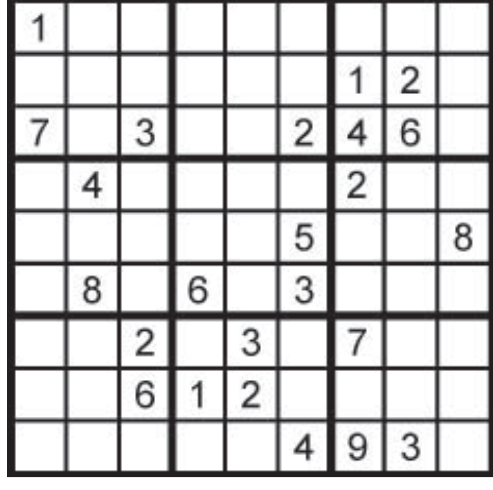
FUN post CROSSWORD



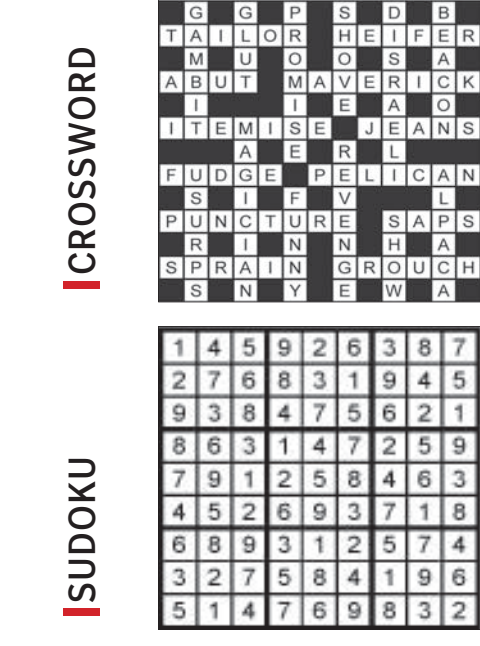
- Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 7 Sci-fi entryway
 - 8 Worldwide
 - 9 Rich soil
 - 10 Excused
 - 11 Make more attractive
 - 13 Desert sight
 - 15 Blocks
 - 17 Edible subterranean fungus
 - 20 Sensational
 - 21 Style
 - 23 Peanut brittle base
 - 24 Brain cell
 - Down**
 - 1 London's ___ Square
 - 2 Buffalo, as it were
 - 3 Railroad car
 - 4 Heron
 - 5 Major publicity promotin
 - 6 Cheerio!
 - 12 Doberman pinscher, maybe
 - 14 Mint family member
 - 16 Appease
 - 18 Renowned
 - 19 Female fox
 - 22 Plummet

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.



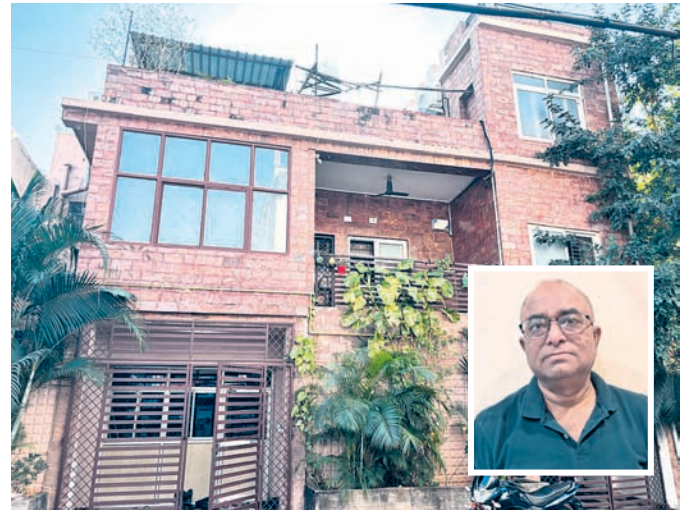
SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

Vig glare on STA Dy Commissioner



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 6: The state Vigilance claimed to have unearthed a massive amount of movable and immovable properties linked to senior state Transport department official during searches at his residence at Maitri Vihar here, Thursday.

A Vigilance official said the disproportionate assets recovered from the residence of Pradeep Kumar Mohanty, posted as a Deputy Commissioner in the State Transport Authority (STA) include Rs 15 lakh cash, about 1 kg gold, a fleet of vehicles and documents of several properties in and around the Capital City.

Giving details, the official said the properties include four multi-storied buildings, 11 plots, a 14-acre farmhouse which are registered in Mohanty's name. The movable properties include three gold biscuits (yet to be weighed), 700 gm gold ornaments, three four-wheelers, and a motorcycle. The official said the seized vehicles are expensive sports utility vehicles (SUVs). All the

The disproportionate assets recovered include Rs 15 lakh cash, about 1 kg gold, a fleet of vehicles and documents of several properties in and around the Capital City

Vigilance sleuths allegedly found that Mohanty had paid Rs 1 crore towards the purchase of a 4-bhk flat in Raghunathpur area of the City

Three plots of land have been located in Nayagarh, six more are in Khordha, while one each is located in Patia and Khandagiri, respectively

properties have been attached pending investigation, he said.

During initial probe, the Vigilance sleuths allegedly found that Mohanty had paid Rs 1 crore towards the purchase of a 4-bhk flat in Raghunathpur area of the City. "Three plots have been located in Nayagarh, six more are in Khordha, while one each is located in Patia and Khandagiri, respectively", he added.

The officer said the STA official's bank accounts, postal, and insurance deposits are presently being scrutinised for further information.

CS directs all-out drives to curb illegal mining

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 6: Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja Thursday directed all district officials to undertake massive enforcement drives to curb all illegal mining of minor minerals and their transportation in their respective localities.

During a meeting with Collectors/District Magistrates, and Superintendents of Police (SPs) in virtual mode, Ahuja instructed the district functionaries to conduct raids at sand and stone quarries, check illegal mining at the source and book cases as per law against the accused.

Simultaneously, strict action is to be taken against illegal transport of minerals and transport without E- Transit Pass. "Wherever it is established prima facie that a vehicle is involved in illegal transport of mineral, it shall be seized forthwith as per law," Ahuja said.

The strategy for enforcement drive shall be decided jointly by the Collector and SP. Sub-divisional level teams and tehsil-level teams consisting of revenue, mining, police and other officials shall undertake enforcement activities, he directed.

Collectors have also been instructed to undertake survey of new sources of sand and black stone. Each district has been asked to identify new sources equalling to 150 per cent of their current sources. District survey reports for these new sources shall be prepared by August, and the sources are targeted to be auctioned by October this year. Sources said the aim of the move is to increase number of sairat sources, which will not only ease the availability of minor minerals, but also make the prices reasonable, apart from checking illegal mining.



EARLY HOLI: Students of Capital Girls' High School at Unit IX in Bhubaneswar play colours following the end of their Board exams Thursday **PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK**

ONLINE TRADING FRAUD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 6: The state Crime Branch Thursday arrested a woman from South Delhi on charges of swindling Rs 87 lakh from a resident here by luring him into high returns on investments through online trading. The accused, Vandana Bawa, was found to be involved in two other cyber fraud cases in Kerala and Gujarat, according to CB officials.

Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Ritesh Mohapatra said the complainant, a resident of Salisahre Vihar, lodged a complaint February

Delhi woman dupes City man of ₹87 lakh, arrested



2, 2024, alleging that a stranger had added him into a WhatsApp Group "101 Stock Discussion Group". The group admin, identifying herself as a market expert, shared tips about picking stocks, initial public offerings (IPOs) and other tricks on the group. This made the complainant to cling on to the group. "Vandana then shared fake pictures of account statements of members showing high re-

turns on their investments following which the complainant invested Rs 87 lakh in phases and on different dates. However, the complainant realised that he had been duped when the fraudster removed him from the group and went incommunicado," the ASP said.

He said a Saket court has granted permission for the transit remand of Vandana. She has been booked under Sections 419, 420, 465, 467, 468, 471, 120 (B) of IPC, along with Section 66 (C) and (D) of Information Technology Act. The sleuths produced her before a local court Thursday.

Sculpture at Dhauli

BHUBANESWAR: A huge sculpture of a bow and an arrow has been installed on the foothills of Dhauli Peace Pagoda ahead of the first-ever archery competition for visually-impaired women to be held on the premises of Labour and Employment Directorate's office at Pokhaript in Bhubaneswar March 8. The competition will be jointly organised by Union Ministry of Labour and Employment, Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department of the state government and social outfit 'Bulls Eye'.



Direct flights to Port Blair, Ghaziabad from March 30



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 6: Direct flight services from Bhubaneswar to Ghaziabad and Port Blair will commence March 30, Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said recently.

"Aviation Bonanza for #Bhubaneswar! Sincere gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @Narendramodi as new flights to Ghaziabad (Hindon) and Port Blair take off shortly under the #NewDestinationPolicy—boosting tourism, trade and

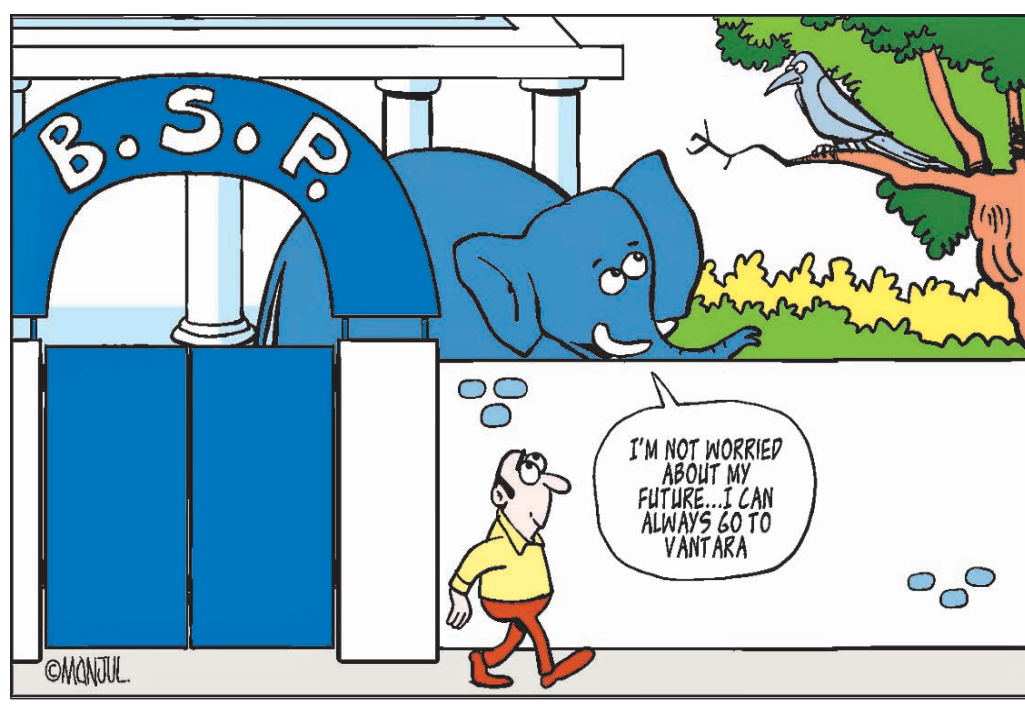
seamless connectivity," the CMO posted on X. Highlighting Odisha's progress, the CMO added, "With Viksit Odisha in motion, the state takes a bold leap toward a more connected future, driving economic growth and enriching cultural exchanges."

Air India Express will operate the services.

According to the schedule, the flight from Hindon will depart at 9:20 AM and arrive in Bhubaneswar at 11:45 AM. The return flight will leave the state capital at 12:15 PM and reach Hindon at 2:30 PM.

Similarly, the flight to Port Blair will depart from Bhubaneswar at 10:35 AM and arrive at 12:55 PM. On the return journey, it will take off from Port Blair at 1:25 PM and land here at 3:35 PM.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



NHRC team begins probe into KIIT row

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 6: A team of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Thursday began its inquiry into the death of a 20-year-old Nepalese girl student at KIIT University and the subsequent alleged attacks on the students of the Himalayan nation by the staff of the private institute.

Led by Joginder Singh, Registrar (Law), the inquiry team reached the airport and proceeded straight to KIIT University under Infocity Police Station here.

"We will follow the commission's order and work accordingly," Singh told reporters. Prakriti Lamsal, a third-year Computer Science student at KIIT, was found dead in a hostel room of the university on the evening of February 16. It was alleged that she died by suicide.

The commission has asked the team to submit findings by March 10. Acting upon a complaint lodged by Ashutosh B, a resident of the city, and a letter from Nepal's rights panel, the NHRC had formed a team of officers from the investigation and law divisions to conduct an on-spot inquiry into the student's death at KIIT University, Bhubaneswar, and submit a report by March 10.

"Considering the seriousness of the matter, the commission directs its Registrar (Law) to proceed with an inquiry in KIIT University along with a team consisting of two officers from the investigation division, one not below the rank of SSP, and one officer from law division," the NHRC order stated.

The complainant has claimed that Lamsal, a Nepalese student at KIIT University, had faced harassment by an engineering student at the institute, following which she died by suicide. The victim had brought the harassment issue before KIIT's

Dedicated cell opens for international students

The Higher Education department Thursday has launched a dedicated International Student Facilitation Cell and a helpline number to support and assist overseas students studying in the universities across the state. Taking to X, Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj said, "The Department has launched a dedicated International Student Facilitation Cell to support and assist international students across (Public/Private/Deemed) universities in the State." The social media post also said, "To foster a conducive and inclusive environment for international students pursuing or interested in pursuing their studies in the state's colleges and universities, this helpline number is launched. The helpline numbers (0674-2323403, 0674-2323404) will be available from 10:30 AM to 5:30 PM on working days."

Clearing AIBE needed for practice experience: HC

ORISSA HIGH COURT DISQUALIFIES LAWYER'S NOMINATION AS 'TREASURER' IN KHURDA DISTRICT BAR ELECTION

PRABHAT PANIGRAHI, OP

Khurda, March 6: The practice experience of an advocate enrolled with the state bar council cannot be taken into account unless and until he qualifies the All-India Bar Examination (AIBE) conducted by the Bar Council of India (BCI), the Orissa High Court said.

While disqualifying an advocate from holding the post of 'treasurer' of a district bar association for lack of practice experience after qualifying AIBE, the single bench of Dr Justice Sanjeeb Kumar Panigrahi referred to the All India Bar Examination Rules, 2010 and observed, "a perusal of the above rule clearly demonstrates that the All India Bar Examination is mandatory for all law students graduating from the year 2009-10 onwards. Passing



this examination is a critical requirement, directly linked to maintaining the standard of individuals seeking to obtain a license to practice law as a profession."

The said advocate had filed his nomination for the post of 'treasurer' in the annual district bar election in Khurda for the term of 2024-25. The petitioner, advocate Biswakesh Mohapatra, lodged a complaint with the Election Officer of the Khord-

ha District Bar Association, alleging that the advocate was ineligible to contest the election due to having only three years of practice experience since he had cleared AIBE only in 2021.

However, the Election Officer dismissed the complaint on the ground that the advocate had been included as a valid voter in the voter list issued by the Odisha State Bar Council (OSBC). Accordingly, his nomination was accepted.

Thereafter, the petitioner approached the OSBC which constituted a central election committee to investigate the matter. Upon deliberation, the committee concluded that the opposite party (advocate) who had cleared AIBE only in March 2021 could only be considered a practicing advocate from that date onwards, and not before.

Then, the OSBC directed the Election Officer of the Khordha District Bar Association to verify whether the eligibility criteria for the treasurer's post requires a minimum of ten years of regular practice. In the event such a ten-year requirement was proved, the Election Officer was instructed to take the requisite steps to invalidate the nomination as the advocate did not meet the stipulated eligibility criteria. However, the Election Officer failed to comply with the order.

This made the petitioner file a writ petition in the Orissa High Court seeking that the respondent be treated as a 'non-practicing advocate' from the date of his enrolment to March 2021 - the date of passing AIBE - and he be disqualified under Rule 25 of the Khordha District Bar Association Rules, 1957.

After perusal of the above rule, Justice Panigrahi made clear that clearing AIBE is mandatory for all law students graduating from the year 2009-10 onwards for being eligible to practice the profession of law. Consequently, the Election Officer was directed to comply with the direction of the election committee and take necessary steps to invalidate the nomination filed by respondent as he did not meet the requisite eligibility criteria.

International Relations Office (IRO), but failed to get justice, the complainant alleged.

The local police have arrested one engineering student on the charge of abetment and he is now under judicial custody since February 17.

The complainant also alleged that the Nepalese students, who sought justice and protested the death of the girl student, were verbally abused, threatened and assaulted by KIIT officials and security guards.

The Nepalese students were allegedly served eviction notices, driven out of their hostel rooms and dropped at a railway station.

These students were allegedly asked to return to their country without making any return arrangements.

SC sets 6-month deadline for civil execution pleas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 6: The Supreme Court Thursday asked all high courts to direct civil courts in their jurisdiction to decide the execution petitions within six months, failing which presiding officers would be held liable.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and Pankaj Mithal also ordered high courts to gather data from district courts regarding pending execution petitions. The bench expressed concern that many such petitions, filed to enforce civil decrees, remain unresolved for three to four years.

"If execution petitions are delayed for years, it defeats the purpose of the decree," Justice Pardiwala remarked.

The ruling stemmed from a long-pending civil dispute from Tamil Nadu dating back to 1980. The court directed all high courts to collect data on pending execution petitions and issue administrative orders or circulars to ensure their disposal within six months. High courts must also forward the collected data to the Supreme Court registry.



excessive delays by executing courts in enforcing decrees.

The case before the bench involved a land sale agreement dated June 30, 1980, by Tamil Nadu resident Ayyavoo Udayar. A dispute arose over the land's title, prompting Udayar to file a civil suit for specific performance in 1986. Despite securing a favorable decree, the defendants did not execute the sale deed, leading to prolonged litigation.

In 2004, the decree-holder filed a petition seeking enforcement of the decree, but it was dismissed. A revision petition in 2006 allowed the enforcement, yet the sale deed remained unexecuted. Another order for possession was passed in 2008 but was not carried out.

The Supreme Court ruled that the high court had committed a "serious error" in its handling of the case. It emphasized that the decree-holders must receive the property's vacant and peaceful possession within two months, using police assistance if required.

This directive aims to expedite justice and prevent undue delays in enforcing civil court rulings.

The verdict emphasised that presiding officers failing to meet the deadline would be answerable to the high court. The matter has been scheduled for review in seven months to ensure compliance.

The Supreme Court noted that similar directions had been issued in 2021 and 2022, mandating completion of execution proceedings within six months, yet they were not implemented. It criticized the



PLAY ENACTMENT: Artistes from Rangamancha, Rourkela stage the play 'Jibana Jemiti' as part of the 33rd annual Natyatsav 'Arohan' at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

Governor welcomes navy's motor rally

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 6: The Indian Navy's car rally along the East Coast, flagged off from Kolkata March 3, reached Odisha Thursday.

Governor Hari Babu Kam-bhampati welcomed the team at Raj Bhavan here.

The car rally, which will cover a distance of around 3,800 km, will travel to Kanyakumari and return to Chennai by March 21.

The initiative aims to enhance maritime awareness, engage with youth and civil society, and promote career opportunities in the Indian Navy, including the Agnipath scheme,



officials said.

As part of the journey, the rally team will visit schools and colleges to inspire young men and women to join the Indian Navy. It will also promote the Centre's Naari Shakti initiative for women empowerment. Addi-

tionally, interactions with naval veterans will be held to update them on the latest welfare policies of the government and the navy, they said.

During an interaction at Raj Bhavan, the Governor praised the expedition's objective of

raising awareness and encouraging youth to serve the nation through the Indian Navy.

He also shared his fond memories of the navy and acknowledged its commitment to excellence and national security.

Expressing gratitude for the warm welcome, Lieutenant Commander Jubin John, a team member, said that the rally will explore India's rich maritime heritage by visiting historical naval sites and ancient trade route locations along the coast.

As the rally departed Raj Bhavan, the Governor bid farewell to the team, waving them off with his best wishes for their journey ahead.

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	34.4°	32.5°
Min Temp	16.5°	18.8°
Humidity	33%	45%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST		
Mainly clear sky		

Odisha mining expo kicks off



RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 6: The 3rd Odisha Mining and Infrastructure International Expo 2025, India's largest exhibition dedicated to the mining sector, commenced Thursday here at Baramunda Ground.

The four-day event, running until March 9, is organised by Futurex Trade Fair and Events Pvt Ltd in association with the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Skill Council of Mining Sector, and the Odisha Assembly of Small and Medium Enterprises (OASME).

Inaugurating the expo, Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise (MSME) Minister Gokulananda Mallik highlighted the state's dominance in mining. "Odisha leads in the production of bauxite, coal, iron ore, and other minerals, significantly contributing to the state's revenue. This expo showcases the industry's growth and vast potential," he said.

Additional Chief Secretary Hemant Sharma emphasised the

expo's importance in fostering industry collaboration and technological advancements. "This platform brings together key stakeholders and innovators, driving the growth of Odisha's mining sector through strategic partnerships," he stated.

Futurex Group managing director Swami Prem Anveshi pointed out the strong international presence, with companies from Russia, Germany, Korea, Japan, and Taiwan displaying advanced mining technology. "These innovations will transform mining operations and infrastructure development in India," he remarked.

With over 250 participating companies, the expo features industry leaders such as SA-NY, Thyssenkrupp, Tata Hitachi, Schwing Stetter, and KYB Combat, showcasing state-of-the-art machinery, technology solutions, and services.

The event serves as a crucial platform for businesses, professionals, and policymakers to exchange knowledge and explore new growth opportunities.

Banks urged to boost credit in key sectors

Bhubaneswar: The 178th State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) meeting, co-chaired by Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg and UCO Bank executive director VN Kamble, was held Thursday to discuss credit expansion strategies. Garg emphasised the need to achieve 100 per cent of the Annual Credit Plan (ACP) target of ₹2.11 lakh crore for FY 2024-25. She urged banks to prioritise credit flow in housing, education, and export sectors while addressing regional disparities in financial access, particularly for women, SC/ST communities, and weaker sections. Stressing the importance of PM-SVANidhi, a scheme regularly reviewed by the Prime Minister, Garg called for increased financing efforts. Additionally, she sought banking support for the newly-launched Financial Assistance to Cold Storage scheme, aimed at strengthening storage infrastructure, reducing post-harvest losses, and preventing distress sales by farmers. Banks were also encouraged to enhance credit flow to improve Odisha's Credit-to-GDP ratio. The ACP target for FY 2025-26 has been set at ₹2.52 lakh crore, as per NABARD projections. Kamble commended banks for achieving 68.95 per cent of the ACP target by December 31 and full coverage under social security schemes like PMJJBY, PMSBY, and PMJDY. However, he raised concerns over slow implementation of PM Vishwakarma, declining SHG loan applications, and registration challenges in the housing sector. RBI regional director SP Mohanty pointed out the retail and food inflation in Odisha, the state's lower credit growth compared to the national average, and RBI's initiatives to promote financial literacy and cybersecurity.

CSIR-IMMT hosts SSTV-2025

RESHMI YADAV, OP

Bhubaneswar, March 6: A two-day national conference on 'Sustainable Science and Technology for Viksit Bharat' (SSTV-2025) commenced at CSIR-Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT) here Thursday, as part of the institution's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

The conference focuses on sustainable innovations across energy, healthcare, agriculture, and strategic industries sectors. The conference was inaugurated by Jajpur MP Rabindra Narayan Behera and Jagatsinghpur MP Bibhu Prasad Tarai.

Speaking on the occasion, Behera emphasised India's rich scientific heritage, urging responsible technological progress. "The vision of Viksit Bharat by Prime Minister proves he is not just a leader but a true visionary. We must work together to achieve it. While the West has dominated global science and technology, we must remember that our own roots—Vedas, Puranas, and Upanishads—hold immense scientific wisdom, which we have



long neglected," he said.

"At the same time, technological progress must align with sustainability. Industries must innovate responsibly, ensuring that development and environmental conservation go hand in hand for a truly Viksit Bharat," he added.

Tarai highlighted the nation's economic aspirations under PM Modi's leadership and said, "The vision of Viksit Bharat is no longer just an idea. It is a national mission. Science and technology will play a crucial role in making India self-re-

liant and a global leader."

The following day will have keynote speeches, panel discussions, and research presentations from leading institutions, including CSIR, ISRO, DRDO, IITs, and NITs. The 4M Vigyan Rath, which toured Eastern India promoting research in mining, minerals, metals, and materials, was welcomed back at the IMMT campus.

Distinguished speakers include, creator of Vande Bharat Express Sudhanshu Mani and NIT Warangal director Bidyadhar Subudhi.

Parkinson's cases may surpass 2.5 crore by 2050

Rising aging population fuels surge in neurological disorders worldwide

The global burden of Parkinson's disease is expected to rise significantly in the coming decades, with over 2.5 crore people projected to be living with the neurodegenerative disorder by 2050. According to a new study conducted by researchers at Capital Medical University, China, the estimated increase marks a staggering 112 per cent surge from 2021, primarily driven by an ageing population.

The findings, published in The

British Medical Journal, highlight that East Asia is expected to witness the highest number of cases, surpassing 1 crore, while South Asia is projected to have the second-largest share, with around 68 lakh cases.

The study underscores the urgent need for increased research, healthcare infrastructure, and policy measures to address the growing prevalence of the disease.

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that gradually impairs movement, balance, and coordination. It can also affect speech, memory, and behaviour. Common symptoms include involuntary tremors, muscle stiffness, slow movement, and



difficulty with coordination.

The disease is caused by the loss of dopamine-producing neurons in the brain, but its exact triggers remain unclear.

The study analysed data from the Global Burden of Disease Study 2021 to estimate the prevalence of Parkinson's disease

between 2022 and 2050 across 195 countries and territories. Researchers found that population ageing is the primary factor behind the rise in cases, accounting for nearly 90 per cent of the projected increase.

While East and South Asia will have the highest number

of cases, the study predicts that Western Sub-Saharan Africa will experience the most dramatic rise, with an almost 300 per cent increase in Parkinson's prevalence. This sharp spike highlights the need for global healthcare systems to prepare for a higher demand for treatment and support services.

Another key finding of the study is the changing gender ratio among Parkinson's patients. The male-to-female ratio, which stood at 1.46 in 2021, is expected to rise to 1.64 by 2050, suggesting that men may be increasingly at risk of developing the condition compared to women.

The researchers emphasised that increasing physical activity and adopting healthier life-

styles could help reduce future Parkinson's cases. Additionally, they called for intensified efforts in medical research, particularly in the development of novel drugs, gene engineering techniques, and cell replacement therapies.

These advancements, they noted, could modify the disease's progression and significantly improve the quality of life for those affected.

The study's findings serve as a crucial call to action for governments, healthcare providers, and researchers worldwide to invest in better diagnostic methods, effective treatments, and improved support systems for individuals living with Parkinson's disease.

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Pradhan bats for tourism circuit in Sambalpur district



A pre-historic rock painting at Bhimamandali

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, March 6: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has requested his colleague Union Culture and Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat to set up a dedicated tourism circuit encompassing Debrigarh, Bhimamandali and Hirakud.

Pradhan, the Lok Sabha MP from Sambalpur, also sought Shekhawat's help in engaging the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to protect and conserve the heritage site of Bhimamandali. He said these efforts would boost the state's tourism landscape and promote the country's standing as a hub for heritage tourism.

In a letter to the Union Culture and Tourism Minister Wednesday, Pradhan described Bhimamandali as a site rich in prehistoric rock paintings and stone inscriptions, some of which are believed to be several

thousand years old. Located around 100 km from Hirakud Dam, Bhimamandali holds immense archaeological value, he added. As one of the oldest rock art sites in the state, Bhimamandali features intricate paintings and engravings of deer, elephants, animal footprints and honeycomb patterns, offering a rare glimpse into early human settlements, he said.

He said the site is believed to be linked to the Pandavas from the Mahabharata and is named after Bhima, making it a must-go destination for tourists. Pradhan added that Bhimamandali attracts a diverse range of visitors, including history enthusiasts, nature lovers, pilgrims and adventure seekers.

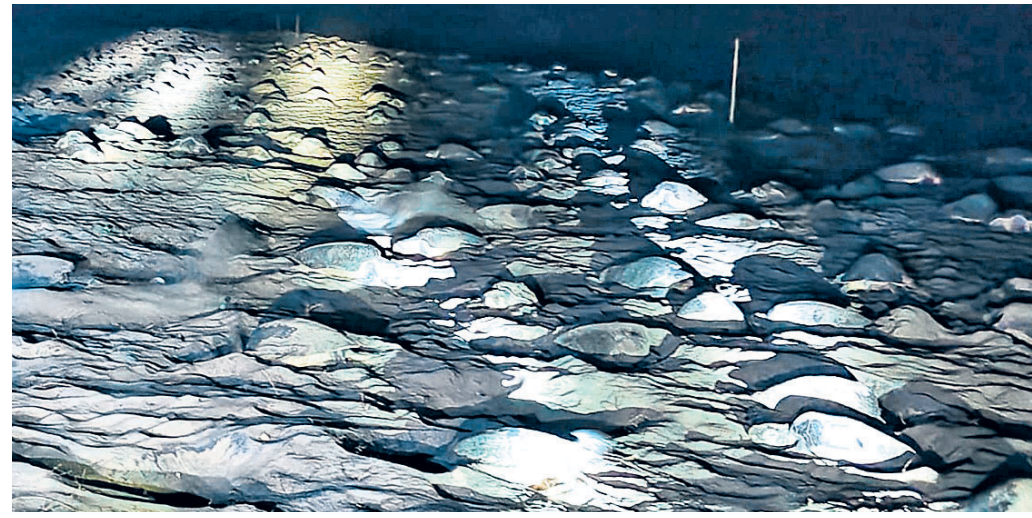
However, he expressed concern over the site's deteriorating condition. Due to a lack of maintenance, much of the rock art has become indecipherable. Historians, heritage conservationists and local communities have been demanding that Bhimamandali be declared a protected monument by the ASI to ensure its preservation and conservation, he added. Pradhan also wrote about the importance of Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary located between Hirakud Dam and its adjoining reservoir.

He said the sanctuary is home to a wide variety of wildlife and contains artifacts and tools dating back to the Middle and Upper Paleolithic Ages.

Given its immense tourism potential, Pradhan urged that Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary be included in the Swadesh Darshan scheme of the Union Ministry of Tourism. The proper preservation and protection of Bhimamandali's heritage site require professional expertise and resources of ASI, Pradhan wrote.

Arribada begins at Gahirmatha

PNN & AGENCIES



Kendrapara, March 6: The mass nesting of Olive Ridley turtles commenced at Gahirmatha beach in Kendrapara district, a senior forest official said Thursday.

Chief Wildlife Warden Prem Kumar Jha, in a post on X, said, "Olive Ridley 'arribada' has commenced at Gahirmatha, the world's largest rookery, following a record-breaking 6.37 lakh mass nesting at Rushikulya." 'Arribada' is a Spanish term for the mass nesting.

Jha said this is a significant milestone in Odisha's ongoing marine conservation efforts.

In another post, he said, "Gahirmatha witnessed the arrival of over 78,000 Olive Ridley turtles for mass nesting last night. As the world's largest rookery, it remains a critical site for their conservation. Odisha continues its dedicated efforts to protect these marine wonders."

An official of Rajnagar Forest (Mangrove) Division said it was heartening to note that the turtles have arrived on their annual sojourn to lay eggs at the tranquil Nasi-II beach of Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary.

The news came amid environmentalists expressing concern over the delay in the arrival of the turtles.

They suspected that climatic conditions might have caused the delay. The Olive Ridley

turtles usually come to Gahirmatha by February-end but it was delayed by a week.

The mass nesting, which commenced Wednesday night, is expected to continue for at least one week.

The perfect topography and profile of the beach, free from sea erosion, has proved to be conducive for the turtles to lay eggs, the official said.

Nasi-II beach comes under the jurisdiction of the Defence

Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) which conducts missile tests from the neighbouring APJ Abdul Kalam Island, the erstwhile Wheeler Island.

Visitors are not allowed on the beach and only forest personnel are deployed there for patrolling.

The forest personnel deployed there were the only witnesses to the rare phenomenon. No wildlife researcher could reach the spot due to prohibitions in place, the official said.

The presence of the for-

est personnel on the nesting ground did not bother the turtles as they maintained a distance from the turtles, he added.

Female turtles arrive at the beach usually at the dead of the night to lay eggs. After laying eggs, they return to the sea. The hatchlings emerge from the eggs after 45-50 days. It is a rare natural phenomenon where the babies grow without their mother, the official added.

An Olive Ridley turtle usually lays about 120-150 eggs. But not all eggs remain intact as predators devour some. Besides, some eggs are also washed away by sea waves during high tide.

DEVELOPMENT COMES AMID ENVIRONMENTALISTS EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER THE DELAY IN THE ARRIVAL OF THE TURTLES THIS YEAR
THE OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLES USUALLY COME TO GAHIRMATHA BY FEBRUARY-END BUT IT WAS DELAYED BY A WEEK

Four injured in explosion while making crackers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, March 6: At least four persons, including two minor boys, sustained serious injuries in an explosion at an illegal cracker manufacturing unit in Jajpur district Thursday, police said.

The incident took place at Jajpur village under Jajpur Town police station limits.

The injured persons were making crackers when the explosion occurred, police added. All the injured were rushed to Maharaja Jajati Keshari Medical College and Hospital in Jajpur.

The impact of the blast was so powerful that the roof and wall of the pucca house, where the illegal firecrackers were being manufactured, were severely damaged, police added.

The matter is under investigation and the reason will be ascertained after the probe, a police official said.

Heroin seized; 3 peddlers arrested



Rourkela: Rourkela police have made significant progress in their ongoing battle against drug trafficking, with the arrest of three individuals on drug-related charges Thursday. The arrested drug peddlers were identified as Sofik alias Kamran Khan, 36; Chuddu alias Saif Ali, 28; and Baaban alias MD Arif, 36. All three are residents of Nalla Road area. Police seized 16.58 gram heroin, one motorcycle, three mobile phones, and cash amounting to ₹10,700 from their possession. The arrests were made after the Plant Site police station received reliable information about the trio. A police team, led by Sub-Inspector S Panda, was patrolling the area when they intercepted the suspects, who were travelling on the seized bike. "They were immediately arrested and brought to the station. We are currently interrogating them and trying to determine all their connections," said Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Ambit Mohanty. Earlier, police had raided the Mina Para area in Nalla Road and detained four people, including three women. During an early morning raid recently, officers recovered over 150 packets of brown sugar, each containing one gram. At the time, Rourkela Superintendent of Police (SP) Nitesh Wadhwani emphasized the department's commitment to fighting the drug trade and targeting drug peddlers. Just three days ago, the Plant Site police arrested Karan Singh, a resident of the Gandhi Road area, with the seizure of 22 kg ganja, a car used for smuggling, a country-made pistol, and two live cartridges.

3 sentenced to life for murder

Bolangir: A court in Bolangir Thursday sentenced three men to life imprisonment after convicting them in the 2022 murder case of Sudhir Behera in Sadaipali under Bolangir Sadar police station limits. Additional Sessions Judge (First Class) Himanshu Shekhar Singh found the accused—Sanjeev Mugri, Bishal Suna and Shiba Nag—guilty and imposed a fine of ₹10,000 on each. In case of failure to pay the fine, they will serve an additional year in prison. According to the case diary, Behera had gone to Sadaipali with friends to witness Rath Yatra July 2, 2022, when the accused attacked him with iron rods over past enmity. Family members rushed a critically injured Behera to Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital, and later shifted him to VIMSAR Hospital in Burla, where he died during treatment. Bolangir Sadar police arrested the three men and presented them in court. The judge delivered the verdict after hearing statements of 22 witnesses, said Additional Public Prosecutor Pradeep Kumar Padhi.

17 boats gutted as fire breaks out at Paradip fishing harbour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

With around 650 large boats and 400 indigenous ones stationed at the harbour, the blaze poses a grave threat

Paradip, March 6: A fire broke out at the Nehru Bangla Fishing Harbour in Paradip Thursday, police said.

Though there was no report of any fatality so far, 12 large boats and over five engine-powered indigenous boats were completely gutted in the blaze, the cause of which was yet to be ascertained, they said.

At least 10 fire tenders have been pressed into service to douse the flames, a police officer said.

The fire broke out around 5pm in a boat at jetty number 1 and quickly spread to nearby vessels.

boats and 400 indigenous ones stationed at the harbour, the blaze poses a grave threat, the officer said. "The situation became worse as cooking gas cylinders and diesel tanks onboard exploded. Each boat carried over 3,000 litres of diesel, along with fishing equipment, making it a highly combustible environment," a fire department official said.

With around 650 large

Absconding rape accused arrested

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kendrapara, March 6: A man, who had allegedly raped a 13-year-old girl last year in Kendrapara district and was on the run since then, has been arrested, police said Thursday.

Acting on a tip-off, the accused, 25, was nabbed from his house Wednesday night. He was absconding after committing the crime in January last year, said Inspector-In-Charge of Pattamundai police station, Bandana Patra.

The girl was allegedly sexually assaulted January 30, 2024 while she was alone in the house, Patra said. The accused was produced in a local court, which remanded him to judicial custody, police said.

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PUBLIC NOTICE FOR AUCTION OF GOLD ORNAMENTS

It is hereby notified to all concerned borrower(s) in specific and the public, in general, that we, IIFL Finance Limited ("IIFL") are auctioning gold ornaments of defaulted customers who neither regularized their loans nor paid the outstanding amount despite being informed through registered auction notices and repeated reminders. Public auction of the gold ornaments pledged in the following loan accounts will be conducted on 10.03.2025 from 10:00 AM at following district Centre **BOLANGIR-BANSITA COMPLEX GL, IIFL FINANCE LTD, BANSITA COMPLEX, GROUND FLOOR, RAMAI TAKIES ROAD INFRONT OF HOTEL RAJ MAHAL- 767001**. Any change in venue or date (if any) will be displayed at the auction center. If for any reason the auction cannot be held on the date mentioned here in or the auction does not get completed on the same day, IIFL reserves the right to conduct or proceed with the said auction on any subsequent date with same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased, then all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to nominee/legal heir.

- Gold Loan A/C No.:** GL25675963, GL31067847, GL31155390, GL31178314, GL31205584, GL31228900, GL31630063, GL31652840, GL31747508, GL31764274, GL31783145, GL33080551, GL33286379, GL33369995, GL3373562, GL33600681, GL33767544, GL34330674, GL33154686, GL33486632, GL33515761.

The Auction shall be conducted on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" and "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis and IIFL does not make any representation or warranties regarding quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. IIFL, at its absolute sole discretion, may either postpone or remove, any of accounts from auction list and any proceedings without prior notice and without assigning any reason therefor and to reject any or all the bids or offers without assigning any reason for the same. Details of defaulting borrower(s) pledged ornaments and other details have been displayed at the respective branch. The defaulter borrower(s) have an option to repay the entire dues including up to date interest and all applicable charges and close or regularize their loan account even after publication of this notice but in any case, till the date of auction, failing which the pledged gold ornaments will be sold and balance dues (if any) will be recovered with interest and costs. However, the defaulter loans which are closed or regularized on or after this publication, will have to bear the proportionate publication charge. Borrowers are requested to submit/update their latest bank account details to enable timely refund of excess auction proceeds, if any.

For detailed information, terms and conditions, contact the concerned branch office of IIFL Finance Limited.

Place: BALANGIR
Date: 07.03.2025

Sd/
AUTHORISED SIGNATORY
IIFL FINANCE LIMITED

IIFL FINANCE
CIN: L67100MH1995PLC093797
Regd. Office: IIFL House, Sun Infotech Park, Road No. 16V, Plot No.B-23, Thane Industrial Area, Wagale Estate, Thane - 400604
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- Gold Loan A/C No.:** GL31633914, GL31653322, GL31657421, GL31670750, GL31677773, GL33385730, GL33531690, GL33542332, GL33550467, GL33569499, GL33872615, GL32717594, GL33090642, GL33217866, GL33629649, GL33282852, GL31023474, GL31033371, GL31047456, GL31047504, GL33044959, GL33057682, GL33344078, GL33355466, GL33360257.

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Place: ANGUL
Date: 07.03.2025

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IIFL FINANCE LIMITED



We must watch over our thoughts. A bad thought is the most dangerous of thieves.

THE MOTHER

Get rich before getting old

The effects of falling birth rates and rising life expectancy are increasingly evident in advanced economies like Germany, Italy, and Japan. Labour markets are tightening, worker shortages are worsening, and families are struggling to find care for aging parents. In some areas, declining student numbers are forcing schools to shut down. South Korea offers a stark example. In 2023, as the country's total fertility rate plummeted to just 0.7 children per woman of childbearing age over a lifetime, sales of dog strollers surpassed those of baby strollers. But population aging is not limited to advanced economies. Within a generation or two, many emerging economies will likely face the same demographic problems plaguing their developed-country counterparts – without the financial resources needed to cushion the blow.

In a new McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) report, we divide these demographic shifts into three distinct waves. The first wave has already swept advanced economies, as well as Eastern Europe and China, where working-age populations peaked around 2010, followed by steady declines. As a result, per capita GDP growth in those economies is projected to slow by 0.4 percentage points annually on average, or as much as 0.8 percentage points in some countries, by 2050. While around 30 per cent of the labour income is currently used to fund pensioners' consumption, this figure could increase to close to 50 per cent by mid-century.

The second demographic wave will hit emerging economies over the next decade, as working-age populations peak everywhere except Sub-Saharan Africa, where it is projected to peak when the third wave arrives in the second half of the century. These economies have a narrowing window of opportunity before their demographic dividend diminishes and the financial burden of supporting an aging population rises sharply.

In nearly half of the 89 emerging economies outside Sub-Saharan Africa, fertility rates have already fallen below the replacement level of 2.1 births per woman, leading to a rapid decline in the ratio of working-age individuals (typically defined as 15-64) to those who are 65 or older. China, an emerging economy with the demographic profile of a developed one, currently has 4.8 working-age people per retiree – not far from the United States' ratio of 3.6. By 2050, China's ratio of working-age people to pensioners is projected to fall to 1.9, below France (2.0) and the US (2.6).

Demographic transitions are unfolding at a slightly slower pace in other emerging economies. Whereas Thailand's ratio of workers to pensioners is projected to fall to 3.9 – the current average in first-wave countries – within five years, Brazil will reach that level in 16 years and India in 33. In all three cases, however, GDP per capita in emerging economies remains significantly lower than that of high-income countries. In purchasing-power-parity terms, Thailand's GDP per capita is just 37 per cent of the average in advanced economies, Brazil's is 34 per cent, and India's is 16 per cent.

These shifts present emerging economies with a daunting challenge: they must get rich before they get old. Over the past 25 years, favourable demographic trends have led to an average annual increase of 0.7 percentage points in India's per capita GDP and 0.5 percentage points in Latin America's. But India's demographic dividend is now projected to drop to 0.2 percentage points of annual GDP growth over the next quarter-century, while Latin America's is expected to vanish.

So, what can emerging economies do? For starters, they must boost productivity. GDP per capita is determined mainly by the size of the workforce relative to the total population and the productivity of individual workers. Productivity in emerging economies lags far behind that of wealthier counterparts, averaging \$13 per hour worked – or \$18 when excluding Sub-Saharan Africa – compared to \$60 per hour in high-income countries.

Given the right investments, emerging economies have an opportunity to create a "flywheel" effect, whereby investment fuels productivity gains. This, in turn, would attract more investment, create meaningful employment opportunities, boost purchasing power, and enable companies to increase productivity even further.

Beyond productivity gains, emerging economies can mitigate the impact of demographic shifts by increasing labour-force participation, particularly among women. In the median emerging economy, the labour-force participation rate of women aged 20-49 hovers around 60 per cent, compared to 80 per cent in advanced economies.

To navigate demographic shifts effectively, governments and businesses in emerging economies must learn from the experiences and strategies of developed countries. Two key lessons stand out.

First, emerging economies must ensure that young people are positioned to compete globally. In addition to improving their education systems, they must boost other investments in human capital and skill development.

The private sector could play a crucial role in this effort. With global consumption and talent increasingly shifting toward the developing world, emerging economies have an opportunity to cultivate the next generation of superstar companies. As MGI research has shown, developing economies that outperform their peers often have large, competitive firms to thank for it. But building such businesses requires a supportive ecosystem, including strong institutions, reliable physical and digital infrastructure, robust intellectual-property protections, and access to investment and partnerships.

The second lesson for emerging economies is to develop effective and sustainable social support systems. In many emerging economies, old-age support systems are still largely informal and family-based. As these countries' populations age, the growing share of elderly people will strain such traditional structures.

Developed countries, currently grappling with mounting public debt associated with the costs of eldercare, should serve as a cautionary tale. By improving financial inclusion and creating incentives for private savings and wealth accumulation, emerging markets could build systems that support aging populations without undermining economic resilience.

Emerging economies can also avoid some of the fiscal challenges facing their developed-country counterparts by investing in the health and well-being of their young and middle-aged populations. To ensure that workers remain active and productive well into old age, policymakers should seek to promote routine exercise, expand access to healthy food, and provide high-quality health care, especially preventive care.

Most importantly, policymakers must keep in mind that demographic change does not hit like a tsunami; it happens gradually, like a tide. While its predictability is an advantage, its slow pace makes it easy to overlook until the consequences become unavoidable. Emerging economies still have time, but the water is already around their ankles.

Anu Madgavkar is a partner at the McKinsey Global Institute in Newark. Marc Canal Nogue is a senior fellow at the McKinsey Global Institute in Barcelona. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE



Anu Madgavkar & Marc Canal Nogue

Within a generation or two, many emerging economies will likely face the same demographic problems plaguing their developed-country counterparts – without the financial resources needed to cushion the blow

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

RECALIBRATING FOREIGN POLICY

The ascendance of Donald Trump to the White House for the second time has caused a tectonic change in global geopolitical order. All countries have to adjust their policies to cope with this dramatic change. India is no exception.

America can still move and shake things in the world. Remember, World War-II came to an end only after the US intervened in favour of the Allied Powers. The Cold War lasted so long because of American posturing against Russia. And the USSR's expansion into Eastern Europe was checked by the US. Israel survives against the combined might of Arab countries only on account of America's sustained support.

Europe, another big power, is basking in its past glory which is also fast fading. The European Union, the supranational entity, is not united as the USA. They are trying to regroup under the sudden blast inflicted by Trump. One only hopes that they succeed as the EU is a good experiment in integration.

China has emerged as a big power and is using its economic heft to acquire political and security dominance. Beijing is battling for carving out its own sphere of influence. Russia, under Putin is desperately trying to revive its old influence in the world. It is trying to undo the disintegration carried out under Gorbachev. Little did he realise his twin strategy of glasnost and perestroika would open up a Pandora's Box leading to falling apart of the Union.

Where does India stand in this changed scenario? Prime Minister Narendra Modi who was perceived as close to Trump must also be rethinking about his frenemies. He campaigned for Trump in 2020, breaking protocols. But Trump's spat with Zelenskyy bordering on plain abuse of each other would have shak-

en many leaders. Trump is currently advised by political individuals. Take Elon Musk for example. Musk is the head of Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). Did people watch how Musk met Modi in a bilateral interaction? Modi was accompanied by the National Security Advisor, the Foreign Minister and the Indian Ambassador to the US, and Musk's side was occupied by children from some foster care and their nannies. It is hard to interpret what it actually signified.

All heads of government may be rereading the chilling lines of Henry Kissinger: "It may be dangerous to be an enemy of America, but to be a friend of America is fatal." Who would realise it more than Zelenskyy? India is at the fence, has not fully become an American friend.

Given such geo-political zeitgeist, what could the South Block, that churns strategies, be thinking? It would be worth the while of observers and analysts to draw their inferences. I will do mine. The first thought that comes to mind is "wait and watch," which is a part of our culture and a policy imperative. Indians are not known for reacting impulsively. Good enough. But there is also a saying that "an early bird catches the worm." Those who take initiative, influence



DK Giri

TRUMP'S SPAT WITH ZELENSKY BORDERING ON PLAIN ABUSE OF EACH OTHER WOULD HAVE SHAKEN MANY LEADERS



Where does India stand in this changed scenario? Prime Minister Narendra Modi who was perceived as close to Trump must also be rethinking about his frenemies

bots can replace real humans. So go for a multipolar world to escape the whims and caprices of one individual who runs the biggest power of the world. In any case, if this world order is going to be reality, and India genuinely wants it, New Delhi has to go overdrive on this.

Europe is jilted with the US. New Delhi should talk to Europeans seriously. If they do not want a repeat of vocal thrashing and crash insults from the American Vice President, they have to pull up their socks. European leaders have reiterated their pledge of support to Zelenskyy. That pledge should soon translate into action. If Europe is making these utterances to put pressure on Trump to secure a better deal for Ukraine, it may not work. Trump may not yield easily to pressure.

President of European Commission Ursula von der Leyen was in India recently. She talked to the Indian leadership about soon completing discussion and sign the FTA. This has gone on forever, almost 12 years. If that is the efficiency of the EU in clinching agreements, God help the EU. They could be more decisive by cutting out the bureaucracy. India is good with the Global South. New Delhi can carry them along. It is the middle powers that India needs to carry confidence with.

I am certainly not convinced that a multipolar world will ever emerge. It is for the countries to choose their place in geopolitical binary. Who will lead either side in a binary will change over decades. But that will be the world order. The middle powers can certainly influence the leaderships in binaries.

India should not hedge between two powers or axes. It can play an active role. For now, it has the space to build a multipolar world. All the best.

The writer is Professor, NIIS Group, Bhubaneswar. ©INFA

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Global pursuit of women's empowerment

Gender inequality is the extreme challenge while gender equality is the utmost opportunity of our times. We cannot have a free and equal society until everyone is free and equal, until women enjoy the same rights as men. According to the UN, "gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is not just a goal in itself, but a key to sustainable development, economic growth, and peace and security." Research has shown that society gets better for everyone when women's rights are upheld and taken seriously. More specifically, the Charter of the United Nations (Articles 8 and 10) stipulates that there shall be no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in every capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs.

The year 2025 is a pivotal moment in the global pursuit of gender equality and women's empowerment, as it marks the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT SOCIETY GETS BETTER FOR EVERYONE WHEN WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE UPHELD AND TAKEN SERIOUSLY

in 1995 in Beijing, China, by 189 governments, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remains the most progressive and widely endorsed blueprint for women's rights worldwide.

But gender equality remains elusive across the globe. Across the world many women and girls still face discrimination, violence and atrocities on the basis of gender. Gender inequality leads to many problems which disproportionately affect women and girls, such as domestic and sexual violence, lower pay, lack of access to education, and inadequate healthcare and lack of control over sexual and reproductive rights.

According to a report on gender justice and women's rights by Oxfam, nearly two thirds of the world's 78.1 crore illiterate adults are women, a proportion that has remained unchanged for two decades. 153 countries have laws which discriminate against women economically, including 18 countries where husbands can legally prevent their wives from working.

According to a new report by UN Women, the home, once a safe haven for women, has become one of the deadliest and most dangerous places for them. This report highlights the global epidemic of femicide, emphasising that the vast majority of these terrible fatalities occur within the home.

Gender inequality is so pervasive in India that in UNDP's Gender Inequality Index (GI) 2022 released in March 2024, India is placed behind 107 countries (ranks 108) out of 193. Similarly in the Global Gender Gap Index 2024 of the World Economic Forum (WEF) India's position has declined two places from 127th last year to 129th.

As of 2024, 68.5% of global gender gap closed while 31.5% of the gap remains unaddressed across all 146 countries indexed this year. It will take 134 years to achieve full parity if the current rate of progress is maintained. By contrast, India has closed 64.15 of its gender gap in 2024, which means 33.9% of the gap remains unaddressed.

The glass ceiling is a metaphor for the invisible barrier that prevents women from advancing in their careers and labour force participation. According to ILO, the global labour force participation rate (LFPR) for women was 48.7% in 2023. This is much lower than the 73% rate for men, resulting in a gap of more than 24 percentage points. In India, latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2023, the stands at 60.1%, with a breakdown of 78.8% for males and 41.7% for females, indicating a significant gender gap. There is some improvement in female labour participation in India due to increase in self-employed women.

The International Women's Day serves as a powerful reminder of the progress made towards gender equality and highlights the work that still needs to be done. The day's theme this year is: "For all women and girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment." This theme calls for actions that can unlock equal rights, power and opportunities for all and a feminist future where no one is left behind. Central to this vision is empowering the next generation—youth, particularly young women and adolescent girls—as catalysts for lasting change.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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When policy backfires

Sir, President Trump won a second term by promising working-class Americans higher wages and a stronger economy. Yet his escalating trade war — particularly with Mexico, Canada, and China — is at odds with those promises. Tariffs are essentially taxes paid by American consumers and businesses, and Trump's newest rounds of tariffs could amount to a \$150 billion annual tax increase. The uncertainty around trade policy has already rattled markets with the Dow Jones Industrial Average down 3.4% since Trump took office, wiping out the gains from the post-election economic optimism. The latest tariffs are hitting America's closest trading partners. Trump imposed 25% tariffs on Canadian and Mexican imports, affecting everything from cars to agricultural products. He also raised tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods, pushing rates from 10% to 20% and threatening to go even higher. These moves will raise prices for American consumers on essentials like fruits, vegetables, beer, and electronics. Retail giants like Target and Best Buy have already warned that tariffs will lead to higher prices, while farmers and manufacturers brace for rising input costs. Energy prices are also caught in the crossfire. Trump lowered tariffs on Canadian energy to 10%, implicitly acknowledging the risk to US consumers, but even that reduced rate will drive up heating bills in the Midwest and Northeast, where households rely on Canadian natural gas and electricity. Trump's tariff war reflects ideology trumping economic common sense — and unless he changes course, the very workers and farmers he vowed to protect will bear the brunt of his policies.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

Save turtles

Sir, Odisha is internationally acclaimed as home to Olive Ridley sea turtles. The creatures are the shortest sea turtles found in the world. But, sadly their population is decreasing and they are enlisted as endangered species. Fishing, trawling, predation of eggs, hatchling, vessel strikes, coastal development, climate change, lighting, marine trash and use of plastic in the sea shore have largely contributed to the loss of Olive Ridley sea turtles. Strict action should be taken against violators under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Arunachal introduces four Bills for better governance

Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, who also holds the tax and excise portfolio, introduced the Arunachal Pradesh Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to amend the state's Goods and Services Tax Act of 2017



Itanagar, March 6: The Arunachal Pradesh Assembly Thursday introduced four Bills aimed at improving governance and administrative efficiency in the state.

Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, who also holds the tax and excise portfolio, introduced the Arunachal Pradesh Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2025 to amend the state's Goods and Services Tax Act of 2017.

Mein, who also serves as the planning and investment minister, introduced the Arunachal Pradesh Arun Parivar Authority Bill, 2025.

The Bill seeks to establish a legal framework for good governance and ensure efficient, transparent and targeted delivery of public welfare benefits and services to residents.

Land management minister Balo Raja introduced the Arunachal Pradesh Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorized Occupants) Bill, which seeks to amend the existing Arunachal Pradesh Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorized Occupants) Act, 2003.

Additionally, water resources minister Biyuram Wahge introduced the Arunachal Pradesh Flood Plain Zoning Bill, 2025, which aims to regulate floodplain zoning of rivers in the state and address related concerns.

During the day, the Assembly paid tribute to former minister Medi Ram Dodum, who died September 1 last year after a prolonged illness.

Leading the obituary reference on the inaugural day of the Budget session, Speaker Tesam Pongte expressed sorrow over Dodum's demise, describing him as a veteran leader and a great philanthropist.

"With his passing, the state has lost a dedicated public servant and a man who deeply touched many lives," Pongte said.

Born August 5, 1955, Dodum's political journey began in 1984 when he contested the Domikh-Sagalee Assembly seat as an independent candidate. Though unsuccessful, he remained committed to public service.

He joined the BJP in 1986

before switching to the Congress in 1988, where he served as party secretary. In 1995, he successfully contested from Bameng Assembly constituency and was appointed deputy minister of horticulture under the Gegong Apang ministry.

In 1996, he was elevated to cabinet minister for horticulture and fisheries, a position he held until 1999.

Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, participating in the obituary reference, praised Dodum's passion for social work, stating that his legacy would inspire future generations.

Home Minister Mama Natung acknowledged Dodum's role in shaping social initiatives, noting that he was instrumental in framing the by-laws of the Arunachal Pradesh Women Welfare Society in 1979.

Dodum is survived by three sons and three daughters. As a mark of respect, the Assembly observed a minute of silence and resolved to extend condolences to his bereaved family, praying for his eternal peace.

WMCs approved for processing solid waste

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, March 6: The Jammu and Kashmir government Thursday said 78 solid waste management centres (WMCs) and material recovery facilities (MRFs) and compost pits have been approved for processing of municipal solid waste in small and medium towns of the region.

The work has been awarded for the bio-remediation of 6.16 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste in Jammu, and a tender has been floated for the bio-remediation of 11.00 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste in Srinagar.

Replying to a question from Congress member Ghulam Ahmed Mir in the Assembly, Health Minister Sakina Itoo said scientific processing of municipal solid waste in the small and medium towns of Jammu and Kashmir has been undertaken.

"The establishment of 78 solid waste management centres (WMCs), material recovery



facilities (MRFs), and compost pits has been approved. Construction work at 52 locations has been undertaken, out of which 33 waste management centres and MRFs, along with 30 compost pits, have been completed," she said during the Question Hour.

The minister said work at 19 more sites of WMCs and MRFs and 22 compost pits is in progress.

"Bio-remediation of legacy waste at dumpsites like Bhagwati Nagar, Kathua, Samba, Udhampur, Tral, Bijbehara, Pahalgam, Anantnag, and

Tangmarg has been completed, with 3.88 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste bio-remediated," she said.

Work has been awarded for the bio-remediation of 6.16 lakh metric tonnes of legacy waste at Kot Bhalwal by the Jammu Municipal Corporation, and for 1.20 lakh MT for seven urban local bodies, she said.

Besides, a tender has been floated for the bio-remediation of 11.00 lakh MT of legacy waste at Achan in Srinagar, she added.

The minister said work has been awarded for the construc-

tion of 65 treatment plants in Jammu, and a tender has been floated for the construction of 125 treatment plants in Srinagar.

She added that a compressed bio-gas plant for 450 tonnes per day (TPD) by JMC and another for 350 TPD will be completed by May 2025.

The minister said the construction of 375 aspirational toilet seats has been undertaken and a tender has been floated for the construction of such toilets.

"An action plan for an amount of ₹67.24 crore has been formulated for the establishment of a 700 TPD pre-processing unit, a 150 KLD treatment plant, a 300 TPD briquetting plant, and an RFID tagging system for 2.4 lakh households and 80,000 commercial units," she said.

The minister further said that three solid waste management plants of four TPD each have been approved for the municipal committee of Doo-ru-Verinag.

Arunachal to strictly deal with illegal gambling, lotteries

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, March 6: The Arunachal Pradesh government would strictly enforce laws to tackle the menace of illegal gambling and unauthorised lotteries, the assembly was informed Thursday.

Responding to a Private Member Resolution (PMR) moved by the lone Congress MLA Kumar Waii, Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein acknowledged that despite existing laws, problems of illegal gambling, unauthorised lottery ticket sales and forceful donations continue in the state.

Mein assured the assembly that the government would strictly enforce laws to curb the menace.

Moving the resolution, Waii urged the government to take immediate steps to halt the rampant sale of unauthorised lottery and 'housie' game tickets, as well as the illegal collection of donations, which he said had become a widespread issue, particularly in the state capital Itanagar.

Termining the resolution 'relevant', Mein stated that the government has already instructed deputy commissioners to enforce existing laws more rigorously.

"Illegal gambling has ruined many families in the state, with people losing their hard-earned money in the hope of profit. Laws are already in place, and law enforcement agencies have arrested many involved in such activities," Mein said.

Arunachal to adopt new tourism policy

Major initiatives will be taken for adventure and eco-tourism, boosting trekking, rafting, paragliding and wildlife tourism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, March 6: Rafting in fast-flowing rivers, paragliding from icy heights and spiritual journeys to the sacred places of Buddhists and Hindus such as Tawang and Parauram Kund in Arunachal Pradesh will be smooth and safe with the adoption of a new tourism policy by the state cabinet.

"Aligned with Aatmanirbhar Bharat, this policy promotes self-reliance through skill development, local entrepreneurship and indigenous tourism industries," he said.

Apart from building world-class infrastructure and connectivity, the Arunachal Pradesh government plans to strengthen road networks, build eco-friendly accommodations and expand digital tourism platforms.

Khandu said niche tourism segments include eco-tourism, adventure sports, spiritual circuits, farm and wine tourism.

Under the Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) model, the state government aims to attract private investments in building tourism infrastructure and strengthening adventure sports.

Major initiatives will be taken for adventure and eco-tourism, boosting trekking, rafting, paragliding and wildlife tourism. The Arunachal Pradesh government will also launch spiritual and pilgrimage circuits by enhancing Buddhist

The Arunachal Pradesh government will also launch spiritual and pilgrimage circuits by enhancing Buddhist circuits linking Tawang, Kanzimane, Chumi Gyatse and Parsuram Kund

circuits linking Tawang, Kanzimane, Chumi Gyatse and Parsuram Kund.

As part of developing hot water springs and wellness tourism, AYUSH-based healing therapies and eco-wellness retreats will be promoted and it would boost economic and employment activities. Local communities will be encouraged by promoting homestays, handicrafts, and rural tourism to boost livelihood.

With regards to sustainable and responsible tourism, eco-friendly policies will be laid out for conservation, and reduced ecological footprint.

According to the tourism policy 2025-30, Arunachal Pradesh's rich agricultural heritage will be showcased through farm stays and organic experiences to promote agro-tourism.

Srinagar's Tulip garden gears up for tourists



The garden, formerly known as Siraj Bagh, will be open to visitors later this month when the tulip bulbs start to bloom

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, March 6: Preparations are in full swing at Asia's largest Tulip Garden, nestled between Dal Lake and Zabarwan Hills, ahead of its annual opening later this month, officials said Thursday.

The garden, formerly known as Siraj Bagh, will be open

to visitors later this month when the tulip bulbs start to bloom. The Floriculture department plants the tulip bulbs in a phased manner so that the flowers remain in the garden for a month or more.

Asif Ahmad, Assistant Floriculture Officer of the Tulip Garden, said the preparations for the garden's opening this year were in full swing. "This is an important tourist attraction. It will be opened for visitors in the coming days," he said.

Officials mentioned that workers and employees of the department were busy giving the garden its final touches.

Ahmad said the department had added two new varieties of tulips to the garden this year.

"We try something new for the tulip garden every year. We are coming with a new color scheme this year. We have added two new varieties of tulips, bringing the total number of varieties to 74," he added.

More than 4.65 lakh visitors, both domestic and foreign, visited the garden last year, while in 2023, it saw a footfall of 3.65 lakh people.

"Last year, 4.65 lakh visitors came to the garden during its short window of 25 to 30 days. This year, we hope the numbers will exceed last year's. We extend our invitation to people from across the country and abroad to come here and witness this flower extravaganza," Ahmad added.

The garden started on a small scale with 50,000 tulip bulbs imported from Holland. It quickly gained popularity among tourists and has steadily grown each year, both in terms of the number of visitors and the tulips that bloom there.

The Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden was established by then-Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad in 2007 to extend the tourist season in Jammu and Kashmir, which was previously limited to summers and winters.

Bungus Valley getting a makeover

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, March 6: Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Thursday announced that the Bungus Valley in Kupwara district is being developed as an offbeat tourism destination with development works totaling ₹72 lakh proposed for the area.

Responding to a query from Jammu and Kashmir Assembly member Sheikh Khur-



sheed during Question Hour, Abdullah said the approved allocation for the plan for 2024-25 is ₹30 lakh. "To promote Bungus as an offbeat des-

ination, the tourism department has proposed development works amounting to ₹72 lakh under the capex budget 2024-25," the chief minister said.

"However, all land in the Bungus Valley falls under the Forest Department's jurisdiction and we have engaged with the deputy commissioner of Kupwara to identify suitable land parcels for these proposed works," he said.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
"e" - PROCUREMENT NOTICE
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PURI (R&B) DIVISION, PURI
E-mail: eerbipuri@yahoo.co.in
WORKS DEPARTMENT
SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE
Bid Identification No. SE(R&B) Puri-53/2024-25
No. B-: The Superintending Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division, Puri on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in Double Cover System in ONLINE MODE from the eligible class of contractors registered with the State Governments and contractors of equivalent Grade/Class registered with Central Government/Railways.

- Nature of Work: Civil Work
- No. of Work: 1 No.
- Tender Cost: Rs. 10000.00/- each (Online)
- Class of Bidders: 'B' Class
- Available of Bid document in the website: From 10.00 A.M. of Dt.07.03.2025 to 11.00 A.M. of Dt.13.03.2025
- Last date of receipt of tender: Dt.13.03.2025 upto 11.00 A.M.
- Date of Opening of Bid: Dt.13.03.2025 at 3.00 P.M.
- The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Puri (R&B) Division, Puri
OIPR-34064/11/0022/2425

EAST COAST RAILWAY
'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS
Tender Notice No. PCMM/E/P/2024-25/131, Date : 03.03.2025

SL. NO. 01 TENDER NO. 07251001, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : HIGH PERFORMANCE ANTI-CORROSION EPOXY COATING, QUANTITY : 38860 LTR.

SL. NO. 02 TENDER NO. 06255005, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : 6400 MM OVER-RIDING CURVED SW/CH 80 KG IN S. QUANTITY: AS PER TS.

SL. NO. 03 TENDER NO. 06255004, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : 10125 MM OVER-RIDING CURVED SW/CH 60 KG IN I. QUANTITY: AS PER TS.

SL. NO. 04 TENDER NO. 06245035, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : PRESTRESSED CONCRETE SLEEPER, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.

SL. NO. 05 TENDER NO. 06255007, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : GLUED INSULATED ALL JOINT, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.

SL. NO. 06 TENDER NO. 03251990A, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : KEY SIDE FOR CASNU BOGIE, QUANTITY : AS PER TS.

SL. NO. 07 TENDER NO. 08251080, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : SHELLGADUS SS, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.

SL. NO. 08 TENDER NO. 03252058, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : SHACKLE LOCK FOR CENTRE PIVOT, QUANTITY : 79684 NOS.

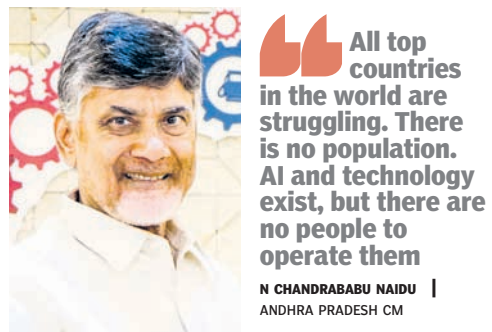
SL. NO. 09 TENDER NO. 03253925, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : BRAKE CALLIPER UNIT, QUANTITY : 34 NOS.

SL. NO. 10 TENDER NO. 03241065A, SHORT DESCRIPTION OF ITEM : KEY BOLT WITH NUT SPRING WASHER & SPLIT PIN, QUANTITY: AS PER TS.

Tender Opening Date : For Sl. No. 01 dt. 19.03.2025, for Sl. No. 02, 08 dt. 31.03.2025, for Sl. No. 03, 06 & 07 dt. 24.03.2025, for Sl. No. 04 dt. 10.04.2025, for Sl. No. 05 dt. 28.03.2025, for Sl. No. 09 dt.11.04.2025 and for Sl. No. 10 dt. 09.04.2025.

Regarding detailed notice, EMD, Purchase restrictions and detailed tender conditions, please visit website www.iraps.gov.in and www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in

Principal Chief Materials Manager/PR-1046/P/24-25 Bhubaneswar



All top countries in the world are struggling. There is no population. AI and technology exist, but there are no people to operate them

STUDENT FOUND HANGING IN KOTA

An MBBS student was found hanging in his hostel room in Rajasthan's Kota district, police officials said Thursday. The deceased was identified as 28-year-old Sunil Bairwa and his body was found hanging from the ceiling fan in his room Wednesday night, the police said



of the day uote

The poor condition of these essential services is no secret. The Uttar Pradesh government, like the Centre, has no shortage of funds, but its failure to use them for the welfare of the underprivileged is deeply concerning

Until we receive statehood, it is necessary to establish business rules for clarity. It took some time, but yesterday at 8 pm, we convened a cabinet meeting and finalised the business rules. They were approved by our cabinet

The BJP has no regards for Marathi manoes because it knows he is going to vote for them. This is a sadist mentality which has come to the fore. This is a ploy to break Mumbai

SECURITY BREACH DURING JAISHANKAR'S UK VISIT

Condemn activities of extremists: India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 6: India on Thursday served a demarche to the British charge d'affaires lodging a strong protest over a breach in security for External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in London as a pro-Khalistani protester attempted to break barricades and tried to stop his motorcade while some others were shouting anti-India slogans.

In a firm reaction, New Delhi condemned the incident and said it expects the host government to fully live up to their diplomatic obligations in such case. It also deplored the "misuse of democratic freedoms" by the "small group of separatist" elements.

People familiar with the matter said the charge d'affaires at the British High Commission was called to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and was served a demarche.

The incident happened as Jaishankar was leaving the Chatham House after concluding an interactive session at the institute, home to Royal Institute of International Affairs, Wednesday evening.

The external affairs minister was in London as in the first leg of his six-day visit to the UK and Ireland from Tuesday that is aimed at exploring ways to further boost bilateral cooperation.

"We have seen the footage of a breach of security during the visit of the external affairs



minister to the UK," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "We condemn the provocative activities of this small group of separatists and extremists," he said in a statement.

"We deplore the misuse of democratic freedoms by such elements. We expect the host government in such cases to fully live up to their diplomatic obligations," Jaiswal added.

The British foreign ministry also condemned the incident and said attempts to disrupt public events were unacceptable.

Videos posted on social media showed a small group of pro-Khalistan protesters holding yellow flags were shouting slogans against India and Jaishankar on the opposite side of the road from Chatham House.

As Jaishankar was about to leave the institute, a tall man was seen attempting to break

the police cordon and run towards Jaishankar's motorcade. The tall and bearded man even tried to block the minister's motorcade by standing in front of it and tore an Indian flag. The man was swiftly taken away by Metropolitan Police officers.

It was not the first such incident of breach of security by pro-Khalistan elements.

In March, 2023, certain pro-Khalistan elements pulled down the Indian flag at the Indian high commission in London, triggering strong reaction from India.

Following the incident, India summoned the senior-most British diplomat in Delhi and demanded an explanation over complete "absence of security" at the mission.

India has been asking the UK to take action against pro-Khalistani elements operating from British soil.

SANATAN DHARMA REMARK

No fresh FIR against Udhayanidhi sans our nod, says apex court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 6: The Supreme Court Thursday ordered no fresh FIR should be filed against Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister M Udhayanidhi Stalin without its nod over his contentious "eradicate Sanatan Dharma" remarks in 2023.

Observing several complaints couldn't be filed on a single issue, a bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar also extended an interim order on his exemption from personal appearance in courts hearing the existing FIRs. The bench was hearing Stalin's plea for clubbing the FIRs and transferring the complaints to one place for future proceedings.

It issued notices to the states where the fresh FIRs were lodged on his plea filed in the pending matter. "Liberty is granted to newly-added respondents (states) to file a response within 15 days from the date of service, and rejoinder if any be filed after 15 days. The interim order to continue and will equally apply to the cases mentioned in the amended writ petition. We direct no further cases be registered without the permission of this court," the bench's order said.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Stalin, said the FIRs were registered in Patna, Jammu, Bangalore aside from Maharashtra and argued all cases could be transferred to a place where the alleged incident took place -- Tamil Nadu.



Singhvi said a fresh case was registered against Stalin in Bihar and a plea for amendment was filed seeking to implead the complainants there in the pending petition.

He referred to the apex court decisions in the case of TV anchor Arnab Goswami, Alt News co-founder Mohammad Zubair and politician Nupur Sharma and said cases arising out of one incident couldn't be allowed to continue in different places.

"In Nupur Sharma, the words are supposed to be much more offensive, this court transferred in all other cases to the first place where the FIR was first registered. That is the solution in this case," Singhvi said.

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for Maharashtra, referred to the present case and said it was a "Sanatan Dharma Eradication Conference" where the deputy CM said Sanatana Dharma had to be eradicated like malaria, corona, dengue, etc.

"Kindly appreciate that if a chief minister of another state says similar things about a particular religion, say Islam, should be eradicated, it wouldn't be tolerated," the law officer said.

Allahbadia, Apoorva appear before NCW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 6: Social media personalities Ranveer Allahbadia and Apoorva Mukhija appeared before the National Commission for Women Thursday in connection with the derogatory remarks made on comic Samay Raina's show "India's Got Latent" and expressed regret over the entire episode, sources said.

Producers of the show -- Sausrabh Bothra and Tushar Poojari -- and lawyers of comic Jaspreet Singh and YouTuber Ashish Chanchlani also appeared before the panel, they said.



They all appeared individually in front of the Commission. Sources said Allahbadia and Mukhija were quizzed for hours and they expressed regret over the whole episode. The Commission had taken serious note of the vulgar and offensive remarks made by Allahbadia, Makhija, Raina, Jaspreet Singh and Ashish Chanchlani on the show and summoned them as well as Poojari and Bothra.

Several FIRs were lodged against Allahbadia, popularly known as BeerBiceps, for the comment on parents and sex on Raina's show. However, the Supreme Court has granted Allahbadia interim protection from arrest over his comments on the show while calling it "vulgar" and saying he had a "dirty mind" which put society to shame.

Patanjali to inaugurate Mega Food and Herbal Park in Nagpur March 9

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nagpur, March 6: Patanjali's ambitious foray into food processing is set to take root in Nagpur. The company's Mega Food and Herbal Park, located within the bustling MIHAN (Multi-modal International Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur), is scheduled to open its doors March 9, 2025.

This marks a significant milestone for Patanjali, whose journey in Nagpur began back in September 2016 with the laying of the foundation for a dedicated food processing unit. The Patanjali Fruits & Vegetables Processing Plant will specialise in transforming citrus fruits and vegetables into a variety of products



including juices, concentrates, pulp, pastes, and purees. This venture promises to not only boost the local economy but also contribute to the growing demand for high-quality, natural food products. The plant houses a flour mill with a processing capacity of 100 tons of wheat daily, supplying Patanjali's wheat mills in Jalna, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana. Patanjali prioritises direct procurement of wheat from farmers, relying on traders or the Food Corporation of India (FCI) only when supply falls short. The plant has already processed 1000 tons of Mosambi and has commenced orange processing.

Patanjali's commitment to eliminating middlemen in fruit and vegetable procurement ensures that farmers receive fair prices, boosting their incomes. The company only engages with traders when direct procurement from farmers is insufficient. Patanjali also supports farmers through backward integration, demonstrating a strong commitment to sustainable agricultural practices and farmer empowerment.

SHORT TAKES

Road mishap leaves 6 dead

Jaipur: A speeding car collided with a truck in Rajasthan's Sirahi district Thursday, leaving six persons dead, police said. The accident occurred near Kivrali village on Abu Road, Circle officer, Mount Abu, Gomaram said. The deceased were identified as Narayan Prajapat, his wife Poshni Devi, son Dushyant, driver Kaluram and two others.

4 killed in road crash

Hisar (HR): Four friends returning from a wedding were killed when their car ramed into a tree near village Harikot here, police said Thursday. The accident took place late Wednesday night, police said. The deceased have been identified as Ankush, Hitesh and Nikhil, residents of villages in Hisar. On receiving information about the accident, the villagers reached the spot and informed the police.

2 shot dead in Ranchi ashram

Ranchi: Two persons were shot dead by unidentified assailants in an ashram in Jharkhand's Ranchi district, police said Thursday. The incident occurred at Chama in Chanho area, around 45 km from capital city Ranchi, Wednesday night.

BSF recovers gold dust worth ₹49L

Kolkata: Gold dust worth over ₹49 lakh was found concealed inside the anal cavity of a man by BSF personnel at Petrapole, near the Indo-Bangladesh border, the paramilitary force said in a statement Thursday.

Tiger found dead

Udhagamandalam (Tamil Nadu): A ten-year-old tiger was found dead in the Nelakottai range in Gudalur forest division in Nilgiris district, due to suspected fighting, a forest department official said Thursday. A post-mortem examination of the dead tiger by a team of veterinarians revealed that the big cat had injuries on the body indicating a fight and a fracture in the head. "It is suspected that the tiger may have died in a fight with another big cat. Samples have been collected for forensic examination. Further investigation is on," the official said.



Bangalore South MP and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha national president Tejasvi Surya tied the knot with Carnatic classical singer Sivarsi Skandaprasad in a traditional ceremony Thursday

PM backs winter tourism in U'khand

POST NEWS NETWORK

Harsil, March 6: On a day-long visit to Uttarkashi in Uttarakhand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi strongly promoted winter pilgrimage and tourism in Uttarakhand from Mukhwa and Harsil. He extended an open invitation to pilgrims, tourists, corporate professionals, and the film industry to visit Uttarakhand during the winter season. The Prime Minister branded Uttarakhand's winter tourism as 'Gham Tapo Tourism' (Basking in the Sun Tourism).

Addressing a public gathering in Harsil Thursday, the Prime Minister first expressed his condolences for the recent avalanche victims in Mana. He then spoke about the deep spiritual aura of Uttarakhand and shared his emotional connection with the land. The Prime Minister said he felt blessed to be at Mukhwa, the winter abode of Mother Ganga, amidst his own people.

The Prime Minister also fondly remembered his 'Didi-Bhuli' (sisters) of Harsil, who often sent him the region's famous Rajma beans and other local products. The Prime Minister reminisced about his visit to Kedarnath a few years ago when, after seeking the deity's blessings, an inner voice had proclaimed that this decade would belong to Uttarakhand.



Emphasising the significance of winter pilgrimage and tourism, the Prime Minister lauded Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami's initiative in this direction. The Prime Minister noted that the winter season holds special religious significance in Uttarakhand. Many sacred rituals take place at various pilgrimage sites during this time.

Highlighting the seamless coordination between the central and state governments, the Prime Minister said that Uttarakhand is moving towards becoming a developed state. Infrastructure projects such as Char Dham all-weather roads, modern expressways, railways, and expanded heli-services are taking shape. This year's Union Budget includes plans to develop 50 major tourist destinations, focusing on attracting visitors to border areas. Calling upon people from across India—especially the youth—to visit Ut-

tarakhand in winter, the Prime Minister pointed out that when most of the country is shrouded in fog, the mountains bask in warm sunlight. In Garhwal, this is called 'Gham Tapo Tourism'. The Prime Minister emphasised India's multi-billion-dollar wedding industry, reiterating his call for 'Wed in India'. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami extended a heartfelt welcome to the Prime Minister on behalf of all Uttarakhand residents. Looking ahead, Uttarakhand is preparing for two major religious events—the Nanda Devi Raj Jat Yatra and the Kumbh Mela, which, under the Prime Minister's leadership, are expected to be a grand success. Prominent dignitaries present included Union Minister Ajay Tamta, Cabinet Minister Satpal Maharaj, BJP State President Mahendra Bhatt, MP Mala Rajyalakshmi Shah, and MLA Suresh Chauhan.

Everyone sensitive about own caste, not of others: HC

The court said that it was not necessary that each and every bad post/comment or speech should be reacted to

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 6: While people are increasingly protective of their own heritage, they often show a lack of respect towards others, the Bombay High Court has said and advocated that every social media comment or public statement requires a reaction, highlighting that there are more refined means to express dissent.

This was stated by HC's Aurangabad division bench comprising Justices Vibha Kankarwadi and Sanjay Deshmukh Wednesday while quashing a case against one Devendra Patil, accused of insulting Dr.

B.R. Ambedkar. During the proceedings, the court also reprimanded the complainant in the case for an online post directed against the Brahmin community. The court stressed that not every social media comment or public statement requires a reaction, highlighting that there are more refined means to express dissent.

The court quashed the proceedings and FIR registered against Patil in August 2019 with the Daulatabad police in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district under provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the



Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. The complainant had claimed that Patil hurled abuses at him for his own post and defamed Dr. Ambedkar in the process. However, the

court found that the exchange did not amount to disrespect towards Dr. Ambedkar and instead, Patil questioned the complainant's use of Ambedkar's name while not adhering to his teachings, also pointing out that contemporary attitudes have diminished respect for the leader's legacy.

The court further noted that Patil's comments were a reaction to a provocative post made by the complainant.

The judges said that people from one community cannot rightfully object to provocations they themselves have

initiated. "Person from only one community then cannot have the right to object when he himself has done some provocative act. There has to be reciprocal respect for persons amongst all communities and castes. That is what the soul of the constitutional scheme is," the court observed. The court also remarked that society's current sensitivity towards caste issues often lacks corresponding respect for other groups and cautioned that without mutual restraint and efforts toward harmony, tensions may continue to rise.



If relations between the two countries improve, it is a good thing for us
FAROOQ ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

'CADAVER DOG' SQUAD JOINS TUNNEL RESCUE OPERATION

Cadaver dogs of Kerala police Thursday arrived in Telangana's Nagarkurnool to join the rescue operation at the partially collapsed SLBC tunnel in which eight persons remain trapped since February 22. The dogs arrived by air and their handlers went inside the tunnel along with officials



of the day quote

In Haryana, we are procuring all crops of farmers at MSP and the state government is taking every such step which empowers farmers
NAYAB SINGH SAINI | HARYANA CM



My political journey began at the age of 17 when I was elected Class Representative at Government College, Sanjauli. This experience paved the way for my election as a Municipal Councillor and later as an MLA
SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HP CM



There are people who are creating some of the false narratives that minorities are not safe in India, some people keep spreading the message that there is discrimination against the minority communities, which is completely false
KUREN RIJUU | UNION MINISTER



Apex court disapproves 'long dates' in matters of liberty

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 6: The Supreme Court Thursday said courts were not expected to keep the matters concerning liberty after a long gap.

A bench of Justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih made the observation after being informed that the

Punjab and Haryana High Court posted the hearing of a plea for temporary bail on medical grounds after two months.

The petitioner's counsel said he had approached the high court for the grant of temporary bail on the ground that her client's two-year-old daughter needed urgent sur-

gery. The lawyer argued the high court, in its order passed February 21, posted the matter April 22.

"In the matters of liberty, the courts are not expected to keep the matter at such a long date," the bench said and permitted the petitioner to move the high court for an earlier hearing. The bench

asked the high court to advance the date and hear the issue at least with regard to grant of temporary bail on the medical ground of operation of the petitioner's daughter.

The petitioner's counsel said he had already filed an application before the high court, where his regular bail was pending, for the advance-

ment of the hearing but it was dismissed. "Now, with this observation, do you think that the high court will reject it?" Justice Gavai asked.

The bench said if it would issue notice on the plea, the respondent would seek time to respond to it and the matter might get delayed. In the high court, said the court, the

matter could be taken up expeditiously. "We expect the high courts to at least give some weightage to our request," Justice Gavai observed.

The counsel said the petitioner sought interim bail before the high court but the matter was kept for hearing along with the main petition in April.

ED conducts raids in money laundering case against SDPI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 6: The Enforcement Directorate conducted nationwide searches Thursday as part of a money laundering investigation against the SDPI, the political outfit of the banned Popular Front of India (PFI), official sources said.

The searches come after the federal probe agency arrested Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) national president M K Faizy March 3 at the Delhi airport. He is currently in ED custody. The searches were carried out at two locations in Delhi, including the SDPI headquarters in Nizamuddin West, Thiruvananthapuram and Malappuram in Kerala, Nandyal in Andhra Pradesh, Pakur in Jharkhand, Thane in Maharashtra, Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, Lucknow and Jaipur, the sources said. The ED had claimed, after the arrest of fifty-five-year-old Faizy, that there was an "organic" relationship between the two outfits and that the PFI was carrying out its criminal activities through the political party (SDPI).

The PFI was banned by the Union government in September 2022, calling it an unlawful association and accusing it of indulging in terrorist activities. Multi-agency searches by

the ED, NIA and various state police organisations preceded the PFI ban.

The SDPI was founded in 2009 and is also registered as a political party with the Election Commission of India. The ED told the court, while seeking Faizy's remand earlier this week, that PFI and SDPI were "organically" linked and that SDPI was nothing but the "political front" of PFI and was "funded and controlled" by the latter.

It claimed that it had evidence to state that there was a "deep-rooted" nexus between the two organisations, as there was "overlapping" membership of their cadres, involvement of PFI office bearers in the founding of SDPI, and the utilization of each other's assets.

"SDPI is a front organisation of PFI through which PFI has been carrying out its anti-national and criminal activities, even while overtly taking a stand that PFI is a social welfare organisation," the ED had alleged. However, the SDPI denies such a link and calls itself an independent outfit.

According to officials in the investigative agencies, the organisation has a "strong" influence in various pockets of Kerala, Karnataka and some other southern states.

'India witnesses surge in fake medicines'

The traders' body attributed this rise to a combination of factors, including consumers' preference for high-discount drugs, inadequate government vigilance, and "lenient" prohibitive laws

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 6: The country has witnessed an alarming surge in counterfeit medicines flooding retail markets, a spike of nearly 50 per cent over and above the estimated figures from the COVID-19 years, according to the All India Organisation of Chemists and Druggists (AIOCD).

The traders' body attributed this rise to a combination of factors, including consumers' preference for high-discount drugs, inadequate government vigilance, and "lenient" prohibitive laws.

These allegations come just days after disturbing reports of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) listing multiple batches of 63 common drugs — produced by various pharmaceutical companies across the country — that failed quality tests.

"Counterfeit and substandard drugs were always available in the market, but their share never exceeded 10 per cent of the total amount of medicines that is retailed. Of late, that figure



These allegations come just days after disturbing reports of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation listing multiple batches of 63 common drugs — produced by various pharmaceutical companies across the country — that failed quality tests

has risen sharply, to nearly 15 per cent of the total medicines available in the market. That's a hike of nearly 50 per cent and poses significant threat to public health and safety," said Sankha Roy Chowdhury, spokesperson and former president of Bengal Chemists and Druggists Association (BCDA), the state chapter of the All India Organisation of Chemists and Druggists (AIOCD).

The BCDA, arguably the country's oldest traders' organisation founded in 1921, current-

ly has membership strength of over 40,000 drug retailers and wholesalers across Bengal, of five bearers claimed.

The organisation blamed the increasing attraction among consumers as well as among drug wholesalers and retailers for hefty price discounts on medicines as the primary cause for sharp influx of adulterated medicines in the market.

"The government has set a cap on profit margins, 10 per cent for wholesalers and 16-20

per cent for retailers, on MRP of scheduled drugs. Anyone offering higher discounts than that should be treated with utmost suspicion. There is, however, little awareness among ordinary consumers who are easily attracted towards hefty discounts and the medicine shops are also falling for the fake drug trap to tide past the ever-increasing and uneven market competition," said Prithwi Bose, general secretary, BDCA. Officials maintained that the spike in distribution of fake medicines has been observed since the introduction of GST in July, 2017.

Calling the flourishing business of injecting substandard medicines to unsuspecting patients tantamount to "committing murder", the official pointed fingers at the alleged "inadequacies" of The Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, which regulates import, manufacture, distribution and sale of drugs in this country for the violations with impunity.

Officials also blamed the "slackness" in government vigilance to deter the inflow of drugs in the retail market which fails to meet quality control standards.

Dr Narayan Banerjee, a medicine specialist, while stating that the high inflow of spurious drugs in local markets would have far-reaching adverse repercussions on public health, blamed the sharp increase in the price of life saving drugs in the country in recent times for people's allurements towards low-priced alternatives.

POST OF THE DAY

Sudheer Rajbhar of Chamar Studio encapsulates the life and journey of lakhs of Dalit youth in India. Extremely talented, brimming with ideas and hungry to succeed but lacking the access and opportunity to connect with the elite in his field

@RahulGandhi

SHORT TAKES

Udit Raj invites Akash Anand to join Cong

New Delhi: Slamming BSP supremo Mayawati after she expelled her nephew Akash Anand from the party, Congress leader Udit Raj on Thursday claimed that the move showed the BSP is being controlled by the BJP, and invited Anand to join the Congress. Mayawati would not have taken such a "suicidal step" without being under pressure, he said. Mayawati Sunday removed her nephew Akash Anand from all party posts, appointing his father Anand Kumar and Rajya Sabha MP Ramji Gautam as national coordinators in his place, and said she would not name a successor in her lifetime.

TMC demands unique ID for voter cards

Kolkata: A delegation of the ruling Trinamool Congress met the chief electoral officer (CEO) of West Bengal Thursday, demanding that "unique ID" be introduced on voter cards to prevent the induction of fake voters in the electoral rolls. Earlier in the day, TMC leaders held a meeting with district functionaries to review findings of a door-to-door scrutiny of electoral rolls, alleging that the BJP has been manipulating the voters' list ahead of next year's assembly elections, with the meeting focusing on addressing detected irregularities and finalising the party's strategy to counter the issue.

Three killed in roof collapse in coal mine

Betul (MP): Three men, including a supervisor, were killed after a roof collapsed in a coal mine of Western Coalfields Limited in Madhya Pradesh's Betul district Thursday, police said. The accident occurred in the underground mine of WCL, a subsidiary of state-owned Coal India Limited, in the Chhatarpur area, about 65 km from the district headquarters, they said.

Sambhal police remarks spark row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sambhal (UP), March 6: A Sambhal police officer on Thursday said those uncomfortable with Holi colours should remain indoors as the festival comes once a year, sparking criticism from the opposition parties which demanded action against him saying his remarks show "bias" and are not befitting of an officer.

A peace committee meeting was held Thursday at the Sambhal Kotwali police station in view of the upcoming Holi festival, which coincides with Friday prayers during the holy month of Ramadan. "Holi is a festival that comes once a year, whereas Friday prayers take place 52 times in a year. If anyone feels uncomfortable with the colours of Holi, they should stay indoors on that day. Those who step out should have a broad mindset, as festivals are meant to be celebrated together," Sambhal Circle Officer (CO) Anuj Chaudhary told reporters after the meeting.



Tourist at the Taj Mahal as the monument glows against a clear blue sky in Agra, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

FROM OARS TO CRORES

Boatman's family earns ₹30cr during Mahakumbh

AGENCIES

Prayagraj (UP), March 6: Maha Kumbh transformed countless lives in Prayagraj, from that of auto drivers and food vendors to boatmen. One of the success stories — of a boatman family from Prayagraj — was shared by CM Yogi Adityanath in the UP Assembly. Overnight, boatman Pintu Mahara and his family have rowed to fame and fortune.

Pintu's tale of success was not a result of fluke, but one of sharp business sense backed by



prompt and bold decisions. The boatman from the Arail area anticipated a massive influx of

devotees and expanded his fleet of boats from 60 to 130 boats ahead of the Maha Kumbh.

Pintu's tale of success was not a result of fluke, but one of sharp business sense backed by prompt and bold decisions

The boatman from the Arail area anticipated a massive influx of devotees and expanded his fleet of boats from 60 to 130 boats ahead of the Maha Kumbh

All the boats were operated by more than 100 members of Pintu's close and extended family. He recalled that operating a boat during the 2019 Kumbh organised by the Yogi govt drove

his business acumen. Based on that experience, he anticipated a massive influx at Maha Kumbh.

The press statement did not give other details including the cost incurred on purchasing the boat and the daily cost of running one boat. The statement came a day after Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath told the state Assembly about the earning of the family, while countering the opposition's criticism of the Maha Kumbh.

Reacting to the Samajwadi

Party's allegation that the boatmen of Prayagraj were "exploited", the chief minister told the House, "I am telling the success story of a boatman's family. They have 130 boats. In 45 days (of Maha Kumbh), they made a profit ₹30 crore... This means each boat has earned ₹23 lakh. On a daily basis, they earned ₹50,000-52,000 from each boat."

The Maha Kumbh 2025 began January 13 ended February 26. The state government has claimed that over 65 Crore devotees visited Maha Kumbh.

SNIPPETS

Days after execution, 2 Indians buried in UAE

New Delhi: Two Indian nationals -- Shahjadi Khan and Muhammed Rinash Arangilottu -- were buried in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in presence of their family members. According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Shahjadi and Arangilottu were buried following regulations of the UAE. Rinash, who hailed from Kannur in Kerala, was handed death sentence for allegedly killing a UAE national and was executed a few weeks ago. While Shahjadi was executed February 15, the date of Rinash's execution is not immediately known. There has been indication that he was executed in the second half of last month.

Babbar Khalsa terrorist with ISI links held: DGP

Lucknow: An "active terrorist" of Babbar Khalsa International with "links" to Pakistan's ISI, who had planned a major terror attack during the Maha Kumbh, was arrested from Uttar Pradesh's Kaushambi district early Thursday, police said. The terrorist, identified as Lajar Masih, was nabbed in a joint operation by Uttar Pradesh STF and Punjab Police around 3:20 am. Addressing a press conference here, Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police (DGP) Prashant Kumar said Masih had planned a major terrorist attack during the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj.

Nine dead, 16 injured in two accidents in Ch'garh

Raipur/Narayanpur: Nine persons were killed and 16 injured in two road accidents in Raipur and Narayanpur in Chhattisgarh in the last 24 hours, police officials said Thursday. On Thursday afternoon, five men were killed after their car jumped a road divider and crashed into a truck near Umaria village on national highway 53 under Mandir Hasaud police station limits in Raipur, Additional Superintendent of Police (Rural) Kirtan Rathore said. In Narayanpur, four persons, including three women, were killed and sixteen injured when their tractor-trolley overturned near Madhona village at 8pm Wednesday, another official said.

international



The US must no longer seek to contain or go after China in the name of strategic competition
LIN JIAN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN, CHINA

SK, US TO BEGIN ANNUAL MILITARY DRILLS NEXT WEEK
South Korean and US troops will begin their large annual joint military drills next week to enhance readiness against North Korean threats, the allies announced Thursday, days after North Korea threatened high-profile provocations against what it called escalating US-led aggression



of the day quote

We should never develop a 'Singaporean only' mentality, because this would deprive us of talent needed to anchor global businesses that benefit Singaporeans
TAN SEE LENG | MANPOWER MINISTER, SINGAPORE

Our concern is that those weapons have been found to be used by terrorists in their operations inside Pakistan. We have flagged it. If the US can make any efforts to get those weapons back, it would be helpful for the overall regional security environment
SHAFQAT ALI KHAN | FOREIGN OFFICE SPOKESPERSON, PAKISTAN

Globally, women's human rights are under attack. Instead of mainstreaming equal rights, we're seeing the mainstreaming of misogyny
ANTONIO GUTERRES | SECRETARY-GENERAL, UN

SHORT TAKES

Sri Lanka's police chief hunted by his own force

Colombo: Deshabandu Tennakoon, theoretically still the island nation's police chief, is being treated as a fugitive and his team members are on a trail to arrest him, police spokesman Buddhika Manathunga said here Thursday. A warrant has been issued for arresting Tennakoon, under suspension since July 2024 and is on the run, and the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) has been tasked with locating him. The Magistrate's court in the southern town of Matara had last week ordered Tennakoon be arrested over a shooting incident in the southern resort town of Weligama, about 150 kilometres southeast of Colombo, December 30, 2023. Tennakoon, as the inspector general, had sent police officers from the Colombo Crime Division (CCD) to the resort hotel in Weligama for a raid in connection with illegal drugs.

5 convicted of plotting to coup in Germany

Berlin: A German court Thursday convicted five people of plotting to overthrow the government in a far-right coup and kidnap the former health minister. The Koblenz Higher Regional Court sentenced the four ringleaders to prison sentences between five years and nine months to eight years. A fifth defendant received a sentence of two years and 10 months, German news agency dpa reported. The defendants, four men aged 46 to 58 and a 77-year-old woman, were accused of founding or being a member of a terrorist organisation called "United Patriots" and of preparing a highly treasonous enterprise against the German government.

Albania shuts down TikTok for year

Tirana: The Albanian Cabinet decided on Thursday to shut down TikTok for 12 months, blaming the video-sharing platform for inciting violence and bullying, especially among children. Education Minister Ogerta Manastirliu said they are in contact with TikTok on installing filters like parental control and the inclusion of the Albanian language in the application. Authorities had conducted 1,300 meetings with some 65,000 parents who "recommended and were in favour of the shut down or limiting the TikTok platform," the minister said. The Cabinet initiated the move last year after a teen stabbed another teenager to death in November after a quarrel that started on TikTok.

EU rallies behind Zelenskyy

EU leaders pledge defence surge, support Zelenskyy after US aid freeze

REUTERS

Brussels, March 6: European leaders Thursday said they would stand by Ukraine and spend more on defence in a world upended by Donald Trump's reversal of US policies.

"Europe must take up this challenge, this arms race. And it must win it," Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said as he arrived at the summit in Brussels.

"Europe as a whole is truly capable of winning any military, financial, economic confrontation with Russia - we are simply stronger," Tusk said.

Many EU leaders hailed the European Commission's proposals this week to give them fiscal flexibility on defence spending, and to jointly borrow up to 150 billion euros (\$160 billion) to lend to EU governments to spend on their militaries.

"We are here to defend Ukraine," the chairman of the meeting Antonio Costa said as he and European Commission Chief Ursula von der Leyen, both smiling broadly, warmly welcomed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in sharp contrast with the clash between Trump and Zelenskyy in the Oval Office last week.

But decades of reliance on US protection, divergences on funding and on how France's nuclear deterrence could be used for Europe showed how difficult it would be for the EU



to fill the void left by Washington after it froze military aid to Ukraine.

Washington provided more than 40% of military aid to Ukraine last year, according to NATO, some of which Europe could not easily replace. Some leaders still held out hope, in public at least, that Washington could be coaxed back into the fold.

"We must ensure, with cool and wise heads, that US support is also guaranteed in the coming months and years, because Ukraine is also dependent on their support for its defence," Germany's outgoing Chancellor Olaf Scholz said.

Adding to the EU's difficulties, Hungary's nationalist lead-

- Prime ministers and presidents gather in Brussels
- Defence push driven by fears of Russia, worries about Trump
- Ukrainian president attends summit
- Hungary threatens to block statement backing Kyiv

er Viktor Orban, a Trump ally, may veto a unanimous statement backing Kyiv, though he made clear he would support measures for an increase in spending on Europe's own defence.

SK fighter jets accidentally drop bombs, injuring eight

ASSOCIATED PRESS

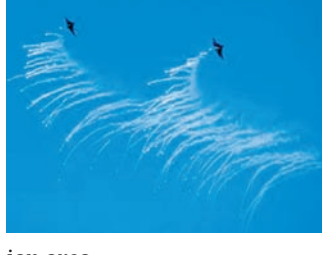
Seoul, March 6: Two South Korean fighter jets accidentally dropped eight bombs on a civilian area during a joint live-fire exercise with the US military Thursday, injuring eight people, officials said.

The MK-82 bombs released by the KF-16 fighter jets fell outside a firing range, the air force said in a statement. It apologised and expressed hopes for a speedy recovery of the injured and said it would offer compensation and take other necessary steps.

The air force said the fighter jets were taking part in the one-day firing drill with the US military in Pocheon, a city close to the heavily armed border with North Korea.

The air force also said a committee would investigate the accident and examine the scale of the damage inflicted.

An unidentified air force official told local reporters that a pilot of one of the KF-16s had entered wrong coordinates for a bombing site. An unidentified Defence Ministry official told reporters that further investigation was needed to determine why the second KF-16 also dropped bombs on a civil-



ian area. In a televised briefing, Pocheon Mayor Paek Young Hyeon called the bombings "awful" and urged the military to halt drills in the city until it formulates reliable steps that can prevent a recurrence. He said that Pocheon, a city of 140,000 people, provides three major firing ranges for the South Korean and US militaries.

Park Seong-sook, a 70-year-old eyewitness who was not hurt in the bombing, said she thought "a war has broken out." "It was such a loud sound," she said, adding that it left her trembling with fear.

The military said later Thursday it has decided to suspend all live-fire drills across South Korea.

The accident came just before the South Korean and US militaries announced they will begin large-scale annual military drills next Monday.

Trump delays tariffs on most goods from Mexico for a month

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, March 6: President Donald Trump said Thursday that he has postponed 25 per cent tariffs on most goods from Mexico for a month after a conversation with that country's president.

Trump's announcement comes after his Commerce Secretary, Howard Lutnick, said tariffs on both Canada and Mexico would "likely" be delayed.

This is the second one-month postponement Trump has announced since first unveiling the import taxes in early February. The reprieve would apply to goods that are compliant with the trade agreement Trump negotiated with Canada and Mexico in his first term.

"We are working hard, together, on the Border, both in terms of stopping Illegal Aliens from entering the United States and, likewise, stopping Fentanyl," Trump said on Truth Social.

Trump's on-again, off-again tariffs threats have roiled financial markets, lowered consumer confidence, and enveloped many businesses in an uncertain atmosphere that could delay hiring and investment.

RANA SEEKS STAY ON EXTRADITION TO INDIA

The likelihood of torture in this case is even higher though as petitioner faces acute risk as a Muslim of Pakistani origin charged in the Mumbai attacks, says the application

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



New York, March 6: Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana has moved an "emergency application" with the US Supreme Court against his extradition to India, claiming that he will be tortured there since he is a Muslim of Pakistani origin.

Rana, 64, a Canadian national of Pakistani origin, is currently lodged at a metropolitan detention centre in Los Angeles. He is known to be associated with Pakistani-American terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the 26/11 attacks. Rana has filed an "Emergency Application For Stay" with the Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States and Circuit Justice for the Ninth Circuit.

President Donald Trump last month announced that his administration approved the extradition of "very evil" Rana, wanted by Indian probe agencies for his role in the 26/11 attacks, "to face justice in India". This followed the rejection of his review petition by the Supreme Court in January.

Now, Rana is seeking a stay of his extradition and surrender to India pending litigation (including exhaustion of all appeals) on the merits of a petition he filed February 13.

In that petition, Rana argued that his extradition to India violates United States law and the United Nations Convention Against Torture "because there are substantial grounds for believing that, if extradited to India, petitioner will be in danger

of being subjected to torture." "The likelihood of torture in this case is even higher though as petitioner faces acute risk as a Muslim of Pakistani origin charged in the Mumbai attacks," the application said.

The application also said that his "severe medical conditions" render extradition to Indian detention facilities, a "de facto" death sentence in this case.

It cited medical records from July 2024 showing that he has multiple "acute and life-threatening diagnoses", including multiple documented heart attacks, Parkinson's disease with cognitive decline, a mass suggestive of bladder cancer, stage 3 chronic kidney disease, and a history of chronic asthma, and multiple COVID-19 infections.

US killing someone by firing squad for 1st time in 15 years

The firing squad, a method of execution with a long and complex history in the United States, is set to be used for the first time in 15 years in South Carolina

The firing squad, a method of execution with a long and complex history in the United States, is set to be used for the first time in 15 years in South Carolina. Brad Sigmon, convicted of murdering his ex-girlfriend's parents in 2001, will face a firing squad Friday, a method he chose over the electric chair and lethal injection.

The history of firing squads in the US dates back to colo-

nial times, when it was used as a punishment for mutiny. In 1608, captain George Kendall, was executed by firing squad in Jamestown, Virginia, for suspected mutiny and conspiracy with Spain. This marked the first recorded execution by shooting in America.

During the Civil War, firing squads were used by both sides to execute deserters and create a "public spectacle" to maintain discipline. According to the Associated Press, Mark Smith, a history professor at the University of South Carolina, firing squads were designed to shock and intimidate, with the added element of uncertainty, as one of the executioners would often be given a blank cartridge.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Utah became the primary state to use firing squads, with at least 40 executions carried out by this method. One no-



table case was the execution of labour activist and songwriter Joe Hill in 1915. Hill, who maintained his innocence until the end, was shot by a firing squad in Utah State Prison.

However, the use of firing

squads declined as lethal injection became the preferred method of execution in the 1980s. Lethal injection was initially seen as a more humane alternative, but it has since been plagued by botched executions

- During the Civil War, firing squads were used by both sides to execute deserters and create a "public spectacle" to maintain discipline
- Firing squads were designed to shock and intimidate, with the added element of uncertainty, as one of the executioners would often be given a blank cartridge
- In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Utah became the primary state to use firing squads, with at least 40 executions carried out by this method

and difficulties in obtaining the required drugs.

In recent years, however, some states have reconsidered firing squads as an alternative to lethal injection. According to Deborah Denno, a criminologist

at Fordham School of Law, firing squads have been relatively reliable, with only two reported cases of botched executions. Denno has argued that firing squads may be a more humane alternative to lethal injection, as they are typically quicker and less prone to error.

In South Carolina, Sigmon's decision to choose the firing squad over other methods has sparked debate. His attorney, Gerald "Bo" King, stated that Sigmon chose the firing squad because the alternatives seemed worse. The execution will be carried out by volunteer officers, with Sigmon bound to a chair and a target placed over his heart. As the US continues to grapple with the ethics and practicalities of capital punishment, the use of firing squads raises complex questions about the nature of justice and the value of human life.

Business



The challenge is to keep pushing forward -- India's corporate sector must step up, and MSMEs need to be integrated into larger supply chains to drive real competitiveness and achieve 7-8 per cent growth
SUMAN BERY | VICE CHAIRMAN, NITI AAYOG

MAHINDRA'S MILESTONE
 Mahindra & Mahindra Thursday said it has become the only car manufacturer in the world to achieve a top 1 per cent Corporate Sustainability Assessment ranking in S&P Global's prestigious 2025 Sustainability Yearbook. The 2025 Sustainability Yearbook ranks the top sustainability performers across various sectors based on S&P Global's annual Corporate Sustainability Assessment



of the day **QUOTE**

Indian regulators need to actively collaborate with social media companies such as Google and Meta as enforcement of controlling gambling-related promotions remains highly inconsistent



ARVIND GUPTA | FOUNDER, DIGITAL INDIA FOUNDATION

Our low-cost health insurance and smart term plans have seen widespread adoption, demonstrating the increasing demand for simplified and cost-effective insurance products



BALACHANDER SEKHAR | CEO, RENEWBUY

India's workforce is undergoing a transformation, with women from Tier II and III cities stepping into diverse careers across industries. Fueled by digital accessibility and evolving hiring trends, this surge is reshaping workforce dynamics



NIMIT PARIKH | FOUNDER AND CEO, APNA.CO

TRADE WAR INTENSIFIES

As US President Donald Trump's new trade tariffs on China, Mexico and Canada kick off, sparking another trade war, countries in Asia's complex and integrated global supply chain are in the crosshairs

REUTERS

Washington, March 6: Investors maintained their short bets on most Asian currencies as they assessed the prospects of an escalating global trade war after US President Donald Trump's tariffs on major trading partners, a Reuters poll showed Thursday. Bearish positions on the Malaysian ringgit, the South Ko-

Investors stay bearish on Asian currencies



rean won, Taiwan dollar and the Indonesian rupiah firmed slightly from a fortnight ago, according to a poll of 11 respondents, while those on the Thai baht also ramped up. Last month, the Bank of Thailand cut its interest rate by a quarter point amid government calls for easing to support the economy and weaken the local currency to boost exports.

While the bank's statement highlighted "structural problems" in the economy more than trade tariffs, Barclays analysts believe global trade tensions were a bigger concern for the central bank. Trump's new 25% levies on imports from Mexico and Canada, as well as the doubling of duties on Chinese imports, which took effect Tuesday,

With growing concerns over Trump's tariffs, market players will gradually increase short conviction on Asian currencies, especially given their recent strength, as risk reward for shorting could improve
POON PANICHPHIBOL | MARKETS STRATEGIST AT KRUNG THAI BANK

remained relatively resilient in light of broad dollar decline and worries that US growth is slowing. The Indian rupee, weighed down by foreign portfolio outflows and increased hedging in the onshore and the non-deliverable forward market, logged its fifth straight monthly fall in February and was the most shorted among Asian currencies. Analysts at DBS said India's tariff rates are higher than the

Bearish bets raised on Thai baht, trimmed on Chinese yuan
Indian rupee most shorted, followed by Indonesian rupiah
Short bets on Philippine peso lowest since January 2024

US and Asian peers, which makes the economy susceptible to retaliatory as well as reciprocal tariff action. The rupee and the rupiah which dropped to its lowest level since March 2020 last week are the worst performing Asian currencies so far this year. The Asian currency positioning poll is focused on what analysts and fund managers believe are the current market positions in nine Asian emerging market currencies: the Chinese yuan, South Korean won, Singapore dollar, Indonesian rupiah, Taiwan dollar, Indian rupee, Philippine peso, Malaysian ringgit and the Thai baht.

Sensex reclaims 74K on firm global trends



Mcap of BSE-listed firms climbed by ₹4,53,808.84cr to ₹3,97,57,850.59cr (\$4.57 tn)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 6: Benchmark Sensex rallied nearly 610 points to reclaim the 74,000 mark while Nifty closed above 22,500 Thursday following heavy buying in Reliance on easing crude oil prices and firm global trends after US President Donald Trump softened stand on tariffs.

Bajaj Finance were the major gainers. Tech Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Zomato, Tata Motors, and IndusInd Bank were the laggards. Broader markets also closed higher with the BSE smallcap gauge climbing 1.63 per cent and midcap index advancing 0.65 per cent. Among the BSE sectoral indices, Energy, metal, Oil & Gas, Commodities, Utilities, Services, Power, healthcare, FMCG and Industrials were the gainers. Telecommunication and Realty were the laggards.

The Indian indices exhibited resilience, owing to positive global cues following Trump's softened tariff stance on automakers from Canada & Mexico amidst the weakening dollar index
VINOD NAIR | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEOJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Recovering from early losses, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 609.86 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 74,340.09, marking its second straight day of gains. During the day, it surged 660.57 points or 0.89 per cent to hit a high of 74,390.80. The broader Nifty of NSE advanced 207.40 points or 0.93 per cent to close at 22,544.70. In the session, the 50-share barometer jumped 219.15 points or 0.98 per cent to hit an intraday high of 22,556.45. From the Sensex pack, Asian Paints, NTPC, Reliance Industries, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finserv, Hindustan Unilever, Sun Pharmaceuticals, Adani Ports & SEZ, Axis Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, Titan and

As many as 3,007 stocks advanced while 989 declined and 107 remained unchanged on the BSE. In Asian markets, Tokyo, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Seoul ended higher. European markets in the mid-session deals were trading on a mixed note. Wall Street ended in the positive zone Wednesday. Meanwhile, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹2,895.04 crore Wednesday, according to exchange data. On Wednesday, the BSE Sensex surged by 740.30 points to close at 73,730.23. Cutting short its record 10-day falling streak, the broader Nifty of NSE rebounded by 254.65 points to settle at 22,337.30.

HEFTY DISCOUNTS

Fast-delivery firms face antitrust case

Zomato, Swiggy, Zepto face heat from local retailers

REUTERS

New Delhi, March 6: Indian consumer products distributors have filed an antitrust case against big fast-delivery businesses of Zomato, Swiggy and Zepto, calling for an investigation into alleged deep discounting practices, legal papers show. India's e-commerce sector has faced intense scrutiny over how products are priced online. An antitrust investigation last year found Amazon and Walmart's Flipkart favour select sellers and resorted to "predatory pricing", which hurts smaller retailers. The companies have denied the allegations.



A variant of a Nescafe coffee jar which a small independent Indian retailer receives from companies for about ₹622 (\$7.14) is offered for ₹514 on Zepto, ₹577 on Swiggy Instamart and ₹625 on Blinkit, according to the filing

Antitrust case alleges deep discounts
Quick commerce sales booming in India
Firms' fast opening smaller warehouses

The filing could increase headaches for Zomato and Swiggy. A separate CCI investigation last year found their food delivery businesses breached competition laws. The case is ongoing. Zepto is preparing for an IPO after raising funds at a valuation of \$5 billion last year. The watchdog will review the case filing and can order its investigation unit to look at the matter closely. This can take several months and may require companies to explain their businesses. It can dismiss the case if it finds no merit in it. AICPDF has 400,000 distributors as members, who supply products of brands such as Nestle, Unilever and Tata to 13 million retail shops across India. A recent Datum Intelligence survey of 3,000 Indian quick

commerce shoppers showed 36% had reduced shopping at supermarkets and 46% cut back purchases from small independent stores. In its filing, AICPDF said local brick-and-mortar stores "cannot match" the quick commerce giant's discounts. It compared online and offline pricing of 25 products, including of Nestle and Hindustan Unilever. Asia's richest man, Mukesh Ambani, is mimicking the strategy to offer fast deliveries, as are Amazon and Flipkart in limited areas. Datum estimates Blinkit has a 40% market share in India's quick commerce market, with 1,007 small warehouses, while Zepto has more than 900 stores and a 29% market share. Swiggy's Instamart service holds a 26% share.

India bought ₹1.5tn worth of Russian oil since Ukraine war

Russia continues to be India's top oil source

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 6: India, the world's third largest oil consuming and importing nation, spent 112.5 billion euro (about ₹1.5 lakh crore) on buying crude oil from Russia since the start of the Ukraine war, a European think tank said Thursday. The Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) released a report on payments to Russia for fossil fuels since February 24, 2022. "According to our estimates, since the beginning of the war, Russia earned EUR 835 billion in revenue from fossil fuel exports," it said. China was the biggest buyer of Russian fossil fuel at EUR 235 billion (made up of EUR 170 billion for oil, EUR 34.3 billion for

coal and EUR 30.5 billion for gas). India, according to CREA, bought fossil fuels worth EUR 205.84 billion from Russia from the beginning of the war until March 2, 2025. This comprised EUR 112.5 billion (\$121.59 billion) for purchase of crude oil, which is refined into fuels like petrol and diesel at refineries, and EUR 13.25 billion for coal. India, which is more than 85 per cent dependent on imports to meet its crude oil needs, spent \$232.7 billion on crude imports in 2022-23 (April 2022 to March 2023) and \$234.3 billion in 2023-24. India, which has traditionally sourced its oil from the Middle East, began importing a large volume of oil from Russia soon after the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. This is primarily because Russian oil was available at a significant discount to other international benchmarks due to Western sanctions and



Latest sanctions by the US have led to a fall in imports after India shunned cargoes in sanctioned ships or insured by banned entities

some European countries shunning purchases. This led to India's imports of Russian oil seeing a dramatic rise, growing from less than 1 per cent of its total crude oil imports to a staggering 40 per

cent in a short period. Some of the refineries in India turned Russian crude oil into fuels like petrol and diesel which were exported to Europe and other G7 countries. Russia, however, continues

US crude imports hit over two-year high in Feb as Russia sanctions bite

Houston: US exports of crude oil to India last month climbed to their highest in over two years, ship tracking data showed, as refiners in the country sought alternative supplies following tighter US sanctions on Russian producers and tankers. The US exported about 357,000 barrels per day (bpd) of crude to India, the world's third-biggest oil importer and consumer, in February, ship tracking data from Kpler showed. That compared with exports of about 221,000 bpd last year. India said last month its energy purchases from the U.S. could go up to \$25 billion in the near future from \$15 billion last year. "Indian refiners are trying to diversify their crude supplies, especially light-sweet barrels," said Rohit Rathod, a senior analyst with ship tracking firm Vortexa. "Sanctions on Russian vessels that came in recently only pushed Indian buyers to look elsewhere," he added. About 80% of the crude exported to India was light sweet West Texas Intermediate-Midland crude, according to the data.

to be India's top oil source. India imported 1.48 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil from Russia in February, against 1.67 million bpd in the previous month. When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, it triggered a series of sanctions from the United States, the European Union, and other Western nations, aimed at crippling Russia's economy. One of the

main sanctions was on Russian oil exports, which significantly impacted Russia's ability to sell oil to European markets. As a result, Russia began offering crude oil at heavily discounted prices in an attempt to find new buyers for its oil. India, with its large energy needs and an economy sensitive to oil price fluctuations, found this offer too attractive to ignore.

Central Bank celebrates International Women's Day



Bhubaneswar: Central Bank of India is holding series of activities throughout the week to celebrate International Women's Day 2025. The bank says that it is committed to reinforce the women empowerment through initiatives. In this sequence, Central Bank of India Regional Office Bhubaneswar, conducted a walkathon at Surya Nagar, Bhubaneswar to promote gender equality and to recognise achievements of women in various fields. The event was held with the theme, "March forward from promises to progress". The walkathon witnessed enthusiastic participation from the bank's staff members, who rallied together to express their support for women empowerment. The event was held in the presence of Pankaj Khara, Regional Head, Suresh Chandra, Deputy Regional Head, Mukund Kumar Karn, Chief Manager & Sandeep Kumar, Chief Manager along with other senior bank officials.

India have real clarity: Williamson

The former skipper stated that the Rohit Sharma-led side have absolute clarity in the way they operate at the Dubai International Stadium



India are an outstanding team and playing really well
KANE WILLIAMSON | BATTER, NEW ZEALAND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, March 6: New Zealand batting mainstay Kane Williamson reckons India have "real clarity" on how they want to operate in Dubai, having played all their Champions Trophy games at the same venue but his team will also be reasonably well-prepared for the tournament finale due to its limited past familiarity with conditions.

Williamson did not specifically say that India had an advantage of playing at one venue, choosing to compare it to New Zealand's understanding of conditions in Lahore, where they beat South Africa Wednesday to set up a final clash against the Rohit Sharma-led side in Dubai Sunday.

New Zealand had played two games in Lahore during the preceding tri-series involving Pakistan and South Africa.

"I suppose having played there on a number of occasions; there's real clarity in how they want to operate," said Williamson when asked if India go into

the final with an advantage of knowing the conditions.

"A little bit like our opportunity here, having played a number of times at this venue as well and I think that's part and parcel in cricket," he added.

Having scored a hundred in the semifinal, Williamson is high on confidence and looking forward to the final. "It is what it is (India play all games in Dubai). Our focus is the next match, the location of that match, the opposition, they're all factors. Obviously, we played India once there," he said.

"The conditions are different, so it's important that we try and take away some of those positives and be nice and clear in how we're trying to operate come two or three-days' time in the final," he said referring to New Zealand's loss to India in the group stage. Both Williamson and Rachin Ravindra struck hundreds to fashion New Zealand's emphatic win.

Williamson called Ravindra, who has score two hundreds in three games, a special talent. "It's a final, so it's exciting.

If we go back to Rachin, an incredibly special talent. It's always great to bat with him. He goes out and he puts the team first and he plays with that freedom.

"When we were out there batting together, there were moments where there were some good spells and it was a little bit challenging. We tried to feed off each other and keep each other focused on the job," Williamson said.

"He's so gifted, really, really confident, clear in what he's trying to do. We've seen it on so many occasions. In big tournaments where he stood up and

shone, and we've seen it here again in this one," added the former New Zealand captain.

The conditions in the UAE have favoured spinners with the slow surface making stroke-making tough. But the fact that New Zealand have played a game in Dubai can only help them in the final, feels Williamson.

"Yeah definitely the conditions are a lot different but you know that's sort of the nature of

the beast I think in any tournament that you have, conditions change a little bit throughout. For us, it was nice to have that last match against India. There's some really good bits there," he said.

"India are an outstanding team and playing really well. So, look, it's important we try and take away some learnings from that last game. Park this match, and in a final, anything can happen."

Will need to adapt on Dubai pitch: Ravindra

Dashing New Zealand opener Rachin Ravindra feels adapting to the conditions will be key to succeed on an "unknown" Dubai surface in the Champions Trophy final against India Sunday. Except the group match against India in Dubai, New Zealand have played all their games in Pakistan. The Kiwis had also played two games in Lahore during the preceding tri-series involving Pakistan and South Africa. India, on the other, have played all their matches in Dubai and are familiar with the conditions. "We don't quite know what the Dubai pitch is. We saw in our (group) game against India the ball turning but the other day didn't turn so much. We found ourselves adapting and playing according to situations, which we will need to do on Sunday again. "We will see in the next couple of days and hopefully it's a good cricket wicket," said Ravindra after an emphatic 50-run win over South Africa in the semifinal here Wednesday. "You get out pretty much every time you bat. Hopefully I can bat for a longer period of time and continue to play well for my team," he said.

"Whenever you approach a tournament, you expect hopefully to be among the top four teams and lucky enough we have been consistently good over a period of time." "We are happy with our preparation, coming here early, we can see we are cooking reasonably well. Trust and ability around the group is great."



SHORT TAKES

Vishnu becomes highest ranked Indian sailor

New Delhi: India's Vishnu Saravanan added another first to his name as he became the highest-ranked sailor from the country in the latest World Sailing rankings released recently. Saravanan, 26, winner of the bronze medal in the men's dinghy ILCA7 event at the Hangzhou Asian Games, reached a career-best ranking of 13th with 776 points, the highest by an Indian sailor. Vishnu Saravanan achieved a career high ranking of world No 13 in Men's ILCA7 category, becoming the first Indian sailor to reach this milestone. Keep making waves, Vishnu, said Sports Authority of India (SAI) in a social media post.

Saud timed out after reportedly falling asleep

Rawalpindi: Pakistan batter Saud Shakil, who struck a half-century against India in the Champions Trophy recently, was timed out after he reportedly fell asleep while waiting for his turn to bat during the final of the President's Cup first-class tournament here. He has become only the seventh batter overall and first in Pakistan cricket history to be timed out. The match was held on Tuesday night between State Bank and PTV. The final was held completely under floodlights due to Ramadan with playing hours from 7.30 PM to 2.30 AM, the first time this has happened in Pakistan's domestic cricket.

Bangladesh's Mushfiqur Rahim retires from ODIs

Dhaka: Veteran Bangladesh wicket-keeper batter Mushfiqur Rahim has retired from ODI cricket with immediate effect. The 37-year-old was part of Bangladesh's squad that exited the Champions Trophy from the group stage. He made the announcement on social media. "I am announcing my retirement from the ODI format as of today. Alhamdulillah (Thank God) for everything.

TT stalwart Sharath announces retirement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 6: Indian table tennis legend A Sharath Kamal will hang up his racket and the iconic bandana later this month, having stayed at the top of his game for more than 22 years and resisting the temptation of lasting another Olympic cycle at the ripe old age of 42.

In his own words, life has come full circle for one of India's finest athletes who will say goodbye to professional table tennis in front of his friends and family in Chennai, where the WTT (World Table Tennis) Star Contender and his swansong will be staged from March 25 to 30.

Sharath's contribution to the game goes beyond the staggering numbers, including seven gold medals at the Commonwealth Games, two path-breaking bronze medals at the Asian



Games and five appearances at the Summer Olympics.

Paris last year was easily the highlight for him as an Olympian, having received the honour of carrying India's flag at the opening ceremony.

The results did not go his way in the French capital but considering his fitness and ranking (he remains India's highest ranked player at no 42), Sharath decided to carry on for another season and take it from there. Another Commonwealth Games and Asian Games are on the horizon but Sharath has had enough.

Emma struggled to breathe after seeing "fixated" man

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indian Wells, March 6: Emma Raducanu says she "couldn't see the ball through tears" and struggled to breathe after spotting a man who was "fixated" on her during a match.

The British tennis player and 2021 U.S. Open winner was left distressed during a match at last month's Dubai Championships by the presence of the man in the stand.

The man, who had already approached Raducanu earlier in the tournament, was ejected from the arena after she spoke to the chair umpire during a second-round match against Karolina Muchova. He was later detained by Dubai police and signed a document pledging to "maintain distance" from Raducanu. The WTA said he had "exhibited fixated behavior."

"I was obviously very distraught," Raducanu told British reporters at the BNP Paribas Open in Indian Wells, her first tournament since the incident.



"I saw him in the first game of the match and I was like, I don't know how I'm going to finish'. I literally couldn't see the ball through tears. I could barely breathe. I was like, I need to just take a breather here'."

Raducanu regrouped to play on after the man was removed from the arena but lost 7-6 6-4. "It was a very emotional time," added Raducanu. "After the match I did break down in

I saw him in the first game of the match and I was like, I don't know how I'm going to finish'. I literally couldn't see the ball through tears. I could barely breathe. I was like, I need to just take a breather here'
EMMA RADUCANU | PROFESSIONAL TENNIS PLAYER

tears, but not necessarily because I lost."

Raducanu told the BBC that the incident "could have been dealt with better" but that security improvements have now been made. "I'm always now very aware and not necessarily doing things on my own any more. I'm always with someone and always being watched," Raducanu told the BBC.

At 40, football icon Chhetri comes out of international retirement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 6: Indian football icon Sunil Chhetri has decided to come out of his international retirement to help the national team in the FIFA friendly assignment scheduled this month, the sport's apex body in the country said Thursday.

Chhetri returns to the team, which he led for more than a decade, aged 40.

"Sunil Chhetri is back. The captain, leader, legend will return to the Indian national team for the FIFA International Window in March," the All India Football Federation (AIFF) wrote on its official 'X' handle.

Chhetri, who made his international debut in 2005 and left the scene as India's all-time top scorer and most-capped player, has been included in coach Manolo Marquez's list of 26 players for the March FIFA

international window. The move comes less than a year after he announced his retirement after a glorious career, leaving a huge void that is yet to be filled.

Having played at the top level until he was 39 years of age and ending his career as one of the game's leading scorers with 94 international goals, Chhetri's departure had made headlines with FIFA, world football's global governing body, leading the outpouring of tributes for the talisman.

FIFA had earlier in 2022 released a documentary on the long-serving Indian captain.

Titled 'Captain Fantastic', it had three parts — kick off, mid-game and extra time.

Chhetri is the fourth-highest goalscorer in men's football, after Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi and Ali Daei.

Chhetri had called it a day after the FIFA World Cup qual-



ifying match against Kuwait in Kolkata June 6 last year.

The Blue Tigers will play a friendly match against Maldives March 19 in preparation

for the opening match of the AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027 Qualifiers Final Round against Bangladesh March 25. Marquez said, "The qualifica-

tion for the Asian Cup is very crucial for us. Given the importance of the tournament and the matches ahead, I discussed with Sunil Chhetri about making a comeback to strengthen the national team. He agreed, and so we have included him in the squad."

Since his retirement, he had continued playing for Bengaluru FC in the Indian Super League. He has so far scored 12 goals from 23 matches this season to become its highest Indian goal-scorer.

Shillong's Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium will host the Indian senior men's team's two matches that they will play during the FIFA international window this month.

India have been placed in a qualifying group alongside Bangladesh, Hong Kong, and Singapore for the Asian Cup. In the tournament's previous edition, India had a disappointing

run, failing to progress past the group stage after losing all their matches.

India's 26-member squad for March 2025 FIFA International Window:

Goalkeepers: Amrinder Singh, Gurmeet Singh, Vishal Kaith.

Defenders: Asish Rai, Boris Singh Thangjam, Chinglensana Singh Konsham, Hmingthamawia, Mehtab Singh, Rahul Bheke, Roshan Singh, Sandesh Jhingan, Subhashish Bose.

Midfielders: Ashique Kuruniyan, Ayush Dev Chhetri, Brandon Fernandes, Brison Fernandes, Jeakson Singh Thounaojam, Lalengmawia, Liston Colaco, Mahesh Singh Naorem, Suresh Singh Wangjam.

Forwards: Sunil Chhetri, Farukh Choudhary, Irfan Yadwad, Lallianzuala Chhangte, Manvir Singh.